

The Difference between Animal Rights and Animal Welfare

Learn the difference between Animal Rights and Animal Welfare.
Protect your rights to own and enjoy pets

ANIMAL RIGHTS FAQ

What is Animal Rights (AR)?

The fundamental principle of the Animal Rights movement is that nonhuman animals deserve to live according to their own natures, free from exploitation by humans. While Animal Welfare works to treat animals humanely, protect them from harm, and supports the relationship humans have with pets, Animal Rights says animals have the RIGHT to be free from human use and ownership.

What rights do they mean?

Animal Rights philosophy states that animals deserve consideration of what is in their own best interests regardless of whether they are useful to humans, or an endangered species, and regardless of whether any human cares about them at all. Animal Rights advocates believe animals are not ours to use--for food, clothing, entertainment, to use in research or to own as pets.

How did the Animal Rights movement begin?

The modern animal rights movement is credited to Australian philosopher Peter Singer who wrote *Animal Liberation* which is the bible for animal rights activists. Singer says "The argument for extending the principle of equality beyond our own species is simple, so simple that it amounts to no more than a clear understanding of the nature of the principle of equal consideration of interests." His utilitarian philosophy is based on a belief that there is nothing to distinguish humans as being better or different from animals. Therefore, by withholding equal rights from animals we (humans) are guilty of discrimination which he terms "speciesism".

Can we still keep animals as pets?

Animal rights philosophy equates ownership of animals with slavery. The strict philosophy dictates that animals should not be domesticated.

Quote from The Animal Liberation Front FAQ: "The pet industry is a form of slavery. Except under the best circumstances, a pet is a prisoner of human society. A human decides where it goes, what it does, what it eats, how it lives and how it dies."

Quotes from the Animal Rights movement leaders: (Source NAIA)

Ingrid Newkirk PETA founder, quoted in *The Harper's Forum Book, Jack Hitt, ed., 1989, p.223*
"I don't use the word "pet." I think it is speciesist language. I prefer *companion animal*. For one thing, we would no longer allow breeding. People could not create different breeds. There would be no pet shops. If people had companion animals in their homes, those animals would have to be refugees from the animal shelters and the streets. You would have a protective relationship with them just as you would with an orphaned child. But as the surplus of cats and dogs (artificially engineered by centuries of forced breeding) declined, eventually companion animals would be phased out, and we would return to a more symbiotic relationship enjoyment at a distance."

Ingrid Newkirk, PETA founder, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals , *Chicago Daily Herald*, March 1, 1990. "You don't have to own squirrels and starlings to get enjoyment from them ... One day, we would like an end to pet shops and the breeding of animals. [Dogs] would pursue their natural lives in the wild ... they would have full lives, not wasting at home for someone to come home in the evening and pet them and then sit there and watch TV."

Wayne Pacelle: (Humane Society of the United States, former Executive Director of Fund for Animals) *Animal People*, May, 1993.

"One generation and out. We have no problems with the extinction of domestic animals. They are creations of human selective breeding."

What right do Animal Rights supporters have to impose their beliefs on others?

They believe that the nature of reform movements is to tell others what to do and all movements initially encounter opposition from people who want to go right on doing what they criticize.

How does the Animal Rights movement affect me?

Using smart advertising campaigns to play on your sympathy and your natural love for animals, the animal rights groups solicit funds to lobby for restrictive legislation in all areas of interaction between humans and animals.

The ultimate goal is not to protect the animals from harm, but to prevent animals from having any contact with humans.

The Guardianship Campaign is an example of this.

What is the Guardian Campaign?

The Guardian Campaign was created by In Defense of Animals (IDA) as a nationwide platform to redefine the legal status animals. Their goal: To accomplish an historical shift toward a more humane public standard regarding animals by incorporating the term "animal guardian" into local and state ordinances. [<http://www.guardiancampaign.com/MissionGoals.htm>]

IDA says [<http://www.guardiancampaign.com/whatDifferenceWord.htm>] "Our changing attitudes toward animals are reflected in the language that we use to write and speak about them. Surveys show the vast majority of people with animals in their care think of them as family members. *Animal guardian* or *animal caretaker* are respectful terms that are consistent with public sentiment."

I love my pet. What's wrong with being a Guardian instead of an owner?

If you love your pet and want to provide wonderful care for it, changing the terminology of the relationship between owner and pet will not strengthen your level of care or commitment.

Legally, however, there is a great difference between the terms owner and guardian. If you own your pet you have rights which are protected under the Constitution; as a guardian you do not own your pet and have that same level of protection. Your guardianship could be challenged in court by someone who thinks they can prove they would be a better guardian.

The term guardian aims to reduce the legal status and value of dogs as property and thereby restrict the rights of owners, veterinarians, and government agencies to protect and care for dogs. It may also subject them to frivolous and expensive lawsuits.

North Carolina Responsible Animal Owners Alliance
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