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If human beings were their subject, that passage would obviously be about eugenics – the system first made popular in the U.S. and then made infamous in Nazi Germany (see Charles Patterson's *Eternal Treblinka: Our Treatment of Animals and the Holocaust* for a powerful and lucid account) for selectively breeding humans for desired traits and to eliminate those deemed undesirable. What animal rights advocates readily see as thousands of years' enslavement of these animals and institutionalized rape, Huffman & Evenson describe in purely technical terms as if discussing inanimate objects.

Rather than blame them for their insensitivity as some animal advocates might feel compelled to do, we should appreciate the service they provide.

Like the land-grant university agriculture and "animal science" instructors, students, and administrators,

government agriculture and "livestock" officials, flesh, milk & egg sellers, marketers, advertisers and public-relations workers, and others whose industries are analyzed in *Science for Agriculture*, those of us who wish to advance the goal of basic legal rights for nonhuman animals can benefit enormously from such an objective discussion.

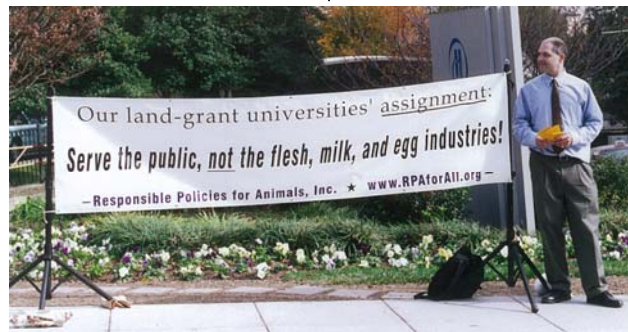
Having "no dog in this race," seeking to rally neither "side" of the animal rights "debate," Huffman & Evenson show us the most important thing we need to know to make informed decisions about our future: There has been, to date, little or no progress toward basic legal rights for nonhuman animals or any societal reckoning with the fact of the animals' sentience and the inherent cruelty of animal exploitation. ★

## Help Pull Out Animal Exploitation by the Roots!



You, too, can take part in the world's only sustained effort to end universities' inestimable billions of dollars' worth of support to the flesh, milk & egg industries: RPA's **10,000 Years Is Enough** campaign!

The **10,000 Years Is Enough** campaign started with four educational mailings to the presidents of all 50 states' main land-grant universities (LGUs) – big schools that include our federally mandated colleges of agriculture.



Lots more has happened since! [Learn more today at www.RPAforAll.org](http://www.RPAforAll.org) or e-mail, phone, or send a letter to [RPA headquarters](http://www.RPAforAll.org).

**10,000 Years Is Enough** is not a one-size-fits-all campaign – it's designed for *you* to take part, whatever *your* talents and experience might be! Everyone taking part does it a different way. We're serious about animal rights, so we're in it for the long haul, not just easy victories.

If you live in the United States, there is an LGU in your state – just waiting to hear from *you*! Nonhuman animals cannot possibly get meaningful legal rights as long as 105 LGUs, including big ones in every state, continue to teach that the animals don't even have moral rights and teach people to slaughter them rather than to respect them. ★

*Educating for a humane future.*

[www.RPAforAll.org](http://www.RPAforAll.org)

Responsible Policies for Animals, Inc.  
P.O. Box 891  
Glenside, PA 19038

# Thin Ice\*

The Newsletter of Responsible Policies for Animals, Inc. Vol. 4, No. 2 ★ Spring-Summer 2006

## The Answer Is Yes!

*The question: Can animal rights appeal to the public without anti-rights animal welfare methods?*

What do these folks have in common?:

☛ About 25 University of Vermont students, Burlington residents, and Vermont animal advocates who gathered for a potluck vegan dinner and the Responsible Policies for Animals (RPA) presentation **Animal Rights: Much More Than You Think!** organized by Students for True Animal Rights.

☛ Fifteen people of three generations in government, law, environmentalism, teaching and other fields who gathered in a conference room at the State Museum in Albany, New York, for a free vegan lunch and the RPA presentation **Health, Conservation, Peace and a Humane Future: The Role of Government & Education**.

☛ About 12 students at the University of Pennsylvania School of Law who attended an RPA presentation on **animal rights and the law**, explaining built-in reasons why animal welfare laws cannot provide nonhuman animals with meaningful protection and only animal rights can.

☛ About 30 members of the Glenside (Pennsylvania) Rotary Club who attended an RPA **introduction to animal rights** at one of the Rotary's regular meetings.

☛ About 25 nurses and therapists who gathered at the Huntingdon Valley (Pennsylvania) Library for two presentations on **nutrition and the mind**, one of them by RPA Executive Director David Cantor, hosted by the Bucks County Chapter of the Pennsylvania Hypnosis Society – followed by vegan snacks.

What do they have in common? They all attended RPA presentations since the last issue of *Thin Ice* – so they all understand animal rights better than they did before. That is real progress toward animal rights!

Countless people have experienced RPA's presentations, articles, cable TV advertisements, letters, e-mails – and the extensive spring 2006 **Abolitionist Online interview explaining how RPA's work improves on past animal advocacy methods**. The interview is easy to find at [www.abolitionist-online.com](http://www.abolitionist-online.com). Originating in Australia, the zine calls RPA "one of the most refreshing animal rights centred voices around"!

**Hey, They Like It!**

RPA's presentations are very well received, even by people who are not sure they like what they hear. *Why?* Because, rather than confuse animal rights education with telling people in the audience to change practices they're emotionally attached to – like what they eat – RPA explains

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## Two New Brochures Available!

Merely explaining to people why all sentient beings should have basic legal rights (see "The Answer Is Yes!" this page) does not suffice. Before supporting or choosing not to oppose fundamental change, most people need to see that the change will benefit, or at least not harm, them and their loved ones.

RPA's two new brochures – **Animal Rights: What America Needs Most** and **Human Problems: Animal Solutions – a brief guide to long-term success in health, conservation, ecology, peace, and abundance through responsible policies for animals** – explain the animals' need for rights and summarize the enormous benefits animal rights offers to people.

**Animal Rights: What America Needs Most** emphasizes benefits of animal rights and the need for the U.S. to establish those rights and export them to other countries. It is especially useful for animal advocates.

**Human Problems: Animal Solutions** describes animal rights as restoring natural boundaries between human beings and the other animals – violating them for thousands of years being a major factor in human suffering today. It is especially useful for people not yet clear on the need for fundamental reform of the human-nonhuman animal relationship.

☛ Get both brochures today, *free of charge*, from RPA or at [www.RPAforAll.org](http://www.RPAforAll.org)!

☛ The website provides the brochures and most other RPA literature in PDF format for easy printing & copying at your home or office. ★

\* RPA's newsletter, *Thin Ice*, gets its name from the ethical "thin ice" on which practices that harm nonhuman animals stand and the literal thin ice threatening polar bears' and other animals' survival.

## Book Review

*Experts' silence louder than words: Animal advocates' impact on food industry nil so far.*

### Science for Agriculture

*A Long-Term Perspective, Second Edition*  
By W.E. Huffman & R.E. Evenson  
314 pp. Blackwell. \$129.99.

By David Cantor

It is no easy task to describe, in less than 300 pages of text, the U.S. history of technology, research, training, invention, and intellectual-property protection in agriculture, the raising of animals for food, and biotechnology, export of these developments to other countries, and future prospects in these vast and complex endeavors. W.E. Huffman & R.E. Evenson do it masterfully, however, in the 2006 second edition of *Science for Agriculture: A Long-Term Perspective*.

They group together as "agriculture" the three core enterprises - crops, nonhuman animals, and biotechnology - even though "agriculture" means the cultivation of fields. But that is not a departure from academic and common parlance despite confusion it obviously perpetuates.

*Science for Agriculture* is meticulously researched and thoroughly documented. It is likely to be considered a classic in its field, like the 1993 first edition.

Striking from an animal rights perspective a quarter-century into the declared animal rights movement is that this book acknowledges no ethical question about our species' exploiting animals for food and fiber - or about what the authors repeatedly describe as the "industrialization" of "livestock production" in recent decades. Chickens, pigs, cattle, sheep, and others are strictly commodities in this discussion. So, not only has no significant change occurred in that aspect of agribusiness between editions of this volume, but for that matter since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century when our land-grant universities' "animal science" programs, our State Agricultural Experimentation System, and our U.S. Department of Agriculture tightened the screws on farm animals by developing factory farming and promoting it to "farmers."

Nor does the book raise serious concerns about the other negative impacts of the flesh, milk & egg industries familiar to declared animal rights advocates: poor human health, increased medical & insurance costs, microbial resistance to antibiotics, water pollution, topsoil & water loss from feed-crop production, fuel waste, and more.

Of course this book doesn't address these things, one might object: Such questions are not the book's topic - it is for would-be reformers to write about them. Huffman is C.F. Curtis Distinguished Professor of

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Responsible Policies for Animals, Inc. (RPA), promotes responsible policies for animals that are also responsible policies for people and ecosystems: basic legal rights for nonhuman animals. RPA is a 501(c)(3) educational non-profit organization. All donations to RPA are tax deductible as allowed by law. Anyone can become an RPA member by donating \$15.00 or more, and RPA appreciates and makes effective use of donations in any amount. RPA members receive *Thin Ice* by mail and other updates and information by e-mail and mail.

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Donations to RPA may be made online or by mail.

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RPA's statement opposing the use of violence and other antisocial behavior in animal advocacy is available at [www.RPAforAll.org](http://www.RPAforAll.org) or by mail.

★

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Agriculture and Professor of Economics and Agricultural Economics at Iowa State University. Evenson is Professor of Economics at Yale. Their interest is agribusiness by numbers.

But that is precisely my point: If the animal rights movement were having a significant impact, economists would notice changes in the numbers. After all, Huffman & Evenson acknowledge important differences among crop and "livestock" sectors when those differences are not related to animals' sentience or their consequent needs or interests. They describe past agribusiness-sector growth rates and predict future rates, noting factors that will affect them such as changes in research funding sources. Their radar detects no measurable shift in consumer choices.

What about Whole Foods Markets' "Animal Compassion Foundation" and other dubious claims to making the flesh, milk & egg industries less cruel?

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what animal rights is.

Taking everyone's needs, interests, and concerns into account helps, too.

#### They've Got To Know What It Is

With ever more animal exploitation and destruction despite a quarter-century of the declared U.S. animal rights movement, RPA began its work in 2003 based on a perception that the public still did not know the meaning of animal rights. Experience continually confirms that virtually no one who promotes it, opposes it, reports on it, writes about it, edits, publishes, or produces accounts of it, or talks about it truly knows what animal rights is.

Without knowing what it is, society will not embrace it. That is why explaining animal rights to people is the most important activity for advancing animal rights. For a more detailed explanation, see the *Abolitionist Online* interview and/or have RPA send you information and a reading list. Here are the basics.

#### Animal Rights Is ...

(1) A political proposal for protecting nonhuman animals against injustice based on the facts that (a) human beings' most effective protection against injustice has been enforceable legal rights, and (b) the animal welfare status quo will always fail the vast majority of animals, denying them basic legal rights and secondary rights that flow from basic rights.

(2) A social movement existing to promote that proposal, with the goal of establishing nonhuman animals' basic legal rights in law and custom - as human rights are established in different ways in different societies - and then to implement those basic rights by establishing secondary rights and enforcement practices.

Animal rights is based on animals' sentience - their ability to experience their lives and feel pain and pleasure - and not on how much people care about them. The failure to establish animal rights drives injustice against human beings as well as against nonhuman animals (see sidebar "What Is Not Animal Rights" this page). Thus, animal rights should have much more appeal than the animal welfare status quo, animal liberation, or any other strategy some people claim "helps animals" - once the differences are understood.

Since hardly anyone understands what animal rights is, it is often confused with other concepts and activities. So the main activity of the animal rights movement today needs to be ensuring that people learn what animal rights is and why animal rights is the only entirely responsible policy for nonhuman animals, people, and ecosystems. That's what RPA's presentations, literature, and campaigns are designed to accomplish. ★

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Not a peep. Consistent with my belief that such anti-animal rights programs are mainly public-relations efforts to rationalize keeping flesh, calves' milk & eggs on store shelves, Huffman & Evenson observe no significant pressure toward less cruel methods that would ostensibly increase "production" costs and retail prices.

We read things like,

Poultry breeders developed a highly successful way of protecting their intellectual property investment in superior breeds by exploiting heterosis, or hybrid vigor. ... While the offspring of this cross exhibit some superior-yield performance, this yield advantage steadily declines as the offspring themselves are bred. Thus, by restricting access to the pure parent-line stock (a form of a trade secret) a breeder remains the sole supplier of the hybrid. Farmers need to repeatedly purchase new stock from the breeder to maintain high yields.

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## What Is Not Animal Rights

So much confusion exists about what animal rights is and what can and cannot advance animal rights. All of us who want animals to have meaningful rights do well to recognize as clearly as possible strategies and tactics that will do not advance animal rights even though they are often identified with people who "believe in" animal rights or groups described as "animal rights" organizations.

To advance animal rights, it is also useful to use the term "animal rights" entirely accurately. That might help alleviate confusion and hasten the process of establishing the rights the animals need for true wellbeing.

None of the activities in the list that follows is an animal rights activity. The last one is consistent with animal rights even though it cannot establish legal rights:

- ◆ improving animal welfare regulations
- ◆ attacking animal abusers
- ◆ exposing cruelty to animals
- ◆ teaching compassion
- ◆ liberating or rescuing animals
- ◆ promoting vegan and cruelty-free living

Without basic rights - like the right to autonomy, the right not to serve human purposes, and the right not to be property, other "rights" are meaningless. A key source of confusion about strategies, objectives, and goals of the animal rights movement is some advocates' claims that regulating the care of animal property such as farm animals confers rights. "Rights" of property will never protect anyone. ★