



The Way to Rights of All Animals

Three things must happen for a new group of persons, such as nonhuman animals, to acquire *basic rights* – rights like humans have under the U.S. Constitution – and Responsible Policies for Animals (RPA) works each day to make them happen:

- ▶ The public recognizes the *personhood* of the members of the excluded group – defined as *someone* equally worthy of life, respect, and fulfillment, not as *something* to disregard, use, own, or destroy.
- ▶ The public recognizes *wrongs* done to the group and its members by practices and policies previously deemed morally acceptable.
- ▶ The new group's *rights* are established in the Constitution by the amendment process to prohibit recognized *wrongs*, enabling *laws* to enforce the group's *rights*.

People wishing to establish a new group's rights create a *rights movement* to ensure that those three things happen. As the movement provides the needed education, *injustice and suffering diminish* as people start to reject practices and policies they learn are wrong.

Despite massive injustice toward nonhuman animals, the first wave of the "animal rights movement" has made no progress these past three decades because *it is not a rights movement*. Rather than teach what the public needs to know to establish rights of all animals, the first wave scrambles to "help animals" every which way and promotes shopping and eating

choices that amount to *conscientious objection*.

"Legal protections" not based on rights do not protect. Anticruelty laws are not progress toward *rights of all animals*. Choosing not to support industries that use nonhuman animals does not reduce wrongs done to them, just as choosing not to enlist in the military does not prevent war.

"Legal protections" not based on rights do not protect."

Moving beyond first-wave methods, RPA, the Animal-Rights Conversation Corps, and the new wave of the animal-rights movement promote rights of all animals *the way rights come to exist for new groups*. The other three articles in this issue of *Persons* explain what we must do. It is simple once we grasp the three things that must happen for all animals to have rights.

Support and work with RPA over time. Make a *real difference* rather than an imagined one. ★

– D.J.C.

Did you know "pests" are beings who live among humans in large numbers because of humans' unnatural way of life?



The Animal-Rights Conversation Corps: The Talk Is the Walk

Our species must put itself on a new trajectory for "us" and the rest of the living world. The policy change needed for this to happen is guaranteed autonomy, ecology, and dignity rights of all animals as called for in Responsible Policies for Animals' Draft Bill To Establish Rights of All Animals – see www.RPAforAll.org. All who are serious about reducing injustice and suffering will dedicate themselves to this task, forming a loose-knit global Animal-Rights Conversation Corps (ARCC).

While the first wave of the "animal rights movement" scrambles to "help animals" without reducing suffering or injustice, the new wave, the true animal-rights movement, promotes rights of all animals the way rights come to exist for new groups of persons. Don't fall for notions that the ARCC is "just talk." The spoken and written word is always the way to justice and the rights persons need to lead a fulfilling life.

What does the ARCC talk about? To whom? How? Respectfully, without blame – and firmly and persistently – we teach the public that ...

- ▶ Human beings, peaceable and cooperative plant foragers by nature, have no natural need or entitlement to use, own, or harm nonhuman animals or to alter, disrupt, or contaminate their natural homes or their biosphere.

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▶ Nonhuman animals are *biological persons* who should be deemed *legal persons*, naturally entitled to freedom from human beings and their societies, industries, institutions, economies, technologies, violence, and overpopulation. Nonhuman animals are entitled to live according to their species' original evolved nature, in their natural ecosystems and biosphere, among their natural families and biotic communities, without being owned, managed, supervised, abused, or killed by humans.

▶ All animals are entitled to equal autonomy, ecology, and dignity rights guaranteed and enforced under nations' governing constitutions.

▶ Nearly all human suffering, loss, deprivation, and early death come from injustice toward nonhuman animals. Establishing rights of all animals is the remedy.

Teaching these basic principles will reduce injustice and suffering by arousing people's innate yearning for justice. Helping animals, and conscientious objection in the form of veganism, do not make the needed progress. Abolitionism does not lead to rights; the struggle for rights leads to abolition.

ARCC educators do not merely object to dog-fighting, factory farming, or other atrocities the first wave and the animal-welfare industry decry. The first wave's narrow focus on fighting cruelty and helping animals these past three decades ignores the vast scope of injustice behind nearly all suffering, loss, deprivation, and early death in humans as well as the other animals.

The ARCC communicates respectfully with people in all walks of life, focusing especially on news, schools, and other

In addition to its members,
Responsible Policies for Animals is . . .

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Responsible Policies for Animals promotes guaranteed equal autonomy, ecology, and dignity rights of all animals. RPA has no salaried staff or directors. RPA members donate \$25 or more and receive RPA's unique bumper sticker, newsletter, and 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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institutions that reinforce false and harmful beliefs about humans and other animals. Use all means of communication. Give out RPA literature. Schedule an RPA lecture. Use "social media" to refer people to www.RPAforAll.org - they are not effective for teaching new and

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radical ideas.

Truth-telling is unpopular, threatening powerful economic, political, career, and status interests. It generates cognitive dissonance, the stress of grappling with two or

more incompatible beliefs. Don't expect to "change hearts and minds" quickly. Avoid entanglement with people's defensiveness. Just know your stuff, say your piece, and move on.

Talk, write, and read up a storm, and keep in touch! Together, we can teach *the rights idea*, establishing justice along the way to rights of all animals. ★
- D.J.C.

All Animals Are Persons

Rights protect and empower *persons* (*fictitious persons* in the dubious case of corporations). So a core task of the animal-rights movement and the Animal-Rights Conversation Corps (ARCC) is to teach the public that all animals are *persons*. The ARCC must overcome lifelong indoctrination into humanism and speciesism holding nonhuman animals *less than human*,

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non-persons, not merely *different from* humans due to divergent evolutionary paths and different DNA.

To most human beings, the concept of nonhuman personhood is *outlandish*. Not because the concept is unsound but because the first wave of the “animal rights movement” fails to correct the groundless dogma that only humans can be persons. Even many animal advocates mistakenly believe that for nonhuman animals to be persons, they must closely resemble human beings intellectually, emotionally, socially, and morally.

The ARCC teaches that . . .

▶ All words acquire their meaning from convention – tacit agreement

“What makes human beings persons is their bodies, not a set of intangible attributes that supposedly set humans apart from the other animals.”

that we denote a particular kind of spherical object with “ball,” another kind with “planet,” another kind with “rabbit droppings.” The meaning of “person” might *seem* fixed and eternal, but today’s standard definition of “person” as any individual human being *has changed through time*.

As recently as 1879, the U.S. government argued in court that a Ponca chief *was not a person*, therefore habeas corpus did not apply to him, and he could be imprisoned without evidence he had committed a crime. As Betty Friedan noted, only as women’s *personhood* has increasingly been recognized have women gained respect – and *rights* – *even while the Equal Rights Amendment languishes unratified*. The same is true for people of color, disabled humans, gay humans, and other human groups.

▶ What makes human beings persons is their bodies, not a set of intangible attributes that supposedly set humans apart from the other animals. When we say “in person” or “damage to person or property,” we refer to a human being’s *body*, not the full scope of their humanity. We aspire to treat every human being with respect, and we expect every human being to be treated equally under the Constitution and the law, without knowing anything about them except that they exist as a human body.

▶ A newborn human of unknown mental capability and a 45-year-old serial killer are persons under the law. As Responsible Policies for Animals’ Petition To Change Human Beings’ Zoological Name points out, humans are far from the only sapient (knowing and wise) animals. Maybe humans are less sapient than the others, considering the needless suffering they cause.

▶ The human body contains more nonhuman cells than human cells. Countless beings live in and on our persons. Human beings are genetically related to all other animals, sharing common ancestors with all of them. Every animal with a heart experiences on average 1 billion heartbeats – a whale or an elephant or a gorilla over a great many years, a chickadee or a mouse in just a few.

How can humans be persons but not their nonhuman relatives and ancestors? How can other animals’ persons, their bodies, share the same physical attributes as humans – blood, vital organs, sense organs, endocrine systems, limbs, skin, brains, nervous systems – and yet humans be *the only persons*?

“Our body looks different from that of a jellyfish,” says Neil Shubin in *Your Inner Fish*, “because of the ways our cells attach to one another, the ways they communicate, and the different materials they make.”

▶ Other animals created the living world, and they did not authorize humans to contaminate, disrupt, overpopulate, or dismantle it. Other

animals enjoyed their natural homes, their food, their families, and the world around them for hundreds of millions of years before humans existed. Open a recent encyclopedia, and you’ll see “Conscientious

“Other animals created the living world, and they did not authorize humans to . . . dismantle it.”

Parents: Parental Care in Amphibians.” It is not metaphorical, humorous, or condescending.

Establishing nonhuman personhood in the human mind is a core task of the ARCC. Enjoy restoring to your fellow human beings, long gone from their natural home and way of life, their original consciousness of the other animals. ★

– D.J.C.

Justice for Nonhuman Animals the Path to Human Wellbeing

Nearly all human suffering, loss, deprivation, and early death come from injustice toward nonhuman animals. This is *crucial* for the Animal-Rights Conversation Corps (ARCC) to teach, since humans resist sweeping change if they do not think it will serve their interests. The first wave of the “animal rights movement” fails to teach it, waiting in vain for “cruelty” exposés to magically produce needed policy change.

Just teaching animal rights’ benefits to humans will move many people to treat other animals with respect that has been lacking since humans started perceiving others as *less than human* many thousands of

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years ago.

The ARCC teaches that ...

▶ Human beings get almost every infectious disease they can name from invading and disrupting

“Just teaching benefits of animal rights for humans will move many humans to treat other animals with respect”

nonhuman animals’ natural homes, killing nonhuman animals, and engaging in other unnatural contact with them. Recent examples include AIDS, Lyme disease, West Nile virus, and Ebola. In the 1980s, cases of bubonic plague in the U.S. were linked to skinning a prairie dog, handling a chipmunk, and other unnatural and unjust acts.

Injustice toward other animals gave humans smallpox, anthrax, influenza, the common cold, and countless other microbial ailments. Clearing land for farming, an injustice dating back many thousands of years, made malaria the monster human affliction it is today.

▶ Since humans are natural plant-foraging (not farming) herbivores, it is not surprising that heart disease, stroke, many cancers, and other non-communicable diseases come from meat, dairy, fish, and eggs in the human diet.

These links between human disease and injustice toward nonhuman animals are so well established that only doubt manufactured by our agriculture universities, news, government and other institutions keeps humans sickening and killing themselves through extremely unnatural practices.

▶ War and genocide would not be the massive and devastating human endeavors they are if not for the long-held delusion that nonhuman

animals are *less than human*. As horrible as it is to humans, war also destroys and traumatizes nonhuman animals, enslaved and free-living alike. War depends on *disrespect* for nonhuman animals and is incompatible with *respect* for them. Organizing to kill predators and nonhumans who eat farm crops made it easy for humans to organize attacks on fellow humans competing for land, water, food, and personal wealth.

War “took off” when humans enslaved horses, using them to manage ever larger cattle herds over ever expanding territories. About 6,000 years ago, violent herding people swept into Europe, vanquishing agrarian societies, destroying their peaceful, rich, complex, cooperative, equalitarian cultures and initiating thousands of years of tyranny and injustice from which our species only recently began to emerge.

“Injustice toward other animals gave humans smallpox, anthrax, influenza, . . . and countless other microbial ailments.”

▶ Where human-produced chemicals exterminate nonhuman animals and alter their genes, human misery follows – cancers, neurological and hormonal disorders, and more. For many thousands of years, nonhuman animals have suffered the most from humans’ assaults on the living world – hunting, felling trees, farming, migrating out of our original habitat, killing animals to protect crops and “livestock,” and polluting with toxic chemicals, fuel and mineral extraction, industrial emissions, and construction projects.

Humans suffer on a massive scale, too, though. Automobiles kill more than 1 million nonhuman animals per day in the U.S. alone, not including

gastropods, insects, and many others – in addition to the pollution caused by auto use, manufacture, and disposal. AND automobiles have killed *more human beings than all wars combined*. The incalculable harm to nonhuman animals from global heating alone is one limitless injustice among many. AND the number of humans dying from global heating each year is estimated at 400,000.

▶ Human overpopulation, a far-reaching injustice inflicted on nonhuman animals for thousands of years, is a factor in all human suffering, loss, deprivation, and early death.

One’s personal relationship to nonhuman animals may determine which infectious disease one gets. How much one eats from animals and how the individual human body responds may determine which non-communicable disease one gets. Ethnicity or religion may determine who fights or exterminates whom. Where and how we live and travel and what we do to survive amidst too many humans and too few jobs may determine which toxins poison us, how global heating affects us, and what crimes victimize us. But overpopulation is a major factor, and it harms nonhuman animals even more than humans.

▶ How do we measure the pain of knowing the preventable suffering our practices, policies, and numbers cause? A resident of the most comfortable society in human history commits suicide every 15 minutes. Two million Americans are addicted to heroin or painkillers, not to mention the vast array of other drugs, diversions, and “comfort foods” sometimes described as respites from our “dreary lives.”

The Constitution invokes justice, liberty, equality, defense, tranquility, and the general welfare, *not dreariness*. ARCC educators teach the human benefits of justice for nonhumans, daily promoting the most desperately needed policy: guaranteed autonomy, ecology, and dignity rights of all animals. ★

– D.J.C.