

# Latimer on Law

Ideas, not ideology, in service of our shared ideals and the common good.

## **"Animal Rights:" Pernicious Nonsense For Both Law & Public Policy**

*"To those people who say, 'My father is alive because of animal experimentation,' I say 'Yeah, well, good for you. This dog died so your father could live.' Sorry, but I am just not behind that kind of trade off."*

-- Bill Maher, PETA celebrity spokesman.

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I come to the issue of so-called "animal rights" from several perspectives. I am a lawyer by education and trade, I am a student of history with interest in the history of science and the philosophical evolution of scientific thought, I am admittedly a sportsman with a strong interest and long experience in fishing, for the smallest trout in local streams to massive tuna far offshore. From all of these perspectives, I get really incensed over the "animal rights" movement as being not just silly, but as pernicious nonsense, because I am from all of those perspectives basically an environmentalist, a real environmentalist with a long history of significant, active involvement in local environmental issues.

### **I. So-Called "Animal Rights" Activists Are, From The Perspective Of A Genuine Environmentalist Ethic, Not Concerned With Any Real, Scientific Policies To Protect Other Species Through Environmental Controls Against Habitat Loss And Pollution Or Through Scientifically Valid Wildlife Management Policies.**

I am starting this discussion with an overview of my involvement with environmentalism over the past few decades, not as an armchair quarterback who simply opines on the subject, but as one who has been both vocal and active on important environmental issues, as a public official, as a citizen volunteer and as a sportsman.

Officially, I am at present a member of the Falmouth Planning Board with over 20 years tenure, concerned with controlling the pace of development in my town including issues of open space and groundwater protection. Previously, for six years, I was a member of the Conservation Commission with direct, hands-on responsibility for protecting our local wetlands through the permitting process for development, as well as the promulgation of wetlands regulations.

I am currently a member and a former director of Falmouth's 300 Committee, a non-profit organization committed to acquiring open conservation lands for the town. I am a member and a former director of the Cape Cod Chapter of Trout Unlimited, with over 200 hours of volunteer service restoring the Quashnet River, after its degradation by the Cranberry industry and then decades of neglect, and as a former director of Citizens for Protection of Waquoit Bay who worked with Matt Patrick in getting the state to purchase the watershed lands around the Quashnet River.

I am a member and former director of the Falmouth Rod & Gun Club which owns the single largest tract of private conservation land in the town, over 200 acres extending to and over the Mashpee line. This land is actively managed for wildlife, including the creation of edge habitats with open fields and adjacent woodlands for deer. The Club has also been involved in arduous volunteer clean-up work of the Child's River, which runs through our property, after hurricane blow-down clogs its natural flow.

I am also a sportsman, and as such I support the scientific habitat preservation and population management efforts of the Division of Fish & Wildlife financially by purchasing a fishing license every year. I have also weighed in occasionally by writing letters in support of the Division's efforts to protect the health and welfare of animal populations in confined areas, through scientific wildlife management practices, as against the specious intermeddling of the "animal rights" movement.

In these several direct ways, as a public official, as a volunteer, as a sportsman and as a concerned and engaged private citizen, I have become acutely aware of the real dangers posed to wildlife through habitat loss and contamination caused by unchecked local real estate development, as well as by inadequately regulated industrial practices that cause air, water and groundwater pollution.

Those are *real* dangers today, not just to the environment but to the welfare of all other creatures we share the Earth with. The "animal rights" focus, by contrast, is on our allegedly "cruel" treatment of individual animals in various specific, carefully selected and isolated contexts, from laboratory mice to farm mink to market hogs to broiler chickens, or whatever may be their next cause *du jour*, chosen specifically for getting the most uncritical media coverage and then getting a fresh flow of cash donations from their scientifically ignorant and easily duped contributors. It has absolutely nothing to do with any genuine environmentalist ethic.

In two prior posts I have documented the ethical and moral shallowness of the "animal rights" credo itself, which is based on an anti-human self hatred, taking the form of a "moral" squeamishness concerned more with stamping out human "cruelty," no matter what the social or economic costs might be, rather than any genuine concern for species diversity or even for animal welfare. I have also documented the evolutionary and biological inanity of ascribing "rights" to other species, as well as the philosophical and political absurdity of doing so.

Here, the focus is on the legal and political damage that the "animal rights" movement has done to the cause of scientific environmentalism in the related contexts of law and politics. This is in addition to their history of support for extra-legal terrorist activities in the cause of "animal liberation," all of which has served to discredit environmentalism by lending credence to the American right's attempt to portray all environmentalists as liberal moonbat "tree huggers."

That history of frivolous litigation and dishonest politicking in the name of "animal rights" is well documented. It has not been simply a matter of seeking to enforce traditional humane laws or existing animal welfare laws in balance with our legitimate human needs. It is instead a concerted political attempt to effect changes in those laws and redefine our relationship with other species by assuming the authority to enforce "rights" belonging to other species as against the state and others whose scientifically valid practices, consistent with existing established humane principles, are considered by them to be "cruel" and therefore in violation of their "animal rights" credo.

As a left of center Democrat, I do not merely dismiss the "animal rights" movement as just some harmless, philosophical silliness we might blithely accept under the big circus tent of liberalism. Instead, I challenge it at every turn for the truly *pernicious nonsense* that it in fact is, both legally and politically.

**II. The "Animal Rights" Movement Has A Long And Sordid History Of Filing Specious Legal Actions, Basically Just So Much Pernicious Nonsense, That Serve Mainly, On Purportedly "Ethical" Grounds, To Disrupt The State's Scientifically Valid Efforts And Protecting Wildlife Habitat Generally And Individual Animal Populations Specifically.**

The "animal rights" movement has a long and sordid history of abusing both the court system and important environmental laws by bringing frivolous lawsuits against the government and others on behalf of other species or individual animals. That history is truly a shameful example of "litigation run amok."

**A. Animal Rights Activists Arrogate To Themselves The Right To Enforce Important Environmental Laws On Behalf Of Other Species With Absolutely No Standing To Do So, Thereby Undermining And Trivializing The Laws Themselves.**

On the issue of standing, i.e. who can enforce environmental laws intended to protect wildlife species, the Supreme Court in *Lujan v. Defenders of Wildlife*, 504 U.S. 555 (1992), held that responsibility for enforcing the Endangered Species Act, or any other significant environmental legislation, rests solely with the agencies designated by law to implement them, as a matter of Constitutional law, unless an individual citizen can prove some specific injury to himself as opposed to any individual animal or animal population in general.

This is simply a matter of basic Constitutional jurisprudence where, under Article III, there must be an actual "case or controversy" for the federal courts to take jurisdiction over any issue arising under the Constitution, the common law or statutory law. And that was what the Supreme Court held in *Lujan*, tossing the animal rights plaintiffs out of court.

More specifically, *Lujan* held that the "animal rights" plaintiffs had no standing to bring suit under the federal Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C., Sect. 1531 et seq., when they challenged certain regulatory rulings made jointly by the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Commerce as to the use of federal funds overseas that might impact the habitat of endangered species, unless they could show not only some specific harm to an endangered species on the list, but also some direct, immediate damage to themselves as individuals, as the law requires.

In *Lujan*, the Court divided 7 to 2, with liberals and conservatives joining in the majority ruling and Blackmun and O'Connor dissenting. This is clearly an affirmation that the kind of mindless "environmentalism" promoted by the "animal rights" movement is not merely a political question of liberal vs. conservative, but involves important issues of Constitutional law with the court stressing that only people can claim governmental interference with *their* rights as people, and in doing so must establish under Article III that they have an actual case in

controversy involving some specific grievance or damage to their rights as individuals, and not simply some real or imagined damage to individual animals or to other species generally

Clearly, under our secular Constitutional government, there is no such thing as animal "rights" that can be enforced as such by the courts. The animals, of course, cannot do it for themselves, and neither can any group of self-appointed, holier-than-thou individuals seeking to manipulate public wildlife management policies in the name of "animal rights."

**B. "Animal Rights" Activists Misuse And Abuse Important Environmental Laws In Order To Advance Their Non-Scientific And Anti-Human "Ethical" Agenda.**

Specific examples are legion as to the "animal rights" movement's dishonestly sordid history of frivolous litigation that has served mainly to garner publicity for groups such as PETA, MSPCA or the oxymoronic Humane Society of the United States, in their attempt to interfere with the legitimate scientific efforts of our public officials to address real environmental concerns. Here are a few local cases in point.

**(1) American Bald Eagle v. Bhatti.**

In American Bald Eagle v. Bhatti, 9 F.3d 163 (1<sup>st</sup> Cir., 1993), the animal rights plaintiffs, presuming to speak on behalf of the bald eagle, sued the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Fish & Wildlife to halt a restricted deer hunt at the Quabbin Reservoir because it was possible that spent lead shotgun pellets would get into the water, be eaten by trout and then the trout would be eaten by an eagle, causing damage to the eagle. No, I'm not kidding. This was purportedly to enforce the federal Endangered Species Act, but it was clearly motivated by an "animal rights" concern to prevent the "cruelty" of deer hunting.

The DFW had a restoration program for bald eagles at the Quabbin, that had resulted in an increase from only 13 in 1982 to 45 in 1993, out of a total state population of 60. Meanwhile, due to a prior ban on hunting on the Quabbin reservation lands, the deer population had increased to a level that far exceeded the state average of 6 to 8 per square mile, and was therefore damaging the forest by gradually eliminating the tree root system necessary for soil stability and the filtering of pollutants. This, in turn, caused a real, scientifically documented threat to water quality in the Quabbin reservoir, the major source of drinking water for Boston and surrounding communities.

The rational solution to the environmental issue at the Quabbin was obvious, reduce the deer herd through a limited controlled hunt, made optimally cost-effective by giving permits to hunters to take a pre-determined number of deer and thereby restore the balance between the deer herd and the ability of the habitat to support their nutritional demands. Then, naturally, the "animal rights" busybodies came raging into court, waving their frivolous complaint and, of course, the judges on the First Circuit Court of Appeals threw the "Bald Eagle" plaintiffs out on their ears.

The Court of Appeals upheld the trial court's finding that the "Bald Eagle" plaintiffs presented only a vague and speculative claim of possible injury to the eagle as a protected species, not a clear threat documented by any scientific studies of the problem as the statute expressly required.

Among the Court's specific holdings on appeal was to uphold the trial court's ruling against the plaintiffs as to admitting certain exhibits. The plaintiffs had attempted to admit only redacted sections of documents, which were scientifically misleading when read out of context. Instead, the trial court gave the plaintiffs the option of putting the entire documents into evidence, or not offering them at all. 9 F.3d at 167-168. Of course, the "Bald Eagle" plaintiffs chose not to put the documents into evidence and then went running to the Court of Appeals on that "issue."

That kind of *dishonesty*, taking factoids out of context both in litigation and in politicking, is just so typical of how the "animal rights" movement has always sought to manipulate public policy and public opinion. It is actually no different in principle from what the right-wing media demagogues do routinely to discredit the liberal or "socialist" policies which they perceive as goring *their* oxen. Indeed, using an imagined and scientifically unfounded "threat" to an endangered species as a pretext to prevent the "cruel" hunting of an overly abundant species like the white tailed deer that is far from endangered, is itself no less cynical and dishonest than anything we ever get from Rush Limbaugh, on Fox TV or in the Murdoch press.

(2) ***Animal Legal Defense Fund vs. Fisheries & Wildlife Board***

In *Animal Legal Defense Fund vs. Fisheries & Wildlife Board*, 416 Mass. 635 (1993), animal activists sued the Commonwealth over certain requirements for appointment to the citizen Fisheries & Wildlife Board that advises the Division of Fish & Wildlife on matters of public policy.

The plaintiffs' inane claim this time was that a requirement that members of the Board possess a Massachusetts sporting license was somehow "unconstitutional." The SJC threw the case out, holding that the requirement was rationally related to the legitimate state interest in wildlife management. What the Court did not address strongly enough was the obvious point that the animal activist plaintiffs themselves clearly do not care about rational, scientific wildlife management at all.

A fishing license then cost only a few dollars. When I buy a license, I may go weeks or months without actually using it, as during the summer months when I fish almost exclusively on the salt water. Still, even if I never fished in fresh water, my thirty dollars or so, along with the fees paid by every other fisherman, hunter or trapper, goes toward funding the Division's important environmental work in managing wildlife populations and wild habitat.

Purchasing a Massachusetts sporting license doesn't require that anyone actually use it to hunt or to fish, but it does indicate that the purchaser supports the important environmental work of DFW, i.e. their basic statutory mission. So any "animal rights" zealot who wanted to be appointed to the Board would only have had to pay a modest fee for a license to be eligible, without ever having to get "blood" on his hands in the field. The fact that they objected to this was not really based on the right to free speech or any other constitutional right, but solely on the fact that they did not want to support the Division's essential work, as defined in the law, to implement scientific wildlife management practices, both humanely and efficiently, in the interest of both the citizens of the Commonwealth and the animals themselves.

Here, it goes without saying that to qualify for a citizen advisory board working with a state agency, one must at minimum support the overall mission of the agency as defined by law. Therefore, the objection to buying a sporting license clearly demonstrated that the "animal

rights" agenda that the plaintiffs sought to bring to the Board is contrary to the basic mission of the Division of Fisheries & Wildlife, and that clearly *disqualified* them from serving on the Board, license or no license.

(3) **MSPCA v. Division of Fisheries & Wildlife**

In MSPCA v. Division of Fisheries & Wildlife, 420 Mass. 639 (1995), the "animal rights" zealots who have taken over the MSPCA, sued the state under Massachusetts law, M.G.L. c.131, Sect. 80A, over a regulation that permitted use of padded jaw leghold traps. The SJC overruled a finding by Superior Court Judge Patrick King that such traps violated the "live unhurt" criterion of the statute, based on a sensible reading of the statute in accordance with the legislature's obvious intent -as opposed to the shrill, sentimental posturing of the "animal rights" agenda.

Basically, the MSPCA wanted to read a mindless "zero tolerance" requirement into the statute, and Judge King mindlessly ruled in their favor. The SJ C, however, quoted the actual language of the regulation that clearly implemented the statutory purpose that leghold traps must be *designed* so as to promote the "live unhurt" criterion, along with voluminous evidence offered by the Commonwealth that the padded jaw traps were in fact so designed and were overwhelmingly effective in meeting the "live unhurt" criterion, despite infrequent instances where trapped animals have been injured.

**C. "Animal Rights" Zealots Misuse And Abuse The Political Process Itself, With Dishonest, Demagogic Appeals To Mindless Sentimentalism, As Bad As Any Right Wing Extremist Rhetoric, In Order To Advance Their Non-Scientific And Anti-Human "Ethical" Agenda.**

There are many, many examples of the lawsuit-happy "animal rights" movement's abuse of our court system, including a recent California case where PETA sued the state Milk Producers Advisory Board because California dairy cows were not "happy" enough. This would be hilarious, except for the fact it is all too typical and is evidence of a serious abuse of our legal system. PETA's case was thrown out of Court on summary judgment, of course, but still some legitimate lawsuit, a contract dispute between builders or a personal injury case had to be delayed for such nonsense.

In addition to abusing the legal system, however, the "animal rights" movement abuses the political process itself through its dishonest, manipulative demagoguery. It is as cynical and abusive as anything we hear from the right-wing media demagogues, and it has only served to strengthen the conservatives' claim that all environmentalists are *moonbat* liberals.

(1) **The ProPaw Ballot Initiative Of 1996.**

I have focused here on the cited Massachusetts cases from the 1990s as a lead-in to the the *dishonest* demagoguery that infuses both the agenda and the political action of the "animal rights" movement. The issue of leghold traps, and that of membership requirements for the Fish & Wildlife Board, again came up in the mid 1990s, but in the political context of the so-called Pro-Paw Initiative, Question 1 on the 1996 Massachusetts ballot.

Question 1 was a three-in-one question, with provisions to outlaw stand-hunting for bears, to ban all leghold traps and to eliminate the sporting license requirement for the Fisheries & Wildlife Board. But on a full-bore television assault, the Pro-Paw ads focused *only* on the "cruel" leg hold trap issue, knowing that the Division could not legally respond while

sportsmen's groups just couldn't match the animal rights fundraising effort. Sportsmen today just don't have that many well-heeled Hollywood celebrities, like the airheads that pump money into PETA, HSUS and other "animal rights" groups.

The focus solely on the trapping issue was misleading in itself on this three-way ballot initiative. Their only campaign slogan was "Ban Cruel Traps," with nary a mention of banning tree stands or the DFW citizens advisory board. There was no inflammatory emotional value in those issues after all. Then, typically, the visual content of the ads themselves was both inflammatory and dishonest also.

The t.v. ads showed ancient footage of small animals like a fox caught in steel-jaw leghold traps, in obvious distress, and claimed that the ballot initiative was intended and designed to prevent that kind of "cruelty." But that kind of above ground steel trap had already been banned by DFW regulations for over a twenty years! The inflammatory video used in the Pro-Paw ads was a *lie*, a deliberate fraud on the electorate, and there's no other word for it.

Meanwhile, Question 1 outlawed all leg-hold traps, even padded traps which the state's highest court had already ruled were not unreasonably "cruel," under the law or as a matter of public policy, based on *facts* produced in court as evidence, as opposed to the inflammatory rhetorical posturing on which the ProPaw initiative was based. In the leghold trap lawsuit, remember, the Court required that any evidence admitted had to be *complete* so as to avoid misleading or flatly dishonest implications. Not so in the political context, however, where the last line of defense is the Attorney General's review of the ballot questions themselves.

Attorney General Scott Harshbarger approved the presentation of those three substantively different provisions in a single ballot question, obviously pandering to the animal activists because he was preparing to run for governor and thought nobody else really cared, instead of ruling as he should have, in keeping with his constitutional duty, that the three issues should have been presented as three separate questions. That backfired on him, however, since even this liberal Democrat held his nose and voted for Celucci, based on that single issue, not to mention every other knowledgeable sportsman of either party.

This is something of which President Obama should be very wary today, as animal rights organizations offer support and expect him to cater to their agenda. As much as I have publicly endorsed Obama and his policies, this is an issue on which he could lose significant liberal support, among those of us who really care about the environment and the welfare of other species generally, especially if the GOP manages to put up some reasonably moderate candidates in 2012 who addresses these issues.

**(2) The "Animal Rights" Groups History Of Political Meddling With Scientific Wildlife Management Policies Has Significantly Damaged Both The Cause And The Implementation Of Genuine Environmentalism.**

In addition to being lawsuit happy, animal rights groups spend huge amounts of money on lobbying efforts to change public policy in favor of their anti-scientific and anti-human agenda on every political level. Here are a few examples from Massachusetts.

In 1985, animal activists opposed the Trustees of Reservations plan to allow a restricted deer hunt on the Crane Wildlife Reservation in Ipswich, MA, in order to reduce the size of the

deer herd. The scientific evidence for this was that the deer were concentrated in such densities that the deer tick population was exploding, creating a serious risk to humans from a painful and potentially disabling infection from Lyme Disease. That, of course, was of no concern to the anti-scientific, anti-human zealots who promote the "animal rights" agenda as an "ethical" matter.

White tailed deer, like all other creatures, require adequate forage, water supply and living space in order to remain healthy and viable as a species or discrete population. This is a scientifically valid concern known as Biological Carrying Capacity. When the BCC of any given wildlands is exceeded, the effect of increased density on the deer themselves is far worse for *them*, and far less humane than a controlled hunt designed to alleviate the pressures of increased density. To allow a long painful death by starvation and wasting diseases can, only in the fevered imagination of an "animal rights" zealot, be considered more humane than the quick, almost painless death caused by a well placed shotgun blast.

There are many serious problems to both public health and safety caused by permitting deer herds to grow unchecked. Collisions between deer and automobiles increase, often killing both the deer and the driver -which doesn't bother PETA's Newkirk at all because she believes "the world would be an infinitely better place without humans in it at all." The damage caused by unchecked deer populations from overbrowsing, as shown in the Quabbin case, include serious habitat loss from erosion, which again harms the deer themselves as well as contaminating adjacent water bodies, with harmful effects on fish as well.

The harm caused by overcrowding of deer herds on limited available lands, to both the deer and humans, is well documented in the scientific literature, which also documents the fact that controlled hunting is not only the most cost effective way to deal with the problem, but the only really effective way as well.

[http://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/pdf/deer\\_mgt\\_options.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/pdf/deer_mgt_options.pdf)

Of course, the animal activists don't even really care about the health or welfare of deer herds except to protect them against the "cruel" hunter who killed Bambi's mother.

The issue has surfaced again recently, as focussed hunts have been scheduled in Massachusetts and Pennsylvania, with the "animal rights" zealots militating for unduly expensive and basically ineffective birth control practices to curb overpopulation. They couldn't care less whether such programs actually work as intended, and they clearly have no concern for permitting natural selection to work in the deer herd's gene pool, as deer are permitted to live artificially sterile lives, contrary to their "natural right" to reproduce which is no less important in nature than the right to life itself. Again, they just want to prevent the "cruel" hunters from killing Bambi's mother.

Maintaining healthy deer herds through wildlife management programs is an important and serious concern, as recognized both by governmental wildlife management agencies across the board and by responsible private organizations concerned with protecting other species properly, by protecting their habitat. The National Audubon Society's mission, for example, is:

*"to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitat for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity."*

<http://www.audubon.org/nas/> .



And the National Wildlife Federation's mission, as America's largest member-supported conservation group, is to unite:

*"individuals, organizations, businesses and government to protect wildlife, wild places and the environment."*

<http://www.nwf.org/about/>

Such sane, responsible and truly humane missions can only be accomplished by policies guided by science and reason, with an overriding concern to protect all species, including mankind, by achieving an appropriate balance between our activities and the natural world around us.

In 1988, "animal rights" activists persuaded the voters of Chelmsford to ban all trapping, using the same "cruel traps" rhetoric. The beaver population, predictably, exploded with rampant dam building that caused massive flooding. This caused not only flood damage to peoples' homes and spoliation of private wells, but the destruction of vegetative habitat that many other wildlife species depended on. The ban on trapping had to be lifted in 1994 but, meanwhile, the beavers were "happy," weren't they? That's what the "animal rights" zealots from PETA or HSUS will tell you, and that's clearly *nuts* in terms of either environmentalism or animal welfare.

In 1996, "animal rights" zealots led by that nickel-plated local moonbat Peter Souza of Provincetown, opposed the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services program to control the seagull population on Monomy by selective poisoning in order to protect nesting plovers and terns. The seagull population in the wild had begun to explode because we were closing the landfills where they had gotten used to getting a free lunch for decades. USF&S held its ground so, of course, so animal activists took direct action, sabotaging the program by setting out baits containing an antidote. The result was an abomination, but mainly for the seagulls themselves and the citizens of Chatham.

This same program had worked successfully in other locations to control gull populations and protect smaller nesting birds, including a program by the National Audubon Society on the Maine coast a few years earlier. Despite the animal activists' intermeddling, it worked well at Monomy as well, insofar as it did provide for a "gull free" zone in which the nesting shorebirds could rear their young successfully without seagull predation.

However, because of the "ethical" animal activists' meddling, many seagulls ingested the antidote and did not die quickly and cleanly within the program's design parameters, but instead made it from Monomy over to downtown Chatham where they died a much slower, and much messier death than would otherwise be the case, dropping like flies on the village's suburban streets and backyards. Of course, feckless State Senator Henri Rauschenbach immediately called for an investigation of USF&W instead of pushing for criminal prosecution of the moonbat animal activists who caused the problem by their pernicious intermeddling.

**(3) "Animal Rights" Groups Take Much Needed Money Away From Responsible Environmental Organizations, And Use It Chiefly To Raise Additional Funds, Or To Finance Lawsuits And Lobbying Efforts, Without Doing Anything To Actually Protect The Environment Or To Protect Habitat Against The Real Perils To Other Species Caused By Mankind.**

The animal activist organizations cause both direct harm to responsible organizations like Audubon and NWF in terms of impeding and interfering with their important work, alongside governmental wildlife agencies, to protect the environment and animal habitat, and in terms of competitive fund raising as well. The number of animal protectionist groups far exceeds the number of major environmental organizations concerned with protecting habitat, and they receive the overwhelming portion of tax-deductible donations which are directed to groups concerned with animal issues.

That the animal activist organizations do this in ways that are deceptive at best and often outright fraudulent cannot be denied. That's not just my opinion, either, because "animal rights" advocates like Ingrid Newkirk shamelessly admit that:

*"PETA's publicity formula (is) eighty percent outrage, ten percent each of celebrity and truth."*

The thing is, though, she grossly exaggerates the part about "truth."

The Humane Society of the U.S., for example, spends the single largest portion of its budget on additional fundraising, through various media outlets that uncritically take its money and then publish its anti-scientific and anti-human nonsense. Meanwhile, HSUS, unlike both Audubon and NWF, spends *zero* dollars on environmental protection or habitat preservation. They don't even support local animal shelters anymore.

The Biggest Lie of all told by "animal rights" organizations, however, is to dupe a gullible and uninformed public into thinking they are somehow "green" and are involved in protecting the environment, when nothing could be further from the truth.

#### **D. "Animal Rights" Activists, With Their Inane Anti-Human "Ethics" Cause Serious Damage Across A Broad Spectrum Of Important Economic And Cultural Human Interactions With Other Animal Species.**

The focus here has been chiefly on the damage caused by animal activists in the area of environmentalism generally, and habit protection particularly. But, of course, the pernicious "animal rights" agenda causes as much or greater harm in many other areas of human activity, too numerous to discuss in detail here, such as agriculture, medical research, product safety, pet ownership, pest control, *et cetera, et cetera*. In any and every human endeavor that involves interaction with other animal species, there is some moonbat activist group out there or another protesting against "cruelty" in the name of "ethical" treatment of animals as defined by "animal rights."

##### **1. Locally, The Meddling Of Animal Activists Has Ranged From Serious Interference With Truly Humane Economic Programs To The Ridiculously Inane Attempt To Assert That Pigs Have The Right To Be "Happy."**

Some local examples of animal activist meddling range from serious interference with important economic programs to the simply ridiculous. In 1994, animal activists protested the leadership of Gerry Studds, a liberal Democrat, for lifting restrictions on the importation of polar bear hides, as part of a program designed to benefit Native American subsistence hunters in the far north. The hunt was going to proceed with or without any such restriction, as the responsible Canadian wildlife agencies had determined there was no threat to the polar bear population, and

the hunt would help maintain healthy and sustainable polar bear numbers. Thus, the only purpose of the animal activists' protest was to deny us Americans the right to determine for ourselves whether we wished to purchase polar bear hides or not, or whether we wished to support our fellow human beings who depended on the trade in hides for their livelihood.

On the utterly ridiculous end of the spectrum was the protest in 2001, led by MSPCA, against a greased pig event for kids at the Barnstable County fair. MSPCA spokesman Walter Kilroy claimed that animal activists are not "extremist," yet the only thing he could say against the greased pig event was that it didn't make the pigs "happy." This was a tightly controlled event with no actual danger to either the pigs or to the young participants. The little piggies didn't have as much *fun* as the kids so, obviously, their "rights" were being violated by this "cruel" practice, but that's not *extremist*. No, of course not, not when you subscribe to an "ethic" defined by Walt Disney cartoons as opposed to rational scientific analysis.

## **2. The "Animal Rights" Problem Is Growing, As Advocates Seek To Validate Their Inane, Anti-Human "Ethics" Through Media Blitzes Designed To Divide And Conquer And Most Recently Through Efforts To Infiltrate Academia By Buying Their Way In.**

The fact that the "animal rights" movement and the related terrorist "animal liberation" movement target such a wide variety of disparate human activities has been part of the secret to their success at fund raising. They are highly organized, with national publications, mailing lists, *et cetera*, while they carefully pick on isolated targets, often the most vulnerable in terms of public support or even public awareness.

The all out assault on the fur industry is a clear example of this, where they target rich women as they leave department stores and specialty shops wearing fur during the winter holiday season. Nobody has much sympathy for those vain, rich bitches anyway, so let's stand up for the poor little fuzzy wuzzies who were killed to make those coats, huh? The problem with that is, and the deception as shown in the Canadian polar bear controversy, is that it is not only the rich customers and the tony furriers who benefit from the trade, but many subsistence farmers and trappers throughout America and the rest of the world whose meager livelihoods often depend on an annual influx of cash from the fur trade. But none of that ever gets mentioned because the animal activists would rather see a subsistence trapper and his family starve to death than see a single beaver or muskrat life be sacrificed to make a fur coat.

Baby harp seals are another *cause celebre* of the animal activists, who would rather see a whole clan of subsistence hunters die off than see a single cuddly widdle seal pup killed to help support that family with cash willingly paid by wealthy matrons here in the States or in Europe. But did you ever notice that we don't hear very much from them if anything about shoe leather? Cows, after all, just aren't all that darned *cute*, like the baby Harp seals.

Yes, they post things on their websites and magazines for the benefit of the true believers, but we don't often see them protesting outside the local shoe store to get free television coverage by spray painting a working mom's new pair of sensible leather shoes. Why do you suppose that is? Like I said, the entire animal rights "ethic" is both cynical and dishonest.

Because of their great success at fundraising, with significant targeting of airhead celebrities like Bill Maher, possessing more money than brains, the animal activists have started to buy their way into otherwise respectable academic institutions. A clear example of this is former t.v. game show host Bob Barker -now there's a real intellectual *mensch* for you, huh? "Come on down!" Barker has given grants of one million dollars or so each to several

prestigious law schools, including Duke, University of Virginia, Harvard and, I am ashamed to say, Columbia, to establish programs relating to "animal law."

One new bizarre development in this emerging "field" of animal law is the practice of wealthy moonbats leaving vast fortunes to their cuddly little puppy or kitty cat. Of course, the poor creatures have no idea and really couldn't care less about the money, but this gives great comfort to the animal activists who can then serve as *trustees* for the dear little muffies and mopsies, you know, they actually get to *spend* that money on behalf of the four legged beneficiaries -plus their own administrative fees.

People are living on the streets in America, never mind in third world nations, but we are now developing a whole new system of laws based on vast sums of private wealth, solely to make sure that cats, dogs and parakeets continue to live the pampered lives to which they have been accustomed. Sure, the idle rich are free to leave money to whatever inane causes they want, but that doesn't mean that we as a society are obligated, in the name of "animal rights," to develop laws and public policy to make sure their pets are pampered as they intended, especially when all the animals themselves care about is to be well fed, properly housed and have some caring person stroke their fur from time to time. That's something that can best be accomplished by finding a nice middle class family to adopt Fido or Felix.

### **III. Conclusion: Animal Activism Is Nothing But Pernicious Nonsense, And That's Really All Anyone Needs To Know About The Subject.**

I've tried to explain here exactly how and *why* animal rights is not only inane nonsense but harmful as well to both our legal and political systems, as well as in economic terms, with both factual documentation and case specific analysis, all for the benefit of those who may have an open mind on the subject.

There is much more that can and needs to be said on this subject, but not within the limited constraints of an essay like this. What is really needed, however, is for a large critical mass of Americans to wake up to the enormity of the damage caused by animal activism, to the natural environment, to public health, to the economy, to medical research as well as to our laws and public policies, and to respond in a *unified* way by speaking out and by supporting responsible groups, both public and private, interested in promoting both animal and human welfare through rational and balanced public policies based on science rather than mindless emotionalism.

So, as Porky might say at this juncture: "Th-th-th-at's all folks!"

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