

Animal Care: Diverging ethical perspectives

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*“When are you Americans going to start being **scientific** in dealing with animal welfare?”*

- Ironic because American (**USA**) scientists tend to accuse Europeans (**EU**) of being emotional and NOT scientific in dealing with animal welfare (**AW**).
- What is the basis of each group (EU vs. USA) accusing the other of not using science?

•Note: Above abbreviations used throughout.

16-19th Century Views of Science (Natural History)

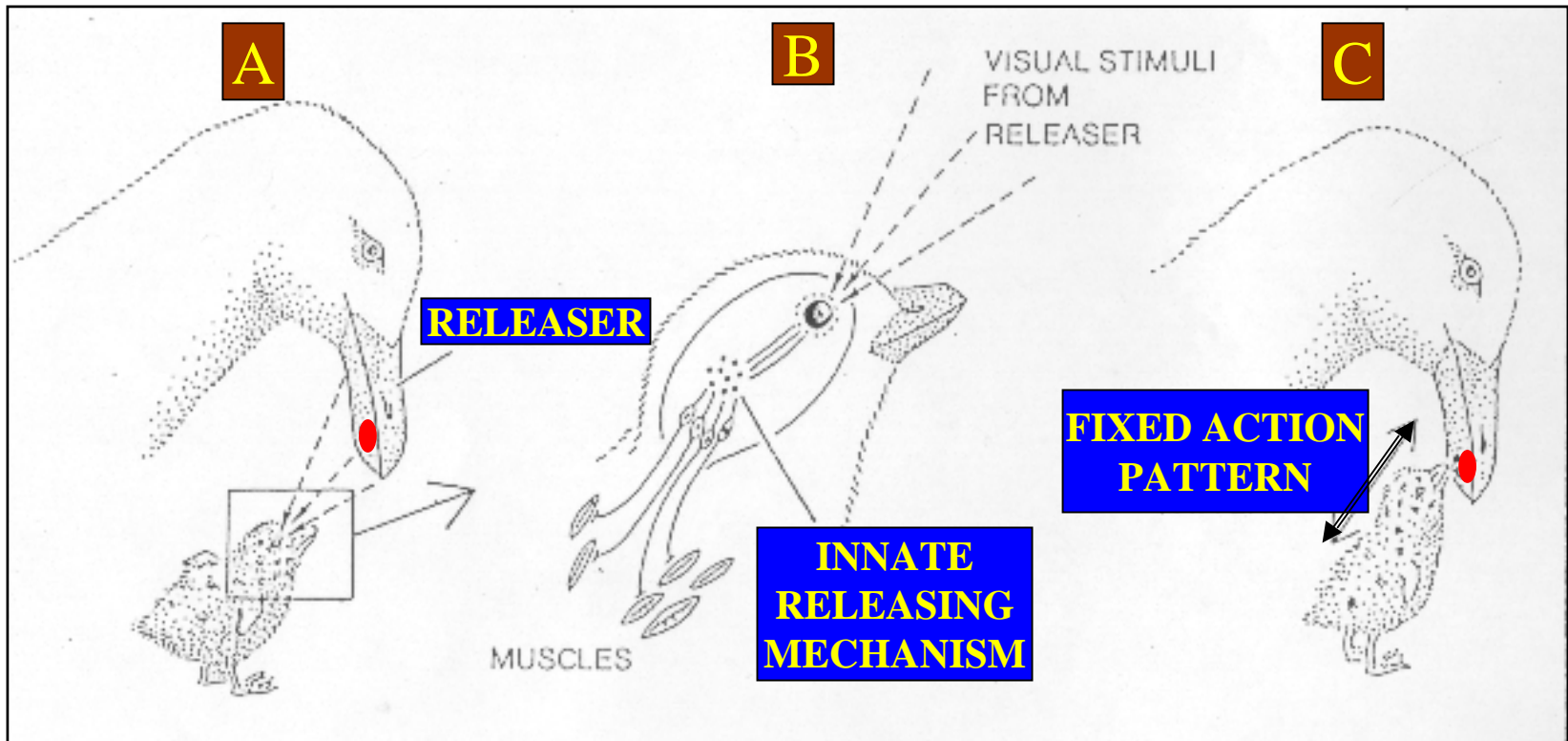
- **German**
- Vitalistic
 - Inner feelings
 - freedom of will
- **Science:**
 - humans as a part of nature.
 - Naturalism
 - **Synthesis** of knowledge
- **French (& British)**
- Mechanistic (Descartes)
 - animals as machines
 - matter as inert
- **Science:**
 - human means of controlling nature.
 - Artificial vs. natural
 - **Reductionism** & law of parsimony

(from S.F. Mason, 1962, *A History of the Sciences*)

Science of Animal Behavior

Europe & USA

- **Ethology (European)**
- ~1930's but dates to Darwin (*Origin of the Species*, 1859)
 - Evolutionary biology.
 - Behavior evolves through natural selection.
 - Behavior is an **adaptive** trait.
 - Nature (genes)
- *“Is a phenomenological science of the subjective.”*
- *“Provides a window into the animal mind.”*
- Both ethology & ethics have “ethos” (character) as root word.
- **Behaviorism (American)**
- **Founded by John B. Watson (@Johns Hopkins; 1900's)**
 - Goal: study behavior objectively
 - Behavior is a product of development and learning
 - Learning theory.
 - Nurture (environment)
- *“Consciousness is neither a measurable or useful concept.”*
- *“Cannot study what is in the black box (mind). One can only measure what it does.”*
- Hence, the term “Behaviorism.”



RELATIONSHIPS AMONG THE CONCEPTS: “releaser,” “innate releasing mechanism,” and “fixed action pattern,” illustrated in the herring gull chick. (A) The hungry newborn gull is sensitive to key cues present in the visual stimuli bombarding it. (B) Visual messages generated by releaser stimuli are routed via the optic nerve to a system within the brain that responds selectively to these specific messages. The innate releasing mechanism orders certain muscles to perform a complete, programmed series of contractions and relaxations. (C) The outcome of these motor commands is the performance of a series of competent pecks directed at the red spot on the adult gull's beak.

EU View of AW for Pigs

- Rooting, wallowing, etc. behavior is an inherent part of what a pig IS.
- A pig is not just anatomy, physiology, etc.
- The “behavioral needs” of a sow are just as important as her nutritional, thermal, physiological, health, etc. needs.
- To perform natural behavior, a pig must be housed in a natural environment.

Two Different Approaches to Science as related to Animal Welfare

Northern European

- Ethology
- **Evolution**
 - Ultimate causation
 - Behavioral needs
 - natural behavior
 - motivation/drive
 - natural environment

American

- Behaviorism
- **Physiology**
 - Immediate causation
 - Stress physiology
 - endocrinology
 - immunology
 - health & sanitation

USA and EU Science/Policy Today

- **USA**

- **Strong veterinary medicine influence:**
 - **Vets wrote “ILAR Guide for Lab Animals” which influenced “Ag Guide.”**
 - **Veterinarians (especially lab animal vets) have huge influence on IACUC’s, AAALAC-I, APHIS, etc.**
 - **Tend to emphasize sanitation, health, etc.**

- **Europe**

- **Ethologists had & have strong influence**
 - **W.H. Thorpe (ethologist) on Brambell Commission (1965)**
 - **Emphasized natural behavior**
 - **Behavioral needs**
 - **Natural environment**
 - **Drafting of EU Policy and Guidelines**
 - **International Society of Applied Ethology (ISAE)**
 - **“Animal Welfare Scientists” (ISAE members)**
 - **Have attempted to move normative statements about “what ought to be” into the realm of Science!**

Science and Ethics

- Science deals with *what is*.
- Ethics deals with *what ought to be*.
- **Animal welfare** is ultimately a question of *what ought to be* but should be in harmony with the knowledge about *what is*.

Animal Welfare

- Having to do with the total life experiences of an animal – and its evolutionary and domestication past.
- Animal Welfare Science?
 - implies expertise in all disciplines.
 - implies a blending or merging of science and ethics.

Swedish Farm Animal Rights

“Cows must have access to pasture.”

But this applies only during the growing season!



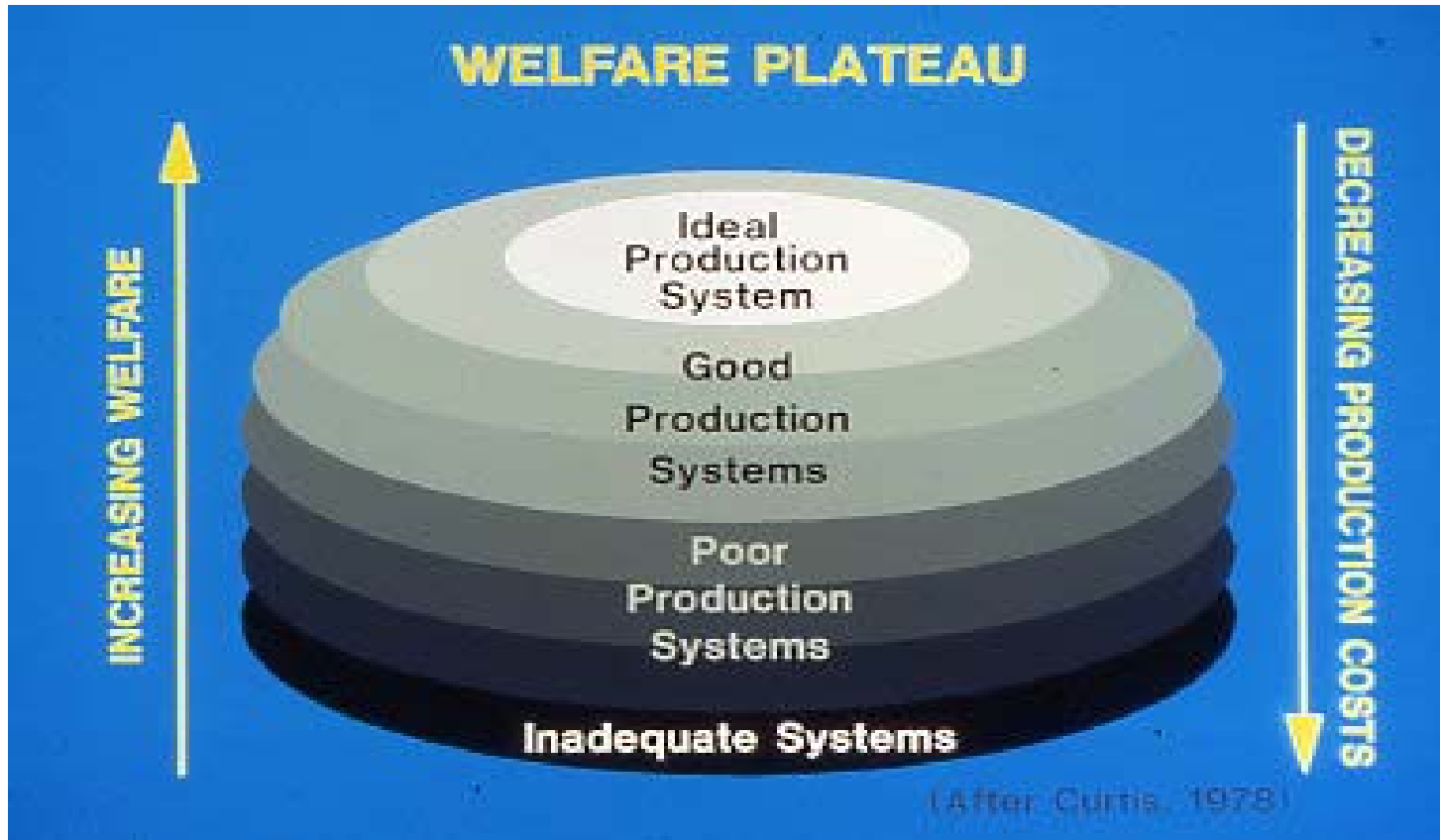
Tie-stalls in Sweden

- ❑ **Many dairy cows tied during non-growing season (~October to May).**
- ❑ **Argument: Banning tie-stalls would lead to bigger barns for loose-housing:**
 - Ultimately poorer welfare (larger groups, more milk per cow, feet & leg problems, etc.)**
 - More environmental problems.**
 - Force out small farms.**
 - negative for rural society as a whole.**
 - loss of the traditional red barns, Swedish Red cows, etc.**
- ❑ **Emphasis on a holistic view.**

How much milk should be asked of one cow?

- Swedish students tend to seek optimal answer through compromise by balancing :
 - Interests of the owner,
 - Impact to the environment,
 - Preservation of the rural community tradition,
 - Interests of the cow.
- American students tend to divide up into those who argue over:
 - rights of farmer vs. rights of the cow.
 - Is this the model of today's American society?
 - Red vs. Blue, Animal protection vs. Animal Ag., etc.

Working toward an Optimum



Gender, Ethics, and Animal Welfare

From Heather Lyons Narver. 2007. *Demographics, moral orientation, and veterinary shortages in food animal and lab animal medicine*. JAVMA

- Males tend to operate under the ethics of a **justice orientation** and see the world “in terms inequality or equality, connect(ing) vulnerability with oppression, and (connecting themselves) with issues of fairness, rights and adherence to standards and principles.”
- Women tend to align with the ethics of a **care orientation**, which “characterize relationships in terms of attachment or detachment, connect vulnerability with abandonment, and (are) concerned with the complexities of sustained relationships, compassion, forgiveness, and avoiding causing harm to others.”

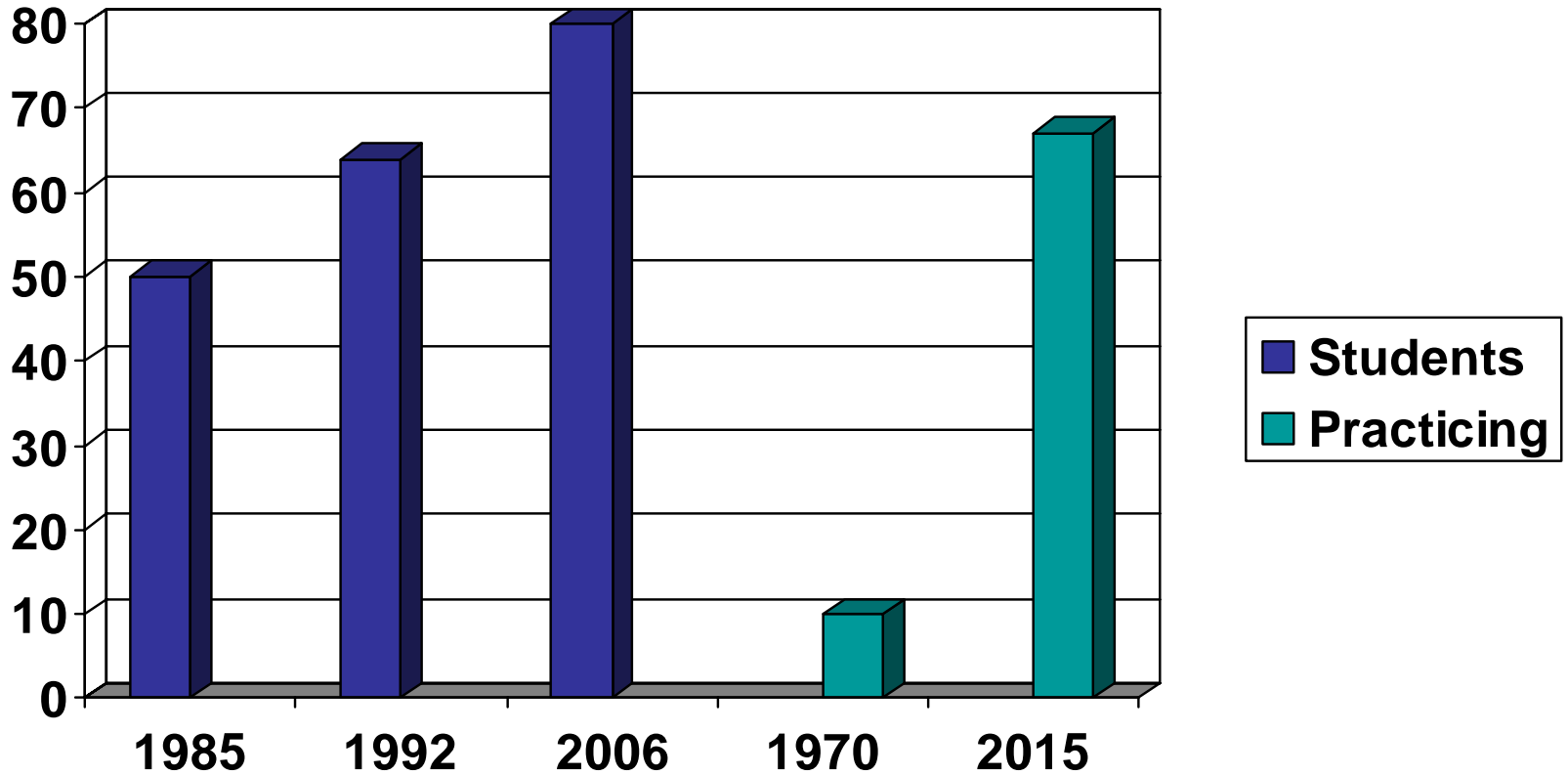
(above based on Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women’s Development*; 1982)

From H. Lyons Narver; JAVMA; 2007

	<u>Moral/Ethical Orientation</u>		
	<u>N</u>	<u>Justice</u>	<u>Care</u>
Male	10	67%	44%
Female	10	33%	65%

(Self et al. JAVMA; 1991)

Female Veterinarians (%)

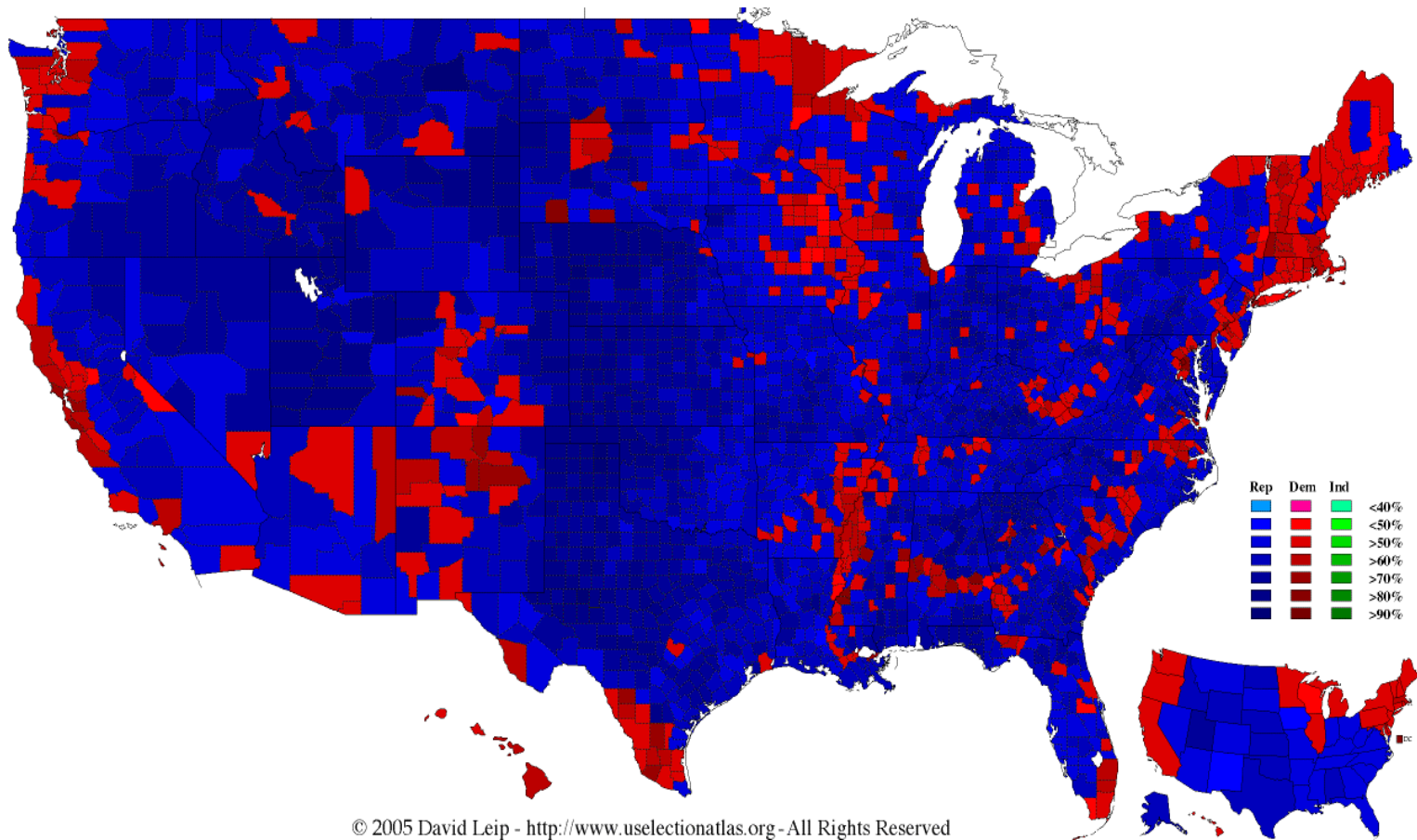


(Lyons Narver, JAVMA, 2007)

Urban versus Rural
attitudes
toward
Animal Welfare

Current Societal Situation

- Continued migration from rural areas to cities.
- First-hand knowledge of animals based primarily on dogs and cats.
- Greater knowledge of the behavior of social animals, especially non-human primates.
- Rapid research advances have eliminated DNA and other perceived species “barriers.”
- Science and technology are moving faster than society’s ability to comfortably assimilate the changes produced.
- Growing feeling of disenfranchisement of some members of society.
- Sizeable and growing literature on the philosophy of animal rights, ethics, etc.



Red = Democratic vote

Blue = Republican

Colors are reversed from the typical “Red State vs Blue State.”

“I don’t want to learn about cows and pigs and chickens. I don’t need such knowledge. My goal is to become a veterinarian.”



Question: “Why do you want to become a veterinarian as opposed to an advanced degree recipient in animal science?”

Answer: “Vets help animals and animal scientists cause harm to animals.”

(Above comments represent views of both male and female students.)

At U-Md., Speaking Up for Sheep

'Lamb Watch' Spawns Protest, but Supporters Cite Educational Benefits

By Amy Argetsinger

Washington Post Staff Writer

Tuesday, May 27, 2003; Page B01



“The Lamb Watch protest reflects a new front for student animal rights activists: ... some have started to raise objections to farming practices that have been standard for generations, particularly as they are taught at colleges rooted in agrarian traditions.”

“They're bred to be practiced on, and we prefer that none be bred... Either they should use the same animals every year or not use any lambs at all.”

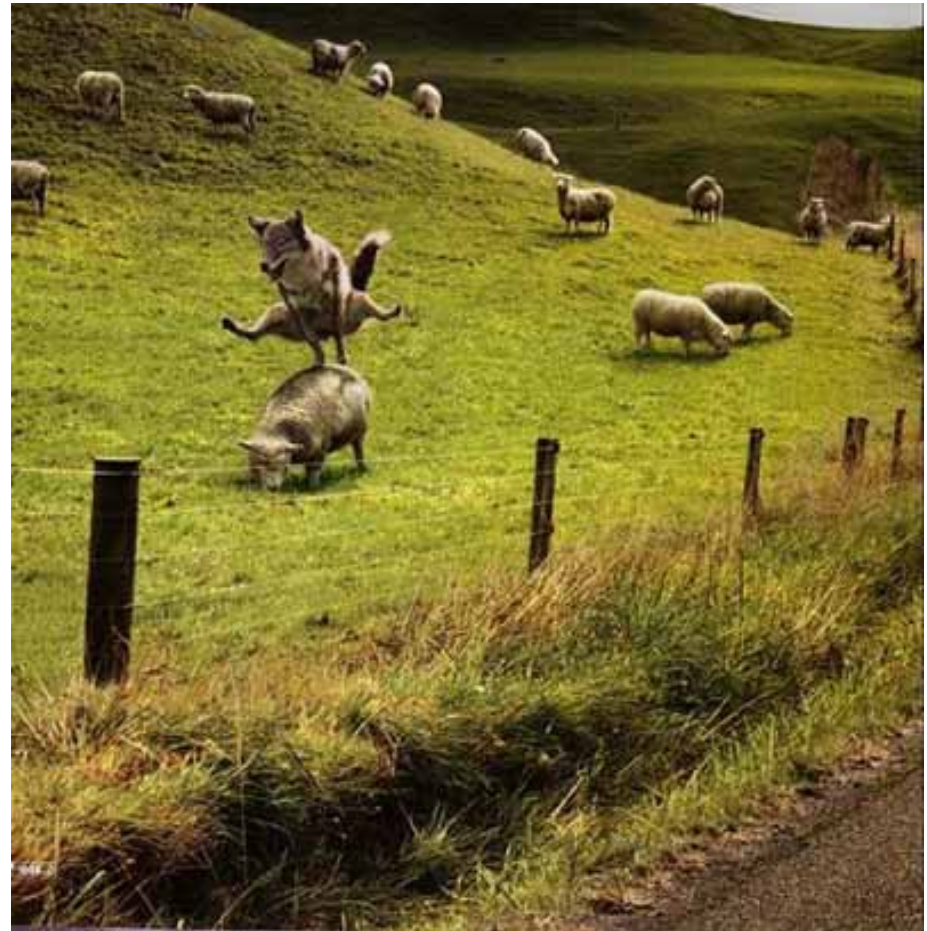
Nature

“Red in Tooth and Claw”



Mother Nature

“Kind and Gentle”



A review of survey data of the past 50 years.

(HSUS Publication; Herzog et al., 2001)

- Only ~2% of Americans are “true” vegetarians.
- Majority of persons state that health concerns are the basis for choosing to avoid certain animal products.
- There is no detectable trend toward increasing vegetarianism.
- Wish to continue animal products in their diets.

Possible implications

Trend in public attitudes seems to be toward uncoupling the ownership of the animal's life from ownership of the animal food products.

Science and Ethics as Complementary Acts

- Ethics is doing the right thing.
- *And the right thing to do is the thing that has the best reasons for doing (Socrates).*
- Thus, acting on the basis of the best reasons must include acting on the best scientific information.

“A rat, is a pig, is a dog, is a boy.”

In matters of pain and suffering:

“A rat, is a pig, is a dog, is a boy.”

Which element does not belong in the following set?

a) boy b) tree c) frog d) rock

- From the viewpoint of science, the rock is the exception.
- The rock is not a living being - a qualitative difference.

Which element does not belong in
the set?

a) boy b) pig c) frog d) tree

- From the viewpoint of science, the tree is the exception.
- The tree is not an animal - a qualitative difference.

Which element does not belong in
the set?

a) rat b) pig c) dog d) frog

- From the viewpoint of science, the frog is the exception.
- The frog is not a mammal - a qualitative difference.

Which element does not belong in the set?

a) rat b) pig c) dog d) boy

- **Science** classifies them all as **mammals** and contends there is no qualitative difference!
- *The boy is placed in separate category on the basis of a value judgement - on the basis of an **ethical** argument!*

Mammal: (rat, pig, dog, boy)

- **Science** is the basis for grouping the elements together.
- **Ethics** is the basis that one can use to argue that the boy deserves different treatment.
- Darwin - *“Humans differ only in degree and not in kind.”*

Elements of Moral Philosophy

Rachels (1993)

- “Most people believe ... that while the slaughterhouse may be an unpleasant place, the animals that are raised for food are otherwise treated well enough. But ... nothing could be further from the truth. ”
- “(T)he slaughterhouse is not an unpleasant end to an otherwise contented existence. As terrifying as the process of slaughter is, for them it may actually be a merciful release.”

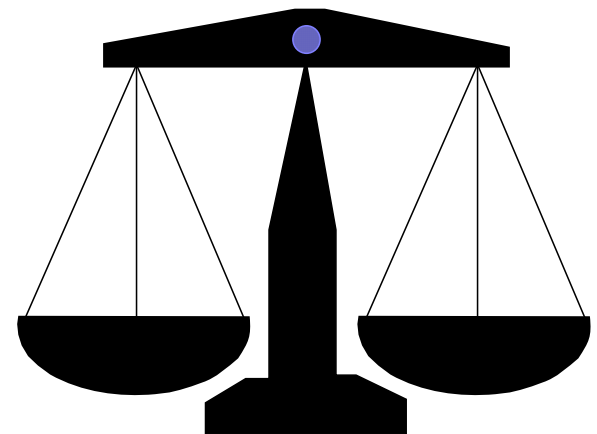


- 1) Vegans propose to “liberate” food animals by bringing forth their non-existence.
- 2) Animals can benefit from their existence, but only IF they experience a reasonable “quality of life”
- 3) And Animal Agriculturalists need to *seriously* work toward meeting this goal.

Natural Ecosystems

- A balance between animals and plants.
- Appropriately practiced agriculture involves a *managed* ecosystem wherein the costs are minimized and benefits are optimized for humans, animals and the environment.

(Stricklin 1989)



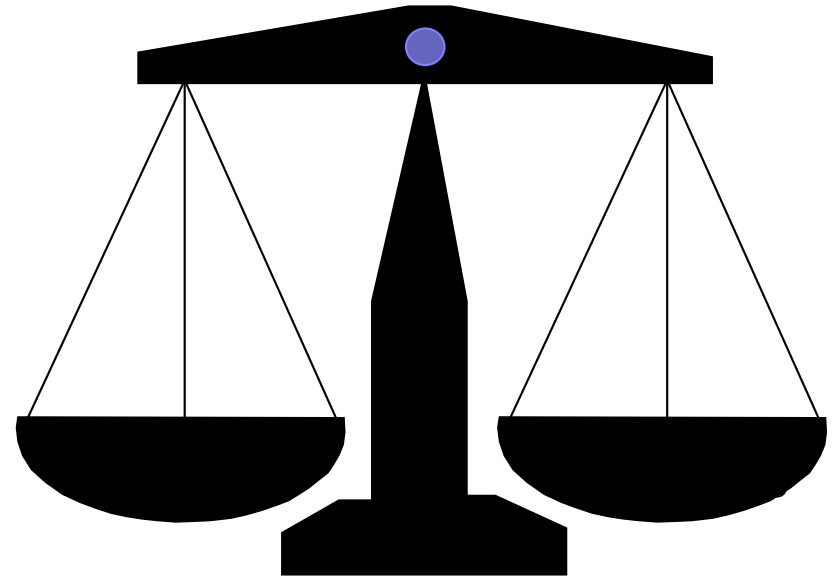
Goals of Animal Agriculture

Minimize the costs

to:

- animals,
- environment, and
- humans (health, worker safety, rural society, etc.)

Maximize the benefits to each party.



“We must move quality of life of food animals from a cost to a benefit.”

Animal Agriculture and Ethics

- Don't give up the "high ground."
- Advocate ethics: **doing the right thing** (which means building from science).
- Address the issue of animal "quality of life."
- Why not **Farmers for Ethical Treatment of Animals (FETA)**?

