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LETTERS

Animal Rights and Radical Politics

Harold Herzog, in his recent review of four books on the animal rights movement (17 Dec., p. 1906), seems not to have examined closely the movement's radical politics. Certainly Rod and Patti Strand [*The Hijacking of the Humane Movement* (Doral, Wilsonville, OR, 1993)] and Lorenz Lutherer and Margaret Simon [*Targeted: The Anatomy of an Animal Rights Attack* (Univ. of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1992)], whose books he dismisses as having a "punchant for half-truths and over-generalization," have done so; and from the vantage point of more than a dozen years of "interacting" with the movement, I can say with assurance that their exposés of the clever machinations of the leaders of this movement ring true.

Herzog describes the two books' concerns about terrorism as exaggerated because the recent governmental *Report to Congress on the Extent and Effects of Domestic and International Terrorism on Animal Enterprises* reported only three terrorist attacks. To say this, he relies on a technicality of definition and does not mention that the report lists these attacks in a group of 21 incidents with damages of more than \$10,000 occurring between 1983 and 1992, the total damages being \$7.66 million. I suggest he talk with John Orem, the subject of the book by Lutherer and Simon, or to his own North Carolina colleague, Walter Salinger, who has suffered for years for having the temerity to testify to the value and appropriateness of releasing animals for research from his local pound, to gain a greater appreciation of the debilitating effects of selective-terrorism on the research enterprise. The chapter "Effects on a targeted investigator" in *Targeted* reveals clearly that random intimidation is the essence of terrorism.

Herzog criticizes the books for offering only "superficial insights into the movement's appeal . . ." to the "typically bright and well educated . . ." young [31 years old on the average, according to a large survey (1)] individuals who are the animal activists. One need not look far for the answer: In addition to being members of the healthiest generation in history (therefore not really able to appreciate the problems they have escaped), they live in a country, according to the Strands, in which only 2 in 50 have had an experience with the realities of farm life. This contributes to their unrealistic, romantic view of animal life.

Finally, the Strands' thoughtful last chapter, which discusses the basically misanthropic underpinnings of the movement's philosophy, can hardly be said to "gloss over the moral quagmire conveniently ignored by dogmatists on either side of the debate . . .," as Herzog suggests.

In *The Name of Science* (Oxford Univ. Press, New York, 1993) by Barbara Orlans fares better in the review, although researchers do not in her book. While disparaging the use of patients by the "incurably ill For Animal Research"—these are suffering people after all—to lobby against animal rights-inspired, anti-research legislation, the worst Orlans can say about the extremist organization People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is that they sing pro-Animal Liberation Front anthems at the National Zoo.

Herzog seems to accept Orlans' contention that researchers are not particularly concerned about animal welfare. He credits activists for having "done a service for those of us who work with animals by forcing us to consider the moral implications of our research . . ." and then quotes my recent statement (2) that "I go through a soul-searching every couple of months, asking myself whether I really want to continue working on cats . . ." as if this personal feeling were a response to activists' prodding rather than a concern I have had for the more than 30 years of my career. The Strands quoted the following from elsewhere in my article [(2), pp. 133–134]:

What animal can match in suffering the heart-break of parents, who lose a child to illness or have given birth to a child with severe birth defects, or the despair of a teenager who learns that life in the future will be incomplete as a result of the car accident that severed his spinal cord? Even chimpanzees cannot participate in the grief of others. We can, even when learning of a tragedy in the newspaper. This makes us special.

in a moving discussion of the inhumanity inherent in too much of the animal rights literature, which does not recognize the humanity of making a choice that favors people. The Strands certainly do not "gloss over" moral issues.

Adrian R. Morrison

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1. W. Jamison and W. Lunch, *Sci. Technol. Human Values* 17, 438 (1992).
2. A. R. Morrison, in *Animal and Human Experimentation*, P. DeDeyn, Ed. (Libbey, London, in press).

Response: Differences of opinion over the relative merits of four books which cover the gamut of positions on a complex and divisive moral issue are inevitable. I suspect that Adrian Morrison and I agree about several important aspects of the animal rights debate. These include our shared beliefs that animal research is critical to biomedical progress, that violence and intimidation are unacceptable as political tactics, and that human and nonhuman animals do not have the same moral status. His letter, however, does reflect some fundamental differences in our views.

First, Morrison maintains that *The Hijacking of the Humane Movement* offers significant insights into the motivations of animal activists. I found the book to be heavy on propaganda and light on intellectual substance. I was put off by its sensationalistic, almost tabloid, quality, and I believe that it distorts and oversimplifies the contemporary animal protection movement. For example, the book's back cover promises, "A real insight into the workings

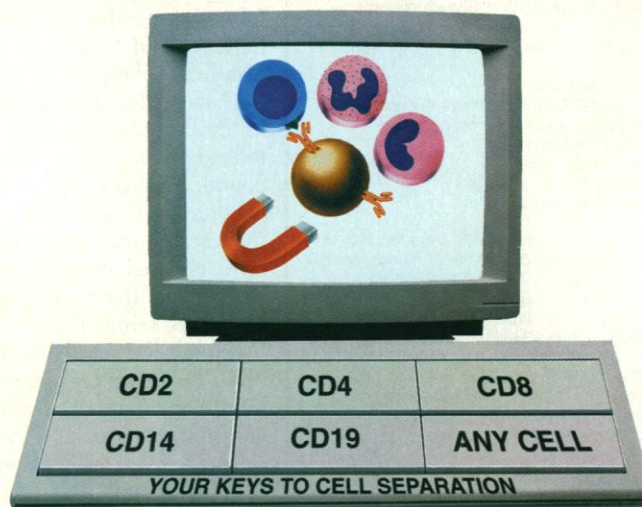
of true fanatics. These people are shown to be the latest hate group, pure & simple, & the animal issue is just a vehicle to disguise its character." The last chapter, which Morrison singles out as being particularly insightful, opens with a quotation from the text of the "bible" of a satanic cult ("Satan represents man as just another animal. . . .") Later in the chapter, readers are advised to resist environmental legislation because, "Nothing removes private property as quickly as endangered species laws (biodiversity)" (1).

The Strands' book does explicate the radical politics of the movement. But, by focusing exclusively on the hyperbole and illegal actions of a small group of extremists, the authors avoid serious examination of the social and moral issues that underlie the rapid growth of animal protectionism in the United States over the past 20 years. They simply dismiss the ethical issues raised by animal activists as the rantings of a small cult of sentimental, misanthropic urbanites. Any social movement can be discredited by treating the rhetoric of the most extreme elements as representative of the movement as a whole. I believe this strategy is misleading and counterproductive. Ironically, books such as *The Hijacking of the Humane Movement* may actually play into

the hands of animal extremists by scaring researchers away from using animal models.

Second, it was the Federal Bureau of Investigation, not I, which concluded that the majority of animal extremists incidents do not fit the criteria of domestic terrorism. I do not say this to diminish the personal suffering that these "incidents" cause. As noted in my review, I believe the Department of Justice report (2) underestimates the actual number of such events. Further, I am indeed sympathetic to the plight of scientists who have been the targets of animal extremists. I am an animal researcher myself. I have had the disquieting experience of opening my morning paper to find that my own research was the subject of angry letters to the editor penned by animal activists who had no understanding of the work. Although this experience was decidedly unpleasant, it pales in comparison with the personal and professional costs suffered by scientists such as Orem, Salinger, and Morrison, who have endured serious threats and harassment at the hands of misguided militants. Some activists appear to forget that humans, including scientists, are also animals and thus would seem to deserve at least the same degree of moral consideration that the activists would have us accord dogs, pigs, and chimpanzees.

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Third, nowhere in my review do I suggest that scientists are not concerned with animal welfare. I serve on several animal care committees, and I know that many researchers do give serious consideration to the well-being of their experimental subjects and the ethical implications of their research. I cited Morrison's "soul-searching" quotation because I believe it is an eloquent statement of our obligation to consider the legitimate ethical questions raised by our use of animals. I did not mean to imply that Morrison's position on this matter was a response to the prodding of animal activists, and I do not doubt his statement that he has always been concerned with the welfare of experimental animals. My experience, however, has been that the ethical culture of many laboratories is quite different from what it was when I was a graduate student two decades ago. My attitudes about our moral responsibilities toward nonhuman research subjects have changed over the years, and I suspect this is true for many scientists. Morrison and I simply disagree about whether these changes would have come about without the prodding of animal protectionists.

Finally, I am concerned about the polarized nature of the debate over the use of animals in research. Scientists who under-

stand the philosophical, social, and psychological roots of animal protectionism and who recognize the complexity of the ethical issues posed by our interactions with other species are in a better position to argue the case for animal research in the court of public opinion. Partisans on both sides of this issue would do well to heed the advice of ethicist Earl Shelp, who cautioned, "May we have the wisdom, patience, and courage to perceive the limitations of our particular moral visions. . . . And may we have the wisdom, patience, and courage to respect similar limitations that we perceive in the particular moral visions . . . of persons with whom we disagree" [(3), p. 116].

Harold Herzog

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2. *Report to Congress on the Extent and Effects of Domestic and International Terrorism on Animal Enterprises* (Department of Justice, Washington, DC, 1993).
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Pork Barrel Funding an Embarrassment

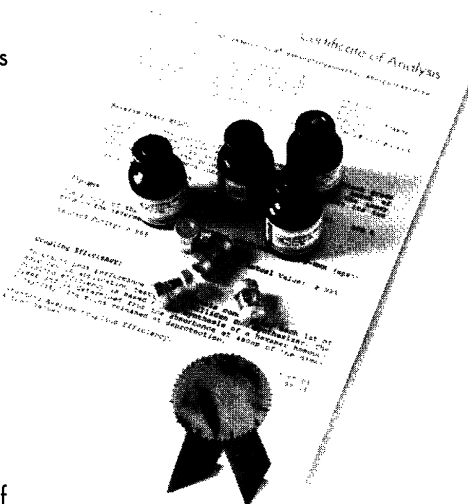
I would like to point out an error in Christopher Anderson's article "Leading pork opponent hog-tied by cancer project" (News & Comment, 15 Oct., p. 329). The article quite rightly points out a significant problem relating to "pork barrel funding" of science projects that do not go through the usual peer-review mechanism. The article discusses a boron neutron capture therapy (BNCT) program that was initially funded primarily through the Department of Energy, but for which direct congressional funding is now being sought by a university consortium. The University of Washington is incorrectly listed as being a member of this consortium.

I am coordinating a BNCT-related project at the University of Washington with the ultimate goal of enhancing the effectiveness of a fast neutron radiotherapy beam. Funding for this project is being obtained through the usual peer-reviewed channels, as well as from discretionary University of Washington funds. We were asked to join the BNCT university consortium, but after considerable discussion decided not to. We were concerned about

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