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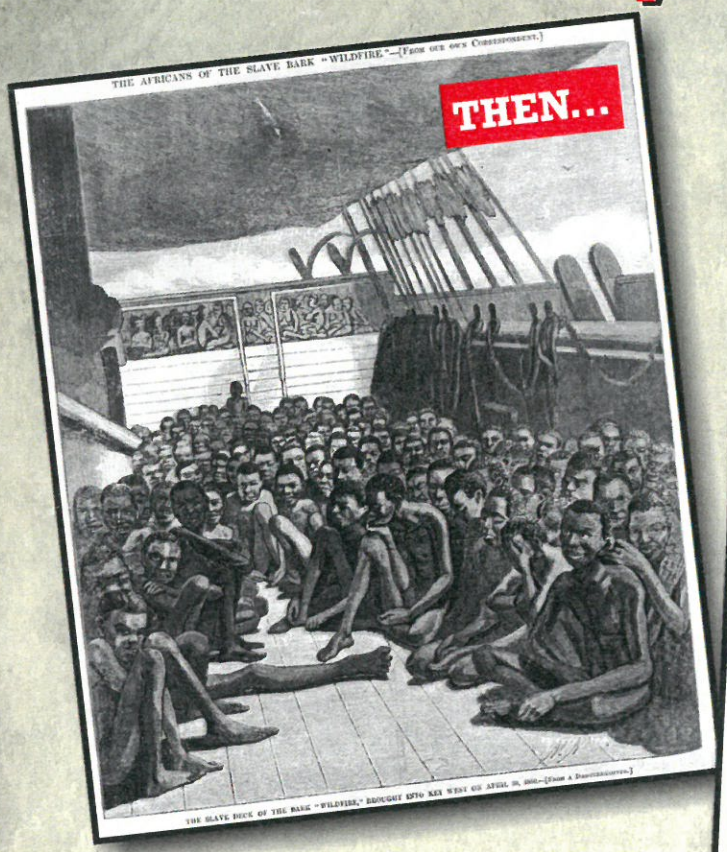
ANIMAL VOICE

OFFICIAL MOUTHPIECE IN SOUTH AFRICA FOR COMPASSION IN WORLD FARMING

Ships of Shame and Insanity



Theologians, clergymen, and religious studies students at the University of Stellenbosch start the conversation...

"How do we begin to liberate animals from human oppression?"

editorial

by Louise van der Merwe

Shipping animals to slaughter is a roaring trade across the world...

We are deluded if we think this trade is anything but SLAVERY on a scale the world has never seen before.

In June 2015, the *Sunday Times* reported the discovery of a wreck of a slave ship in the sea below Lion's Head, Cape Town. *Animal Voice* editor, **Louise van der Merwe,** wrote the letter-to-the-editor below in response to the article. It was not published.

Dear Editor -

In your story mention is made that the shame that we feel about the slave trade is so abhorrent to our sense of who we are as humans, that there is "global selective amnesia about slavery." (*Sunday Times,* June 7 2015, Page 7: How Clifton's grave of slaves was finally found).

But slavery is not the ghost of something past. Slavery flourishes today as never before, feeding our insatiable appetite for dominance of **us** over **them**, feeding our toxic arrogance and enabling the scourge of a mentality of superiority to flourish as much today as in 1794 when the *Sao Jose-Paquete de Africa* sank along with its cargo of shackled humans to the sea bed below Lion's Head.

The only difference today is that we have transferred our concept of 'less than', from the indigenous inhabitants of Africa, to beings who share with us the breath of life and so much more besides, but who manifest in a different shape or form to us. Just as once we got away with unmercifully shackling 'slaves' to do our bidding, we now shackle non-humans with our unforgiveable arrogance, ignorance and ability to blind ourselves to the hideous truth about the enormity of the suffering we inflict on them. Animals by their billions are the enslaved 'them' of today.

And still we continue to wonder, in our blind stupidity, why our society is so violent! We continue to ignore the fundamental truth that how we treat those who are absolutely at our mercy, is exactly who and what we are.

Losing our prejudice against those who are shaped differently to us and replacing it with a profound sense of respect and reverence is a threshold we still have to cross. For the sake of our children and all non-humans, it cannot come too soon.

Evolution of the human mind

We must take the final step in expanding the circle of ethics.
- Peter Singer, philosopher and professor of bio-ethics.

He says: "In an earlier stage of our development most human groups held to a tribal ethic. Members of the tribe were protected, but people of other tribes could be robbed or killed as one pleased. Gradually the circle of protection expanded, but as recently as 150 years ago we did not include blacks.

So African human beings could be captured, shipped to America, and sold. In Australia white settlers regarded Aborigines as a pest and hunted them down, much as kangaroos are hunted down today.

Just as we have progressed beyond the blatantly racist ethic of the era of slavery and colonialism, so we must now progress beyond the speciesist ethic of the era of factory farming, of the use of animals as mere research tools, of whaling, seal hunting, kangaroo slaughter, and the destruction of wilderness."

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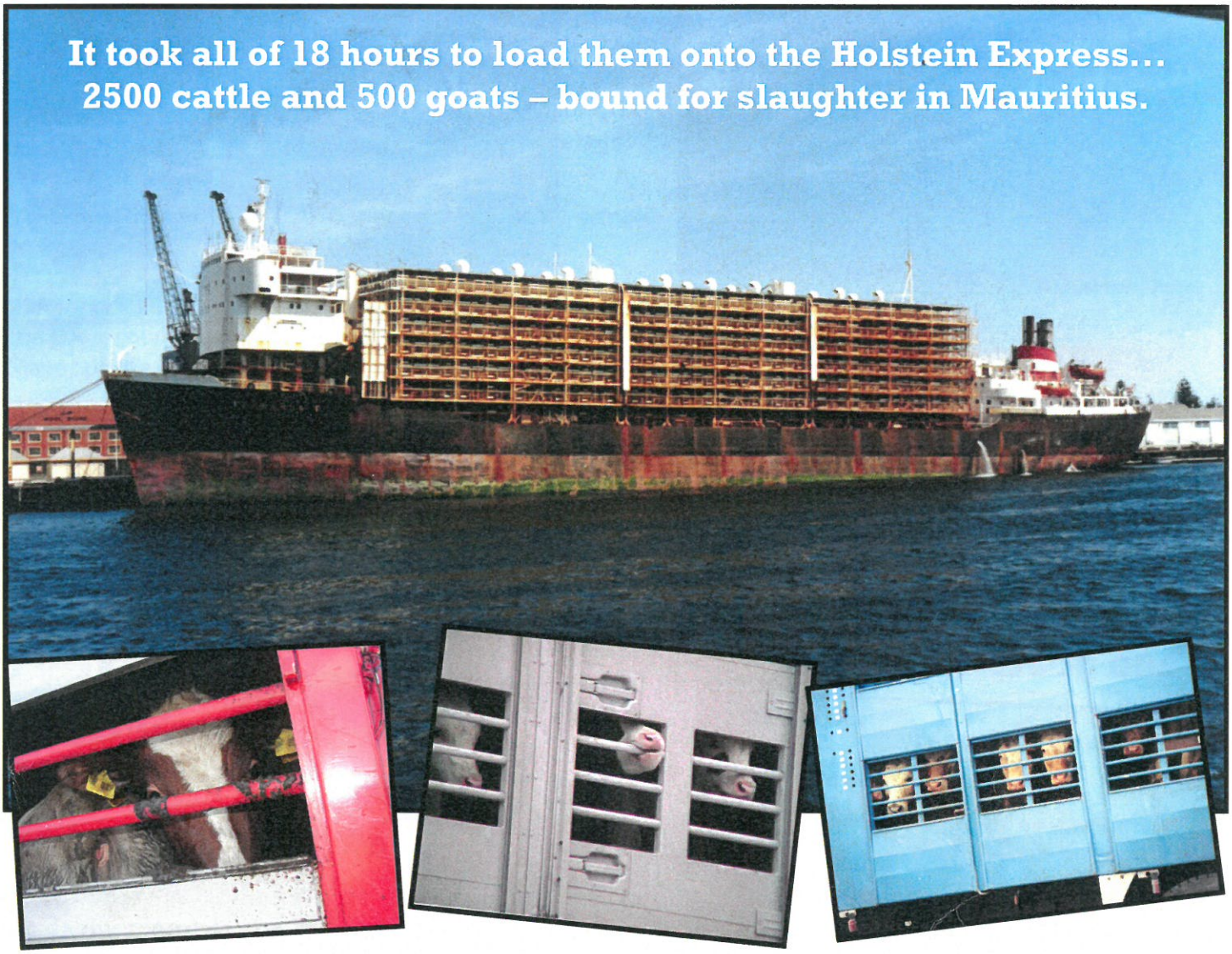
Journey across the high seas...
to slaughter



Together with members of ***Ban Animal Trading,*** *Compassion in World Farming* supporter Eileen Chapman was there to witness their departure from the harbour at East London on 2nd July 2015.

"The saddest thing of all," said Eileen afterwards, **"was when I flew out of East London that night on my way back to Johannesburg, and saw the most beautiful big golden moon shining over the sea. The amazing beauty of the moonlight, was completely overshadowed by my knowledge of the heart-breaking misery and trauma of the cows and goats on board the Holstein Express."**

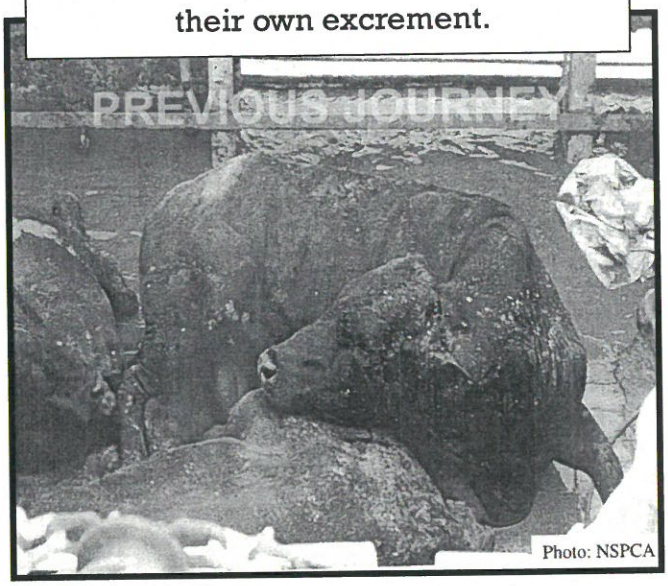
Eileen's heartbreak was reported in *The Times* the next day. See http://m.timeslive.co.za/thetimes/?articleId=15146061

Eileen Chapman

Eileen said she saluted the courage and compassion of **NSPCA** inspectors in the face of such desperately tragic circumstances as every animal was loaded under terrible circumstances until four o'clock in the morning.

Unheard of – cattle pant like dogs in the searing heat of the ship's hold.

Sea-sick South African cattle, en route to Mauritius, awash in sea water and their own excrement.



Asked for comment **NSPCA** CEO *Marcelle Meredith* said:

"We stand opposed to the shipping of live animals because of the dreadful ordeal animals are forced to endure – transportation to the harbour, loading onto a ship over a period of many hours, and at least a week-long journey below deck in miserable conditions.

"Poor ventilation and unpredictable sea conditions lead to sea sickness which results in increased stress and suffering.

"It is a practice which needs to be stopped immediately since it does not adhere to any animal welfare principles."

...heart-breaking misery and trauma of the cows and goats on board...

The trade is world-wide. These Australian sheep are headed for the Middle-East.

THANK YOU, Madam Mayor

for recognising the Sentience of Animals and for your support of their Five Freedoms!

On 21st August 2015 Mayor **Patricia de Lille** confirmed her support, as mayor of the City of Cape Town...

- for the **recognition of animals as sentient,** capable of feeling the same pain and emotions as humans
- for the basic **Five Freedoms for non-human beings.**

In July 2015, **Mayor de Lille** gave her support to a ground-breaking Resolution passed by the DA.

Animal Voice then wrote to her and asked if her support for the DA resolution could be interpreted as support also, as Mayor of the City of Cape Town?

Her reply: **A resounded yes!**

The Democratic Alliance resolution below was accepted by the DA's Federal Council in Durban on Sunday, 26 July 2015. The DA is probably the first political party in South Africa and in Africa to accept a resolution of this nature by one of its highest federal political structures (0nly Federal Congress is a higher structure and only meets every two years).

Resolution 12
Acknowledge that non-human animals are sentient beings

Dr Thomas Ferreira proposes the following resolution on behalf of Ward 23 branch in Mangaung, seconded by Maryke Davies:

Sentience is the ability to feel, perceive, or experience subjectively and the recognition of an emotional dimension. The concept is central to the philosophy of animal freedoms, because sentience is necessary for the ability to suffer; and
Noting that animal sentience is mostly ignored by our modern, capitalist and consumerist society, resolves the following:

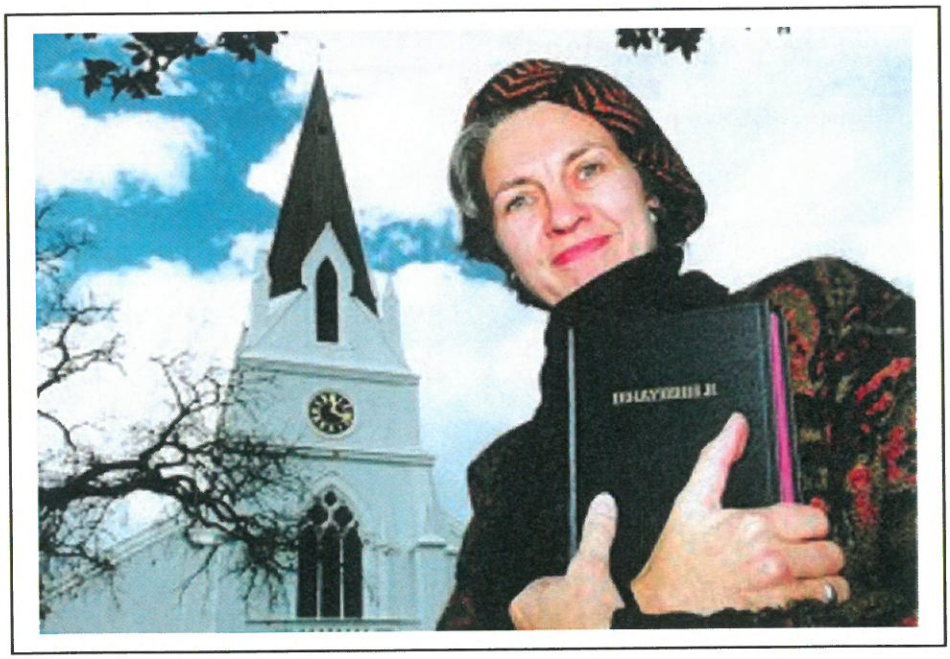
1. The acceptance of non-human animals as sentient beings, which are able to feel the same pain and emotions as humans.
2. The recognition of the basic universal freedoms for non-human animals namely:
    a. **Freedom from hunger or thirst** by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour.
    b. **Freedom from discomfort** by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area.
    c. **Freedom from pain, injury or disease** by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.
    d. **Freedom to express (most) normal behaviour** by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind.
    e. **Freedom from fear and distress** by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.

Will Theology rescue non-human animals from Human Oppression?

The University of Stellenbosch helps shine a light on the way forward...

In a ground-breaking colloquium on 9 July 2015, academics, theologians and religious studies students from around the globe, took their seats in the Board Room of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Stellenbosch.

They were there to begin the discussion on the rights of animals and the challenge this presents to Christian Theology and the Church in Africa.

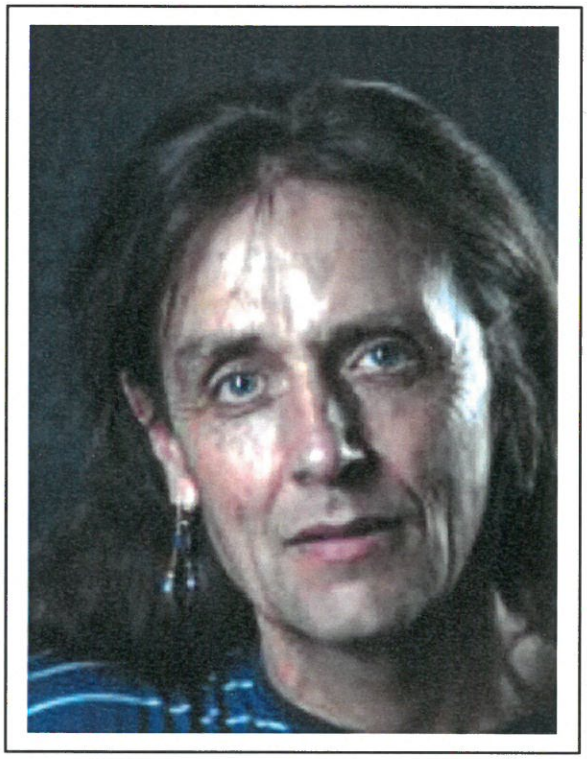


Professor Elna Mouton, Professor of the New Testament and former Dean of Theology called the colloquium together in order that one of South Africa's leading proponents of animal rights, **Professor Kai Horsthemke,** Professor of Philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand, could present his work to the faculty before leaving South Africa to take up a position in Germany.

Professor Elna Mouton said:

> The Faculty of Theology at the University of Stellenbosch chose human dignity as a key focus; but in concentrating on human dignity, have we neglected the dignity of non-human creation?

Professor Horsthemke is world renowned for his work on the moral rights of animals.



His latest book,
Animals and African Ethics
is available from LootOnline and is published by Palgrave MacMillan.

This is a synopsis of Professor Kai Horsthemke presentation:

"The purpose of this presentation is not to give graphic images of the evils, cruelty and inhumanities meted out to animals but to begin a conversation that will lead to a better existence with our non-human cousins.

For a very long time it was assumed that there is a difference in kind between human beings and all other creatures ... that we, as humans have a uniqueness that no other beings could possibly share and on this basis we assumed a superiority – that allowed us to do with the rest of creation what we liked. We thought that language, self-awareness, autonomy and moral agency set us apart and warranted not only differential but also unequal treatment and consideration of all other creatures.

However, we know now, through science, that animals and humans are on the same continuum and that the difference between ***us*** and ***them*** is one of degree only – and not one of kind. Humans are superior in some ways. They are inferior in others. When it comes to social organisation and functionality, we are way behind bees, ants and termites, for example.

- Human language might be unique. But other forms of communication are just as rich. The honey dance of bees, for instance, is an extremely complex form of communication, as is 'whalesong'.
- Chimps, orang-utans and gorillas are proficient at (human) sign language. A journalist who interviewed a chimp through sign language is on record as saying the hairs on his back stood up when he realised that this yielded insight into another species' subjective consciousness.
- Dogs are said to be better at reading our expressions than other humans are. There is the story of the Jack Russell who kept his care-giver (who had suffered a stroke) alive for three days (that is, until he was discovered) by dipping a cloth into the toilet bowl and bringing it to him. This was not something he had been taught.

There are so many of these stories, and they blow the idea of a radical difference ***in kind*** between humans and non humans right out of the water. Our understanding now - that we exist on a biological and psychological continuum with

Prof. Kai Horsthemke, presenting his work to the faculty of Theology at the University of Stellenbosch.

animals - has profound implications for the way we treat them and warrants our serious consideration of how our so-called uniqueness has been used to justify the gulf between ***us and them*** and make it possible for us to use and abuse them.

There are two basic moral arguments for liberation of non-human animals from human oppression.

1. The first is the so-called 'argument from marginal cases', also known as **'the argument from species overlap'.**

   It states that any human excellence or criterion of uniqueness or superiority that is usually cited to distinguish between humans and non-humans will also fail to apply to some human beings, like the very young and the mentally incapacitated. Yet, these human beings clearly matter morally – and this inability does not entitle us to treat them in whatever way we like. If humans beings on the 'margins' of humanity matter – like the mentally incapacitated, the senile and the very young - then we must also grant equal (albeit not necessarily the same) moral status to non-humans who do not share these excellences.

   Some philosophers have tried to torpedo this argument on the grounds of the consideration that there is a characteristic that distinguishes all humans from all non-humans, namely the fact of their common humanity. It is because we are human that we are special.

2. The response to this has become known as **'the argument from speciesism'**. This argument states that just as it is morally inexcusable to leave someone out of our moral concern because of their sex, and just as it is morally inexcusable to treat any person as inferior because of their race or ethnicity, so too is it morally inexcusable to exclude on the basis of species. If sexism is wrong and racism is wrong, then speciesism must be wrong and is an irrational prejudice just like racism and sexism.

So how do we begin to secure a place for non-human animals?

People commonly appeal to considerations of kindness and compassion. The problem with such appeals, however, is that being kind or compassionate does not guarantee that one will actually end up doing the right thing. Furthermore, the moral status of a human or non-human does not depend on our psychological states regarding these creatures, or whether or not we sympathise with them.

Others also appeal to what might be called 'sentientism', that the moral weighty fact is whether or not a creature can suffer and experience pain. The problem with this approach is that it does not really accord any kind of moral harm or disvalue to death. If it only matters whether or not an individual experiences pain, then there can be no objection to killing him or her, as long as this is done painlessly, i.e. without involving suffering.

"My preferred argument and strategy for the liberation of animals is a steady roll out of rights.

Our best available tool is to accord rights to non-humans. Moral rights very often precede legal rights. Before women had any legal rights their moral rights had been acknowledged by moral and political reformers.

Slavery was legal in many parts of the world but there were moral reformers who appealed to justice long before legal rights were given. Thus, I suggest that morality is a precursor of law.

Young infants have rights, as do the mentally incapacitated or patients with progressive Alzheimers disease have rights, simply because they can be said to have interests that can be protected or safe-guarded by an appeal to rights.

By the same token, non-human animals have interests in life, liberty and enjoyment of life, free from disease, and are therefore deserving of corresponding rights.

If we think of rights as the backbone of moral concern and interaction and compassion as the heart, then we begin to get closer to achieving an understanding of true liberation. Animal Liberation can be achieved – even if only in our own consciousness to start with. This would free us from the role of oppressor. If we take rights seriously then there is no excuse, for example, for rearing and killing animals for human consumption."

Animal Liberation will become Human Liberation.
According rights to non-humans will be a contentious matter for years to come and the movement will be criticised for respecting animals at the expense of human beings. It will be criticised as not respecting cultural traditions. But culture is not sacrosanct.

Virginity testing and female genital excision are examples of traditional customs that are clearly not in the interests of the young girls who are at the receiving end of these practices.

They deserve the attention of anyone opposed to moral injustice.

The concept of *ubuntu* has commonly been given a human-centred interpretation but the idea that 'I am because we are' can be interpreted to include other animals too. This is a beginning. There remain a lot of work to be done but the substratum is there within the thinking and philosophy on the African continent."

Prof. Elna Mouton,
Prof. Kai Horsthemke
and
Dr Hellmut-Michael Skriver.

**"Let us start with daily accountability:
what are we going to eat, what pharmacological products
are we going to use, what are we going to wear."**

In concluding the colloquium, Professor Mouton said:

"The Faculty of Theology chose Human Dignity as one of its key items of focus. But in concentrating on human dignity, we may have neglected the rest of creation. We must take this discussion forward. The analogies with feminism and slavery are powerful.

In the discourse of liberation, we find that if one grouping of humanity is regarded as inferior, the 'superior' grouping suffers just as much.

- For example, the liberation of women, liberated men.
- The liberation of slavery, liberated oppressors.
- Any kind of hierarchy is potentially dangerous.

There is a God image that I love to work with. It is found in Deuteronomy 10:17. God reveals Himself there as powerful, yet impartial, and compassionate to the so-called marginalised.

He gave us the responsibility of taking care of the rest of creation. We need to come to terms with the extent to which we have misunderstood our responsibilities as a result of a hierarchical attitude.

The implications of a discourse like this are absolutely enormous. To be created in the image of God is not something to boast about unless we take our responsibility very seriously. God is an inclusive God. He is compassionate to all of creation, and he is not hierarchical.

With this understanding, the liberation of non-human animals has profound implications. Let us begin."

"I have spent my life fighting discrimination and injustice, whether the victims are blacks, women, or gays and lesbians. No human being should be the target of prejudice or the object of vilification or be denied his or her basic rights.

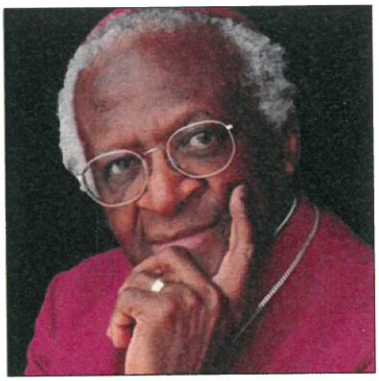
But there are other issues of justice – not only for human beings but also for the world's other sentient creatures. The matter of the abuse and cruelty we inflict on other animals has to fight for our attention in what sometimes seems an already overfull moral agenda. It is vital, however, that these instances of injustice not be overlooked.

I have seen firsthand how injustice gets overlooked when the victims are powerless or vulnerable, when they have no one to speak up for them and no means of representing themselves to a higher authority. Animals are in precisely that position.
Unless we are mindful of their interests and speak out loudly on their behalf, abuse and cruelty go unchallenged.

It is a kind of theological folly to suppose that God has made the entire world just for human beings, or to suppose that God is interested in only one of the millions of species that inhabit God's good earth," says Archbishop Desmond Tutu in his forthright foreword to the Global Guide to Animal Protection to be published by the University of Illinois on 30 December.

insight

by
Archbishop Tutu



We must fight injustice to animals as we do injustice to blacks, women and gays – Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

In his first major statement on animal welfare Archbishop Tutu says "Our dominion over animals is not supposed to be despotism. We are made in the image of God, yes, but God – in whose image we are made - is holy, loving, and just. We do not honor God by abusing other sentient creatures.

If it is true that we are the most exalted species in creation, it is equally true that we can be the most debased and sinful. This realization should give us pause … There is something Christ-like about caring for suffering creatures, whether they are humans or animals."
Archbishop Tutu concludes with his warm support for the **Global Guide to Animal Protection** and urges the reader to seek justice and protection for all creatures, humans and animals alike: "Churches should lead the way by making clear that all cruelty – to other animals as well as human beings – is an affront to civilized living and a sin before God."

See more of what Archbishop Tutu says in his preface to **The Global Guide to Animal Protection.**
The Global Guide to Animal Protection **is** published in both the UK and USA and is available from
http://www.press.uillinois.edu/books/catalog/69wgp5qn9780252036354.html

Priced USD95 (cloth) and USD27 (paper).

insight

by
Pope Francis

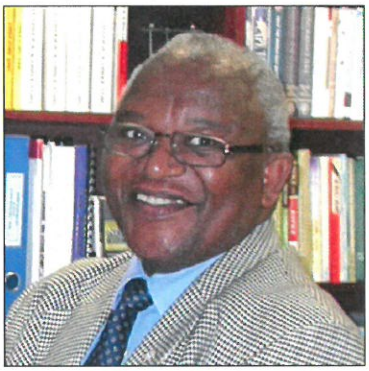
" Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience. "

" It is contrary to human dignity to cause animals to suffer or die needlessly. #LaudatoSi. "

" The Bible has no place for a tyrannical anthropocentrism unconcerned for other creatures. "

insight

by
Bishop Siwa



Bishop Ziphozihle Siwa, Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa and President of the South African Council of Churches.

" We need a transformation of society at the level of culture itself. We need to realize that we have been captured by the lure of consumerism to believe our happiness and success depends on what we eat, wear, won and use…

We are trapped in the logic of consumerism which emphasizes what we lack, downplaying what we already have. We are reminded daily of our unfulfilled needs, thus placing consumerism at the heart of culture. The over consumption of animal-derived products – meat, eggs, milk and so on – is part of this culture of consumerism and places an enormous burden on human health, as well as on the lives of animals which are crammed into factory farms in order to supply our demands, especially for cheap meat…

The Church has a moral and theological responsibility to set aside this stupidity and embrace its role of stewardship of our beautiful earth and all its creation.

We need our congregations to become eco-congregations. "

"One day the absurdity of the almost universal human belief in the slavery of other animals will be palpable. We shall then have discovered our souls and become worthier of sharing this planet with them." - Martin Luther King

VICTORY for animals!

On 28th July 2015, the **ritual killing** of hundreds of thousands of animals **STOPPED!**

In future, the *Gadhimai Festival* in Nepal **will use peaceful worship** in celebration of the goddess *Gadhimai,* **instead of killing and violence.**

Animal Voice spoke to South African activist **Nikki Botha** who played a role in bringing down the nightmare of butchery...

Animal Voice: **Nikki, how did you find out that the animal sacrifice at Gadhimai had been banned?**

Nikki: *I found out about it the moment one of the activists who is at the forefront of this fight, posted the news on social media. The Gadhimai Temple Trust had just announced that the time had come to change this tradition in favour of a bloodless sacrifice.*

Animal Voice: **You say you were 'pretty much hysterical with joy.' What were your first words after being told of this victory?**

Nikki: I can't repeat it in polite company unfortunately, but suffice to say it was colourful. I couldn't find anything coherent to say - the shock was just that great.

Animal Voice: **In essence, what this ban means is that hundreds of thousands of water buffalo, goats and other farmed animals will be spared the nightmare of being rounded up into an arena, and being hacked to death as part of the Nepalese festival in the name of the goddess Gadhimai.**

You travelled to Nepal to witness this terrible atrocity last November and put your photographs out there for all the world to see. You played a role in the global exposure of the Gadhimai Festival. With hindsight, do you think that what you witnessed will have a lasting effect on you? If so, can you try and describe your feelings?

Nikki: You don't witness something like that without it having a lasting impression on you for life. It was traumatic and incomprehensible. What your eyes see and how your brain reacts do not compute. I couldn't make sense of it or logically process it for months afterwards. But this victory has gone a long way in healing those scars and although I will never, ever forget the suffering and carnage I witnessed at the festival, I am at peace for the first time since then.

Animal Voice: **The Zulu nation has a word that applies to you. Bayete! Animal Voice salutes you.**

Nikki: I salute Animal Voice for covering this issue and I salute the public who stand by us in the fight for our non-human brothers and sisters.

Never again...

Photo: Courtesy Nikki Botha

This powerful statement was issued by the *Gadhimai's Temple Trust* chairman **Ram Chandra Shah** on 28th July 2015.

For generations, pilgrims have sacrificed animals to the *Goddess Gadhimai,* in the hope of a better life. For every life taken, our heart is heavy.

The time has come to transform an old tradition. The time has come to replace killing and violence with peaceful worship and celebration.

What would make a beautiful blonde Afrikaans girl with a degree and a good job, give everything up to fight against the slaughter of marine animals?

#STANDUP250 SOUTH AFRICA
ROSIE KUNNEKE

Animal Voice asked **Rosie Kunneke** to give us a glimpse into her soul...

Animal Voice:
Rosie, you hit the headlines back here in South Africa in July after it took three policemen on a beach in the far-off Faroe Islands to tackle you to the ground in your bid to put yourself between a pod of pilot whales and their killers. We would love to know more about you. For starters, what part of South Africa are you from? Where did you go to school? Who is Rosie Kunneke?

Rosie: **I was born in Namibia, got my degree in Bloemfontein and am currently living in Cape Town. After 12 years working in the corporate world (Financial) I decided to pursue my passion for animals. I quit my job, sold my Mini Cooper and started going on campaigns for *Sea Shepherd Conservation Society*. Back in Cape Town, 3 friends and I started our own NGO called TinCanTown doing animal rescue work in the very poor informal settlement of Blikkiesdorp (close to Delft).**

I firmly believe that all species have the right to live their lives free of pain, suffering and exploitation, and murder by another species.

Animal Voice:
You are Land Team Leader for *Sea Shepherd*. What prompted your involvement with Sea Shepherd?

Rosie: **After watching the documentary called "The Cove" I was very distraught about how we humans treat animals. I turned vegan and decided that I want to dedicate my life to helping animals. I was looking for organisations that actively protect animals and our oceans and that is how I got to know about *Sea Shepherd*.**

I have been to Taiji twice for *Sea Shepherd* regarding the slaughter of dolphins and was supposed to go for a third year to lead the campaign, but was denied entry into Japan. I was on board the *Sea Shepherd* vessel *Bob Barker* down to Antarctica for their anti-whaling campaign in 2010-2011, and was also part of *Sea Shepherd's* anti-seal clubbing campaign in Namibia for two years. Last year I was the land crew leader in the Faroe Islands – and again this year.

Animal Voice: Please tell us more about the plight of pilot whales in the Faroe Islands.

Rosie: **I have been on the Islands since 15 June. Although the Faroese can kill dolphins and pilot whales any time of the year, their summer months are notoriously the high season for doing this brutal, unnecessary and cruel massacre. The Faroese herd migrating dolphins and pilot whales onto shallow beaches and then brutally kill them with knives and spinal lances. It is absolutely horrific and although the Faroese will claim the pilot whales die within 2 seconds, our footage shows animals suffering in agonising pain for up to a minute (or more). These highly intelligent, self aware sentient mammals get slaughtered in the presence of their family members, swimming in their blood...you can hear their cries. The Faroese claim this is a tradition and they do it for the meat, but there is NO need to do this anymore – they have well stocked supermarkets and have one of the highest per capita incomes.**

Animal Voice:
How was the pod of pilot whales driven ashore and what was going on in your head when you ran towards them, to put yourself between them and the people waiting to kill them?

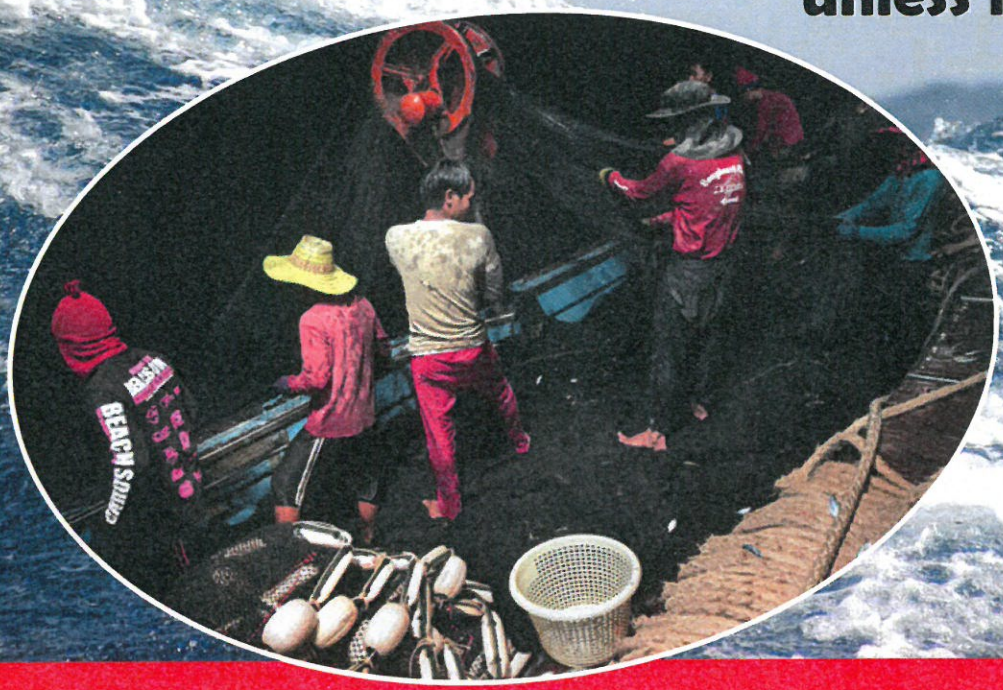
Rosie: **The pod of whales was spotted off the coast of the most western island called Mykines. Many boats form a semicircle behind the pod and then by making a noise, drive the pilot whales onto shallow beaches where many locals are waiting with their knives, spinal lances (used to break the spinal cord) and hooks with ropes attached. They put the hook in the blow-hole of the pilot whales and drag them onto the beach. As I watched, I knew that I would do everything possible to try and interfere with the killing.**
There was no way that I could just stand there and watch without trying to do something. Our plan was to non-agressively put our own bodies between the killers and the pilot whales.
As you know, that got us arrested. While running onto the beach, I was tackled by 2 policeman. I fought to get away but one policeman sat on my back and then another with his knee in my side, holding my hands behind my back. A third man came to put the handcuffs on.

The next moment the masses of killers ran past me and I knew then that the pilot whales were on the beach and they were about to be brutally killed. To be honest with you, while lying there with one of the policeman pushing my face into the sand, my only thought was of those innocent, self-aware sentient beings that were being brutally killed. An incredible sadness and at the same time rage came over me. In that moment I felt so ashamed to be part of a specie that has lost its compassion for other living beings and kill innocent lives for the sake of 'tradition'.

Animal Voice:
And now, Rosie, you are under arrest in the Faroe Islands – far, far from home and family. Please tell us how you feel.

Rosie: **Whatever happens to me is NOTHING compared to what those beautiful animals have to endure. I will NEVER stop fighting for the animals. The Faroese authorities will ask for my deportation if I am found guilty but I will never stop fighting for these beautiful animals.**

Trawling the high seas is a place where human life is cheap, and marine life worthless – unless it can be sold.



On 27th July, the *New York Times* carried a story about the tragic lives of young men trapped in slave-like conditions on board Thai fishing vessels that cast their nets for the livestock and pet food industries. A day later, also in *The New York Times,* we are told of the work of the international marine conservation ***NGO Sea Shepherd*** against illegal fishing in Antarctica. According to the article, *Sea Shepherd* had boarded a vessel that was pulling nets on board that had been underwater for so long that the catch had already started to decompose.

READ MORE: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/27/world/outlaw-ocean-thailand-fishing-sea-slaves-pets.html?_r=0

LOUISE
VAN DER MERWE

Earlier this year I got to know a slightly-built impressive young man – an addiction counsellor – whose kindness to my beautiful, talented, dying younger alcoholic sister – was something incredible to witness. In the times we would sit together, he told me he was studying for his Master's degree in Addiction Counselling but that, a little more than a decade ago, he had worked on a fishing trawler – perhaps the toughest job in the world. When I read the *New York Times* articles, I telephoned him and asked if he would give us more insight into the South African trawling industry.

Here is Danie's* story:
(*not his real name)

Animal Voice: **You were 17 when you got a job on a deep sea trawler. That's a far, far cry from what you are doing now.**

Danie: "Yes. I got my Matric at Grassy Park High School. I was one of five siblings and we grew up in abject poverty. I swept the classrooms at my school after hours and packed the shelves at *Niefie's Fruit and Veg* in order to pay my school fees. I knew I wanted to study further but when there is no money, you don't know what you want to study. Then a friend's father who, at the time, was Human Resources Manager for *Blue Continent Products* (part of the *Oceana Group*), said he could find me a job on a boat. I still have the piece of paper my mother signed, giving permission for me to be employed on board ship.

"Next thing, I was off to Saldahna to do pre-sea training and first aid.

"Then came my first trip - from Cape Town to Port Elizabeth, on board the Desert Diamond, a massive 124 metre trawler operating about 12 nautical miles off the coast. It is a mid-water pelagic trawler with an on-board fish meal factory in the pakofka (Russian for the Box Room.) I learned to speak a bit of Russian because half the crew was Russian!

"My job was to box the fish that were frozen in the scuffs (refrigerators). But before that, I had to dispose of the garbage on board, like all the empty boxes and plastic wrapping. I did it with another boy. We had to cling onto each other's clothing as we leaned overboard to stuff the garbage into the big metal incinerator that was attached to the side of the ship at the stern. It was scary and dangerous because one slip and there was no coming back! There were no life-jackets or ropes to hold us.

"Each trip lasted 4 – 5 weeks. At that time, the fish were plentiful between Mossel Bay and PE. The winches pulled up the net – sometimes two nets a day – filled with 80 tons of fish. As I said, it was a mid-water trawler. That is where the horse mackerel and mackerel fish are found. Horse mackerel are full of bones but they are a delicacy in Central African countries, just like snoek is a delicacy to us here in the Cape.

"Obviously, though, it wasn't just the horse mackerel we pulled up. We pulled up the whole sea!

"Whatever we pulled up in the net that wasn't horse mackerel or mackerel, would be disposed of in the on-board fishmeal factory – the ribbon fish, the puffer fish, the baby sharks...

"Have you ever seen a Mola Mola (Sunfish)? That's a 1000 kg fish! It came up in the net once. They just hooked it in the eye and tossed it back overboard.

"Occasionally there were dolphins in the net – but already dead. Even if they had been alive, there was never any rush to get the non-target species back in the water. They died on deck.

"That massive 124 metre trawler was like a toy in the sea. I can still hear the deadening thunderous D_O_O_F as the bow smacked against the sea again after being raised up by the swell. The hull actually shook every time. We trawled even in the worst weather. If the fish-finder said there were fish, then the weather was irrelevant. Sometimes the 40 kg boxes in which the fish were packed in the hold would topple over as the ship rolled in heavy seas. Sometimes the waves flooded our cabins."

Then Danie's father passed away. There was no way Danie could return to shore for his father's funeral.

"That was a turning point for me. Trawling is a sad life. All the non-target fish go down a shute to be shredded, heated, dried and packed for fish meal for the pet food and livestock industries. About 20% of each haul went into fishmeal – that's 20 tons a day. We cleaned the sea out!

"The toughest part of all was the packing of the horse mackerel into boxes. We worked in four-hour shifts in minus 30 degrees C in the hold, packing the fish into boxes. You can't imagine the scale of it. Think of the hold as a huge double-storey house with no inside walls and packed up to the rafters with boxes of horse mackerel, each box weighing 30 – 40 kgs. Even with our boots and gloves, it took its toll on the guys. Back in the harbour we had to discharge the ship of all the boxes. You became a zombie. You had feeling for nothing.

"In the beginning it didn't seem right that we were taking resources from our waters to feed countries in Central Africa instead of people back home in Mitchell's Plain. But soon we stopped caring.

"We were totally desensitized. I remember the way the Mola Mola was hooked in the eye – so it must have worried me. And I remember the by-catch dying on the deck when they could have been thrown back. But I thought it was 'normal' – the way it was.

"The Japanese vessels in our waters are worse off. Their vessels are much smaller - they trawl in vessels only 20 – 30 metres in length – in mountainous seas and there are always dogs on board. Now, as you talk to me, I cannot fully believe the overwhelming devastation of it all."

When Danie returned to Cape Town after one of his trips, he applied for a bursary with the Department of Social Services. Today he is well on his way to achieving his Master's in Addiction Counselling. He says his father, who was an addict and died too young, would have been proud of him.

Note from Ed: ***That's for sure!***

Rotary challenges Cape Town's young debating contestants on a burning consumer issue!

Sixteen Cape Town high schools took part in Rotary's Schools Debating competition this year - to propose or oppose the motion:
"This house would ban battery farming".

On 27 July, the final knock-out debate took place between *De Kuilen High School* (opposing the motion) and *Camps Bay High School* (proposing the motion).

In a twist of fate, English and Life Orientation teacher **Melanie Thomet,** well known for her opposition to battery farming, was tasked with preparing her debating team at *De Kuilen High School* to oppose the motion! Melanie made headlines in the Sunday newspaper Rapport last year when angry parents accused her of indoctrinating their children with animal rights concepts which had turned them away from meat and God.

In the end, *De Kuilen High* won the debate in its argument against the motion.

"It was a strange feeling," said Melanie. **"I was simultaneously proud and disappointed that my team had won the debate. But the debate generated so much passion on behalf of the animals trapped in battery cages that I felt it was, in fact, a significant victory for the animals. The learners from all 16 schools are now aware of the plight of 24.5 million hens trapped in battery cages across our country!"**

Participating schools were: Reddam, Claremont, CBC Parklands, Westerford, De Kuilen, DF Malan, Wynberg Boys, Springfield, Milnerton, Edgemead, Bishops, Rondebosch Boys, Camps Bay, Bloubergrant, Fairmont and Deutsche Schule.

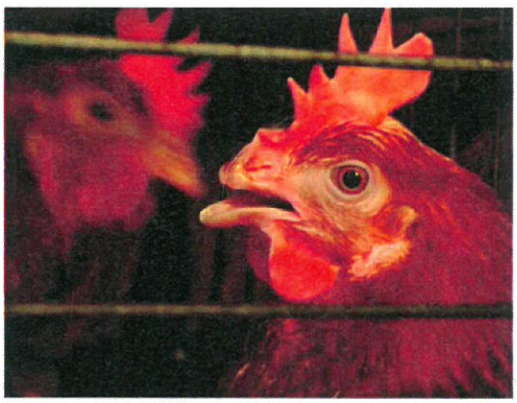
Melanie Thomet

"I was devastated when I learned that my school had to argue *against* the motion. I took solace in the fact that animal rights has become relevant enough to be chosen as a topic for an inter-schools debating competition."

OPPOSITION :
De Kuilen High School
(from left to right)
Solomon Mannel,
Cyndi-Laine Adams,
Chiara Nefdt

PROPOSITION :
Camps Bay High School
(from left to right)
Anathi Makhinzi,
Thimna Tibisono,
Nwabisa Mbisholo

END THE
CAGE AGE



Woolworths leads the way

...in supplying fresh pork products from sows who are kept in better welfare conditions. 100% of *Woolworths* fresh pork comes from sows kept in group housing and **not in sow stalls.**

Hooray Woolworths! Way to go!

However...

Woolworths' **processed pork products** (like sausage) and its cured products (like bacon and ham) still come from sows kept **in sow stalls/crates/metal straightjackets – for life!**

ACTION

- Please email Woolworths' CEO **Ian Moir.** Thank him for the progress he has made for sows but ask him when-oh-when will ALL his pork products come from sows in group housing? IanMoir@woolworths.co.za
- Please also email the same question to: **Cecil Mitchell,** head of protein CecilMitchell@woolworths.co.za
- And **Zyda Rylands,** Foods Director ZydaRylands@woolworths.co.za