

# Pushing Rights of All Animals the Way Human Rights Came To Exist

*Lectures, meetings, fliers, brochures, websites, correspondence – relying on the written and spoken word reflects the precise nature of rights.*

*“Enlighten the people generally, and tyranny and oppressions of body and mind will vanish like evil spirits at the break of day.” – Thomas Jefferson*

The struggle for basic rights of all animals – rights like those established in the Constitution’s rights Amendments, which all animals need to lead fulfilling lives – extends the struggle of John Locke, Isaac Newton, Thomas Paine, James Madison, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Frederick Douglass, Lucy Stone and others. Their media were *the spoken and written word* – conversation, lectures, speeches, sermons, pamphlets, books, letters, articles. So those are the media Responsible Policies for Animals (RPA) uses.

*Rights are a verbal construct.* Rights are not feelings, lifestyles, or shopping choices promoted by visual images and celebrities. Rights must be articulated in words. They can only be understood, respected, and enforced through verbal communication.

That is why popular animal advocacy, with its emphasis on mass media, visuals, shopping choices, lifestyle, and pop-culture publicity methods, has not made progress toward establishing rights of all animals despite raising awareness of horrendous suffering that humans inflict on nonhuman animals. *And it is why Responsible Policies for Animals (RPA) relies on the spoken and written word* – especially public and private lectures, meetings, correspondence, factsheets, newsletters, brochures, fliers, letters-to-the-editor, op-ed pieces, emails, and websites.

## Education the Objective, Not Popularity

Many people assume the objective of animal-rights activities must be to build popular support for “the movement” or an organization’s work for the cause *as quickly as possible*. That reflects common sense, but it ignores how basic rights came to exist in the first place. Popular outrage rebels against atrocities, and people make personal choices accordingly. But jurists, legislators,

scholars, and informed advocates formulate precise *concepts, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs* to establish justice and equality and to protect autonomy and wellbeing – so far only for humans and, sadly, nonliving corporations. Hence prohibitions against tyranny and injustice in the Bill of Rights and other rights Amendments – *rights* that mere laws, policies, or practices are not permitted to violate. Rights are *unalienable guarantees* – not to be overruled by majority opinion, officials’ private interests, or other sources of tyranny.

## RPA Rights-Education Events

Human rights, women’s rights, civil rights – these concepts took centuries of gradual enlightenment to establish in human minds and institutions. If not for the printing press and increasingly literate populaces able to gather in cities and towns, the vast majority of human beings might still consider unfettered tyranny *natural, right, and the only imaginable way of life* – even though it subverts our species’ biological nature. Rights enforce *justice* – the closest condition to the natural order that humans can achieve – not *kindness*, a natural human trait overwhelmed by mass societies, institutions, and industries. Rights help maintain order by affording rights-holders the opportunity of a fulfilling life, thereby preventing organized rebellion and minimizing disruptive individual acts of violence.

This past fall and winter, RPA founder David Cantor gave lectures designed to show participants how establishing *unalienable basic autonomy, ecology, and dignity rights of all animals* – guarantees that no nonhuman being on Earth currently possesses – will improve *human* wellbeing and help solve the big *human* problems. That is *the political (policy) argument for animal rights*, as distinct from the *ethical* argument: that because nonhuman animals *experience their lives* – do not merely exist like a

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rock – they are entitled to equal consideration and treatment and require *rights* to safeguard those entitlements.

Without grasping the far-reaching benefits to humans, the vast majority of people, misinformed by news, popular animal advocacy, and other institutions, assume animal rights *diminishes* humans' quality of life – *takes away* this or that cherished food, research endeavor, recreation opportunity, amusement, or manufactured product. *Nothing could be further from the truth.* The human plight will worsen inexorably until justice is established for all animals. And *rights* are the only way.

### Concrete Results

The political argument for animal rights parallels the case made by leaders of human-rights organizations that *defending human rights anywhere benefits all humans everywhere.* Emphasizing the political argument is both crucial and practical. Public and official sentiment rarely mobilizes behind any political proposal, whether *modest* like making automobiles less unsafe or *radical* like rights of all animals, based on morality alone. Practical consequences are key.

A typical RPA lecture providing the political argument for animal rights is titled **Basic Rights of All Animals: Solve Human Problems by Ending Injustice against Nonhumans.** A typical description reads,

Thousands of dedicated citizens and officials work daily to improve human wellbeing – health, justice, equality, an end to war, restraints on pollution, conservation. But what do we see? Ever more human disease, endless war, rampant human disruption of the natural world, global economic disaster a routine news item, everything fun, no one happy. Could civilization's millennia-long assault on nonhuman animals and the natural world be the root of human suffering and violence? If so, can we change course? Hear a surprising and thorough analysis. Start considering practical long-term solutions.

Each lecture explains to participants the scientific basis of *human* rights and how it applies to *nonhuman* animals. Human rights do not exist merely to prevent *cruelty* or the worst suffering but to guarantee one animal species – humans – the political (policy) circumstances in which they are most likely to lead a fulfilling life.

By guaranteeing much more than just a prohibition on torture or punishment without a trial by jury, the total configuration of rights affords a much greater likelihood that government will refrain from torture than merely prohibiting torture ever could. By creating circumstances in which a large proportion of the populace can, or believes it can, find fulfillment through personal, social, and political endeavor, the totality of the Constitution's rights Amendments makes a stable society with a large

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Responsible Policies for Animals, Inc. (RPA), promotes responsible policies for nonhuman animals that are also responsible policies for human beings and ecosystems: unalienable equal basic individual autonomy, ecology, and dignity rights of all animals.

RPA is a 501(c)(3) educational nonprofit organization. Monetary and in-kind donations to RPA are tax exempt as allowed by law.

RPA has no salaried staff or directors.

Anyone may become an RPA member for one year by donating \$25.00 or more. RPA considers ill, impoverished or incarcerated people for donation-free honorary memberships upon request. No one need adopt a particular lifestyle to be an RPA member.

RPA members receive *Thin Ice* and Updates on RPA's work. New members receive RPA's bumper sticker (see [www.RPAforAll.org](http://www.RPAforAll.org)).

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proportion of relatively comfortable humans more feasible than under abjectly tyrannical systems that many humans still endure.

*As for humans, so for nonhumans:* Justice and a fulfilling life are impossible without *rights* on a planet dominated by human mass societies, with tyranny over humans still widespread and nonliving corporate, industrial, and financial interests perpetually undermining humans' and nonhuman animals' wellbeing.

### More Promising than Popular Advocacy

Popular animal advocacy's focus on *regulating the suffering and deprivation human beings are permitted to inflict on nonhuman animals* makes no significant headway toward rights of nonhumans and their anticipated benefits to humans, because it does not address the root cause of other animals' suffering: *injustice.*

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Popular advocacy invokes *cruelty* as the cause of nonhuman animals' agony when humans use them for food, clothing, medicine, teaching, entertainment, companionship, and other purposes. But *cruelty involves intent to cause pain and suffering*. That only describes the sociopathic behavior of the very few. Most humans naturally abhor cruelty without prompting by organized advocacy.

Popular advocacy invokes "voting with your wallet" as the "solution" to most "cruelty" – shopping "cruelty-free" and donating to organizations that "fight cruelty" and "help animals." Elaborate public-relations endeavors create an illusion of change by linking humans' natural compassion to "making a difference." *None of this addresses tyranny and injustice, whose remedy is rights.*

This helps explain why the plight of nonhuman animals has steadily worsened during the decades when "animal rights" has been used to refer to anything anyone does to help nonhuman animals. Helping others is inherently good, but *it does not promote rights*. The human plight likewise continues to worsen, since human suffering is rooted in our species' thousands of years of infringements on nonhuman animals, including using and owning them and ever more powerfully disrupting their world.

### What We Must Do

➤ ***Host or help organize an RPA lecture at your home or in your community.*** RPA lectures are modeled on the great traditions of human rights, feminism, civil rights, gay rights, radical dissent, and America's founding principle of basing policy on open inquiry and empirical study. These great traditions are subverted by today's public-relations-driven universities and news industry, corporate rights, and the domination of moneyed interests over the common good. Take part in restoring the original American way by helping RPA's dissenting voice be heard.

➤ ***Emphasize the needed change – basic rights of all animals and prohibition of corporate rights – in all of your political activities.*** Make sure electoral candidates and your elected officials know that you do not buy their public-relations-driven agendas maintaining support from nonliving corporations and industries regardless of the public interest. *Vote for those least dedicated to nonliving industrial and corporate interests; dedicate your time and energy to the only solution to the big problems: establishing all animals' unalienable basic autonomy, ecology, and dignity rights.*

➤ ***Learn the precise and complete animal-rights message and how to spread the word at [www.RPAforAll.org](http://www.RPAforAll.org) and from literature we are glad to mail you.*** Animal rights is not what the news industry persists in pretending it is. If an activity is not aimed at eventually establishing a full configuration of rights of all animals like those humans possess under the Constitution, it is not a rights activity – so it cannot be an *animal-rights* activity. ★

## Middle East Activists Confirm: Fulfilling Life Not Possible Without Rights

*Not just "a word on paper," rights are necessary for other animals as for humans.*

By David Cantor

"All human rights for all – this should be our common call to action," writes Mary Robinson, United Nations high commissioner for human rights, in her Foreword to *In Our Own Best Interest: How Defending Human Rights Benefits Us All* by William F. Schultz, executive director of Amnesty International USA.

"[O]ur primary agenda at this stage is to help the affected people understand what their rights are, and how to go about protecting them," says the Bahrain Center for Human Rights.

It is for good reason that these voices and some of the longest-running organizations promote and defend *rights*. Rights are the institution that makes justice possible – with persistent effort. No rights – no likelihood of a fulfilling life. It is for good reason that "Arab Spring" activists do not merely call for "fighting cruelty," "making a difference," or other vague notions that deprive conventional animal advocacy of concrete political goals that can achieve meaningful change.

### American Revolution by Another Name

In Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, Libya, Syria, and other countries, "Arab Spring" protests invoke the word that has inspired people to cast off tyranny and establish justice since the beginning of the American Revolution: *rights*.

The American Revolution is not to be confused with the War of Independence. The War established an independent nation. The Revolution established basic rights of the individual person as the basis of governance. Billions of *human* persons do not yet have rights. The United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights lacks force of law despite cherished victories.

In popular animal advocacy, "animal rights" is a public-relations device. Some call rights of all animals "pie in the sky" to display their "practicality" while exploiting the "animal rights" label's cachet.

### Rights Necessary in Unnatural Societies

Humans are in different predicaments with regard to rights. Some people enjoy rights and enforcement. Some have rights but lack enforcement. Some lack rights altogether, except for the extra-legal U.N. Declaration. But all understand that *without rights – every individual person's precise enforceable guarantees against tyranny – there can be no justice*. This is particularly the case since humans

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established mass societies thousands of years ago.

Without justice, humans and other animals cannot lead fulfilling lives. Social-animal societies establish justice through empathy, reciprocity, generosity, altruism, respect, compassion, mercy, friendship, cooperation, and moral indignation. Dominant individuals are promptly dealt with by individual and alliance challenges when they perpetrate injustice by gratuitously harming others or displaying greed or selfishness at others' expense.

When humans abandoned their original foraging life for hunting, herding, agriculture, sedentism, clothing, and nonhuman enslavement, a hyper-aggressive few could now seize overwhelming wealth and power. Dominant individuals and their families formed cliques and cabals, replacing nature's meritocracy with artificial might-makes-right despotism. For thousands of years, the few have subjugated the many through monarchy, religion, feudalism, universities, capitalism, corporations, the military, news, and public relations.

Dictatorships generate uprisings like "Arab Spring" by oppressing human beings to a breaking point. Unable to organize vis à vis human institutions, *nonhuman animals depend on humans to establish their rights.*

#### **Rights: The One Bright Light**

Failing to appreciate rights, many Americans invoke the cliché that rights are "only a word on paper." But certain words in certain documents – *or their absence* – have enormous impact on human and nonhuman life. Constitutional words like "vote" or "judiciary" or "war" do not seem to confuse anyone. But *rights are not visible.* Understanding them requires *thought.* Serious thought is discouraged by today's news-and-PR regimes.

The Constitution's rights Amendments – the Bill of Rights and Amendments XIII, XIV, XV, and XIX – make a fulfilling life possible. Without rights and the necessary vigilance, *you would likely be imprisoned for possessing this newsletter.* Rights violations, though constant, are far from most rights-holders' daily experience.

Official violence against citizens shows the human world has not yet completely embraced the American Revolution. Rights of nonhumans is a dream today. But *it is the right dream* – the dream that can establish justice for the first time since a human being first thought how nice the world would be without predators. ★

#### **Next Issue of Thin Ice:**

***More Responsible Policies for Animals action to stop our institutions from teaching false beliefs about animals so rights of all animals can take root in the public mind and eventually in the Constitution.***

## **Thank you for supporting Responsible Policies for Animals!**

***Supporting Responsible Policies for Animals helps you remedy the suffering the corporate state inflicts on human beings and the other animals. There is no meaningful protection without rights, and false beliefs promoted by universities, news, and our other institutions are the main obstacle to rights of all animals.***

***"Making a difference," "fighting cruelty," and acts of compassion, indisputably good for the few who can be helped, cannot reach the trillions bred for short, confined lives as food for humans, hauled out of Earth's oceans, lakes, and rivers, poisoned by fossil fuels, killed or disrupted by forest destruction and global heating, shot for recreation, used for medicine or amusement, or consigned to unfulfilling lives as property of humans.***

***Rights of all animals will have the necessary reach, but only with the kind of long, persistent struggle that established rights of human beings.***

***Not being beaten or starved is not enough. All deserve a fulfilling life.***

***Again, thank you!***