

Which is more extreme: branding oneself or continuing to eat meat?

Jan 25, 2013 | 15 Comments

Recommend

You, Stacey Citraro-againstanimalabuse and 182 others recommend this.

Recommend 184

A A



Emily Moran Barwick

Written by Emily Moran Barwick Guest Opinion

FILED UNDER

- Opinion
- Opinion Letters To The Editor
- Act

What is more extreme? Using 2,500 gallons of water, 55 square feet of rainforest, 17 pounds of grain, and 27 times the daily carbon emissions of the average car, to produce one pound of beef? Or plucking ripe produce from a fruit-bearing plant?

Or let us compare the simple, swift movement of a sharpened blade. On the one hand, this blade slits the carotid artery of someone's child while he hangs helpless and conscious, choking on his own blood as his brother, a second later, meets the same fate. On the other hand, this blade cuts through a tomato, the red juice not as dark as the child's blood and no choked death-cry to be heard.

Same action. Same tool. Which is more extreme?

In the planning and execution of my public branding performance piece, I've been told numerous times that my action is "extreme." My art in general has been dismissed more than once as merely "shocking."

I find the realities I'm bringing to light to be shocking and extreme; however, my actions are rather banal in comparison. Let's look at Sunday's performance piece, for example.

I will willingly, consciously, and with my full consent be branded with a cattle iron. I will be executing a carefully-planned, well researched action during which I will experience pain, granted most likely extreme. I will receive medical aftercare for my burn. I will return home safely.

This voluntary action of mine may seem shocking and extreme to some; however, the reality I'm hoping to shed light on is most certainly both. If we are so outraged, so upset over my voluntary choice to have myself branded, why are we OK with the involuntary enslavement, torture and murder of other animals? How is my act of momentary discomfort more offensive than the daily murder of

Most Popular Most Commented More Headlines

- 1 Woman uses pain to make her point
- 2 Kirsten Nodel, infant
- 3 Our View: Public library not designed as site for snoozing
- 4 Fewer UI students forced to repay federal loans
- 5 Noel Ann Johnson

Most Viewed

Raptor Center Bald Eagles Jan. 28, 2013



PHOTO GALLERIES



269 Branding to Support Animal Rights



Coralville Brrr Fest



millions?

In the U.S. alone, 8.3 billion animals were killed for food in 2012, according to the USDA's National Agriculture's Statistics Service. These figures are a gross understatement given this data includes only federally inspected plants and does not include fish, marine animals, crustaceans, rabbits, other farmed animals or animals killed for their fur or other "by-products." In the month of November 2012, 12.89 million cattle, 252,3000 veal calves, 10.11 million pigs, 181,800 sheep and an average of 679,500 chickens and turkeys were killed in the U.S.

We Americans often cringe at cultures that slaughter and eat dogs, feeling disgust at their callousness while we savor our pork loins. We don't stop to think of the hypocrisy in our actions.

Pigs, far more intelligent than any breed of dog, are capable of abstract representation and are ranked fourth in animal intelligence, having been shown to remember commands learned over three years ago, according to Stanley Curtis, formerly of Penn State University.

Intelligence aside, there is the undeniable fact that pigs think, feel, emote and, of course, suffer.

Living in Iowa, we are in the center of America's pork industry, industrial agriculture and factory farming. Out of the 10.1 million pigs that were slaughtered in November 2012, 2.7 million of them were killed in Iowa, a total well over two times that of the next highest state.

Its facts like these that leave me rather befuddled when someone observing my lettuce-filled-meal calls me extreme as they bite into their meat product, so severely processed that its flavor has been scientifically designed and distilled by a flavorist.

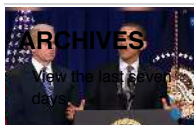
Consider this: in the split second the brand will be touching my skin, 263 animals in the U.S. and 4,757 animals worldwide will be killed, according to the USDA and United Nations.

Once again, I ask what is more extreme?

Emily Moran Barwick is a local artist. She can be contacted through www.emilymoranbarwick.com.

[View Comments \(15\)](#) | [Share your thoughts »](#)





Yesterday, Jan. 27
Obama calls for assault weapons ban, backgrou...
Saturday, Jan. 26
Friday, Jan. 25

Thursday, Jan. 24
Wednesday, Jan. 23
Tuesday, Jan. 22
Monday, Jan. 21



Eric Wack video
Jan 16, 2013

HELP

- Subscribe Now
- Contact Us
- Job Openings
- P-C History
- Pay Bill
- Apply
- NIE
- Gannett Foundation

REAL DEALS



Flip, shop and save on specials from your favorite retailers in Iowa City, IA 52245

[GET DEALS NOW](#)

TOP VIDEO PICKS

[MORE VIDEO](#)



[Raptor Center Bald Eagles](#)
(1m41s)



[Isabel Wilkerson Lecture](#)
(3m27s)

[Site Map](#) | [Back to Top](#)

NEWS

- Local
- Photos
- Salaries
- Weather
- Nation/World
- Archives
- Video

DATA

- Salaries
- Arrests
- Divorces
- Crime statistics
- ITBS scores

HAWK CENTRAL

- Football
- Photos
- Recruiting
- Men's basketball
- Women's basketball
- Wrestling

OPINION

- Editorials
- Guest Opinion
- Letters to the Editor
- Endorsement Letters
- Writers Group
- Iowa Cityscapes
- Poetic License

PREP SPORTS

- Photos
- Recruiting
- LIFE**
- Cooking Class
- Table Wine
- Green Thumb
- Calendar
- Movies
- Life Events
- Sudoku
- Religious services
- Dating

OBITUARIES

HELP

- Contact us
- About the Press-Citizen
- Subscriber Services
- P-C FAQ
- NIE
- Submit announcement

FOLLOW US

- Twitter
- Facebook
- Mobile
- RSS
- E-mail Alerts

[News](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Cars for Sale](#) | [Homes for Sale](#) | [Apartments for Rent](#) | [Real Estate](#) | [Shopping](#)

GANNETT

Copyright © 2013 www.press-citizen.com. All rights reserved.
Users of this site agree to the [Terms of Service](#), [Privacy Notice/Your California Privacy Rights](#), and [Ad Choices](#)

