

The yulin dog meat festival and american views

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



American Views on the Yulin Dog Meat Festival are Invalid

Dogs play a very important part in the lives of human beings all around the world. For some, friendly canines are more than just a pet, they are family. Dogs can even become a part of a service or may even be considered hero's such as K9 officers in local Sheriff Departments, search and rescue teams, guide dogs for the blind, and even service dogs for those with serious health concerns. For others, dogs can even be considered a source of food. Each year, in the Chinese city of Yulin, a large dog meat festival takes place. In this festival, dogs are slaughtered and killed to become a city's cultural and traditional meal. Americans view this cultural tradition as disgusting and cruel. On the other hand, the community of Yulin reflects on this tradition and sees it as a normal part of their culture that they grew up with. Though there is some truth to both arguments, those who agree with the dog meat festival are more open minded and consider the cultural differences without bias. The American's judgements against the annual Yulin Dog Meat Festival are not valid because they are based strictly on their emotions, their own hypocrisy of the humanization of specific animals, and their lack of insight and respect for the culture.

American's who detest the Yulin Dog Meat Festival are only thinking with their emotions. They use their emotions to justify their claim that this festival is wrong because of how it makes them feel. In the article, "Some we love, some we eat: Rethinking the Yulin Dog Meat Festival", Samson Tang, an Anthropologist who currently specializes in Human-Animal Studies states that these dogs are, "Crammed into tiny cages in which they can hardly

move during transportation, most of the dogs oftentimes with no food or water given- are hungry, spent, or more poignantly, dead, when they arrive in Yulin. But they are still served to customers as ' delicacies' "(Samson). The Americans use their feelings instead of logic when deciding whether or not to agree with the dog meat festival. Many times, American's hear of these horrific situations that take place in Yulin, China and because it sounds sad, they automatically accept the situation as cruel and judge the people who are participating in this dog meat festival. According to author Jullan Bigini, in the article, " China Dog Meat Festival: Is it really that bad to eat dog?" states, " Westerners who feel appalled by the Yulin festival need to check that their objections are based on robust values and not just a sentimental preference for cute, friendly animals (Bigini). This shows that Americans rely on their emotions to make judgments instead of thinking critically about what is really being done when it comes to the dog meat festival.

While many American's claim the dog meat festival held in China is cruel and disgusting, they are neglecting the reality that Americans also eat other slaughtered animals. According to Nathan Runkle, the founder and president of Mercy For Animals, in the article, " Our outrage over China's Yulin dog meat festival exposes a disgusting hypocrisy" (Runkle). It is interesting to see that even an activist for animals such as Nathan Runkle also believes that his view, as well as the view from all animal supporters believes that they are quick to judge the dog meat festival without really researching and opening their minds to what is really being dealt with during this festival. He also sees how himself, as well as other Americans, are hypocrites. Runkle also states, " On the menu in Yulin were 10, 000 dogs and cats served with

lychees and liquor. In America: millions of pigs, cows and chicken served with fixin's" (Runkle). While American's believe the treatment and slaughter of dogs in Yulin is wrong, American's brutally slaughter, kill, and eat not thousands, but millions of livestock every year. Bigini also goes on discussing, " Seeing one video of one dog being beaten is not enough to condemn the whole festival, just as knowing that there have been abuses in some Western abattoirs does not condemn the whole meat industry (Bigini). It is hypocritical to only categorize this cruelty as wrong and disgusting when America takes part in the same exact slaughter, only with a different species. This proves how American's only use their emotions to justify their hypocrisy to the dog meat festival.

Although animals are important to all human beings, Americans humanize dogs and neglect to keep the same treatment with all other animals. It is unjust to place a higher value on one species of animal over another. Many American's claim that relationships with dogs are different from other animals because of their trainability and friendliness. However, every animal should be treated equally. For example, in Nathan Runkle's article, he discusses how Americans think of dogs as only a friend or a pet and categorizes their livestock such as pigs, as only a means for food. He states, " In terms of intellect, none of these animals differs significantly from the other- though pigs are actually smarter than dogs [...] but in general, they are all social and enjoy humans' company when treated with kindness" (Runkle). If Americans are going to accept the fact that they themselves eat animal meat, they should accept the fact that somewhere around the world dogs are still considered animals and there are countries that eat dog meat.

Americans also place more responsibility into the lives of dogs. For example, in America, there are several types of dogs who do a service: guide dogs, emotional support dogs, military dogs, service dogs, and so on. But, who is to say that pigs or cows cannot be used in these services too? In fact, pigs are just as trainable as dogs, if not more. If Americans are against eating dog meat, they should be against all animal meat in general, not just focusing on uplifting one species. Many Americans also tend to categorize their animals with labels such as a "food" animal, or a "pet" animal. For example, in the United States, dogs are strictly a pet. It is forbidden to hear of anybody causes any harm whatsoever to a canine companion. But, cattle, sheep, and swine are strictly for eating rather than being a companion animal. However, in China, dogs can be both, food and pets. Nathan Runkle discussing the equality of animals by stating, "What really matters is the ability to suffer and feel pain. In those respects, scientists agree, the animals we love and the animals we eat are all the same" (Runkle). All animals suffer and feel the same pain, no matter how cute or friendly they are. If one animal can be consider food or even a pet, all of them can be. All animals are equal. This shows how American's humanize and place higher value specifically on dogs.

The American attacks on the Yulin Dog Meat Festival prove their ignorance because of their lack of insight and respect for the Chinese culture.

Americans are ignorant when it comes to the way their meat is prepared. In China, people must capture, kill, and prepare their meat themselves. In America, we really do not see the full process of how our meat gets prepared. Americans do not understand what the Chinese have to go through on a daily basis to obtain meat. China's economy is nothing like the

one in the United States. According to Carla Thomas", in the article " 5 Things to Know About China's Yulin Dog Meat Festival", she states that, " Prices of dog meat dishes at the dog meat festival keep mounting" (Thomas). While Americans view the prices increasing at the dog meat festival as a negative thing, the Chinese see it as a positive thing for their society. Instead of Americans seeing this price increase as a terrible aspect of the dog meat festival, they should view it from the perspective of the Chinese. Carla Thomas also reports, "[...]the press the festival has attracted has greatly increased the exposure of the event, with participating venues using the opportunity to cash in (Thomas). The Chinese are finding a unique way of making more money, hence regulating their economy. This proves how Americans are ignorant about the Chinese culture and economy.

The Americans ignorance and lack of knowledge towards the Chinese culture is shown when the Americans argue with China about their traditions and customs. A common argument animal activists make is the argument that those in Yulin who are selling dog meat often rip off animal activists by overcharging them their price for dogs. If American's could look past their ignorance and gain some insight, they would clearly see how this dog meat market is actually helping the city of Yulin. The anthropologist who is studying Human-Animal Studies argues, " If dog meat consumption in Yulin is such a glorious tradition and cultural practice, then why were the vendors so eager to try emotional blackmail to rip off the volunteers and animal activists who wanted to rescue the caged dogs? [...] The Yulin Dog Meat Festival is not so much cultural practice as a bloody business that thrives on the exploitation of dogs." While the Americans claim that China is just

blackmailing them by holding the dogs who are about to be slaughtered for a high amount of money, the Chinese are just trying to do what they came to the festival to do: make money.

Though it may not be in the Americans' best interest, the economy in China is not like the one we have in the United States. They have to work really hard to get and earn the money they do. They all have families they need to feed, bills or rent that needs to be paid, and the more money that comes into China, the more regulated the economy and the city of Yulin can be. In the article, " Chinese City Defends Dog Meat Festival Despite Scorn, author Amy Qin reports, " The range of food offerings on display was impressive, from everyday vegetables to ram heads, about \$8 each, and live civets, which were selling for as much as \$580 an animal. Farther down the market, across from the now-silent slaughterhouse, butchers lined across three aisles hacked away at gold-skinned dog carcasses on thick wooden blocks, as customers, some still sitting on their motorbikes, placed orders for dog meat at \$3. 50 a pound"(Qin). The citizens in Yulin, China, have found a way to bring in more income for their society and Americans neglect to see that people in China have to make a living too. This shows Americans have a lack of insight and respect for the Chinese culture and do not have or are not open to learning about the way the Chinese in the city of Yulin live.

In conclusion, the Americans perspective of the dog meat festival in the Chinese City of Yulin are invalid because of their own biased opinions of dogs. While dogs are often humanized and treated as family members in America, their hypocrisy for a lack of concern with other species of animals

and their ignorance towards the Chinese culture is evident and there is no logic behind their reasons for disproving the intake of dog meat. Americans are often blinded by their emotions and refuse to open their mind into the possibilities that the dog meat festival may actually be a positive contribution to the city of Yulin. If Americans could step outside of their comfort zone and be open to learning about the Chinese culture and could put their emotional attachment to dogs aside, they would see how eating dog meat and the treatment of the dogs who are taken in to become dog meat and very much the same as the treatment that happens here in America with livestock.