

Understanding HSUS

A Guide to the World's Richest Animal Rights Group

1. The Humane Society of the United States is a “humane society” in name only.

Unlike the “humane societies” in thousands of American cities and towns, HSUS doesn’t care for dogs and cats, or place them for adoption. HSUS is not an umbrella group for pet shelters: In 2008 and 2009, HSUS shared less than one percent of its budget with them. In fact, it’s not affiliated with a single pet shelter anywhere in the world.

2. “Animal welfare” and “animal rights” are two very different ideas.

Most people are in favor of animal *welfare*. They want animals to be treated humanely. But they also accept the fact that some animals are raised to provide food, some are kept as pets, some are used in research that seeks to cure cancer and AIDS, and others are an important part of sports, entertainment, and education. A very tiny minority of Americans, however, believe in animal *rights*. They want to eliminate every human interaction with animals, without exception. Animal rights activists believe insects and babies are morally equivalent—and that since “animals are people too,” no man, woman, or child should benefit from the use of animals.

3. The primary difference between PETA and HSUS is that PETA is honest about its beliefs.

PETA spells out its goal of “total animal liberation” right on its website. But most Americans don’t understand that HSUS shares the very same agenda. In its 1980 annual meeting, HSUS formally resolved to pursue the “establishment of *the rights of all animals* within the full range of American life and culture” [emphasis added]. Most of HSUS’s current leaders come from the animal *rights* school of thought. Many of them are former PETA employees.

4. PETA is increasingly irrelevant; its main purpose is to make HSUS appear moderate by comparison.

If PETA didn’t exist, most of HSUS’s goals would be (correctly) seen as quite radical. But PETA routinely throws red paint, attacks politicians with pies, and parades its naked interns on street corners—allowing HSUS to promote the same extreme agenda as PETA while appearing comparatively reasonable.

5. HSUS’s CEO is an outsider, not a stakeholder, in how farm animals are cared for.

Like the leaders of other animal rights groups, HSUS top dog Wayne Pacelle is a strict vegan. He has sworn that he will never eat meat, eggs, or dairy foods. But unlike labor union negotiators, who have a strong interest in making sure their corporate adversaries stay in business, Pacelle’s main goal is to completely shut down entire sectors of the American economy—including animal agriculture, pet stores, shooting sports, the fur trade, *in vivo* biomedical research, zoos, and aquariums.

