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ABOLITIONIST ONLINE EDITORIALS

Abolition of Animal Exploitation: The Journey Will Not Begin While We Are Walking Backwards

by Gary L. Francione

In *The Longest Journey: Begins with a Single Step: Promoting Animal Rights by Promoting Reform* (<http://www.satyamaj.com/sep106/singer-friedrich.html>), Peter Singer and PETA's Bruce Friedrich claim that an "odd" controversy has developed in "recent years" about whether animal advocates ought to pursue animal welfare as a means to achieve animal rights. The controversy is neither "odd" nor "recent." The controversy is not "odd" because there is a fundamental inconsistency between the regulation of animal exploitation and its abolition. The controversy is not "recent" in that the tension between rights and welfare has been a constant in the animal advocacy movement for the past fifteen years. What is "recent" is that there is an emerging worldwide grassroots movement that is challenging the hegemony of corporate animal welfare organizations that have vitiated the movement and that attempting to formulate an alternative, abolitionist paradigm. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that Singer, who is the principal formulator of welfareist ideology, and PETA, which implements that ideology and maintains that any dissent or even discussion is "divisive" and threatens movement "unity," are expressing concern.

There are at least five reasons for an abolitionist to reject the welfareist approach presented in the Singer/Friedrich essay.

1. Animal Welfare: Making Exploitation More Efficient

Singer and Friedrich claim that welfare reforms will recognize that nonhumans have "rights" and "interests" that the reforms will incrementally move animals away from the status of being property or commodities that have only extrinsic or conditional value. They are wrong. The reforms they support have nothing to do with recognizing that animals are sentient, that they have interests, and that they are deserving of an alternative, abolitionist paradigm. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that Singer, who is the principal formulator of welfareist ideology, and PETA, which implements that ideology and maintains that any dissent or even discussion is "divisive" and threatens movement "unity," are expressing concern.

For example, consider the campaign that led to agreement by McDonald's to provide supposedly more "humane" standards for slaughterhouses and increased space for battery hens. Singer applauds these actions by McDonald's, which were followed by Wendy's and Burger King, as a "ray of hope" and "the first hopeful signs for American farm animals since the modern animal movement began." (Wendy's *N.Y. Times*, Feb. 15, 2003; Friedrich's *N.Y. Times*, Feb. 15, 2003.) However, there has been a real change in consciousness concerning the treatment of animals used for food (*L.A. Times*, Apr. 29, 2003), and PETA's Lisa Lange praises McDonald's as "leading the way" in reforming the practices of fast-food suppliers, in the treatment and killing of its beef and poultry." (*L.A. Times*, Feb. 23, 2005)

The slaughterhouse standards praised by Singer and PETA were developed by Temple Grandin , designer of "humane" slaughter and handling systems. Grandin's guidelines, which involve techniques for moving animals through the slaughtering process and stunning them, are based on maximizing economic concerns. According to Grandin, "proper handling of animals that stresses and improves efficiency and maintain good meat quality, efficiently and profitably." Proper stunning is important because it "will provide better meat quality. Improper electric stunning will cause bloodspots in the meat and bone fractures. . . . An animal that is stunned properly will produce a soft carcass that is safe for plant workers to work on." She maintains that "[g]entle handling in well-designed facilities will minimize stress, reduce the risk of injury, and produce a higher quality, rough handling or poorly designed equipment is detrimental to both animal welfare and meat quality." (www.grandin.com)

In discussing as a general matter the slaughter and battery-cage improvements to which Singer and Friedrich refer, McDonald's states: "Animals that are well cared for are less prone to illness, injury, and stress, which all have the same negative impact on the condition of livestock as they do on people. Proper animal welfare practices also benefit producers. Complying with our animal welfare guidelines helps ensure efficient production and reduces waste and loss. This enables our suppliers to be highly competitive." (www.mcdonalds.com) Wendy's (*www.wendys.com*) In a report about voluntary reforms in the livestock industry, the *Los Angeles Times* stated that "the reforms are driven by self-interest. When an animal is bruised, its flesh turns mushy and must be discarded. Even stress, especially right before slaughter, can affect the quality of meat." (Apr. 29, 2003)

This example (and there are many others) illustrates how the producers of animal products working with an environment that advocates reform are becoming better at exploiting animals in an economically efficient manner by adopting measures that improve meat quality and worker safety. But this has absolutely nothing to do with any recognition that animals have inherent value or that they have interests that should be respected even when it is not economically beneficial for humans to do so. Supposedly humane reforms in animal welfare are, for the most part, limited to and justified by economic benefits for animal exploiters and consumers. Moreover, large corporate animal exploiters can now point to the fact that animal advocates such as Singer and PETA are praising them for their supposedly "humane" treatment of nonhuman animals. PETA quite remarkably presented its 2005 Visionary of the Year Award to Grandin, the designer of the Los Angeles slaughterhouse. PETA's press release "innovative improvements" in slaughtering processes and PETA's Ingrid Newkirk praises Grandin as having "done more to reduce suffering in the world than any other person who has ever lived." (*New Yorker*, Apr. 14, 2003)

There is also serious doubt as to whether these changes actually provide any significant improvement in animal treatment apart from the issue of efficient exploitation. A slaughterhouse that follows Grandin's guidelines for stunning, proe use, and other aspects of the killing process is still an extremely horrible place. Battery hens that supply some of the major fast-food chains may now live in an area that is equivalent to a square of approximately 8 1/2 inches by 15 inches. The industry standard for the width of a battery hen is 7 inches-but it would be nonsense to claim that the existence of a battery hen is anything but miserable.

2. Animal Welfare: Making the Public More Comfortable About Animal Exploitation

Singer and Friedrich claim that no support whatsoever that animal welfare reforms will lead to greater protection for animals and then to "animal liberation" (more on that below). We have had animal welfare for about 200 years now, and there is no evidence whatsoever that welfare reforms lead to increased protection for animals and then to animal abolition. Indeed, we are using more nonhumans today and in more horrific ways, than at any time in human history. To the extent that we have made marginal improvements in some aspects of animal treatment, those improvements have, for the most part, been limited to measures that make animal exploitation more profitable. Although it is possible, in theory, to go beyond this minimal level of animal protection, the status in fact of animal welfare is more than a little troubling. The industry's value of animal products now militate strongly against significant improvement in our treatment of animals and ensures that animal welfare will do little more than make animal exploitation more economically efficient and socially acceptable. In any case, the reforms that Singer and Friedrich propose, and that are presently being promoted by the corporate welfare organizations in the United States , do not go beyond the minimal level.

Singer and Friedrich claim that opponents of welfare are saying "that before these reforms, large numbers of people were refusing to eat meat, but now they have decided that, because animals are not treated so badly, they can eat meat again." Singer and Friedrich also claim that welfare of whom I am aware has ever said any such thing. What I have said is that animal welfare has quite clearly not resulted in large numbers of non-vegans changing their behavior and refusing to eat meat or other animal products, and that welfare reforms are not likely to lead in that direction anytime soon for the very reason that they make people feel more comfortable about animal exploitation. That comfort is the explicit message of the welfareist movement. Animal advocates claim that we can "consume with conscience." (*N.Y. Times*, Oct. 6, 2004 , statement of Paul Waldau) Indeed, in Singer's most recent book, *The Way We Eat: Why Our Food Choices Matter* , he and co-author Jim Mason claim that we can be "conscientious omnivores" and exploit animals ethically if, for example, we choose to eat only animals who have been well-cared for and then killed without pain or distress.

The message that this approach sends is quite clear, and if Singer and Friedrich really think that it does not encourage the consumption of animal products, they are deluded. Moreover, welfare reforms may increase demand and increase the number of animals who are used for animal products. Indeed, we are using more nonhumans today and in more horrific ways, than at any time in human history. To the extent that we have made marginal improvements in some aspects of animal treatment, those improvements have, for the most part, been limited to measures that make animal exploitation more profitable. Although it is possible, in theory, to go beyond this minimal level of animal protection, the status in fact of animal welfare is more than a little troubling. The industry's value of animal products now militate strongly against significant improvement in our treatment of animals and ensures that animal welfare will do little more than make animal exploitation more economically efficient and socially acceptable. In any case, the reforms that Singer and Friedrich propose, and that are presently being promoted by the corporate welfare organizations in the United States , do not go beyond the minimal level.

I would like to share with you a story that, while anecdotal, illustrates the problem. When the Whole Foods store near my house opened, I sold large meat products but did not have a meat department. There is now a large fresh meat and fish department. There are also signs in the store advertising the "Animal Compassion Foundation" established by Whole Foods, which provides funding so that ranchers and farmers can develop ways of raising their nonhumans more "humanely." Several weeks ago, I was walking by the meat counter and I remarked to an employee standing there that I thought it was a shame that Whole Foods sells corpses. The employee responded: "Did you know that PETA gave an award to Whole Foods for how well they treat animals?" Yes, that's right. In addition to giving awards to Temple Grandin and PETA, they also loudly lauded Whole Foods for "requiring that its producers adhere to strict standards." (www.peta.org) *The Way We Eat* features Whole Foods and has pages and pages of adoring praise of the company as an ethically responsible seller of animal products.

Putting aside that there is some serious question as to whether the "strict standards" that PETA and others praise have any meaningful effect on the lives and deaths of the animals whose corpses are sold at Whole Foods (a forthcoming article from Professor Darian Ibrahim at the University of Arizona maintains that the standards are lacking), this sort of approach can only encourage animal exploitation. It only encourages and encourages people to believe that we can have both the best of both worlds, which serves to perpetuate and legitimate the consumption of animal products. In the words of a reviewer of *The Way We Eat* on Amazon.com: "You don't have to become a vegetarian or even a vegan, although becoming one could be a good way to live, both healthwise and morally, but the book sure makes you want to shop at Whole Foods and to buy free range chicken. It's just as simple as that: whatever you can make your food supply come from a decent source."

3. The Goal? What Goal?

Singer and Friedrich talk about how welfare promotes "animal rights" and claim that opposition to animal welfare is "counterproductive to the goal of animal liberation that we all share." Exactly what goal is it that we all share?

Singer is a utilitarian who has consistently rejected moral rights for both nonhumans and humans although he confusingly uses rights language when it is convenient. So from the outset, those rights that humans have certain moral rights, such as a right not to be enslaved or used as a commodity by others, do not share Singer's goal as far as humans are concerned. As for nonhumans, Singer is not opposed to use per se of most animals; he is concerned only about treatment. To the extent that he does care about treatment, it is only in the context of how we may not be able to assure adequate treatment. But his goal is not the abolition of all animal exploitation; given Singer's general moral theory, abolition cannot be his goal. Singer has maintained consistently that most nonhumans do not have an interest in continuing to live because they are not self-aware in the same sense that normal humans are, and as a result they do not care whether we use them; they only care about how we use them. This reflects the views of Jeremy Bentham, the 19th century utilitarian on whom Singer bases his theory. Bentham argued that although animals could suffer and, therefore, mattered morally, animals do not care whether, for instance, we eat them. They care only about how we treat them until we eat them.

This view that it is not use per se but only treatment is the foundation of animal welfare ideology and differs from the animal rights position as I have articulated it. I maintain that if animals have an interest in continued existence-and I argue that any sentient being does-then our use of them as human resources-however "humanely" we treat them-cannot be morally acceptable. If that is the case, then we should seek to abolish and regulate animal exploitation. I also argue that Singer is wrong to maintain that it is possible to accord equal consideration to any interests that he acknowledges animals do have as long as they are human property. The interests of property will almost always be regarded as weighing less than the interests of property owners.

You do not have to get deeply into philosophy, however, to assess the nature of Singer's "animal liberation." Singer's most recent book not only maintains that we can ethically eat animals and animal products, but it also has a disclosure that should inform our views about Singer and his views about violence toward nonhumans. In *The Way We Eat* , Singer and Mason tell us that they learned that a turkey factory needed workers to assist in artificial insemination. "Our curiosity piqued, we decided to see for ourselves what this work really involved." Singer and Mason spent a day "collecting the semen and getting it into the hen" They caught and restrained the male turkeys while another worker "squeezed the tom's vent until it opened up and the white semen oozed forth. Using a vacuum pump, he sucked it into a syringe." Singer and Mason then had to "break" the hens, which involved restraining the hen "so that her rear is straight up and her vent open." (28) The inseminator then inserted a tube into the hen and used a blast of compressed air to insert the semen into the hen's oviduct.

And it wasn't just the turkeys who had an unpleasant time. Singer and Mason complain that their day at the turkey factory was "the hardest, fastest, dirtiest, most disgusting, worst-paid work we have ever done. For ten hours we grabbed and wrestled birds, jerking them upside down, facing their pushed-open anuses, dodging their spurting shit, while breathing air filled with dust and feathers stirred up by panicked birds. . . . All that, and they don't care whether we use them; they only care about how we use them. This reflects the views of Jeremy Bentham, the 19th century utilitarian on whom Singer bases his theory. Bentham argued that although animals could suffer and, therefore, mattered morally, animals do not care whether, for instance, we eat them. They care only about how we treat them until we eat them.

It is deeply disturbing that Singer and Mason regard it as morally acceptable to engage in violence toward nonhumans and to use violence, particularly to satisfy their curiosity about what "this work really involved." I suggest that there is no non-speciesist way to justify what Singer and Mason claim to have done without also justifying the rape of a woman, or the molestation of a child, in order to see what those acts of violence "really involved." Perhaps Singer's perverse actions with the turkeys can be explained by his claim in 2001 on Nerve.com that "sex with animals does not always involve cruelty" and that we can have fully satisfying sexual contact with animals. In any event, if violence against nonhumans is permitted under Singer's theory, we do not need to know much about the nature of the theory that has some very serious flaws and his goals are probably not ones that, as Singer thinks, we should share.

As for the goals of Friedrich and PETA, the industry that has become clear over the years is that PETA's understanding of "animal rights" is, to say the least, idiosyncratic. To cite one example of many, no theory of animal rights of which I am aware would sanction the mass killing of healthy nonhumans, as occurred at PETA's Aspen Hill "sanctuary" in 1991, or more recently at PETA corporate headquarters and by PETA employees who allegedly used deception to obtain healthy animals who were subsequently killed and dumped. I suppose that if you agree with Singer- that the animals that PETA killed did not have an interest in their lives, but only wanted a "kind" or "compassionate" death- this makes sense to you. I, however, would disagree.

When animal advocates question the corporate welfareists, the stock reply is to say that we all have the same goal, we are all working for the animals, and that dissent or discussion will threaten the unity of the movement. Like "compassionate consumption," the notion of "movement unity" is a fiction that is used to maintain control of discourse and to pursue a strategy. There is no movement "unity" because there is an irreconcilable difference between the abolitionist/rights position and the regulation/welfare position, between those who maintain that we should be as "fanatical" (to use Singer's disparaging description) about speciesism as we are about human exploitation, and those, like Singer, who do not. Proclamations about movement "unity" are simply another way of telling advocates not to question the control of the movement by corporate welfareists.

4. Animal Welfare or Nothing: The False Dichotomy

Singer and Friedrich maintain that those who are concerned about nonhumans have two choices: pursue animal welfare or do nothing to help animals. The implication here is that the abolitionist position is too idealistic and cannot provide a strategy to pursue for the short term. This is a standard ploy of welfareists and it is not clear to me whether they really believe this, or if it is just a slogan. In any event, Singer and Friedrich present us with a false dichotomy.

We are inflicting pain, suffering, and death on billions of nonhumans every year. No one including the most convinced abolitionist-maintains that we can stop that overnight or, indeed, anytime soon. The issue that confronts the advocate is what to do now. We have two choices: a world of limited time and limited resources. We cannot do everything. So the issue-at least for those whose goal is abolition-becomes: what do we choose to do now that will reduce suffering most in the short term, that is consistent with the abolitionist approach, and that will build a political movement for further change in the abolitionist direction?

I would suggest that welfareism is not the rational choice for the abolitionist. It is a bit late in the game to promote animal welfare as the "single step" that will start us on our long journey. We have spent billions of dollars and what do we have to show for it? I submit that the answer is: nothing and certainly nothing that could be described as an effective use of our limited resources. Singer and Friedrich cite the Animal Welfare Act (a federal law in the United States that purports to regulate the use of nonhumans in experiments and exhibition) and the U.S. Humane Slaughter Act as examples of welfareist laws that would leave animals worse-off if we did not have them. I disagree.

The Animal Welfare Act, which does not even apply to 90% of the nonhumans used in experiments, imposes no real substantive limits on what vivisectors can do with animals in the laboratory. The Act does, however, provide a resource for the research community and for people like Singer and Friedrich to point to in order to assure the public that there is regulation of vivisection. The Humane Slaughter Act, which also does not even apply to most animals who we eat, is, in any event, focused on reducing carcass damage and ensuring worker safety. Again, the primary purpose of the Act is to make consumers feel more comfortable. The Act does not require much more protection than a rational property owner would provide in the first place, and there have been countless instances in which the U.S. government does not enforce the Act.

Singer and Friedrich also cite as an example of the progress of animal welfare that "the stocking density changes for hens, although meager, mean that conditions have gone from 20% percent annual death rates to two or three percent annual death rates." This is particularly bizarre in that 100% of the chickens will ultimately be killed. Any reduction in deaths before the slaughterhouse keeps the birds alive longer in horrible conditions and increase profit for exploiters. So welfareists have succeeded in educating exploiters about how to, in McDonald's words "ensure efficient production and reduce waste and loss." Singer and Friedrich may find this exciting. I do not.

So what can an abolitionist do now that will reduce suffering more effectively in the short term and is consistent with the abolitionist end? The abolitionist approach provides practical guidance in a number of respects. The most important form of incremental change is the decision by the individual to become vegan. Veganism, or the eschewing of all animal products, is more than a matter of lifestyle; it is a political and moral statement in which the individual accepts the principle of abolition in her own life. Veganism is the one truly abolitionist goal that we can all achieve-and we can achieve it immediately, starting with our next meal. If we are ever going to effect any significant change in our treatment of animals and to one day end that use, it is imperative that there be a social and political movement that actively seeks abolition and regards veganism as part of the moral baseline. There is, of course, no rational distinction between meat and other animal products, such as eggs or dairy, or between fur and leather, silk, or wool.

Most national animal advocacy organizations in the U.S. focus on animal welfare-even if they pay lip service to veganism. An excellent example of this is PETA. On one hand, PETA purports to encourage veganism. On the other hand, PETA's campaigns are, for the most part, focused on traditional welfare regulation and PETA actively and confusingly promotes the concept of "humanely" produced animal products.

There is, however, no sense in which veganism is promoted as a moral baseline of the movement. Rather, veganism is presented merely as an optional lifestyle choice and is often portrayed as being difficult and only for the committed few rather than as an easy way to eliminate exploitation. That is, the corporate movement, many of the "readers" of which are themselves vegetarians, sets us the goal of abolition as a position as the "fringe" radical position, making the "normal" or "mainstream" position the one where they try to "consume with compassion." Indeed, Singer claims that we "don't have to be fanatical" about food issues, and "[a] little self-indulgence, if you can keep it under firm control," is acceptable. (*The Way We Eat* , 281) We would, of course, never say that "a little self-indulgence" is acceptable where rape, murder, child molestation, or other forms of human exploitation are involved, but the so-called "father of the animal rights movement" assures us that "a little self-indulgence" in participating as consumers in the brutal killing of nonhumans is nothing to worry over. It is acceptable, expected-to-be "fanatical" about not molesting children or other serious forms of human exploitation, but Singer tells us that it is acceptable to be flexible when it comes to nonhuman exploitation.

A movement that seeks abolition must have veganism as a baseline principle and should have as its "mainstream" position that we can be "conscientious omnivores" who can "consume with compassion." We must be clear: "Compassionate" consumption is an incoherent oxymoron. All animal products, including those insidiously stamped "Certified Humane Raised and Handled" by various corporate animal welfare organizations, involve unspeakable brutality.

Veganism and abolitionist education, including boycotts, peaceful demonstrations, school programs, and other non-violent acts aimed at informing the public about the real, environmental, and health dimensions of veganism and abolition providing practical and incremental strategies both in terms of reducing animal suffering now and in terms of building a movement in the future that will be able to obtain more meaningful legislation in the form of prohibitions rather than mere "humane" regulation. In the late 1990s-when the animal advocacy community in the United States developed separately-veganism to pursue a welfareist agenda-a substantial portion of movement resources had been invested in vegan education and advocacy, there would likely be hundreds of thousands more vegans than there are today. That is a very conservative estimate given the hundreds of millions of dollars that have been expended by animal advocacy groups to promote vegans and the legislation and initiatives. The investment of time and money would have been reduced suffering more by decreasing demand for animal products than all of the welfareist "successes" put together and multiplied ten-fold. Increasing the number of vegans would also help to change a political and economic base necessary for more pervasive social change as a necessary predicate for legal change. Given that there is limited time and there is a limited financial resource available, the investment in traditional animal welfare is not a rational and efficient choice if we seek abolition in the long term or even if we only seek reduction of animal suffering in the shorter term.

Singer claims that the reality is that "going vegan is still too big a step for most." (*The Way We Eat* , 279) Putting aside the fact that more people might be inclined to go vegan if Singer and the corporate welfare movement were not telling them that they can consume animal products "with compassion," the solution is incremental veganism, not "humane" animal products. For example, a campaign to get people to eat one vegan meal a day, and then two, and then three, is much better than encouraging them to eat "free range" meat, eggs, or dairy at all three meals. But the message should be clear: veganism, and not "compassionate consumption," is the baseline principle of a movement that promotes abolition.

At this point in time, it is unlikely that most legislative or regulatory campaigns that seek to go beyond traditional welfare reform are going to be successful; there is no political base to build such reforms because the corporate movement has not yet been supplanted. If, however, advocates wish to pursue such campaigns, they should act in the very least involve prohibitions and not regulations. These prohibitions should recognize that animals have interests that go beyond those that must be protected in order to exploit the animals and cannot be compromised for economic reasons. At no point should animal advocates propose alternative, supposedly more "humane" substitutes. For example, a prohibition on the use of all animals in a particular sort of experiment is to be preferred over the substitution in the experiment of one species for another. But I want to be clear that I do not favor inventing any resources for legislative or regulatory campaigns at this time. The political compromise required usually results in focusation of the benefit sought. Rather, the abolitionist movement should focus on veganism, which is a much more practical and effective way to reduce animal exploitation.

I stress that the abolitionist movement should embrace non-violent approach, both on the level of individual interactions and as a matter of movement ideology. As I have long argued, the animal rights movement should see itself as the next step in the progress of the peace movement; as a movement that takes the rejection of injustice to the next step. The problem of animal exploitation is complicated and involves roots that go deep into our patriarchal culture and our disturbing tolerance for violence against the vulnerable. Not only is violence problematic as a moral matter, it is unsound as a practical strategy. We will never address the problem successfully by using violence to try to create a social movement in favor of abolition. As Mohandas Gandhi maintained, the most powerful force with which to oppose injustice is not violence but non-cooperation. There is no better way to refuse to cooperate with the exploitation of nonhumans than to eliminate it from your own life through veganism and work to educate others to do the same. It is disturbing that PETA spends much more time criticizing those who oppose the welfareist approach than it does those who will only marginalize the animal issue further by associating it with violence.

It is also disturbing to see the extent to which PETA uses sexism in its campaigns, literature, and events. Speciesism is closely tied to sexism and other forms of discrimination against humans. As long as we continue treating women like meat, we are going to continue treating nonhumans as meat. It is high time that serious animal advocates make clear to PETA that its sexism is destructive and counterproductive.

5. "Whose Side Are You On?"- Good Question.

Singer and Friedrich end their essay by asking: "Whose Side Are You On?" They tell us that the animal exploiters all oppose animal welfare and ask whether we want to be on the side of the animal exploiters who oppose animal welfare or on the side of Singer and Friedrich, who support animal welfare. This question by Singer and Friedrich is problematic in at least two respects respects:

First, because we think that if most experts/ers oppose animal welfare, it must be because animal welfare is really harmful to animal exploiters. That is nonsense and indicates either naivety or disingenuousness. An industry may oppose regulation even when it does not really oppose it and even when the regulation may benefit it. A case in point involves the federal Animal Welfare Act amendment of 1985, which created "animal care committees" to monitor animal experiments. These committees have not only failed to provide any meaningful limits on animal experiments, they have effectively insulated vivisection from public scrutiny more than they have. Vivisectors publicly opposed the 1985 amendment although I had many vivisectors tell me privately that the amendment was, on balance, not harmful for the practice of animal use. They opposed it because they oppose the principle of any governmental regulation of animal use. It would be difficult to find a vivisector who would say, with a straight face, that the 1985 amendment has done anything to restrict vivisection, and many are delighted that they can now assure the public that there is a committee that reviews all animal experiments.

Second, Singer and Friedrich are wrong factually in that a number of large animal exploiters openly and publicly embrace the welfare reforms that Singer and Friedrich applaud. McDonald's and others have done so because they understand that they got a bargain. They made minimal changes that were more than offset by the great publicity that they got from promoting animal welfareists. A shareholder of these companies would be justified in claiming that if they did not take the deal that PETA and others offered as it can only maximize shareholder wealth.

Although I generally do not think that questions such as "whose side are you on" are helpful, I am going to make an exception in this case and ask the same question. Here are two:

- Singer maintains that animal use per se does not raise a moral issue because most nonhumans do not have an interest in continuing to live;
- Singer maintains that we can consume animals in an ethical manner;
- Singer regards inflicting violence on nonhumans as an acceptable way of learning about animal exploitation;
- PETA kills "euthanizes" is the wrong word because it implies a death that is in the interest of the animal/ those hundreds of healthy animals because PETA apparently accepts Singer's view that animals do not have a fundamental and morally important interest in continuing to live; "Animal Rights" means "thruainer" executions.
- PETA promotes campaigns that are embraced by corporate animal exploiters, and gives awards to animal exploiters.
- PETA has thoroughly trivialized the animal rights movement by turning the issue of animal exploitation into one large, self-promoting media stunt, and has made sexism a constant theme of its animal campaigns.

So whose side are you on?

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