

Illegal fur trade



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The Illegal Fur Trade: A Modern Day Cruella DeVille If someone hears about puppies being caught to make coats for fashion they might think about the Disney villain 'Cruella DeVille' and probably not stop to entertain the thought that it just might be true. Well, it is. The fur trading industry is alive and kicking every day and every night. All types of animals are being murdered to make fur, from regal tigers to little hamsters and, most horrifyingly, domesticated cats and dogs.

Some animals have even become endangered by fur trading companies and are getting pushed closer and closer to extinction. The animals are horribly treated from the day they are born until the day they are slaughtered by the fur farms all around the world. Many countries have taken out bans and laws to prohibit the act of fur farming and/or trading, but it still happens and there are even loop-holes that countries are finding in order to sell their furry product. The fur industry breaks many of the laws and is hardly ever reprimanded. They even go as far as to mislabel the fur they produce so it stays within the boundaries of the law.

Many things can be done to take action against the fur companies and PETA is leading that race and has already accomplished a lot. The production of fur is a literal waste of energy and most importantly it is morally wrong and incredibly cruel; just overall deplorable. 'Fur farming' as it is called is taking place all over the world. China is the main producer of fur, with most of the fur farms being established within the past ten years.

(Mass, Barbara, et al. 5) Other countries that produce fur are mainly Denmark, Finland, Sweden, and Holland, but India, Canada, and most

Eastern countries also produce fur. “ Fur farming. “) In more detail; 73% of fur farms are in Europe, 12% in North America, and the other 15% are spread throughout the rest of the world, including Argentina, and Russia.

(“ Fur Farming”) The conditions of the furs are nightmareish and almost too horrible to believe. On the fur farms in China, the animals are kept in rows of mesh wire cages that are around 35 inches long, 27 inches wide, and 24 inches high; some are much smaller. This may seem fine, except the foxes kept in those cages are an average of 27 inches long. (Mass, Barbara, et al.

) The farms breed the animals and usually slaughter them around six months of age. (Mass, Barbara, et al. 7) Many farms primarily are used as ‘ baby factories’ and breed the animals by force breeding, but mostly by artificial insemination since in some breeds of animals, the mating seasons do not overlap. Farms try to morph the colors of the animals, mainly foxes, into a specific color they are looking for, which is also done by artificial insemination.

Artificial insemination can be very difficult. A source in Finland says “ precise timing is needed if the female is not to be hurt. If heat detectors and insemination devices are used too early, injuries result. Too high a voltage in the heat detection device causes convulsions. Lack of hygiene and ripping of membranes are reported to have resulted in thousands of deaths. Sperm collection is an unpleasant procedure with foxes struggling to get away and damaging their teeth on tongs.

The same donor can be used several times a week. ” (Mass, Barbara, et al.

11) Small scale farms are mostly family owned and hold a few hundred

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animals, and medium scale farms are run by 10 to 15 workers and hold up to a few thousand animals. The large scale farms, however, employ 50 to several hundred workers and sometimes hold up to 35, 000 animals. (Mass, Barbara, et al. 6) Many cruel methods are used to kill the animal without ruining the pelt, which will be discussed in the next paragraph.

Once the furs are 'harvested' they are shipped out all across the world, with 80% to Europe, USA, and Japan. (Mass, Barbara, et al. 7) The fur farms make quite a profit; a live fox is sold for around US\$50 and a coat sells for US\$3, 000. The cruelty that is inflicted onto these poor animals is barbarous. The animals that aren't bred are captured.

Transportation is even unbearably cruel. The animals are packed into small, flimsy wire mesh cages with other animals and no food or water. Most of the animals are on the road for days and are visibly exhausted and lethargic. Some even go insane from confinement and exposure and start fighting with other animals and chewing their own limbs off.

When they arrive at their destination, workers toss the cages off the trucks and onto the ground 10 feet below, deliberately breaking the animals legs so they won't escape. "China's Shocking Dog and Cat Fur Trade .") " Many of the animals we saw still had collars on, a sign that they were once someone's beloved companions, stolen to be made into fur coats. " ("China's Shocking Dog and Cat Fur Trade .") The worst part of the animals lives is the slaughter.

Many inhumane methods are used to kill them without ruining their 'precious' coat. One way is to stomp on the animals neck in order to break it

or suffocate it. Another way is to shove a hose down its neck and pour water into it until it drowns. Other methods include: hanging by a noose, choking with wire, beating it with blunt objects, bled to death, placing animals in a box and gassing them with exhaust from a truck, electrocuted with rods stuck in their mouth and anus, and even poisoned with strychnine, which suffocates them by paralyzing their muscles with painful cramps.

(“ Inside the Fur Industry: Animal Factories. ”) Unfortunately, these methods are not entirely completed in order to be more ‘ cost-efficient’, so the animal may ‘ wake up’ while being skinned. The workers do not stop if this happens, they continue and throw the skinless, still-breathing animal in a pile and let it die a slow, agonizing death. (Mass, Barbara, et al. 8) There are hardly any laws prohibiting or limiting the sale of fur, especially in countries such as China. Currently, there aren’t any federal laws providing protection for the defenseless animals that die on fur farms, and in China there aren’t any animal welfare laws at all.

Even with laws, the fur traders break them and rarely get reprimanded properly due to the fact that it is difficult to track. Laws are difficult to create due to the large profit that the fur industry makes and the skewing of their statistics and information. “ Unfortunately, external costs are hard to measure, and numerous opportunities exist for countries to manipulate their statistics. ” (Randall 40) The U.

S. did start to take action and pass some laws, though. “ The Dog and Cat Protection Act of 2000 banned the trade in dog and cat fur after HSUS [Humane Society of the United States] investigation revealed the death toll

to be two million a year and found dog fur for sale in the United States. (“ Dog Scandal Pushes New Fur Labeling Bill.

“) In other countries, there are also laws being set up. In France, Great Britain, Poland, and Italy, they have passed their own laws on dog and cat fur trade. Switzerland and Australia have banned the trade in these furs long ago. (Bennich 1) In the UK, fur farming was banned in 1999.

(“ Dying For Fashion. “) One of the major loopholes in any of these laws all comes down to the labeling. The mislabeling of fur is difficult to track and identify and is a major scape-goat for the fur industry. Dog and cat fur is rarely labeled for what it really is. Instead of printing the truth on the labels, they instead put false or misleading names. Dog products may be sold as Asian jackal, gae wolf, or sobaki.

Some of the dog breeds actually being killed are German Sheperds, Chow-Chows, and Husky’s. Cat products are sold under many pseudonyms like wildcat, goyangi, and katzenfelle. (“ Betrayal of Trust. ”) Raccoon dogs, a member of the canid family, are the most mislabeled fur.

A recent investigation by the HSUS found, through DNA testing of the fur, that 26 out of 37 fur-trimmed jackets were mislabeled and actually Raccoon Dog. Instead of the true name, they instead put: faux fur, ecological fur, ployester, Coyote, Rabbit, Canis Latranis, Raccoon, Finni Raccoon and other misleading names. (“ Raccoon Dog Misrepresentation Continues Investigation Results: Fall/Winter 2007. ” 2) It’s not just little boutiques or private stores that carry these mislabeled furs, it is large, trusted retailers such as Neiman Marcus, Dillard’s, Macy’s, Saks Fifth Avenue, Burberry, Juicy <https://assignbuster.com/illegal-fur-trade/>

Couture, and Sears. " Raccoon Dog Misrepresentation Continues Investigation Results: Fall/Winter 2007. " 3) Mislabeled fur is hard to control because a DNA test is needed to be done in order to determine whether the label is stating the truth or not, and DNA tests are expensive.

This fact is what makes the fur industry have a loophole in their illegal fur trade. It is a scary fact that anything that is fur or even faux fur could be a domestic cat or dog. Anyone can be wearing a dog or cat. Almost any animal is fair game to the fur trade. Minks, raccoons, foxes, beavers, hamsters, rabbits, cows, sheep, llamas, bobcats, lynxes, opossums, otters, kangaroos, cats, dogs, ocelots, chinchillas, polecats, Arctic foxes, badgers, Black bears, coyote, Gray fox, Red foxes, Silver foxes, Kit & Swift foxes, skunks, weasels, squirrels, Timber wolves, wild wolves, wolverines, Raccoon dogs, coypus (resembles beaver), sables, antelopes, pumas, seals, lions, tigers, leopards, snow leopards, martens (resembles fox), and other animals are all used to make fur.

(" Fur. ") That's a lot of animals dying for fashion. Some species of animals are even going extinct or are endangered thanks to the fur industry. The Tibetan antelope, or chiru, dropped from more than one million at the turn of the 20th century to around 75,000 today due to poaching for its prized Shatoosh, its warm, soft, and fine undercoat. (AFP) Snow Leopards are already endangered, with only 3,500 to 7,000 specimens left in the wild, according to experts. (Dexel 5) It is not only the endangerment and extinction of animals that the fur industry is causing, it is the lives they are literally stealing.

Dogs and cats in China that are loaded onto trucks for slaughter are sometimes spotted with their collars and tags still on. Mass, Barbara, et al. 6) Pets in China are being stolen off the streets by workers, oblivious to the sign that the animals is loved by someone, somewhere, around their cold necks. The murder of animals for fur is morally wrong.

Killing a defenseless animal for fur wrong, just plain wrong. The fur industry tries to defend themselves by saying things like: ' Animals have to die of something at sometime', ' Most fur animals are pests', ' Fur is product of necessary and carefull culling', ' Most fur animals are bred for it' and ' Fur gives pleasure to many people'. Well, answers are abundant to these defenses. Yes, all animals have to die of something at sometime, but, so do humans, but that doesn't give us a reason to kill, torture, or cruelly raise them.

Animals do not become pests by themselves, we destroy their land or introduce them to other environments for ' sport', so why should they suffer just because our actions caused them to become a little bothersome? Fur is definatley not necessary product of culling, a term which usually describes the killing of animals which we consider to be damaging in some way to the environment. The vast majority of animals killed for fur are killed in their own environment or in fur farms, which humans force them into, so they are not by any means causing harm to the environment; we are by killing them. As for the statement that animals are bred for the harvest of their fur; animals bred for their fur are not only deprived of their lives, but their basic freedom to act on their instincts. " In the wild, a mink will defend a territory of 2 1/2 miles of riverbank or 22 acres of marshland. An arctic fox ranges over

anything from 2, 100-15, 000 acres and yet on fur farms these animals are kept in tiny wire mesh cages.

Such is their frustration that they become psychotic. Many are driven to cannibalism and self-mutilation" (" Frequent Reasons for Buying Fur. ") Many people take pleasure from wearing a dead animal and find nothing wrong in that, but, if a psychopath wears the skin of a, let's say, human, it is wrong due to the fact that it took the suffering and murder of another sentient being to make it. It is disturbing to take pleasure in a product that has caused so much incredible pain and suffering to an individual. You wouldn't kill your faithful and reliable dog and wear it, but that is just what is happening all over the world. Fur is also a tremendous waste of energy, time, and resources.

" According to a study by Ford Motor Company engineer Gregory H. Smith, it takes almost three times as much energy to make a coat from trapped animals' pelts - and 40 times as much from ranch-raised furs - than it does to make a fake fur coat. (" Did You Know?. ") Numerous hours are spent by workers in China killing, trapping, and raising animals for their fur. That time could be spent helping build homes for the poor in China or any number of things. The amount of food and grain used to feed the animals, even though they are barely fed enough to survive, could probably feed a small country.

Dead, skinless, animals are tossed into a pile to rot and then thrown in a landfill, burned, or buried, which harms the environment. The gas used to transport animals, corpses, fur, and by-products are a great waste of fuel, especially in this age of oil deficiency. Also, the sheer number of animals

used to make one fur product is a complete waste. Twelve to fifteen lynxes, ten to fifteen wolves or coyotes, fifteen to twenty foxes, sixty to eighty minks, twenty-seven to thirty raccoons, ten to twelve beavers, and sixty to one hundred squirrels are needed to make one complete coat of their kind.

(" Facts about the Fur Trade") There is a plethora of things that can be done, and are being done, to try and stop this cruelty. PETA, the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, are heading many campaigns against the fur trade and have also won many battles with fur-using companies. They create petitions, boycotts, opportunities to write letters to important people, and supply information to educate people about the fur industry. Their website, www.peta.com,

has leafletters, stickers, posters, books, and all kinds of things available to order, for cheap or even free, so anyone can educate people. There is even an opportunity to donate old fur coats to PETA who will give them to homeless people, the only people who truly need one, or use them in demonstrations. Not buying any kind of fur, not even faux because it could be mislabeled and other people might see you wearing it and want to go but fur, is a great and easy way to help stop the fur industry's murderous ways. PETA has had many success'; The Bombay Company, Polo Ralph Lauren Corporation, Red Envelope, J.

Crew, Olan Mills, Ann Taylor, Forever 21, Abercrombie & Fitch, and many other retail companies have all made some kind of pledge against using fur. PETA has also done many undercover reports into the dark, cruel world of the fur industry and has compiled great amounts of information and video

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against the fur company that can be viewed on their website, but, be warned, the videos are very disturbing and PETA holds nothing back and censors nothing. The illegal fur trade is a dishonest, cruel, morally corrupt, and energy wasting industry that needs to be stopped. Animal abuse is wrong, no matter what 'fabulous' and couture product comes from it. Fur farms are unbearably cruel and are a waste of valuable resources.

Fur should not be bought at all due to the fact that if the label says 'Canis Latranis', it could actually be man's-best-friend and people could be encouraged to buy fur if people are seen wearing any type of fur. The mistreatment and vituperation of animals all over the world is a disservice act and needs to end. Works Cited: AFP, "Fur is back..

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