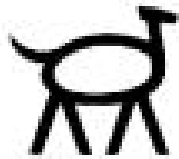


Attitudes and Behaviors Relating to Fur

Evaluating Responses to Selected Anti-Fur Messages and Materials

P R E P A R E D F O R



The Fund for Animals

P R E P A R E D B Y T H E

HUMANE RESEARCH COUNCIL

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AWARENESS OF AND EXPOSURE TO REAL ANIMAL FUR

- **When compared with previous studies, participants in the current focus groups exhibited greater awareness and understanding of the issues surrounding real fur.** In the focus groups sponsored by HSUS in 1992 and 2001, participants showed little awareness or understanding of the processes used to obtain real fur. In the current study, the participants appeared to be somewhat more educated than their earlier counterparts.
- **Still, overall exposure to the issue of real fur appears to be fairly low.** Respondents to the telephone survey were asked how much they had recently “read, seen, or heard” about real fur. Sixty-four percent (64%) responded “nothing at all,” while another 21% responded that they had read, seen, or heard “only a little.” In the focus groups, many questions elicited pauses as participants evidently thought about some questions for the first time.
- **The lack of exposure to the issue of fur parallels a lack of conviction or strong feelings about the issue of real fur.** A large percent of respondents to the telephone survey agreed with the statement, “I do not have strong feelings about the issue of buying or wearing real fur.” Overall, 52% agreed with this statement, including 28% who “strongly agreed.” Again, this feedback was corroborated by focus group participants, many of whom outright admitted that they either do not think or care about the issue.

FUR OWNERSHIP AND PURCHASE INTENT

- **From the telephone survey, younger women, African-Americans and Hispanics, along with those with lower levels of education and income – appear to be most interested in purchasing fur. Furthermore, African-American and Hispanic respondents were also most likely to have recently purchased any type of fur garment, including faux and real.**
- **Specifically, for almost all types of real and faux fur garments, African-Americans were the ethnic group most likely to have recently purchased, as well as the most likely group to buy them in the future.** More than “Anglos” and Hispanics, African-Americans also appeared to be the most likely ethnic group to choose real fur garments over faux fur, and were notably the most interested in buying full fur garments rather than fur trim.
- **Younger respondents exhibited significantly stronger pro-fur behaviors and attitudes than their older counterparts across all categories of purchases.** In the telephone survey, the youngest group of 18-29 year-olds were significantly more likely to have recently purchased any type of garment made of fur, including real and faux fur as well as full fur and fur-trimmed garments. In the focus groups, several of the teenage participants indicated, prior to viewing the ads, that they would choose to own a real fur garment if given the opportunity (such as having enough money).

- Those of a lower socio-economic status (a derivative of income and education levels) are, somewhat surprisingly, most likely to have recently purchased any type of fur garment, and most likely to show intent to purchase a garment in the near future. Not as surprisingly for this group, the preference for faux fur was considerably stronger than for real fur.
- In the telephone survey, when asked “why do you choose to buy or not buy real fur garments or accessories,” a large majority (84%) of all respondents gave (coded) reasons to NOT buy real fur, versus a minority (15%) who gave reasons to buy real fur.
- The vast majority of the respondents in the survey who gave reasons to NOT buy real fur most often cited associations with “animal cruelty,” “animal rights,” or “inhumane” as the unaided reason (44% of all respondents gave one of these responses). Other noteworthy reasons given for not buying fur include the answer that it “doesn’t look good” or is “unattractive” (17% combined), or that it is too expensive (17%). Eight percent (8%) of all respondents who said they would choose to buy real fur indicated they “prefer the look, feel, and style of real fur.”

FUR TRIM VERSUS FULL FUR GARMENTS

- Overall, respondents to the telephone survey were much more likely to buy fur-trimmed garments (38%) than full fur garments (21%). This disparity was greatest in New York, where 41% of respondents said they were more likely to buy fur-trimmed garments, compared to 18% who said full fur garments. By contrast, respondents in Washington, DC were much more likely to buy full fur garments (36% versus 22% for fur-trimmed garments), possibly due the greater African-American population in DC. In both markets, about a third of respondents said they were equally likely to buy both types of garments.
- Interestingly, African-American respondents were the only ethnic group, and one of the only demographic sub-groups, to indicate that they are more likely to buy full fur garments (47%) than fur-trimmed garments (22%).
- Participants in the groups generally admitted that they would not know if a fur garment were real or faux upon seeing it, especially when it comes to fur-trimmed garments. Asked to distinguish between their reactions to seeing either a real or a faux fur garment, participants often said that they would not be likely to notice. Moreover, respondents in multiple groups said they would simply assume that fur-trimmed garments are made of faux fur.
- Those who think a full fur is ostentatious or even cruel are still likely to consider garments *trimmed with real fur to be acceptable or “politically correct.”* In other words, buyers and wearers of fur-trimmed garments fly lower on the radar of social unacceptability than do full fur owners, a trend that is reflected in the rising sales of fur-trimmed garments reported by the industry.

- **Those who see real fur-trimmed garments (and acknowledge their source) almost always expressed the belief that they are made from the “scraps” of full fur garments.** During the focus groups, numerous participants thought that scraps were used to make fur trim garments and accessories, and several felt trim to be more humane for that reason. This belief was somewhat weaker in the survey, where one-third of all respondents agreed with the statement that “Real fur trimmed garments are made from the leftovers of full fur garments.” Another third disagreed, while the remaining third was unsure.
- **In the focus groups, discussion of full furs often elicited associations with wealth, status, luxury, and excessiveness.** Nearly all participants in groups other than the group comprised of older fur owners felt they would take special notice of someone wearing a full fur garment, often with a negative association. Fur trim garments and accessories, as opposed to full fur, were more often associated with style, and to a lesser degree warmth, than luxury.

TRAPPING VERSUS FARMING

- **Participants across all focus groups, depending largely on age, were split on whether or not they saw a difference between trapped versus farmed fur. However, those that did see a difference overwhelmingly believed that farmed fur would be “better,” and in the majority of cases, participants felt that farming processes are more likely to be humane than trapping.** This sentiment was strongest among the group of older fur owners in NY.
- **These findings were corroborated in the telephone survey, which found that respondents were slightly more likely to think of trapping as less humane than farming, but that both methods were considered inhumane by a majority of respondents.** When asked to agree or disagree with the statement that “Raising animals on factory farms for their fur is okay,” 73% of respondents disagreed and 22% agreed. By comparison, when asked to agree or disagree with the statement that “Trapping animals in the wild for their fur is okay,” 78% of respondents disagreed and 17% agreed.
- **The telephone survey also included similar, but more descriptive questions specifically asking with method of killing animals for fur was considered by respondents to be more humane. The results were similar to the previous general questions, but slightly more polarized.** When asked to agree or disagree with the statement that “Gassing, neck breaking, anal and genital electrocution, and other methods of killing used on fur farms are inhumane,” 81% of respondents agreed and 16% disagreed. Also showing similarly slight increases in agreement over the less descriptive question, 83% of respondents agreed with the statement that “Trapping animals in steel-jawed leg hold traps is inhumane;” 14% of respondents disagreed with this statement.

REACTIONS TO MESSAGES AND MATERIALS

- ☉ **Generally speaking, the messages and materials that were most graphic in nature seemed to elicit the most desired responses in the current study (ie: deep consideration of the issues and some potential for behavior modification).** However, it should be noted that the disconnect between participants' visceral responses and the potential effectiveness of the materials can be significant, and is often most pronounced for graphic or offensive materials. Note that these findings were most stark for younger participants, and in particular the group of teenagers in DC. Furthermore, several of the more graphic materials were also shown in video format, which inherently carries more weight than print media.
- ☉ **Ads that include images of animals are hit-and-miss, and are largely dependent upon the species, size, perceived "cuteness," and context of the animal image used.** Several species, particularly those that resemble domesticated cats and dogs, such as bobcats, were fairly well-received by most participants. By contrast, animals perceived as "wild" (ie: foxes) or "pests" (ie: raccoons), or animals that were less familiar to participants (ie: chinchillas), appeared not to resonate as well with most. Similarly, fully-grown animals usually test less effectively than "baby" animals.

SELECT MESSAGES AND MATERIALS THAT TESTED WELL IN THE CURRENT STUDY

- ☉ **Consistent with the general feedback that graphic materials elicited the strongest responses, many participants in each group identified segments from the FaunaVision compilation video as the most disturbing.** The segment that was aired in most groups included footage that showed the skinning of a dog for purposes of obtaining its fur, which caused confusion in some groups, but disgust and sympathy in most.
- ☉ **One of the print ads that consistently fared well, created by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, features an image of a caged fox on a fur farm with the headline "Just think, it only takes 29 more to make a fur coat."** The ad elicited strong emotional reactions from some participants who had expressed earlier that they would consider buying a real fur coat. However, a few participants said that the PETA logo caused them to question the ad's credibility, and the ad was further criticized for its misspelling among the group of young professionals in DC.
- ☉ **Another advertisement by PETA also tested well with these participants, in this case an ad featuring an elegantly-dressed pop singer holding the carcass of a skinned fox, with the headline, "Here's the rest of your fur coat."** While some participants claimed they would not look at such a graphic ad, by and large it successfully elicited feelings of shock and/or sympathy in most other participants, particularly those from younger groups.

- **Another of the advertisements that received favorable comments from participants was the second-place winner from the American *Design against Fur* competition held by the Fur Free Alliance.** The ad features a full-page image of a group of baby red foxes, with the small headline, “Here’s a sneak peak at this year’s newest fall fashions.” The visual was clearly the strongest element of this ad and the headline, while effective when noticed and understood, was often overlooked or caused some confusion even among the most educated participants.

SELECT MESSAGES AND MATERIALS THAT TESTED POORLY IN THE CURRENT STUDY

- **The PETA ads featuring nude celebrities (Pamela Anderson and Charlotte Ross) were universally rejected by participants in all groups, even though they effectively caught the attention of nearly all participants.** Generally speaking, overt sexuality did not seem an effective approach with participants in this study.
- **Similarly, anti-fur ads featuring celebrities also seemed to resonate less with most participants when compared to other types of ads.** With the possible exception of The Fund for Animals’ Jessica Biel ad, which tested well with some younger participants (generally those who recognized Biel from television), all of the anti-fur materials featuring celebrities received comments questioning the identity and credibility of the spokesperson. The Fund for Animals’ print ad featuring Marla Sokoloff and radio ad featuring Wendie Malick were no exception.
- **Advertisements that utilized “shame” such as HSUS’s ad headlined “You should be ashamed to wear fur,” were universally rejected by participants in all groups.** All participants regardless of demographic shared the opinion that no advertisement should dictate to readers how to feel about an issue. This feeling is tied closely to the nearly unanimous belief in one’s “freedom of choice” to wear real fur, which in turn led participants to feel that “shame” ads were passing judgment on fur wearers. Even participants who vehemently disagreed with wearing fur (themselves) said that others should have the right to do so without feeling threatened or ashamed. Some participants in the older group of fur owners became defensive, while others criticized the ad’s sponsor. Ironically, the fur owners who demonstrated significant guilt were also the most passionate critics of using shame as a tactic.
- **Print ads that “crossed the line” into being “too graphic” prompted many older fur wearers and younger professionals in DC to quickly flip the page; they claimed they would not look at such advertisements.** There were some confused responses to the graphic materials, particularly to PETA’s “No Skin off Your Back” and HSUS’s undercover video segment that demonstrated dog farming (ie: why is this being shown in the context of a fur video?).

I. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

In 2001, The Fund for Animals (“The Fund”) launched a national print advertising campaign to persuade female consumers not to purchase garments made from real animal fur. The campaign was continued and expanded in 2002, with the addition of several new print advertisements and a radio spot with female television celebrities endorsing the choice not to purchase or wear real fur. To date, The Fund has conducted a semi-targeted, semi-sustained advertising campaign aimed at younger women in major metropolitan markets, primarily New York City and Washington, DC.

In early 2003, in an effort to evaluate and improve upon these advertising efforts, The Fund began a mixed-method research study in collaboration with the Humane Research Council (“HRC”), a professional consumer and market research organization that provides below-market and pro bono services to animal advocacy groups. This report covers the results and analysis of The Fund’s anti-fur marketing research study, including general behaviors and attitudes relating to fur (Section II), reactions to anti-fur messages and materials (Section III), and a brief overview of the conclusions that can be drawn from the results of the current study (Section IV).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In order to assist The Fund in refining its anti-fur advertising campaign for the 2003-2004 season, the current research study was designed to gauge visceral responses to (and establish baselines for the potential long-term effectiveness of) various approaches to persuading current and likely purchasers not to buy real fur. The study was also designed to gain a better general understanding of those current and potential purchasers of real fur garments, including their behaviors, attitudes, and opinions.

The primary research questions of this study include:

- What are the attitudes toward fur of current and likely fur consumers living and working in the New York City and Washington, DC metropolitan media markets?
- How do women of varying demographics respond to different anti-fur messages, materials, and media? What are the key similarities and differences by demographic?
- What is the recent purchase behavior of likely fur consumers as it relates to both real and faux (fake) fur and fur-trimmed garments?
- What are the near-term purchase intentions of likely fur consumers as they relate to both real and faux (fake) fur and fur-trimmed garments?
- What is the level of awareness among likely fur consumers of anti-fur advertising campaigns, and to what degree do those campaigns influence purchase decisions?
- Based on the findings of the current study, what specific topics and questions need to be addressed in subsequent research?

Detailed answers to these questions and others are provided in this report. Verbatim responses are included where appropriate to most effectively illustrate participant feedback.

METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE

The current study is based on both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, including a total of four focus groups and two phone surveys conducted in the New York City and Washington, DC media markets over the months of May, June, and July 2003. Recruitment and moderation of the focus groups was conducted by HRC and The Fund, using personal contacts, volunteer labor, and “snowball” recruiting techniques. The phone survey instrument was designed by HRC, with assistance from and management of the phone interviewing conducted by Hill Research Consultants of The Woodlands, Texas.

A total of 33 females participated in the focus groups, two of which were conducted in each metropolitan media market. Most of the groups were racially mixed, but largely homogeneous in terms of age, income level, and education. The phone surveys included samples of approximately 300 females aged 18-50 in each media market. See below for an overview of characteristics for focus group participants and phone survey respondents. See Appendix A for detailed profiles of focus group participants based on in-group feedback and questionnaire responses.

Summary of Participants and Respondents

	Focus Group Participants	Survey Respondents
NEW YORK CITY	<u>Group 1: Females, 48-60</u> 10 participants, 1 left prior to materials review 5 Anglo, 3 Asian and 2 Middle-Eastern immigrants - Household incomes well over \$100k - All fur owners, most are also recent buyers <u>Group 2: Females, 26-35</u> 10 participants 8 Anglo, 2 Asian- and Middle-Eastern Americans - Household incomes \$40-80k - One active fur wearer/buyer and some ownership of real/ fake fur	- N = 302 - Females age 18-50 - Ethnicity: 43% Anglo; 20% Black or African American; 9% Asian; 21% Hispanic / Latino / Mexican-American. - Education: 68% have gone beyond high school to attend at least some college.
WASHINGTON, D.C.	<u>Group 1: Females, 16-17</u> 6 participants, 1 left prior to materials review 1 Anglo, 3 Asian-American, 2 African-American - High school students - One fur trim garment owner <u>Group 2: Females, 30-40</u> 8 participants, 1 left prior to materials review 4 Anglo, 3 African-American, 1 Asian-American - Household incomes unknown - No fur ownership	- N = 312 - Females age 18-50 - Ethnicity: 52% Anglo; 28% Black or African American; 5% Asian-American; 9% Hispanic / Latino / Mexican-American. - Education: 78% have gone beyond high school to attend at least some college.

From the fur industry we have learned that the dominant purchasers of real fur garments are young women ages 24-44, while men represent only 5% of real fur sales (FICA 2003). From the same source we know that more furs are purchased in New York than any other city, followed closely by Chicago, and that other top fur markets in order of retail sales are Philadelphia, Los Angeles, and Washington DC/Baltimore. Based on this information, the current study of women age 16-55 in New York City and Washington, DC provides an appropriate target audience for anti-fur message and materials evaluation, but it should be noted that there will likely be higher incidences of fur purchasing behavior in these markets than elsewhere in the U.S.

CAVEATS AND RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

The geographic scope of this study is limited to the New York City and Washington, DC metropolitan media markets. While the results may prove useful for anti-fur advocacy in other U.S. cities or regions, as well as nationally and even internationally, they can only be said to be geographically representative of the opinions of women in those two markets.

Participants for the focus groups were recruited using personal contacts and “snowball” recruiting to draw in additional participants from the same target peer group, including friends and colleagues of the original recruit. Snowball sampling as a recruitment methodology has several limitations, but it is also significantly reduces cost when compared to hiring an outside recruiter. Specifically, using snowball techniques can introduce significant bias into the recruiting process. Thus, participants’ backgrounds were screened to prevent major conflicts of interest or significantly biased opinions. Note that these focus group results are not meant to be projectable to any population beyond women of similar demographics in New York City and Washington, DC. All results from the series of four focus groups conducted for this study, therefore, should be considered entirely qualitative in nature, and not necessarily representative of any larger population of current or likely fur buyers.

For a variety of reasons, it should also be noted that participants in focus groups will occasionally provide answers that differ from their actual feelings or behaviors, which is an inherent risk to qualitative research. Hence, a quantitative study was conducted by phone to corroborate the results of the focus group. The use of qualitative and quantitative methods provides a more complete view of participants and respondents in the current study.

The telephone survey includes a combined sample size of 614 responses (N = 302 in NY and 312 in Washington, DC), which brings an expected margin of error of approximately +/- 4% at a 95% confidence level for questions asked of the entire sample. Responses segmented by geographic market, with sample sizes of about 300 each, will have an approximate margin of error of 5.5% at the same confidence level. The survey instrument also contains eighteen agree/disagree statements that were split-sampled and that are therefore subject to higher margins of error (N = 147-158, margin of error is about 8%). Other sub-samples and questions with low response rates are also subject to higher margins of error.

OVERVIEW OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

In the past, nearly all of the consumer and market research to understand consumer's attitudes and behaviors relating to fur was conducted by the fur industry, and very little of it has been made publicly available. With a few exceptions, animal advocacy groups have not conducted research to evaluate attitudes and behaviors relating to real fur garments, and how those behaviors might be changed to benefit fur-bearing animals. Furthermore, most of the materials, messages, and images currently used to advocate against wearing real fur have not been evaluated using research -- until the current study. This dearth of research is particularly notable when it comes to substantive studies that are both quantitative and projectable or that delve into specific issues that may cause likely fur purchasers to abstain from real fur.

That said, by compiling the few phone surveys, magazine polls, and focus group results that are available, we do see some recurring themes.

Motivations for Wearing Fur, Including Trim and Accessories

In the research conducted to date, most respondents have associated warmth, style, and luxury with fur more than any other characteristics. Over the years, reasons for wearing fur seem to have remained fairly consistent, at least as they relate to full furs, and a fur coat is still considered by many to be a symbol of ultimate luxury. Some findings from previous research studies are provided below:

- *Women cited the reasons for wearing fur as its warmth (49%) and beauty/style (43%).* [From a 1993 national poll of 1,000 adults by the Fur Farm Animal Welfare Coalition, a pro-fur group]
- *Forty-eight percent (48%) mentioned the word "warm" when asked what words or phrases they associated with the term "fur."* [From the 1992 "Attitudes toward Fur" report prepared for HSUS by Arcola Research, from a total of seven focus groups]
- *People wear fur for the sense of elegance and prestige it gives them* [From the 2001 "Fur Trim Study" report prepared for HSUS by Jacobs, Jenner & Kent, from a total of four focus groups]

Research has shown that attitudes and behaviors relating to fur trim garments are often very different from those relating to full fur garments. The buyers and wearers for each type of garment tend to be demographically and psychographically different, and the reasons and associations they give for buying real fur are often quite distinct.

- *When asked if fur accessories and fur trim were the equivalent of wearing a full fur coat, the unanimous answer was "no." The primary differentiating factor for these fur-wearers and fence-sitters was the price.* [From the 1992 "Attitudes toward Fur" report prepared for HSUS by Arcola Research, from a total of seven focus groups]

Treatment of Fur-Bearing Animals

Contrary to the current study, a relatively small number of participants in previous studies have shown a willingness to believe that animals are treated cruelly by individuals, businesses, and industries, even those that ultimately kill animals for human use. This belief has persisted in previous research, but has appeared to diminish since the older data were collected, as participants in the current study exhibited significantly more knowledge of the practices of farming and trapping animals for fur, and therefore are more likely to believe that the fur industry might be inhumane. Not surprisingly, the more a person believes that a fur-bearing animal was treated humanely, the more likely they are to believe that wearing fur is okay.

Most fur owners and “fence-sitters” in prior research have shown an expectation that the fur industry treats animals humanely, largely because the participants believed it was in the industry’s self interest.

- *“It would be a different story if I knew they were making the animals suffer. But as long as it’s quick and painless, I don’t have a problem with it (fur).”* [Dallas, “fence-sitter”]
- *Members of these groups opposed cruelty. On the other hand, they did not think the fur industry was cruel.* [From the 1992 “Attitudes toward Fur” report prepared for HSUS by Arcola Research, from a total of seven focus groups]
- *Sixty percent of fur owners said the [fur] industry’s commitment to humane care had a “great effect” on their decision to buy and wear fur.* [From a 1993 national poll of 1,000 adults by the Fur Farm Animal Welfare Coalition, a pro-fur group]

Perceptions of Trapping versus Farming

When given the chance to share opinions, as with a ballot initiative, Americans are overwhelmingly opposed to the use of the leghold trap, as well as trapping animals for their fur in general. However, previous research indicated that fur farming seemed to hold much less stigma than trapping when participants think of animal cruelty. Indeed, many participants shared the belief that farming fur is somehow better than trapping because “the animals are raised for the purpose.” It should also be noted that our review of previous studies uncovered no research on public attitudes relating to other types of traps (i.e.: snare, conibear, padded, etc.).

- *Americans are three times more likely (48%) to say that trapping is the greater concern, while 16% are more concerned about fur farms.* [From a survey conducted by Penn + Schoen Associates, Inc. before 1990]
- *The common view was that [fur] ranchers would treat animals more humanely than trappers would.* [From the 1992 “Attitudes toward Fur” report prepared for HSUS by Arcola Research, from a total of seven focus groups]
- *“Trapping as a way to make money, trapping for fur clothing, and trapping as recreation all had high levels of DISapproval.”* [From a study of focus groups commissioned by the International Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies and the Furbearers Resource Group and conducted by Responsive Management, a pro-consumptive wildlife use opinion management company]

- *Seventy-four percent (74%) agreed with the statement: "I believe that the use of the steel-jaw leghold trap to catch wildlife should be prohibited."* [From a 1996 survey for the Animal Welfare Institute conducted by the Opinion Research Corporation]
- *Seventy-nine percent (79%) of the "informed" public and 74% of the "uninformed public are against the use of "steel traps to capture animals."* [From a 1980 paper presented to the "World-wide Furbearer Conference" by Steven Kellert]

Other Observations

Previous research has also shown that celebrities are not the most credible spokespeople when it comes to the anti-fur message. However, it should be noted that what celebrities wear in a seemingly "unendorsed" manner can have a significant impact on what sells in the marketplace, particularly to younger audiences, and this is no less true of full fur and fur trim garments. Studying the influence of celebrities was not a primary purpose of the current study.

- *On a 5-point scale of "believability" on animal rights and environmental issues, the public rated the Hollywood celebrities at 2.0, superior only to elected officials, who were at the bottom.* [From a 1993 national poll of 1,000 adults by the Fur Farm Animal Welfare Coalition, a pro-fur group]
- *Advertisements featuring celebrities scored very poorly with all of the groups.* [From the 1992 "Attitudes toward Fur" report prepared for HSUS by Arcola Research, from a total of 7 focus groups]

One of the issues addressed to a large extent in the current study has achieved results that are consistent with the results of previous research. Specifically, participants past and present have held on to the belief that fur is ultimately an issue of "freedom of choice." Furthermore, one of the most effective positions taken by the fur industry seems to be their effort to frame the buying, selling and wearing of fur as a "rights" issue. Even participants who have shown they are "against" fur themselves typically concede the industry's argument that fur is "yours to use if you choose."

- *Eighty-seven percent (87%) of respondents agreed with the statement that "people should have the freedom to wear fur if they want to."* [From a 1998 poll for the Fur Information Council of America conducted by Responsive Management, a pro-consumptive wildlife use opinion management company]
- *"This freedom of choice belief was even extended to retailers, with 73% agreeing that Neiman Marcus is a private company and has the right to sell whatever it wants"* [From a 2001 poll conducted by Decision Research for The Fund for Animals of 400 high-income consumers in four metropolitan areas]

II. DETAILED FINDINGS – GENERAL ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS

In support of the ultimate research objective to evaluate the potential effectiveness of selected anti-fur messages and materials, several techniques were used to capture participants' and respondents' general attitudes and behaviors toward fur. A portion of each focus group was devoted to discussing current fur ownership and planned purchases, in most cases with delineations made between real and faux fur, as well as full fur garments and fur-trim garments or accessories. Additionally, each focus group participant completed a brief written survey to quantify fur ownership and recent actual purchase behavior.

The telephone surveys included detailed questions about recent purchase behavior, planned purchase behavior in the near-term future, and a number of agree/disagree statements to gauge general reactions to potential anti-fur messages. All results from the phone surveys are segmented by age, ethnic background, highest level of education completed, and personal annual income.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH AND PERCEPTIONS OF ANIMALS

Each focus group opened with a general discussion of the participants' personal relationships with non-human companion animals. Across all groups, the majority of participants either had previously lived or currently lives with a companion animal. Similarly, the majority of participants in all groups self-identified as "animal lovers" when prompted, with only one or two respondents in each focus group declining to label themselves with the term. Several participants balked at the term "animal lover," in some cases responding that they "only like dogs" or jokingly that "animal liker" would be a better description.

When probed about the differences between domesticated and undomesticated or "wild" animals, participants were fairly split on whether they thought there are more similarities or differences between the two types of animals. By and large, participants showed a proclivity for thinking of wild and domesticated animals similarly rather than differently. However, some participants remarked that domesticated animals are "more loving" and that some species of animals were distinctly more intelligent than other species. Others remarked that wild animals are more hostile toward humans, with one participant commenting that she "didn't want to be anywhere near them."

CURRENT FUR OWNERSHIP AND RECENT PURCHASES

Ownership and intent to purchase both real and faux fur garments were captured in the telephone survey and the brief questionnaire distributed to focus group participants. The latter questionnaire was also used as a catalyst for discussing participants' current ownership and past purchases of real and faux fur garments, full and trimmed. In some cases the discussion provoked participants to remember additional fur garments that they currently own, but in nearly all instances responses to the in-group questionnaire and the discussion itself were in agreement.

Summary of Fur Ownership and Intent to Purchase

	Focus Group Participants	Survey Respondents
NEW YORK CITY	<u>Group 1: Fur Owners, 48-60</u> • ALL participants own at least two garments made entirely of real fur; three respondents own five or more such garments. • Most participants own at least one garment trimmed with real animal fur. • About half of participants own a garment trimmed with or made entirely of faux fur. • Participants purchased most of the real fur garments themselves, but also received many as gifts. <u>Group 2: Professionals, 26-35</u> • Three of ten participants own either one or two garments made entirely of real animal fur. • Only one participant, also a full fur owner, owned a garment trimmed with real animal fur. • Nearly half of the participants own a garment trimmed with faux animal fur, two of whom also own full real fur garments. • Exactly half of participants do not own garments with any type of fur or fur trim, real or faux. • The fur owners obtained their furs in a variety of ways, including gifts and both second- and first-hand purchases.	• N = 302 • In the past six months, 10% had purchased one or more full faux fur garments; 12% had purchased a faux fur-trimmed garment. • In the past six months, 6% had purchased one or more full real fur garments; 5% had purchased a real fur-trimmed garment. • 80% said they were not likely to buy any fur garment in the next six months (faux or real, full or trim). • More respondents are likely to buy a faux fur garment (9%) than a real fur garment (5%). • Considering both real and faux fur, more respondents are likely to buy garments trimmed with fur (41%) than entirely of fur (18%).
WASHINGTON, D.C.	<u>Group 1: High School Students, 16-17</u> • Only one participant owns a real fur-trimmed collar, which she received as a gift from her father and does not wear. • Four of six participants own one or two garments trimmed with faux fur. • Two participants do not own garments with any type of fur or fur trim, real or faux. • All but one of the furs, real and faux, were purchased for participants or given as gifts. <u>Group 2: Professionals, 30-40</u> • Only one participant owns a real fur-trimmed garment. • Four participants own a single faux fur-trimmed garment each, one of whom also owns the real fur garment. • Three participants do not own garments with any type of fur or fur trim, real or faux. • Most of the garments were received as gifts, with one or two received as bequeathals.	• N = 312 • In the past six months, 7% had purchased one or more full faux fur garments; 7% had purchased a faux fur-trimmed garment. • In the past six months, 4% had purchased one or more full real fur garments; 3% had purchased a real fur-trimmed garment. • 87% said they were not likely to buy any fur garment in the next six months (faux or real, full or trim). • Slightly more respondents are likely to buy a faux fur garment (5%) than a real fur garment (4%). • Relative to NY respondents, women in DC are more likely to buy garments made entirely of fur (36%) than those trimmed with fur (22%), when considering both real and faux fur.

Note: These results are comparative summaries only, and should not be used to draw conclusions between the focus groups and telephone survey. The different methodologies necessitate different styles of analysis, so readers should use caution when drawing any conclusions.

Key Differences Segmented by Demographic Group

Current ownership and recent purchase behavior relating to fur garments vary considerably by group and are largely dependent upon the age, ethnicity, and socio-economic status (a combined metric that includes education and income) of the participant or respondent. These trends were reflected in the focus groups, where in particular the older group (intentionally recruited to include fur owners) had a much higher rate of both fur ownership and likeliness to continue purchasing fur. From the telephone survey, we see stark differences among some respondents, including significantly different behaviors and intentions when discussing the purchase of real and faux fur garments. Key differences emerged when segmenting respondents by demographic variables. In general, the groups that seem most interested in purchasing fur include younger women, African-Americans and Hispanics, and those with lower levels of education and income, and hence socio-economic status.

Interestingly, respondents in New York City were significantly more likely to have recently purchased faux fur than were their Washington, DC counterparts. Ten percent (10%) of NY respondents had recently purchased at least one faux full garment, while 12% in NY had purchased at least one faux fur-trimmed garment. The comparable numbers for DC respondents showed 7% of respondents having recently bought at least one faux full garment and 7% having recently bought at least one faux fur-trimmed garment.

NY respondents were also more likely than DC respondents to buy real fur, though this difference was only slight. When asked about future purchase intent over the next six months, including both real and faux garments, a strong majority of respondents in both markets (80% in NY, 87% in DC) responded that they were “not likely to buy either.” Considering both real and faux fur, respondents from NY were much more likely than those from DC to buy a fur-trimmed garment over a full fur garments. Forty-one percent (41%) of NY respondents are more likely to purchase fur trim, while 18% are more likely to purchase full fur. By comparison, 36% of DC respondents are more likely to purchase full fur garments, while 22% are more likely to purchase fur trim. In both markets, approximately 35% of women were equally likely to purchase both types of garments. Note that these results are from questions asked only of those respondents who indicated in a previous question that they were likely to buy a real or faux fur garment, and the results are therefore subject to higher margins of error.

Generally speaking, younger respondents exhibited stronger pro-fur behaviors and attitudes than their older counterparts across all categories of purchases. Of all age groups, 18-29 year-olds were significantly more likely to have recently purchased any type of garment made of fur, including real and faux full fur and fur-trimmed garments. This trend was most evident with faux fur garments and fur-trimmed garments, with younger respondents showing significantly less interest in garments made entirely of real animal fur.

Consistent with past research and what seem to be current marketplace trends, African-American and Hispanic respondents were most likely to have recently purchased any type of fur garment.

They were also more likely to show intent to purchase a real or faux fur garment in the near future. For almost all types of real and faux garments, African-Americans had the highest likelihood of recent purchases or intending to buy them in the near future. More than whites and Hispanics, African-Americans also appeared to be the most likely ethnic group to choose real fur garments over faux fur, and were notably the most interested in full fur garments rather than fur trim.

Regarding socio-economic status, we find that those with lower status are, somewhat surprisingly, most likely to have recently purchased any type of fur garment, and most likely to show intent to purchase a garment in the near future. Respondents with lower levels of education and income generally bought more fur garments of all types, including real and faux, as well as full fur and fur-trimmed garments. This trend seemed to be most true of garments made entirely of faux animal fur and least true of garments trimmed with faux animal fur. Overall, those of a lower socio-economic status were much more likely to buy faux fur than real fur garments in the near future. Note, however, that those interested in any fur garments represented the minority, and so these questions are based on a significantly smaller sample size.

Description of the Purchase Process

The purchase or other procurement process varies considerably for current owners of real fur or fur trimmed garments. In general, participants purchased a number of real fur garments for themselves that is comparable to the number given to them as gifts. Many participants had received their real fur garments from husbands as gifts or from their mothers as hand-me-downs, as well as from other relatives as bequeathals. Still, many of the participants in the three older focus groups (particularly the oldest group of fur-wearers in New York City) had purchased their real fur garments for themselves.

"That's the reason why I got a summer job, so I could buy myself a fur coat... It was the style, I mean it was a very big trend at the time; it was more fun furs than luxurious furs, I think, at that point... and I've been buying them since." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

In some cases, most notably in the focus group of young, professional women in New York, participants were quick to note that their real fur garments were gifts or accidental purchases. Some showed remorse at having received such gifts, and many of the fur-owning participants in the younger groups of professional women claimed to not wear their fur garments. In one instance, a participant had purchased a second-hand hat made of seal skin. She remarked, laughing a little uncomfortably, that what she thought had been a "nice, soft, felt hat turned out to be a nice, soft dead seal."

GENERAL AWARENESS OF AND ASSOCIATIONS WITH FUR, REAL AND FAUX

Minimal Awareness and Consideration Overall

From the results across all focus groups and in the telephone survey, it is clear that the issue of animal fur is not top-of-mind for women in New York City and Washington, DC. Several

agree/disagree statements in the telephone survey yielded high response rates for “unsure” or “don’t know” answers; these answers were provided by up to 37% of respondents for some isolated questions. Similarly, some questions and prompts in the focus groups elicited pauses as participants thought about questions they appeared not to have considered previously. Similarly,

[When asked if she thinks farming or trapping animals would be more human] “It’s not of interest to me, so I don’t care. I’m never going to go buy a fur. And I’m not going to be passionate about this issue.” [Early forties, DC]

“As far as I’m concerned, I don’t give it much thought. I go into a store and I need a particular item, I don’t think of the process, I just purchase it.” [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

Respondents to the telephone survey were also asked how much they had “read, seen, or heard about the debate over women wearing fur garments in the past six months.” Sixty-four percent (64%) of respondents claimed to have read, seen, and heard “nothing at all,” with an additional 21% claiming to have read, seen, or heard “only a little.” More to the point, a significant percent of women in both markets agreed with the statement, “I do not have strong feelings about the issue of buying or wearing real fur.” Overall, the number responding that they agreed with this statement was 52%, including 28% who “strongly agreed.” Younger respondents and African-Americans were significant more likely to agree with this statement. In contrast, those with lower levels of education and income were slightly less likely to agree.

Associations with Fur

Participants’ and respondents’ associations with fur were captured extensively in the focus groups, and to some degree in the telephone survey. A wide range of associations with fur were uncovered, including some clear distinctions by age. Overall, participants had more negative than positive associations with real fur. Not surprisingly, the focus group of older fur owners in New York City had the most positive associations with fur, while the youngest focus group of teens in Washington, DC generally had the fewest positive associations. Each of the groups of young professional women had strongly mixed responses, exhibiting both positive and negative associations with fur.

“Because it keeps me warm and I love the look and feel.” [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

“I would (buy a real fur), definitely, but there are several factors that hold me back. Price, being one. Another is climate, this is just not the climate... we don’t have that kind of winter here. And also, they can be a little ostentatious.” [Mid thirties, DC]

“I choose not to own (real fur garments) because they are hot. I also choose not to own (them) because I believe they are excessive... I feel that it is too expensive.” [Teenager, DC]

More than half of the New York group of older fur-wearers remarked, unprompted, that “warmth” is their key reason for wanting to own a real fur garment, with numerous references also to the “luxuriousness” and “style” of real fur. These associations were shared by several respondents in

both of the focus groups comprised of professional women. Participants also sometimes countered these positive associations with feelings of guilt. When asked why they choose to own fur, some participants in these groups responded:

"I'm in the market of looking heavily, strongly. My mother had one, and she really loved it, and she's looking for one... and I just like that idea. I like the idea of a fur coat, and the warmth and the style and the fashion of it. I always have. And if I ever get to that point, yes, I'm definitely going to get one..." [Early thirties, DC]

"It is a conflict for me – I love the feel and warmth of fur... but the controversy brought to light the facts most people were unaware of." [Late 40s, fur owner, NY]

"I absolutely adore the feel of fur, the look of fur, the luxury of fur, the warmth of fur, but I have to be 100% honest, I haven't worn my fur coat in three years because I feel horribly guilty..." [Late 40s, fur owner]

Numerous positive and negative associations with real fur were also captured in the open-ended question in the telephone survey. Answers were coded to reflect respondents' reasons for buying or not buying real fur garments, if they were to choose to purchase one. A large majority of all respondents gave unaided reasons to NOT buy real fur, including 84% of respondents, versus 15% who gave unaided reasons to buy real fur. Significant differences did not seem to arise by geographical location or age group. However, African-Americans were more likely to give reasons to buy fur relative to other ethnic groups. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of African-American respondents gave unaided reasons in favor of buying real fur, nearly double the percent of all respondents combined. Separately, respondents who were reported as being of a higher socio-economic status were much more likely to give unaided reasons to buy real fur. This trend maps to both education and income, but most significantly to education.

Among the two focus groups comprised of young professional participants, where the incidence of fur ownership was much lower, there were fewer positives associated with real fur and the fur industry. Additionally, the younger participants were generally much quicker than their older counterparts to point out the ethical concerns that relate to killing animals for their fur. Many of the participants in the younger focus groups also made personal statements that they would never purchase fur, a sentiment that was absent with almost all older participants.

"I just never had the desire (to buy real fur); it seems wasteful, cruel and unnecessary; it's not an attractive fashion." [Late twenties, owner of one garment made entirely of real animal fur, and one garment trimmed with faux fur; the former was an accidental second-hand purchase, the latter she bought herself, NY]

"I've never had any interest in owning a garment made of real fur – it's also not something that I feel suits my lifestyle." [Early thirties, NY]

"I think it's disgusting to wear the skin of another living creature." [Early thirties, NY]

Participants in the younger Washington, DC focus group comprised of high school students age 16 and 17 were the most vocal about negative associations with real fur. Nearly all participants in this group mentioned animal cruelty as a deterrent to purchasing real fur. The younger participants also frequently mentioned the excessiveness and cost of real fur as deterrents. When asked if there are any reasons to not buy real fur, participants gave varied but similar responses:

"Yes, because they harm cute animals." [Owner of one garment trimmed with faux fur.]

"I don't feel that people need fur when we live in an age that there are synthetic fibers and more friendly alternatives. The fur industry causes too much pain and endangers species. If we needed fur to survive, then it would be justifiable, if the deaths were less painful and quicker, but we have alternatives... the thought of killing animals for mere fashion sake makes me feel uncomfortable." [Owner of one faux fur-trimmed garment]

"...it's expensive for someone to buy, and I don't see why you would have to go buy a real one when there's a fake one..." [Owner of a real fur trim collar for a leather jacket, which she received as a gift]

Despite these negative associations among younger participants, several members of this focus group also exhibited strong positive associations with real fur. Compared to the older participants, who most often mentioned warmth as a motivating factor, teenage respondents seemed to be much more motivated by the glamour and status they associate with real fur. The issue of fur as a status symbol came up in all focus groups, but was not cited extensively as a personal association with fur, except in the youngest focus group. Moreover, status also appeared to be an important association for the older group of fur owners, many of whom associated it with formalwear.

"(I would choose to own a real fur coat) just to say that I have a real fur." [Teenager, DC]

"As far as the status thing goes, I don't think having a real fur means you're better than anyone else... it's just the same." [Teenager, DC]

"I enjoy it, it keeps me warm in the winter and I do it for the fashion. If I go to a function, I would say that 80% of the women have some kind of fur coat, and I'm not going to walk in with a... you know, leather coat or a cloth coat... and I enjoy it, I really do." [Mid forties, fur owner, NY]

"I see it (real fur) as very formal." [Mid thirties, DC]

The telephone survey included statements that captured respondents' associations with fur garments. When asked to agree or disagree with the statement that "Real fur is unnecessary because other warm and elegant alternatives are available," 75% of respondents agreed, 52% of them strongly. Indeed, questioning the necessity of real fur was a consistent theme in the focus groups as well, although not a prominent one. One participant in the group of professional women in New York City remarked that "For me it has to do with the utility of the thing I'm using, and fur to me just seems like something that isn't needed."

Distinct Attitudes Relating to Real versus Faux Fur

The distinctions between real and faux fur garments were addressed at different lengths in all focus groups, with most of the discussion occurring in the groups comprised of professional women in New York City and teenagers in Washington, DC. By and large, participants in these focus groups had more negative associations with real fur than with faux fur, many remarking that real fur is “expensive,” “ostentatious,” or “disgusting.”

“(Real fur is) expensive for someone to buy, and I don’t see why you would have to go buy a real one when there’s a fake one...” [Teenager, DC]

“I haven’t give much thought about my feelings toward real fur, but I think I do know that my initial perception when someone walks into the room with real fur, when I take the time to think about it, I realize that that an animal was most likely killed for that fur. So that’s the reaction that I have when I’m confronted with that situation.” [Twenty-something, NY]

“I see it as the same (faux fur compared to real fur)... it just costs less.” [Teenager, DC]

“I don’t really like the way fur looks anyways. I would prefer it to be fake, I don’t think real I would like as much.” [Teenager, DC]

Again, many participants in the younger focus groups also had positive associations with real fur, with several remarking, prior to the materials evaluation, that if they were better off financially, they would be in the market for a real fur garment. This was most evident in the youngest focus group of teenagers in Washington, DC, several of whom echoed one participant’s comment that “if I had the money for it, I’d go ahead and get the real one.”

As mentioned previously, results from the telephone survey indicate that African-American women and younger respondents showed a much higher likelihood of purchasing real fur than other ethnic and age groups. African-American respondents, and to a lesser degree Hispanic respondents, were the most likely ethnic group to purchase all types of fur garments. African-Americans, in particular, were the only ethnic group that was more likely to buy real fur than they were to buy faux fur. Younger respondents are much more likely than their older counterparts to purchase all types of garments except those made entirely of real animal fur. In general, younger respondents seemed to have little issue with wearing real fur in general, but were averse to full garments made of real fur. Groups of a lower socio-economic status were much more likely to buy faux fur than real fur garments in the near future.

Mistaking Real Fur for Faux Fur

In all but the focus group of older fur owners, the statement was made by at least one participant that real fur is easy to mistake for faux fur, particularly when the garment in question is trimmed with real fur. Further, it seems that this confusion leads to fewer negative responses because the garment is often assumed to be faux fur. Because this issue relates primarily to full fur versus fur-trimmed garments, it will be discussed at greater length in a later section.

"I don't have any gut negative reaction. For one thing, if somebody came in wearing fur, I would not have any way of knowing if it was real or not. I suppose if I touched real and faux next to each other I could probably tell the difference, but just seeing them I would have no confidence in my judgment." [Thirty-something, NY]

FULL FUR VERSUS FUR-TRIMMED GARMENTS AND ACCESSORIES

General Observations

As with the previous section, the distinctions between full fur and fur-trimmed garments were discussed at greatest length with the focus groups comprised of professional women in New York City and teenagers in Washington, DC. Most participants in both focus groups had ruled out buying either a real full fur or a real fur-trimmed garment, with only slightly more interest in buying fur trim. There was some association with full fur garments being more dated and therefore less fashionable than fur trim garments.

Participants also made some positive associations with real fur trim over full fur garments in both focus groups, most often remarking that fur trim is "not as excessive" or "less ostentatious." Along those same lines, garments made entirely out of real fur were viewed as a sign of wealth and status, often a reaction that participants identified before any negative associations.

"I notice full-length fur coats because I can't afford one, and if somebody walks into the room with a full-length mink, I'm like 'what do you do for a living?'" [Early thirties, NY]

"When I see somebody with a full-length fur, I automatically think, 'wow, they must be rich.' And then I process that animals were probably killed." [Early thirties, NY]

As mentioned previously, results from the telephone survey generally indicate that there are distinct differences among different demographic groups when indicating likelihood of purchasing fur-trimmed garments versus purchasing full fur garments. Overall, respondents to the survey showed that they are significantly more likely to buy fur-trimmed garments (38%) than full fur garments (21%). Respondents in New York were significantly more likely to buy fur-trimmed (41%) than full fur garments (18%). By contrast, respondents in DC were much more likely to buy full fur garments (36% versus 22% for fur-trimmed garments). In both markets, about a third of respondents said that they are equally likely to buy full fur and fur-trimmed garments.

There is some indication that younger respondents are more likely than their older counterparts to purchase fur-trimmed garments over full fur garments. However, large refusal and "unsure" response rates for the youngest segment of 18-29 year-olds lead to higher margins of error, so caution should be used with this information. The most significant demographic difference occurred with African-American respondents, most of whom indicated that they are significantly more likely to buy full fur garments (47%) than fur-trimmed garments (22%). African-Americans were the only ethnic group to indicate such a preference, similar to DC residents in general. This can be explained in part by the higher incidence of African-Americans living in the DC area.

Real Fur Trim as a Byproduct of Full Fur Garment Production

As we have seen in previous research, many participants believe fur trim is a byproduct of the manufacturing process of full fur garments. In the focus group of professional women in NY, one participant remarked that she “would sort of guess that it (fur trim) might be the leftover pieces after you cut a bigger fur,” with what seemed like general agreement from the other participants. When prompted, many of the women in these two focus groups also thought that fur trim would be more humane relative to full fur for this reason. However, there were also some interesting retorts to this position, including comments about the fur industry’s care and treatment of animals.

“I think you have to probably put more effort into doing a traditional (full) coat. With trim it’s really small so you don’t have to have much fur. I think with the trim it gives a person (fur farmer) more leeway to be more cruel because you have to take less care of the fur.”
[Teenager, DC]

In the telephone survey, respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the statement that “Real fur trimmed garments and accessories are made from the leftovers of full fur garments.” In total, approximately a third (34%) of respondents agreed with this statement, while a third (31%) disagreed and another third responded that they are unsure. Some distinct groups showed more likelihood than their counterparts to disagree with the statement, indicating a denial of one of the more common fallacies uncovered in the focus groups. In particular, 48% of Hispanics disagreed with the statement, which is significantly higher than African-American and Anglo respondents. Younger respondents and those identified as of lower socio-economic status also showed slightly more likelihood of disagreeing with the statement.

Mistaking Real Fur Trim for Faux Fur

As indicated previously, participants in most focus groups mentioned that they might not know if a garment were real or faux upon seeing it, especially when talking about fur-trimmed garments. When asked to distinguish between their reactions to seeing either a real or a faux fur garment, respondents often commented that they would not likely notice. In other words, participants often claimed that when they see garments trimmed with fur, they assume it is fake. Therefore, this assumption permits owners of fur-trimmed garments to avoid the negativity that is sometimes associated with real fur. One can therefore wear real fur trim and still be considered acceptable or “politically correct” by friends and colleagues who might otherwise frown upon someone wearing a full fur garment. This is perhaps one reason why the fur industry is now pushing fur trim harder than ever.

“Probably where the difference is, in terms of any reaction I would have, I might be noticing something like a full-length coat, I’d be less likely to notice, or be inspired to react, by someone wearing an accessory.” [Twenty-something, NY]

“I don’t think I have any particular reaction either positive or negative, but with fur trim, I’m less likely to even notice it, whereas my mind might register if someone is wearing a full-length mink coat.” [Twenty-something, NY]

"I notice it (fur-trimmed garments) as fake fur, especially if I see somebody in my age group, I think 'that's not real.'" [Teenager, DC]

"(Have you ever associated fur trim with animals?) Not the trim... because I always think it's fake fur." [Teenager, DC]

THE PERCEIVED ORIGIN OF FUR, INCLUDING FARMING VERSUS TRAPPING

General Observations

A comparison with previous studies shows that, in the past decade, some changes seem to have occurred in the public's perception of the origin of real fur. In previous studies, participants showed a strong mix of reactions, including many who believed that ranching (and occasionally trapping) of animals for their fur was considered humane. However, during all four of this study's focus groups, only a few of the participants claimed that the fur industry would use humane methods to kill animals. Most participants believe that raising animals on farms is more humane than trapping animals in the wild, but for the most part they recognized that both practices were inherently cruel, and that the fur industry's primary interest is the "bottom line."

Interestingly, this reaction was most evident among the older group of fur owners, who universally acknowledged that the fur industry is a business, and therefore that maintaining humane standards would not be a priority for the industry. These results indicate a distinct shift from those in previous studies, in which most participants, fur owners in particular, believed that it was in the fur industry's self-interest to treat animals humanely.

When asked how real animal fur is obtained, participants responded with a variety of answers, most of them admitting that they didn't know. There was less understanding of the processes involved in raising animals on farms than trapping them in the wild, but nearly all participants acknowledged that there must be some level of cruelty involved in both practices. The younger focus group participants seemed to be more knowledgeable about the processes used to kill fur-bearing animals on farms, including gassing, neck-breaking, and electrocution. Older participants frequently referred to the process in generalities, and were less often able to name distinct methods of killing animals for their fur.

"They gas them, I think, or break their necks. 'If they're caught, then they're trapped and killed after they're caught by like breaking their necks or something, but if they're raised it's like a gas chamber.'" [Teenager, DC]

"I would imagine that it's a pretty gruesome process... I can only imagine that skinning an animal has to be fairly barbaric. When I see a fur garment, I think that something had to be skinned for it." [Early thirties, NY]

"I know it's a horrible fright, and I'm sure if I see something like that, it's going to make me think twice, maybe, to wear it or to buy it again. I've never seen it.... I guess deep down you don't want to know." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

Nearly all participants across all focus groups felt that farming animals for their fur would be more humane than trapping them in the wild, but again most respondents admitted that they did not know the answer and had not given the question much consideration. Additionally, some participants felt that it did not matter if the animal was caught in the wild or raised on a farm, because the end result is the same. And finally, a few respondents commented that farming may be less humane than trapping because of the living conditions animals experience on fur farms.

"Well I think there's two sets of them nowadays, you have the ones that are farm-raised, for the sole purposes of, you know... you farm raise them, mass produced. And then you have, in some countries, where people just hunt and live in the wild... I think by and large the United States would have ones that are farm-raised." [Thirties, DC]

"I would think farming would be more humane, maybe controlled by whatever governing body controls such things, just like in the food industry." [Late forties, NY]

"There are certain animal coats I wouldn't buy... if a wild animal coat was available, that I would not buy. That's usually why I buy mink over some other animal. A wild animal that's living on its own, like (with) trapping, I don't think that's right." [Fifties, NY]

"I don't find a difference... whether it's trapped or whether you're raising it. I think the animal is still an animal, so it doesn't make a difference. If you're going to wear fur, you know, just wear it, if not I don't think it makes a difference whether it's trapped or whether... the animal is still an animal." [Late forties, NY]

"I think farming might be crueler because you don't know the conditions, they could be in really small cages, they're left out in the cold..." [Teenager, DC]

These results were corroborated by the telephone survey, but the differences between respondents' perceptions of farming versus trapping proved to be much more subtle than in the focus groups. Overall, when asked to agree or disagree with the statement that "Trapping animals in the wild for their fur okay," 78% of all respondents disagreed (62% strongly) and 17% agreed (5% strongly). By comparison, when asked to agree or disagree with the statement that "Raising animals on factory farms for their fur is okay," 73% of respondents disagreed (51% strongly) and 22% agreed (7% strongly).

When confronted with the specifics of farming or trapping, telephone survey respondents held to the very slight belief that farming is more humane. Overall, when asked to agree or disagree with the statement that "Trapping animals in steel-jawed leg hold traps is inhumane," 83% of respondents agreed (69% strongly) and 14% disagreed (6% strongly). Similarly, when asked to agree or disagree with the statement that "Gassing, neck breaking, anal and genital electrocution, and other methods of killing used on fur farms are inhumane," 81% of respondents agreed (70% strongly) and 16% disagreed (10% strongly).

Participants in a couple of the focus groups went so far as to describe the process involved in either raising or trapping animals for their fur. In most cases, participants were not knowledgeable

about the processes of obtaining fur, but they occasionally showed evidence of deeper considerations in their responses.

"...the idea that often times, when animals are caught in traps, they go to great lengths and do rather awful, abstract things to themselves, like gnawing off a paw or something to get themselves out of the trap. So it's not so much what happens after the animal is dead than the process by which it is killed that sticks in my mind." [Early thirties, NY]

"I keep picturing that I see an animal trapped, the guy is hiding... he is just waiting for the animal to get caught. I just see that in my head, it's like a hunter." [Teenager, DC]

Across almost all focus groups, at least one participant in each group compared wearing real fur to eating animals, and in some cases to wearing leather. The meat (or "vegetarian") comparison was most prevalent in the focus group of older fur owners in New York City, when rationalizing or justifying their current ownership and use of real fur garments. Comparisons to meat and leather were made predominantly as rationalizations for wearing real fur, and specifically for remaining ignorant or the process used to obtain real fur.

"(I don't want to know how they obtain real fur.) If I buy a piece of meat from the supermarket, I don't want to know how they slaughtered it, how the animal was raised... it's just dead, it's available, it's something that I like to eat, and I buy it." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

GUILT, SHAME, AND FREEDOM OF CHOICE

General Observations

In every focus group, the notion of guilt or shame was occasionally associated with owning or wearing real fur garments. This reaction was most prevalent with the group of older fur owners, when discussing their negative associations with real fur. Often this guilt was a source of considerable conflict for current fur owners. A number of non fur-owners in the younger focus groups also remarked that they associate guilt with ownership of any real fur garments. Several participants across multiple groups mentioned having negative associations with fur or feelings of guilt from previously viewing footage of the clubbing of baby seals.

"I absolutely adore the feel of fur, the look of fur, the luxury of fur, the warmth of fur, but I have to be 100% honest, I haven't worn my fur coat in three years because I feel horribly guilty, and I struggled with the idea of getting rid of them because I'm not wearing them, and I don't want to get rid of them because I really do love them, but it's a struggle for me, and I will not buy another one..." [Late forties, fur owner, NY]

"I don't know how guilty, but I do feel guilty, and I haven't even worn my fur coat, it's been sitting in the closet for maybe ten years. I won't wear it. I tell you the truth, I have though a coat that's with a trim that's like with fur that I had from a couple years ago, three years, and that I've worn, I don't know why." [Late forties, fur owner, NY]

"Recently I have felt guilty seeing certain advertisements against killing the animals." [Early fifties, fur owner, NY]

"I just feel bad, because my mom owns a long mink fur jacket and I feel bad because I don't know how much dead animal skin is on there, and I just feel really uncomfortable, and she's passing it on to me, and I'm not wearing it at all... It's just more of the fact that if I was an animal, I wouldn't want to be killed just for my skin." [Teenager, DC]

In the telephone survey, it is interesting to note that coded responses for the open-ended question showed a strong lean toward cruelty- and guilt-based responses. When asked why they would choose to buy or not buy real fur garments, a large majority of respondents answered with "animal cruelty," "inhumane," or "animal rights" as their primary reason for not buying real fur garments. About half of all respondents gave one of these unaided answers.

Sources of Awareness, Sympathy, and Guilt

Many participants in the younger focus groups also identified specific sources of information that elicited either strong negative associations with real fur, or specific imagery that caused them to later exhibit feelings of guilt toward fur. Some participants also identified a general and growing feeling that fur is "just not politically correct," rather than citing any specific reason for having negative associations with fur ownership.

"The thing that I really can't get out of my mind is the imagery that PETA has made very available. I have a hard time getting that out of my mind when I see fur." [Thirties, NY]

"I really don't like fur because I think about how they kill the animals. I did a report in 9th grade on it, and I did a lot of research, and I really didn't like it." [Teenager, DC]

"I have a negative association because I'm supposed to have a negative association. Yeah, I mean, it's not politically correct to like fur. When I see someone in a full fur, I think 'ewww, not PC,' and I can't say that I like it even if I do because some of my close friends are so pro-animal and I don't want to offend them." [Thirties, NY]

Freedom of Choice Remains the Dominant Perspective

Despite broad and consistent personal associations with guilt and shame, nearly all participants across all focus groups held to the belief that fur is essentially a "freedom of choice" issue. This is explained in part by the consistent feeling that finished animal products are just "personal property," irrespective of the source of the fur. Even participants who were vehemently against the idea of purchasing fur themselves most often conceded that owning and wearing fur are ultimately personal decisions. Only occasionally did a participant voice the opinion that animals should not be killed for reasons of fashion.

"Everyone is entitled to their own opinions." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

"I don't feel I have to justify to anyone what I want to do. They're entitled to feel their way. They don't have to wear fur. If I want to wear it, it's my choice, just like everybody else feels..." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

"Everyone has a right to express their opinion no matter what it may be, and maybe the anti-fur activists, their right is to educate people. At the same time I think the people that choose to do so have the right to without feeling threatened." [Early thirties, NY]

"Killing an animal for sustenance is different than killing an animal so you can look good." [Mid thirties, DC]

These findings were strongly corroborated by the telephone survey, in which respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the statement that "People should be able to wear real fur if they want to." Overall, 76% of respondents agreed with this statement, with about half of those respondents agreeing strongly. Another question that also gets to the issue of one's "right" to wear fur asked respondents to agree or disagree with statement that "The sale of real fur should be banned in the U.S." This question yielded surprisingly different results, with 42% agreeing with the statement, 25% strongly). So while it appears that a reasonably large number of respondents support the idea of a ban on sales of real fur, on paper at least, when probed further nearly all participants and respondents defaulted to thinking of real fur as a personal choice.

While there were no clear geographical distinctions, it is interesting to note that two groups of respondents to the telephone survey stood out as least likely to believe in freedom of choice when it comes to killing animals for their fur. Generally speaking, Hispanics along with people of lower socio-economic status as separate groups both seem most sympathetic to the notion that it is wrong to kill animals for their fur. Sixty-two percent (62%) of the survey's Hispanic respondents (including Mexican-Americans and Latinos as well) agreed with the statement that "The sale of real fur should be banned in the U.S.," compared with 42% overall. Hispanics were also the *least* likely to agree with the statement that "People should be able to wear real fur if they want to," with 63% of Hispanics agreeing, compared to 75% overall.

Respondents identified as being of a lower socio-economic status were also less likely to believe in freedom of choice when discussing real fur. However, the differences for this group were considerably less stark than for Hispanic respondents. Forty-eight percent (48%) of the survey's lower socio-economic respondents agreed with the statement that "The sale of real fur should be banned in the U.S.," compared with 42% overall. When asked if they agree or disagree with the statement that "People should be able to wear real fur if they want to," 72% of lower socio-economic respondents agreeing, compared to 76% overall.

PERCEPTIONS OF ANTI-FUR ADVOCATES AND THE ANIMAL ADVOCACY MOVEMENT

General Observations

Most focus group participants had not interacted with anti-fur advocates, except in isolated instances. Furthermore, as mentioned previously, 64% of respondents to the telephone survey claimed to have "read, seen, or heard nothing at all about the debate over women wearing furs in the past six months," with an additional 21% claiming to have "read, seen, or heard only a little." It

is necessary to keep in mind this low overall exposure and awareness when evaluating perceptions of anti-fur advocates and the animal advocacy movement.

For the most part, participants did not exhibit overt hostility toward anti-fur advocates or other animal rights activists. The most notable exception to this occurred in the group of young professionals in DC, who displayed outright hostility toward specific animal advocacy organizations, particularly PETA. Off the record, more than one participant commented that “she hates PETA.” Consistent with previous research, even fur-wearing participants showed considerable tolerance for the rights of animal advocates to express their opinions. However, many participants remarked that animal advocates are known to be “outspoken and dramatic,” and that they sometimes “take things too far.” Many participants claimed to have witnessed or heard about incidents involving fur-wearers being doused with red paint. The association with red paint was mentioned without prompt in every focus group. Some participants in the older group of fur owners claimed to feel personally threatened by the idea of wearing fur in certain situations.

“I do believe that there are limits to where people are trampling over other peoples ability to move freely and walk on the street and feel safe, so I think that there are boundaries that have been crossed, which is a problem.” [Early thirties, fur owner, NY]

However, on balance most participants did not have negative perceptions of anti-fur advocates. Discussion of participants’ perceptions of advocates often led to a discussion of the freedom of choice issue, with nearly all participants in all focus groups echoing or agreeing with the remark that “everyone has a right to express their opinion.” Participants were quick to defend both the right to wear fur and the right to protest wearing fur.

“I think everybody should have a right to their own opinion and if they believe people shouldn’t wear fur then that’s their opinion. I remember one time I saw this lady throw a whole gallon of something on this lady’s fur coat, and that shouldn’t be done by anybody because she spent her money on that.” [Teenager, DC]

Older fur-wearing women were generally much less tolerant of the perspectives of anti-fur advocates than their younger counterparts in both markets. One participant in this focus group commented that she was afraid to go to Manhattan while wearing fur, for fear of being “sprayed or killed,” with many of the other participants providing some audible or visible agreement. However, it should be noted that some of those same participants showed some openness to the anti-fur message from family members and friends. Interestingly, the same participant who feared wearing fur in Manhattan had been heavily influenced by her anti-fur daughters to not purchase any more fur garments.

[Justifying fur ownership and usage] *“I wear it because it’s so cold, especially last winter. And other than that, my daughters keep nagging me to death. My step-daughters, they’re both anti-fur, they don’t wear fur. I promised my daughter I’ll never buy another one, which I didn’t.”* [Over 50, NY]

Respondents to the telephone survey were asked if they themselves would take on the role of anti-fur advocates when asked to agree or disagree with the statement that “I would write to a store or designer and ask them to stop selling or designing with fur.” While the majority (56%) disagreed with the statement, a surprising 39% of all respondents agreed with it. About half felt strongly about their responses. Notably, Hispanic respondents and to a lesser extent those of a lower socio-economic status showed some greater indication of willingness to write to a store.

Participants also noted a distinction between wearing real fur versus wearing leather or consuming meat. While many participants felt that one could reasonably wear leather and choose not to wear fur, this feeling did not hold true when talking about anti-fur advocates. For this latter group, participants felt that anything less than total consistency would be hypocritical.

III. DETAILED FINDINGS – REACTIONS TO MESSAGES AND MATERIALS

As stated previously, the ultimate research objective of this study is to evaluate the potential effectiveness of selected anti-fur messages and materials, and in particular a set of existing and prototype advertisements designed by The Fund for Animals. All of the actual materials evaluation occurred in the focus groups. Some advertising-related messages were also tested in the telephone survey, but these were limited to agree/disagree questions relating to one-line statements. See Appendix B for a complete list of materials evaluated in each focus group.

It should be noted that many of the materials evaluated for the current study received only minimal attention during some focus groups, due to time constraints and the desire to evaluate a wide range of messages and materials. In general, this evaluation process involved simply showing a print advertisement and allowing a semi-structured discussion to evolve. For more information on structure, content, and recruiting of the focus groups conducted for the current study, please refer to Section I of this report, or to the discussion guide provided in Appendix C.

PREVIOUS MATERIALS EVALUATION STUDIES

General Observations

A review of prior research that includes evaluation of anti-fur materials revealed that this is an area that requires much more in-depth study. In fact, very few messages, materials, and images currently used by animal advocacy groups have been evaluated with likely fur consumers. Some past research indicates certain trends, such as the observation that baby animals test better than fully-grown animals, and thus could be said to “work” more effectively. Similarly, past research confirms the widely-held belief that celebrities, by and large, make less effective spokespeople for issue advocacy. However, neither of these trends has been fully tested, and we should be careful not to make conclusions based on limited or dated research.

Consider the following: In one study conducted by Arcola Research on behalf of HSUS in 1992, the report suggested that one ad tested more effectively than the others. However, the researcher’s use of the term “effective” is clearly misleading. Few of the respondents said they would not wear fur because of the advertisement, while a few said it would make them “think” and others outright rejected the ad. Certainly the results indicate that this advertisement has potential, but to say that it is truly “effective” would require more and better (more equal) research.

The above ad – the one that focus group participants gravitated to in past research – was an advertisement featuring a baby red fox with the headline “Does your mother have a fur coat?” However, it is important to note that this advertisement was the only color ad shown (all others were black and white), and that it was almost twice as large as the other ads. These differences in color and format will very often introduce significant bias, making it difficult to provide any objective comparison of materials. Hence, HRC only screened ads as uniform, 8.5” x 11” semi-gloss photo prints.

One of the more recent studies, also sponsored by HSUS, includes an analysis of attitudes toward fur and fur trim garments, as well as anti-fur advertisements and materials. The study, conducted by Jacobs, Jenner, and Kent in June of 2001, draws several interesting conclusions, some of which appear to be valid and some of which represent leaps that may not be supported by the data. The following are excerpts from this report:

- *Most people are hiding from the reality of how real animal fur products are obtained. The only approach should be the direct, very graphic dramatization of the raising and killing process. The audience says it wants cute persuasion, but this will not have any sustained, meaningful impact on changing attitudes and behaviors.*
- *Ads showing celebrities or gratuitously seductive women have no appeal at all. Rather ads which "humanize" animals (showing they have families, feelings, similar qualities to "pets") as well as those which depict "pain or suffering" seem to have the potential for the greatest impact.*

Some of these conclusions have been corroborated to an extent in the current study, but it is very important to note that these bold statements represent extrapolations and generalizations beyond what is supportable from the data. In particular, the claim that "direct, very graphic" ads should be the "only approach" demonstrates a lack of understanding regarding message and audience targeting. Indeed, suggesting that any one approach is the "only" effective approach is almost never true. Additionally, while the "shame" ads evaluated in the previous study were clearly not liked by participants (and indeed were roundly dismissed in the current study as well), the leap should not be made that tapping the emotions of "guilt" or "embarrassment" never works.

REACTIONS TO PRO FUR PRINT ADS

General Observations

HRC tested a combination of five pro-fur print advertisements in this study (see Appendix B for the full list of materials). However, the materials were adjusted for each group in order to accommodate different time constraints and objectives. Due to a lack of time, the teenagers in Washington, DC were not shown any pro-fur print ads. Moreover, also due to time constraints, the older females in DC only took a cursory glance at these advertisements.

In both geographic markets, the older women were more accepting of and influenced by the pro-fur print ads. Without prompting, the older women in Washington, DC and the fur owners in New York immediately drew comparisons between the quality of the model-centric pro-fur print advertisements and the celebrity-centric anti-fur print advertisements. In both cases, the pro-fur ads featuring models emerged as the more effective materials.

"It's not eye-catching the way the Linda Evangelista or any of the other [pro-fur] ads are. I probably wouldn't give it a second look. I probably wouldn't bother to read it." [Over 50, fur owner, New York]

"The fur [ads] in the first couple of pages are glamorous. And they're selling glamour. They're not selling sex." [Early forties, DC]

Not surprisingly, the participants rejected or accepted the various ads primarily based on personal style and preference. For example, a Dolce and Gabbana fur trimmed purse ad tested positively with the group of New York fur-wearers, but fared very poorly with the younger professional women in New York because they didn't like the "style" of the purse. In general, a number of participants liked Blackglama's 2001 American Legend Linda Evangelista ad. This study also evaluated the Saga Furs ad (headlined "*Fur. Meant to be enjoyed. Go ahead. Live in it.*") used as a springboard to discuss the "freedom of choice" to wear fur, as described in detail in Section II.

REACTIONS TO ANTI FUR ADS / CELEBRITY AND SEXUALITY

General Observations

Four celebrity print ads from The Fund for Animals and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, featuring Jessica Biel, Marla Sokoloff, Pamela Anderson, and Charlotte Ross, were shown to participants in all focus groups. Wendie Malick's radio ad was played for all focus groups except the New York fur owners (for details on this ad, see the sub-section covering audio and video ads later in this section).

With the occasional exception of the Jessica Biel ad, most participants did not react positively to the celebrity genre of anti-fur advertisements. Comparatively speaking, the group of teenage participants in Washington, DC was the most receptive to The Fund's celebrity print ads, and in particular Jessica Biel. Unlike some of the participants in the older groups who considered the celebrity opinions "preachy" and "irrelevant," the teenage participants by and large did not voice this sentiment except when referring to the Wendie Malick radio ad.

PETA's appeals to sexuality were universally rejected, though surprisingly not condemned as sexist except in rare circumstances. Most participants simply laughed and ignored the message, sometimes commenting that it would be "more appropriate for men." Some of the older, more vocal participants negatively characterized Anderson and Ross as "sluts" or "tramps." However, generally speaking, participants across all groups seemed neither interested in nor affected by any of the celebrities' opinions.

"I think this is an ad that would catch men's attention, but I think for women, we'd be like, okay..." [Thirty-something, DC]

The Fund for Animals' Celebrity Ads

In general, the ads featuring Jessica Biel and Marla Sokoloff did not fair well with focus group participants, as one would expect given general attitudes toward the use of celebrities. However, it should be noted that there was a stark difference between the two ads, and the Jessica Biel proved far more viscerally effective than the Marla Sokoloff ad. In part this was due to Biel's apparent greater recognition among participants, particularly younger ones, several of whom commented on knowing her from the television show *7th Heaven*. By contrast, only a couple participants across all groups claimed to recognize Marla Sokoloff from *The Practice*. One fur owner, upon reading the Biel ad, commented on the text's description of fur farming:

"I just learned something new 'farmed,' the way it's being described here is very, very cruel. And when you read something like that ... it kind of makes me cringe when I read that part how they treat the animal." [49, fur owner, New York].

This is significant because the fur owners were quick to draw ethical distinctions between trapping and farming. Thus, upon reading the Jessica Biel text, one fur owner learned that fur farming is also inhumane, which contradicted the general consensus among fur owners.

However, despite this difference in reaction, neither ad was considered to be particularly effective by participants, and most claimed they would not read the ad if flipping through a magazine. Many participants voiced a sentiment similar to one who said she was "not interested in what they (the celebrities) have to say."

"Well I don't know who she [Jessica Biel] is, but the big print that caught my eye that, you know, the animal[s] have the right to keep their fur, which I agree with her, but I'm going to still wear my fur." [Over 50, fur owner, New York]

"What caught my eye on this is her [Jessica Biel's] face, obviously, and I recognized her. And I read the big headlines and after that I wouldn't read anything more than that because I already know what she stands for and I'm not interested in what she has to say." [Over 50, fur owner, New York]

"Too much information... a terrible ad [Jessica Biel]. In terms of advertising, we live in a soundbite society right now. We get so much information now; no one's going to read this unless they have a passion for it... I would ignore it." [Early forties, DC]

"Who is this chick and why do I really care what her opinion is? Is she an authority... I think not.... Maybe she was getting paid to say this." [Late thirties, DC]

The Marla Sokoloff ad received only a lukewarm reaction, with most participants not exhibiting strong feelings. And those who did express their opinions were most often critical. Surprisingly, several participants in multiple groups criticized the Sokoloff ad for being too sexual.

"I find that image a little bit bothersome because, I don't know, she's showing cleavage, it looks a little more sexualized than is appropriate for the issue." [Early thirties, NY]

"Should this be a Victoria's Secret ad? I would look to see if this had 'Victoria's Secret' on it somewhere. If it didn't, I would flip the page." [Early forties, DC]

While the sentiment in the youngest group of teenagers could be characterized as most positive toward these celebrity ads, the sentiment among the group of older professional women in Washington, DC was significantly more hostile. Even the Jessica Biel ad, which fared best among all celebrity-based anti-fur ads, seemed to do poorly with this group. As we will discuss later, this DC group also had a more favorable response than other groups toward Wendie Malick's radio ad, though no internal consensus merged. It should be noted that, for most participants, the fact that

Malick is a celebrity did not hold as much weight as did what she was saying, how she said it, and most importantly, the speed and tone of the music.

Credibility of Celebrities is a Key Issue

Conventional wisdom and past research holds that celebrities are not all equally effective issue advocates. Rather, celebrity spokespeople are usually judged *individually*, as the public deems particular celebrities credible only if the spokesperson is perceived to have done his or her homework on the particular issue. The current study largely corroborates this conventional wisdom. PETA's nude or semi-nude ads featuring Pamela Anderson and Charlotte Ross were ignored or dismissed, in part because none of the participants were convinced of their expertise on the issue. These particular celebrities were therefore often considered inappropriate for the *context* of such issue ads.

"If it was somebody who you could respect doing the ad – let's say that like Albert Einstein was still alive and doing ads – OK, well that's somebody whose opinion that I might respect a little bit. But I don't know who this woman [in this case Wendie Malick] is, I don't know what her background is, I don't know what her education is, I don't know if she's a Ph.D. in veterinary medicine or if she's an actress. I don't know who she is so therefore ... she has no credibility with me." [Late thirties, DC]

"I think that [with celebrities] there's got to also be some personal investment in the cause." [Late twenties, NY]

Interest in the spokesperson's personal background and history as an issue advocate was regularly mentioned as an important detail in these focus groups. Those who accepted Jessica Biel as an anti-fur spokesperson consistently referred to 7th Heaven's "warm and friendly," family-oriented appeal. In fact, participants in multiple demographics groups showed indications of the importance of context-sensitive advertising.

"That's why I said I would read the paragraph. Because I would want to know more about her [Biel] and why she is making this stand. It doesn't say anything about her (Biel and Sokoloff ads). So she is telling me what I should think. And if someone's going to tell me what I should think, I want to know what they're backed up on. They could be paid, they could be getting something out of it." [Late twenties, NY]

"I like her [Biel]! Yeah, she's from 7th Heaven. I just like her personally I like how they use a celebrity to get their point and how they use the – I don't know, perfect – she's from just the right like show to say that. You can't take someone from a show that has fur on it to this show. The show she's in is perfect. It's so warm and homey, you never see them like walking around in fur coats or walking around talking about killing a fox." [Teenager, DC]

Notes on Design, Structure, Headlines, and Logos

For the most part, the design of The Fund's Biel and Sokoloff ads (both of which are similarly designed) was well-received, yet not extraordinary. Several participants across multiple groups

commented that the ads looked like product advertisements. The Sokoloff ad's design received significantly more criticism, in part because of the perceived suggestive nature of her pose, but also because of "bad lighting" and a "blurrier image."

In the two New York groups, two individuals – both unprompted – noted the added credibility provided by the multiple logos, which included all member organizations of the Fur Free Alliance. Note that the multiples logos appeared along the bottom of the Jessica Biel advertisement only (in contrast, the Marla Sokoloff ad was screened with The Fund for Animals' logo).

"Yeah [it is credible] because if you read it's got the Humane Society's logo, and this Fur Free, and whatever's foundation for the prevention of cruelty to animals... sponsored the ad. They probably paid for it so it's most likely true." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

"Well the first one (Jessica Biel) is stronger cause you've got more sponsors. (A handful of other participants then claim to have noticed this as well)" [Early thirties, NY]

Group sponsorship, including the use of multiple logos, was observed to positively impact the credibility of advertisements in the two focus groups conducted New York. Participants felt that the information provided on a co-sponsored advertisement was more likely to be credible because multiple organizations were willing to put their names and reputations on the line. However, it should be noted that, as with celebrities, participants' perceptions of the individual sponsor organizations can also have a significant impact on perceived credibility of an advertisement. Given that this concept was tested only in passing, and only with these two ads, more research should be conducted on the use of multiple logos in anti-fur ads.

REACTIONS TO ANTI FUR PRINT ADS / APPEALS TO SYMPATHY

General Observations

In total, nine anti-fur advertisements were screened that, in general, appealed to participants' sense of sympathy for fur-bearing animals. Six of these ads were screened for all focus groups, while the other three ads were each shown in only one or two groups.

The Fund for Animals has numerous existing and prototype print ads in this genre. In addition to The Fund's original bobcat print advertisement, participants were shown a prototype variation that includes a larger picture with shortened copy and a rephrased headline. Participants in all groups were also shown a series of three Fund prototype advertisements, each of which included an appeal to sympathy in combination with images of fur-bearing animals of different species. These advertisements included images of a rabbit, a raccoon, and an orphaned red fox.

Also screened with participants in the current study was PETA's caged red fox ad, entitled "Just Think, You Only Need 29 More to Make a Fur Coat." This ad, which seemed to do well with most participants, was shown to all four focus groups. Finally, four HSUS print ads in this genre were also shown to participants in several groups. However, it should be noted that these ads – including the "I'm Not a Coat" series and the "Canines" comparison ad – were dropped from the

materials evaluation after the first two focus groups due to time constraints and a lackluster response from participants. It was decided to alter the materials list to prioritize forthcoming print advertisements from the Fur Free Alliance's *Design against Fur* competition.

The Fund for Animals' Sympathy Ads and Prototypes

Most of the New York fur owners identified the bobcat design as the most effective print ad. Participants in the groups of older fur owners and young professionals in New York City immediately released audible sounds of sympathy when seeing this ad. Moreover, several fur owners had visceral comments corroborating this sympathetic reaction. Participants in the older group of fur owners almost unanimously agreed with bobcat ad's headline that animals need their fur more than people. The group of young professionals in New York experienced very similar gut reactions upon viewing the bobcat ad.

"When I see ads like this I have a guilty conscience. It bothers me a little bit." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

"It's a baby, it's precious looking, and it looks like a house cat." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

"I don't think anything invokes the sympathy like this." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

"I think this is a more effective ad than the girl [Jessica Biel and Marla Sokoloff]. I just, I want to go pet it. I would just want to pet it and hold it. I think it's more, you put a face to the fur." [Twenty-something, NY]

"It looks just like a household cat. That looks more like a domesticated cat than a wild animal." [Early thirties, fur owner, NY]

The original bobcat advertisement includes a declarative headline, "She Needs Her Fur Coat More Than You Do." In contrast, the prototype bobcat features a similar headline, but rephrased as a question: "Do You Need a Fur Coat More than She Does?" Most of the focus group participants across all demographic groups gravitated towards the prototype ad's shorter text and larger picture, but preferred the original's declarative headline over the interrogative.

"I think I like the statement better [from the original bobcat ad] but I might read this one [the prototype bobcat ad] because it's shorter (multiple heads nod in agreement and several people say 'yeah')." [Late twenties, NY]

"I like the first one better - the statement - but I would read the second one because it's shorter." [Early thirties, NY]

"I just saw 'necks broken'.... I'm one of those people that like a word just catches my eye." [Late twenties, NY]

Several of the participants in the older group of fur owners commented on the bobcat's "sad" look and its eyes.

"[It has a] sad look, like you know, 'what are you doing to me?' kind of thing rather than the other two pictures of the other two animals." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

"See the cat stands out. I am more sympathetic with the cat for some reason. I don't know if it's the eyes." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

"As soon as I saw this I got a little bit upset. I have a pet, I have a dog. I'm not a cat lover but when I saw this I saw the eyes.... It looks like a baby." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

"This is the only one [the bobcat] that makes me feel some guilt. The other ones don't." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

In order to evaluate participants' responses to using different species of animals, The Fund also created prototype ads featuring a rabbit, a raccoon, a chinchilla, and two fox prints. The rabbit prototype did not seem to resonate with most focus group participants. Several women immediately linked the rabbit to food and hunting, while others seemed to think of raccoons more as pests, which mitigated the appeal to sympathy. Unlike with the bobcat prints, which featured the cat's large, innocent eyes, participants seemed unable to connect with the rabbit image, and the ad therefore elicited weaker responses.

"When I look at the rabbit, and [you] see, the way I was raised, my father used to go hunting for rabbits, so we used to eat the rabbits ... so it doesn't bother me." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

"I ate the rabbit and I like it too." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

The Fund's orphaned fox prototype featuring the headline "Does your mother have a fur coat?" resonated best with older New York fur owners. Upon flipping to this ad, several participants remarked that it is both "extremely sad" and "very good." When asked, none of the fur owners (who are all mothers) had any problem with the ad's connection to motherhood.

"It makes you think." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

"It makes you feel bad that they're killing this poor little fox's mother." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

Among the group of older fur owners, this ad's only potential problem arose over the issue of trapping animals versus raising them on farms.

"But this tells us it's done in the wild. And I think we can differentiate between catching animals in the wild where they're defenseless maybe, then farm raising them for a purpose. It's not that it's more wrong than the other, it's just that you can understand it better." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

The orphaned fox prototype was not as well-received by the groups of young professionals in both Washington, DC and New York City. Several participants in these groups immediately called the ad "stupid" and criticized its tone, with those in the DC group being more vocally critical, while those in the New York group tended to notice and take offense to the mother connection.

"It just doesn't do anything for me. When you start getting into these stupid questions, you know, you're really thinking that the reader is stupid. I think you have to look at your reader as an intellectual." [Early thirties, DC]

"It seems like someone's preaching to me and I don't like that in an ad." [Early thirties, DC]

"Well, say I don't have a fur coat but my mother does. His mother lost hers - so was I supposed to go rip the fur off my mother's back?" [Late twenties, DC]

"I don't know, they're attacking my mom here." [Early thirties, NY]

"Yeah, I don't like bringing my mom into it." [Early thirties, NY]

Similarly, The Fund's raccoon prototype ad did not test very well with these participants. Although some participants initially made audible noises of sympathy, participants in most groups subsequently criticized the raccoon advertisement on the basis of unpleasant real world encounters with raccoons.

"When I first turned the page I thought it was very cute and then when I continued to look at it I started thinking about my associations with raccoons (at this time, another participant nods her head in agreement) going through garbage cans and then its claws are like right there [prominently displayed in the center of the picture] and the background, somehow it looks wild because of the light around the fuzzy fur." [Early thirties, NY]

"I have no empathy for raccoons (someone else immediately says 'they have rabies.') [Late twenties, DC]

"They're pesty in this area. I mean I'd like to get rid of the raccoons near my house." [Early thirties, fur owner, NY]

"I think it's a rabid raccoon because it's out in the daytime (multiple heads then nod in agreement and several say 'that's right')." [Late twenties, NY]

"Even the rabbit was more effective because I think of a rabid raccoon." [Early thirties, NY]

PETA's "Just Think, You Only Need 29 More to Make a Fur Coat"

The New York fur wearers frequently made the distinction between trapping and farming as a justification for ownership of fur. Consider one fur owner's reaction to the weakness in The Fund for Animals' orphaned fox prototype:

"But this tells us it's done in the wild. And I think we can differentiate between catching animals in the wild where they're defenseless maybe, then farm raising them for a purpose. It's not that it's more wrong than the other, it's just that you can understand it better." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

However, on this note, the issue of "defenselessness" (as phrased by the previously cited fur owner) was also raised during the screening of PETA's ad, entitled "Just Think, You Only Need 29 More to Make a Fur Coat." From the research, this seems to be an important point because PETA's ad was the only print ad that featured a picture of a defenseless *farmed* fur-bearing animal. In other words, all of the other prints portrayed animals in the wild, or the carcasses of fur-bearing animals post-slaughter. By comparison, PETA's "Just Think" ad, demonstrates a small slice of life

on a fur farm; it shows a small, dark cage housing a confined, cornered, and distressed animal. One immediately notices how the fox's ears are positioned behind the animal's head. The teenagers in Northern Virginia immediately recognized the significance of this context:

"I like this ad because it's in a cage and it's vicious so we know what it goes through to make fur." [Teenager, DC]

"The fact that it's in a cage and just the number (of animals used)." [Teenager, DC]

"The animal definitely looks like a wild animal. It seems they definitely captured it and abused it. I think 'why is that animal abused?'" [Teenager, DC].

"I read it because of what it said – the cage."

Indeed, this PETA ad possessed the most "stopping power," which for our purposes is defined as visibly making the reader pause and think, particularly among the older group of fur wearers. Even among the more cynical professionals in Northern Virginia, who were not visibly moved by other anti-fur print materials, PETA's ad provoked significant remarks.

"(Passionately) Oh, it's awful! That's awful! I mean, that's sobering! That's a realistic – you can realistically picture it now!" (Over 50, fur owner, NY).

"Yeah, it is pathetic, because again it's a bad picture. The cage really kind of does it." (Young professional, DC).

"It's just a pathetic looking animal and I empathize with that." (Young professional, DC).

"To me this was the most sympathetic one out of all the ads. Well, because first it reminded me of a dog, it's a large picture, and just the wording 'Just Think You Only Need 29 More to Make a Fur Coat,' and the please don't by fur." (Over 50, fur owner, NY).

Appeals to Shame

In all four focus groups, participants were shown HSUS's print ad featuring a woman wearing a full-length fur coat, hiding her face with her purse. The ad is entitled, "You Should Be Ashamed to Wear Fur." The ad was universally rejected. Across multiple focus groups, the ad was criticized for the same reason, namely that participants did not feel that any advertisement should tell them or others how to feel. The teenage participants especially did not like the ad's dictatorial tone; they rejected its message because they perceived it as telling them what to do.

"I don't like the words that they choose. Because they other[s] like made you feel sad. This one is like telling you [that you] should feel this way (at this point the participant starts passionately waving her finger) then you don't want to feel that way." [Teenager, DC]

"I don't like it because I don't think any ad should tell you what your opinion should be about." [Teenager, DC]

Even among participants exhibiting strong anti-fur positions or feelings of compassion toward animals, it was firmly believed that fur is a “freedom of choice issue,” and that shame as a tactic was inappropriate. Reactions among the older women followed a similar pattern found in the group of teenage participants. Reactions were strongest among the group of young professionals in New York City. Early on in this group, participants were divided into two camps. One group, the majority, was unapologetic about wearing fur. The other camp, limited to only a couple of participants, expressed guilt over purchasing fur.

“It makes me feel like it’s too strong a statement. Not being a fur wearer I still think it’s a little bit extreme.” [Late twenties, DC]

“I think it’s rude.” [Early thirties, DC]

“This is terrible. It’s their opinion and they shouldn’t judge me with what I think.” (Over 50, fur owner, NY]

“I’d just flip right past it.” [Early thirties, DC]

“You know, I wouldn’t give it much attention. I’m not ashamed to wear fur.” Over 50, fur owner, NY]

“I’m not ashamed at all. This ad doesn’t bother me at all.” [Over 50, fur owner, NY).

Fur owners who had previously expressed guilt over wearing fur came out strongly against the notion of shame and expressed comments similar to participants in other groups.

“I have a lot of sympathy for the animals but an ad like this is kind of stupid to me. Because I don’t think anyone who wants to wear their fur should be ashamed if that’s what they want to do. I think it goes too far.” [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

“(Very passionately) I think it’s offensive. It makes me angry at them for trying to make people feel bad There’s no question there’s freedom of choice but this is a negative ad.” [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

Hence, those fur owners who were most easily moved by other anti-fur approaches were equally – or more – critical of HSUS’ shame ad. In other words, they were no less critical of appeals to shame than the unapologetic fur wearers.

REACTIONS TO ANTI FUR PRINT ADS / GRAPHIC AND CRUELTY

General Observations

HRC screened two graphic print advertisements created by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), including the Sophie Ellis Baxter ad headlined “Here’s The Rest of Your Fur Coat,” and the skinned fox ad entitled “Fur: No Skin Off Your Back.” On the whole, these ads tested well with both groups of teenage participants in Washington, DC, and the young professionals in New York City. Among older women, including fur owners, these ads produced mixed results.

When several participants in the group of young professional noted that they had reached "advertising saturation," meaning that they could no longer distinguish between different types of messages, the moderator skipped ahead to the graphic portion of the study. Immediately upon showing PETA's Baxter ad, the moderator returned to the same participant who had just claimed that the images were blurring into each other.

"That's effective. (Several others participants verbally agree). It's shock factor. I cringe. I feel bad for the animal. So yeah, I think it's effective." [Early thirties, NY]

The teenagers in Washington, DC made similar remarks, as did some participants in other groups, though to lesser extents. Immediately upon screening the ad, several of the participants in the group of teenage participants released an audible gasp. Generally speaking, at this point in most of the groups, many of the participants agreed that they felt the Baxter ad was, thus far, the most effective anti-fur material they had seen.

"Yeah. This is so effective." [Teenager, DC]

"You see like a model holding a carcass. It's like 'why is she doing that?'" [Teenager, DC]

Upon screening the second graphic print ad, PETA's "No Skin off Your Back" ad featuring a skinned fox, one participant in the New York group of professional women immediately made a strong, unsolicited remark.

"Scarred for life, thank you. I will never look at a fur coat the same way. That was my initial reaction to this ad. Because when I look at a fur coat, I will always have this image in my head for the rest of my life." [Early thirties, NY]

This comment is particularly interesting because the participant used the exact same words as one of the teenage participants in Washington, DC. At the end of the graphic video section in that focus group, this teenage participant noted how she had been "scarred for life." Similar comments that corroborate the generally strong impression made by the graphic ads on young professionals continued to flow from the group discussion.

"This one is more disturbing than the previous one (Baxter)." [Early thirties, NY]

"(In a clearly disturbed voice) Ugh. I don't have any words to describe it. I just think it's disturbing." [Early thirties, NY]

"My first thought was 'Why did they leave the fur on the paws?' Isn't that strange? I mean, why did they leave the front still on?" [Early thirties, NY]

PETA's "No Skin off Your Back" ad was the only graphic print screened for the fur owners group. These women were initially shocked and disturbed, and they expressed these reactions verbally. Compared to the younger groups, more of these older participants claimed that they would not look

at the ads, and few would give it more than a glance. Moreover, even though the majority of fur owners found the ad disgusting, many did not see the linkage to cruelty.

"Oh that's horrible. I wouldn't even look at that." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

"I don't get that it's inhumane or cruelty. I don't know. I just know that they took the skin off to make an item, a garment. Now, I want to say maybe it died of natural causes - I hope he wasn't tortured - I don't know. I don't have the answers to that but how I would justify it in my mind is, you know, hopefully it doesn't happen often." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

The reactions to both of PETA's graphic print ads were similar among the group of young professional women in Washington, DC. However, participants in this demographic group were also quicker to dismiss these ads, sometimes criticizing the messenger.

"I am more just disgusted. I've lost the sympathy 'cause I'm just so appalled (another woman nods in agreement)." [Early thirties, DC]

"I would say it's almost like flag burning, you know. If you have to sit there and resort to such overt, potentially dramatic tactics then you need to fine tune your message better." [Late twenties, NY]

"Give me a break." [Early thirties, DC]

Discussion of Chinchilla and Fox Ads

Two additional graphic advertisements evaluated with these groups included prototype ads developed by The Fund for Animals testing essentially the same concept with different images of animals. In the first prototype, the ad features a small chinchilla, with the copy text organized to look like the contents and directions one might find on product packaging. The ad graphically describes the process of killing animals on farms, making reference to genital electrocution. The second prototype ad has much the same layout and text, but the image features a fox.

In general, the prototype chinchilla ad tested very poorly with most participants in all focus groups. Many participants outright rejected this ad, in part because they were unfamiliar with a chinchilla. Specifically, the fur owners in New York universally rejected the chinchilla ad because they said it looked like a "rodent." Off the record, one fur owner told the moderator that "nobody would feel sympathy for a rat-like creature." Based on this feedback from the first group, a new prototype with similar design characteristics and a more sympathetic creature was produced, namely a baby red fox using the same design and text as the chinchilla prototype.

Both the chinchilla and red fox prototypes were evaluated in the subsequent three focus groups. Among the group of young professionals in DC, the chinchilla also was roundly criticized and dismissed. The group of teenage respondents, also in DC, held that the ad was slightly more effective than with the other group, in large part because a few participants were familiar with chinchillas. The red fox prototype fared only marginally better with this group. Later, the headline

“Compassion is the new fashion” was added to the fox advertisement, which in turn yielded slightly more positive reactions among the older women in DC (as compared with the original prototype).

REACTIONS TO ANTI-FUR AUDIO AND VIDEO ADS

General Observations

In addition to the numerous anti-fur print ads evaluated in the current study, several audio and video segments, including some public service announcements (PSAs), were also aired and screened for participants. Because of significant differences in peoples’ attention and reaction to different media formats, evaluation of these ads is presented in this separate section rather than in the celebrity or graphic sections above, where they would otherwise belong.

All else being equal, video should be considered a more effective medium than print for conveying most types of messages. This is particularly true of messages appealing to cruelty, where a textual description of the processes involved in killing animals for fur will rarely, if ever, stand up to a video segment showing the same processes. Caution should be used when comparing the results of evaluating print advertisements with the results of evaluating video or audio ads, and it should be acknowledged that videos in particular begin on an unequal footing.

The video segments screened for the current study include one implicitly pro-fur piece, a 30-second piece from the VH-1 special *The Fabulous Life of JLo*. Two anti-fur segments from different sources were also shown and evaluated during the focus groups, including segments from API’s “The Cull of the Wild” and FaunaVision’s “Faces of Fur 2001.” Each of the graphic segments provides graphic examples of fur trapping and farming, respectively. Note that not all segments were aired or screened in all focus groups (details are provided in each sub-section). For a full list of materials, see Appendix B.

“The Fabulous Life of JLO” (VH-1 special)

VH-1’s “The Fabulous Life of JLO” was screened for two focus groups, including the young professionals in New York City and the teens in Washington, DC. In both groups, the majority of participants remarked that the description of JLO’s collection of real fur garments and accessories was “ostentatious” and “excessive.” Specific unprompted comments criticizing JLO’s fox fur eyelashes for their opulence were heard in both groups.

Wendie Malick Radio Ad (The Fund for Animals)

The Wendie Malick radio PSA was aired and discussed in all but the older group of fur-owners in New York City. Virtually all participants in the study felt this was an ineffective ad, for a variety of reason. Several participants in each group characterized the PSA as “boring,” “wordy and monotonous,” or “slow.” More than one participant also remarked that the opening country guitar music did not fit Malick’s voice, and was especially problematic for establishing the ad’s pace and

holding the audience's attention. Hence, most of these women claimed they would either not listen to the message or would change the radio station upon hearing this PSA.

"(When) I heard, 'Hi, I'm Wendie Malick,' I'm like, 'who the hell are you?' Flip. (motions hand as though changing the station)." [Late thirties, DC]

"As soon as I heard the guitar I would change it." [Anglo, late twenties, NY]

"It's this typical music for this sing-songy, kind of preachy, like "don't do this, don't do drugs, don't buy this." [Teenager, DC]

"I think the music in the background and talking about gnawing off their own limbs, I just think that's a bit silly, having that sort of peaceful music in the background and calm voice." [Early twenties, DC]

A few participants in the older groups of professional women in NY and DC remarked that they did like the ad, and specifically claimed to appreciate Malick's non-accusatory tone. However, these participants were the small minority, and the ad did not prompt them to discuss any of the content from the announcement itself.

"The Cull of the Wild" (Animal Protection Institute)

The first three minutes of API's "Cull of the Wild" was screened exclusively for the older group of fur owners in New York City. During the earlier part of the session, the moderator had established near consensus from participants that it is inhumane to trap wild animals for their fur. Almost all participants in the group of fur owners watched the entire video segment. Those who found it most difficult to watch had repeatedly expressed feelings of guilt towards buying and wearing fur earlier in the group.

(Sadly) "Well, I don't know. It kind of turns you off. I think it's cruel. And it doesn't make me want to go out and buy another fur coat or anything made of fur." [Late forties, fur owner, NY]

Two or three of the most hardened fur wearers – those who seemed least moved by previous anti-fur arguments and materials – *rationalized* this footage as irrelevant to their wardrobe and lifestyle, or claimed that their garments were made exclusively of farmed animals.

"Like I said, we know all these things. We've seen them on the television shows. Seeing it over again, I'm not going to [not] buy any fur coat for the reason that I don't like fur coats at this point in my life. So it doesn't make any difference." [Over 50, fur owner NY]

"Everything that we've seen has really been a wild animal. Not what happens on a farm, which is mostly what we all wear. I mean, [when] we wear fur, we mostly wear a farm-raised animal, not a wild animal (multiple heads nod in agreement)." [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

"It bothers me. I think it's horrible. But again, it's not going to stop me wearing fur." [Over 50, fur owner NY]

In other words, while some older fur owners and wearers claimed to disapprove of certain methods of obtaining fur – namely, trapping animals in the wild – and most did not seem to personalize the footage to the extent necessary to provoke behavior change. “Cull of the Wild” caught participants’ attention, but was too easily dismissed because most claimed that the fur garments they personally own are exclusively made of farm-raised animals, or that trapping itself is a rare method of obtaining fur in the U.S. This general idea was echoed in other groups as well.

“Faces of Fur 2001” (FaunaVision)

Segments from FaunaVision’s “Faces of Fur 2001” compilation video were screened in all four focus groups. These segments contained the most graphic anti-fur material included in the current study. Participants in all four focus groups watched the segment of HSUS’s undercover footage showing dog and cat farming in Asia. However, while the older group of fur owners watched segments of baby seals being clubbed by hunters, participants in the other three groups watched undercover scenes of fox and mink farms. This adjustment was made after it was specifically noted that the first group lacked a catalyst for discussing farm-raised animals.

In all four groups, participants reported the German Shepherd slaughter as the most disturbing segment. However, this scene also provoked the most universal confusion of any video segment of the video, with several participants expressing disbelief that it was related to fur. In each group, the moderator first established that the majority of participants failed to catch the linkage to fur farming. Participants were then asked to assume this dog was killed for its fur. Finally, assuming such fur farms and practices existed, would participants consider them acceptable?

“We don't know why they were killing it. Maybe the dog was sick, or maybe the dog just - I don't know why they would kill it?” [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

“No, it's not acceptable to kill an animal in that fashion. If it's an industry they should follow certain guidelines to be humane as possible.” [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

“What bothers me is not necessarily why they were killing the animal, but the way they were killing the animal. I just don't think they should have put the animal through that kind of torture.” [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

In the face of such footage, where a domestic animal is graphically slaughtered, even the pro-fur participants passed judgment against animal cruelty. However, there were limitations to these judgments, most notably the dominant confusion elicited by the German Shepherd segment. The judgments were further shaped and rationalized by the belief that such cruel practices do not occur in the U.S., and by welfare concerns exhibited only for certain species.

“(Would I buy a coat made out of) a dog? Well, I'm a dog lover. A wild animal? No. Mink, I guess I don't know why I have a different perception of mink, because I always considered it raised on a fur farm. But not a wild animal. A wild animal, I don't think it's right.” [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

“Faces of Fur 2001” / Inconsistencies, Contradictions, and Changes in Perception

All participants condemned the cruelty that they saw in this segment; none would defend the treatment and conditions demonstrated in the video. In fact, only upon viewing this particular segment would certain participants express an outright contradiction or change in perception toward fur. Moreover, many of the participants who had not previously expressed any strong anti-fur sentiments later adjusted their opinions after viewing this video segment. In the first example, a fur owner from New York admitted to rethinking her opinion after viewing the FaunaVision segment (along with the Bobcat ad). Immediately after the screening, the moderator asked how the graphic footage “changes the equation” for this self-identified “fur-lover.”

“Why would they kill them that way? That would be my first question? Why be so cruel?”
[Over 50, fur owner, NY]

Earlier, the same participant had very strongly questioned the credibility of the Jessica Biel and Marla Sokoloff anti-fur print advertisements. In this case, it seems that the video documentation was sufficient to overcome the credibility gap of the print advertisement. Moreover, on the questionnaire (which asks the participants to name the most effective ad of the focus group) the same participant wrote:

“I found the tape very disturbing and the ad of the bobcat made me re-think my feelings towards furs.” [Over 50, fur owner, NY]

In another example, after watching the implicitly pro-fur JLO segment described earlier, one teen defended the position that even the excessive consumption of fur is merely a personal issue. The teen likened such fur to just another luxury item – that is, a material object not unlike a “Ferrari.” However, after viewing “Faces of Fur 2001,” the moderator decided to revisit this position and asked the participant if she would still equate real furs with cars. The teen confirmed that she would not.

Despite such occasional reversals and even apparent contradictions, all but very few of the participants held firmly to the belief that owning and buying real fur remains a matter of personal choice, as discussed earlier.

“Faces of Fur 2001” / Comparisons by Age

The graphic video segments from the FaunaVision footage were clearly the most viscerally effective material evaluated in the focus group comprised of teenagers. As the moderator screened increasingly graphic footage for these participants, they exhibited growing support of the anti-fur position. The teenage participants, all of whom watched the footage, seemed to agree universally that graphic materials were the most likely provoke thought about the issues.

“I think it’s the most effective because for me I personally need – I have to actually see what happens.” [Teenager, DC]

"Because it shows you actually like what they are going through and like what they look like." [Teenager, DC]

"I think that makes me the most opposed to fur (other heads nod in agreement and someone says 'yeah, definitely')." [Teenager, DC]

"It was really graphic. It just made you really see.... it's different, how much pain like they went through." [Teenager, DC]

This video footage also seemed to work well with the group of young professionals in New York City. Unlike the group of teenage participants one of the young professional participants left the room at the moderator's warning (before the tape started) and several participants put their heads down during the footage. Many of the participants exhibited tense body language, suggesting they were uneasy watching the footage. Overall, the group of young professionals was also more critical of the FaunaVision video's text and graphics.

Changes in opinion in the face of graphic video evidence did not occur in groups, and seemed particularly unlikely in the group of young professionals in Washington, DC. However, one likely fur buyer in this group noted that the FaunaVision video segment was stronger than the print ads because it held her attention – even though she claimed to only be bothered by the skinning of the German Sheppard and not the other footage.

"It held my attention a little bit more so I'd be more likely to listen to what you said as opposed to print because I can easily get away from it (print)... It still doesn't change my opinion. Maybe when I go into a fur shop, this time I'll be thinking a little bit more but it's not going to change my opinion." [Early thirties, DC]

"Faces of Fur 2001" / Comparisons to Other Ads and Media

In terms of comparative efficacy, at least according to participants' "gut reactions," the moderator prompted participants to rate the FaunaVision video's graphic material relative to the print and other ads viewed earlier during the focus group.

"For me it's really striking to actually see the taking of life and it makes me think of larger questions of meaning of life. (Compared to the other genres), that's actual taking of life and you don't see that in the [print] ads. That's killing. Well, it makes me think more." [Early thirties, NY]

"You're watching the act of the animals getting killed. There's nothing left to the imagination whereas in the print ad you see the animal and you see the message and you kind of think 'Oh, I'm sure this is what happens,' but to me, it's not as powerful as seeing the act actually occur." [Early thirties, NY]

"Oh yeah [it makes me feel worse than other ads]. I ... (the disturbed participant fails to come up with any words and just raises her hand and shakes her head indicating she has nothing left to say)." [Early thirties, NY]

This footage provoked the most significant responses among both groups of young professionals in

New York City and teenagers in Washington, DC. However, it should be noted that an important difference seemed to emerge between these two groups. Generally speaking, the teens accepted the FaunaVision presentation wholesale, while some young professionals criticized the text and audio overlays, and suggested that the footage might represent the “worst they could find.”

“I think the music made it trite. The image is enough.” [Early thirties, NY]

“[The music] was almost like hitting you over the head, manipulative. I mean it, the image itself was very manipulative - it spoke volumes - but there was no need for the music.”
[Early thirties, NY]

OTHER – DESIGN AGAINST FUR CONTEST WINNERS

The Fund for Animals and the Humane Research Council are member organizations of the Fur Free Alliance, an international coalition of animal protection groups working together to reduce and eventually eliminate the purchase and sale of real fur. Among other activities, the Fur Free Alliance conducts the *Design Against Fur* competition, in which design students submit potential anti-fur advertisements for consideration by a team of fashion designers, animal advocates, and other judges.

In support of the Fur Free Alliance and the *Design Against Fur* competition, several of the winning entries from the competition were evaluated in the current study. The first place winner of the competition is an ad that features a drawn image of a fox hanging from a coat hanger with the headline, “Fur. Hang it Up for Good.” This ad was evaluated in the group of teenage participants and in group of young professionals in Washington, DC. In both cases, the ad seemed to do poorly. The majority of participants in each group was either confused or did not see a link to cruelty. Some of the participant liked the advertisement to abstract art.

“I wouldn’t see this as an anti-fur ad.” [Teenager, DC]

“You can’t really tell what it’s supposed to be. You wouldn’t take it seriously.” [Late thirties, DC]

“That looks more like a – a lot like an ad for not using furs but more like an art thing – like an abstract.” [Teenager, DC]

“It’s like an origami type something.” [Late twenties, DC]

“If I glanced at it I wouldn’t see an animal – I would see the design.” [Teen, DC]

The second place winner of the *Design against Fur* contest was by far the most effective of the FFA ads evaluated, and proved to be one of the most effective appeals to sympathy. This second place advertisement was shown to all groups except the older group of fur owners (the materials were not available in time for this group). Among the groups of teenagers and young professionals in New York City, this ad seemed to resonate well.

"That's a good ad... I think the statement is clear. I like the whole ad." [Early thirties, NY]

"That's horrible! Like, first you look at the picture and you're like 'oh look at the cute little family' and it's like 'OK, that's not cool!'" [Teenager, DC]

"They're babies. They're pups. That's effective. It makes you think. It makes you think that these are baby foxes and they don't get to grow up." [Early thirties, NY]

(Unprompted) "I like that the foxes are looking down at the heading so it like makes you go down (multiple people agree)." [Teenager, DC]

However, a smaller set of these participants did not immediately understand the ad's meaning, in part because of the ambiguity and location of the headline.

"There was a disconnect. I had to think about this ad. You know, you have a picture of foxes, you have a line about fashion and for whatever reason the connection wasn't immediately obvious to me." [Late twenties, NY]

"I didn't think this one was effective as the other one. Because I think the words are too small and like too far down. Like, when I first saw it ... it was just a picture and I didn't see the words." [Teenager, DC]

Moreover, among professional women in Washington, DC, this ad received mixed results. Some participants acknowledged that the image's baby foxes are cute, but at the same time they suggested that it did not affect their opinion toward real fur.

[This is] four animals being possibly killed. To me it doesn't have an effect other than saying 'oh, they're really cute. But, you know, I would still go out and get what I wanted.' [Early thirties, DC]

"It's not going to change my opinion." [Mid thirties, DC]

The third-place winner of the *Design Against Fur* competition features the image of a single fur coat wrapped around what is apparently a camouflage army jacket, with the headline, "You are what you wear." The only consistent theme that emerged from evaluation of this ad was complete confusion, which further implies that the ad has little chance of being effective. The third-place winner was screened in the groups of teenagers and young professionals in DC, and participants unanimously expressed confusion, with not one participant saying anything positive about this ad

"You don't know what they're trying to say. They camouflage – why?" [Late twenties, DC]

"Why would you be wearing the army shirt with salmon(-colored), faked out fur?" [Teenager, DC]

"Is this an army ad?" [Early thirties, DC]

"You don't even know it's a fur ad." [Late twenties, DC]

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

AREAS TO EXPLORE WITH ADDITIONAL RESEARCH

The current study uncovered several trends among participants and respondents that will require additional research. Further exploration of these areas may identify opportunities to proactively and effectively thwart the rise in popularity of real fur and fur-trimmed garments among younger audiences, African Americans, and Hispanics (though it should be noted that Hispanic respondents to the telephone survey were much more likely to buy *faux* fur). Additional research would provide valuable information in the following areas:

- **Youth Audiences** – Based on findings from the current study, more research is needed to corroborate and fine-tune the efficacy of graphic advertisements with younger audiences, and specifically to identify ads that clearly draw the connection between cruelty and real fur or fur trim.
- **African-Americans** – None of the focus groups in the current study were homogeneously comprised of African-Americans and very few of the individual participants were from this ethnic group. Furthermore, African-Americans represented the single most likely group of fur-buyers in the telephone survey. Specifically, African-Americans were the only group to indicate a much higher likeliness to buy full fur garments over fur trim garments.
- **Freedom of Choice** – The perceived “freedom of choice” to purchase real fur garments was the single most prevalent and problematic response from participants in the current study. In order to effectively overcome this mindset, we should consider conducting additional research to identify effective methods for changing the universal belief that fur is a personal choice.
- **Psychology of the Fur Trim Buyer** – Given that real fur trim is rarely noticed, more research is needed to fully understand the degree to which *real* fur trim is being purchased unknowingly.

GENERAL AWARENESS AND PERCEPTIONS OF REAL FUR

- The vast majority of focus group participants and survey respondents claimed that they simply do not think about the fur issue. However, when forced to consider the issue, a majority of participants identify negative associations with fur.
- When pressed for the details of fur’s origin, participants in the current study seemed to be more knowledgeable than participants in previous studies.
- Among current and likely fur owners, the dominant associations with real fur include warmth, luxury, style, and status. Among unlikely fur owners, cruelty toward animals was identified as the dominant association with real fur, followed by wealth. These observations are consistent with past research findings.

NO SINGLE MESSAGE WILL WORK FOR ALL AUDIENCES

- The current study demonstrates that, as with any type of communications, one message does not work for all audiences. Hence, no single advertisement emerged as a clearly effective message for all groups. Future anti-fur advertising efforts should make sure to isolate messages by target audience.
- Cute, fuzzy animals do not always work. If they are used, they must be shown in a context that demonstrates a clear link to the cruelty involved in creating real fur and fur trimmed garments. When shown advertisements that did not have this clear link, participants in the current study did not make any connection to fur products or the fur industry. Participants that did respond to cute, fuzzy animals specifically mentioned that the emotional impact of the ad came from the animals' eyes.
- Participants in the current study had strongly mixed responses to advertisements depending on the species and age of the animal featured. In particular, advertisements that featured animals resembling domestic animals, or animals that looked like babies, seemed to resonate most.
- Celebrities by and large failed as messengers for most audiences in the current study. The most frequently heard criticisms of celebrity spokespeople include: a lack credibility; the view that the celebrity is only espousing his or her own opinion; and the thought that the celebrity was somehow being compensated for appearing in the ad. If celebrities are used, they need to appear to have done their homework, and they must be presented in the right context, with the right message.
- Graphic advertisements worked most effectively for younger participants in the current study. However, caution must be taken not to cross the intangible line where the viewer will be so turned off by the graphic image that they are more likely to turn the page than read the ad. The focus with graphic ads should be on demonstrating to the viewer the true process of real fur production. For example, showing only a skinned animal does not "teach" the viewer anything new; they already know that fur comes from an animal who has been skinned, so the image can easily be dismissed as "disgusting" or "gross."

ISSUES AND PERCEPTIONS SPECIFIC TO FUR TRIM

- As identified by the fur industry and the marketplace, fur trim garments and accessories currently account for the majority of real fur sales. Anti-fur advocates must therefore proactively address the issue of fur trim.
- Fur trim is rarely noticed, and when noticed it is assumed to be fake. Additionally, fur trim is considered by most to be socially acceptable, including even those who have strong negative associations with full fur garments.
- If participants believed or were told that the fur trimmed garment was real, or if they purchased it themselves, then they assumed it was comprised of the scraps from a full fur garment.

THE FUR INDUSTRY'S THREE PRIMARY ARGUMENTS

The fur industry employs three fundamental arguments to justify selling, buying, and wearing real fur garments – one's "freedom of choice," that raising animals humanely is in the industry's self-interest, and that real fur is less environmentally detrimental than fake fur.

- As stated previously, the "freedom of choice" or "rights" issue remains not only the primary rationalization of current fur owners, but also the dominant mindset of non-fur owners. Even those who felt strongly about not buying real fur themselves defended the right of others who choose to do so.
- The argument that it is in the fur industry's best interest to treat animals humanely was not compelling for most participants in the current study, as opposed to previous research. Most participants, unprompted, admitted that the fur industry's priority would be the bottom line, not animal welfare. Ironically, this sentiment was most prevalent among the older group of fur owners.
- One of the fur industry's recent arguments involves positioning real fur as an "environmentally-friendly" fabric relative to synthetic fur. This argument was not compelling with participants in the current study, and nobody remarked that it would impact her purchase decision. Many participants felt they could neither agree nor disagree with this argument due to lack of information.

THE FUND FOR ANIMALS' 2003/2004 ANTI-FUR ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN**Suggested Target Audiences and Media**

- HRC recommends that the primary target audience for The Fund's 2003/2004 campaign in both markets be young women age 18-30, with emphasis on women age 18-24. In the New York City media market, we suggest skewing somewhat toward professional, more affluent women. In the Washington, DC market, we suggest skewing somewhat toward African American and Hispanic women (with occupation and income as secondary concerns) to generate explorative results for future detailed analysis of these ethnic groups.
- For the upcoming campaign, HRC does not specifically recommend targeting teenage women, given that it seems from the current study that they are not yet at the purchase point for fur garments. As mentioned further below, we would instead target networks and publications that skew toward teens, but that do not necessarily actively target them.
- Also, HRC does not recommend targeting older women, given that they do not represent significant upside for the fur industry. Older women are generally not on the leading edge of fashion or social consciousness, and the graphic theme that appears to be most effective for younger audiences seems to work least effectively with older women.

- We strongly recommend a focus on visual media, including television (primary) and print advertisements (secondary), for both markets and for all materials targeted at younger audiences. HRC recommends de-emphasizing radio media for the issue of fur.
- In both markets, HRC recommends that The Fund focus on networks and publications that saturate the primary target audience, but also allow the media mix to skew toward younger audiences, and specifically to include teens (easily done with cable television advertising).

Suggested Ad Themes and Content

- For its 2003/2004 campaign, HRC recommends that The Fund employ a primary theme of graphic and sympathy-provoking imagery (and text) that makes clear the origin of real fur and directly associates it with wearing fur trim. This approach appears to be most effective overall, and particularly with younger women, who we are suggesting should comprise the primary target audience. It should be noted that the term "graphic" does not necessarily include blood and gore, and in fact a somewhat graphic appeal to sympathy may be the more effective option.
- Although more research is needed in these areas, HRC also suggests exploration of several secondary themes, including "uncooling" fur among the urban hip-hop audience, reinforcing the belief that fur is expensive, ostentatious, and unnecessary, and proactively addressing the "freedom of choice" issue with specific audiences.
- HRC strongly recommends that The Fund develop advertisements that feature fur-trimmed garments and accessories. In general, the connection of cruelty to full fur garments is obvious and will be implied by even general anti-fur messaging. We therefore feel only the connection of cruelty to fur trim must be made explicit. When creating the ads, HRC recommends that the word "fur" be accompanied by the word "trim" or something similar in nearly all circumstances. Again, this is an area that needs more research, but we feel that a "one-to-one" connection must be made between fur-trimmed items and animals.
- HRC recommends that The Fund consider a future campaign targeted at urban African Americans and the "hip-hop" audience that has adopted fur as a trademark. More research is likely needed in this area more than any other, and materials targeted at African American women will first need to be tested with those women. During the upcoming campaign, targeting of African American women should be limited given the lack of research available, but The Fund should consider targeting this audience in future campaigns (ie: 2004/2005).
- HRC recommends that every advertisement have a distinct "call to action," including either a behavior that the reader is asked to adopt, or a specific action the reader is asked to take. Furthermore, we recommend that The Fund employ a call to action that directs readers to some mechanism for measuring responses, such as a website or a phone number.

Feedback and Recommendations Regarding Anti-Fur URLs

- It should be noted that results relating to The Fund's anti-fur URLs are based on the feedback of only 13 total participants, 5 of whom responded that they would visit none of the URLs presented. The teenage participants offered significantly more responses to the URLs than did the professional women, with nearly all in the latter group writing that they would visit "none" of the websites (5 of 7 participants).
- Keeping in mind the limited feedback, HRC recommends that The Fund use dontbuyfur.com or stopfur.com as the primary choice for the campaign website. Between both groups, dontbuyfur.com received 5 mentions, while stopfur.com received 4 mentions. For the group of teenage participants, specifically, stopfur.com and dontbuyfur.com clearly led the pack with three participants choosing each (includes double counting). Participants mentioned liking that the "message is in the name," and that these URLs are easy to understand and remember. These two URLs were also the only ones mentioned by participants in the group of professional women, two of whom gave similar reasons to the younger participants.
- Only one participant across all groups selected furreeny.com and furreedc.com; additionally, this was a participant in the group of teenagers that was already well-versed in and sympathetic to the anti-fur cause. However, one other participant in the same group commented that furreeny.com and furreedc.com look like "strange foreign words," with some agreement from others.
- HRC strongly recommends using a different, measurable URL for the various campaign media (TV, print, etc.), so that The Fund can measure the effectiveness of each and refine the media mix in the future. Also, if The Fund purchases advertising in two different markets, it will be necessary to use a different URL for each market. Eventually, it will be advisable to have separate URLs for each niche audience and each type of message, so that The Fund can measure effectiveness for each approach and audience.

V. APPENDIX A – DETAILED PROFILES OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

GROUP 1 – OLDER FUR-OWNERS IN THE NEW YORK METRO AREA						
Participant	Entirely of Real Fur	Trimmed with Real Fur	Entirely of Faux Fur	Trimmed with Faux Fur	How Obtained?	1. Why do you choose to own or not to own a garment made of real animal fur? 2. Are there reasons you can think of that have caused you to not purchase a real fur garment or reconsider owning one? (VERBATIM RESPONSES)
1	3	2	0	0	Self/gifts	1. "I own fur garment for fashion and warmth." 2. "I have not reconsidered owning a fur coat."
2	6	8	0	2	Self/gifts	1. "Keep warm and not allergy; feel good in winter." 2. "I promise my daughter not to buy any more fur."
3	6	0	0	0	Self	1. "I feel really cold in the winter." 2. "Only if my safety is a concern."
4	3	2	0	0	Self	1. "Because I like." 2. "Will not change my mind. Still like to wear fur."
5	3	1	0	1	Self	1. "I like it."
6	3	1	0	0	Self	1. "It is warm and I like the look of fur."
7	5	1	2	0	Gifts	1. "It is a conflict for me – I <u>love</u> the feel and warmth of fur." 2. "Yes. The controversy brought to light the facts most people were unaware of."
8	3	1	0	0	Self	1. "Because it keeps me warm and I love the look and feel."
9	1	1	0	1	Self/gifts	1. "I chose to own a fur coat because I just liked having one." 2. "Recently I have felt guilty seeing certain advertisements against killing the animals."
10	2	1	1	0	Self	1. "I feel they are the warmest garments I own. Humans have been wearing fur for warmth for thousands of years." 2. "There may be some reasons that I'm not aware of."

GROUP 2 – YOUNGER PROFESSIONALS IN THE NEW YORK METRO AREA

Participant	Entirely of Real Fur	Trimmed with Real Fur	Entirely of Faux Fur	Trimmed with Faux Fur	How Obtained?	1. Why do you choose to own or not to own a garment made of real animal fur? 2. Are there reasons you can think of that have caused you to not purchase a real fur garment or reconsider owning one? (VERBATIM RESPONSES)
1	2	0	0	0	Gift	1. "Don't find them attractive enough to buy and real fur is too controversial." 2. "Same reasons as above. I have never seriously considered purchasing fur."
2	2	2	0	1	Self/gifts	1. "The way it looks and depends on cost."
3	1	0	0	1	Self	1. "Never had the desire; seems wasteful, cruel and unnecessary; not an attractive fashion. Bought a used seal fur hat from a second-hand shop – didn't realize that it was made of fur at purchase." 2. "Not something I value or want. I imagine the cost would be higher than I'd want to spend. Once had a fake fur coat – bought on clearance as a joke – never wore – think it was given away – just not an attractive fashion for me to wear."
4	0	0	0	1	N/A	1. "I just like other garments better. Fur is not attractive to me." 2. "It's not PC – my friends are animal lovers, they'd be offended."
5	0	0	0	2	Gifts	1. "I never particularly wanted one, not for ethical reasons really, just not my thing, and certainly not worth the expense. And I don't need that much warmth." 2. No (besides those above)
6	0	0	0	0	N/A	1. I don't like knowing something suffered for my comfort unnecessarily.
7	0	0	0	0	N/A	1. "I've never had any interest in owning a garment made of real fur – it's also not something that I feel suits my lifestyle." 2. "Since I've never really entertained the thought of owning a fur garment, I've never reconsidered this decision (not to own)"
8	0	0	0	0	N/A	1. "Don't feel it's an ethically defensible choice – pain caused far outweighs benefit to me, especially since invention of polar fleece. Fur garments (even a recycled one) seem to be an overly ostentatious choice."
9	0	0	0	0	N/A	1. "Personally don't like the idea of owning real fur – but also is not my style of clothing." 2. "Not interested in owning fur or that style of clothing."
10	0	0	0	0	N/A	1. "I think it's disgusting to wear the skin of another living creature." 2. "Being an animal lover."

GROUP 3 – HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN WASHINGTON, DC METRO AREA

Participant	Entirely of Real Fur	Trimmed with Real Fur	Entirely of Faux Fur	Trimmed with Faux Fur	How Obtained?	1. Why do you choose to own or not to own a garment made of real animal fur? 2. Are there reasons you can think of that have caused you to not purchase a real fur garment or reconsider owning one? (VERBATIM RESPONSES)
1	0	1	0	1	Gifts	1. "Because my parents bought it for me." 2. "Yes, because they harm cute animals"
2	0	0	1	1	Gifts	1. "Expensive. Harmful." 2. "Movie I saw with pictures of animals who were used for fur."
3	0	0	0	2	Self/gifts	1. "Basically whatever is in style at the time. During the winter season jean jackets w/ faux fur was really popular; really warm and comfy." 2. "Harms animals."
4	0	0	0	1	N/A	1. "I don't feel that people need fur when we live in an age that there are synthetic fibers and more friendly alternatives (cotton, wool). The fur industry causes too much pain and endangers species (interrupting ecosystems when trapping). If we needed fur to survive, then it would be justifiable, if the deaths were less painful and quicker, but we have alternatives." 2. "The thought of killing animals for mere fashion sake makes me feel uncomfortable."
5	0	0	0	0	N/A	1. "Not fair to the animals." 2. "Animals need their fur more than we do."
6	0	0	0	0	N/A	1. "I choose not to own because they are hot. I also choose not to own because I believe they are excessive." 2. "I feel that it is expensive."

GROUP 4 – YOUNG PROFESSIONALS IN WASHINGTON, DC METRO AREA

Participant	Entirely of Real Fur	Trimmed with Real Fur	Entirely of Faux Fur	Trimmed with Faux Fur	How Obtained?	1. Why do you choose to own or not to own a garment made of real animal fur? 2. Are there reasons you can think of that have caused you to not purchase a real fur garment or reconsider owning one? (VERBATIM RESPONSES)
1	0	0	0	0	N/A	1. "I don't have a very strong opinion either way... I don't think I'd be comfortable in a real fur. I like the way faux fur looks, but most of the time these items are not within my budget anyway." 2. "I just don't have a strong desire to own a fur garment – for a status symbol or whatever – fur is simply too expensive and I don't prioritize it as something I need to have."
2	0	0	0	1	Gift	1. "Mostly cost related – would own real fur." 2. "No – only cost related."
3	0	0	0	0	N/A	1. "Price. Otherwise I would consider... climate, animal furs are really only useful in very, very cold climates." 2. "Price/climate/overly ostentatious and formal, no proper occasions to wear it. Not cost effective; fear of paint throwing."
4	0	0	0	1	N/A	1. "Against use of animals for food, clothing, etc." 2. "See above."
5	0	0	0	0	N/A	1. "Choose not to own – perceived animal cruelty to obtain."
6	0	0	0	0	N/A	1. "Not of interest." 2. "Interest, basically do not like look, feel, not comfortable with wearing garment with fur."
7	0	1	1	0	Gifts	1. "Expense." 2. "Public demonstration; acts of public violence/disturbance against wearers."

APPENDIX B -- MATERIALS SHOWN AND EVALUATED IN FOCUS GROUPS

ANTI-FUR MATERIALS							
ADVERTISEMENT	FORMAT	GENRE	SPONSOR	5/15/03	5/20/03	6/10/03	6/24/03
Jessica Biel	Print	Celebrity	<i>Fund</i>	YES	YES	YES	YES
Marla Sokoloff	Print	Celebrity	<i>Fund</i>	YES	YES	YES	YES
Wendie Malick	Audio	Celebrity	<i>Fund</i>	NO	YES	YES	YES
Charlotte Ross (Horizontal)	Print	Celebrity	<i>PETA</i>	YES	YES	YES	YES
Pamela Anderson	Print	Celebrity	<i>PETA</i>	YES	YES	YES	YES
Original Bobcat	Print	Sympathy	<i>Fund</i>	YES	YES	YES	YES
Bobcat Prototype	Print	Sympathy	<i>Fund</i>	YES	YES	YES	YES
Orphaned Fox Prototype	Print	Sympathy	<i>Fund</i>	YES	YES	YES	YES
Rabbit Prototype	Print	Sympathy	<i>Fund</i>	YES	YES	YES	YES
Raccoon Prototype	Print	Sympathy	<i>Fund</i>	YES	YES	YES	YES
Chinchilla Prototype – Contents/Directions”	Print	Sympathy	<i>Fund</i>	YES	YES	YES	YES
Fox Prototype – Contents/Directions	Print	Sympathy	<i>Fund</i>	NO	YES	YES	YES
Fox Prototype – Contents/Directions w/title	Print	Sympathy	<i>Fund</i>	NO	NO	YES	YES
Canines	Print	Sympathy	<i>HSUS</i>	YES	YES	NO	NO
“I’m Not A Coat” – Dog	Print	Sympathy	<i>HSUS</i>	YES	NO	NO	NO
“I’m Not A Coat” – Cat	Print	Sympathy	<i>HSUS</i>	YES	NO	NO	NO
“I’m Not A Coat” – Fox	Print	Sympathy	<i>HSUS</i>	YES	NO	NO	NO
Just Think, You Only Need 29 More	Print	Sympathy	<i>PETA</i>	YES	YES	YES	YES
You Should Be Ashamed To Wear A Fur	Print	Shame	<i>HSUS</i>	YES	NO	YES	YES
Here’s The Rest Of Your Fur Coat	Print	Cruelty	<i>PETA</i>	NO	YES	YES	YES
Fur: No Skin Off Your Back	Print	Cruelty	<i>PETA</i>	YES	YES	YES	YES
Cull Of The Wild – Abridged Version	Video	Cruelty	<i>API</i>	YES	NO	NO	NO
Faces Of Fur 2001 (Excerpt)	Video	Cruelty	<i>FaunaVision</i>	YES	YES	YES	YES

ANTI-FUR MATERIALS / AMERICAN DESIGN AGAINST FUR CONTEST

ADVERTISEMENT	FORMAT	Genre	SPONSOR	5/15/03	5/20/03	6/10/03	6/24/03
FFA Design Contest #1	Print	---	FFA	NO	NO	YES	YES
FFA Design Contest #2	Print	---	FFA	NO	YES	YES	YES
FFA Design Contest #3	Print	---	FFA	NO	NO	YES	YES

PRO-FUR MATERIALS

ADVERTISEMENT	FORMAT	Genre	SPONSOR	5/15/03	5/20/03	6/10/03	6/24/03
2001 American Legend – Linda Evangelista	Print	Mink	Blackglama	YES	YES	NO	YES
Fur. Meant To Be Enjoyed. Go Ahead. Live In It.	Print	Full-Length, Died Blue	Saga Furs	YES	YES	NO	YES
Dolce & Gabbana – Purse	Print	Fur Accessory	Dolce & Gabbana	YES	YES	NO	YES
Scarf	Print	Fur Accessory	DKNY	YES	YES	NO	YES
Andrew Marc – Winter Background	Print	Shearling	Lord & Taylor	NO	YES	NO	YES

INDEPENDENT MATERIALS

ADVERTISEMENT	FORMAT	Genre	SPONSOR	5/15/03	5/20/03	6/10/03	6/24/03
The Fabulous Life Of JLO	Video	Celebrity	VH1	NO	YES	YES	NO

APPENDIX C -- DISCUSSION GUIDE USED IN FOCUS GROUPS**PART ONE – ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS (20 MIN)****DISTRIBUTE PRE-GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE AND NAME TAGS– 5 MINUTES 2:40 PM**

- *Please take a few minutes to fill out this questionnaire, then we'll discuss your answers.*

INTRO – 5 MINUTES 2:45 PM

- *Thank you*
- *The purpose of these focus groups is to study different female demographics and attitudes towards fur fashion in the NY and DC media markets.*
- *Rules*
- *Structure – 20-minute discussion. 60 minutes of materials evaluation*

GENERAL BEHAVIORS AND ATTITUDES

- *Anyone here a pet owner?*
- *Do you consider yourself to be an animal lover?*
- *Do you feel that there are differences between different kinds of animals, such as domesticated animals (ie: cats and dogs) versus wild animals (ie: foxes and rabbits)?*

BEHAVIORS AND ATTITUDES RELATING TO FUR – 5 MINUTES 2:50 PM

- *On your questionnaires, how many of you indicated you own a fur garment? [Show of hands]*
- *How many of you own full fur garments? Fur trim? Both?*
- *How many of you have had fur garments purchased for you? [Show of hands]*
- *How many of you have purchased for yourself? [Show of hands]*
- *Tell us what type of fur garment you purchased and why you bought it... please take us through the entire purchase process. [Choose someone, repeat if multiple people are willing. Use answers as springboard to talk about the perceived benefits of full fur and fur trim garments.]*
- *For those who own a fur or fur trim garment, what do you think are the benefits of owning it? [Get quick answers from ALL fur-owners, sequentially.]*
- *Has anyone considered buying fur or fur trim?*
- *What about faux fur? Does it have the same benefits? Would you wear faux fur? Which consider more ecologically friendly?*
- *Anyone have any negative associations with fur fashion? If owner anyone experience any ethical conflict?*
- *How do you think the fur for real fur garments is gotten and produced? [Discussion]*
- *How do you think fur trim is produced? Is it more or less humane? Might you wear one and not the other?*
- *Trapping vs. Farming*

PERCEPTIONS RELATING TO ANTI-FUR ADVOCATES – 5 MINUTES 2:55 PM

- *In general, what is your experience with or perception of anti-fur and animal activists?*
- *Can you wear leather and still be anti-fur? Can you eat meat and still be anti fur? Hypocrisy?*
- *If owner, did you ever run into anti-fur activists when wearing your fur coat? What happened?*

PART TWO – REACTIONS TO ANTI-FUR MESSAGES AND MATERIALS (60 MIN.)

PRO-FUR GENRES, MESSAGES AND MATERIALS

Pro-Fur Ads / Full Fur & Appeals to Freedom (about 5 minutes) 3:00 PM

MATERIALS: Section #1

a. *Linda Evangelista*

- *What do you think of this advertisement*
- *Is buying and owning a fur a basic right? Is it a “freedom of choice” issue?*
- *Is full fur a practical thing? Luxury thing?*

Pro-Fur Ads / Fashion Trim, and Celebrities (about 10 minutes) 3:05 PM

[HAND OUT TRIM ADS AS GROUP, THEN CELEB ADS AS GROUP, THEN SHOW VIDEO]

- *Fur trim – Do you think of it like full-fur?*
- *Does it have the same benefits? Is it as glamorous or gaudy?*
- *What is your opinion of these designers? How do these ads affect those opinions?*

MATERIALS: Section #2

- ----- FOCUS INITIAL DISCUSSION ON FUR TRIM -----

a. Scarf & Purse

CELEBRITIES:

- *Do you notice celebrities wearing fur? Which ones?*
- *Are you influenced by their fashion styles? Does JLO’s love of fur impact them? Other celebrities?*

MATERIALS:

a. [Video] VH1 – *The Fabulous Life of JLO*

Anti-Fur Ads / Celebrity and Sexuality (about 10 minutes) 3:15 PM

MATERIALS: Section #3

a. Jessica Biel **AND** Marla Sokoloff

- *Are celebrities credible spokespeople against fur? Are you influenced by them?*

- For this group, are Biel and Sokoloff credible anti-fur spokespeople? Are they effective? Why or why not?

MATERIALS: Section #4

a. Pamela Lee **AND** Charlotte Ross

- For next group is sexuality and nudity effective in moving the messages? Is it taking it too far?
- Which do they think is more effective, just celebrities? Or celebs. PLUS sexuality?

Anti-Fur Ads / Appeals to Sympathy (about 15 minutes) 3:25 PM

MATERIALS: Section 5

a. Bobcat ORIGINAL
b. Bobcat PROTOTYPE
c. Rabbit PROTOTYPE
d. Raccoon PROTOTYPE

- How do the different elements make the ad more or less effective, including the length of the text?
- Overall, how effective is the appeal to one not needing a fur coat?
- Credible?
- **KEY ISSUE!!!** Overall, how effective is the use of animal imagery, including baby foxes, etc.? How do reactions change when using images of wild animals (foxes, bobcats) versus domestic animals (cats and dogs?)

e. Here's A Sneak Peak (foxes) – FFA #2
f. Does Your Mother Have a Fur Coat? – Fox PROTOTYPE
g. [Audio] Wendie Malick
h. Just Think, You Only Need 29 More...

MATERIALS: Section 6 (SPECIES DIFFERENCES)

a. HSUS – Canines

Anti-Fur Ads / Provocation, Cruelty and Graphic (about 15 minutes) 3:40 PM

[HAND OUT SEQUENTIALLY, DISCUSSING DIFFERENCES EACH TIME]

MATERIALS: Section 7

a. Hang It Up For Good – FFA #1
b. You Are What You Wear – FFA #3
c. You Should be Ashamed to Wear a Fur

- Overall, how effective?
- Do these materials link fur to animal cruelty?
- Credible?

MATERIALS: Section 8

- | | |
|----|---|
| a. | Fund – <i>Content and Directions</i> – Chinchilla PROTOTYPE |
| b. | Fund – <i>Content and Directions</i> – Fox PROTOTYPE (no title) |
| c. | Fund – <i>Content and Directions</i> – Fox PROTOTYPE (title) |

----- WARN AGAINST GRAPHIC NATURE OF REMAINING CONTENT -----

- | | |
|----|--|
| d. | PETA – <i>Here's the Rest of Your Fur</i> – Baxter |
| e. | PETA – <i>Fur: No Skin Off Your Back</i> |
| f. | [Video] COK – **** ESABLISH FUR FARMING |

- *Overall, how effective?*
- *Do these materials link fur to animal cruelty?*
- *Credible?*

LAST THOUGHTS

- *Any final comments?*
- **QUESTIONNAIRE AND DOMAIN NAMES**

THANK AND CLOSE – END

APPENDIX D -- HOW TO RECEIVE MORE INFORMATION

Copies of many of the previous research studies cited in this report are available from the Humane Research Council. Specifically, with permission of the author(s) and sponsor(s), copies of following studies and articles mentioned in this report are currently available upon request to those advocating on behalf of fur-bearing animals.

- 2001 “Fur Trim Study” report prepared for HSUS by Jacobs, Jenner & Kent, from a total of four focus groups.
- 1998 poll for the Fur Information Council of America conducted by Responsive Management, a pro-consumptive wildlife use opinion management company.
- 1996 survey for the Animal Welfare Institute conducted by the Opinion Research Corporation.
- 1993 national poll of 1,000 adults by the Fur Farm Animal Welfare Coalition, a pro-fur group.
- 1992 “Attitudes toward Fur” report prepared for HSUS by Arcola Research, from a total of seven focus groups.
- A 1980 paper presented to the “World-wide Furbearer Conference” by Steven Kellert.
- A survey conducted by Penn + Schoen Associates, Inc.; date unknown.
- A study of focus groups commissioned by the International Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies and the Furbearers Resource Group and conducted by Responsive Management, a pro-consumptive wildlife use opinion management company; date unknown.

Additional documents relevant to the current study are also available upon request to qualified users of the research. With express permission from The Fund for Animals, the documents that are available include the following:

- Final version of the telephone survey instrument
- Summary multi-column marginals from the telephone survey
- Summary banner tables from the telephone survey
- Verbatim responses from the survey’s open-ended question

To receive copies of any of these documents, please contact the Humane Research Council by visiting www.humanereseach.org, or using any of the following methods.

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