This study examined parallels between sexism and speciesism. Students completed the Modern Sexism Scale (MSS) and items measuring speciesism. Results indicate a positive correlation between the MSS and Speciesism scale. Men scored significantly higher than women on both scales. Implications of these results and avenues for further research are provided.

### Background

- Joy (2002) claims that the way that humans treat other animals is a reflection of mental health.
- Other authors (Bell, 2001; Wright, & Hensley, 2003) assert that animal abuse among children is one early-warning indicator of adult criminal activity.
- However, many cases of abuse of animals by children are "terminal" in that they do not lead to other violent crimes as the child ages (Arluke, 2002; Arluke et al., 1999; Cahill, 2002).
- Attitudes toward animals develop via a variety of avenues.
- Stibbe (2001) reveals evidence that the propaganda used by animal products industries functions as a mechanism to promote oppressive and manipulative attitudes toward animals.
- Kidd and Kidd (1997; see also Miura et al., 2002) find that a concern for wildlife develops early in childhood through interactions with pets and by having adult role models.
- Early experiences with animals lead to greater empathy, an orientation toward choosing a helping profession in adulthood, and stronger pro-social values relative to individuals who did not have childhood experiences with pets (Cameron et al., 2007; Vizek-Vidovic et al., 2001).
- Hills (1993; see also Franklin, 1996; Pagani, 2000) provided a framework for the development of attitudes toward animals. Hills obtained discriminant validity for the model, demonstrating that animal rights supporters scored low on a measure of instrumental self-interest and high on measures of empathy and equality between animals and humans while the opposite pattern was demonstrated by farmers, with human dominance over animals being pronounced.

### Purpose

To examine these potential parallels between sexism and speciesism.

### Research Questions

- Is there a relationship between sexism and speciesism? Are there differences between men and women for speciesism?

### Method

- 432 students at two colleges in the Midwest and Pacific Northwest were surveyed.
- 96 participants reported being male and 312 participants reported being female.
- A majority of the sample (86.8%) reported being White.
- The questionnaire contained demographic items, the Modern Sexism Scale (MSS), and items measuring speciesism.
- Composite scores were calculated for the MSS and speciesism items.

### Results

- There was a positive correlation, r(407) = .482, p = .000, between the MSS and speciesism.
- Replicating research using the MSS, there was a significant difference between men and women on the MSS, t(405) = 4.721, p = .000.
- Men and women differed on the speciesism scale, t(405) = 5.736, p = .000.
- Men scored higher than women on both scales. Cohen's d indicated moderate effect sizes for sex on both scales (dMSS = 0.53 and dspeciesism = 0.67).

### Conclusions

- The hypotheses were supported – there is a direct relationship between sexism and speciesism.
- Do speciesist attitudes arise through the same mechanisms that produce sexist attitudes? Bigler and Liben (2007) reveal an environmental control for biases.
- If sexist attitudes are manipulated, is there also a change in speciesist attitudes? Lillis and Hayes (2007) demonstrated a change in several measures associated with prejudice, overall – when combined with this study’s results, it is possible that by reducing one type of prejudice, there is a concurrent reduction in other forms of prejudice (see also Case, 2007). Future research should explore this.

### References