

Animals: A New Ethics

Guest Editor's introduction

It has been an incredible privilege to gather together these powerful voices. They are some of the greatest animal advocates of our time, all top, international experts – and the people to whom I personally owe a huge debt; not just in terms of their generosity here, but for putting so many of us ARAs (Tom Regan will explain) on our paths in the first place. They were certainly my shining lights when I was stumbling around as a young activist in the '90s, looking for guidance. I know, you too, will come away inspired.

Inevitably, when you're dealing with a subject as gargantuan and painful as the abuse and exploitation of fellow sentient beings there will be some uncomfortable moments, and some tears. There would be something wrong if people were not moved by Mark Gold's compelling piece on slaughterhouses, (one of the best articles I have ever read on the subject), or Jan Creamer's stirring feature on animal experimentation; but you can rest assured that you are in very capable, warm and seasoned hands. No one is going to 'assault' or 'accuse.' And the truth must be faced (as I'll talk about later) if we're ever to change this.

There are also things to celebrate: Animal Asia's incredible work in China; ESMA's devoted life-saving in Egypt; Pen Farthing's in Afghanistan; Gudush Jalloh's in Sierra Leone; Virginia McKenna's success in getting Raffi and Anthea (two young lions who lived on top of a bar in Tenerife) out to Born Free's sanctuary at Shamwari. Jordi Casamitjana and other activists have managed to get bull-fighting banned in Catalonia. The ban came into force in January. It's an incredible, heartening achievement, after so many centuries of entrenched brutality. He's now ready to take on the rest of the bull-fighting world – a true spiritual warrior who has done *Joao* proud. Lorraine Platt introduces us to the Blue Fox, a clear demonstration that there are millions of Conservatives in the UK who are part of that significant 75% of the nation who do not want to see the 2004 Hunting Act repealed. (David Cameron please note!) And Dan Lyons celebrates the newly created Institute For Animals And Social Justice (IASJ) and its vision to translate ethics into policy.

There are moments of beauty too: Asian elephant artists enjoying their painting and securing their future in the process; Heathcote Williams' stunning *Whale Nation*, celebrated by Maureen Duffy; Benjamin Zephaniah's *Luv Song*; Sharon Howe on Franz Marc's visionary empathy (interestingly, back in 1912, he observed, somewhat sadly, that his work would not be properly understood for another hundred years - and here we finally are); Martin Wallen's charmed encounter with a fox; Richard Ryder's illumination of an alternative path; Ingrid Newkirk's dream of non-violence including animals; Jonathan Balcombe's and Marc Bekoff's fascinating insights into animal minds and emotions (I didn't know rats liked having their bellies' tickled); Marc Bekoff's powerful Manifesto; and Brian May's inspirational campaign to save our badgers.

I hope by the end of reading *Animals: A New Ethics* in print and online you will feel motivated. Let's build a bridge between the environmental and animal protection worlds – and together make cruelty history.

Very many thanks to Satish and Resurgence, to fellow activist Rukmini Sekhar for planting the first seed with me last year, to our wonderful contributors, to the animal charities and campaigns organisations who do so much – and above all, to the animals themselves – without whom our lives would be infinitely poorer.

Heidi Stephenson, Guest Editor, *Animals: A New Ethics*