



# Animal Rights: History and Scope of a Radical Social Movement

Dr. Harold D Guither PhD

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In the past decade, philosopher Bernard Rollin points out, we have "witnessed a major revolution in social concern with animal welfare and the moral status of animals." Adopting the stance of a moderate, Harold Guither attempts to provide an unbiased examination of the paths and goals of the members of the animal rights movement and of its detractors.

Given the level of confusion, suspicion, misunderstanding, and mistrust between the two sides, Guither admits the difficulty in locating, much less staying in, the middle of the road. The philosophical conflict, however, is fairly clear: those who resist reform, fearing that radical change in the treatment of animals will infringe on their business and property rights, versus the new activists who espouse a different set of moral and ethical obligations toward animals.

From his position as a moderate, Guither presents a brief history of animal protection and the emergence of animal rights, describes the scope of the movement, and identifies major players such as Paul and Linda McCartney and organizations such as People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals that are actively involved in the movement. He concentrates on what is actually happening in the 1990s, discussing in detail the possible consequences of the current debate for those who own, use, or enjoy animals in entertainment and leisure pursuits. A reference work for students in animal sciences and veterinary medicine, the book also poses questions for philosophers, sociologists, and public policymakers as well as animal owners, animal and biomedical researchers, and manufacturers and distributors of animal equipment and supplies.



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