

Preface

The purpose of this report is to provide awareness of the global issues associated with animal rights. Through an investigation of the effects of the lack of animal rights in countries such as Thailand, China, Brazil and Canada it aims to provide the reader with a better understanding of the animal rights movement. The lives of animals in these countries are being taken advantage of and this is leading to animal rights activist groups being created in an effort to speak for the animals. This report will examine the animal rights controversy.

Animal rights “refers to the abolition of animal exploitation of any type by humans.” (Ward, 19) Many animal rights activists believe that animals should be treated equally as humans which means that they believe in ‘speciesism’. Speciesism is “the notion that it is unethical to assume human priorities supersede the lives and wants of other creatures” (21) Speciesism is the common belief of all animal rights activists, that the life of an animal is equally important to the life of a human.

It is important to become educated on the issue of animal rights and to learn about the consequences of what will happen if animal suffering is not stopped. These atrocious acts are endangering more and more species everyday which is threatening global biodiversity and causing an imbalance of ecosystems.

If humans don't stop cruelty to animals, they will never know how to stop cruelty to each other. (I Am An Animal)

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Summary

For the purpose of this report a variety of different primary and secondary sources were used. These sources include books, internet web sites, databases, movies and documentaries. These different research methods were used to ensure that there was a wealth of information to draw from for use as evidence to support the arguments of this report. The use of different sources helped to gain different perspectives on the issue. This helps to make the report more varied because the sources, while all informative, used different mediums in order to give different perspectives.

Background

When looking at the history of the animal rights movement, it is hard to find a starting point. People have relied on animals for food and clothing for hundreds of thousands of years, but when did the ethics of killing and utilizing animals become an issue?

The debate of animal rights can be traced back to ancient Greece. Ancient Greek philosophers had different views on the subject. Aristotle (384-322 BCE), an influential philosopher who covered a large variety of subjects in his writings, believed that every living organism has a soul. However, he didn't believe a soul was an immortal consciousness, but instead it was the ability to perform natural functions. According to Aristotle, plants have souls that are entirely focused on nutrition, growth and reproduction, nothing else. Animals are unlike plants because they have not only life, but perception. Humans are unlike animals because not only do humans have life and perception, but also have the ability to reason. Therefore, Aristotle believed that there was a hierarchy in nature from simple to more complex, which meant that plants were created for animals, and animals were created for humans. This is why he believed that we could utilize animals however we please. (Taylor, 36)

There were many other philosophers who agreed with Aristotle, but there were some who did not. Pythagoras (late 6th century BCE) is known as the first philosopher who argued for animal rights. He believed in reincarnation and that animals could be former human beings and therefore, killing them means you could be killing your ancestors. For this reason he promoted vegetarianism and rejected using animals in religious sacrifice. (37) Pythagoras had many followers and also inspired other philosophers to argue in favor of animal rights. However, at this time, the majority of people did not agree with him.

“Despite these dissenting voices, the emphasis of Aristotle [...] on rationality as the distinctive human quality, and the related claim that animals are on earth for our use because they lack reason, have been echoed by most philosophers until well into the twentieth century.” (37) Most philosophers agreed with Aristotle instead of Pythagoras and believed that for different reasons, animals were not entitled rights and were meant to be utilized by humans. One example of a philosopher who agreed is René Descartes (1596-1650). René Descartes introduced a new theory of why animals should not have rights. He believed that animals can be understood in purely mechanical terms and that they are machines, no different from a clock. Since animals were entirely mechanical, he believed that they were not conscious. The difference between animals and humans, in Descartes’ view, is that humans are machines that are conscious and have minds. He explained that animals have sensations in a way that a car can “sense” that there is low fuel, or that a door is still open. A car “senses” these things, but it is not conscious. This means that “scientifically minded Cartesians (followers of Descartes’ ideas were called Cartesians) could therefore nail living dogs to boards and cut them open, secure in the belief that they were inflicting no pain and that the sounds emanating from the objects of their research were just the squeaking of machinery.” (38) The idea that animals were creatures without

feelings lasted long after Descartes.

However, this idea began to be questioned in the 18th century. The year 1776, was when the first book that defended animal rights was published. The book was called *A Dissertation on the Duty of Mercy and Sin of Cruelty to Brute Animals*. The author argued that, “Pain is pain, whether it is inflicted on man or on beast.” (Pringle, 7) Another philosopher during this time, Jeremy Bentham, stated that a full grown horse or dog is more rational than a human infant and “the question is not, can they *reason*? Nor can they *talk*? But, can they *suffer*?” (7) By the end of the 18th century, most educated people believed that morality outlawed animal cruelty. Although the educated people believed this, most of the public was not educated and so animal abuse continued. (7)

Charles Darwin (1809-82) is the next important philosopher to examine. He published his theory of the natural selection of evolution in his book *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* in 1859, and this marked a revolution in human thinking about our relationship with other animals. (Wand, 34) Darwin’s view was that human beings are animals and he compared how close humans are to primates according to DNA. Darwin respected animals but he was not a supporter of animal rights. “He said that the thought of vivisection (the practice of performing operations on live animals for the purpose of experimentation or scientific research) made him feel sick with horror; yet he refused to support the contemporary campaign against it because he believed it was necessary for the progress of science.” (Taylor, 54) Even though he believed that animals were conscious beings, it was hard to argue for animal rights because of the accomplishments made in science due to animal experimentation. Even though Darwin did not argue for animal rights, his book raised the status of animals.

There was not much vivisection to protest until the late 1800’s. There were few scientists

in 1880 who conducted experiments on animals by dissecting them, but vivisection became more popular by the turn of the century. This created antivivisection groups who claimed that vivisection was not a humane path to knowledge. The antivivisection movement prospered for a time because there was no evidence that useful medical knowledge had been gained by animal experimentation. The twentieth century brought a steady flow of medical discoveries that were based on animal research. In the 1900's many vaccines had been created, such as those against rabies, anthrax, cholera and other diseases. These discoveries swayed the opinions of the public which made them accuse the antivivisectionists of being more sensitive to the suffering of dogs and rabbits than suffering of people. Unfortunately for their cause, even before the turn of the century, the antivivisection groups were losing members and influence, and they were no longer supported by general animal welfare organizations. "In 1900, an international congress of animal protection societies officially expelled antivivisection groups" (Pringle, 9-11)

Clearly animal experimentation is a very important topic to regard when investigating the issue of animal rights because it is so controversial. Medical research involving animals has dramatically improved the health of the human race. Without animal experimentation diabetics would suffer without insulin and polio would still not have a cure. ("Animal") The problem is that to reach these great achievements in history millions of animals have had to suffer. Animal testing started around 400 years ago to discover how blood circulated in the body. ("FAQ's") The view of animal rights activists on animal experimentation is, "more lives could be saved and suffering stopped by educating people on the importance of avoiding fat and cholesterol, the dangers of smoking, reducing alcohol and other drug consumption, exercising regularly, and cleaning up the environment than by all the animal tests in the world." ("Experimentation")

Another reason why animal rights activists are demanding animal experimentation to stop

is because animal systems are different from human systems, which means, even if drugs or cosmetics are tested on animals, they will still need to be tested on humans to make sure they are safe. There are certain commercial drugs that have been called back because of the side effects in humans even after they have been tested on animals. (“Animal”) Animal testing is one of the most controversial uses of animals today and it is occurring all over the world. The more laws and regulations one country makes about animal experimentation will push researchers out of the country to a country with fewer regulations. (“Where”) Even though some countries have tried to stop animal experimentation, it has not worked because other countries are not as strict with their regulations on the topic. This shows that stopping animal experimentation has to be a worldwide effort or it will not be successful.

An example of the cruel experimentations that have occurred is the Silver Spring Monkey Case in 1987. The Silver Spring Monkeys were seventeen macaque monkeys living in the Institute of Behavioral Research in Silver Spring, Maryland. These monkeys became known as “the most famous lab animals in history”. (Wand, 187) The monkeys were research subjects of Edward Taub, a psychologist. He cut nerves that supplied sensation to the monkeys’ arms and legs and then used restraints, electric shocks and the withholding of food to force them to use the limbs in which they had no feeling. Alex Pacheco, cofounder of the animal rights group PETA, was working undercover in this lab, recorded and eventually informed the police of the unacceptable living conditions of the monkeys. The police raided the institute and removed the monkeys. This marked the first raid against an animal researcher in history. Taub was charged with 119 counts of animal cruelty. The Silver Spring Monkey Case was the first animal research case to reach the Supreme Court and it raised a lot of awareness of the animal rights issue.

Many alternatives to animal testing have been developed today. There are options for

which alternative you would like to go with. Skintex, EpiPack, New Red Bioassay and Testskin are all different procedures of cloning human tissue to use for experimentation. Eytex is an in-vitro (test tube) procedure that measures eye irritancy through a protein alteration system.

TOPKAT is a computer software program that measures toxicity, mutagenicity, carcinogenicity, and teratogenicity. (“Testing”) Although there are alternative methods for experimentation, animal testing is still going on in many parts of the world because it is the cheaper option for testing products. This means that the suffering of millions of animals is continuing throughout the world.

Role of Control

In the issue of animal rights it is easy to determine that the economic influences of humans are in the role of control. Companies raise and exploit animals to make as much money as possible and criminals smuggle animals across borders for financial benefits. Also as already stated, companies testing their products choose the cheaper method of animal experimentation instead of spending a bit more money to test their products with the scientific advancements that have been made. Sadly, the ones who have control are possibly the ones that care the least about this issue.

The animal rights activists are the ones who need to control this issue. These are the people who are informed and care about animals and their rights. Therefore they are the most motivated ones who can make a difference for the animals. The best way that the activists can gain control is by raising as much public awareness as possible. If they inform the public on how companies are abusing animal rights, they can boycott and change the way these companies run their businesses. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, or PETA, is the largest animal rights organization in the world. PETA is the best example that shows how effective public awareness is. Pressure from PETA and the public have caused companies such as L'Oreal (largest cosmetics company), and Maybelline to stop testing their products on animals. McDonalds and General Motors are other companies that, due to the pressure from PETA and the public, have agreed to stop animal cruelty in their companies. (I Am An Animal)

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Issue Expert

Of all the important leaders in the history of animal rights, Ingrid Newkirk has made the greatest difference. Newkirk, the cofounder of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) has led this organization, with more than 2 million supporters, through many contributions to the issue of animal rights.

Newkirk was born in Surrey, England and she lived in Europe until the age of seven. At this age, she, her family and her dog, which was the closest thing to a sibling she had, moved to New Delhi. Here she did volunteer work which included, helping people suffering from leprosy, stuffing toys for orphans, and feeding stray animals. By doing these things she learned that anyone in need, including animals, were worthy of concern. (“Ingrid”)

Newkirk didn't think about vegetarianism or fighting for animal rights until the age of 21. She found some abandoned kittens and decided to take them to an animal shelter. This is what opened her eyes to animal rights. She went back a couple of days later to the shelter to visit the kittens, only to find that they had to be put to sleep. This led to her interests in investigating animal cruelty, because of the methods used to put animals to sleep in this shelter. She obtained a job at this shelter and tried to improve upon the inhumane ways they were putting animals to sleep. This was Newkirk's first job where she acted on behalf of the animals. (I Am An Animal)

While working at the animal shelter, Alex Pacheco walked in and offered her his time. After hearing the stories that Pacheco told her about hunting down a pirate ship that was butchering hundreds of whales in national waters, she borrowed a book from him that would change the way she thought about animal rights. The book that she borrowed was called *Animal Liberation* by Peter Singer. After reading *Animal Liberation*, Newkirk realized how deeply she cared about animal rights. She found Singer's logic flawless. (Newkirk, xvi) “Animal Liberation, more than anything else, gave me the impetus to start PETA - Ingrid Newkirk”

(“Message”) This book has recruited many readers to the belief of animal rights, and the author is today known as one of the greatest influences on the animal rights movement. Singer’s book has been tagged as “the bible to the animal rights movement”. (Singer, ix)

With Pacheco as the cofounder, Newkirk founded PETA which has turned out to be the largest animal rights group in the world. Before PETA existed, the only two things you could do to help animals was to volunteer at an animal shelter or to donate money to a humane society. These organizations did useful work to bring comfort to the animals that are used by humans, but they did not raise the question of why we kill animals for different causes nor did they push for change. PETA’s uncountable victories, both small and large, have improved the lives of millions of individual animals. Working with universities and government institutions to carry out non animal test methods, starting many “cruelty-free” products and promoting the availability of meat alternatives at grocery stores and restaurants are just a few examples of PETA’s numerous success stories. (“History”) These success stories would not be a possibility without Ingrid Newkirk, or the public supporters of PETA who help to boycott and pressure big businesses.

Through the accomplishments that Newkirk has made by starting PETA, it is easy to see how she is a very influential leader in the animal rights movement.

Religious Views

The subject of animal rights is mentioned in many religions around the world. Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism are all religions that have different beliefs about the treatment of animals.

Christianity's beliefs on the treatment of animals can both support animal rights or go against it. The Bible says that God gave man dominion over every living thing. However, in the Garden of Eden, this dominion did not include the killing of animals. The animals were to eat grass and humans were to eat fruits and nuts. But, when man got kicked out of the Garden of Eden, they were sent away in animal skins and therefore we assume it had become permissible to kill animals. This means that in the beginning when things were just as God created them, animals were not meant to be food for humans. It was later, when sin became out of hand; humans were allowed to use animals for food. Christians may believe that since man is in a higher position than animals, that we have dominion over them and that killing them is permissible. However, many Christians argue that animals in human diet is not what God originally intended, and that dominion over animals simply means that we are responsible to God for the care and well being of those placed under our rule. (Singer, 187-188)

Judaism is the next religion to examine. The dominant principle behind the treatment of animals in the Jewish religion is the prevention of tza'ar ba'alei chayim, which is the suffering of living creatures. When God gave humans dominion over animals, the Jews interpreted dominion as 'guardianship'. The Jewish Law states that "it is forbidden [...] to inflict pain upon any living creature. On the contrary, it is also our duty to relieve pain of any creature, even if it is ownerless or a non-Jew." ("Animals") It is important to Jews that no living creature suffers, no matter what kind of creature it is. They believe the way you treat animals reflects the way you treat humans and treating humans fairly and equally is the belief of Jews. ("Treatment") Kapparot is a Jewish

ritual which some Jews perform as often as once a year. It starts off with reciting selections from the Tanakh (the Jewish Bible). Then a rooster (for a male) or hen (for a female) is held by the feet above the person's head, and is swung in a circle three times. While doing this, the person says "This is my exchange, my substitute, my atonement; this rooster (or hen) shall go to its death, but I shall go to a good, long life, and to peace." ("Kapparot") The rooster or hen is then donated to the poor for food and it is hoped that the bird "will take on any misfortune that might otherwise occur to the one who has taken part in the ritual, in punishment for his or her sins." ("Kapparot") Although the Jews are not allowed to inflict pain on any living creature, they still include animals in their rituals.

Another religion that treats animals the proper way is Islam. The Islamic religion always has viewed animals as a special part of Allah's (Islamic God) creation. It is the Islam belief that doing good to any living thing is an act that will be rewarded, and that God will forgive one's sins. Just as the humane treatment of animals would be rewarded, animal cruelty would be punished. The religion bans animal cruelty and it is believed that an act of animal cruelty is worthy of punishment in the afterlife. ("Humane") Even though the Islam religion bans animal cruelty, this does not mean that they are vegetarian. "Islamic dietary laws mandate that domestic animals raised for meat be slaughtered under strict religious guidelines." ("Ritual") The Islamic ritual slaughter is called Zabihah and it involves making a single, quick incision across the throat of the animal, "deep enough to sever the jugular vein, carotid arteries, trachea and esophagus, but not so deep as to cut the spinal cord." ("Ritual") When this ritual is performed correctly, the animal will feel no pain. This is because the quick incision stops the flow of blood and oxygen to the brain and the animal loses consciousness and all sensation almost immediately. There are conditions to the slaughter, such as; the Muslim performing the act must be sane and they must

say “In the name of Allah” during the slaughter. Other conditions are, the animal must be healthy and allowed to eat (humane restraint before the slaughter), the slaughter must not be done in the view of other animals and the animal being slaughtered should not see the knife. (“Rituals”) The Islamic religion acknowledges that animals should be treated humanely and that being cruel to animals is a punishable act.

Hinduism is similar to Islam because the basic Hindu practice is “respect for all creatures and compassion for all beings.” (“Rights”) Hindus believe in reincarnation, which is determined by the law of Karma. The better life will result in the better incarnation. Which means the next life is effected by the current life, so if one lives a righteous life, the next life will be better. Hindus believe that animals do in fact have souls, so being cruel to an animal is being cruel to another soul and this will end up in a worse incarnation. (Thompson, 7) An animal in the Hindu religion that is extremely respected is the cow. “In Hinduism, the **cow** is revered as the source of food and symbol of life and may never be killed.” (“Hindu”) The cow provides plenty of important products like, milk, butter and fuel from their dried dung. This is why Hindus do not eat beef. Hindu families usually have at least one dairy cow which is often treated like a member of the family. The sacred cows in Hinduism show how Hindus respect all creatures which means they believe animal cruelty is unacceptable.

The next religion, Buddhism, is the belief that every living being has a soul, no matter how big or how small, and all souls are trying to reach Nirvana. Nirvana is a peaceful state the soul reaches after breaking an ongoing rebirth cycle of reincarnation. To reach Nirvana the soul must reincarnate, working its way up until it reaches its’ destination. The only way to do this is to live an honorable life. The Buddhists believe that animal cruelty is dishonorable and will not get them to Nirvana. (Thompson, 34) In the religion of Buddhism, there is no god. Buddha is a

figure in Buddhism who reached enlightenment and maximum knowledge. He was a teacher in this religion. Buddha once said, “All beings tremble before violence. All fear death, all love life. See yourself in others. Then whom can you hurt? What harm can you do?” (“Buddha’s”) Buddha stated that all beings are equal and should be treated with equal respect. This is why Buddhists believe in animal rights.

According to different religions around the world, it is clear to see that there are many different perspectives on animal rights and how animals are treated. Most religions believe that it is not morally right to abuse animals and since animals are living beings too, they should be treated with respect.

CASE STUDY 1:

Animals in Entertainment: Elephant Abuse in Thailand

Throughout history, Thai elephants have been praised and advertised nationally. But, very little has been done to protect them. They have been abused and mistreated for many years and these elephants face the threats of poachers and illegal loggers. (“Against”) A great threat that Thai elephants face today is abuse in the entertainment industry. Thailand’s tourist trade depends on their elephants. Visitors of Thailand become flooded with offers of different elephant experiences, such as, elephant shows and elephant trekking. Thai elephants are being forced into street begging (dragging elephants around cities in chains by their owners who charge tourists to feed them and watch them perform tricks), entertaining crowds at circuses and giving rides to tourists. All of these actions reduce the elephants’ life expectancy by at least 50%. (“Volunteer”) Travelers are looking for close up interactions with these creatures, but what travelers do not realize is the disturbing experiences these elephants are forced to go through to give tourists these kinds of experiences. (“Scandal”) Mahouts, the guardians of elephants, are assigned an elephant early in its life and they will be attached to each other throughout the elephant’s life. However, mahouts spend all their time caring for the elephants and therefore are usually very poor. This makes them depend on their elephants to make money which is why they resort to the entertainment industry. (“Asian”)

The harsh and disturbing reality that produces these elephant fascinations is not widely known by tourists or even by the Thais. The truth is that mahouts (guardians of elephants) and elephant trainers use what is called, the ‘torture training method’ to make these elephants tourist friendly. (“Scandal”) This method entails tying or chaining the elephant up in a confined pen that is much too small for the animal to move. The elephant is then tortured, beaten, hit, poked, prodded, and jabbed with sharp hooks, sometimes until bloody. This is done to break the

elephant's spirit and without a doubt it does, usually taking its sanity too. ("Circuses") The torture training method has been used for centuries and it is still used for almost every elephant attraction in Thailand. ("Scandal")

Thailand's culture influences the issue of elephant abuse in many ways. It is part of the Thai culture that being a mahout is a job passed down throughout the family. "Deeply rooted in Thai culture, elephant training has traditionally been a familial heritage passed down through the generations." ("Scandal") Mahouts inherit their jobs from their families and today most work for mahouts is in the tourist business since elephant shows are so popular among tourists. The tradition of mahouts is influencing the elephant abuse problem in Thailand because today, they are focusing their jobs primarily on elephant entertainment for the tourists.

Another example of the cultural influences on the issue is the laws of Thailand. "Only wild elephants have any legal protection in Thailand" ("Thailand") Although the wild elephants are protected, the vast majority of elephants in Thailand are privately owned. "95% of Thailand's elephants are domesticated working elephants and privately owned." ("Mahout") This means that even with the wild elephants being protected, the large majority of elephants are still vulnerable to abuse and neglect by their owners. If there were laws that outlawed any kind of abuse or cruelty to elephants, it could reduce the problem a significant amount.

Thai elephants were once used for logging, but this has become illegal. ("Scandal") However, this law was passed due to the destruction of the forests and not to protect the elephants. After this law was made, it "left hundreds of elephants out of work and many were simply abandoned by their owners." ("Scandal") Once these animals have been domesticated, they can no longer survive in the wild on their own. When the owners abandoned their elephants,

they left many of them to simply die in the wild. (“Scandal”) Laws have such strong influences on countries and they can make significant changes on issues such as this one.

Elephant abuse is an issue that impacts the society of Thailand. One example of its effects on society is the ignorance of Thailand’s population. There are many elephant handlers who have no familiarity with any of the basic needs of elephants. “Unlike the mahouts that grew up around elephants and inherited their profession, most of the elephant handlers operating today are opportunists with little or no knowledge of the nature of elephants or what they require to survive.” (“Scandal”) It is known that a very profitable area in the entertainment industry of Thailand is elephant performances. This causes regular people with little or no knowledge of elephants and their needs to go into this industry for the money. This shows the ignorance of the Thai people who only care about making money. This could be resolved if there were laws or regulations about qualifications to become an elephant handler, or outlawing elephant entertainment altogether.

Another impact this issue has is on the economy of Thailand. Tourism is a major economic factor in Thailand. (“Travel”) The poor mahouts who rely on their elephants for money are forced to train their elephants for the entertainment industry. Reasons like this are why around 70% of Thailand’s elephants are “engaged in tourism and culture.” (“Asian”) This shows how great of an impact Thailand’s elephants have on its economy.

What can be done to help the elephant problem in Thailand? Making the public aware of this issue is one of the biggest factors that can help. Getting tourists to stop supporting the cruel trade and boycotting the business can bring the abusive elephant trade to an end.

The Elephant Nature Park is an example of one of the solutions that has been attempted to solve this issue. The Elephant Nature Park is a project in Northern Thailand that has been operating since the 1990's with a goal to provide Thailand's elephants with a sanctuary and a rescue center. It is located 60km away from the city and "has provided a sanctuary for over 34 distressed elephants from all over Thailand. Set in a natural valley, bordered by a river, and surrounded by forested mountains, the area offers a timeless glimpse of rural life." ("About") The Elephant Nature Park tries to help as many elephants as possible but it is very expensive to feed these large animals. With support and donations from the public this project will be able to help protect more elephants and put a stop to this issue.

CASE STUDY 2:

Animals Used For Clothing: Fur Farms in China

Fur coats are very popular in the fashion and film industry and are worn by many. They are portrayed as an item of elegance, wealth and glamour which is why people do not think about the origins of the fur. The reality is that millions of animals each year, including foxes, mink, bobcats, lynxes, opossums, beavers, otters and even domesticated dogs and cats are killed by anal or vaginal electrocution or gassing. In China, where 80% of the world's fur comes from, these methods are too expensive so the animals are simply beaten, strangled, stomped and skinned alive. ("Chinese")

Most Chinese fur farms were established within the past ten years. Some fur farms breed their own wild animals for fur. Some species that are bred include red and Arctic foxes, raccoon dogs, mink and Rex Rabbits. Between 25% and 30% of China's fur is attained from the wild, and between 70% and 75% are from captive animals. ("Fun") "Two million cats and dogs are killed for fur each year in China, many of them stolen pets" ("Chinese") Many of the stolen pets have their collars on until right before they get skinned, showing that these animals were once someone's cherished companion stolen to be made into a fur coat. ("Fur") Recently, an increasing amount of international fur traders, processors and fashion designers have gradually shifted their business to China because of the cheap labour and because there are no restrictive regulations on fur farms. ("Fun")

In the UK fur farming has been banned based on humanitarian grounds. However, fur farming has not been banned in the European Union, but they have in place many regulations in the farms. In all farms in China, where there are no regulations, the animals are handled roughly and are confined in rows of small wire cages. Sometimes as much as up to 20 animals are shoved

in the cages at once. The animals show signs of extreme anxiety and self mutilation. This falls way short of the EU regulations. (“Fun”)

The Chinese culture has a big influence on what goes on in the fur farms. In the culture of ancient China, women were not respected. “Women of ancient China could not hold any position of power. They are portrayed as "objects" sold off into marriage and their feet were bound to keep them from running off.” (“Position”) Although the position of women in the Chinese culture has significantly changed, they are still regarded as lesser than men. (“Women”) Since the Chinese culture believes that women have such a low status, it is hard for the Chinese to regard animals with any kind of importance. This may be one reason as to why animals are treated so brutally in Chinese fur farms.

The laws, or lack thereof, is also another great influence on the Chinese fur farms. There are no regulations governing fur farms in China. “Farmers can house and slaughter animals however they see fit.” (“Facts”) Since there are no laws or regulations for fur farms in China, the farmers go with the cheapest and most convenient methods for killing and skinning the animals. Unfortunately the cheapest and most convenient method for the farmers is being extremely rough and skinning the animals alive. Laws and regulations on the issue of fur farms can easily prevent much of the cruelty and suffering going on inside of the farms.

There are simple solutions at hand to solve the brutal treatment of the animals in fur farms. If fashion designers ceased to use fur in their collections and instead use non-violent materials, there will be less of a demand or want for the furs. Fashion designers can bring other materials in style instead of furs. Another simple procedure that can be done is for shoppers to stop buying any clothes or accessories that have fur, and to check whether the designers

incorporate fur in any of their collections. If people don't buy fur, there will no longer be a need to produce it which means fur farmers will need to turn to work in other industries. The greatest impact would be for fashion retailers to stop stocking clothes or accessories that have fur. Since the European Union is the world's biggest consumer of fur, it would be wise to focus on reducing the fur being imported there. An easy way to do this is if the European Parliament banned the import of any fur from China. This could significantly reduce the sales of the Chinese fur farms. The ultimate factor in issues such as this one is that the only reason these cruel actions are being performed is because of money. If consumers are not buying fur, and there is no demand for it, there is no reason for the fur farms to continue operating.

An easy way to solve the problem, or at least to reduce it, is for the Chinese government to introduce and enforce new laws and regulations. Laws that prohibit the skinning of live animals, prohibiting inhumane treatment and slaughter of animals, and prohibit the inhumane confinement of animals can make a significant difference in the fur farm industry and a great difference in the lives on Chinese animals.

CASE STUDY 3:

Animal Trafficking in Brazil

Brazil is the home of more animal species than any other country in the world. From colorful birds to enthusiastic monkeys, Brazil is truly a great place of biodiversity. The problem is that there is a large demand for exotic animals as pets, and for other uses, in countries around the world, and this leads to exotic animal trafficking. (Colombo)

Although much wildlife trade is legal, a huge black market exists and this is what causes the problems. Illegal wildlife trade is the third most profitable criminal trade in the world, behind arms smuggling and drug trafficking. (“Business”) Prices in the animal trade business range from tens of thousands of dollars for a hyacinth macaw (an exotic bird) to a couple dollars for a giant cockroach. (“Exotic”) However, the penalties for animal trafficking are usually not as severe when compared to arms smuggling or the drug trade. This is why drug traffickers are turning to the animal trafficking business. (“Growth”)

One problem with illegal animal trafficking is that the species traded are often already highly threatened and in danger of extinction. Endangered species can sell for more money which is why it is more appealing to capture them. “Rare and endangered species in particular are in danger of being trafficked, since rare animals generally fetch a higher price on the black market.” (Campana) Animal species that are in danger of extinction should be conserved and protected because there is an increasing threat to Brazil’s biodiversity. “Animal trafficking is threatening Brazil’s biodiversity at an alarming rate. Over the past 10 years, the official list of Brazilian animals threatened by extinction nearly doubled.” (Giovanini) The official list of Brazilian animals in danger of going extinct is growing as time passes. Today, over 600 species are on this list, and the main cause is animal trafficking. (Giovanini)

Another problem with illegal animal trafficking is the conditions under which the wildlife are transported. The business of illegally trafficking animals is not a friendly one. “There are few survivors of the cruel and lucrative business of international trafficking in wild animals.”

(Colombo) The cruelty in the animal trafficking business is endangering many species of Brazil because so many animals die being caught and transported. It is estimated that “around 38 million wild animals are poached every year and only about a third survives long enough to be sold.” (“Growth”) Governments around the world are passing laws that prohibit the capture and sale of certain species but most of these laws are poorly enforced. There are few laws and penalties that exist and it is hard for them to deter dealers or smugglers because of the profits that can be gained. (“Exotic”)

The different ways that animals are illegally transported are creative, but atrociously inhumane. For example, parrots beaks and feet are taped and then the birds are shoved into plastic tubes. The tubes can then be easily hidden in luggage. Smugglers who are worried about the X-ray machines at the airports will take stolen bird and reptile eggs and hide them in special vests to get around the X-rays. Baby turtles have been taped so that they are trapped inside their shells. They are then shoved into tube socks. Lastly, infant pythons might be hiding in CD cases and that is how they are transported. A German customs agent reported that there is an eighty to ninety percent mortality rate among the animals transported. (“Exotic”)

Animal trafficking in Brazil has a significant impact on the society. Due to the cruel ways Brazilians are illegally transporting their animals; many animals die which is endangering more and more Brazilian species and threatening Brazil’s biodiversity. Illegal animal trade also has other impacts on society. Illegal animal trade ruins the efforts made to manage their natural

resources sustainably and there is massive economic losses because of the dying animals.

(“Work”)

Illegal animal trafficking not only impacts Brazil’s society; it also impacts the countries in which Brazil exports the animals to. Introducing invasive species to countries means that they can prey upon, or choke out the native species of the country. “Invasive species are a major cause of recent extinctions.” (“Work”) Animal extinction not only affects global biodiversity, but it also creates imbalanced ecosystems which is not good for animals across the world.

One solution to animal trafficking is public awareness. If more people knew what exotic animals had to go through to get to their countries, less people would buy the animals. Another solution to animal trafficking is more laws and regulations about the issue. If there were more laws on transporting and capturing animals, the amount of animal trafficking would be greatly reduced. However, it is important that these laws are enforced. There are a few laws and regulations about how many animals can be transported and the methods in which they are transported, but since the laws on this matter are hardly enforced, smugglers ignore them. If there is increased public awareness and more laws and regulations on animal trafficking, it could make a significant difference on the issue.

Organizations

There are various organizations that fight for animal rights. There are worldwide organizations that have missions to protect animals all over the world, but there are also many IGO's and NGO's. Each organization has had successes or failures in their efforts of defending animal rights.

PETA is the largest animal rights organization in the world with 2 million members and supporters. PETA focuses its attention on four main areas in which the largest numbers of animals suffer for the longest periods of times. These four main areas are factory farms, the clothing trade, laboratories and in the entertainment industry. PETA also works on a variety of other issues, but these four areas are their main focus. ("About") PETA's first achievement was the Silver Spring Monkey Case in 1987 as previously mentioned. This was the first raid against an animal researcher and the first animal research case to ever reach the Supreme Court. It raised a lot of awareness of the issue of animal rights. Since then PETA has had uncountable achievements and successes, all making a difference in the lives of animals. ("Victories") However, some believe PETA's tactics are questionable. Ingrid Newkirk, the president of PETA believes that no media is bad media. (I Am An Animal) This might explain why PETA is known for saying and doing anything at all to draw attention. PETA will do whatever it takes to expose people to their point of view. Whatever it takes includes running semi-nude pictures of Pamela Anderson with anti fur captions and throwing pies in the faces of those refusing to listen to them. There are many opinions about whether or not these are good tactics. Some believe that these obnoxious actions are going to be the failure of PETA, but others believe the tactics are genius. "Because the truth is, the animal rights issue is a tar pit. The more people are exposed to it, the less comfortable they are with the concept of animal suffering." (Frel) Despite what people think

about their methods, no one can deny the amount of success PETA has had defending the issue of animal rights.

The next organization to examine is the World Society Protection of Cruelty to Animals (WSPCA). The WSPCA is an organization whose goal is to ensure the safety and well-being of animals. This organization, just like PETA, focuses their work on four main priorities. The four priorities are companion animals, commercial exploitation of wildlife, farm animals and disaster management. WSPCA has many different SPCA's in different states and provinces all over the world. Their network includes more than 1000 member organizations in over 150 countries. The WSPCA works with an alliance with the United Nations and the Council of Europe and is the largest alliance of animal welfare societies. ("WSPA")

The latest mission that the WSPCA has is saving the animals in Japan after the tsunami. **"WSPA has committed \$150,000 to help Japanese animals during the critical recovery period in the aftermath of the recent earthquake and tsunami". ("Action")** The organization is supporting and helping to set up 30 temporary shelters for animals and pets in Japan who lost their owners and have nowhere to go. **With the help of the little government funding they receive, and the help of generous donations, the WSPCA can continue to have many more successes.**

Another organization in the issue of animal rights that focuses on something a little bit different is the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES). "Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival." ("CITES") CITES' main focus is on that of endangered species. Today, well known information about the endangered status of many different species such as, the tiger

and elephants make the necessity of this organization very obvious. Since CITES is a government organization, it has had many successes involving creating new laws. Laws are important in reducing the trading of endangered species. However, for CITES to become a more successful organization, they need to make sure that the laws that they are making are being enforced. Since many of the laws for the international trade of animals are rarely enforced, many people overlook them. If these laws are enforced regularly, this organization would be much more successful.

Peoples Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) is the last organization to examine. PAWS is a Canadian national organization and focuses on helping homeless animals find loving homes. Their mission is “to ensure that there comes a day when every homeless animal has a safe, loving home where they are respected, nurtured and valued as a family member.” (“Mission”) Over the next few years, PAWS hopes to establish an animal sanctuary in Southern Ontario to help more animals. With a no-kill policy, PAWS has been operating since 1972 and has had numerous success stories by finding animals adopted parents and loving homes. The organization calls these success stories “Happy Tails”. (“PAWS”) PAWS is a growing organization and will continue to have many “Happy Tails”.

Although these organizations have all made small differences in animal rights issues, without getting the majority of the public to try and make a change, it will be extremely hard to solve any of the many problems associated with animal rights.

Canada

Canada is a country that prides itself on being a very tolerant and accommodating country, but when it comes to animal rights, it contradicts itself. There are many different issues in Canada that involve violating the rights of animals that many Canadians are unaware of. However, there are some very well known issues.

One major animal rights issue in Canada that is well known is the Canadian Seal Hunt. Each year, the government gives the ok to slaughter hundreds of thousands of seals. The seal hunt is known as the world's largest marine mammal hunt. Many animal rights groups say the hunt is cruel, difficult to monitor and it reduces the seal population. (Gillies) The hunt usually opens in March in areas around Prince Edward Island. The main hunt usually begins in April off the east coast of Newfoundland and finishes up by May. ("FAQ's")

During the slaughter, baby seals are shot or repeatedly clubbed over the head. Sealers beat the animals with clubs with large metal spikes attached called hakapiks. ("Canadian") They then drag the seals across the ice with boat hooks and skin them, often while still alive. ("Canadian") After obtaining the skin from the seals, the sealers collect some of the penises, and the oil from the seals. The fur will be sold to high-end retailers like Dolce & Gabbana, Gucci and Prada. The penises will be sold as aphrodisiacs in Asia and the oil will be sold as a health supplement. The blubber is also sometimes collected, but a 2006 study discovered that 80% of the seal is simply discarded and goes to waste. ("Seal")

Slaughtering seals like this should not be happening. There are regulations for the humane hunting and killing of the seals, but they are hard to monitor and are not enforced which

lets Canadian sealers get away with these cruel, inhumane ways of slaughtering seals. Even if they were enforcing the regulations for humane hunting, these regulations are not applied to seals in the water. (“Seal”) This means that even if the seals on land were being killed humanely, the sealers can still try to kill the seals in the water any way they’d like. Often, the sealers shoot seals in the water without killing them. The seals will swim away, but even if the sealers do not get them, they’re left to die from the bullet wound. (“Canadian”)

From the pressure of animal rights activists, the government has made some regulations for the hunt. Newborn harp seals, otherwise known as whitecoat seals are not allowed to be hunted. The government banned all hunting of whitecoats in 1987. However, it is true that young harp seals lose their white coats (and their protection) at around 12 to 14 days of age. Most harp seals are slaughtered under the age of three months old and many have not yet learned how to swim which makes it impossible for getting away. (“FAQ’s”)

The seal hunt is not even sustainable. Government scientists have estimated that this year’s replacement yield (the number of seals that can be killed while still allowing the species to maintain its population) is 165,000, and yet the government has still set the quota, or the allowable catch, at 275,000. (“Seals”) If this is not changed, the Canadian seals could potentially be an endangered species or even become extinct because of the unsustainable numbers set by the government.

The Canadian seal hunt significantly affects Canadians. Whether or not they know it, Canadian tax payers’ money is used to support the sealing industry. “Over 20 million dollars in government subsidies were provided to the Canadian sealing industry between 1995 and 2001.” (“Seal”) The government used tax payers’ money on something that half of Canadians do not

support. Government subsidies are hard to track to the sealing industry because the information is not made public. However, it has been proved that “\$400,000 in government subsidies were granted as recently as 2004 on two sealing companies.” (“Seal”) The government is spending the citizens’ money on cruel things like this, and there is little profit earned when doing so. Even the sealers admit that the hunt is not an economical boost. Sealer Desmond Hunt is quoted as saying, “We all go out for the love of it rather than the money, which isn't there anymore.” (“Seal”) Due to massive boycotts in Newfoundland and Canadian seafood that are worldwide, ending the hunts will actually increase the profits in the area. “According to 2006 reports, Canadian snow crab imports to the United States have dropped by \$160 million due to the Canadian seafood boycott – this is more than ten times the money the seal hunt brings in.” (“Seals”) The government is spending tax money on industries that are not even profitable. This is clearly affecting Canadians since it is their money being spent on non-profitable things.

Canada has a very important role to play in the issue of animal rights. Canada is among the countries in the world that are considered the leaders. Starting with making laws for animal rights, such as the banning of the seal hunt, it can influence other countries to do the same. Sadly, the Canadian government has already demonstrated that doing so is not an option and clearly Canada is not fulfilling its role for this issue. This is why it is up to animal rights organizations to pressure Canada’s government into changing the laws to support animal rights. PETA is a great example of an organization that should do this because of their aggressive approaches to issues such as this one. Canadians helping to boycott the industry would be a great help as well because animal rights organizations cannot do it on their own.

Possible Solutions

There are very serious problems associated with animal rights. In every country throughout the world, there are problems related to animal rights. If these problems are not stopped, or at least controlled there will be global consequences. Without solutions, these problems can grow into animal extinction. This can threaten global biodiversity and it can create imbalanced ecosystems. Some possible global solutions that can help stop or control the animal rights issues are more law enforcement, strict adoption regulations, more public awareness and redefining the role of the United Nations in animal welfare.

In most animal rights issues, such as animal cruelty and animal trafficking, there have been laws made in order to stop or reduce these problems from occurring. For example, there are many laws and regulations for legal wildlife trade. These regulations set standards for how animals are treated while being transported and for how many animals can be traded legally per year. “Although legal trade in wildlife is regulated by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), an estimated one-third of the global sales of 25 billion dollars a year is illegal.” (Colombo) This proves that although there are many laws that are meant to reduce the problem, poor law enforcement results in many people overlooking the laws. Increasing law enforcement surrounding any issue dealing with animal rights is the first step to reducing many of the problems of animal suffering.

The next solution to animal rights issues is to make strict adoption regulations. There are already many adoption regulations present in Canada, but by making the regulations stricter, this can reduce a significant amount of animal cruelty by ensuring that animal owners are suitable

ones. Making strict adoption regulations means that instead of letting anybody walk into a pet store to adopt an animal, they must meet certain qualifications to be able to do so. The qualifications could include factors such as, age and suitable living environment and conditions. If someone does not meet the minimum required age of 18 they cannot adopt an animal. Also, if they do not have proof of a house, either rented or owned, they will not be able to adopt an animal. These regulations are to make sure that the animal being adopted has a responsible owner and loving home to live in. On top of these qualifications, there should be an employee that does unexpected check-ups at the animal's new home throughout the first year of being adopted. By doing this, the employee can see how the animal's living condition is and whether or not it is being abused or neglected. The bad thing about this solution is that if there are more adoption regulations, this means that less people will qualify to become a pet owner and there will be much less adoption. This will lead to too many animals in shelters without homes and there will be no where to keep all of them. These regulations are necessary to ensure that animals being adopted are not abused or neglected, but less people will be able to adopt because of them.

As well as strict adoption regulations, increasing public awareness is also an effective solution to animal rights problems. The reason that animal cruelty occurs is because people are not informed about the issue and they feel detachment from animals. This means that since they are not informed, they don't feel any connection to animals or any need to try and solve the problem. "This sort of detachment is easy, given the ways that animal abuse is hidden from our eyes." (Williams, 339) This means that if there was more public awareness about animal rights, much less animal abuse would occur. If the public knew about the horrible experiences animals are put through every day, most people would find these discoveries disturbing. They would feel bad for the animals and want to make things better for them, which would decrease animal

cruelty. “Once the curtain is drawn back, humans take note. When pigs or cows escape on the way to slaughter, it makes the news and people sympathize with these animals and their fight to escape death.” (339) Making the public aware of what kinds of things are happening in the world regarding animal rights is an effective solution because the public can achieve many things together, such as boycotting businesses that have a history of animal cruelty.

These solutions cannot happen by themselves. Financial funding is necessary for any of these solutions to occur. For more law enforcement to occur there needs to be more law enforcement officers who have to be paid. Also with the strict adoption regulations, there must be more employees to be able to do unexpected check-ups and they need to be paid as well. For more public awareness, there should be funding for an animal rights broadcast that will be able to report on all of the issues and successes within the animal rights issue. Where can this financial help come from? The government can help with funding these solutions. These solutions would be good for the government to fund because it makes more jobs which is good for the economy. Unfortunately, the government is not too concerned about this issue and will not want to fund something that it doesn't care about.

“Ever occur to you why some of us can
be this much concerned with animal
suffering? Because government is not.

Why not? Animals don't vote.”

-Paul Harvey (“Rights”)

A global solution that could get the government involved and make significant changes for the animals of the world is redefining the role of the United Nations in animal welfare. The United Nations is an organization that has made many changes around the world for many different issues. Unfortunately the United Nations puts little focus on the issue of animal rights. To make many significant changes for the animal rights movement, it is important to have an international organization like the United Nations governing animal welfare. “For the health and future of all species we need a global organization that governs the welfare of animals everywhere [...] this organization would oversee a set of standards established by the global community and ensure the humane treatment and preservation of all species.” (Smith, 238) The future of animal welfare lies in achieving international recognition that animals matter and the best way to do this is to have a global organization, like the United Nations, governing animal welfare. If the United Nations adopted the issue of animal rights, this would establish animal welfare as an international issue. The United Nations could encourage governments to improve and enforce national animal welfare regulations and recognize that animal welfare is an important factor in humanitarian and environmental policy making. The United Nations could also encourage industries which use animals to focus on animal welfare in their businesses. This would significantly reduce animal suffering all over the world.

The WSPCA is currently trying to get the United Nations to adopt a Universal Declaration on Animal Welfare (UDAW). A Universal Declaration on Animal Welfare would be an agreement among people and nations that animals are sentient and can suffer, animals’ welfare needs must be respected and animal cruelty must end for good. (“Universal”) If the United Nations adopts UDAW, it would significantly reduce the suffering of animals around the world.

This declaration, if adopted would promote things like human health, social development and poverty and hunger reduction. (See appendix A).

Overall, the best solution to animal suffering is redefining the role of the United Nations in animal welfare. This solution would get not only a global organization involved in the fight for animal rights, but it also gets governments around the world involved as well. The reason that this solution would be so effective is because of the amount of power the United Nations and governments have. By getting them involved in the solution of this issue means that there will be enough power to make changes on the topic.

Conclusion

From the facts and studies shown throughout this report, it is clear that animal suffering is a serious issue throughout the world. The fight for animal rights has come a long way throughout history, but there are still many problems to overcome. Although there are many organizations continuously fighting for animal rights, there is still animal cruelty occurring throughout the world. As a global community, it is up to us to work together and make a difference for the animals of the world. It is extremely important that there is awareness of the harsh realities that animals all over the world are forced to face every day in order to solve this issue. There is still so much progress to be made in the fight for animal rights. The sooner that countries worldwide make an effort to stop animal cruelty, the sooner animal suffering will no longer be an issue.

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Appendix A



Human health – because good animal care reduces the risk of diseases transmissible to humans (zoonoses) and of food poisoning. The human-animal bond also has therapeutic effects

Social development – because people's attitudes and behaviour towards animals overlap with their attitudes and behaviour towards each other

Poverty and hunger reduction – because looking after animals properly improves their productivity and helps farmers to provide food for themselves, their families and the community

Disaster management – because animals are important for people's lives and livelihoods and must be considered in disaster preparedness and response

Environmental sustainability – because responsible animal management affects land use, climate change, pollution, water supplies, habitat conservation and biodiversity for the better.

Animals matter to the world. It is time for a Universal Declaration on Animal Welfare.