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# Animal-based experiences and animal experiences: farm animals' perspective on human leisure in rural settings

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## ABSTRACT

This study poses the question: How are leisure experiences inspired by rural practices about the traditional use of farm animals lived by the animals? The aim is to contribute to the literature about farm animals in leisure experiences and the animals' perspectives on the leisure experiences in which they are involved.

Based on the main tenets of ecofeminism, it explores the research question by adopting a creative approach consisting of a fictional story about a pig living at a rural museum. An *ad hoc* model is developed to identify some main typologies of animal experiences derived from their involvement in human leisure experiences.

This study highlights some practical and research implications and invites the reader to deeply and critically reflect on the use of animals for human leisure.

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## KEYWORDS

Leisure; animal-based experiences; farm animals; ecofeminism; academic fictional writing

## Introduction

Recently, some tourism and leisure scholars (e.g. Fennell 2011; Yudina and Fennell 2013; Yerbury et al. 2017; Carr and Young 2018; Kline 2018a, 2018b; Notzke 2019) have investigated animal-based experiences by adopting a view in which animals are neither mere attractions nor means used in specific human activities, but are instead sentient beings, i.e. beings capable of responding to stimuli and having conscious sensations (Leroy and Praet 2017). As noted by Carr (2009, 2015), these scholarly contributions almost exclusively address experiences involving free and captive wild animals, dogs and horses.

Moreover, the animals' perspective on animal-based leisure and tourism experiences tends to be ignored by most scholarly contributors (Cohen 2019). Few are the exceptions. For example, Bertella, Fumagalli, and Williams-Grey (2019) use a creative approach in developing a fictive dialogue between a human joining a swim-with-dolphins tour and a dolphin, and a special issue of *Leisure Studies* is dedicated to multispecies leisure (Dashper, Danby, and Finkel 2019).

This study investigates experiences based on rural traditions that include caring for farm animals, slaughtering them and consuming their flesh. From the human perspective, these experiences are usually viewed as educational and entertaining (Peñaloza 2000;

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Adam 2004; du Rand and Heath 2006; Wilson 2007; Barbieri et al. 2016; Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen 2016). However, what about the animal perspective? More precisely: how are leisure experiences inspired by rural practices about the traditional use of farm animals lived by the animals?

The study presents a fictional story inspired by a real event consisting of the slaughter of two pigs at a rural museum in southern Norway in autumn 2018. Differing from what happened in reality, only one pig is killed in the story, while the other, named Slafse, is taken to an animal sanctuary by some animal activists. The story adopts a first person narrative and is centred on Slafse's thoughts (Figure 1).

## The day that changed everything

This place is not so bad. I might get used to it. Over there, I can see a puddle of water I'd like to explore. I'll definitely explore it as soon as the other pigs walk away from it. I don't know them. I don't know anybody here. Everything is new.

My head feels confused.

C

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All I remember is that some humans approached our place. Nothing new: it had happened many times before. Humans come to visit me quite often. They come to visit both my best friend and me. I like their visits. My best friend is a bit shy, and sometimes she keeps her distance from the visitors, but she likes them when they bring us food.

Sometimes very hairy pigs come to visit us. These very hairy pigs have long strange snouts and long tails. It looks like they are friends with humans. Humans seem to treat these hairy pigs differently from the way they treat us normal pigs. My best friend says that although all pigs are equal, some pigs are more equal than others. Very hairy pigs are closer to humans than we are. Maybe they are more equal to them than to us, or they are differently equal.

So, what I remember is that people approached our place. I could smell that she was quite close to me. Her presence always makes me happy: she smells sweet and brings delicious apples to us. She is my second best friend. She always comes close to me, pets my snout and makes funny sounds like 'peppapeppapeppapig'. She is human and can make a lot of sounds. Other small humans make lots of sounds, and sometimes they give me strange things to eat, and I feel sick afterwards.

Local News &amp; Events

**THE RURAL**

22nd October 2018



Animal activists at the rural museum.

### Animal activists at the Pig Slaughter Day at the museum

As a journalist of The Rural, I'm always curious about the local events arranged in our beautiful countryside.

Sunday afternoon I visited the museum to participate to the Pig Slaughter Day event.

Few months ago, two pigs, Snøfte and Slafse, were brought to the museum with the intention to present to the public how a traditional farm looks like. Snøfte and Slafse soon became very popular among the local children.

Sunday the museum arranged the Pig

Slaughter Day event, and a group of activists interrupted the event.

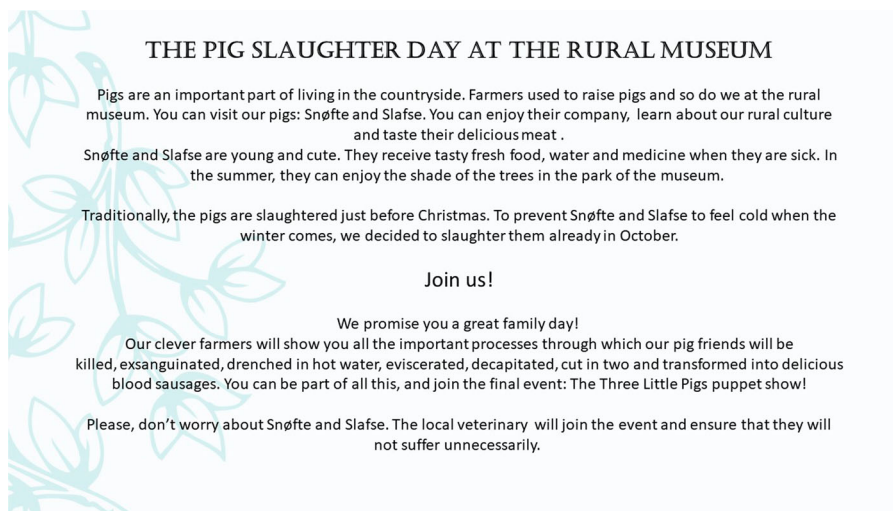
– The activists ruined our day. They wanted to take the pigs to a sanctuary. This is such nonsense. We wanted to show the people where their food comes from. The event was arranged to educate people about our traditions and culture, and to have a good time together - tells the event organizer.

The animal activists leader has a

different opinion:

- People should be made aware of the possibility to live healthy and happily without meat, without killing. Turning the killing of animals into an event, a family day, is just wrong! We offered to rescue the pigs, bring them to a sanctuary. After some discussions, we managed to rescue Slafse. Unfortunately, Snøfte was killed.

Please, send us your opinion about this and we'll publish it on The Rural!



**Figure 2.** Fictive promotional poster about the event at the rural museum. Sources of inspiration: Eidsvoll Museum (2018a, 2018b) and Romerikes Blad (2018b).

That day, my peppapeppapeppapig friend didn't make any sound at all, but I could smell that she was not far from me. I could smell something else, something I had never smelled before. There was also something new, hanging from the fences of our place. People were looking at it (Figure 2).

Some humans looked at this thing, and then looked at my best friend and me. My best friend ... I have known her for ... forever ... I can't remember a single day without her. We have our quarrels, but we are friends. We have fun together, and we love to play and relax together under the shade of the trees.

Suddenly everything was silent, and some men approached us. My best friend went close to them, hoping to get some food. The men grabbed her. I could hear my human peppapeppapeppapig friend sobbing.

I recognized one of these men. He used to bring us food and fresh water. Once, he stopped a small human who had jumped over the fence and had started to pull my tail. Grhhhh! I remember the acute pain! The man stopped the small human. I was grateful and felt protected. However, this time, this man did nothing. He didn't stop the other men.

He didn't stop the other men. He didn't stop the other men.

He did not.

NOT.

The men grabbed my friend in a way that scared me. I ran away. I could hear my friend squealing, again and again.

AGAIN and AGAIN and AGAIN AGAIN AGAIN AGAIN

I was paralyzed by fear, and everything went **BLACK**.

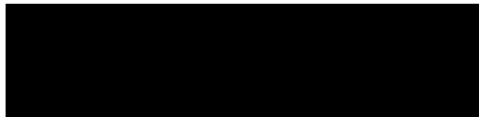


I woke up, and I was here.

**I'm HERE**

A human was petting me, and she was whispering something in my ear. Sounds, human sounds. She reminded me of my peppapeppapeppapig friend. I have no idea how I arrived here and what happened that day, but everything is different now. The sound of human voices makes me happy and desperately scared at the same time.

I panic easily; I freeze and wait for something to happen.



But I have to be aware of the fact that **NOW I'M HERE** and it feels good.

**I'm here and it feels good.**

Some fresh water might help. Now, I'll go explore the puddle. The other pigs are gone. The water looks fresh and splashy. This place is not bad at all.

## Discussion

The fictional story told from the perspective of the rescued pig gives us the opportunity to reflect on several aspects that are discussed in the following pages with references to relevant literature about animal studies, philosophy, experiences and methodology.

### *Ecofeminism-inspired reflections on animal experiences and human responsibility*

The concept of experience is broadly adopted in leisure and tourism studies (Tinsley and Tinsley 1986; Mannell and Iso-Ahola 1987; Lee, Dattilo, and Howard 1994; Morgan, Lugosi, and Ritchie 2010; Sharpley and Stone 2011; Elkington and Gammon 2013). This study uses a phenomenological approach to the concept of experience, that is understood in relation to how individuals perceive and interpret the world (Reckwitz 2002). An experience is then viewed as a subjective form of knowing that involves the individual's mental, emotional and physical capacities and is triggered by stimuli and events. This study argues that animal-based leisure and tourism experiences are experiences for the human participants and also for the animals involved, and therefore, it is reasonable to investigate their point of view.

This position is in line with the main tenets of ecofeminism, a philosophical perspective that encompasses various issues, including our understanding and treatment of animals. Drawing a parallel between the dualism man/woman and human /nonhuman animal, ecofeminism takes a critical stance regarding the superior position of humans in comparison to nonhuman animals, reflecting also on the dominant Western view about privileged roles assigned to rationality in comparison to emotions (Plumwood 1991; Gruen 2011; Adams and Gruen 2014; Weitzenfeld and Joy 2014). Not only do ecofeminists acknowledge the sentience of animals, usually noting some degrees of difference across and within species, but also view animals as capable, both cognitively and emotionally, to have relations with humans that can be meaningful for both parties (Gaard 1993; Gruen 2015). The central role given to emotions is peculiar of ecofeminism in comparison with other animal ethics approaches such as utilitarianism and animals rights. The possibility of meaningful human-animal encounters can be viewed as relevant to the experiential aspect of tourism and leisure activities, as pointed out by a few scholars (e.g. Yudina and Grimwood 2016; Bertella 2018).

Moreover, ecofeminists argue that humans have a moral obligation to care for animals and act responsibly and compassionately towards them (Donovan and Adams 2007). In relation to farm animals, this obligation is quite evident, due the fact that the lives of these animals as entirely controlled by humans. With regard to this aspect concerning the care of the animals, abusive episodes as the one reported in the narrative about the child pulling Slafse's tail are condemned by ecofeminists as well as by farmers following animal welfare principles. Still, the ecofeminist understanding of animal care differs greatly from the one by farmers who follow animal welfare standards, including those involved in tourism and leisure experiences such as the museum event. Most ecofeminists view taking the life of a healthy animal and arranging an event around such killing, as in the case of the rural museum, as an act deriving from the wrongful use of power and violence towards animals. This is in sharp contrast with the practice of care and its promotion

as a value. Although recognizing the influence and the importance of the cultural context where any practice, also those involving animals, occurs, this study follows the position according to which the explanation of violence against animals referring to traditions is ethically unjustifiable, and dangerously leading to uncritical thinking and intellectual dishonesty (Midgley 1998).

### ***Qualifying the rural experience from the farm animals' perspective***

The fictional story is a source of important reflections about our understanding of how the animals involved in human leisure and tourism experiences might live such experiences. While considering her new home in a sanctuary for rescued animals, Slafse remembers her life before the Slaughter Day event. It can be noted that many of Slafse's memories refer to aspects such as fun, sensorial pleasure, relaxation and social interaction. Social interaction – more precisely, friendship – is a theme that recurs quite often in Slafse's thoughts. Slafse has nice memories of her relation with Snøfte, the other pig living at the museum. Slafse views Snøfte as her best friend: someone with whom she used to share her days, playing, eating, relaxing and also quarrelling. Sharing her life with another pig gives Slafse companionship and plenty of opportunities to engage in many social activities. These activities might be important for the development of her physical, cognitive and emotional capacities. This aspect concerning the animal capacities and the fulfilment of such potentials cannot be ignored in the light of current knowledge about the emotional, cognitive and social capacities of pigs. These are found to be able to establish relations also with humans, and such relations can be similar to those that humans have with dogs (Tiffin 2007; Marino and Colvin 2015). In the story, social interaction is not limited to the relationship between the two pigs. Before the event, Slafse had experienced friendship with a human: a girl who used to visit the museum and liked to pet and feed the pig. Slafse remembers the girl's smell, her voice and her caring behaviour. The mutuality of their relation is quite clear; the girl used to enjoy the contact with the pig, and the pig used to appreciate the girl's visits.

Slafse remembers another human in positive terms: a man, possibly the guardian of the animals, who used to bring them food and water. From Slafse's words, we can understand that this man gained the pig's trust when he stopped a child from abusing Slafse. As in the case of the girl, this human behaves with care and responsibility, due to his role as the guardian of the animal and perhaps out of compassion. Slafse seems to appreciate this man.

Still, regarding human-pig interactions, we learn from the story that not all pigs might value these interactions in the same way. Snøfte is a shy pig and does not always appreciate meeting the museum visitors.

Some issues can be acknowledged regarding the pig's experience of living at a rural museum and the related potentials for identity development. The story suggests that living in a setting with several stimuli, including visits by humans and their pets and sharing her life with another pig, Slafse had the opportunity to engage in reflections about how humans perceive her, and pigs, in general and in comparison to dogs. Slafse refers to dogs as very hairy pigs with strange long snouts and long tails. This way of viewing the dogs suggests that the pig had noted many similarities between her and the dogs. From the story, we learn that such similarities had somehow been discussed



by the pigs. Slafse and Snøfte had observed that although they were not so different, dogs were treated differently by humans. In this sense, it can be suggested that the experience of living in a rural museum with several stimuli contributed to Slafse's identity development.

Not all experiences at the rural museum were positive for Slafse. The episode with a child pulling Slafse's tail is a negative memory. The pig remembers the pain she felt, the sense of being powerless and not being able to stop the child. Other negative experiences are those of feeling sick after being given 'strange' food by some children.

Slafse associates the Pig Slaughter Day event with several negative memories. The event provoked confusion and fear. Confusion concerns the lack of understanding for what was happening, the suspect that something different from her everyday routine was going to occur, the different behaviour of her human friend, and the unexpected behaviour by humans, in particular, the man whom Slafse used to trust.

### ***A first step towards theorizing farm animal experiences***

The data from the fictional story can be used to develop a two-dimensional conceptual model that captures the main components of leisure and tourism experiences involving farm animals. This model is presented in Table 1 and focuses on farm animals encountering humans, including recreationists, tourists, experience providers, other animals and eventually veterinarians.

One dimension for the model is identified in the level of control that the animal has in the encounter with humans as part of the experience. To what extent can the animal decide to meet and interact with people? The degree varies: full control, mediated control (the presence of a responsible person), or no control. The first case indicates voluntary participation in the encounter, while the latter is the case of the animal's coerced participation in the experience.

The second dimension of the model refers to the spectrum of the animal's physical, cognitive and emotional states. From the discussion of Slafse's story, these can include panic (black out), fear and emotional pain, physical pain, confusion, discomfort, comfort, sensorial pleasure, social pleasure and cognitive growth (self-development, identity development). These states are not specified in the model that, more generally, reports a scale from negative to positive.

The two dimensions mentioned above identify six typologies of experiences that are labelled as follows: friendly relations, friendship, indifference, tolerance, accidents and

**Table 1.** A model illustrating the farm animal experiences.

		Negative		Positive	
The animals' control on the encounter with humans	Full control: the animals are in a big enclosure and/or can walk away from the humans.	ACCIDENTS	INDIFFERENCE TOLERANCE	FRIENDLY RELATIONS	FRIENDSHIP
	Mediation by guardians and/or veterinarians who can ensure that the standards of welfare are followed.	ABUSE	INDIFFERENCE TOLERANCE	FRIENDLY RELATIONS	FRIENDSHIP
	No control: the animals can't choose whether to have contact with people or not.	ABUSE	INDIFFERENCE TOLERANCE	FRIENDLY RELATIONS	FRIENDSHIP

abuse. When the animals have full control over the encounter, accidents may occur and influence the animals negatively in various ways. The fictional story describes the pig accepting unsuitable food from the visitors. Without the supervision of a guardian, farm animals might hurt themselves in various ways, and some accidents can be traced to interaction with visitors. On the positive side, these encounters can develop into friendly relations and friendships. The former is the case of the pigs enjoying visitors, and the latter is the case of the girl visiting Slafse. Between these two typologies of experiences, it is reasonable to assume that some encounters are neither liked nor disliked by the animals. The presence of the visitors may leave the animals indifferent, or the visitors may bother them a bit but the animals might tolerate them.

The second row refers to the case where some humans, for example, guardians and veterinarians, are present at the encounter and can interfere in case that the animal welfare standards are not met. This situation can result in quite positive relations between the animals and the visitors who can learn how to interact respectfully with the animals. On the negative side, this can be the case of severe abuse in the form of killing. The latter is the case of Snøfte, Slafse's pig friend, who was handled following legal methods regarding the presence of a veterinary, and experienced fear and, finally, death.

The third row concerns encounters where animals have no control over encounters with humans. Several outcomes are possible. Visitors, as well as experienced providers, might behave carefully and respectfully. Alternatively, they can behave badly due to their ignorance or lack of compassion. While the first case can result in interactions that are positively experienced by the animals, the second case can lead to accidents and abuse.

### ***Methodological challenges when exploring the perspective of animals***

In *Speaking for Animals: Animal Autobiographical Writing* (2013), animal studies scholar Margo DeMello reflects on animal writing, i.e. narratives by the animal perspective. Fictional stories told by the animals imply that humans, the authors of such stories, speak for the animals without projecting their human perspective. However, how can a human speak for animals? Some humans engage in such a task relatively often. For example, when a dog becomes ill, the owners do their best to interpret their companion's thoughts and feelings and communicate them to the veterinarian. Nonetheless, it is important to remember that speaking for animals is very challenging and maybe impossible; even with the best intentions, we might lack the necessary understanding, the appropriate concepts and terms. Speaking for animals might also lead to a sort of appropriation of a reality that, ultimately, is not ours. Paradoxically, the latter aspect highlights the danger of confirming instead of rejecting power inequalities between humans and animals.

Carefully aiming to come closer to the probably unachievable and possibly dangerous goal of animal writing as described by DeMello, a first step might be to strive for a type of understanding of the animal world that relies on certain interspecies similarities. Several experiments demonstrate that inter-species understanding and also communication can occur, at least with some animal species (De Waal 2016). Denying such possibility is denying our animal nature. As aforementioned, several nonfictional sources suggest that pigs are extremely intelligent, have rich emotional and social, share many anatomical, physiological and psychological traits with humans (Tiffin 2007; Marino and Colvin 2015).

Thus, this study adopts some of the methodological suggestions by Parry and Johnson (2007) and Vickers (2010), and elaborates on the author's understanding of the pig world. More specifically, it uses critical thinking and creativity, and relies on the consultation of scientific and fictional sources about pigs. A detailed description of the development of the fictional story is presented in Tables A1 and A2 in the appendix.

### ***Multi-perspective stories***

It can be noted that the developed story offers the possibility to elaborate on various points of view, in particular those of some of the mentioned characters. It could be interesting to explore the perspective of the humans with whom the pig has established positive relations. The literature indicates some mechanisms people use to cope with possible difficult situations such as the one of the Pig Slaughter Day, including the emphasis placed on the ritualism of rural traditions and animal welfarism (Leroy and Praet 2017). It has also been noted that farmers, who are directly involved in the killing, adopt (more or less consciously) coping mechanisms, such as compassion hardening, deindividuation of the animals and detachment (Wilkie 2005; Leroy and Praet 2017).

Thus, it can be asked: How does the girl feel during the event? How would she tell the story from her point of view? What about the pig guardian? How did he feel witnessing the killing of the animal he had raised? Did he feel like he was betraying the pigs?

This study has chosen not to include such aspect concerning multiple perspectives on the investigated event in order to emphasize the objective fact that the event is centred on the killing of an animal. The pigs are the main victims of the rural experience: they both went through an extremely traumatic experience and one of them died. While we might engage in interesting and stimulating mental exercises in attempting to capture the different perspectives of the various subjects involved in an experience, the animals are the ones who are abused and sometimes killed in leisure activities, and it is the 'voiceless' screams of fear and pain by such individuals that, morally speaking, should be our major concern.

### ***Practical implications***

It can be fruitful to focus on the negative spectrum of experiences relative to the way the human rural leisure experience can be lived by the involved farm animals while considering some practical implications. Two comments can be made relating to the three squares in the first column of the model. To limit these negative animal experiences, it seems very important that the experience provider will educate and control the visitors when interacting with the animals. In other words, the animals should be protected from visitors. It is important to realize that some farm animals, especially when used to being treated correctly, are trusting and this can sometimes lead to accidents. Accidents can also turn into abuse when animals cannot walk away from humans.

The second comment is about some abusive experiences occurring when humans who are responsible for the animals are present. This case concerns the slaughter of the animals, that implies their death and possibly also fear. Other rural practices can lead to negative experiences for the farm animals, for example, docking (tail clipping) and branding (marking livestock with a fire-heated tool). When included in human leisure experiences, these rural practices are usually qualified as educational and entertaining. This

view is a very partial description, and the people who choose to participate in such activities should be made aware of the animals' perspectives. People should be informed that animals are likely to perceive such practices as painful and abusive. It can be argued that in these activities, the animals are victims of human behaviour, and the humans participating in such activities as a form of leisure are accomplices in such abuse. Realistically, experience providers that offer these activities and promote them as educational and entertaining might recognize the abusive aspect of such practices, but tend to resist exposing the visitors to this truth, choosing instead to emphasize the ritualism of rural traditions as a value *per se*.

### **Research implications**

This study has the ambition to contribute to a shift of the leisure and tourism literature concerning animals towards a more engaged and pluralistic scholarship. Such contribution is here presented in the form of questions on which the readers are invited to reflect. It can be said that the reluctance of experience providers to consider critically rural traditions and communicate this to potential visitors might be influenced by their sense of identity and their commercial interest. What about leisure and tourism scholars? With the considerable advancements in our knowledge about animals, why are so few scholars engaged in discussing the use of animals in leisure and tourism critically from the perspective of the animals? In particular, what are the reasons for ignoring the farm animals' perspective on rural leisure practices? Are such reasons in line with a view of academia as the place for critical thinking and dedication to exploring the truths behind the appearance?

Once we, as scholars, have clarified for ourselves our ethical position in relation to farm animals, several research topics might be investigated. For example, future studies might focus on the experiential value of farm animal encounters, including farm visits, festivals and food activities. The possible emergence and/or reinforcement of empathy and/or compassion hardening towards the specific animals, the animals in general and, in broader terms, towards the 'other' could be explored. Another possibility might be to explore the operators' and the tourists' understanding of leisure and tourism experiences from the perspective of farm animal through research projects that use experiments based on the use of virtual reality devices. In the latter case, tourism and leisure scholars might have important lessons to learn from animal rights activists' non-violent actions such as the ones by the Direct Action Everywhere movement (Kahn and Kellner 2004).

### **Conclusions**

This study has posed the following question: how are leisure experiences inspired by rural practices about the traditional use of farm animals lived by the animals? Based on various fictional, nonfictional and scientific sources and using her imagination, the author developed a story about a pig living at a rural museum. The use of this fictional narrative approach provided a thick and thought provoking description of the pig's reflections, overcoming the limits of more traditional methods of scientific inquiry. The story has been used to discuss the pig's perspective on the leisure activities arranged by the museum and to develop a conceptual model.

The discussion suggests that human leisure experiences inspired by rural practices can be lived differently by the farm animals. This study has presented a model representing six typologies of experiences: friendship, friendly relations, indifference, tolerance, accidents and abuse. Factors influencing the animals' experience, in addition to the type of practice and the individual characteristics of the animal, include the control that animals have on the human encounter implied in the rural practices, and the presence of some humans who can supervise the encounters to guarantee that welfare standards are met.

This study also suggests the opportunity to inform the participants in farm animal-based activities that the animals can perceive such experiences in ways that are quite far from leisure. This is particularly important in cases where the leisure experienced by human participants derives from the attendance and complicity in the abuse of animals. Instead of emphasizing the human perspective in relation to the ritualism and symbolic value of the rural practices and the importance they used to have in the past, it is desirable that visitors are presented with an updated and more critical view. This would be in line with the ideal of a form of leisure that does not perpetuate categories and dualisms (we/the others) that tend to lead to partial and simplistic representations of the reality. It is unrealistic to expect this shift from rural experience providers, and therefore it is opportune that leisure and tourism scholars initiate a debate about the use of animals in human leisure activities, hoping that in a not too far future this will lead to some practical repercussions on the welfare and wellbeing of animals.

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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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## Appendix

**Table A1.** Inspirational sources for the fictional story.

Source	Use in the fictional story
Event: 'Pig Slaughter Day' at Eidsvoll Museum, Norway (October 2018). Various online textual, pictorial and video data from the museum webpage and Facebook page, the Facebook page of the animal rights group that arranged a protest during the event, the local newspaper.	The context of the rural museum; the promotion of the event (traditions, entertainment, preparation and serving of food deriving from the slaughtering); the slaughter of a pig in the presence of another pig; the names of the two pigs; families as the main target group of the event; the explicit request by a child to go home as soon as the first pig was killed; the offer by the animal activists to bring the pigs to a sanctuary; the reassurance by the museum that the slaughter follows legal methods limiting animal suffering; the arrangement by the museum of a puppet show about the Three Little Pigs (some weeks after the Pig Slaughter Day).
Article: <i>Thinking pigs: A comparative review of cognition, emotion, and personality in Sus domesticus</i> by Marino and Colvin (2015) and related comments by biologist; book chapter <i>Pigs, people and Pigoons</i> by Tiffin (2007).	Scholarly knowledge about the abilities of pigs' sensory abilities, learning skills, time perception, spatial learning and memory, novelty seeking, inquisitiveness and play, social cognition and complexity, self-awareness, and personality. Pigs are cognitively complex and share many traits with animals whom we consider intelligent. Pigs connect emotionally with other pigs, and can respond emotionally in anticipation of future events. Pigs have many anatomical, physiological and psychological traits similar to humans.
Nonfictional novel: <i>The pig who sang to the moon: The emotional world of farm animals</i> (2004) by Jeffrey Masson.	Anecdotal knowledge about farm animals and reflections on their emotional lives.
Fictional works: Novel: <i>Charlotte's Web</i> (1952) by E.B. White. Film: <i>Babe</i> (1995) by Chris Noonan.	The characters of the two fictional works, Wilbur and Babe, are pigs who value their life and attempt to escape slaughtering.
Fictional novel: <i>Big pig, little pig. A year on a smallholding in south-west France</i> (2017) by Jacqueline Yallup.	Reflections by a urban person moving to the countryside and learning to raise and kill pigs at a small farm.
The author's experience with farmers raising animals: Pigs: casual conversations with two farmers, participation to the presentation of the activities of a farm. Other farm animals (bovine): observation (3 months living at a farm).	Pigs tend to behave very similarly to dogs. Pig farming can be an important economic activity and is very important to keep rural traditions alive. Farmers who have raised and cared for their animals might be strongly attached to them and feel extremely frustrated in delivering them to the abattoir. Some farmers might cope with this situation refraining from eating animal flesh.

**Table A2.** Writing techniques adopted in the fictional story.

Main character	First person narrative: the focus is on the rescued pig's perspective.
Reverse chronology	The story is based on the memories of the pig.
Artefacts	The extract of the local newspaper reporting about the Pig Slaughter Day event at the rural museum and the leaflet promoting the event. These artefacts are meant to make the event more real and add some dynamics to the text.
Irony	The promotional leaflet is characterized by a bitter irony about the way humans view the pigs (as friend and as food).
Creative writing, visual techniques	Black and white squares are inserted in the text to indicate the pigs' consciousness and mood.
Quasi-quotation and mention	The story includes a quasi-quotation from <i>Animal Farm</i> (1945) by George Orwell, and mentions Peppa Pig, a popular preschool animated TV series.
Human characters	The museum visitors (the girl and the child pulling the pig's tail), the guardian and the men who kill Snøfte. The reader might find easy to identify in one or more of these characters.
Animal characters	Other animal characters include a pig (the pig's best friend) and dogs. The inclusion of the latter aims to make the reader smile (due to the way dogs are described by the pig) and reflect on the differences and similarities of pigs and dogs.