



Elephant in the Newsroom Campaign

All day every day, news promotes animal abuse, suppresses animals' stories, and stymies efforts at justice. Each of us can enlighten newsmen.

By David Cantor

This spring, RPA sent the producers of *The Pulse*, a large-audience public-radio program “about people and places at the heart of science,” two books about harm to human beings from biomedical experiments on nonhuman animals, with a detailed two-page letter including agony experienced by nonhuman animals in laboratories.

The Pulse had aired a show reinforcing standard fictions rationalizing animal experimentation: biomedical experiments “can’t be” done on human beings (they are); animals subjected to experiments are treated “humanely” (they suffer horribly); government regulates what experimenters do to nonhuman animals (it doesn’t); and medical progress necessitates animal experiments (it doesn’t).

RPA’s letter points out that the broadcast did not ask the central moral question, Are human beings entitled to other animals? It urges the show’s producers to present a truthful discussion of animal experiments and to inform news-industry colleagues of the reality.

“Animal experimentation is just one of many abuses promoted by news.”

Equal-Rights Campaign

The *Pulse* mailing is one of many communiqués in RPA’s Elephant in the Newsroom campaign. Like RPA’s other campaigns, Elephant in the Newsroom urges one of our most influential institutions to replace conventional wisdom established by and for special interests with truthful discourse in the public interest. Only then can the public grasp the enormity of abuse funded through taxes, universities, and other channels.

Animal experimentation is just one of many abuses promoted by news. RPA aims to change the story by enlightening the storytellers. That is how tyranny and injustice are eliminated and rights of new groups of persons established.

Rights-Promoting Strategy

To reduce animal abuse and the human misery it generates, we must supplant the false, long-established speciesist and human-supremacist story with a truthful story of all animals’ innate personhood and equality.

The news industry, like civilization’s other institutions, promotes the *misunderstanding* that maintains animal abuse and the perception that it is normal, natural, and ethical. The Elephant in the Newsroom campaign parallels what rights movements do to improve public discourse on gay people, women, people of color, Jews, and others defamed and treated unequally. By urging news to renounce speciesism, defamation of nonhuman

animals, the Great Chain of Being, and other beliefs, attitudes, and practices that harm nonhuman animals, we can influence the populace more than is possible through kindness and anticruelty rhetoric.

“To reduce animal abuse and human misery, we must supplant the long-established speciesist story”

Truth-Telling, Repetition, Persistence

A Kansas newspaper before the Civil War declared that any Abolitionist who set foot in the territory would be lynched. News strives to “reflect the larger culture” to avoid flak from audience and investors. News will not readily give voice to a radical new paradigm because doing so is bad public relations for news, and news is first a public-relations endeavor for itself.

For many years, RPA has been “pushing the rock” while recognizing it will take considerable time, additional voices, repetition, and sus-

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tained financial support to “move the rock.” But we know it can be done.

Years ago, we mailed a book, an article, and a letter to celebrity author Michael Pollan whose current best-seller, *The Omnivore’s Dilemma*, reinforced the false and harmful belief that human beings are natural omnivores – we’re actually herbivores, misled to eat from animals. We sent the same mailing to the large-audience public-radio show *Radio Times*, which regularly hosts Pollan. The next time Pollan spoke on *Radio Times*, he and the host acknowledged that human beings are herbivores.

That does not make it the station’s *policy* to debunk the omnivore fallacy – it still constantly fails to. But the Elephant in the Newsroom campaign can gradually change the story by enlightening the storytellers.

You Can Do It

If you would like to chip away at fallacious conventional wisdom regarding pet industries, climate breakdown, oil spills, human overpopulation, car culture, and other animal abuse underlying human misery and cruelty to animals, I’m glad to show you how: RPA@rpa1.org or 215-886-RPA1. ★

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Responsible Policies for Animals, a 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt educational non-profit organization, works to reduce animal abuse and human misery by urging institutions to stop promoting them. RPA has no salaried staff or directors. RPA members donate \$25 or more and receive RPA’s unique bumper sticker, newsletter, and e-Updates. On request, RPA considers ill, indigent, or imprisoned persons for donation-free honorary membership. Donate to RPA at www.RPAforAll.org or by mail.



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Cruelty versus Abuse: Crucial Distinction for Reducing Animal Abuse and Human Misery

Civilization is based on animal abuse, but little of the abuse is cruelty, so fighting cruelty can’t reduce animal abuse or the human misery it generates.

By David Cantor

Nearly all human misery in the news today is rooted in civilization’s animal-abuse policy, culture, and practice – supported by ideology holding some beings less than others.

Mass abuse of children at the border; official violence against black people; mass incarceration and rights violations; resurgence of antisemitism and attacks on members of groups dehumanized by the President; outbreaks of Ebola virus, MERS,

Lyme, and other infectious diseases; high rates of heart disease, stroke, cancer, and other diseases linked to the meat, dairy, fish, and egg industries; increasingly severe hurricanes, fires, and droughts; many times the number of people who existed on Earth when agriculture began now displaced by violence or lacking food and water; widespread trauma, stress, anxiety, and suicide: All are traceable to the vast scope of animal abuse starting with organized killing

of predators and venomous animals more than 60,000 years ago.

“Nearly all human misery in the news today is rooted in animal-abuse.”

All that civilization does to and with nonhuman animals and their natural homes and ecosystems is abuse that perpetuates human misery. Very little of it is cruel.

Cruelty Focus No Solution

In our daily lives, we know the difference between cruelty and abuse.

“With the focus on cruelty, animal abuse steadily increases.”

We can abuse – maltreat – someone without intending to, and vice versa. There can be a thin line between love and abuse, between play and abuse. We routinely “suck up” abuse of self and others, a constant of civilization, its institutions, industries, and systems; there is no way to address it all and still find enjoyment or relaxation. We usually only bother to respond to abuse if it sinks to a certain level: a beating or a vicious libel or betrayal rather than a minor slight.

Cruelty, on the other hand, means intentionally causing pain and suffering. People who display a pattern of cruelty are sadists or psychopaths.

But the animal-advocacy establishment routinely uses “cruelty” to denote all that it “fights.” “Cruel factory farming.” “Cruel fur-ranching.” “Cruelty to elephants in circuses.” “Cruel animal experiments.” “They cruelly set a cat on fire.”

Only the last of those uses “cruel” accurately. The others use the word incorrectly: The practices described, though atrocities, have purposes other than pain and suffering. The distinction does not matter to the nonhuman victims. But it is not possible to reform human policy or practice without understanding human motives and purposes.

Human Interest in Reducing Animal Abuse

Very few human beings will accept, let alone support, changes they perceive as harming them and their families and communities, even if the changes are proven morally right.

When farmers left their homes and families to fight the War of Independence, they believed victory would improve their own lot and that of their families, not just those of the elites who had instigated rebellion. The elites who signed the Declaration of Independence and crafted the Constitution intended to create a rebellion-free society by establishing unalienable equal rights to eliminate and prevent tyranny. When white people fought to end human chattel slavery and supported equal rights of freed slaves, they intended to improve the entire society and exculpate themselves from moral injury as part of oppression and injustice, not just to help people who were suffering.

Yes, those who support others’ equality are appalled by cruelty inflicted on rights-denied groups, but cruelty can only be reduced if the underlying abuses subjecting victims to cruelty are reduced. Merely speaking out after every beating, every lynching, every enforcement of sepa-

rate-but-equal cannot change policy or practice. Forces of the status quo are enormously powerful and have long since convinced the populace the status quo is good for everyone.

Swap Easy Futile Methods for Hard Practical Ones

It is the same with animal advocacy. Anticruelty laws have existed for centuries, organizations decrying cruelty and promoting humane treatment of nonhuman animals since the nineteenth century, highly funded and well publicized ones more than half-a-century. With the focus on cruelty at the margins, animal abuse at the center of civilization steadily increases. Animal-abuse policy, culture, and practice remain even though a small number of nonhuman victims are aided at the margins. All of our institutions teach speciesism and human supremacy: Animal abuse advances human interests; abuse only matters if it’s cruel because cruelty is an undesirable trait, not because nonhuman animals are entitled to an autonomous and fulfilling life.

Recognizing that standard animal-advocacy methods are easily defeated by forces of the status quo with more funding and publicity than animal organizations, RPA implements strategies that address the core problem that generates all of the others: abuse, not cruelty.

You Can Do It

RPA’s campaigns enable a small number of dedicated people to move our most powerful institutions to stop promoting animal abuse and resulting human misery. I can show you how to take part: RPA@rpa1.org or 215-298-RPA1. ★

A Responsible Policies for Animals member in Oregon who distributes RPA literature says, “RPA’s writings are the greatest.” A member in Pennsylvania constantly places RPA brochures in his public library. Contact RPA – RPA@rpa1.org or 215-886-RPA1 – for free literature. Help supplant false and harmful stories told about human beings and other animals.

What Is All Animals' Innate Equality?

It doesn't mean caring more about other animals than about people.

By David Cantor

When the founders established all human beings' innate equality as the basis of the American Revolution, and later when equal protection of the laws was established in the Constitution, the instigators did not care about everyone equally or treat everyone equally in their personal lives. They just understood, as students of the Enlightenment, history, and human behavior, that equality is the basis of eradicating tyranny and injustice.

Every effort to defame, demonize, or suppress the story of a group of human beings – poor people, criminals, black people, women, Jews, gay people, transsexual people, and others – diminishes victims' fulfillment, increases their abuse, and undermines civilization.

“Every effort to defame diminishes victims' fulfillment, increases their abuse, and undermines civilization.”

Same When Victims Are Non-human

There is nothing natural about animal-abuse culture or our species' building civilization at the expense of nonhuman animals. The Agricultural Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, and all of the technologies and comforts arising from them are rooted in the Animal-Abuse Revolution emerging more than 60,000 years ago with organized killing of dangerous

nonhuman animals – innovation, not our species' natural lifeway.

Because human beings are moral apes with an innate affinity for other beings and the living world, the long march of animal abuse has always been bolstered by rationalization – not justification for uprooting, massacring, poisoning, genetically manipulating, torturing, and otherwise harming other animals but the appearance of justification. From birth, human beings are indoctrinated into lifeways that harm nonhuman animals and beliefs that suppress the conscience naturally activated when we harm others.

Regaining Original Knowledge

When we assert that all animals are innately equal, we begin to tell nonhuman animals' story so their abuse can be reduced. While humans in their original home and lifeway feared dangerous animals and might have hated those whom they witnessed killing or injuring family members, they did not have ideologies holding nonhuman animals unworthy of life, autonomy, or fulfillment.

Having become attuned to autonomous free-living animals' intense enjoyment of their lives and their roles in creating the world that make our lives possible – spreading vegetation, developing topsoil, decomposing dead beings, and more – I see the need for our species to treat all animals equally to begin to reduce animal abuse and human misery, restore Earth, and create societies compatible with our species' original nature – free, autonomous, altruistic, generous, and democratic; not tyrannized, diseased, violent, anxious, stressed, and suicidal.

Interests over Ethics

If you read and listen closely, all of the propaganda amassed to de-

feat the endeavor to reduce animal abuse evades moral questions like, What entitles human beings to other animals?, or, What justifies killing or injuring other animals or preventing them from living autonomous and fulfilling lives?

“Propaganda amassed to defeat the endeavor to reduce animal abuse evades moral questions.”

Always invoked are *interests*, not *ethics*: If we stop breeding nonhuman animals, how will pig farmers make a living and what will life be like without pets? If we stop inflicting cancer, tuberculosis, and malaria on other animals, how will medical advances occur? If we can't crush nonhuman animals on roads, how will we get where we need to go? That is indoctrination by news, universities, industries, trade and professional associations – all institutions, including families, as generations of indoctrination come down to the young.

You Can Do It

All public and educational discourse promotes inequality among beings, though all beings are genetically interrelated and nature does not generate inferior and superior beings – only countless beings in a vast web of life. If you would like to urge authorities to stop defaming nonhuman animals and promoting unequal treatment, I can show you how: RPA@rpa1.org or 215-886-RPA1. ★