

WHY I DEFEND ANIMAL RIGHTS ACTIVISTS



“Know that the same spark of life that is within you, is within all of our animal friends, \the desire to live is the same within all of us...”—Rai Aren, Secret of the Sands

Since I can remember I have been an animal lover. Dogs are my favorite. I feel a closeness to them more so than any other animal. The terms "animal cruelty" or "animal rights" never came to mind in my youth. Much like many other social issues it was never discussed...so it was like it didn't exist. Don't get wrong me...when I force my mind to go back I do **REMEMBER** certain occurrences that I now understand to be animal mistreatment. For instance, it was common for people to keep dogs chained up in backyards. From what I recall those chains were never very long. It wasn't uncommon for a dog's escape attempt over a fence to end with his hanging lifeless body. Sadly, the poor creatures faced even other cruel fates. Those lethal chains were often accompanied by crude makeshift dog houses. I'm from the Midwest and those poor animals were forced to stay outside through the scorching summers and the freezing winters. I remember local boys giving their dogs red pepper flakes in order to make them "mean". I guess they thought it cool to have a dog that snarled.

I also remember my mom finding a sick and neglected puppy next to our home. A family in my neighborhood discarded the pup as I think they had just grown bored with it. My mom took it upon herself to feed the animal and nurse it back to health. It was wonderful watching her do so. She showed such compassion for the little thing. We watched it grow stronger everyday...a beautiful memory I still hold close to me heart. I'm still very proud of her for it.

It was within the last 7 years that I **REALLY** got **CONSCIOUS**. That I woke up and **TRULY** understood that the meat we eat came from animals that were alive just like me. They had moms who loved them and looked for them when they were gone. They experienced fear like me...pain like me...and they wanted to **LIVE**. In realizing those things I could no longer allow myself to be a party to needless death and suffering.

There's a movement going on in the world today. A whirlwind of consciousness taking over society. People are waking up. We are finally understanding that death and suffering is not just a "human" thing. There are people helping to spread the word and out there making a difference. When you know better, you do better and complacency makes no sense.

Animal rights activists have made the choice to fight for what is right. They devote their time, energy, blood and sweat to making a difference in this world. They put their freedom on the line for the lives of others. They are adding **ACTIONS** to words. It is for those reasons that they have my respect. I proudly serve as their defender.