Moral debate over vegetarianism forms the backdrop to a preliminary consideration of the questions: Is it ethical to produce, sell and eat faux meat? Is it ethical to produce, sell and wear fake animal skin? Is it ethical to sell or wear secondhand or thriftshop genuine animal skin? If vegetarianism is morally required, the question of just what uses of nonhuman animals are ethical or unethical and on what grounds is always on tap. In this piece, I examine the above questions in light of deontological then utilitarian reasons for vegetarianism. I conclude deontological or animal rights grounds entail the moral condemnation of faux meat and fake and secondhand animal skin. I conclude utilitarian or animal welfare grounds entail, with some qualification, the moral acceptability of faux meat and fake animal skin but the clear moral unacceptability of secondhand animal skin.

As thrift shop one-offs became more and more current, morals were tested. Is it ethical to not wear a fur piece that was made when sensitivities were different and fashion was less politicised? Or is that wasteful, and so is it actually more ethical to wear it? Simultaneously, vast improvements in the look and feel of fake fur mean that those who like the appearance of fur but are not comfortable with the morals of it can buy convincing lookie-likies. Good-looking fake fur has undoubtedly contributed to the social acceptability of real fur. It's de-stigmatised the aesthetic. Probably not. I wear fur as I wear leather and suede, suppressing the raw fact of it. And yes, leather is a by-product (as is shearling), and therefore generally supposed to be more acceptable than fur. But is it really? Real and faux fur are trending for Fall ’16, but what do we really know about the materials? We spoke to Thomas Salomon, the general manager of Paris fur company Yves Salomon, and Hannah Weiland, founder of faux fur label Shrimps, about their very different businesses. That won’t change anything if you’re vegan, but if you’re willing to wear fur and leather as long as it has been responsibly made, it’s an option. We spoke to two designers who have built their businesses on faux and real fur, respectively, so you can make informed decisions this fall. Below, Hannah Weiland, founder of faux fur label Shrimps, and Thomas Salomon, general manager of the Paris fur company Yves Salomon, share their points of view.