



Total Animal Advocacy: How To Do It

The quality of human and nonhuman life and prospects for justice and a better future depend upon total animal advocacy, a great opportunity to participate in democracy as an active citizen.

By David Cantor

The last two issues of *Persons*, fall 2021 and spring 2022, explain the need for thousands of people to take up total animal advocacy (TAA) in order to realize the cherished dream of reducing animal abuse. In this issue, I'll provide practical tips, giving lots of examples. First, some basic principles to indicate the urgency of adopting this new strategy developed by Responsible Policies for Animals these past twenty years.

A key reason standard animal advocacy (SAA) of the last half-century cannot reduce animal abuse is that it does not address *causes* of animal abuse, only some of the worst *symptoms* – animal factories, painful experiments, the fur industry, cruelty to pets. Progress occurs for victimized *human* groups because organized efforts target defamation and wrongful framing of victims, not only lynching, spouse abuse, or murder of labor organizers. Animal abuse will remain lawful and customary, all nonhuman animals subject to abuse, if civilization's drumbeat of speciesism and human supremacy continues without challenge.

Beliefs in higher and lower animals, animals worthy and unworthy of life, and animals entitled and unentitled to fulfillment transfer to human beings. Speciesism generates racism, sexism, poverty, war, and other human strife. Physical abuse of nonhuman animals gives us COVID, influenza, monkeypox, Ebola, smallpox, bubonic plague, nearly all infectious diseases, plus heart disease, stroke, many cancers, osteoporosis, autoimmune diseases, and others from abuse of human beings and

other animals by the meat, dairy, fish, and egg industries and institutions that promote and abet them. Humans cannot experience peace, justice, and health without eradicating speciesism and human supremacy.

Reducing abuse of animals, including human beings, requires a long and persistent challenge to discourse framing animal abuse as normal, natural, enjoyable, necessary, justified, even humorous. TAA advocates for the totality of the animal world, including what animals need for survival and fulfillment, by confronting the totality of animal abuse, *everything human beings do to and with other animals and their natural homes and ecosystems*, unmasking speciesist propaganda that saturates the human mind.

Let's Get Started

In a nutshell, here is how total animal advocacy works. Examples follow the instructions provided below. RPA offers assistance in any

aspect of your effort. Don't hesitate to get in touch.

(1) Note a statement, omission, euphemism, teaching, or framing that defames, mocks, denigrates, or condescends to nonhuman animals or explicitly or implicitly promotes or condones animal abuse as defined above, not only obvious atrocities. Record exact words. Keep precise information about the source – exact names and titles of responsible parties, title and publication information if book, article, or other written work; show, date, and time if radio or television, URL if internet; institution if school, university, civic group, youth group, church, other; company or organization if a profit or nonprofit business.

(2) Obtain contact and background information useful for writing to responsible parties. Email addresses, mailing addresses, and websites enabling you to form a profile – prior

continued on page 2

Now More Than Ever ...

... Responsible Policies for Animals – and all of Earth's animals, including human beings – need your generosity and your determination to help root out the causes of animal abuse, the main source of human misery, the Bio-caust, intense relentless pain in billions of nonhuman animals in any given moment, and mass killing of countless others.

Thank you for your support of RPA to date! If you have not donated to RPA in a long time, consider sending a check soon or visiting Support RPA at www.RPAforAll.org. When using the website, consider donating \$10, \$15, or more per month to help RPA build momentum in coming months and years. In addition to *Persons*, RPA members receive the organization's unique bumper-sticker and brochures.

Whatever you can manage is greatly appreciated and is used very efficiently as RPA has very low overhead and no paid staff or directors. Total animal advocacy is not cost-free, though. Every dollar helps us do more. Thank you! ★

continued from page 1

work, degree of prominence, intellectual arrogance or humility, openness or bigotry – are useful.

(3) Write to responsible parties, cc'ing others when appropriate. If the responsible party is an interviewed author or expert, an interviewer, host, editor, or producer is also appropriate to contact. At an institution or business, sometimes the top person is the one to contact, sometimes only the speaker. Often emailing is suitable – consider including attachments or links. Sometimes it is preferable to mail a letter, typically with enclosures. RPA can provide or refer you to literature.

Politely and respectfully explain the error and its importance. Much public discourse is human-supremacist and speciesist. Advancing the human endeavor at the expense of other animals is generally deemed not only normal and harmless but praiseworthy. “Torment nature,” urged Francis Bacon hundreds of years ago. Take an understanding tone that doesn't single anyone out; acknowledge the error is probably not motivated by a wish to harm. Recommend preferable, more truthful wording or framing for future use. Express an interest in knowing the responsible party's response to your request.

An example from RPA's work that comes to mind: Years ago, after hearing bestselling author Michael Pollan discuss his book *The Omnivore's Dilemma* on *Radio Times*, sending a letter, an article, and a book, I demonstrated to Pollan and the show's producers that human beings are natural *herbivores*, not omnivores, sickened more than nourished by eating from animals. The next time I heard Pollan on *Radio Times*, he acknowledged humans are natural herbivores. The show went on to imply otherwise many times afterwards, and I didn't hear from Pollan or *Radio Times* staff, but crucial seeds were planted, and I continued contacting the show about harmful errors.

What To Look For

Animal-related error is more haystack than needle. The struggle is not detecting enough abuse-promotion to address but finding an overwhelm-

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Persons cover art: Rebecca Lotka and David Cantor.

Defining animal abuse as everything human beings do to and with other animals and their natural homes and ecosystems, recognizing animal abuse as both the basis of civilization and the root cause of human misery, and acknowledging that standard animal advocacy cannot achieve a reduction in animal abuse, Responsible Policies for Animals (RPA) brings new and original methods to the endeavor.

RPA demands that institutions, thought leaders, and the industry-government-university-media complex stop promoting animal abuse and speciesism and become anti-speciesist – for the sake of human beings, the other animals, and Earth. RPA uses its website, correspondence, literature, meetings, group presentations, *Persons*, and other means to advance its campaigns and to teach others RPA's methods.

RPA members donate \$25 or more and receive *Persons*, e-Updates, and RPA's unique bumper sticker and brochures. On request, RPA considers ill, indigent, or imprisoned persons for donation-free honorary membership. Learn more and donate tax-free at www.RPAforAll.org or by mail.



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ing amount. We're so used to faulty discourse that it passes over us like a breeze we don't know is carrying nuclear radiation unless we're warned. All day and into the night, news reporters, anchors, interviewed guests, and others with a public voice ritually demonstrate their adherence to the values, customs, and cherished beliefs they assume (usually correctly) their audience shares. Paeans to pizza, pets, barbecued burgers and ribs, rodeos,

zoos, aquariums, free-hotdog night at the stadium, tips for “that Thanksgiving turkey,” relaxation and bonding memories of fishing, “seafood” specialties as vacation season begins, electric cars as a remedy to the Biocaust, celebrity capitalists' launches into space, teenage girls (no longer only boys) going deer-hunting with their fathers – all praise and promote components of the Animal-Abuse Revolution.

continued on page 3

continued from page 2

Let's consider specific opportunities for protest and correction.

► When numbers of "lives lost," a "death toll," or those injured in an attack or a disaster refer only to human beings, implicitly other animals are not living beings, do not live and die, do not suffer, and so are of no concern. Yet more nonhuman animals than humans suffer and die from causes of disasters: oil extraction, energy production, weapons, mining, timber, bulldozing, construction, automobiles, and others. To inform the public truthfully, news and other institutions must at the least specify they are only discussing impacted *human* victims; better, report the "animal-abuse toll," too.

► Using "pro-life" to mean anti-abortion implies life=human fetus. Apart from fetus as life being a religious belief with no legitimate place in Constitutional governance, what about all the life antiabortionists are not so "pro"? The "pro-life" political party promotes anti-life forces like war, weapons industries, unregulated manufacturing and waste-disposal, car & fuel culture, air travel, everything that perpetuates the Biocaust and the Animal-Abuse Revolution. "Pro-life" covers up all of this. "Anti-abortion" is the correct term.

► Human beings are apes, primates, mammals, animals. "People and animals," "humans and apes," "people and primates," and the like distance humans from their nonhuman relatives, suppressing the innate human affinity for other animals, making animal abuse seem acceptable. "Human beings and other animals," "humans and other primates," and such avoid abuse-promotion.

► Use of "natural" for anything in civilization is always dubious. Civilization is the totality of the unnatural in human life and lifeways and the denaturing of human beings, making it impossible for them to live by their evolved nature according to their original, natural lifeway in their original, natural habitat. Even what are often called "natural foods" are just *less unnatural* than pseudofoods like meat, dairy, fish, eggs, refined sugar,

and added chemicals. It is not natural to obtain foods through agriculture or vehicle transport. Nor do war, labor, or hatred of unfamiliar people comport with human nature, though often portrayed as if they do.

► Human beings are natural herbivores, eating from animals a cultural innovation enabled by technological innovations beginning with manufactured weapons. Eating pseudofoods from animals sickens more than nourishes human beings. Contact with other animals in industries such as meat, fur, and pets (including exotic animals often smuggled unlawfully) gives human beings nearly all of their infectious diseases – COVID, bubonic plague, influenza, smallpox, anthrax, Ebola, and many more. The meat, dairy, fish, and egg industries are assaults on the human body, on countless billions of non-human animals used, and on the rest of the living world, accountable for most greenhouse gases, more than 140 massive ocean dead zones, and much more. Maintaining delusions that humans are natural omnivores and hunter-gatherers is among our experts', institutions', and industries' most harmful errors.

► It is upsetting, but not very hard, to imagine being a fish in an aquarium and suddenly finding yourself on a city street suffocating and freezing to death. That experience is omitted from a December 16, 2022, Associated Press article, picked up by many venues worldwide, about an aquarium in a Berlin, Germany, hotel that exploded pouring about 1,500 fish out of the hotel housing the aquarium. The article says more about damage to the hotel and businesses in or near it, nonliving entities that cannot suffer or die, than about what the unfortunate fish endured. An aquarium company, also a nonliving entity, "said it was saddened by the incident" – even though a corporation cannot feel. Such an article promotes all forms of tyranny over other animals.

► ABC-TV *World News Tonight with David Muir* on December 11, 2022, reported a break in the Susquehanna oil pipeline spilling into a creek in Kan-

sas farmland nearly 600,000 gallons of Canadian tar sands, highly toxic and hard to clean up. In the first report, the only potential consequence mentioned was a possible increase in the cost of gasoline. The next night, anchor Muir iterated the same concern and took about eight seconds to add that "environmentalists are concerned there might be lasting impacts."

Might be lasting impacts?! Oil poisons and burns animals living in a stream, others consuming water from the stream, and yet others who eat oil-contaminated animals. Homes and habitats are wiped out. By saying *environmentalists* are concerned, is Muir indicating *he is not* concerned, his colleagues and higherups at ABC-TV are not concerned, the corporation is taking a position that general concern would be misplaced? Failing to mention nonhuman animals erases

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them as victims of the oil industry, which has victimized countless billions of human and nonhuman animals for a century-and-a-half.

► Reports of discoveries about non-human animals' emotions and sophisticated intelligence often call the findings "surprising." *Why?* Original humans, living day to day without speciesist or human-supremacist indoctrination on an African savanna teeming with other animals of immense variety, surely knew they were among beings whose behavior was rational and whose cries of distress closely resembled their own and those of their children. Jonathan Balcombe, Candace Savage, Mark Bekoff, Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson, Dorothy L. Cheney, Robert M. Seyfarth, and other authors on animal minds this last

continued on page 4

continued from page 3

half-century eliminate any possible doubt. Not to mention that intelligence and emotions are adaptive, lack of them anything but. Calling them surprising upholds a long-debunked belief that nonhuman animals are inferior to human beings and so deserve less consideration.

Animal abuse informs every aspect of civilization, and it is repugnant to human beings. That is why authorities and spokespersons in every area of life erase animal abuse from human consciousness – usually unaware that is what they are doing as animal abuse was erased from their minds, too. TAA strives to prevent and reverse erasure. I've become so attuned since starting Responsible Policies for Animals' campaigns against university animal-abuse training and speciesism in schools and news that I notice protest-worthy items all day long on radio, TV news, and reading in print and onscreen. The animals need thousands of people to practice TAA – each of us can only do so much, and the task is beyond enormous.

What Does This Accomplish?

In 2017, I wrote to the CEO of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation on behalf of RPA “to respectfully request that the ... Foundation insert the word ‘human’ before ‘lives’ in its tagline ‘all lives have equal value’” since the Foundation only worked to improve the wellbeing of selected human groups, a minuscule portion of living beings. Not long after, I stopped hearing the tagline on public radio, where it had repeated daily over a long period before. It still appeared in big letters at the Foundation's homepage, but it no longer does.

The Gates Foundation is just one of countless organizations using nonsensical speciesist and human-supremacist verbiage, albeit a large and influential one. When enough people make authorities aware of their errors

and the damage they do, needed change can occur. As with the expression, You can't win if you don't play, you can't expect change you don't work to create.

We cannot reduce cruelty to dogs and cats if “humane” breeding and trading in nonhuman animals remains fashionable and the entire culture promotes pet ownership. We cannot eliminate horrific experiments on nonhuman animals while universities and government conduct and fund experiments and public discourse treats

“I hope you will give total animal advocacy a try.”

“lab rats” as a type of animal. We cannot diminish the meat, dairy, fish, egg, and slaughter industries while health practitioners, nutritionists, university instructors, and the news industry promote the meat delusion. We cannot protect free-living animals or prevent extinctions when destruction of animals' natural homes and ecosystems is called “development,” Earth “our planet.”

What If We Don't?

During World War II, FDR remarked that after the war, the term Third Reich would have to be stricken from the German language. Germany has taken it much further with laws prohibiting hate speech. In “Racist Ideology and Practice Rooted in Speciesism” (*Dissident Voice*, September 2, 2019) and in my essay “Beyond Humanism, Toward a New Animalism” (in *Circles of Compassion: Essays Connecting Issues of Justice*, 2014), I explain that animal-abuse culture and speciesism gave rise to the long enemy-monger-

ing project that has made civilization so much more violent, tyrannical, painful, and distressing than the original, natural human lifeway. RPA literature and campaigns emphasize this.

History shows there is no protection or justice for anyone who is defamed by authorities and dominant groups due to their biological nature. The more authorities defame innocent people or praise people predisposed to hate them, the greater the chance members of their audience will attack members of targeted groups. Today, officials in many states target transsexuals for discrimination, and people are attacking and killing them. Antisemitism is on the rise in large part because a president praised as “good people” some of its most aggressive purveyors and continues to meet with antisemites and white supremacists. Enabling all of this, but publicly unacknowledged, is the Animal-Abuse Revolution and tens of thousands of years of speciesist rationalization and ideology.

People in the grip of hatred, despair, self-loathing, or anger don't have to be told to attack members of targeted groups; before they lash out, they already perceive members of targeted groups as less worthy and as acceptable victims. They have no clue that the entire millennia-long enemy-mongering endeavor is designed by tyrants and their sycophants to deflect attention from tyranny and tyrants as the real enemies.

The kind of world we evolved to live in, expect to live in, and wish we could live in will not reemerge unless humanity can get a grip on speciesism and human supremacy. I don't see a way for that to happen without thousands of people taking up TAA and promoting anti-speciesism. I hope you will give TAA a try. ★

**Thank you for supporting
Responsible Policies for Animals.**