

The Fund for Animals Anti-Fur Focus Groups

HUMANE RESEARCH COUNCIL

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I. SURVEY BACKGROUND & METHODOLOGY

In 2003, The Fund for Animals (“The Fund”) and the Humane Research Council (“HRC”) sponsored several research projects to evaluate anti-fur messages and materials and understand the impact of the group’s 2003/2004 anti-fur advertising campaign in New York City. The 2003 study included a series of focus groups and multiple waves of surveys in both New York City and Washington, DC. More recently, in May of 2004, an additional five focus groups were conducted with communications students at George Washington University (“GW”). The current analysis covers only the most recent focus groups.

This report is based on five audio-taped focus groups conducted between April 21 and May 6, 2004, using GW campus classrooms. A total of 46 students participated in the focus groups, each of which lasted approximately 45-60 minutes. Recruitment and moderation of the focus groups was conducted by Courtney Dillard, PhD. Technical assistance, transcription, and initial analysis was provided by Jennifer Allen and Pierre Grzybowski. Further analysis is based on detailed notes taken during the groups and audio-tapes of the groups themselves.

Each group included at least five participants, and no more than twelve. Moderation of the groups was based loosely on the discussion guide provided in the appendix. In each group, participants were asked to provide visceral feedback to a number of anti-fur advertisements, including print, radio, email (“Flash animation”), and television ads. In some cases participants were also asked to give their personal preference among several alternative domain names. Prior to beginning each group, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire cataloging their personal behaviors and opinions relating to fur garments. At the end of each group, participants revisited the same questionnaire and gave unaided input on the most and least effective advertisements seen during the session.

Please see below for an overview of characteristics for focus group participants, based on the pre-group questionnaire.

	Female/ Male	Fur ownership	Heard About Debate	Opinion
Overall	Female: 36 Male: 10	Real fur: 11 Real fur trim: 17 Faux fur: 1 Faux fur trim: 4	A lot: 1 Some: 9 Only a little: 25 Nothing at all: 11	Acceptable: 3 Personal choice: 34 Unnecessary: 9
Group 1	Female: 8 Male: 1	Real fur: 4 Real fur trim: 5 Faux fur: 1 Faux fur trim: 4	A lot: 0 Some: 1 Only a little: 4 Nothing at all: 4	Acceptable: 0 Personal choice: 7 Unnecessary: 2
Group 2	Female: 8 Male: 2	Real fur: 2 Real fur trim: 4 Faux fur: 1 Faux fur trim: 6	A lot: 1 Some: 1 Only a little: 5 Nothing at all: 3	Acceptable: 0 Personal choice: 10 Unnecessary: 0

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	Female/ Male	Fur ownership	Heard About Debate	Opinion
Group 3	Female: 11 Male: 1	Real fur: 4 Real fur trim: 6 Faux fur: 3 Faux fur trim: 9	A lot: 0 Some: 4 Only a little: 6 Nothing at all: 2	Acceptable: 1 Personal choice: 8 Unnecessary and Should Choose Not: 2 Unnecessary and Should be Banned: 1
Group 4	Female: 7 Male: 3	Real fur: 1 Real fur trim: 2 Faux fur: 0 Faux fur trim: 4	A lot: 0 Some: 3 Only a little: 6 Nothing at all: 1	Acceptable: 1 Personal choice: 7 Unnecessary and Should Choose Not: 1 Unnecessary and Should be Banned: 1
Group 5	Female: 2 Male: 3	Real fur: 0 Real fur trim: 0 Faux fur: 0 Faux fur trim: 2	A lot: 0 Some: 0 Only a little: 4 Nothing at all: 1	Acceptable: 1 Personal choice: 2 Unnecessary and Should Choose Not: 2 Unnecessary and Should be Banned: 0

Note that data obtained from these focus group results are not projectable to any larger population, and they may have limited relevance to anti-fur advocacy in general. It should also be noted that participants in focus groups will sometimes provide answers that differ from their actual feelings or behaviors, which is an inherent risk to qualitative research. This is particularly true when evaluating materials because there is a strong potential disconnect between one's visceral reactions to viewing the material when compared to the long-term impact of those materials, if any, on the individual's behavior. Still, given that visceral responses to materials are a likely determinant of someone taking in the intended message, it is an important area to evaluate.

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RESPONDENT BEHAVIORS AND PERCEPTIONS

- ⇒ In the pre-group questionnaire, 19 of 46 respondents said that they own a real fur garment, while 25 of 46 said they own a faux fur garment, in both cases including both full and trimmed garments. Overall, including both real fur and faux, ownership of fur-trimmed outnumbered full garments by about four to one.
- ⇒ The vast majority of focus group participants indicated that they had heard “nothing at all” or “only a little” about the debate over buying and wearing real furs (over the past 12 months). Only one participant had heard “a lot.”
- ⇒ The vast majority of participants also indicated that the statement, “Real fur is understandably controversial, but people should still have the choice to buy it,” best represented their own opinion. This perception is very consistent with past quantitative and qualitative studies.

COMPARATIVE EVALUATION OF DIFFERENT MEDIA

- ⇒ Participant reactions to different media types were diverse, with some types considered more effective by some, but less effective by others. Generally speaking, the print ads were identified as more effective than the multimedia materials.
- ⇒ For some participants, television was the preferred medium because they felt it holds the viewers attention more than print or radio. Others preferred print because it gives the reader more time to absorb the information. Opinions were mixed regarding the use of animation, but overall it was deemed less effective than other media types and in this case not at all effective for college students.

EVALUATION OF PRINT MATERIALS

- ⇒ Consistent with past research, the print materials that elicited the strongest visceral reaction from participants were very graphic in nature. PETA's Sophie Baxter ad featuring a skinned fox was overall deemed to be the most effective of any of the materials evaluated.
- ⇒ Appeals to sympathy can also be successful. The second most effective print ad (and overall ad) was FFA's Bobcat ad, which was given high marks for the image and the headline. PETA's Caged Fox ad also successfully created sympathy for the animal and was somewhat effective for that reason.
- ⇒ Also consistent with past research, celebrities were not considered effective except in very specific circumstances. The Jessica Biel ad was considered the least effective print advertisement.

EVALUATION OF MULTI-MEDIA MATERIALS

- ⇒ Somewhat contrary to past research, the Wendie Malick radio ad was fairly well-received in these groups, praised for its pace and for the “warm tone” of Malick's voice.
- ⇒ Overall, the television ad was deemed less effective than the radio ad. Though some argued that TV is the better medium to keep the target's attention, most felt the commercial was too frenetic and distracting, and the voiceover was largely lost as a result.
- ⇒ The “Fufanu” Flash animation tested poorly with college students. While some commented that it might be appropriate for children, the majority of respondents thought the animation was “silly,” too long, or in a few cases that it made light of the issue of real fur.

III. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Generally speaking, comprehensive evaluation of print ads, television commercials, and other materials requires understanding several related elements, including 1) stopping power, 2) flow and depth of attention, 3) motivation to act, and 4) long-term impact on opinion or behavior, among other factors. Given the limited nature of the current study, we are really only able to evaluate stopping power and to a limited extent flow/depth of attention of the materials. Conclusions regarding the ability of these ads to motivate the target audience (college students) to act or change its behavior would only be hunches, and are largely unsupportable with this study alone.

Regardless, visceral responses to materials are an important measure of an ad's effectiveness because they provide a baseline assessment of stopping power. The ability of an ad to pique the interest and further consideration from the viewer or listener is arguably the most important aspect, serving as a "gatekeeper" of sorts. If an ad is unable to draw the target in within the first couple of seconds, then the other elements of the material are almost moot. In addition to getting a sense of stopping power, feedback from focus groups can also help identify elements of an ad that are unclear, annoying, or offensive to the target audience. In each case, the results of qualitative research may be very helpful to choosing (or eliminating) possible advertising concepts and/or building a marketing plan. With these qualifications and objectives in mind, details of the five focus groups with GW college students are provided below.

RESPONDENT BEHAVIORS AND PERCEPTIONS

Participants were asked to list whether or not they own any fur garments, including full fur and trimmed garments, as well as real animal fur and faux fur. The data was collected in the pre-group questionnaire only; specific behaviors relating to fur ownership were not discussed during the group session. Compared to previous studies involving women of all ages (high school through late 50s), participants in the current study own a lot of real fur garments. In three of the groups, at least half of the participants own a garment made of or trimmed with real fur. In another group, three of ten respondents own a real fur garment. Overall, there was about four times more ownership of fur trimmed garments than full fur garments (including both real and faux). Only one group included no fur-owning participants, and it was a group with only five participants, three of whom were men. In total, among 46 participants, the groups included 19 people who own a real fur garment, all of whom are female. Ownership of faux fur was slightly more common, with 25 of 46 respondents owning at least one faux fur garment, including many who also own a real fur garment. Owners of faux fur were represented in all of the groups, with about half of participants in each group owning a faux fur garment.

The questionnaire also asked participants to answer two questions regarding "the debate over buying and wearing real fur," including how much they had heard about it over the past year, and how they feel about it personally. The vast majority of participants have heard "only a little" or "nothing at all" about the debate over the past year, while only a small number had heard "some" or "a lot." When asked about their personal views on buying and wearing real fur, the vast majority also stated in essence that people should have the choice to buy it. A relatively small number said that real fur is unnecessary and it should either be banned or people should choose not to wear it. A very small number of participants said that fur is "morally acceptable." These results corroborate our findings from earlier research, in which "freedom of choice" was clearly the dominant perspective.

COMPARATIVE EVALUATION OF DIFFERENT MEDIA

Throughout the course of the focus groups, we evaluated materials spanning several different media, including print, television, radio, and web-based (Flash animation) materials. For obvious reasons, each medium will elicit different reactions corresponding to the overall efficacy of the medium in general, as well as the specific advertisement being evaluated. Some caution should therefore be used when making comparisons between different media types, and comparisons are more meaningful when considered within the same genre of media vehicle. However, some comparative reactions to different media were somewhat surprising and very telling; for instance, the fact that the television spot was deemed less effective by participants than both the print and radio advertisements.

Perhaps not surprisingly, participants had conflicting reactions to the effectiveness of different media types. While some felt that print advertisements allow more time to absorb the information (and were therefore more effective), others commented that they are more likely to turn the page than they would be to watch a television commercial. In these cases, the stopping power of an image or headline is paramount for print materials. Regarding the radio advertisement, the absence of visuals was a negative for some, but a positive for others who felt they could focus more easily on the information. Only very few participants thought the Flash animation was an effective medium, with tolerance for email “advertisements” appearing to be much lower than for other media. Based on unaided feedback from the questionnaire, participants considered print ads to be more effective in general than other media types. All of the top three ads identified as “most effective” were print ads, although the Wendie Malick radio spot tied for third. Similarly, three of the four ads evaluated and considered “least effective” were multimedia materials.

EVALUATION OF PRINT MATERIALS

PETA Sophie Baxter Print Ad

Previous research studies have shown that graphic approaches to anti-fur advertising appear to be the most effective overall, and they are especially effective with younger audiences. In focus groups conducted in 2003, graphic materials were shown to produce the greatest visceral response, in most cases eliciting feelings of disgust and sympathy. While offensive and potentially counterproductive for some, graphic materials in general have the most “stopping power” of all genres. These findings are corroborated by the current study, in which the most effective ad was deemed to be PETA’s featuring Sophie Baxter holding a skinned fox carcass, with the caption, “Here’s the rest of your fur coat.” The Baxter ad easily had the most stopping power of all of the materials evaluated. It was also selected by more than half of all participants as the most effective ad of the group, based on responses to the in-group questionnaire. The Baxter ad received three times as many “most effective” responses as the next most effective ad (FFA’s Bobcat ad).

The Baxter ad was considered effective in part because it was shocking and therefore pierced the veil of the otherwise unremarkable advertisements. One participant who said she owns “a lot of fur” liked this ad and bluntly stated, “I need shock value.” The skinned fox was considered a very strong visual by almost everyone, and a number of participants said that the juxtaposition between the fox and the model is

effective. This also is consistent with past research. The ad's headline was considered good but not great, and some participants felt it was too "preachy" or "accusatory." Other comments about the headline were that it should be positioned at the top, and that it should be bigger and bolder. The Baxter ad was also considered offensive by a small minority, some of whom felt it was inappropriate for magazines or other publications. One male participant who said the ad was offensive commented that the ad "doesn't belong in a magazine." The PETA logo in the upper left corner of the ad was a minor distraction for some and a major deterrent for a few others.

FFA Bobcat Print Ad

Overall, participants identified The Fund for Animals' Bobcat ad as the second most effective, with about one in six participants listing it as their favorite on the questionnaire. While the Bobcat ad has significantly less stopping power than the Baxter ad, it was considered more effective than other ads primarily due to an effective combination of image and headline. A number of participants associated the bobcat image with household cats, personalizing the issue for them. The headline was also given high marks for being very bold and especially for use of the pronoun "she," which also personalized the message significantly. Past research has also demonstrated the strength of this language, and overall the concept of "needing their fur coat more than you do" is a consistent winner.

Not everyone thought the Bobcat ad was effective, however. While none of the participants chose it as the least effective ad, from some it elicited only a lukewarm response, not appearing to have any significant impact. A few participants criticized the bobcat looking so much like a household cat because they felt the notion of trapping pets was unbelievable and unsupported in the ad's copy.

PETA Caged Fox Print Ad

Another print ad from PETA included a caged fox with the headline, "Just think, it only takes 29 more to make a fur coat." Overall, this ad was considered less effective than the Bobcat ad in the questionnaires, but during the group discussion it clearly had more stopping power because of the image. The image was considered among the most effective of all of the materials evaluated. In every group, participants commented that the fox looked scared, with the crouched position, laid-back ears, and glassy, frightened eyes of the caged fox. During the group discussions, the image seemed to have a strong impact on a number of participants. Several mentioned that the caged fox image was more effective than the bobcat image. Overall, however, the ad appears comparable in effectiveness to the Bobcat ad, but for different reasons. Some felt it was more believable to consider a fox being used for fur rather than a bobcat.

The headline received mixed responses. A large number of participants commented that the use of the number ("29") was very effective. People seemed to be drawn to the number in the headline, and many participants commented that it made clearer to them the negative impact on animals of buying real fur. Others simply said that they like having facts. Apart from the reference to "29 more," however, the headline was considered confusing by most participants. Some commented that it reads like an equation or a poem, and several participants said they had to read it twice due to the strange wording.

FFA Jessica Biel Print Ad

Least effective of all the print materials was The Fund for Animals' ad featuring Jessica Biel. In the questionnaire, no participants chose this as the most effective, while nearly one in four participants said it was the least effective of all the materials evaluated. As we have found in past research, the use of celebrities evokes a mixed response at best, and is very hit-or-miss depending on the specific celebrity and the context of the message. In the case of Jessica Biel, most participants recognized her, but many did not think she was credible on the issue of fur. It was also suggested that celebrities might be more effective if used with children. Most participants seemed to feel that a picture of an animal does a much better job of connecting to the issue than a celebrity spokesperson.

The Biel ad featured a headline similar to the Bobcat ad: "Animals need their fur coats more than I do." The headline was well-received, but not as well as the Bobcat ad which featured the personalized "she" rather than the general term "animals." Some participants also thought the headline for the Biel ad would be more effective if it were bolder and used initial capitalization, as with the Bobcat ad. The Biel ad was also considered less effective by many participants simply because it is black-and-white. Overall, the ad does not have significant stopping power unless the viewer has a specific interest in Jessica Biel herself. Otherwise, most participants agreed the ad looked like any other product advertisement, some suggesting it looks like an ad for make-up or hair products. Finally, the copy was considered by most to be too long, with only very few participants saying they would read through it.

EVALUATION OF MULTI-MEDIA MATERIALS

FFA Wendie Malick Radio Ad

Past studies have evaluated a 60-second radio advertisement from The Fund for Animals featuring Wendie Malick. By and large, the ad was dismissed as being monotonous and wordy, with only a small number of older participants feeling that the ad is effective. In the most recent groups with college students, however, the radio spot fared significantly better, and compared favorably to the television ad (see below). Comparisons between different media can be misleading, but overall the Malick ad was considered less effective than all of the print ads save Jessica Biel. However, the radio spot received much more traction with these participants than in past studies, possibly reflecting the bias of college students in favor of radio (according to the Ad Council, adults 18-24 listen to an average of 23 hours of radio a week). Still, although it tested better than previously, the radio spot was ranked third overall among least effective ads, according to the questionnaires.

The Malick radio spot received mixed responses during the group discussions, but overall people seemed to think it was reasonably effective. The ad was given high marks for the pace, the voiceover, and for recall of specific important elements. Several participants commented that the tone of Malick's voice was very "comforting" and "non-accusatory," while others commented that the pace was much better than the comparatively frenetic pace of the television ad. Not everyone agreed, however, with a smaller number of participants saying that the warm tone contradicts the weight of the issue and the graphic language. When asked what they remember from the ad, participants most frequently recalled liking the voice and the tagline ("compassion is the new fashion"). Note however that the tagline was also used in other materials evaluated, which may have led to an overstated sense of recall.

Other comments on specific language used in the Malick ad were not as positive. While a few participants thought the reference to “family pets” made for an effective connection, a few others seemed to feel that it was not a supportable statement. Also critiqued was the reference to the “holiday season,” which seemed out of place for a group conducted in the spring. Finally, several participants commented that the use of the word “cool,” particularly by an older person, was itself un-cool, with one participant commenting that it was like hearing her father say the word.

FFA Television Commercial

The 60-second television commercial produced by The Fund for Animals was developed in part based on previous qualitative research. The focus on fur trim, juxtaposition of fashion and cruelty, and specific language reflect the findings from past focus groups. The television spot seemed to have pretty good stopping power with participants in the current study. However, there were several general comments that television as a medium captivates people more than print or radio, in part because people could “just turn the page” or change the radio station. Although intuitively one can do that with television as well, a number of respondents thought they would be more likely to allow the TV commercial to play out than to read the print ads or listen to the radio spot.

According to questionnaire responses, the TV commercial was not considered very effective. Two participants listed it as their choice for most effective, while four identified it as the least effective of the materials evaluated. A majority of participants seemed to feel that the TV spot was too fast-paced, making both the images and the content difficult for participants to take in. This feedback was remarkably consistent between groups. In particular, it seems that participants missed most of the voiceover because they were paying attention to – or trying to figure out – the images. One person commented that the voiceover was “too quick for my ears to pick up.” Others felt that the voice was much less inviting than Wendie Malick’s. Comments about the commercial’s background were more limited, but also mostly critical. The majority of those commenting on the music seemed to find it “annoying” or too upbeat for the otherwise somber message, but a few female participants thought the runway-style music was actually a positive.

For these reasons and others, the TV commercial does not seem to result in the desired take-aways. While several participants remembered the tagline, “Compassion is the new fashion,” this was one of the only elements that stood out consistently. It is worth noting that a few participants actually remarked that the use of runway models wearing fur garments in the commercial might in fact make real fur seem *more appealing* to themselves or to others. In the end, only a very small number of participants said they were likely to either visit the website or call the number shown at the end of the TV spot. Overall, the television commercial seems to have comparable visceral effectiveness to the print ads, though again we caution against drawing too many conclusions between different media types.

FFA “Fufanu” Flash Animation

The least effective advertisement according to both the group discussions and the questionnaire was The Fund for Animals’ “Fufanu” Flash animation. Again, the very different nature of the medium will have a significant impact on the perceived effectiveness. Rather than being exposed to the material by flipping through a magazine or watching TV, Fufanu viewers are likely to receive the link via email, based on word-

of-mouth from a friend or relative. Many participants felt that the Fufanu was unlikely to grab or keep their attention, in part because they do not open emails unless they know the sender and/or have a specific interest in the topic. The vast majority of participants felt the animation was much too long (running time is three minutes), and for this reason only a few participants said they would watch it in its entirety.

The Fufanu animation received several important criticisms. The most frequently mentioned was that it is more suitable for children because of its “silliness” and similarity to Dr. Seuss books (i.e., *The Lorax*). However, several people also commented that the animation’s suitability for children is contradicted by references to *Sex in the City* and Neiman Marcus, which some participants felt only adults would understand. Overall, while the Fufanu was considered different and entertaining by some participants, most felt it was ineffective and several commented that it makes light of the fur issue. The use of animation, the perceived “silliness,” and the “annoying” singing each led some participants to feel that the animation does not give appropriate weight to the issue. As with most of the other materials, very few participants said they would take any action after viewing the Fufanu animation.

OTHER OBSERVATIONS

Participants in the focus groups were also asked to provide feedback on several advertisements from the Fur Free Alliance’s Design Against Fur competition and on domain names. However, there was no group discussion on these items, and the evaluation is therefore surface-level at best. The Design Against Fur competition winners were evaluated in only three of the five focus groups. All three print designs were handed out to participants at the same time, with a quick show of hands to indicate their preference among the three. Participants showed a slight preference for the “Family of Foxes” ad, and slightly less preference for both the “Snap!” ad and the “Fox Coat-hanger” ad. No consensus emerged from the groups, however, and it is important to note that these results are very limited without having had some group discussion.

The various anti-fur domain names were considered by participants in four of the five groups. All participants were provided handouts with the options listed in no particular order and asked to circle their preferred domain name. Overall, there was a strong preference for “www.stopfur.org,” which received about three times as many votes as the next two choices. The apparent runners-up include “www.furiscruel.org” and “www.furfreedc.org,” with all of the other domain names receiving two or fewer votes each, among a total of 37 participants. Again, without group discussion it is difficult to fully assess responses to the domain names, but in this case “www.stopfur.org” is the clear winner.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- ⇒ Perhaps most importantly, The Fund for Animals should consider limiting the scope of its anti-fur campaigns to very specific niche audiences. As we discussed during the de-briefing call with David Hill last summer, buying fur is itself a niche behavior, and even the best advertisement impacts only a fraction of fur buyers. It is therefore very difficult to measure any real changes in perception or behavior as a result of a campaign. See below for recommendations about specific audiences.
- ⇒ HRC also strongly recommends that The Fund focus on the major audiences providing growth for the fur industry, including (we believe) African Americans and fur trim buyers. Precise research identifying areas of growth is not available, but empirically these seem to be the audiences that are driving interest in real fur. These suggestions are consistent with our recommendations from the August 2003 report.
- ⇒ All of the media types evaluated in previous and current studies – print, television, radio, and Flash animation – can be effective in certain circumstances and with certain audiences. While the print ads proved most effective in the current research, a television ad may work well if it can avoid overwhelming the viewer's senses. Also, the radio spot fared better than previously, and The Fund may wish to revisit radio as a means of reaching this younger audience.

TARGET AUDIENCE RECOMMENDATIONS

- ⇒ Overall, we recommend maintaining The Fund's focus on younger women, and perhaps trying even slightly younger audiences than previously suggested. While most young women in high school have not reached the purchase decision point for real fur garments, exposing them to the issue may be effective in swaying them to not buy real fur later in life.
- ⇒ To reach younger audiences (perhaps quite younger), HRC recommends that The Fund explore a toned-down version of the "Fufanu" animation. Although it tested poorly in the current study, there are some indications that it may work for children. With fewer adult-oriented references and slightly less graphic material, a revised animation could also be used for humane education purposes.
- ⇒ As mentioned above, we also strongly recommend trying to influence African American women, specifically. Hip hop is currently the dominant form of music, and fur is already pervasive and still growing in the largely African American culture that surrounds it. As a pre-defined niche with distinct interests and media vehicles, African Americans are an audience worth considering. As we have stated previously, however, HRC cautions against targeting this audience without first conducting some additional research.

THEME AND CONTENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- ⇒ With respect to ad themes, the conclusions from HRC's August 2003 report largely hold true in the results of the current study. Clearly, materials that are either graphic (primarily) or induce sympathy (secondarily) receive the best visceral response from the most people. Advertisements featuring celebrities are generally not effective except in particularly cases, and we recommend not using this approach. The use of animated characters may need to be limited to children.
- ⇒ Specifically, an obvious suggestion based on both current and past results is that The Fund should consider a more graphic approach. Naturally, a balance must be struck between tastefulness (and ability to get the ad printed or aired) and graphic content. There are strong indications that an advertisement that succeeds in being shocking without being offensive is most memorable.

- ⇒ As stated above, The Fund should maintain a focus on fur trim simply due to the fact that it is a high area of growth for the fur industry.
- ⇒ HRC recommends that The Fund evaluate the value of the “calls to action” in its advertisements. It appears that only a small number of readers or viewers have taken action as a result of past campaigns or might take action as a result of possible campaigns. For this reason, and depending on the cost of maintaining phone numbers and websites, the calls to action may be de-emphasized in favor of general consciousness-raising campaigns.

RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO SPECIFIC ADVERTISEMENTS

- ⇒ The Fund’s Jessica Biel print ad should probably be retired. The Fund’s Bobcat ad is much more effective than the Biel ad, but it does not seem to be worth spending large amounts of campaign dollars to run.
- ⇒ The Fund’s television commercial is not without merit, but The Fund should consider reworking it before airing it any further. Specifically, a slower-paced version with fewer images and a more deliberate voiceover may prove to be more effective.
- ⇒ The Fund may also want to consider a variation of the Wendie Malick radio ad. While the spot proved somewhat effective in the current study, HRC recommends trying versions with different music and/or altered copy.
- ⇒ As suggested above, the Fufanu animation does not appear to be effective with older audiences, and may be inappropriate for some younger audiences. Consider producing a more child-oriented version that humane educators could use.
- ⇒ We recommend also considering a theme involving the numbers of animals used to make fur garments. These numbers are surprising for some people, and participants seem to be drawn to the use of specific references, as evidenced by PETA’s Caged Fox ad.
- ⇒ Finally, consistent with our comments on graphic materials above, HRC strongly recommends that The Fund consider producing a variation of PETA’s Sophie Baxter print ad, which is both graphic and provides a strong juxtaposition between fur fashion and animal cruelty.

V. APPENDIX A – MATERIALS EVALUATED

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
Print Advertisements					
FFA – Jessica Biel	X	X	X	X	X
FFA – Bobcat	X	X	X	X	X
PETA – “Just think...”	X	X	X	X	X
PETA – Sophie Baxter	X	X	X	X	X
DAF – Multiple ads [1]	Not shown	Not shown	X	X	X
Multimedia Advertisements					
FFA – TV Commercial	X	X	X	X	X
FFA – Wendie Malick Ad	X	X	X	X	X
FFA – “Fufanu” Flash animation	X	X	X	X	X
FFA – Domain names [2]	Not shown	X	X	X	X

Notes:

- 1) “DAF” refers to Design Against Fur, a competition organized by the Fur Free Alliance. Although the DAF ads were shown in groups 3, 4, and 5, no discussion took place during the group, and participants were only asked to provide their preference among the three ads.
- 2) Six different domain names were evaluated in all but one group by using a handout and asking participants to circle their preference. No discussion of domain names took place during the group.

V. APPENDIX B – DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRO – 5 MINUTES

The purpose of these focus groups...

DISTRIBUTE PRE-GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE – 5 MINUTES, 10 TOTAL

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

BEHAVIORS AND ATTITUDES RELATING TO FUR – 10 MINUTES, 20 TOTAL

[SHOW OF HANDS] *How many of you have thought about fur as a controversial issue?*

Have you discussed fur as an issue with your friends or family or any other contacts?

[SHOW OF HANDS] *Do any of you own garments either trimmed with or made entirely of real fur?*

Did you purchase the coat yourself or get it as a gift?

Tell us what type of fur garment you purchased and why you bought it...

What about faux fur? Does it have the same benefits? Would you wear faux fur?

ANTI-FUR GENRES, MESSAGES AND MATERIALS – 35 MINUTES, 55 TOTAL

Questions to ask throughout the process

- *Which messages and materials garner the most visceral response?*
- *Which overall approach (i.e., genre, celeb, animal, etc.) do participants think make the most/least effective argument against fur? Why?*
- *Look for consistent feedback on details like headlines, image types, etc. and explore further.*

The Fund for Animals Print Ads

We'll start by looking at a couple of print ads using a similar message but with a different approach...

1. Jessica Biel Print Ad

- *Do you recognize either the actress or her name? If so, from where?*
- *If you were reading a magazine, do you think this ad would grab your attention? Why or why not?*
- *What do you think of the headline, "Animals need their fur coats more than I do?" Why?*
- *Would you read the copy for this ad?*
- *In general, do you think celebrities make effective spokespersons for an issue like fur?*

2. Bobcat Print Ad

- *What do you think of this variation of the headline, including the use of "she?"*
- *If you were reading a magazine, do you think this ad would grab your attention? Why or why not?*
- *Would you read the copy for this ad?*
- *Do you think this approach is more or less effective than the Jessica Biel ad?*

The Fund for Animals Multimedia Ads/PSAs

3. Fur Trim Commercial (30 seconds)

- Overall, do you think this ad was more or less effective than the print ads you've seen?
- What was your reaction to the graphic footage in the commercial? What do you think of the juxtaposition of this graphic footage with models wearing fur?
- What's the one thing from the voiceover (copy) that sticks in your head the most? Did it make you feel any differently about fur (or fur trim)?
- [SHOW OF HANDS] How many of you would call the number or visit the website?

4. Wendie Malick Radio Ad (1 minute)

- Overall, do you think this was more or less effective than the commercial you just saw?
- Do you recognize the name Wendie Malick or her voice? From where?
- Again, what's the one thing from the voiceover (copy) that sticks in your head the most? Why?

5. "Fufanu" Flash Animation Video (3 minutes)

- Now obviously this is a very different approach... what did you think? How would you compare it to the 30-second commercial you just saw?
- If you were sent this in an email, would you forward it to anyone you know? Why?
- What's the one thing from the animation that sticks in your head the most? Did it make you feel any differently about fur trim?
- [SHOW OF HANDS] How many of you would click on one of the links shown here? Which one?

PETA Print Ads

6. PETA "Just Think... Only 29 More" Print Ad

- Compare this picture of a fox with the bobcat image you saw earlier... which has the greater impact on you?
- What about the headline?
- If you were reading a magazine, do you think this ad would grab your attention? Why or why not?

7. PETA Sophie Baxter Print Ad

- Do any of you think this ad is shocking or offensive? What about compared to the others you've seen tonight?
- What about the headline?
- Again, if you were reading a magazine, do you think this ad would grab your attention? Why or why not?

DAF Ads -- Time Permitting

8. Design Against Fur Ad #1 – Family of Foxes

9. Design Against Fur Ad #2 – Coat Hanger

10. Design Against Fur Ad #3 – Snap!

- Similar questions to above, but explore feelings of sympathy and empathy as they see animals in positive versus negative settings, and abstract versus real imagery.

LAST THOUGHTS – 5 MINUTES, 60 TOTAL

Do you have any final comments on this topic?

VI. APPENDIX C – PRE-GROUP QUESTIONNAIRE

Date / time: _____

Name (optional): _____

1. Do you own any garments made entirely of REAL FUR? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. Do you own any garments trimmed with REAL FUR? ☐ Yes ☐ No
3. Do you own any garments made entirely of FAUX FUR? ☐ Yes ☐ No
4. Do you own any garments trimmed with FAUX FUR? ☐ Yes ☐ No
5. Over the past year, how much have you heard about the debate over buying and wearing REAL FUR?
☐ A lot
☐ Some
☐ Only a little
☐ Nothing at all
6. Which of the following best represents your opinion about REAL FUR?
☐ Real fur is morally acceptable and people should be able to buy it if they want to
☐ Real fur is understandably controversial, but people should still have the choice to buy it
☐ Real fur is cruel and unnecessary and people **should choose** not to buy or wear it.
☐ Real fur is cruel and unnecessary and selling it **should be banned** in the U.S.

Please fill out the following questions AFTER the focus group

7. Of all of the ads you saw today, which had the most impact on you and why?

8. Of all of the ads you saw today, which had the least impact on you and why?

9. As a student of persuasion, how would you convince people to stop buying real fur?

