

animals and destroy their homes. Despite long-standing conflicts based on religion, ethnicity, race, and nationality, conflicts over resources almost always motivate war.

Raising cattle fosters **poverty** by driving plant farmers off their land, diminishing soil fertility, and concentrating Earth's wealth in the hands of the few, thereby strengthening dictatorships and diminishing prospects for the "Third World" poor to remedy their plight.

Topsoil loss due to cattle grazing and producing feed crops for cattle, chickens, pigs and other animals diminishes Earth's wealth, concentrates food production and distribution, and maximizes food prices and public support of the most harmful food industries.

Can we restore boundaries between humans & others?

There is no possibility of undoing thousands of years of technological change and human population growth and geographical expansion. But making humane treatment of animals the new human organizing principle can renew and inspire collective efforts to build rewarding human lives, healthy communities, and lasting peace.

The most likely way to restore the needed boundaries based on respect is to establish meaningful, enforceable legal rights for all sentient beings. As legal rights and their enforcement make boundaries that prevent tyranny among human beings, legal rights for nonhuman animals are a reasonable means to the boundaries between people and other animals required for a brighter future, and sentience – the ability to feel pain & pleasure and experience a life – is a reasonable basis for establishing those rights. The U.S is a good place to start, and given the will to succeed, we can spread much-needed justice to other societies.

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Selected Sources

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- ☞ *Eternal Treblinka: Our Treatment of Animals and the Holocaust* by Charles Patterson
- ☞ *Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health* by Marion Nestle
- ☞ *Introduction to Animal Rights: Your Child or the Dog* by Gary Francione
- ☞ *Man the Hunted* by Donna Hart and Robert W. Sussman
- ☞ *Resource Wars and Blood and Oil* by Michael T. Klare
- ☞ Responsible Policies for Animals' website: www.RPAforAll.org

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Responsible Policies for Animals, Inc., a 501(c)(3) educational nonprofit organization, shows people how to establish responsible policies for nonhuman animals, people and ecosystems. Donations to RPA are tax deductible as allowed by law. Basic RPA membership is \$15. Members receive the newsletter Thin Ice and other information and updates on RPA's activities.

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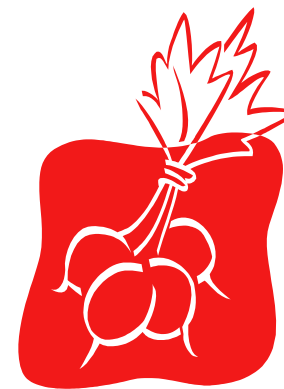
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*Respect for
Nonhuman Animals
the Key to
Human Wellbeing*



*A brief guide to health,
ecology, justice, and
peace through humane
treatment of animals.*

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From

Responsible Policies for Animals

www.RPAforAll.org

There are built-in reasons why unnatural and inhumane ways of living produce illness, resource scarcity, pollution, war, and poverty. Big problems are hard to solve because their shared roots are not addressed.

Restoring natural boundaries between human beings and other animals – responsible policies for animals – is the best remedy, because they address problems’ roots, not just their fruits.

Natural boundaries.

Our species’ amazing success in terms of population, range, and affluence comes from going beyond our original place in nature. Culture, not nature, produced civilization with all of its comforts and promise as well as misery and despair. There is no “going back,” but failing to see how treating nonhuman animals inhumanely harms people, we cannot see how treating them humanely will help people – or the inherent value of interspecies justice.

Like other primates, early humans and hominids organized socially to avoid predation. Turning the tables over a long period and eventually developing organized hunting, agriculture, and civilization benefited ever larger numbers of people and inflicted misery on ever larger numbers of people and nonhuman animals.

About 5 million people existed when agriculture began. About 165 times as many are malnourished today while about 50 billion nonhuman animals are slaughtered for food each year even though humans are natural herbivores. Breeding animals for food is one boundary violation driving human problems today, but there are others.

Can restoring boundaries improve human health and lower costs?

Nutrition research finds fats and proteins from flesh, milk & eggs cause heart disease, stroke, and many cancers. Flesh, milk & eggs

also contribute to widespread obesity and increasing rates of type-2 diabetes. Chronic diseases, driven by violations of human-nonhuman boundaries, ensure soaring medical treatment & insurance costs.

Influenza pandemics come from unnatural contact with nonhuman animals, such as raising chickens and pigs for food. Anthrax, smallpox, and other infectious diseases also jump to humans from other animals.

When we humanely and equitably restore natural boundaries between human beings and the other animals, people will not consume flesh, milk & eggs. Ending public support of flesh, milk, eggs & feedcrops will help people live healthfully on fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, and whole grains – more natural to our species and recommended by leading nutritionists.

Instead, unfortunately, the U.S. continues to move in the wrong direction: Our agriculture departments and colleges of agriculture at our land-grant universities serve the flesh, milk & egg industries. Factory farming methods the colleges developed are spreading to countries with billions of people who used to eat more healthfully even though poor. The mass media constantly promote flesh, milk & eggs.

Can restoring boundaries protect resources and ecosystems?

Exploiting animals for food not only links animal exploitation & abuse to human illness – growing crops to feed them wastes rapidly vanishing topsoil, water & oil. Runoff from oil-derived fertilizers and pesticides used in feed-crop production and waste from animal factories are major water pollution sources, the former flowing downriver and making extensive dead zones in the oceans. Methane from animals raised for food is the gas that is warming Earth’s climate the fastest.

Suburban sprawl scatters people’s natural extended families, deprives impoverished people of wealthier neighbors, depletes urban tax bases leading to school & infrastructure deterioration, and destroys neighborhood business districts. And sprawl is a series of violations of natural boundaries between humans and other species. It consists of replacing ecosystems nonhuman animals need (and took part in creating) with paving, houses, office parks, commercial buildings, and unnatural landscaping. Sprawl involves far more car use than traditional town & city living does. Cars injure and kill enormous numbers of people and other animals.

Though an early motive for flight to the suburbs was infectious diseases in cities, rational measures can prevent epidemics but sprawl spreads Lyme disease by disrupting natural ecosystems. Likewise, further intrusion into deep forest is causing malaria to reemerge in the Amazon region in the continuing boundary violation where people destroy animals and their ecosystems for short term gains linked to long-term pain.

Can restoring natural boundaries reduce violence and poverty?

Animal-abusing boundary violations that drive human illness, soaring medical & insurance costs, lower quality of life, resource waste, and ecosystem destruction also create the conditions for war, genocide and poverty.

Despots and demagogues typically move people to attack others by demonizing them as nonhuman animals who evoke fear: predators, rats, snakes, cockroaches, others. Classifying some animals as unworthy of life or liberty probably led people to start doing the same to other people very long ago. Acts of war include destroying “livestock.”

Bombing cities and destroying crops and resources also kill and injure nonhuman