

# "WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY ANIMAL RIGHTS?"



Animal rights is about letting animals live on their own terms. Animal rights can be written into our laws, but is not an actual list or bill of rights as we have for human society. It begins with our commitment not to act like masters of others.

# "WHY IS ANIMAL RIGHTS NECESSARY?"

Because we humans often act as though we are the only beings on the planet. Humans are the only animals that have upset the balance of nature—yet we depend on other animals for our very survival. The environment in which we all live depends upon the rich diversity, and interplay, of nature.

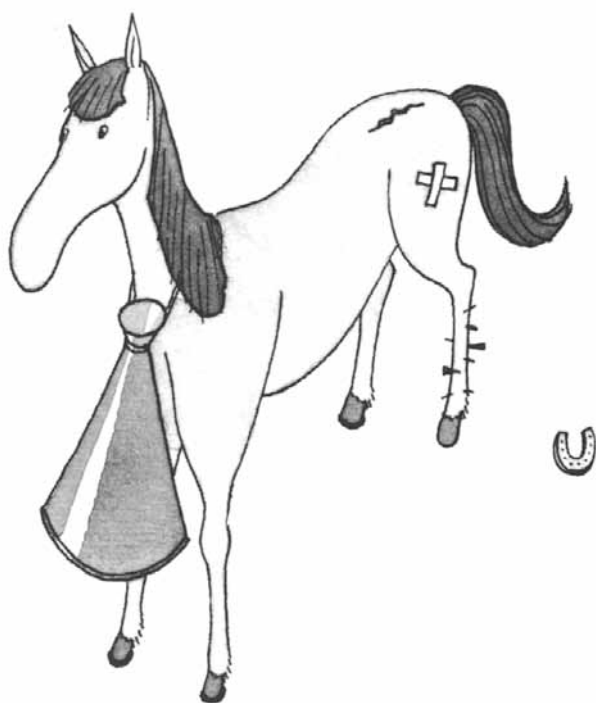


# THERE ARE LOTS OF WAYS THAT HUMANS EXPLOIT ANIMALS.

We domesticate them and use them for food, even though our nutritional needs can be completely supplied by an animal-free diet.

Although other materials are available, we use animals' skin and other body parts for clothing, furs, hats, boots, rugs, jewelry and even pet toys.





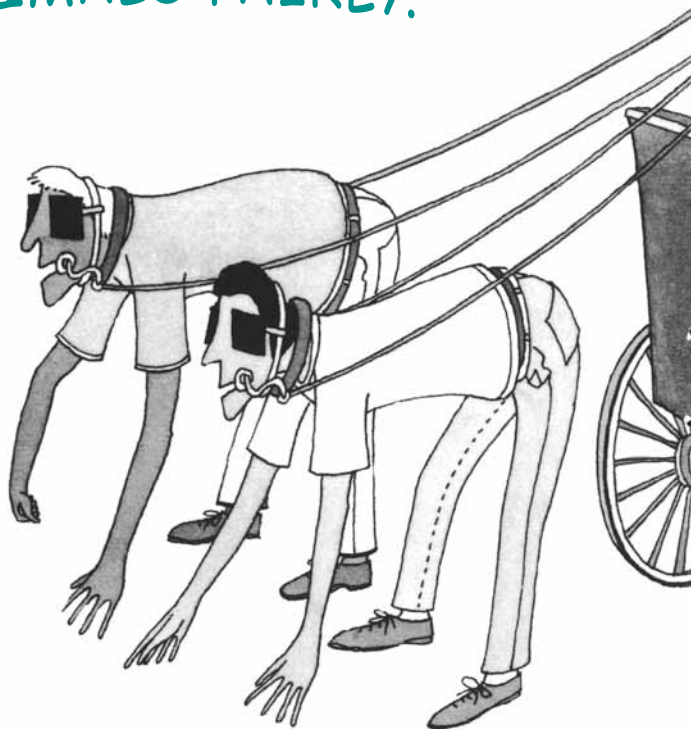
# HUMANS CAN TALK ABOUT IT AND ANIMALS CANNOT.

All animals wish to experience life in its fullness.  
Unlike many animals who have to kill to survive,  
humans do not. Why should humans cause misery  
to other beings when it's not necessary?

Dominion is the idea that animals are ours to control. Animal rights challenges this by offering a way of living that strives to lessen the harm that humans inflict on the planet, each other and, of course, other animals.

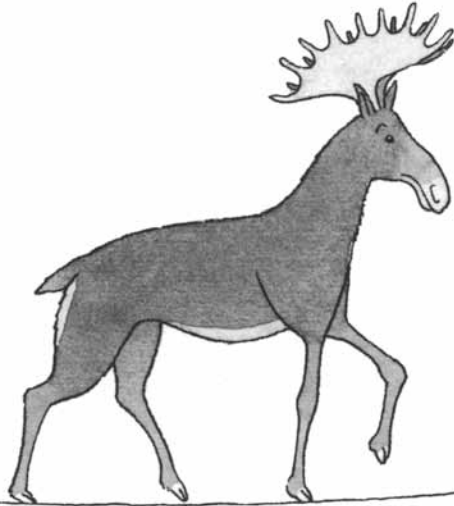
One way we can respect animals is to become vegans—people who do not eat or use animals or their products in any way.

ANIMAL RIGHTS IS ABOUT  
JUSTICE—TREATING  
ANIMALS FAIRLY.



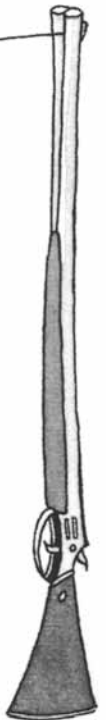
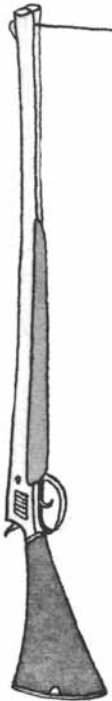
# WHAT DOES DOMINION LOOK LIKE?

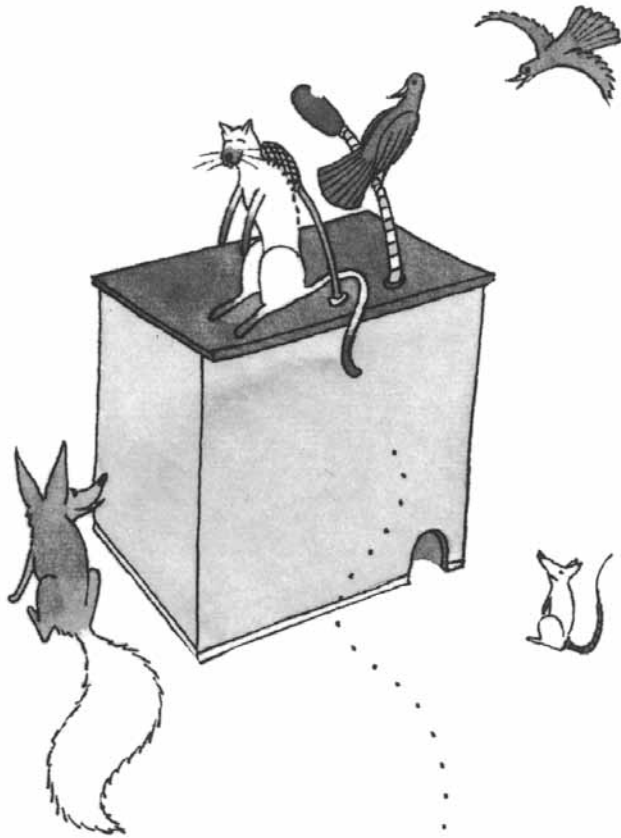
Here are some ways humans attempt to  
control nature and other animals:



- \* A government encouraging trapping and poisoning of animals to keep them off farms or ranches or out of our yards.
- \* A government attacks populations of free-living animals, such as birds, deer, wolves, coyotes, or black bears.
- \* Bounties (rewards of money) are offered to people who go out to kill certain animals.
- \* Artificial birth control is forced upon free-living animals to keep their numbers down.

Left to themselves, animals manage and balance their own populations naturally, according to how much food they have and the normal activities of predators.





"BUT THEY ARE ONLY  
ANIMALS—AREN'T THEY  
INFERIOR TO US?"

People often claim that because animals cannot talk or reason like us that they are inferior. Science, however, continuously teaches us that animals are highly complex beings who interact and communicate with each other.



# WHY WOULDN'T WE THINK OTHER ANIMALS EXPERIENCE EMOTIONS?

As we do, they protect their children; they feel fear;  
they warn each other of dangers; they play.

We might differ from other animals in some ways,  
but that doesn't give us the right to chase them down,  
take their lands, pollute their waters,  
or use them for our conveniences.



# ANIMALS ALSO EXPERIENCE PAIN AND DISTRESS.

It's not difficult to observe signs of pain in the way a conscious being reacts to it— including one who isn't human.

Humans cause suffering and pain for animals when we enslave them to pull our carts or bear young for us to buy and sell, or in any way force them to live a life outside of their nature and habitat.

Animal rights teaches us to reject violence, to not see others as instruments to our own ends, to stop taking advantage.





## WE TAKE ADVANTAGE, CAUSE DISTRESS, AND ACT UNFAIRLY WHEN WE USE ANIMALS FOR AMUSEMENT:

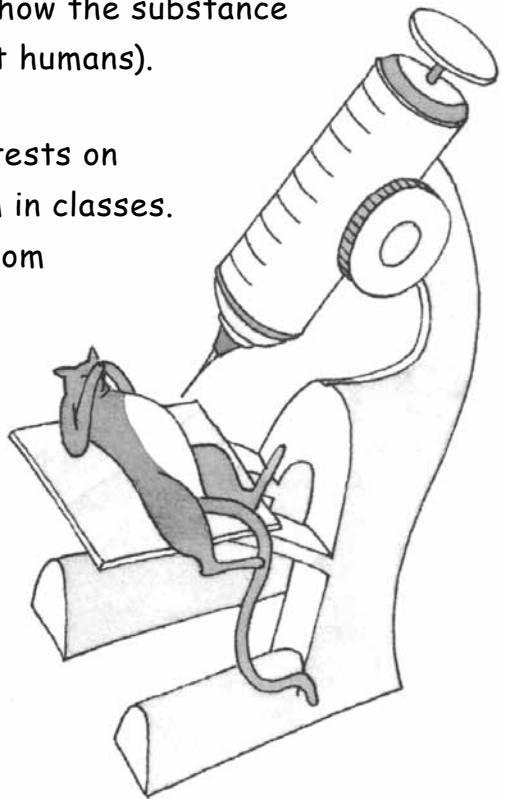
- \* We have forced them to do tricks in circuses and carnivals.
- \* We have taken them from their homes and gawked at them in zoos.
- \* We have drugged, injured, and even killed them in races, rodeos, bullfights, cockfights and dog fights.
- \* We have needlessly stalked and killed them to eat, or just for sport.

And lots of pets are abandoned on the streets or discarded in pounds (where they are often killed) when their owners no longer find it convenient or affordable to keep or care for them.

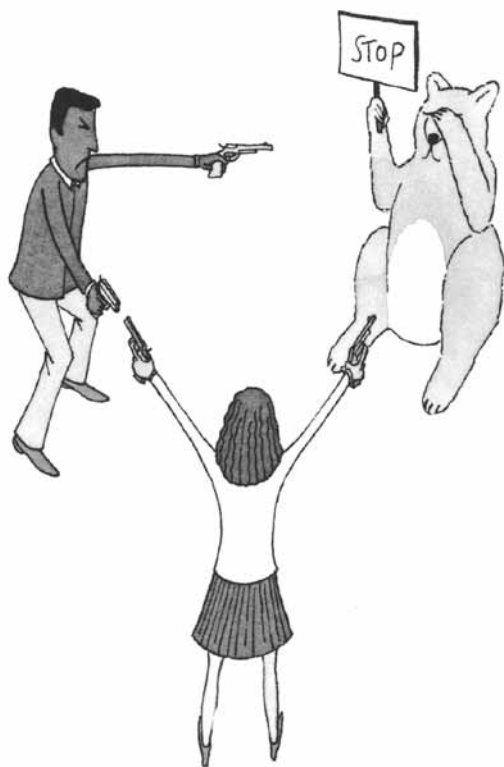
We also exercise dominion over and take advantage of other animals when we use them for language experiments or in biotech's research laboratories. We make them stand-ins for human beings to test household products, drugs, and cosmetics. We are often told this experimentation is necessary (even though many tests prove unreliable; after all, we really want to know how the substance of procedure will affect humans).

Students also conduct tests on animals or dissect them in classes. What we really learn from dissection is how to block off our caring attitudes about others.

If there were no other animals on the planet to use in labs, couldn't we find alternatives? We have minds; we should put them to use in this way.



WHETHER OR NOT WE WANT TO ADMIT IT, THINKING  
WE ARE SUPERIOR TO ANIMALS AND THINKING  
IT IS OUR RIGHT TO CONTROL THEM IS A PREJUDICE.



It can make people act mean, hateful, or just neglectful.

But—as with any type of prejudice—each of us has within us the power to change. We can adopt a different attitude, one that reshapes our destiny.

This will have wonderful effects on the planet's other communities. Other animals should be free, yes—to thrive. For life is more than avoiding torture. It is interacting, singing, pursuing joy.

# ANIMALS SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO LIVE FREE AND ON THEIR OWN TERMS.

We humans can learn to live responsibly,  
with respect, kindness, and love. We can  
learn how to respect the environment  
and all of our planet's inhabitants—  
including each other.



To learn more about animal rights and how you can get involved; and to learn more about eating and living in a way that doesn't take advantage of other animals, please visit:

Friends of Animals 

[www.FriendsofAnimals.org](http://www.FriendsofAnimals.org)

[www.VeganMeans.com](http://www.VeganMeans.com)



We also recommend "On Their Own Terms: Bringing Animal-Rights Philosophy Down to Earth" by Lee Hall. It even has a personal workshop you can use to develop your perspective and learn how to put it into action. The book can be purchased at the Friends of Animals website. Or ask your local library to stock a copy.

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