Baby Monkeys Terrorized

ALDF aims to shut down University of Wisconsin’s recently approved cruel maternal deprivation tests

A series of terror tests on baby monkeys has stirred up public controversy—the University of Madison-Wisconsin recently approved cruel “maternal deprivation” tests in which researchers remove newborn rhesus macaque monkeys from their mothers. The defenseless baby monkeys are terrorized and exposed to anxiety-inducing stressors including live snakes. They are then forced to undergo painful skin-punch biopsies and stressful brain scans. Finally, they are killed before they reach the age of two.

It’s nearly impossible to argue that these tests aren’t shockingly cruel—and the Animal Legal Defense Fund is using the power of the law to probe the university’s approval process for compliance with the federal Animal Welfare Act. The University of Wisconsin has refused to disclose public records from the federally-mandated animal welfare committee that reviewed and approved this research. That’s why ALDF has filed a lawsuit to compel the university to disclose these public records. The documents could...
The environmental and animal protection movements face a powerful common enemy: the large-scale industrial farming of animals for animal products, or “factory farming.” The factory farming industry has grown exponentially since its inception in the 1950s and the vast majority of animal products are produced on these large scale operations. With a single-minded goal of reducing production costs for meat, dairy and eggs, the industry has systematically exploited weak legal protections for animals and the environment. The results have been catastrophic for both.

Animal agriculture causes the most (and some of the worst) forms of animal cruelty. It has also been recognized as the single largest source of water pollution and the root cause of “dead zones” in our oceans, like the one in the Gulf of Mexico that is so large it is now measured in comparison to the size of entire states (this year it’s the size of Connecticut). And animal agriculture has been recognized as a larger source of the pollutants causing climate change than all forms of transportation combined. That’s why ALDF recently filed a first-of-its-kind petition with the California Air Resources Board to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from animal agriculture.

It would seem natural then that animal protection and environmental groups would be working together to face this, and other, common threats. Unfortunately, such cooperation has often been lacking with advocates getting stuck, instead, on differences like how to deal with invasive species.

But the Animal Legal Defense Fund is leading the way to build bridges between these important movements. Uniting these causes was the theme of our recent 2014 Animal Law Conference at Lewis & Clark Law School, and we have partnered with the Center for Biological Diversity on important campaigns against “Wildlife Services,” a federal killing agency, and the illegal killing of endangered birds in California highway-widening projects.

To confront the animal cruelty and environmental destruction caused by the factory farming and other industries, it’s going to take the combined efforts of animal and environmental advocates and lawyers working together. And that’s why ALDF is building strong and broad-based coalitions between lawmakers, journalists, environmentalists, bioethicists, teachers, food safety specialists, and the best legal minds in a generation to protect the lives and advance the interests of animals.

As a member of ALDF, you make these coalitions possible and together we can protect animals and the earth we share with them. Thank you.

For the animals,

Stephen Wells, Executive Director
ALDF continues to fight to protect horses working in the horse-drawn carriage industry. We may think of New York horse-drawn carriage rides as romantic. But how much of a fairy tale is it for horses on tightly-packed, noisy, polluted city streets?

Did you know the law permits drivers to work their horses nine hours a day, seven days a week? Drivers have been observed unlawfully double-shifting horses, so some horses work even more than that. Carriage horses are also forced to work in sleet or shine—even when the weather is unbearably hot or freezing cold. A study from Cornell suggests that asphalt can be up to 50 degrees hotter than outdoor temperatures.

Understandably, horses are terrified of traffic and sudden noises. A horse named Smoothie bolted when a man walked past beating a small drum—the carriage shackled to her got caught and she collapsed and died of shock within a few minutes. Since 2006, at least nine carriage horses in New York have died, some from horrific accidents. None was older than 15 years—whereas domestic horses ordinarily live between 25 and 30 years.

The shameful truth is, our laws fail horses. The law doesn’t separate horses from the traffic that spooks them, or from the exhaust they are forced to breathe, or from the pavement that wracks their joints and bones. Under the law, horses aren’t given the chance to exhibit natural behavior, like interacting with one another, or rolling in grass, or feeling soil beneath their hooves. Furthermore, the law doesn’t meaningfully restrict how hard the horses work, since drivers routinely fail to accurately describe how many rides a horse has taken on a given day, or how many shifts a horse actually worked.

The law also does not meaningfully protect horses from dangerous working conditions or provide horses with a real retirement. According to an audit of Department of Health records conducted by the Coalition to Ban Horse-Drawn Carriages, the industry burns out around one third of its horses in any given year, and the law requires owners to report the sale only if the horse is sold within New York; if the owner sells the horse across state lines, the owner faces no reporting responsibility at all.

So who is looking out for horses? ALDF successfully won a lawsuit against the New York Police Department (NYPD) to obtain public records of carriage-related accidents and injuries. Last fall, after being denied access to these records by the NYPD for more than a year and a half, ALDF petitioned the New York Supreme Court to force NYPD to turn over these public records. This was bolstered in April 2014 by the New York Supreme Court’s agreement with ALDF that the public has a right to these records under New York’s Freedom of Information Law (FOIL). The judge emphasized the validity of ALDF’s concern about the mistreatment of horses in the carriage industry. NYPD was instructed to comply with ALDF’s request and produce the documents within 45 days—as a result, the public learned about 25 accidents involving horses in the carriage industry for the first time.

“Even if the City agencies were to enforce those laws perfectly, carriage horses would still remain under-protected in Manhattan” said Jeff Pierce, attorney at ALDF. “The City Council can solve the problem far more effectively by banning the industry and eliminating the needless suffering of carriage horses.”

This industry has shown that its bottom line is not the well-being of horses. Beyond New York, other large metropolitan areas also have horse-drawn carriages on city streets and put horses in harms way. A ban on horse-drawn carriages in urban environments is the only meaningful way to protect these horses.
In October, ALDF and the Center for Animal Law Studies hosted the 22nd annual Animal Law Conference at Lewis & Clark Law School in Portland, Oregon. As always, this outstanding event brought together the key organizations and individuals working within the legal system to advance the law for animals. The theme was “Animal Law in a Changing Environment” which emphasized the need for animal and environmental advocates to work together to protect animals. This theme was reflected in presentations about our impact on wildlife and wilderness and in screenings of documentaries like *Cowspiracy: The Sustainability Secret* and *The Ghosts in Our Machine*.

Factory farms are one of the biggest industries in which animal protection and environmental concerns overlap. “Animal agriculture, particularly factory farming, causes great suffering to billions of animals,” explains ALDF Executive Director Stephen Wells. “So, legal challenges to these operations that focus on environmental harm or animal cruelty will benefit both.” And that’s why ALDF continues to take on the abuses of factory farms—from greenhouse gas emissions to ag gag laws to cruel methods of confinement like body-gripping farrowing crates that keep pregnant and nursing mother pigs unable to walk, turn around, or stand comfortably.

“The more people learn about what happens every day for millions of animals on factory farms, in laboratories, and slaughterhouses, people are naturally outraged by it and want to become involved,” said journalist and author Will Potter, who also gave one of the two keynote addresses that weekend. Will is a...
plaintiff in one of ALDF’s two groundbreaking ag gag lawsuits that fight the attempt of the ag industry to criminalize whistle-blowing about illegal activity on factory farms. “Animal advocates are concerned about animal cruelty, workers’ rights, and environmental pollution—and environmental advocates are concerned about all of those same things,” says Will. “This is an industry that is so big and so powerful that it requires all of these movements united to challenge their power.”

Other presentations also emphasized the link between animal protection and environmental protection. Saturday evening’s keynote address was presented by Kieran Suckling, executive director of the Center for Biological Diversity. Kieran compared the audience’s reaction to an image of a Humvee “gas-guzzler” with the fact that it was pictured at a McDonald’s drive-thru window. Most people would chastise only the vehicle, he pointed out. But “your choice of what you drive is vastly inconsequential compared to what you eat,” he insisted. Animal agriculture is not only contributing to cruelty and the spread of contaminated food, but it’s also destroying the planet. “No one is growing soy to feed the hippies,” he joked. 70% of soy grown around the world is to feed the cows who take up 25% of our entire landmass, just to provide humans with the type of “food” produced by McDonald’s and other corporations.

In fact, raising animals for food is the largest contributor to global greenhouse gasses. So it is clear that we cannot fight climate change without reducing, if not eliminating, our consumption of animal products. “Consuming animal products is an environmental issue and climate change is an animal rights issue” says Stephen Wells. “And a swelling human population is contributing to the problems associated with both.”

In our legal work, ALDF will continue to spread the message shared at the conference: animal protection is an environmental issue and the degradation of the environment is an animal protection issue. We will continue to build strong and broad-based coalitions to combine our efforts. “Ecological sustainability and justice for all life on earth demands that we do,” Steve says.
reveal that the committee abandoned its statutory watchdog role of preventing research that inflicts extreme animal suffering for dubious human health gains.

“Records detailing the barbaric nature of the research and the committee’s failure to scrutinize its methods and goals, as required by the Animal Welfare Act, could lead the university to reevaluate the studies and put increased pressure on the National Institutes of Health to reconsider spending tens of thousands of taxpayer dollars on these tests” says Kelsey Eberly, an ALDF attorney.

So why are these tests conducted? The cruel methods in these tests are considered archaic by many in the scientific community. Painless methods that not only avoid animal suffering but also better assess the cognitive aspects of anxiety disorders in humans are already available.

And that’s why, as this issue goes to press, more than 350,000 people have spoken up for baby monkeys by signing a Change.org petition written by Dr. Ruth Decker. “As an alumna of the University of Wisconsin-Madison’s School of Medicine, I am horrified to learn that my alma mater plans to conduct highly controversial and cruel experiments that will torture and kill baby monkeys,” said Dr. Decker. “These monkeys are highly cognitive, similar to humans in social behavior, emotion, and capacity for anguish—and this research deserves our deepest condemnation.”

Dr. Decker and the hundreds of thousands who have joined her aren’t the only ones speaking up for monkeys. World-renowned primatologist Dr. Jane Goodall also weighed in on these tests, saying, “Extensive (and horribly cruel) experiments proving the damaging effects of maternal deprivation and isolation were carried out on rhesus monkeys by Harry Harlow and his students [at the University of Wisconsin] in the 1960s and 1970s… I understand that monkeys are being subjected to what I consider extremely cruel and inhumane experiments at the University of Wisconsin that is funded by public money.” Dr. Goodall explained that she was “shocked and saddened” by these unethical tests.

What is the university’s response to this public outrage—and condemnation by experts? The university continues to defend these cruel and unnecessary tests even in the face of expert criticism. But a growing coalition of alumni and students of UW-Madison and other UW system schools who are deeply concerned with the university’s maternal deprivation tests has formed UW Not In Our Name. The public has a right to insist federal tax dollars are not wasted on unnecessary “terror testing” when far more useful and totally painless methods of research are already available. “Researchers will not be incentivized to stop using animals as long as federal dollars continue to support the status quo,” says Dr. Decker.

To challenge the status quo, a new video by internet sensation “Randall” of the viral “Honey Badger” video also blasts UW’s controversial tests on baby monkeys: Randall told the Animal Legal Defense Fund that he “created this video because I do NOT want my tax dollars funding ‘baby monkey terror tests.’ Experimenting on animals, especially in this day of technology and science, is archaic, disgusting and beyond inhumane.”

Read ALDF’s response to the university, setting the record straight about the facts and details of maternal deprivation tests, and view Randall’s video at ALDF.org/maternaldeprivation.
Every year, the Animal Legal Defense Fund hosts an online “Rescue Tails” contest in which we ask our supporters to send in “tales” and photos of the rescued animals in their lives. We allow everyone to vote for their favorite rescue story—showcased on our Facebook and Pinterest pages. We do this to celebrate those of you who become guardians of animals who need loving “forever” homes. Whether a chicken rescued from a factory farm, or a dog rescued from a puppy mill, adoption is always the best option. So many animals need loving care from people just like you!

Our top semi-finalists included “Spot”:

At 11 months old, Spot was rescued from a high-kill South Carolina shelter and brought to a Pennsylvania foster home. He was quickly adopted and returned (through no fault of his own) before coming to stay with our family. Little did I know when I went to pick Spot up to be his foster mom, that he had found his forever home that same day! We had Spot for about a week when we decided we just couldn’t let him go! He has been with us for almost a year now and we love him dearly!

Also a semi-finalist was “Dandy”:

I rescued Dandy as a 5 month old puppy from Wayne County Animal control in Goldsboro, NC. I had fostered a few dogs and decided I would save another dog, foster and find an adopter. Dandy was what made me a “foster failure” as I decided to keep her. She became the best friend of my other rescue dog Pook, and my husband and Dandy love to go to the beach, mountains, and pretty much anywhere for an outdoor adventure!

The 2014 contest is now closed, but it’s not too early to start taking pictures for next year! We are always on the lookout for rescued animal photos to share on social media! Email us your high-resolution photo and story to photo-contest@aldf.org.

**Racing Funds for Animals**

The race started at midnight. Eileen Francisco ran through the dark morning hours of July 27 and well into the afternoon. When she crossed the finish line, she had logged 52.4 miles and completed her journey to raise an impressive $10,000 for the Animal Legal Defense Fund.

San Francisco’s “Worth the Hurt” double marathon takes runners on a grueling course that includes the city’s notoriously steep hills. During a run of that magnitude, runners fight against hunger pains, exhaustion, and the bruises that inevitably form on the soles of their feet. But Francisco was able to push obstacles to the back of her mind and think about the people who invested in both her and the cause.

“I’m passionate about animals and oceans in particular,” Eileen says. “As I was learning about ocean animal protection, I ran across ALDF and the story of Joyce Tischler. She was a young lawyer in the 1970’s who wanted to create laws that protect animals. If you want to be inspired, talk to Joyce.” ALDF’s founder and general counsel, Joyce is often called “the mother of animal law,” and she was among the many supporters that donated to Francisco’s run that raised $10,000.

Francisco’s efforts were a huge success, and it shows how the determination of just one person can have a tremendous impact. People who would like to do their own personal fundraiser for ALDF have limitless options, and it’s easy to turn a favorite activity into a fundraiser. Play basketball? Ask people to donate a certain amount for each point you make. Love food? Talk to a restaurant about donating 20% of the proceeds from one night to ALDF. Enjoy baking? Host a bake sale with your favorite vegan treats. For more ideas, contact Vaughn Maurice at 707-795-2533 x1045.
Rescue Tails Photo Contest Winners!

This year, all the wonderful stories of compassion and companionship had our tails wagging. More than 600 animal lovers voted for their favorite photo story! We’re happy to announce that “Bailey” is featured on ALDF’s holiday card, available at cafepress.com/aldf. Congratulations Bailey and family!

Bailey and her brother Cosmo were rescued from the local waterfront, and we adopted them through Staten Island Council for Animal Welfare. Bailey loves to get rubbed, and she falls over on her side, and keeps doing it again and again.

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