

## HUMANS VERSUS ANIMALS

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In the beginning, humans and the so-called "lower animals" would meet cautiously and fleetingly, both intent on the basic goals of survival - food and water for the belly and shelter or other escape from more powerful enemies who regarded them as dinner entrees. This situation prevailed until puny man threw the first stone or swung a heavy club and realized that he could catch fleetier animals and kill larger ones than himself with his new tools. Thus instead of a grubby existence on plants, fruits, and insects, humans with their new toys eventually became efficient predators. Most of the graffiti on ancient cave walls depict scenes of the hunt. The focus on animals by these primitive subway artists may have been bragging about past hunts but was more likely the supersititious belief that drawing about killing game would make it come true. Superstition and religion have colored the relationships between humans and animals in some segments of society right up to modern times.

The Stone Age hunters who lived over 150,000 years ago used the pit trap, wooden club, snare, throwing stick and smoked even the fearsome cave bear out of hiding. The Neanderthals who lived a mere 150,000 to 60,000 years ago developed the bow and even used botanical poisons on arrows to incapacitate their prey. About this time the dog found the pickings good around the campfires of successful human hunters and became a partner. His keener senses and fleetness combined with human ingenuity made an unbeatable team. Also, he was always a convenient morsel when the larder was bare (the human race has never had a strong sense of gratitude).

Then humans tired of the nomadic hunter existence and turned to domesticating cattle, sheep, and goats and tilling the soil. The relationship between man and these other animals became somewhat symbiotic (according to the human definition) in that he protected them from other predators with the intent of eating them himself.

Up to this time hunting was a serious business of getting food to survive. Grass would never have provided enough protein to permit such a physically inept animal to survive. His only asset was the sly ability to outthink his physical superiors. So the human race owes its survival today not to vegetarians but to the mighty hunter who put meat on the table. Admittedly the picture has changed since the Neanderthal hunter slunk out of a cave to go shopping at the local grocery

store. He didn't consider the feelings of his selected dinner, but would go right to consumption of the main course just as the hawk and coyote predators do today.

It was probably not until the days of the Roman civilization that hunting became other than a necessity. In this culture there was little regard for other animals. Great numbers were brought into Rome to provide sport for spectators. Animal was pitted against animal or against human. The 'program' usually consisted of two parts. A random assortment - elephants, lions, leopards, hippopotamuses, etc. - were force fed intoxicating beverages and then turned on one another in a state of drunkenness. After they had mutually mangled one another, archers who paid for the privilege would shoot the survivors from the safety of the stands. Hundreds of thousands of animals died in this fashion. Some records of the extent of this slaughter indicate Nero used 300 lions and 400 bears in 1 year. And the Emperor Trajan had 11,000 animals killed in 123 days (Dembeck 1965).

While the Romans were credited with spreading the word about sport hunting, probably the greatest hunter, if he can be called that, was Kubla Khan in the 13th century. According to Marco Polo, he hunted only with a club - the club consisting of 10,000 men with some 5,000 dogs. They would spread out in a line extending over a full day's journey on horseback. The Emperor himself rode in a "fine chamber" on the back of 4 elephants and would occasionally loose a gerfalcon at a crane and then go back and lie on his bed. As Polo says, "...I do not believe there ever existed in the world, or ever will exist, a man with such sport and enjoyment as he has, or such rare opportunities." (Brander).

It is interesting that Aldo Leopold (1933) in tracing the history of game management points to K. Khan as the first conservationist who forbid killing of animals between March and October (the above hunt took place on March 1, 1298) so they could "increase and multiply" and also provided the first use of winter food patches for the benefit of wildlife. Apparently he had his own selfish motives, but then nobody is perfect.

In Europe, rigid game laws were first laid down by Frankish King Dagobert. Again this was no altruistic gesture. Dagobert wanted to reserve hunting for himself and his nobles. He had a whole civil service of forest rangers to enforce the regulations and punish lawbreakers with very severe penalties. In 1016 King Canute issued a similar edict in Britain. Anyone caught hunting in the King's forests was put to death or as Canute put it - "...to forfeit as much as any man may forfeit." (Brander 1971). Such benevolent rulers were responsible for the Robin Hood resistance movement.

Thus protection and the well being of animals and birds up to the present century was mainly so they could be harvested for the enjoyment of the gentry and large landowners. Hunting was a matter of ritual. The hunters either had beaters drive the animals before them or rode horseback behind packs of dogs to catch their prey. In the meantime, the poor farmer suffered. If it wasn't the losses caused by predators and herbivores to flocks and fields, it was the trampling of crops by the aristocracy as they chased stag and boar over the land.

Hunting in Europe up to the last century was measured by the number of animals killed by a noble few. Hunting and trapping to fill the belly was reserved for poachers. With the colonization of Africa, the Americas, and Australia, paradise was opened up for the poachers. Here were animals in vast numbers and nobody to tell them they couldn't shoot or trap to their heart's content. However, carving out a living from the wilderness occupied most of their waking hours and they only took what they needed of Nature's bounty or to protect their fields and flocks.

Then as the lands became more settled in the last century, the European idea of hunting for sport rather than the table became more widespread. Slaughter of the seemingly endless supply of buffalo became popular, not only for sport but for the economic returns as well. Market hunting for all types of game became big business.

The same century saw the start of the humane movement that questioned our total subjection of the lower animals and argued the bible's contention that God gave mankind "...dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." The movement is credited to the work of Richard Martin in England who formed the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in 1824 (McCoy 1978). Undoubtedly, there was a need at this time to waken human compassion for other animals (as well as humans, for slavery was in full 'flower' too).

This philosophy has grown among the developed nations ('developed' meaning those with the luxury of not having to personally shovel manure but being able to pay somebody else to do it). The basic intent of the humane movement - to promote the moral obligation of the human race to 'subhuman' animals - is very laudable. Their work in sponsoring animal shelters to care for the population boom in dogs and cats, striving for more humane conditions in abattoirs, etc. has become part of our moral fiber, but this takes money. In their efforts to raise the necessary funds they have branched out from domesticated animals to wild animals as having the exotic appeal needed to engender new sources of funds. Their success here has fostered a new breed of fund raisers who play on the sympathies of naive individuals who are so divorced from the facts of life they have forgotten coyotes have the same taste for beef, and rabbits the same taste for lettuce that they have. The concept of vertebrate animals

competing with humans for food and fiber falls completely beyond their understanding.

Using movie and other superficially 'famous' personalities to lend their names and faces, these promoters, under the guise of being solely concerned with the welfare of wild animals, have been able to make a good living. As long as their 'operating expenses' and publicity on their good deeds are adequately covered by the gullible media, they very graciously let at least a little trickle down to help the poor beasts. If the need isn't there they can invent one, as in the case of the anti-hunting films, GOODBYE FOREVER and GOODBYE JOEY. (This last is an Australian film where a young kangaroo reportedly skinned alive by hunters was actually a tame one that had been attacked by dogs.)

Taking advantage of the fact that only 4% of this country's population today actually knows what it is like to compete with other vertebrate animals for a living, these fancy organizations like FUND FOR ANIMALS, DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE, and similar organizations are pushing their anti-hunting philosophy on the rest of the country. They claim to know more than trained wildlife managers when it comes to the welfare of wildlife.

Examples of their type of operations are:

#### ANGEL ISLAND, CALIFORNIA

The deer herd had expanded beyond its ability to survive on the limited range and California Game Department wanted to have biologists shoot the excess. The protectionists got an injunction forcing the State to capture and transplant animals to another area at a cost of \$3000 per animal. A study showed that 85% of the transplanted deer died in the first year and over half of these in the first 3 months. The poor survival rate was blamed on the poor conditions of the deer at the time of capture and their lack of experience outside of a controlled refuge environment. Of the 15 fitted with radio transmitters, 2 were victims of poachers or vehicles, 1 was killed by dogs, 2 were killed by predators, 2 were run down by vehicles, 3 died of unknown causes, and 1 has disappeared (Fitzwater 1983a).

#### SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE GAME PRESERVE, VIRGINIA

A 3000 acre preserve is supposed to furnish feed and range for herds of rare and endangered species, but some native deer were fenced in and current fences are incapable of keeping others out. Due to this deer pressure, the alfalfa crops that should have yielded 75 tons produced only 45 tons in 1979, 9 tons in 1980, and 0 in 1981. Furthermore, the deer have infected the range with parasites like meningeal worms. A hunt held in 1981 took off 126 deer, but the herd is reproducing at the rate of 110 per year. When word of a 1982 hunt got out, the FUND FOR ANIMALS went to work. They got Yates (D-IL) to hold hearings on the project until it

was too late to do anything. He wanted to research the possibility of relocating the deer over the objections of the Virginia Game Department that they have enough deer. So they settled for a \$500,000 appropriation to repair the fence, but that money hasn't been appropriated (Fitzwater 1982b).

#### EVERGLADES, FLORIDA

Flooding last year in the Everglades threatened the existence of the deer herd there. The Game Department wanted to hold a hunt to take the pressure off the range where the deer were concentrated out of the water. Again an injunction was obtained for the area north of Alligator Alley. Here 948 deer died and not much hope was given for the rest of the herd estimated at 1,500. Hunters were permitted south of Alligator Alley. Eight hundred and seven deer were taken out and pressure for food relieved to the point where only 4% of that herd died compared to 64% for the northern herd.

Of the 807 deer taken, 723 were by hunters. The others were taken out at a cost of \$8,000 as part of a capture and relocation project. This resulted in some bad feelings among the protection groups as Jack Kassewitz, Jr. (NATIONAL WILDLIFE RESCUE TEAM) accused Cleveland Amory (FUND FOR ANIMALS) for jumping in on the publicity by printing a fancy brochure entitled, "FUND stops Everglades deer kill". The brochure claims that the operation was expensive and the FUND needs more money. According to Kassewitz, the FUND only put in \$1,500 on a \$2,000 chopper bill and has refused to pay a \$189 share of court costs (Fitzwater 1982a).

#### GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK, ARIZONA

When the National Park Service tried to remove the feral burros that were destroying the fragile habitat of the area, they were stopped by a lawsuit from the FUND and others. It is estimated it will cost over \$360,000 to capture and relocate some 350 borros under the most difficult conditions (Fitzwater 1980).

#### HARRIMAN PARK, NEW YORK

The New York Department of Environmental Conservation's plan to remove excess deer from Harriman Park by a hunt was stopped by a FRIENDS OF ANIMALS injunction. The deer herd is estimated at 3,350 which figures out to about 3.3 acres per head and evidence of overbrowsing is clearly evident. The protectionists are blocking this "...proliferation of terror, broken bones, torn flesh, bloodshed, death and ecological destruction." (Really have a way with words don't they?) They claim that starvation is nature's way of handling over-population. One wonders if these people really don't understand that overbrowsing is a much better example of 'ecological destruction' than shooting a few animals (Fitzwater 1983b).

Added to this group we now have a third which promises to be even more of a problem, as it has alerted the antennae of many lawyers. This is the so-called 'animal rights' movement. These would give animals status in a court of law, represented by a human mouthpiece, of course. This is not exactly a new thought, but previous attempts could possibly be blamed on the superstitious ignorance that prevailed before the 19th century.

In 1445, the French peasants in Autun brought a lawsuit against the rats who had ravaged their crops (Killikelly 1886). Chassanee was appointed public defender for the rats. Summonses were read by the ratholes. No rats showed up in court. Chassanee presented the plea that the notices had been too local and individual. The summonses were reread in every community. Again no rats showed up for the trial. Chassanee requested an extension of time as young and old rats, sick and healthy ones were cited and suitable arrangements had to be made. No rats. Chassanee then requested that as the summonses implied safe conduct to and from the courtroom, all cats should be placed under bond. Here the plaintiffs refused and the case was dismissed.

Somewhat later (1733) rats and mice destroyed the lands of Bouranton (Frazer 1935). The case was tried before Louis Gublin on September 17th. Defense contended that all God's creatures were entitled to live. The prosecution pointed out a place for them to live. The defense demanded 3 days to allow their clients to move. Gublin then condemned the rats and mice to move in 3 days to deserts, uncultivated lands, and high roads, on the threat of excommunication.

The above incidents reinforce my opinion of the legal profession in general and the lawyers involved in the Animal Rights movement. Such organizations as San Francisco's Attorneys for Animal Rights (AFAR) make no bones about it, they are even developing a fund out of which lawyers handling animal rights cases can be paid "...since recovery in such cases remains limited" (Anonymous 1982). A Professor Mark Holzer states: "In 5 years, there will be a section of the ABA (American Bar Association) on animal rights." Unfortunately, scientific judgments have little effect on the lawyers and we can look forward to a continual legal battle in the future, out of which only the lawyers will get rich.

The best arguments I have seen against the Animal Rights philosophy are those of a veterinarian, Dr. C.E. Berryhill (Pork Report, 1:1, Jan/Feb, 1982):

"...if man and all other species are equal, by what right does man dominate the other species? The answer is that rights, ethics, and morals are totally human concepts...The world of biology is governed by might, not right. We do not have the right to dominate other species, but we have the power...If they could communicate, all these other species would demand a world dominated by force and violence. It is the only system they understand. Man cannot make any systematic effort to

respect the rights of any other species until such other species reciprocates with a respect for the rights of man.

The second concept is...not only are all non-human species equal to the human, they are all equal to each other...Advocates of animal rights must defend all species in the same way and to the same degree. If we can wage total war on the Medfly, we can do the same with any other species. The moose is no more deserving than the mouse..."

But then this is probably too rational a rebuttal to use in the face of fanatical emotionalism and legal greed.

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