

# AGENDA

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## AGENDA NOTES

AGENDA, a journal of animal liberation, is devoted to fostering greater cooperation and unity within the animal liberation/ rights/welfare movement. We provide a forum in which the movement can exchange ideas and discuss the problems and issues before it. We strive to activate and facilitate two processes vital to the building of a more effective, progressive movement: (1) the refinement and filling of our theoretical base, and (2) the evolution of strategies and tactics for political change. *Agenda* is independent of any animal welfare or animal rights organization, and is published quarterly without charge. Our printing and postal costs are borne by *Animal Rights Network, Inc.* as one of its movement-building activities; if you wish to help cover these costs, please make contributions payable to ARN, for *Agenda*. Notes, articles, comments and other written submissions are welcome and should be sent to *Agenda*, Box 5234, Westport, CT 06881. We cannot be responsible for the return of unaccepted material unless it is sent to us with adequate postage and a self-addressed envelope of sufficient size to accommodate the material.

*Agenda* is rolling right along, more or less on schedule. Although the number of articles, essays, notes, etc. submitted so far has been fairly small, we sense that there is considerable interest and support for the kind of publication we are trying to produce. Several persons submitted promises, sketchy ideas and drafts for pieces, but never came across with the finished goods in time to make publication. This may be our fault, in part, because we haven't been specific about deadlines and the form

to be followed for written submissions. So, here they are: From now on, we are aiming for quarterly issues to be mailed out on or near the first days of October, January, April and July. The deadline for each issue will be the 15th of each month just before. Please send your pieces on ordinary 8½" by 11" paper, typed and double-spaced. Make any hand-written corrections or substitutions clearly legible. It's just too expensive and time consuming to have to write or call back and forth to figure out what you are trying to say. With each submission, include a short note about yourself, your background, organizational affiliations, animal activist projects, etc. For examples of these biographical notes, see those following each of the articles in this issue. Further details about our requirements for written submissions may be found in the box about *Agenda* just above.

While we're on the subject of written submissions, perhaps this is a good point to clarify and restate *Agenda's* purposes in the hope that this may stimulate some ideas and work out there. But, rather than waste ink and space, read them for yourself in the box above. What, then, are some of the issues and problems before us? What strategies and tactics need further work and clarification? Think about the sort of discussions you have among yourselves and organize them into a piece for publication. You don't have to write a piece all by yourself. Team up; send something cooperatively written by your local group.

This is perhaps a good point to invite submissions on a specific subject: The role of Veganism in the animal liberation movement. Although this approach is already much discussed and argued among activists, I have yet to see its basics discussed in print, and perhaps *Agenda* is a good place to carry on such a discussion. What is the case for Veganism? It is to be consistent,



so as to avoid detractors? Is it to make the maximum effort to avoid contributing to animal suffering? Is it to force change by undermining the profitability of animal products? For some, I know that the rationale for Veganism and the rules for its observance are well worked out. But for others, the Vegan position is not so clear, nor is it clear what is supposed to accomplish. So, all you Vegans out there, let's here it.

We welcome opinions and responses to articles and other parts of *Agenda* for our *Comment* department. In this issue's *Comment*, Doris Primack writes in response to Jim Mason's essay in *Agenda* #2.

We've had a few complaints from people who have heard about, but aren't receiving, *Agenda*. Rest assured that we do not intend to exclude anyone who is interested in animal rights issues, but obviously we need your name and address before we can mail issues to you. Those of you who are receiving *Agenda*: please take a few minutes to write out the names and addresses of friends, acquaintances, animal rights advocates, or others that you know who might be interested in receiving *Agenda*. If you have written us asking for *Agendas* #1 and #2 but still haven't received them, write to us again, please. We have had problems and confusion in getting our lists together and our mailings out, so please bear with us; we're trying to do better.

Our last issue, #2, went out to about 300 addresses. Our request for donations to Animal Rights Network, Inc. was answered by quite a few of you, but ARN did not receive enough to cover costs of typesetting, printing and postage. Nevertheless, ARN informs us that they are willing to underwrite our costs until *Agenda* has been exposed to the animal rights community. Therefore, this issue has been sent out to approximately 2,800 addresses—600 people and 2,200 organizations. We ask you again to please send a check to Animal Rights Network, Inc. P.O. Box 5234, Westport, CT 06881, if you want to help bear

the costs of getting *Agenda* out there into our community. Obviously it does not make sense, nor can ARN afford, to send *Agenda* to those who have no interest in this type of publication. So, if ARN doesn't receive enough from you to pay for this issue, we'll have to cut back the size of our next mailing and we'll probably have to come up with an annual subscription rate—probably \$5 to \$10. Those of you who have sent money already—thanks very much; those of you who haven't but are interested in *Agenda*—please help us reach you—and others.

You will note that we have dropped our *Movement News* department. We have done so because Animal Rights Network *News* does a better job at this than we can, and it comes out more frequently than does *Agenda*.

One last note on sexism in language: Usage of the word *man* and of male pronouns to refer to both sexes effectively excludes women from conscious thought—a practice that we find inconsistent with the boundless ethic called for by the animal liberation movement. We are mindful of those who ridicule feminists' usage of gender-neutral terms such as *chairperson*, *salesperson*, etc. and who rush to the conclusion that, as a result, language is bruised. We disagree with them. With a little imagination in word choices, language can easily be made gender neutral. Besides, if the new terms and constructions are awkward or uncomfortable so much the better because they will make us all the more conscious of the prejudice contained in the traditional "comfortable" expressions. Therefore, we avoid "man", "men" and the male pronoun unless we are referring specifically to male beings. Where other writers use these terms generically, we take the editorial prerogative (ethically motivated, of course) of italicizing them—not for sarcasm or irony, but to call attention to the cultural bias that we have inherited so that it can be disinherited.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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To the Editor:

I have just finished reading the latest *Agenda* and it's really good—I'm not just saying that. Regarding the comments in your Notes section on duplication, I don't see it myself. You are approaching the subject from a different perspective in another part of the world. I like the black-and-white no-nonsense style of *Agenda* and will be interested to see how the practical-finances work out. It's a valuable addition to the Network which raises all kinds of possibilities.

Your Comment section sets my mind racing. We are currently finishing off our book, *THE BOOK OF BEASTS*, and your comments about Lorenz, etc. are so apposite. It's a shame we can't spend a few hours discussing all this. Our book is aimed at redefining our basic image of what animals are in the light of our new scientific knowledge. It covers pre-history, evolution, animal/human interface, extinctions, and has a bestiary of amazing creatures. We are really excited about it at the moment. The more you examine this vast area, the more fascinating it becomes . . . Let's just keep in touch and work towards common ends.

John May—London, England (Co-editor of *The Beast*, a magazine by and for animal liberationists).

To the Editor:

I have read *Agenda* and have given copies of it to some of the

members of AFAR. I find your ideas significant; you have been standing back to get the overview that most of us miss. I tend to give lip service to the idea of an integrated animal rights movement, but what I see is the fragmentation you discussed . . . So, I think what you've started is a crucial reminder that we need a significant change in how we "manage" our movement in order for it ever to get off the ground. Further, I think that *Agenda* should be getting into the hands of all of those 2-4 person organizations, each going their own way and unaware of even the possibility of something larger or broader than their narrow human concern.

Joyce Tischler—San Francisco, CA (Co-founder and Co-chair of Attorneys for Animal Rights).

To the Editor:

What place in the overall movement towards animal liberation do your readers allocate, I wonder, to the idea of a charter of animal rights? The idea first surfaced in England in 1926, when such a Charter was approved by over 60 independent societies, widely circulated, and translated into many languages. The intention of this first Charter was not to seek immediate implementation, but to focus attention on the need for reform and to provide an incentive, and a goal for the future for the animal welfare movement to work towards. A revised version—the In-



ternational Animals' Charter—was prepared in 1953, and with further changes circulation in Canada in 1976. Charters were drafted between 1950 and 1956 by the World Federation for the Protection of Animals, and in 1971 a bill proposing a charter for animals was submitted by an individual to the French National Assembly. In 1972, a Declaration of Rights of Animals was proclaimed in Norway, and in the same year a Universal Declaration of the Rights of Animals was circulated in France, translated into 5 languages, and endorsed with the signatures of 2 million people.

More recently, in 1978, another Universal Declaration of the Rights of Animals, brainchild of Prof. Georges Heuse of the World Foundation for the Quality of life in collaboration with many others, was presented to UNESCO with the aim of having it brought before the U.N. General Assembly as a convention at its meetings in 1980. At the present time, national leagues in support of the International League for Animal Rights (headquarters, Paris; Georges Heuse, President) exist in several European countries and elsewhere, and it is clear from the record that progress in several areas is being registered in France, and possibly in Luxembourg and Switzerland as well.

What is the value of an animal rights charter? It certainly serves to focus attention on areas where the law is either inadequate or hopelessly out of date, and is a general reminder of the ideals we are working towards. Clearly the terms of such a charter must be capable of change and updating, with changing conditions. Unfortunately it serves also in some quarters as a divisive element, when opinions clash on what is an ideal and yet practical provision. This has proved so in such areas as research using animals and vegetarianism.

All such charters look to the future and surely must be capable of universal application. Even the opponents of a universal declaration, in this reader's opinion, render a service to the cause when their disagreement prompts them to challenge the original with a variant version—such as, for example, the Hofstra Charter (1979). How rightly your Editor terms this movement revolutionary! It requires a change in human awareness—looking to a more harmonious world, the “new ethic” of Schweitzer. It seems natural that the present Declaration should be prospering and gaining recognition in France over all other countries, given France's long and pre-eminent tradition of human rights. Text of the UDRA available on request.

Joyce Lambert—Canadian League for Animal Rights, P.O. Box 5201, Station B, Victoria, B.C., Canada (Author of *Rights for Animals?*)

To the Editor:

*Agenda* seems to be intended as a tool for creating a network of animal rights groups—not necessarily people who agree to adopt the same opinions, but who agree to help each other out despite different emphases to achieve a common goal. It is necessary to have a common roof under which groups with diverse interests—“save the seals/whales” people, anti-vivisection people, anti-cruelty (cat and dog) people, vegetarians (anti-slaughter people)—can overcome the need to defend the urgency of their cause *against* the others. If you are able to maintain your objective stance and sharp focus, you only need increased circulation and word-of-mouth to reach that goal.

I believe that it is very important that you make *Agenda* an indispensable resource to activists if you hope to become a tool of that network. Here in issue #2, for a start, you have printed the addresses of organizations with current, active causes in need of volunteers, and progressive journals in need of subscribers and this is good. But it needs to go farther; for example, here in Chi-

cago, no one seems to know where to find individuals or groups involved in animal activism. I know a number of potential activists frustrated by the lack of a means, and an organization (The Chicago Vegetarian Society) that can't find a single speaker or organizer (against factory farming, etc.) to whom it can lend a forum. Lack of communication, not opposition, keeps these causes from gaining force.

... I wholly agree with R. Morgan (Letters, *Agenda* #2) that we must not and *cannot* permit ourselves to be isolated from other progressive social causes. But we first need a core group, nationwide, of animal rights activists, legal experts, and organizations, if we are to effect any real change on national habits and policy. People with common goals need a way to find each other. I hope *Agenda* will do what it can to help those individuals find, or form, a nucleus.

Lori Lippitz—Evanston, IL

(Ed. note: *Animal Rights Network, Inc.* and its Newsletter provide the services referred to above. *Agenda* tries to “provide a forum in which the movement exchange ideas and discuss the problems and issues before it, etc.” See our box about *Agenda* on page one. If this is confusing, keep reading both publications for a few months to pick up on the difference in thrust.)

To the Editor:

Warmest congratulations on *Agenda*. A too-used phrase such as “consciousness raising” is nonetheless relevant when applied to this newest voice in the humane wilderness. There is change afoot in the humane movement, all to the good, which is helping many humane organizations to stop missing the forest because of the trees. *Agenda* promises to be a most effective catalyst assisting that change.

John F. Kuhlberg—New York, NY (Executive Director, American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, 441 East 92nd Street, New York, NY 10028).

To the Editor:

I work for a large, well-known national organization, and have gotten many a letter from the public inquiring why we larger groups do not join together. Because of the number of such inquiries, my co-workers and I sat down and wrote what we believe to be the real reasons behind non-unity. I think it can best be explained by sharing with you the form-letter of explanation we offered to the public:

“Dear Friend,

Thank you for your letter concerning the lack of united action among the animal-rights groups.

We, and most other groups, support your view that, in terms of speedy progress in accomplishing our goals of eliminating animal cruelty, a cooperative effort among ALL groups would be in our best interest.

Many problems, though, make it extremely difficult to achieve such united action.

1. **DISAGREEMENT AS TO WHAT CONSTITUTES “CRUELTY”**—There are thousands of animal-welfare and animal-rights organizations around the world. All undoubtedly seek to help animals, but there are vast differences held as to what issues are considered cruel or not. For example: a major argument between groups is whether the practice of wildlife “management” is cruel or not. The



U.S. Departments believe it is in the best interests of the animals to trap, hunt and even poison them. We find this reasoning ridiculous. We don't see how killing any wild animal is in its best interest, with the sole exception being our desire to end agony by euthanizing any animal which is in mortal pain, or, in the case of domestic animals, euthanizing if its future is utterly hopeless.

Again, another main argument is whether it is cruel or not to eat meat. Some groups argue that this issue is not of importance if an animal is killed humanely; other groups feel there's no justification in this modern age for taking the life of an animal to eat, when other ample sources of protein are available.

Some groups also feel it's cruel to imprison animals in zoos, or train them to do difficult and unnatural stunts for circuses and fairs. Yet other groups feel as long as the animal is fed and housed properly, and treated humanely, zoos and circuses are acceptable and not an issue to be concerned with.

So you can see that lack of agreement as to what constitutes cruelty is one of the major reasons for non-unity between organizations seeking to help animals.\*

2. **DIFFERENCES IN DEFINING PRIORITIES**—Because of human nature, people have differences in opinions as to *which* animals should be helped first. For example: some people may sense an urgency to help endangered species, whereas other folks may feel the need to concentrate on ending trapping. So who is to decide which issue to pool efforts on and focus on first? Even if top representatives from each group were to convene to discuss at length a set of priorities, it is doubtful that one representative who sees grounds for optimism in anti-seal hunt campaigns would concede to those representatives who prefer to focus on spay-neuter campaigns. Emotions about the varying cruelty issues run high, and, even with the best of intentions, are difficult to channel into action.

Additionally, geographical factors influence of a person's choice of priorities. For instance, to a person living in Florida and keenly aware of the abuse suffered by manatees due to motor boat blades, immediate action seems imperative. His or her concern seems more worthy of attention than New Yorkers' desire to change their housing laws to permit pets in apartments, or Pennsylvanians who detest the slaughter of the state's black bear population.

3. **DIFFERENT IDEAS ON MEANS OF ACCOMPLISHING GOALS**—Even when groups DO agree on the necessity of acting together on a given issue (which is frequently), irreconcilable differences crop up which prevent complete unity. For example: there are leaders of animal-rights groups who prefer to inform the public through direct mailing via their own newsletters, and appeals for funds, whereas other leaders want face-to-face communication with the public (via demonstrations, public meetings, school humane education programs, etc.) to bring the issues home to the people. Still, other leaders feel the best way to attack any problem is through the courts and the legislature.

It is true that all of the above means are vital in attacking an agreed-upon issue, but this would require pooling of finances. Then the question arises: which course of action

gets what share of the monies—fund raising? public consciousness-raising? legislative action? And *who* is to decide?

Let us assume that all means of action against the cruelty issue *were* given equal share of available funds.

If a congressional bill is to be drawn up, how can agreement be reached on the intricate proposals within the abolition of that particular cruelty, or does one take, perhaps a more moderate approach in hopes of getting more congressional support? While abolition of the said cruelty is the *desired* goal, experience has shown that compromise is most often necessary to even make any progress *at all* towards the goal. For example, even to get bills to the hearing stage is extremely difficult. This is because of the strong opposition of pro-hunting, trapping, business or scientific special interests . . . rich and powerful lobbies. It must be remembered that among animal-rights leaders, some are more compromising than others, and some refuse to compromise altogether. This is an admirable trait, but not always a productive one.

4. **PERSONALITY CLASHES**—As in any other walk of life, individuals differ in many ways. It is common knowledge that persons who fight for the rights of the oppressed are themselves more sensitive individuals, and likewise more sensitive to their ideals. You'll find stronger convictions to one's own ideals, and a tendency to view all else as either advancing or undermining these ideals. Because one's convictions are so strong, it is easier to dole out criticism to a party thought to be less committed. Likewise, one tends to take criticism more personally when one knows his or her motives are of the best intentions. For example: if one group, deeply concerned over saving the lives of unwanted burros or goats, is publicly ridiculed by another animal rights group as a publicity-seeking stunt or a waste of funds which might have been directed into a more "worthy" (preferred) cause, it is difficult for that group to lightly shrug it off in good humor. Therefore, in the animal-rights movement, as in any other walk of life, conflicts develop between groups.

Like the proverbial extremely wealthy, famous old man who, all his life was world-renowned for his generosity, his active concern for humanity, and his efforts to feed the hungry and house the poor, his humanitarianism primarily was due to his being able to *afford* to be charitable. Given the same circumstances, we all could claim the same generous qualities as him. Likewise, though, almost all of us in the animal-rights movement yearn for unity, with all the afore-mentioned problems we face, we almost cannot *afford* (at this point, anyway) to look far beyond our own noses.

I mention all this to defend not only large organizations but *any* organization which sooner or later will find their hands tied, due to limitations incurred by the very capitalistic society we live in. *Any* change, like it or not, centers around the availability of funds to enact those changes, and availability of funds depends on the interest and support of the public depends on the changes you can show them you've brought about for the better, which brings us right back to the beginning of the circle. Right or wrong, it is the American way doing things, and we are forced to "play the game by American rules." If any animal-rights group hasn't found that out by now, they will soon. (You'll surely get a little help from the pressure of government regulations, especially if you're a non-profit group.) So the problem of non-unity is not an easily-answered one, and we all must be careful not to

\*[Ed. note: see the article by Tom Regan in this issue, p. 8



point fingers too quickly.

The second point which I am prompted to raise is actually related to the first. Because of all the problems resulting in non-unity, I certainly think it is much too soon to even contemplate any sort of mass demonstration in Washington, D.C. I suppose for *any* cause, a protest in Washington is the "icing on the cake"—it makes an issue seem so much more respectable and serious. It's like the ultimate cry to the public, "Now you have to take us seriously and listen. We've made it to Washington."

Yet if you look at all the causes in the past, be it civil rights, the Vietnam war or nuclear energy, these issues were *household words*. Practically every American *knew* there was an issue of whether or not blacks should have equal rights; we *knew* Americans were divided as to whether or not we should be in Vietnam; we *knew* that there was a national debate on whether nuclear power should stay or go—all this long before mass demonstrations of any of these issues occurred in Washington.

But where is the *truly* national outcry for or against animal rights? Yes, there are admittedly many Americans who have a special stake in either helping animals or exploiting them. But compared to the total population of this country, they are but a drop in the bucket. The animal-rights cause is still in the "whispering" stage. This we must know by simply asking your average person on the street how he or she feels about animal rights, and he or she will most probably tell you "well, they hadn't really thought about it," or "what on earth are you talking about!?" Being so intensely involved and dedicated to animal rights as we in the movement are, we erroneously imagine all others to be as concerned as we are. If that were truly the case, we would not have such a tremendous battle before us.

I believe we first have to get past the "whisper" stage of this movement; we need to infiltrate every aspect of American life with our views. Animal-rights books must be made available in libraries everywhere. Vegetarian restaurants must peek from at least one corner of every town. Non-animal products from cosmetics to clothing must be available everywhere and advertised as such. School children must be approached everywhere with this new consciousness.

In short we must subtly yet firmly infiltrate our whole society with this new way of living—make it an acceptable or at least a more acknowledged way of living, before we start screaming at the public to mend their evil ways. We must keep in mind that the majority of animal abuse and exploitation "out there" is unconscious and based on ignorance, and that most people, when told the facts and given the options, are willing to change. (Remember when we ourselves ate meat, wore fur and leather, loved circusses and rodeos?) Let's give society a chance to change before we start blasting away at Washington. It may make us lose potential allies to this cause. And as we all realize, we need all the friends we can get in this most difficult of fights—a fight more than revolution . . . this is indeed evolution!

*Editor's comments: Our letter-writer has skillfully summarized the consciousness-raising task we have ahead of us, as well as the main problems which hinder the development of a co-operative rather than a competitive atmosphere in which to proceed.*

*We'd like to add one more item to the list of "reasons for disunity", one which we might go as far to say may even point us to an underlying solution for some of the problems pointed out by our letter-writer. We add it also so as to not allow the reader to be left with the notion that all of these problems exist for reasons beyond our control, or beyond the responsibility of the movement to solve.*

**5. LACK OF AN HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE**—Change is a process, one in which each

change level has a necessary prerequisite. For example: the automobile could not have been invented prior to the wheel; the typewriter could not have appeared before the alphabet; complex thought-processes in the human mind could not have existed without first the development of language with which to express them.

The same is true of social change in particular. Society, as time marches on, gradually acquires more and more knowledge which, added to the sum total of the knowledge just preceeding, yields newer, more accurate knowledge, facts and truth about the world around us. In other words, certain developments or changes in society cannot occur without certain other changes or developments taking place first.

The animal rights movement appears to lack this necessary, historical perspective. At a recent gathering of animal rights activists a comment was made that illustrates this. During a discussion as to whether or not the animal rights movement should join forces with other movements (i.e., anti-nuclear, feminist), one person said "I won't work with the American Indian Rights movement because they're struggling to gain coastal fishing rights." This comment contains the presumption that fish might be liberated before Native Americans, and it just isn't going to work that way. We may lose a few friends by saying this, but most likely, the non-human animals are going to be the last to be liberated. (This is not being said, however, to urge others to discontinue action on behalf of animals. On the contrary, it is said in hopes that action will be directed to where it is first needed and to where it is most likely to be set the stage for desired long-term results.)

All this, then, will require us to do more than just pay mere lip service to other movements because it will involve the realization that there are no "other" movements, just one with many facets and stages of completion. People are animals, too, and for us to draw a line between "animal rights" and "people's rights" makes us equally as guilty of "specieism" as the hunters, vivisectioners and furriers we battle with every day. Also, let us not forget that the human animals represent our only means of liberating the non-human ones, since the non-human ones cannot speak for themselves.

And how does this development of an historical perspective provide solutions to the other problems pointed out by our letter-writer?

First of all, by broadening our perspective in this way we will have an easier time of defining and stacking priorities—it will become more clear to us what needs to be done first and what follows.

Secondly, it will become evident what a waste of time it is to be arguing about degrees of cruelty since animal rights is not a question of cruelty but rather an issue concerning the institutionalized exploitation of certain beings by other beings, all with the full blessing of society's notion that certain beings have this divine dominion over others.

And lastly, we expect that by developing a more politically sophisticated attitude, the movement will rise above personality clashes, and effective means of accomplishing goals will be more easily agreed-upon. Yes, there will still be personality differences, but the real movement will take place in spite of those who allow such pettiness to stand in the way of progress.

(\*Ed. note—We wish to discourage submission of materials an onymously. In this case, an exception was made because the letter-writer felt it might cause employment problems if a name was used. These topics need to be discussed and AGENDA is intended as a sounding-board for just that purpose. Let's be up front about who we are and what we have to say.)



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# ARTICLES

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## Toward More Effective Political Mobilization For Humane Causes

by Christian J. Eilers

It seems strikingly paradoxical that in a country in which millions of people love their pets such brutal suffering can be inflicted upon millions of other animals through such activities as trapping, vivisection and factory farming, among others. But, if those of us who wish to eliminate such cruel practices are to achieve our goals, we must somehow persuade most of the rest of the populace, as well as the powers that be, of the justness of our cause. We must literally change society's attitudes toward animals and their sensibilities.

But, given the present fragmented state of the humane "movement" (see the article by Jim Masopn in the Winter, 1979/80 issue of *Agenda*), one may wonder what, if anything, might possibly be done to substantially alter any of the various cruel practices (e.g., trapping) which are responsible for causing intense suffering in millions of animals each year. My response is that those of us concerned with working toward the alleviation of animal agony must search for ways to accomplish a more effective political mobilization. How? Through becoming more aware about the nature of the political process; through learning and using more effective lobbying techniques; and, most importantly, through helping to unify and strengthen the animal movement through such means as the dissemination of ideas through such publications as *Agenda* and, as an extremely important next step, through the convening of animal welfare conferences.

Relative to the nature of the political process, it is important to inform all those who wish to become politically active on behalf of some humane cause that, to put it briefly, politicians usually have an intense desire to either get re-elected or elected to a higher office (they have become used to enjoying the power they wield, as well as the other perquisites of office, and since many very much wish to do what they feel is right, and since retaining one's office is the only way to accomplish this, they must get re-elected). It is also important to mention that the august surroundings and the pomp and ceremony which are often a part of many significant legislative, executive and administrative offices (at both the state and national levels) serve to reinforce in the official the notion that he is a servant of "the people" (i.e., it reinforces the notion that it is the advancement of human welfare, and not the welfare of animals, that is to be his or her primary concern).

One very important first step is for us to learn more about effective lobbying techniques. Since legislators (at both the state and national levels) are besieged by the thousands of legislative proposals which are introduced into their respective legislative bodies each year, it usually takes several years, even for legislation considered by many as basically "sound" and "needed", to become enacted into law. Therefore, we will need to have persistence in our lobbying efforts. Perhaps one of the best sources of additional information on effective lobbying techniques is the book: *How You Can Influence Congress: The Complete Handbook For The Citizen Lobbyist*. The book was written by George Alderson and Everett Sentmen, and is available at

bookstores at a cost of \$9.95. E.P. Dutton, 2 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10003 (The book is available to public interest organizations at discount rates).

But perhaps the most important immediate objective for the animal welfare movement is that we need to bring together (unify and strengthen) our forces through the publication of newsletters and journals, and through the convening of a major (and periodic) conference or conferences. Given the diversity of opinions on what must be done to alleviate animal suffering, it would seem that such a conference would be vitally important to further understanding among the many and diverse animal welfare organizations (AWOs). It would seem that such a conference would also be a vitally important aid to the movement in helping it to develop its goals (both immediate and long-range), and its strategies for achieving those goals. Finally, such a conference would help to foster the development of group cooperation, such as the formation of a united coalition of several AWO's working to achieve a particular objective (e.g., the formation of the "Coalition to Abolish Metcalf-Hatch" was a significant factor in the repeal, last year, of a inhumane New York State law involving the requisitioning of pets for vivisection). The conference(s) on animal welfare seems essential to the next step in our movement: the development and effective implementation (through various forms of activism) of strategies which will begin having a substantial impact upon society's attitudes toward animal sensibilities. And such conferences can, if properly conducted, only enhance the legitimacy of the humane movement.

*Christian J. Eilers is a student at SUNY, Albany.*

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## PUT ANIMALS INTO POLITICS!

by Kim Stallwood

For the first time in the struggle for Animal Liberation, cruelty to animals became a serious political issue during the General Election campaign earlier this year. All 3 major political parties contained a manifesto commitment to ease cruelty to animals in some way. This important step forward for the British Animal Welfare Movement had been in the works for some time.

It has taken nearly 3 years since Animal Welfare Year for the Animal Welfare Societies to push forward together for legislative reform through co-operation and unity. Before Animal Welfare Year, many independent societies were pursuing notoriously separate paths, confusing the public and politicians alike with their differing and often contradictory demands.

67 UK societies participated in Animal Welfare Year which 'celebrated' the centenary of the 1876 Cruelty to Animals Act—still the mainstay of British legislation to protect animals. The ensuing publicity of Animal Welfare Year helped persuade the media that animals were always a newsworthy story and it laid the foundations for placing Animal Welfare on the map, for both the electorate and the elected.



Seeing that co-operation and unity were important factors in improving the climate of public opinion, like-minded societies began forming "joint consultative bodies." Scientists, politicians and individuals from anti-vivisection societies formed the Committee for the Reform of Animal Experimentation (CRAE). Likewise, the Farm Animal Welfare Co-ordinating Executive (FAWCE) was made up of experts and representatives from 13 different farm animal welfare societies. In all, five joint consultative bodies were formed. The remaining three are the Christian Consultative Council for the Welfare of Animals, the Humane Education Council (HEC) and the National Joint Equine Welfare Committee.

Animal Welfare Year was followed by the formation of the General Election Co-ordinating Committee for Animal Protection (GECCAP) and the campaign to 'Put Animals into Politics.' GECCAP was made up of representatives from the Joint Consultative Bodies and other interested parties. It proposed two main principles:

1. animal welfare and protection is a responsibility of government and should not be consigned to the hazard of the Private Members' Bill procedure.

2. the establishment of a Standing Royal Commission on Animal Protection.

Moreover, GECCAP identified 6 major areas of concern (not in order of priority):

- factory farming.
- experiments on living animals.
- treatment of horses.
- export of live animals.
- dogs in the community.
- blood sports.

None can doubt the success of this campaign. Because of it, the last (Labour) Government announced the setting up of a Council for Animal Welfare, the major political parties put Animal Welfare issues in their Election Manifestos and, not least, regular articles and comments on the campaign appeared frequently in the journals and magazines concerned with the exploitation of animals. Even our enemies took note. For example, the pro-bloodsports publication, *The Field*, stated in November 1978:

"Most Animal Welfare Groups use lawful means to further their ends and strive to win support in Parliament for their aims. They pursue notoriously separate paths, however. Several groups with similar aims may campaign quite separately and dissipate the strength of the Welfare Movement. A determined and professional effort is being made to unite them all behind the slogan 'Put Animals into Politics'."

The new Conservative Government appears to be honouring its election manifesto commitments to update legislation concerning the welfare of farm animals and experiments on live animals. But there are already signs of an upsurge in illegal activities by organizations such as the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) who put life before property. They say the Government are acting too slowly and not radically enough.

GECCAP has now been dissolved but an extension of it, the National Consultative Committee for Animal Protection, is being formed.

GECCAP was an important landmark in the history of the Animal Welfare Movement, for it established once and for all the importance of unity and co-operation, though it must be admitted that the journey was stormy at times. Everyone campaigning for Animal Rights is indebted to 83-year-old Lord Houghton of Sowerby who chaired GECCAP and made so much possible. He above all others helped remove some of the

crippling political naivety so prevalent among activists young and old.

As younger activists within the Movement begin to gain positions in the more established and traditional Animal Welfare Societies, the next General Election will see Animal Protection as a major political issue.

## An English Movement—Building Effort: Co-ordinating Animal Welfare (CAW)

CAW was started by a group of activists who were disillusioned with the present methods of campaigning adopted by the tradition Animal Welfare groups. It was felt that the days of the separatist fighting for Animal Liberation with no regard for co-operation and unity were over—especially as some of the existing campaigns bordered on the amateur and politically naive. It is true that since Animal Welfare Year 1976-77 and the setting up of Joint Consultative Bodies [Editors note: see the article just above also by Kim Stallwood], the Movement had pushed its way towards co-operation as it had never done before; but it was felt that there were still some hurdles to be crossed and this would only be achieved by pressure from the existing membership of these particular guilty Animal Welfare groups.

CAW does not have a "membership" as such but is a loosely-knit group providing a link between those who actively and realistically seek to minimize animal suffering. The link is provided by regular informal meetings held in London and the circulation of a bulletin. Anyone is welcome to attend the meetings or contribute to the Bulletin. As CAW wishes to avoid rules and bureaucracy, it does not place any limitations on the contributions it receives. However, as CAW stands for unity, co-operation and a purity of selfless motive on behalf of the individual — it believes that these three ideals should be foremost at all times.

During discussions at the meetings (to which guest speakers are invited) and in articles included in the bulletin, CAW tries to analyze with a view to understanding, what Society needs to change to make Animal Liberation possible. This may be categorized as follows:—

CAW encourages activists:—

1. to think in terms of a *Movement* rather than separate organizations.

2. to press the existing Animal Welfare groups, though the *members* of those groups to follow closely a policy of co-operation.

3. to take part in campaigns to ensure that those on the governing bodies are committed to a policy of co-operation and to the rebuttal of outdated tactics.

4. to urge Animal Welfare groups, to influence the established structures within society, e.g., educational establishments, professional bodies, trade unions, political parties and limited companies [corporations], to make them more amenable to Animal Liberation.

5. to encourage individual participation in local groups and branches of those bodies listed in 4 above.

6. to read up on animal usage, welfare and rights so that the individual can campaign more effectively by being aware of the



facts and arguments for Animal Liberation.

To these ends, CAW has produced a comprehensive Animal Liberation Booklist including over 100 titles in 17 sections. A copy of this will be sent to anyone outside England for 2 dollars.

CAW will be very pleased to receive subscriptions to its bulletin from U.S. activists and please include a minimum of 5 dollars to help towards printing and mailing costs.

CO-ORDINATING ANIMAL WELFARE,  
P.O. BOX 61,  
CAMBERLEY,  
SURREY.  
GU15 4EN.  
ENGLAND.

*Kim Stallwood is an animal rights activist based in England. He has worked with Compassion in World Farming and the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection; he was one of the principal organizers of Co-ordinating Animal Welfare, an animal rights movement-building group.*

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## SOME THOUGHTS ON CRUELTY

By Tom Regan

So much of the history of the humane movement has been colored by the notion of anti-cruelty that it may appear both impossible and disrespectful to suggest that we dispense with this notion—or, if not entirely dispense with it, at least be certain that it no longer plays a leading role. But that is exactly what I think we should do. For the notion of cruelty both muddles the fundamental moral issues and provides an easy way out for those who treat animals in ways we think are wrong. I want to explain, however briefly, why I think this.

When do we say that someone is cruel? A moment's reflection reveals that this is not whenever someone causes pain. For example, my dentist causes me pain, but it does not follow that he is therefore cruel. But what if he causes me unnecessary pain? Even that won't do. Suppose he is clumsy or negligent, and that is why he causes me unnecessary pain. Then he is a clumsy or negligent dentist, failings surely; but he is not therefore a cruel person. No, cruelty involves more than causing pain; more even than causing unnecessary pain. Fundamentally, it involves en-

joying causing unnecessary pain. Cruelty, in other words, at least in its clearest sense, is a form of sadism.

Suppose this is true, as I think it is. Then we can see why relying on the notion of cruelty muddles the central moral question. This it does because it takes attention away from what, say, the animal experimenter *does* and fixes it on what sort of person the experimenter *is*. If cruelty is the issue, we need to know whether the researcher enjoys causing pain (whether *he* is a sadist), not whether what he *does* causes unnecessary suffering. And yet, surely, what we want to know, what we want to establish, and what we want to object to is that he causes unnecessary pain, whether he enjoys this or not. If he enjoys this, then we ought to regard him as a sort of moral monster. But—and this is the crucial point—he may well cause unnecessary pain and *not* enjoy it, not be a moral monster, not be a sadist, and *still be doing what is wrong*. So, what if we want to object to his causing unnecessary pain, and given that he might be guilty of this and not enjoy the pain he causes, it beclouds the case we want to press to charge the experimenter with “cruelty.”

But not only does this muddle our case. It also is counterproductive because it gives the experimenter (or the factory farmer, etc.) an easy way out. If we say they are cruel, then all they have to do to escape our charge is introspect and see whether, in fact, they enjoy causing pain to animals. Maybe some do, but I hazard the guess that most do not. Most researchers, factory farmers, etc. are not sadists, in other words—despite the tendency of some in the humane movement to paint a picture that makes them seem so. But, now, if most are not sadists, and if we charge them with cruelty, their avenue of escape is clear: Since they do not enjoy making animals suffer, they are not cruel and thus they are off the moral hook. And if we ask, “How did they escape?”, the answer is: Because we let them! Because we made it easy for them! Because we have been careless in barbing our hook!

What we must do, then, is not confuse cruelty with the very different notions of causing pain or even causing unnecessary pain. It is on unnecessary pain (and death, as well), I think, that we must focus our attention. And it is because relying on the charge of cruelty detracts from doing this, for the reasons given, that we must stop relying on it, either altogether or, at the very most, only occasionally. Our own language stands in the way of our goal.

*Tom Regan is Professor of Philosophy at North Carolina State University at Raleigh. He co-edited Animals Rights and Human Obligations with Peter Singer. His latest edition, Matters of Life and Death is being published by Random House.*

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## THAT'S SPECIESISM!

Although the item below is not about abuse of animals of *other* species, it indicates an association between the subjugation of animals and what feminists call *patriarchy*, or the “Rule of the Fathers.” Elizabeth Fisher’s book *Woman’s Creation* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1979), explores this subject thoroughly and provides documentation from archeological evidence. We agree with Eleanor Burke Leacock, Professor of Anthropology at The Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn, who wrote in the introduction to her edition of Frederick Engels’ *The Ori-*

*gin of The Family, Private Property and The State*, (New York: International Publishers, 1975, p. 45). [Ed. note: This book should be read in conjunction with Fisher’s *Woman’s Creation*.]: “Today there is a more widespread awareness that all oppressive relations are interconnected and embedded in our system as whole, and that only united effort can effect fundamental change.” The item below shows how, because of prevailing patriarchal notions of supremacy, power and prerogatives of control over other beings, the prejudices of sexism, ageism



(we would add racism) are interrelated. In this case, the victims of these notion is, and the oppression that they maintain, are women, children, and elderly persons—but they could just as well be animals of other species.

### Home is likeliest spot for violence, expert reports

The Chicago Sun-Times, Thursday, April 24, 1980

by Michelle Stevens.

"The average U.S. resident is more likely to be a victim of violence in *his* own home than on the darkest street in the most dangerous city neighborhood, says a social worker specializing in battered women.

"All of us would like to believe that the violence and sexual abuse that occurs in our society is out there—away from people we love, but the fact is that family violence is a matter of daily occurrence," Nikki Nelson told some 150 domestic-violence specialists during a daylong conference Tuesday at Roosevelt University.

Unlike the criminal who strikes out a stranger, she explained, men who batter their wives or women who abuse their children believe they have a right to use their superior power to control family members.

Nelson, a social worker at United Charities' Loop Family Center, has counseled battered women for eight years and is a member of the Chicago Abused Women Coalition.

She spoke at an "Abuse of Power" conference co-sponsored by the university and United Charities for police, social workers, hospital personnel and others who deal with child abuse, wife-beating and other forms of domestic violence.

She traced the history of domestic violence to the 17th century, when women and children were widely looked upon as possessions, "and as such, could be abused at will by the master."

That belief still is held today by many parents and husbands, she said.

"As recently as 1646 in this country there was a law permitting parents to kill unruly children," she added. "The first legal child abuse case in this country was in 1874, and until less than 100 years ago it was not against the law for a man to abuse his wife. These are legal reflections of the social realities of unequal power distribution."

Women, children and the elderly—the groups traditionally without power—usually are the victims. And they are the victims because of stereotypes.

"When we believe that a real man is one who is aggressive and tough, and that women should be passive, we as a society are setting them up to be victimizers and victims," Nelson said. "Children will continue to be abused so long as society looks at children as possessions of their parents whose behavior must be controlled by physical force, if necessary."

She suggested that growing numbers of elderly people are being abused because they have lost their power and veneration in society. "I suggest to you that abuse of the elderly is increasing as their position of power decreases. When they are seen as dependent and difficult people who we must grudgingly take care of, we are setting them up to be victims."

Nelson said she believes domestic violence will continue to increase so long as outdated notions of power continue. "Those attitudes must be changes if we are to prevent family abuse in the future."

*Agenda* thanks to Lori Lippitz, Chicago Vegetarian Society, Evanston, Illinois.

[Ed. note: The U.S. Supreme Court recently had the opportunity to declare corporal punishment in the schools unconstitutional, but it passed it up thereby legitimizing the use of physical force to "discipline" children.]

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## READING FOR REVOLUTION

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This section, a collection of quotes, references and excerpts, aims to present animal rights as the political movement that it is, with its roots closely bound up with the moral foundations of other liberation struggles.

Our theme this time: How our view of animals is an index to our view of the natural world . . . including our view of ourselves in that world. In the excerpts that follow, the writers explain how our view of animals as lowly, inferior beings causes us to despise an essential part of ourselves at great psychic and emotional expense.

"*Man* has lived *his* life in the midst of a world of animals. At the time that *his* mind was being formed, *he* was bound to animals in an ambiguous relationship of dependence. And *he* has never gotten over it. *He* was both the tributary of the animals and their executioner. And that is why it is not possible for *man* today to stand aloof from animals. Animals were an integral part of *man's* early life, of *his* basic psychological life.

"*Man's* development through animal contact can be designated as neither primitive nor archaic. It has occupied almost the entire span of human evolution—hundreds of thousands of years as compared to an "age of science" which has occupied barely a century of *man's* existence. (pp. 21-22).

"It is only superficially paradoxical that animals have never

been so abused, physically, as today, at a time when the whole world seems preoccupied with "defending" animal life. The explanation is simple enough: *Man* protects animals not for the animals' sake, but for *his* own. *He* needs animals to bear the brunt of *his* own hostilities and frustrations. *He* needs animals as a means of compensation for *his* weaknesses and failings. *He* needs animals as victims for the violence and rage which *his* inhibitions prevent him from unleashing at their proper targets. Any animal, whether wild or domestic, is able to fill that role, and it matters little what the consequences are to the animal itself. It is not rare that parents, by precisely the same means, destroy their own children emotionally, turn them into neurotics and psychopaths. And yet, children are protected by the force of tradition and law from such aggressions, as well as the supposedly natural instincts of their parents. Animals, who have no such protection, fare infinitely worse. (pp. 28).

" . . . We have begun to realize that *man* is not independent of nature. We have sensed that we have need of all forms of life in order to preserve the quality of our own lives. We have begun, in other words, to do what we must do. Threatened by our own technological civilization, we can save ourselves only by rediscovering our animal nature, by accepting ourselves for what we were in our most distant past, and by building a community, one composed of both humans and animals. It must be a new



community, different from that which existed 20,000 years ago, or even two centuries ago. (p. 320).

Philippe Diolé, *The Errant Ark: Man's Relationship With Animals*, New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1974.

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### "Evolution and Our Animal Kinship

"Don't let anyone tell you that evolution is just a theory. Some people still believe that human beings are a special form of divine creation, something separate from and above all other life forms—the only one with a soul perhaps. How convenient this thinking is for those who adhere to the Judeo-Christian tradition of *man's* god-given dominion over all creation, entitling *him* to use nature as a resource for *his* own gratification and to think of all creatures as *his* to harvest and dispose of as *his* whims decree.

"Even when Charles Darwin presented strong evidence supporting his theory of evolution, the continuity among species evolving toward greater mental abilities was accepted by few. Most chose to use Darwin's evidence to support their view of *man's* superiority and dominion over all creatures great and small.

"It is more important today than every before for human beings to be aware of their kinship with all of life. It is essential for our survival that we have a strong reverence for all forms of life as our kin and see all as part of creation (or of evolution as a godlike creative process if you wish). Our lack of dominion over ourselves and our dominionistic, egocentric world views are respectively suicidal and biocidal. Evidence from studies of the evolution of animals can give us the factual pieces to build a

firmer foundation for an active and viable belief in *man's* kinship with all life.

"Another proof of our kinship with animals comes from studies of the human brain. Comparing its structure and function with those of other creatures' brains, we find that we differ in fewer ways than we may think: the similarities between the brain of *man* and the brains of other mammals are greater than the differences. (pp. 121-123).

"To doubt whether an animal can experience pain, fear, anxiety, satisfaction, and pleasure is to doubt the very existence of our own consciousness. And to reject the possibility that our most recently evolved animal kin—the carnivores and primates—cannot or do not experience comparable states of joy, depression, guilt, remorse, and love is as illogical as denying that you or I have such experiences.

"Only the skeptic, divorced from *his* own animal self, like a robot tuned into its new brain biocomputers, would argue against the evidence of a continuity of animal awareness and inner subjective mental states akin to our own. And for what reasons would *he* argue against such evidence? Perhaps, in the final analysis, it is easier to think of other animals as different, inferior, and unfeeling, since to think and act otherwise brings with it the enormous responsibilities of humane stewardship, of benevolence to all life. (pp. 125-126).

Michael W. Fox, "Man and Nature: Biological Perspectives" and essay in: Richard Knowles Morris and Michael W. Fox, eds., *On the Fifth Day: Animal Rights and Human Ethics*, Washington, D.C.: Acropolis Books, Ltd., 1978.

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## COMMENT

Biology, Ethology and Animal Liberation  
by Doris Primack

(Editors note: This is Agenda's first guest editorial, submitted in response to Jim Mason's editorial in the last issue. Agenda readers are invited to join the fray on these and other animal liberation issues.)

"Animal rights is in the air", wrote Henry Spira in the last issue of *Agenda*. There is something else in the air, namely an increasing effort to understand the roots of human nature by observing its relationship to other species. Although the main purpose of this effort is a scientific rather than an ethical one, its potential for the furthering of animal rights as well as the resolution of social issues is considerable and deserves careful consideration. In fact, it is astonishing that this field with its rich material in favor of animal rights has been so totally disregarded by the movement.

I am referring to the investigations which started with Darwin's evolutionary theories as a stepping stone to the discipline of ethology—whose foremost proponent is Konrad Lorenz<sup>1</sup>—and which most recently culminated in the science of sociobiology propounded by Edward O. Wilson<sup>2</sup>. Briefly, ethology is concerned with the behavior of animals in their natural habitat and sociobiology aims at the combining of the social with the natural sciences. If we know where we came from biologically we can better determine how to improve socially.

These investigators in the field of animal observation may not

agree in detail but they all have two things in common: 1) They establish a direct continuity between what are called the "lower" animals and the human animal and 2) They have stirred up a veritable hornet's nest of virulent opposition reminiscent of the church's outrage at Galileo's discovery that the earth is not top star in the universe. They have committed the sin of challenging the exclusiveness of the human race. The furor that ensues whenever scientific inquiries reveal a link between human being and animal other than the mere anatomical one is most impressive. Since we are vitally interested in man's attitude towards animals we should examine the causes of this opposition and two reasons come to mind: One is human conceit and the other human guilt.

Humanity is accustomed to seeing itself as either the product of special creation or else endowed with special attributes unique to our species. Either view gives it special status. Significantly, positive traits such as intelligence, cooperation, altruism and other moral behavior are our exclusive property while negatively perceived (because misunderstood) traits such as territoriality, aggression, dominance etc. belong strictly to the realm of raw "animal" nature. If we do seem to be afflicted with such base behavior we theorize that it arises from the conditioning of "society" or "culture"—conveniently forgetting that society and culture were not foisted upon us from outer space but are our very own invention.



I should like to refer the reader here back to *Comment in Agenda No. 2*. This editorial mentions the "notions" of power, hierarchy, competition, dominance etc. which are seen as having been generated by our economic structures and result in animal-hating attitudes and the oppression of *man* and animal alike. If these traits were mere notions their eradication would not be so problematical. Unfortunately they are much more formidable than that. Ethology has shown that these attributes are pervasive throughout the animal world and that they are instinctively based. They have been selected out over eons in the evolutionary process and as such have been provided with safeguards to keep them beneficial to life. And instincts are anything but notions. They are genetically determined, deep-seated regulatory forces. Unless we want to cling to the belief in our special creation we cannot very well assert that a large part of life's genetic make-up disappeared with the emergence of *homo sapiens* and that the very same behavior reappeared later with the rise of civilization as an entirely different thing—namely the outgrowth of culture.<sup>3</sup>

If these traits have become ugly in *man* it is not because they are an odious by-product of our culture but because these formerly benign drives have become maladaptive in conjunction with *man's* unprecedented intelligence. Animals aggress in defense of their territories with nothing more than their own anatomical weapons and are largely inhibited from killing their own kind. Animal dominance and hierarchy keep order in a flock or troop. However, in *man*, aggression, allied to *his* intelligence, can invent the neutron bomb and human dominance creates economic power structures which are not conducive to order but to exploitation. To say that our economic systems have generated dominance is as illogical as to say that the existence of weapons has generated war. Neither weapons nor power complexes came about *ex nihilo* but presuppose the urge to use them. There is no evidence that the human being was ever averse to, or innocent of, exploiting *his* environment even prior to the rise of civilization some 10,000 years ago. *He* stampeded thousands of animals over cliffs when he had the opportunity. At the time *he* merely lacked the brains to exploit anything on a more systematic scale.

Yet our animal heritage is not comprised only of aggression and dominance. It also contains altruism and cooperation. Wilson in particular outlines the animal sources of these traits which, predictably, earned him a good deal of verbal aggression from his human-supremacist colleagues. Owing to the "cultural inflation of innate human properties," (*On Human Nature*, p. 164) altruism can be greatly expanded in *man* and is therefore *his* (and the animals') best hope—IF those now standing outside can be brought within its scope of application.

The biodeterminist school does not hold that culture plays no role in human behavior but rather that culture had to first be shaped by *man's* innate endowments. While these allow for many variations in cultural expression they also give us built-in limitations. Yes, hopefully we can "clean up our act culturally" but only if we use our intelligence to deal realistically with our animal inheritance instead of disregarding its existence.

The obstacle to this awareness is human conceit, the same conceit which places us above the animals and provides us with the imaginary moral right to exploit them. It is debatable whether animal-hating attitudes are the main cause of their mistreatment. Rather the cause seems to be indifference to them because of widespread ignorance of their nature. Few people feel outright hatred towards animals. The average meat-eater does not hate the cow and the fur-clad woman hardly gives a thought to the mink. People simply don't care because they regard animals as utterly unlike themselves and remote from their own

experiences. Before we can change their fate we must change the way they are perceived.

Rightly or wrongly, most people's concern and empathy are in proportion to their feelings or familiarity. This also is at least partly the basis for racism and any other kind of chauvinism. Our sympathies—and hence altruism—go out in concentric circles from the immediate family, friends, in-groups to nation, race and religion. We are social and territorial, two traits which prompt the foremost care for our own. And animals are positioned on the outermost rim. Human causes are basically fought for on the ground of our common humanity. All human beings deserve, even if only in theory, equal treatment by virtue of their membership in the human race. Animals do not even have theoretical rights because of their assumed *fundamental* differences. The assertion that such differences are not in kind but in degree is offensive to our self-esteem. The feeling of superiority seems to be essential for the sense of "meaning" of human life as opposed to meaningless animal life. Even Mary Midgley<sup>4</sup> who treats this subject at length finds it necessary to resort to *apologia* and appeasement whenever she points out our close ties to other species.

Another reason for the resistance to acknowledging this tie is the psychological threat it poses. Evolutionary concepts have been accepted by most rational persons intellectually but have been neither acted upon ethically nor incorporated into the human psyche emotionally. To do so would necessitate the admission that we are committing the most heinous atrocities and would thus generate guilt. Suppressed guilt tends to lash out against those who arouse it and if we are terribly wrong in our treatment of animals our guilt feelings would have to be terrible, too. After all, we like to think of ourselves as basically good. Hence the irrational anger directed against scientists like Lorenz, Wilson and others in that group who would upset the comfortable *status quo* of our uniqueness and with it the privileges we have allocated to ourselves. This very anger indicates that they have hit a sensitive nerve.

Animal exploitation has been justified throughout the ages by the self-serving proclamation of the special sanctity and uniqueness of human life. If that uniqueness is destroyed then it can no longer serve as an excuse for excluding other life forms from our sphere of justice. Because animal rights do not mean mere kindness. They mean justice, i.e. laws, and such laws will need scientific substantiation. Granted that mortality alone should dictate equal concern for all regardless of shape or color. But we are far from such perfection. Meanwhile it is not enough to state that animals are not property but living beings.<sup>5</sup> No one denies that they are alive. Nor does the issue of private v. communal property seem relevant. Abolish private property without changing the image of the animal and it will merely exchange a private tormentor for a collective one. Also, no one seriously contests that they have interests. No one today will deny that animals would rather be comfortable than in pain. The problem is that *their* pain does not affect us as does the pain of those with whom we *identify*. It follows that we must concentrate on ways to achieve a process of greater identification with animals.

It is here that the findings of the (undeservedly maligned) biodeterminists can serve the animal rights movement well. Indeed, their discoveries have led some of *them* to question the treatment of animals and to ask about "the boundaries of the community of beings to which special ethical considerations are due."<sup>6</sup>

We need not define the precise interaction of nature v. culture but we should systematically collect the wealth of scientific data which belie the out-dated harmful belief in the "otherness" of



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animals and stress their underlying "aliveness" to us. This evidence should be incorporated into our strategy and augmented by Peter Singer's principle of different interests since, unlike human rights groups, we are dealing with many species. It can be foreseen as proceeding on two fronts: on an educational level, and on a legal one—with the former creating the proper climate for the latter.

This does not prevent us from supporting other rights groups. It does mean that we have extra difficulties which need a special approach. There exists a legal framework for humans, even if it is imperfect. There exists none for animals and, because of their great diversity, it will take many stages to erect one. The start may have to be made with those whose similarity to *man* is most obvious and whose ill-treatment and killing is beginning to evoke a glimmer of doubt in the minds of some people outside the movement. These are the apes and possibly the dolphins. If we could work towards a legal case for their right to be neither harmed nor killed it would throw the issue of animal rights wide open. Although it may appear arbitrary and unjust to single out one highly intelligent creature, this must be seen as merely the most expedient way of setting a precedent. The number of victims saved would be small, but the significance of winning such a case with even *one* type of animal would be enormous; for the first time in human history the age-old barrier between *man* and animal would be breached.

Admittedly, this is a very long-range goal, but so are all other solutions—including the restructuring of society. The causes of animal oppression are very complex. This essay tries to look at

these causes from a psychological point of view and to show how science may be used to overcome the psychological block which prevents humans from elevating animals to a status of moral and legal equality.

(NOTE: I have used "man" in the general sense of "human being" for the sake of simplification and when I speak of "us" those who have transcended human parochialism should not feel themselves included.)

*Doris Primack is a long-time animal rights advocate based in New York City. She has worked with various animal welfare/rights groups over the years. She serves on the coordinating committee of Vegetarian Action, P.O. Box 508, Radio City Station, New York, NY 10019.*

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Edward O. Wilson, *On Human Nature* (Cambridge Mass: Harvard U. Press, 1977)
3. Richard Leakey, *Origins* (New York, E.P. Dutton, 1977)
4. Mary Midgley, *Beast and Man* (Ithaca NY: Cornell U. Press, 1978) (recommended reading in *Agenda No. 2*)
5. *Agenda No. 2*, Comments
6. Carl Sagan, *The Dragons of Eden* (NY: Random House, 1977)