



A Rat Is a Pig Is a Dog Is a Boy: The Human Cost of the Animal Rights Movement

Wesley J. Smith

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Over the past thirty years, as Wesley J. Smith details in his latest book, the concept of animal rights has been seeping into the very bone marrow of Western culture. One reason for this development is that the term “animal rights” is so often used very loosely, to mean simply being nicer to animals. But although animal rights groups do sometimes focus their activism on promoting animal welfare, the larger movement they represent is actually advancing a radical belief system.

For some activists, the animal rights ideology amounts to a quasi religion, one whose central doctrine declares a moral equivalency between the value of animal lives and the value of human lives. Animal rights ideologues embrace their beliefs with a fervor that is remarkably intense and sustained, to the point that many dedicate their entire lives to “speaking for those who cannot speak for themselves.” Some believe their cause to be so righteous that it entitles them to cross the line from legitimate advocacy to vandalism and harassment, or even terrorism against medical researchers, the fur and food industries, and others they accuse of abusing animals.

All people who love animals and recognize their intrinsic worth can agree with Wesley J. Smith that human beings owe animals respect, kindness, and humane care. But Smith argues eloquently that our obligation to humanity matters more, and that granting “rights” to animals would inevitably diminish human dignity. In making this case with reason and passion, *A Rat Is a Pig Is a Dog Is a Boy* strikes a major blow against a radically antihuman dogma.

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