

Gender, Views of Nature, and Support for Animal Rights

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The last 20 years have witnessed the dramatic growth of the animal rights movement and the concurrent increase in its social scientific scrutiny. One of the most notable and consistent findings to emerge from this body of research has been the central role of women in the movement. This paper uses General Social Survey data to examine the influence of views of the relationship of humanity to nature on this gender difference. Holding a Romantic view of nature is associated with higher levels of support for extending moral rights to animals and lower levels of support for animal-based testing. A Darwinian view is associated with greater support for testing on animals but is unrelated to views on moral rights for animals. In general, views of nature affect animal rights advocacy to a greater extent among males than females.
