



# Poultry Press

*Promoting the compassionate and respectful treatment of domestic fowl*

## New Brochure and White Paper Take A Chilling Look at The Fate of Birds in Laboratories

*"No One Knows How Many . . ."*

**"No One Knows How Many . . . The Use of Birds in Agricultural and Biomedical Research"** is a powerful new brochure produced through the collaborative efforts of the New England Anti-Vivisection Society (NEAVS) and United Poultry Concerns. The brochure, which is based on a White Paper supported by NEAVS and written by **Karen Davis, PhD, President of United Poultry Concerns**, is a revelation of horror.

"Millions of birds are used in grotesque experiments and suffer and die horribly at the hands of vivisectionists," says NEAVS

**President Dr. Theodora Capaldo.** "NEAVS is deeply concerned that while birds are extensively experimented on, few people know the suffering and torment they endure in laboratories in the United States and around the world."

### Protected By Neither Conscience Nor Law

One reason that countless birds are exposed to callous, cruel, and wasteful research in the United States is that birds and farmed animals have been arbitrarily **excluded from the Animal Welfare Act**, even though the Act was designed to cover all warm-blooded sentient animals. Thus unprotected, birds are subjected to food deprivation, artificially induced diseases, heat stress, debeaking, slaughter experiments, and much more, through funding provided by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and other federal agencies funded by U.S. taxpayers. UPC and NEAVS are asking people to urge the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to include birds in the Animal Welfare Act in fulfillment of the Act's original intention. **Please see below on whom to contact.**

Chickens and other domestic fowl are especially vulnerable to vivisection because, at

the very time society has begun to demand less cruel treatment of birds and other animals raised for food, genetic engineers are pushing the technologies of farmed animal abuse in whole new directions. "These birds have not only the tragedy of being considered food," says UPC President Dr. Karen Davis, "They are fair game for all sorts of hideous research – everything from being forced to 'model' the effects of cigarette smoke inhalation and high-cholesterol diets to having their faces disfigured in experiments designed to make them grow teeth or sprout extra beaks. Thus far neither conscience nor law has protected them. This has to be changed."

For a complete copy of **Dr. Davis' White Paper, "The Experimental Use of Chickens and Other Birds in Biomedical and Agricultural Research,"** please visit United Poultry Concerns' website at [www.UPC-online.org](http://www.UPC-online.org) and click on I Need Information. Or visit NEAVS' website at [www.neavs.org](http://www.neavs.org). For copies of the brochure, "No One Knows How Many . . . The Use of Birds in Agricultural and Biomedical Research," please send a SASE to

NEAVS or to UPC, ATTN: Bird Brochure.

*"What caused you to become skeptical of your work?"*

*"A moral twinge."  
Somehow it didn't feel right to be cutting off the wings of newly-hatched birds [to save feed costs]. Later some of them couldn't get up onto their feet. It wasn't pleasant seeing them roll around on their side trying to get onto their feet without their wings."*

**Dr. Eldon Kienholz (1928-1993).  
Professor of Poultry Nutrition at  
Colorado State University's  
Department of Animal Science.  
Interview with Dr. Karen Davis**

### United Poultry Concerns

P.O. Box 150  
Machipongo, VA  
23405-0150  
(757) 678-7875  
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Visit Our Web Site:  
[www.upc-online.org](http://www.upc-online.org)



Write to the USDA and urge that birds be included in the Animal Welfare Act.

**Bobby Acord, Deputy Administrator  
of APHIS  
1400 Independence Ave SW  
Jamie Whitten Bldg. Room 312 E  
Washington, DC 20250  
Tel: (202) 720-3861  
Fax: (202) 720-3054  
[Bobby.R.Acord@usda.gov](mailto:Bobby.R.Acord@usda.gov)**

# United Poultry Concerns Profiled in Egg Industry Magazine,

October 2002

The October issue of *Egg Industry*, the U.S. egg industry's trade magazine, features interviews with four leaders of the animal advocacy movement including profiles of our organizations. This coverage of our philosophy and concerns is the result of our attendance at last year's *Egg Industry* Summit on the welfare of "laying" hens in Las Vegas, Nevada. Interviewed are **Karen Davis (United Poultry Concerns)**, **Paul Shapiro (Compassion Over Killing)**, **Bruce Friedrich (PETA)**, **Wayne Pacelle (HSUS)**, and **Dr. Michael Appleby (HSUS)**.

The 13-page *Egg Industry* exclusive begins: "No issue poses greater challenges to the egg industry than that of animal welfare." In

August, *Egg Industry* editor Dr. Charles Olentine visited United Poultry Concerns where he interviewed Karen Davis and toured our chicken sanctuary. Here is an excerpt from UPC President Karen Davis concerning the life of battery-caged hens:

"I've been in a lot of battery cage houses. I've broken into them. I think they are the most awful place that you could ever put [even] an enemy. You are nauseat-



Photo courtesy of PETA

*"The fact is there is a whole ton of science which shows that chickens are miserable in cages." – Karen Davis, PhD, quoted in Egg Industry magazine*

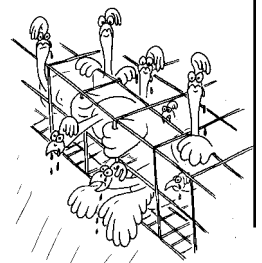
ed with the ammonia fumes, these birds are miserable, and the young ones are jumping all over each other. When you go through with your camera, what is even more horrifying is seeing the ones who have been in there for a number of months and are not even responding, like they have learned helplessness – their combs are hanging way over their faces and their combs are all doughy and white. It's a horrible scene. It's not clean in these places. They are filthy and manure is coming down and crusted and hanging over the bars. . . . There is an endless sound

of machines and distressed birds all around you. You can't even describe it to people. What we need in addition to video footage is for something to enable

people to smell what it is like in there. These birds are creatures with wings and legs. To take a creature with wings and legs and never let them take a step is horrible."

Davis continues: "The fact is that these birds can never clean themselves. Our birds dust bathe all the time or if a bird is brought here who has traveled awhile in a cage, that's their first act—to have a dust bath. It's just like us, we take a shower or bath. They want to clean themselves. We don't have any right to deprive a creature of her method of practicing bodily hygiene."

These observations are a sample of the richly impassioned, professional, and informative interviews presented in the October 2002 issue of *Egg Industry*, which notes in its profile of United Poultry Concerns that in 1996 UPC President Karen Davis "published a book entitled *Prisoned Chickens, Poisoned Eggs: An Inside Look at the Modern Poultry Industry* in which she says 'the industry makes its case for us.'"



## PoultryPress

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# Harvey, the Boston Rooster

By Matt Kelly

When he called us, **Harold Mercer and his wife Virginia** had been frantically trying to find a home for the beautiful black and gold rooster who appeared one day in their yard in the busy Boston suburb of Hyde Park, Massachusetts. It all started Christmas a year ago when Harold, an avid wild bird lover and feeder, saw an unusually large bird running through his yard. He dashed into the house as fast as his trim 80-plus body could take him to find the wild bird identification book. Who was this dashing stranger?

Keeping his distance, the new bird hung around Harold's yard, enjoying the cracked corn and other goodies Harold put out every day. Harold soon discovered him roosting at night in the fork of a tall White Pine. **He and Virginia named their mystery bird Harvey.**

All went well until March, when Harvey began crowing. When neighborhood boys started harassing Harvey, Harold called the animal shelter, which set a humane trap but only succeeded in trapping the Mercer's cat. **More calls led Harold to United Poultry Concerns, who called me.** My wife Mary and I keep a small sanctuary in Western Massachusetts. We were already pretty full, but. . .

I drove down to Hyde Park on Saturday afternoon at dusk. Harold, Virginia, and their grandson Chris had a ladder ready out back, near the tall pine. Lo, there was Harvey on his perch, 35 feet above us, but he wasn't resting. He was wide awake in the light of the back porch floodlight. Chris positioned the extension ladder under Harvey and started

to move it up. Real careful. When the ladder touched the tree, Harvey could stand this no more, and flew off into the night.

We finally found him in the front yard. I grabbed my net, and in a quick swoop, had him safe. As we held him snug, talking quietly and petting him, the terrified rooster began to calm down. I brought him to Harold and Virginia, and for the first time, they petted and kissed Harvey. Then he was off to his new home.

After a few showdowns between Harvey and the other roosters, Harvey took up with our largest and most gentle rooster, Peeps, and with Sky Pilot, our male pigeon. He's taken to hanging out with our new wild female turkey Mrs. Turk as well. In short, Harvey is doing just fine. He's a great guy. He's part of our gang.



Photo by Matt Kelly

Matt and Mary Kelly are longstanding members of United Poultry Concerns. In 1998, they adopted Lily, a hen rescued from a game show machine in New York City's Chinatown Arcade. The story of this rescue, "She's Free," appears in the Spring/Summer 1998 issue of *PoultryPress*, Volume 8, No. 2, online at [www.UPC-online.org](http://www.UPC-online.org). We thank Harold Mercer for being Harvey's guardian angel and Matt Kelly for sharing this heartwarming story.

## A LEGACY OF COMPASSION FOR THE BIRDS

Please remember United Poultry Concerns through a provision in your will.  
Please consider an enduring gift of behalf of the birds.

A legal bequest may be worded as follows:

I give, devise and bequeath to United Poultry Concerns, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation incorporated in the state of Maryland and located in the state of Virginia, the sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ and/or (specifically designated property and/or stock contribution).

We welcome inquiries.

**United Poultry Concerns, Inc.**  
**P.O. Box 150 • Machipongo, Virginia 23405-0150**  
**(757) 678-7875**



photo by Tal Ronnen

# Eggs: Ugly Side Up

*“The entire Western world is becoming educated about how the modern egg industry is treating its birds—which is badly,” said Karen Davis, head of Virginia-based watchdog group United Poultry Concerns.*

—Todd Hartman, “A Fox in the Henhouse,” **Rocky Mountain News** (Colorado), October 16, 2002.

## A Tad More Cage Space

Under pressure from animal rights advocates, some members of **United Egg Producers (UEP)** are responding to UEP’s voluntary plan to give battery-caged hens a tad more space—essentially by putting one less hen in each tiny cage. The new standard will increase space per bird to 67 square inches for white leghorn hens and 86 square inches for brown hens (who are slightly larger birds) by 2008. 48 to 54 square inches per hen has been the standard practice for decades. UEP’s standards, to be phased in over a 6 year period, are weaker than McDonald’s standards requiring the company’s suppliers to provide 72 square inches per caged white hen and a few extra inches for brown hens.

## UEP Welfare Seal: “Animal Care Certified.”

UEP has developed a “welfare seal” for egg cartons. This is a ruse. Under UEP’s new “Animal Care Certified” Seal, hens may still be:

- **Warehoused** in stacks of barren wire cages with no room to spread their wings, take a step, sit or stand normally or comfortably.
- **Force molted** by food deprivation. UEP merely recommends that producers who remove all food from hens for a week or 2 or 3 not let their weight drop below 70 percent. In other words, an “Animal Care Certified” producer may still force the hen to lose nearly a third of her body weight—to be starved from about 3 pounds down to 1 pound.
- **Debeaked** or “beak trimmed” with a burning guillotine blade that slices through the beak’s sensitive nerve endings.

## Camera Doesn’t Lie

As reported in *The New York Times*, National Page, December 4, 2002, the Washington DC-based animal advocacy organization **Compassion Over Killing (COK)** conducted an undercover investigation from

August to November 2002 of a battery-hen complex near Baltimore, Md. At **Red Bird Egg Farms**, investigators documented “unimaginably cruel conditions” including:

- **Cages with up to 11 hens stuffed inside.**
- **Feathers rubbed away by wire and other hens.**
- **Swollen eyes, infected skin, and shattered wings entangled in cage wire.**

According to COK, Red Bird Egg Farms is “the norm in the egg industry.” Similar investigations at major egg farms in Minnesota, Ohio, New Jersey, Colorado, and Maryland have all uncovered the same conditions. For details of COK’s investigation and rescue, go to

[www.cok.net](http://www.cok.net).



## What Can I Do?

● **Please Omit Eggs and Egg Products From Your Diet**, including so-called “substitutes” like Egg Beaters which are made of egg whites. All products with egg ingredients come from battery-caged hens. **Egg whites instead of whole eggs actually double the number of hens.** So-called “uncaged,” “free range,” and “organic” eggs are still produced by hens who are overcrowded, typically debeaked, possibly force molted, and brutally slaughtered often after being trucked hundreds or thousands of miles with internal injuries, broken bones, and no food or water. They travel covered in egg slime because, though crushed together in crates, many hens continue to lay eggs during transport. Still young, they go to poultry markets, poultry auctions, renderers, and landfills. **In all systems, newborn male chicks, slow hatching chicks, and defective female chicks are ground up alive or thrown in trashcans or landfills to suffocate.** A North Carolina family farmer told UPC in October that even after you pour dirt over the chicks and run over them with a truck, “you can still hear them peeping under the dirt.”

● **Urge baking companies to include vegan alternatives to eggs in their package instructions and recipes.** For example, 2 Tbsp to ¼ cup of applesauce, apple butter, or other fruit purees can substitute for 1 egg. Other options are 1 mashed banana for 1 egg; 2 Tbsp soft tofu, potato starch, or cornstarch for 1 egg; a little extra yeast or baking soda for lightness; a little extra vegetable oil for moisture. In most cases, you can make your suggestions on the company’s website. Always politely request a reply.

<u>Company/Mailing</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Phone/Fax</u>
Aunt Jemima <a href="http://www.auntjemima.com">www.auntjemima.com</a>	Robert Morrison, CEO The Quaker Company PO Box 049003 Chicago, IL 60604	800-407-2247 Fax: 800-224-1048
Betty Crocker <a href="http://www.bettycrocker.com">www.bettycrocker.com</a>	Steve Sanger, CEO General Mills, Inc. PO Box 1113 Minneapolis, MN 55440	800-446-1896 Fax: 763-764-8330
Duncan Hines <a href="http://www.duncanhines.com">www.duncanhines.com</a>	Dale Morrison, CEO Aurora Foods, Inc. 11432 Lackland Road St. Louis, MO 63146	800-750-8358 No Fax:
Jiffy <a href="http://www.jiffymix.com">www.jiffymix.com</a>	Howard Holmes, CEO Chelsea Milling Company PO Box 460 Chelsea, MI 48118	734-475-1361 Fax: 734-475-4630
Krusteaz <a href="http://www.krusteaz.com">www.krusteaz.com</a>	Ron Wise, CEO Continental Mills PO Box 88176 Seattle, WA 98138-2176	800-426-0955 Fax: 253-395-7591
Pillsbury <a href="http://www.pillsburybaking.com">www.pillsburybaking.com</a>	International Multifood Corp. Consumer Relations PO Box 580740 Minneapolis, MN 55458-0740	800-767-4466 No Fax
Topco <a href="http://www.topco.com">www.topco.com</a>	Ian Grossman, Sr. Vice President Topco Association Inc. 7711 Gross Point Road Skokie, IL 60077	888-423-0139 Fax: 847-676-5694 ConsumerServices@Topco.com

## STOCK CONTRIBUTIONS

Dear Friends,

Several of our members have made financial contributions in the form of stock to United Poultry Concerns through our securities account. We are deeply grateful for these gifts, and anticipate more in the future. There are two obvious benefits in making stock contributions. Please consider these advantages in making your future gifts to United Poultry Concerns.

**Donors may give as much stock as they want to a nonprofit organization without impinging upon their estate.** By giving this way, they avoid paying a capital gains tax on their assets, because they are gifting their assets.

**The benefits to the nonprofit are obvious.** In giving a gift of stock, you enable the nonprofit of your choice to grow and do more. It's as simple and important as that. Everyone wins.

United Poultry Concerns has a securities account with **Paine-Webber**. For information on how you can donate to us this way, please call our financial advisor, **Claudia Puopolo**, at Paine-Webber at **757-490-5639** or **800-368-4070**.

From United Poultry Concerns and all our Feathered Friends, we thank you for helping to ensure our future!

Sincerely,  
Karen Davis, Ph.D.  
President



photo by Tal Ronnen

You are Cordially Invited to Attend

# UNITED POULTRY CONCERNS FOURTH ANNUAL FORUM 2003

## Promoting Veganism

Saturday August 16 – Sunday August 17, 2003

University of Colorado-Boulder Campus Events Center

**Topic: How to promote veganism widely and effectively**

### Speakers

Carol J. Adams, author of *The Sexual Politics of Meat* and *Living Among MeatEaters*

Matt Ball, Vegan Outreach

David Crawford, Rocky Mountain Animal Defense

Karen Davis, United Poultry Concerns

Bruce Friedrich, PETA

Lauren Ornelas, *VIVA!*

Norm Phelps, The Fund for Animals

Paul Shapiro, Compassion Over Killing

Zoe Weil, International Institute for Humane Education

**Registration Fee:** \$75.00 per person pre-paid. Students & Seniors \$40 per person.

Send your registration to United Poultry Concerns, PO Box 150, Machipongo, VA 23405. Cash, Check or Money Order only. No credit cards.

For information about Boulder and other logistical Forum questions, please contact Lynn Halpern at 303-642-0414 or [Lynn@leadingveg.com](mailto:Lynn@leadingveg.com). For Forum updates, visit [www.UPC-online.org](http://www.UPC-online.org) / Coming Events, or call Karen Davis at 757-678-7875.

### Why Vegan? Why Not Yet Vegan?

Dear Friends, Have you not become vegan yet? If not, please share your experience with us. Feel free to write anonymously. Thanks! United Poultry Concerns

**Want to stay up on farmed animal issues?** Subscribe to Farmed Animal Watch! This weekly email digest is free to interested individuals. Information is gleaned from an array of industry, advocacy, academic, and mainstream media sources. Archived issues and a wealth of other useful information can be found at: <http://www.FarmedAnimal.net>. To subscribe, send a message to: [Info@FarmedAnimal.net](mailto:Info@FarmedAnimal.net).

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Membership includes our quarterly PoultryPress Newsletter to keep you informed of current issues, and how you can get involved in many other ways. If you would like to become a monthly supporter, go to our website at [www.upc-online.org](http://www.upc-online.org) and click on the link to set up your account. It's that easy!

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Please make your check payable to United Poultry Concerns. THANK YOU!

**Are you moving?** Please send us your new address before the next newsletter.

**Do you want to be removed from our mailing list?** Please tell us now. The U.S. Postal Service charges \$.50 for every returned mailing. Remailing the newsletter costs UPC an additional \$.60. Due to the enormous cost of remailing newsletters including the time it takes, we can no longer provide this service. Thank you for your consideration. Please keep up your membership. We need your **continuing** financial support.



United Poultry Concerns

PO Box 150 • Machipongo, VA 23405-0150



# Urge Livestock Abuse Prosecution of Iowa Turkey Beaters

On October 23, 2002, **Kyle Alan Sloan and Kevin Andrew Sloan beat to death 100 turkeys** at Woodland Farms in Story County, Iowa. The men have been charged with burglary, criminal mischief, and the Class D Felony offense of having knowingly injured and willfully destroyed the birds by an act of violence. Because the Class D Felony charge addresses this crime from the standpoint of property damage rather than animal cruelty, **we are urging the Story County prosecutor to include the charge of Livestock Abuse.** A Livestock Abuser is defined under Iowa law as a "person [who] injures or destroys livestock owned by another person, in any manner. . . . A person guilty of livestock abuse commits an aggravated misdemeanor."



## What Can I Do?

**Please write to the Story County District Attorney** and ask him to file livestock abuse charges against Kevin and Kyle Sloan. Remind him that the court must recognize the true victims of this vicious crime—the turkeys who were beaten to death.

**Mr. Stephen Holmes**  
**Story County District Attorney**  
**1315 South B Avenue**  
**Nevada, Iowa 50201**

**Ph: 515-382-7255**  
**Fax: 515-382-7270**

## Good News For Chickens

### Oklahoma Voters Ban Cockfighting

Oklahoma voters passed State Question 687, making Oklahoma the 48th state to ban cockfighting. The ban makes cockfighting and related activities a felony offense punishable for up to ten years in prison. Oklahoma is the 27th state to adopt felony-level penalties for cockfighting. **New Mexico** is being targeted next in the campaign to outlaw cockfighting in every state in the union. Cockfighting is now legal only in **Louisiana** and parts of New Mexico. In **Virginia** the law needs tightened to make cockfighting itself illegal and not just the gambling aspect, as is now the case.

### Indiana Judge Sentences Hen Rapist

On November 4th, a Valparaiso, Indiana man who sexually assaulted and killed a hen in a motel room in 2001 **received a 10½ year prison sentence for his crime.** Porter County Superior Court Judge Thomas Webber said there was sufficient evidence of animal cruelty to warrant the penalty imposed on **Michael Bessigano, who plucked and raped the hen while she was alive.** In 2001 UPC posted an Action Alert urging people to demand conviction of Bessigano. We successfully urged the Porter County Prosecutor to prosecute Bessigano for felony cruelty to animals and as a habitual offender. His history of cruelty to birds dates back to 1991 when he was arrested for breaking a rooster's neck and abusing geese.

## Good News for Turkeys and Ostriches

### Turkey Race Cancelled in England, Ostrich Race Cancelled in Spain, Due to Protests

*"These sensitive birds can become easily frightened and injured with so many strikes against them imposed by thoughtless people, of which these proposed 'races' are prime examples."*

— United Poultry Concerns President  
 Karen Davis, PhD

A turkey race proposed by an internet betting company to be held at a greyhound stadium in South London, in December, was cancelled in response to overwhelming protests by animal advocates in the US, UK, and elsewhere. The company, Blue Square, announced its decision to drop the race confronted by "the fact that people do not perceive

it" as humane. An RSPCA spokesperson said the race "adds insult to an already abused animal." United Poultry Concerns joined the RSPCA and Farmed Animal Action to urge that the race be cancelled.

A similar victory was celebrated in October when a proposed use of ostriches to run with bulls through the streets of Fuengirola, Spain was cancelled by the Mayor "as a result of complaints received by animal rights groups and individuals."

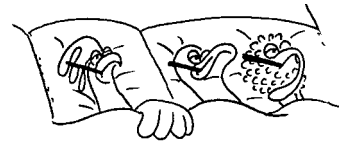


African ostriches with their young.

Photo by Stone Images

## "Poultry" are Sick Enough to Make People Sick and Stay Sick

A survey reported in the January 2003 issue of *Consumer Reports* found harmful drug-resistant bacteria in nearly half the chickens it purchased in stores around the country. 42% of the birds were infected by *Campylobacter* and 12% were infected by *Salmonella*. Both types of bacteria can cause diarrhea, fever, abdominal pain, arthritis, and death. Sierra Club and the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy found similar results in whole chickens and ground up



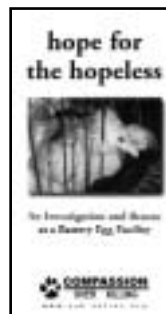
turkeys purchased and tested for infection in the Midwest. 90% of the *Campylobacter* samples and 34% of the *Salmonella* resisted treatment by antibiotics such as tetracycline, according to Consumers Union, which publishes *Consumer Reports*. Ronald Phillips, a spokesman for the Animal Health Institute, which represents animal drug companies, said the use of antibiotics in animals raised for food is necessary "[b]ecause when you stop that use, those animals get sick." — Quoted by the Associated Press, Dec. 11, 2002.

## Now Available on Video!

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\$17.50 for both (shipping included)

Undercover Videos Show Living  
Conditions of U.S. Laying Hens

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An Investigation and Rescue at a Battery  
Egg Facility documents the living conditions of hens at ISE-America in Maryland. [www.ISECruelty.com](http://www.ISECruelty.com)



## Silent Suffering

An Investigation and Rescue at Ohio's Largest Egg Farms documents the living conditions of hens at Daylay and Buckeye in Ohio. [www.EggCruelty.com](http://www.EggCruelty.com)



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## "Battery Hens"

*Roosting in Branches After Rotting in Cages*

This beautiful color poster shows the Rescued Cypress hens at UPC. Perfect for your office, your home, your school — Size 11.5 inches  
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## ... AND OUR NEW VIDEO

## The Dignity, Beauty & Abuse of Chickens

See the contrast . . .

The poultry & egg industry would like us to think chickens have lost their natural behavior and zest for life.

Our new video shows chickens at UPC's sanctuary doing things that chickens like to do!

16:07 min. — Color \* Music \* No Narration  
3 parts: UPC Sanctuary \* Poultry & Egg Industry  
\* Back to the Sanctuary.

Great holiday gift \* wonderful educational video  
To order send check or money order to UPC. \$10 prepaid.



## Turkeys Are Too Neat To Eat



United Poultry Concerns, Inc.

P.O. Box 150  
Machipongo, VA 23405-0150

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Website: [www.upc-online.org](http://www.upc-online.org)

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The posters are in color,  
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1 for \$4  
2 for \$5  
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©Book Review by Karen Davis, PhD

*Fresh Eggs: An American Fable*

By Rob Levandoski

(Sag Harbor, NY, The Permanent Press 2002)

\$26 hardcover, 279 pages.

ISBN: 1-57962-048-5

To order from the publisher call 631-725-1101 or go to [www.thepermanentpress.com](http://www.thepermanentpress.com)

*"There are many things more toxic than chemicals," Dr. Pirooz says.*

*"Such as?"*

*"Such as living on a concentration camp for chickens."*

*"She's allergic to chickens?"*

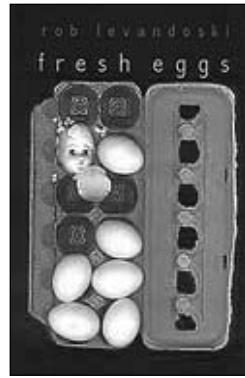
*"To the way they are being forced to live perhaps."*

*"A psychological allergy you mean?"*

*Pirooz nods and shrugs at the same time. "Perhaps a spiritual one."*

George Bernard Shaw once wrote that custom will reconcile people to any atrocity. Fortunately not everyone gets reconciled; if so, there would be no social justice movements, no moral progress, no strong and growing animal advocacy movement as there is in many parts of the world today. *Fresh Eggs* documents the growing unreconciliation of the American public to the atrocity of battery hen cages and to treating creatures like machines. Set in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when the battery-cage system of egg production was established, it shows the egg industry through the consciousness of a child.

Rhea Cassowary is born to a fifth-generation farm family in Ohio just when her father, Calvin, decides to save the family farm by selling his soul and his family to Gallinipper Foods, an agribusiness poultry products company. Lying in her crib, Rhea's peace is forever shattered by a sudden banging outside her window. The day Calvin takes his infant daughter through a battery henhouse for the first time, she recognizes the cause of the banging—battery hen houses were being built. In



perceiving the meaning, she "feels as if she is being born again."

Calvin is a normally decent, morally muddled man who wanted to be an art teacher, but feeling the Calvinist weight of generations of Cassowarys expecting him to do his duty at any cost, he gave up his dream

and took over the farm. He slides further into betrayal by agreeing to become a battery-hen operation manager for Gallinipper Foods, rationalizing that here "he'll find fulfillment and joy and financial success."

The bane of Calvin's ambition is his daughter Rhea, whom he loves but is prepared to sacrifice. Watching the chicken catchers break hens' bones and drive over fleeing hens for fun, he is "reviled, but not surprised." Calvin is the type to be reconciled, but Rhea is different. The images of cruelty and terror and her father's complicity seep through the holes in her protective "magic cloak" into her "porous memory."

When the chicken catchers drive away with their tortured cargo, her cloak becomes "Superman's cape," and though the "rows of sad chickens give her bad dreams and bad thoughts" and the sense of their fear is "in her nostrils and on her tongue," Rhea sneaks into the just emptied house where she sees "splotches of blood and runny manure. Sees the flattened chickens on the floor. Sees that some of the empty cages are not empty. She sees torn legs—translucent white bones, dribbles of yellow fat, shreds of white skin, bloody pink meat—fixed to the wire floors by gripping toes. She sees torn wings caught in the wire walls. She sees severed heads, beaks plier-locked on the wire doors, necks like feathery spigots dripping blood." **In the midst of this hellhole she "hears a throaty plea"** rise from the manure pit beneath the cages. Lowering herself into the manure she reaches for a hen who "springs for the open door." **She names this hen Miss Lucky Pants**—the name her grandmother gave her for not drowning in the manure pit she plunged into to save the hen. Later she liberates a house full of thousands of hens.

Book review cont'd from page 9

The conflict between Rhea and her father and his company erupts during their tour of Gallinipper's hatchery operation. The Gallinipper men go on about how great everything is—the debeaking machines, comb removal (dubbing) machines, etc., and how the chicks “feel no more pain than you do when you clip your toenails.” **A debeaking operator guides a chick's “nub of a beak toward a pair of blades Bzzzzzzp.”** The chick evacuates watery manure, is dropped into a tray, another chick is picked up, and the entire merciless operation is said to be “to everybody's advantage.”

Responding to the horror of it all, Rhea feels a burning itch in her chest “as if her heart was lighting matches.” She tells her father she has a feather growing on her body. “Behave,” he tells her.

**Fresh Eggs** is a modern fable, a form of creative fiction in which the moral teachers are animals and their listeners. Told in a folksy way, this book has plenty of humor, but the absorbing story isn't funny or intended to be. It's about vicarious suffering so deep that the suffering manifests itself in a physical resemblance of the vicarious sufferer, Rhea, to the trapped and tormented birds of the egg industry. Rob Levandoski challenges us to rethink our treatment of creatures more vulnerable than ourselves including our children. Dramatizing links between child abuse and animal abuse, he explores the violence of *violation* and captures the chill humor of clashes between Western efficiency models of thought and experiences that elude and transcend these models.

As Rhea's feathers sprout softly over her by now pubescent body, her stepmother discovers them and tears open Rhea's shirt to show her father. Instead of comforting and protecting his daughter, Calvin rips Rhea's feathers from her chest as if he were plucking “some goddamn chicken.” He subsequently decides to use Rhea to “save” the family business by prostituting her as a touring circus freak and company mascot in media commercials. After Rhea stages her own death with feathers and blood to get her father's attention and escape her exploitation as Rhea the Feather Girl, her father makes a deal with Gallinipper's biotech company EggGenics to have his daughter cloned like the 7-52 Super Hens who are “saving” the farm and making the company

rich. Is it right or wrong treating his daughter like a replacement pullet? CEO Bob Gallinipper blandly assures him it's not: “God shares his secrets. First the Bible, now genetics.” Donna, the stepmother, reassures Calvin that “this cloning thing isn't some filthy crime against God and nature. It's a good thing that makes everybody rich in every way.” Likewise, EggGenics Special Projects Director Sophia Theophaneia, with “an appreciative wink from Bob Gallinipper,” tells Calvin that “as a Christian and a woman and a scientist, I'm comfortable with it.”

**In his Acknowledgments, Rob Levandoski kindly thanks “Karen Davis, Ph.D. whose book *Prisoned Chickens, Poisoned Eggs*, proved to be an important resource, both technically and spiritually.” *Fresh Eggs* won Levandoski, the author of two other popular and acclaimed novels, a prestigious Individual Artist Fellowship from the Ohio Arts Council and an appreciative review in *The New York Times*, although the reviewer felt *Fresh Eggs* dodged the book's issues by having Calvin's daughter grow feathers. I disagree. **Rhea's feathers add pertinent dimension to issues the book raises, like the intimacies and interminglings between humans and other species that are considered permissible and those considered taboo.** Rhea's feathers and the feelings they signify are unacceptable, but mingling human body tissue with the tortured body tissue of dead birds, chick embryos, chicken eggs, hen hormones, and genes is okay, as Bob Gallinipper smirks confidently to Calvin. Rhea's feathers don't fit the mold: they're like the chicken behaviors that don't fit the cage or the concept of chickens as machines. The feathers have psychological validity and are part of a spiritual history of vicarious suffering which the book brings out. They're a sign of protest against the evil “normal”:**

“I can't sell the farm and you know it.”

“But you can sell your daughter?”

“There's nothing wrong with the way I treat my chickens.”

“Rhea apparently does not agree.”

Book review cont'd on page 11

## Freddaflower Memorial Fund

*The pain of losing them is the price we pay for the privilege of knowing them and sharing their lives. . . .* — Vicky Barbee

We thank those people who have contributed to our work with recent donations *In Loving Memory and in Honor of* the following beloved family members and friends:

For my mother, who died yesterday. She loved animals, and so do I. Her name was Yvonne Lacroix and she believed funeral flowers were a waste. So do I. So for her, here's a cheque to fight on, for my mother Yvonne.  
—from Michele Mooney



For my beloved dog, Tai Jen Kou. Also in Tai's memory, I and others celebrated World Farm Animals Day on Oct. 2 by passing out samples of vegan food and information to a busy downtown lunchtime crowd, hopefully converting every person to a vegan lifestyle. —from Linda A. Morello

For our friend, Mr. Ron Waters, who died on October 1. He was kind to animals and provided a good home for several rescued birds. —from Kay Evans and Jim Robertson



Photo by Karen Davis

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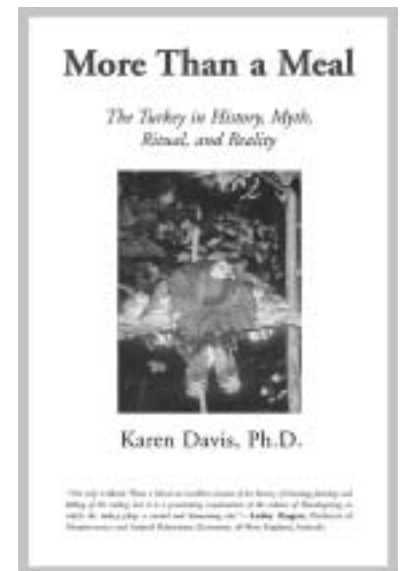
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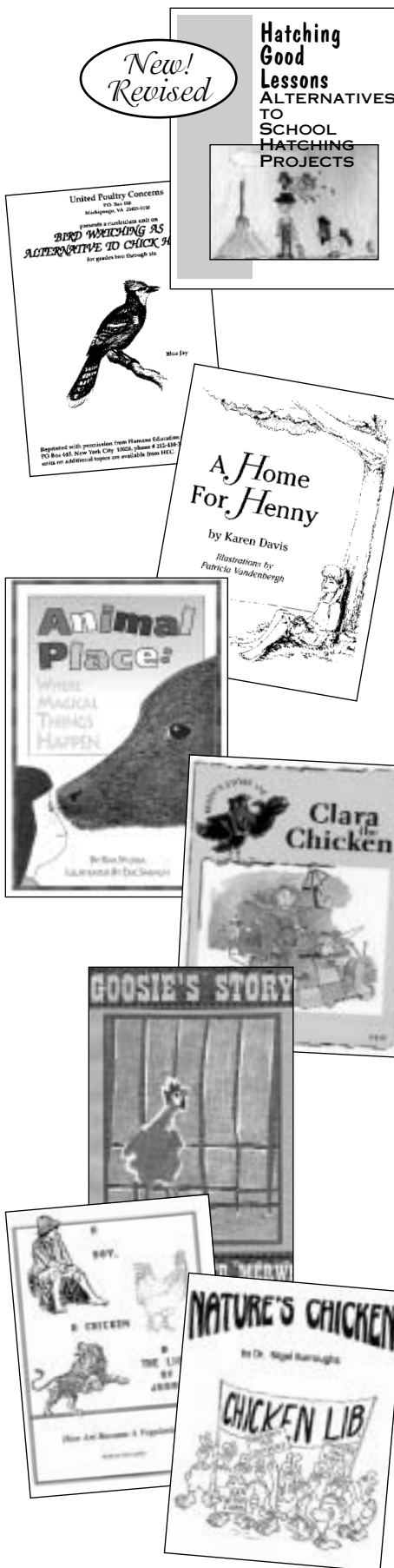
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### Prisoned Chickens, Poisoned Eggs: An Inside Look at the Modern Poultry Industry

By Karen Davis

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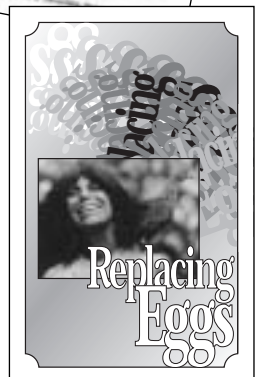
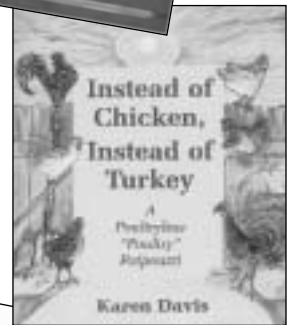
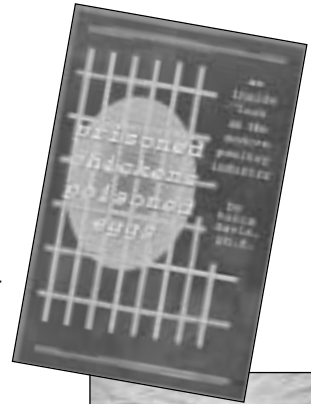
### Animals and Women: Feminist Theoretical Explorations

Edited by Carol J. Adams & Josephine Donovan

"Karen Davis's brilliant essay [Thinking Like a Chicken: Farm Animals and The Feminine Connection] brings together the books' central concepts, leading to conclusions that rightly should disturb feminists and animal advocates alike." – Review by Deborah Tanzer, Ph.D. in The Animals' Agenda. \$16.95

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*By Chickens' Lib*

This vivid half hour video exposes the cruelty of the battery cage system and intensive broiler chicken, turkey and duck production. \$20.00

### Humane Slaughter?

*By Farm Sanctuary*

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### Egg-ribusiness

*By Farm Sanctuary*

With powerful footage taken at locations across the United States between 1988 and 1999, this fully narrated video illuminates the intolerable conditions endured by egg laying hens and unwanted male chicks at the hands of the egg industry. 14 minutes, VHS. \$15.95 + \$2.00 Shipping



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*Photo by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals*

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*Photos by Kay Evans & Karen Davis*

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### FACT SHEETS

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- "Intensive Poultry Production: Fouling the Environment"
- "Philosophic Vegetarianism: Acting Affirmatively For Peace"
- "Providing a Good Home for Chickens"
- "School Hatching Projects: A Poor Lesson for Children"

"Chicken Talk: The Language of Chickens"

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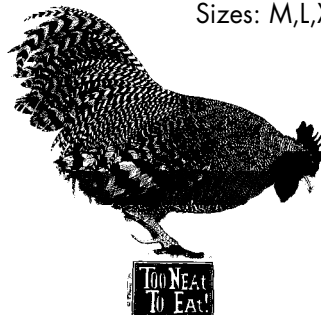
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