In response to student concerns, alternatives to exercises that harm animals have proliferated. Video discs present high-resolution diagrams, photos, and moving images. Via computer, students can determine lessons’ focus and pace. Students seek new ways of learning.

HUMANE EDUCATION
Toward Cruelty-Free Education
Students seek new ways of learning

The HSUS assists secondary and college students who seek humane alternatives—by providing information on such alternatives, letters that express support for the students’ ethical convictions, and advice on how the students can successfully negotiate with their school. We also evaluate and publicize new humane educational materials, promote their development, and encourage schools to implement progressive policies regarding animal use.

As more and more students question the harmful use of animals in education and, through their actions, encourage others to do the same, more alternatives become available, and as school policies change, the momentum toward more humane curricula should continue to build.

Meanwhile we must urge middle and secondary schools, as well as colleges and universities, to implement alternatives to harmful animal use. Students should determine whether their schools offer such alternatives and request them if they do not. For new, schools that formally offer humane alternatives, and students who seek them, are in the minority. Increasingly, however, students are “pulling” their schools—and society—toward empathy.

NEW FROM HSUS

The HSUS has a new booklet for pre-college and college students titled To Harm or Not to Harm: Animals and Your College Education. Designed to inform, sensitize, and motivate students, the booklet describes ways in which animals are exploited in higher education, problems inherent in such exploitation, humane alternatives currently available, and ways in which students can negotiate, with their college instructor, a mutually satisfactory alternative to exercises that harm animals. Single copies are available at a cost of $1.00 each. College- and secondary-level student organizations, as well as other interested individuals or groups, may wish to order in bulk.
and respect for animals.—Jonathan Balcombe, Ph.D., HSUS assistant director for education, Laboratory Animals

The HSUS will gladly provide any interested student, teacher, or school administrator with a copy of its guidelines regarding animal use in elementary and secondary school biology. We are committed to assisting students who seek a humane education.

Inquiries regarding primary and secondary school curricula should be directed to NAME, 67 Norwich-Essex Turnpike, East Haddam, CT 06423; inquiries regarding post-secondary school curricula should be directed to The HSUS’s Laboratory Animals section.

MARINE MAMMALS

Whales in the Spotlight
Free Willy wins attention for captives

On July 16, 1993, Free Willy opened nationwide. The movie depicts the friendship between a twelve-year-old boy named Jesse and a captive orca (killer whale) named Willy, and Jesse’s efforts to free Willy from an aquarium. A blockbuster hit, the movie has publicized the plight of captive whales. Although the movie’s plot is fiction, the United States has more than twenty real-life “Willys”—orcas held in captivity. In our country some forty-five other whales—belugas, pilot whales, and pseudocod—together are also held captive.

On the opening day of Free Willy, The HSUS held a press conference in Orlando, Florida—home of Sea World, the facility that holds more orcas than any other. HSUS President Paul G. Irwin voiced this appeal to the captive-whale industry:

On behalf of our more than 1.7 million members and constituents, we call upon each aquarium in the U.S. to make a firm and binding commitment to acquire no additional small whales, and to work with the humane and environmental community to rehabilitate and release current captives as quickly as possible. On [July 12, 1993], The HSUS mailed to all U.S. aquaria currently holding whales a letter...asking them to make such a commitment. We urge the captive-whale industry to meet the challenge of compassion.

Long before Free Willy, The HSUS had expressed concern about captive whales in aquariums and marine parks. Last year we urged the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to prohibit capturing whales for public display and keep­ing them in captivity.

Most whales currently in captivity were born from the wild—netted or lassoed and hauled aboard a boat. Deprived of their close family bonds, their naturally varied social interactions, diverse diets, and expansive home ranges, captive whales are confined to a concrete tank in an aquarium or marine park and, often, made to perform.

In the wild, whales live in family groups. Family bonds often last many years—some species, a lifetime. Whales born in captivity are separated from their mothers after only two to three years.

Free-living whales travel long distances each day. Sometimes, over a period of hours or days, they swim several miles along a coastline and then retrace their path. At other times, they traverse 50-100 miles of ocean. At rest, the tank holding a captive whale is only seven times the whale’s length. A beluga or orca would have to circle a tank 500 times or more to travel 50 miles.

Whales can dive up to 1000 feet and stay underwater for as long as 30 minutes. Although an adult male orca is 27-30 feet long, the deepest orca tanks are only 35 feet deep. Free-living whales spend only 10-20 percent of their time at the surface, but captive whales spend more than half their time there.

Compared to their wild counterparts, captive belugas, orcas, pilot whales, and pseudocod have low birth rates. For three decades humans have attempted to breed whales in captivity; yet, as of February 1993, only ten captive-born calves (three belugas and seven orcas) were alive.

Captivity also drastically shortens the average life-span of belugas, orcas, pilot whales, and pseudocod. According to NMFS statistics and scientific reports published by the International Whaling Commission, at any given time a captive orca is more than 2.5 times as likely to die as a free-living orca of comparable age. On average, captive orcas live only one-fourth as long as those in the wild.

Having concluded that whales are especially unsuited to captivity, The HSUS has initiated a campaign aimed at securing their freedom. The enthusiastic public response to Free Willy and the July 16 press conference includes widespread interest in this goal. USA Today covered the press conference; radio and television interviews, as well as newspaper coverage, followed. For example, Lauren Shuler-Donner, producer of Free Willy, and I appeared on CNN’s news program “Up to the Minute”; CNN carried a debate between John W. Grandy, Ph.D., HSUS vice president, Wildlife and Habitat Protection, and Brad Andrews, curator of Sea World.

In our efforts to protect marine mammals from capture and confinement, The HSUS is also lobbying Congress. On July 14 Senator Barbara Boxer, Representative Gerry Studds, and HSUS Executive Vice President Patricia Forkan hosted a congressional screening of Free Willy that may have contributed to the sudden scheduling of a July 28 senate hearing on the issue of public display of marine mammals (see page 3).

The Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA)—which forms the legal basis for preventing the exploitation, harassment, or killing of any marine mammal and which is being reauthorized this year—currently permits the capture of whales and other marine mammals for public display. In an effort to strengthen protection of marine mammals, The HSUS has joined forces with sixteen other organizations to form the Marine Mammal Protection Coalition (MMPC). On behalf of the MMPC, The HSUS has submitted testimony urging Congress to amend the MMPA to prohibit both public and U.S. import or export of marine mammals. We have asked Congress to consider an HSUS report on captive whales when deciding whether or not to amend the MMPA to prohibit all display of whales.

The HSUS intends to campaign hard to stop the exploitation of whales in aquariums and marine parks. We believe that removing whales from the wild causes them intense suffering and that it is inhumane to confine whales to small concrete tanks. We hope that, with increased public awareness, the practice of holding belugas, orcas, pilot whales, and pseudoc—captivity in captivity will soon become a thing of the past. For example, a report by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has confirmed that Bear #134 to a zoo rather than place her in a rehabilitation-and-release facility in Oregon. With other animal-protection groups, we initiated a massive letter-writing campaign. Having consulted with numerous bear experts, The HSUS was convinced that Bear #134, after being captured and sent to WSU, where she was confined to a cage for experiments.

The HSUS appealed to WSU, the NPS, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to transfer her instead to Wildlife Images Rehabilitation and Education Center, a bear rehabilitation-and-release center in Oregon. With other animal-protection groups, we initiated a massive letter-writing campaign. Having consulted with numerous bear experts, The HSUS was convinced that Bear #134, after being captured and sent to WSU, where she was confined to a cage for experiments.

For years Bear #134 was one of Yellowstone’s most popular animals. Annual hundreds of tourists gathered to watch her, often with her cubs. Then, in 1985 the National Parks Service (NPS) built the Grant Village tourist facility and the July 28 senate hearing on the issue of public display of marine mammals (see page 3).
A Legal Defeat for Animals
U.S. Supreme Court permits ritual sacrifice

In June the Supreme Court of the United States handed down a decision voiding several ordinances enacted in 1987 by the City of Hialeah, Florida, that prohibited the killing of animals in religious and other rituals (see the Winter 1990, Fall 1992, and Winter 1993 HSUS News). Previously, in response to a lawsuit filed by a Santeria church that had announced its intention to practice ritual animal sacrifice, two lower federal courts had upheld the ordinances. The Santeria church argued that the ordinances violated the First Amendment's guarantee of free exercise of religion.

The high court's voiding of the Hialeah ordinances, in which all nine justices concurred, was a great disappointment to The HSUS and other animal-advocacy organizations that had filed friend-of-the-court briefs supporting the City of Hialeah.

The long-term impact of the Santeria decision, however, will depend on the extent to which the court was reacting to the immediate circumstances surrounding the enactment of the Hialeah ordinances and to their particular text and structure. The court described, and expressly condemned, the open hostility and prejudice against the Santeria religion and its practices that were evident during the Hialeah city council's deliberations. In addition, rather than attempting to apply existing anti-cruelty laws, the city chose to enact a series of five ordinances containing prohibitions as well as intricate exemptions to those prohibitions—that had the effect of prohibiting only religiously motivated killings of animals while allowing many other forms of animal killing, including kosher slaughter.

The court considered this legislative scheme a "religious gerrymander" specifically designed to target the Santeria church and its practices. The case against Santeria animal sacrifice would have been much stronger, two justices noted, had the Santerias been requesting an exemption from a generally applicable anti-cruelty law rather than from the customized prohibition that, in the court's view, the Hialeah ordinances represented. The court perceived fundamental public-policy inconsistencies regarding the treatment of animals that may be difficult for drafters of future laws aimed at suppressing ritual killing of animals to overcome. In response to Hialeah's assertion of a vital interest in protecting animals so long as that interest is not similarly upheld in nonreligious arenas, such as sport hunting.

The Santeria case highlights the need for broader, more uniform protection of animals.—Roger A. Kindler, HSUS general counsel

Don't Overlook Our Overstock!

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- Summer 1992 (including 1991 Annual Report, Iditarod, Kentucky Derby, Slaughtering)
- Spring 1992 (including Animal Care Expo '92, Elephants in Africa, Lota and the Milwaukee Zoo)
- Fall 1991 (including Wild Birds in Honduras, Wildlife Insect Contraception, Healing Society's Relationship with Animals)

For the cost of postage and handling, we'll send you a carton of 180 of any one of these issues, while supplies last. Distribute copies at "information days" or other events, or give them to local libraries. Contact The HSUS, 2000 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037 for shipping costs to your address.