

I am an anthropologist (PhD) and work in the area of animal rights, climate change and social justice, which are deeply interconnected. I am also the descendent of a dairy farmer.

It is well documented that each species has its own social and moral world. Under observation it is clear that cows, pigs, chickens, water birds, native wildlife and other land and water animals, demonstrate intelligence, fear, affection, social cohesion, curiosity and play. These animals have the desire and the will to live.

The current PoCTA legislation is untenable because animals who are most likely to suffer and die sit outside PoCTA. Furthermore breeding, shooting, racing, hunting, harming and killing animals has grave social consequences. We cannot isolate what we do to animals from the effect of these actions on humans: the relationship is intrinsic.

Activities that involve racing, riding, fighting, roping or shooting non-humans encourage people to commodify and lessen the value of those who are 'other' or different to them. Exploiting and harming other species for 'sport' or 'entertainment' is the seed of the many forms of violence and crime in humans. This has also been well established in research. What people do to animals, they then more easily do to humans who are different to them.

Cruelty is widespread and commonplace in animal industries. It is not - as is often quoted - "a rogue operator" or "an isolated incident". It is a matter of routine. For example the very nature of breeding and killing animals for food, requires farmers and slaughter-men to suppress their natural human empathy. The act of routinely harming someone to the point of death is a serious action that affects both the slaughter-man and also the animal who loses his or her life. Slaughterhouses are also bizarrely and uniquely risky environments that pose real physical and psychological harms to the men and women who work in them.

Nevertheless, we continue to victimise animals for profit on a mass scale unprecedented in human history. We rear animals in huge numbers, separate them from their families, often killing their young. Once they are no longer useful or profitable, we kill them. This occurs with many species.

Many people don't realise that the current PoCTA laws cover a very small number of animals. Wildlife, animals now considered "pests," native waterbirds, animals bred and slaughtered for food, and animals who are used as involuntary research subjects are all exempt from PoCTA in certain ways. PoCTA as it currently stands is equivocal which allows harming, killing and exploitation to continue. The current Protection of Cruelty to Animals (PoCTA) law is failing. PoCTA must apply broadly to all non-human animals in order to be effective.

Stringent PoCTA laws would be beneficial all species, including humans. While killing huge numbers of animals for food is unlikely to cease overnight, we can at least affirm the gravity of such an industry. We can stop normalising the industrialisation of animals for food, clothing, sport, entertaining and experimentation. The RSPCA can facilitate true animal welfare (which includes rights) by:

- Supporting an independent Office for Animal Welfare
- Rejecting planning submissions for new slaughterhouses and factory farms from now onwards
- Broadening the legislation to include all species that are exploited by humans
- Being clear, consistent and persistent with concern for animal rights as well as welfare (not just pet rights and welfare).

Animal industries are *inherently* inhumane and detrimental to humans as well as non-humans. Thank you kindly for considering my submission.

Yours sincerely,

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Anthropologist