

**VETERINARY SCHOOLS AND THE
ANIMAL WELFARE MOVEMENT:
BUILDING BRIDGES**

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Outline of Talk

- **History**
- **Current Situation**
 - Public Attitudes
 - **Animal Groups & Veterinary Profession:**
 - Demographics & Economics
 - Interactions – positive and negative
- **Thoughts for the future**
 - The Potential & Challenges
 - A Policy Agenda
- **Conclusion**

Veterinary Profession and Animal Welfare: Developments - 1

- **1870's** – NY State – Law, Liutard & Bergh, MA – Angell & Harvard
- **1875-1945** – Limited interaction; Bergh does speak at some veterinary schools; 1897 Daniel Salmon of BAI appeals for humane society cooperation
- **1928** – AVMA expresses concern about HS veterinary hospitals (at Women's SPCA, ASPCA, MSPCA)
- **1945-2000** – Cool to difficult relations between AVMA and animal groups
- **1970s** – HS veterinary activities again a concern at AVMA – but Angell (MSPCA) one of top intern destinations for companion animal medicine
- **1971** – Los Angeles Dept of Animal Regulation establishes low-cost S/N clinic

Veterinary Profession and Animal Welfare: Developments - 2

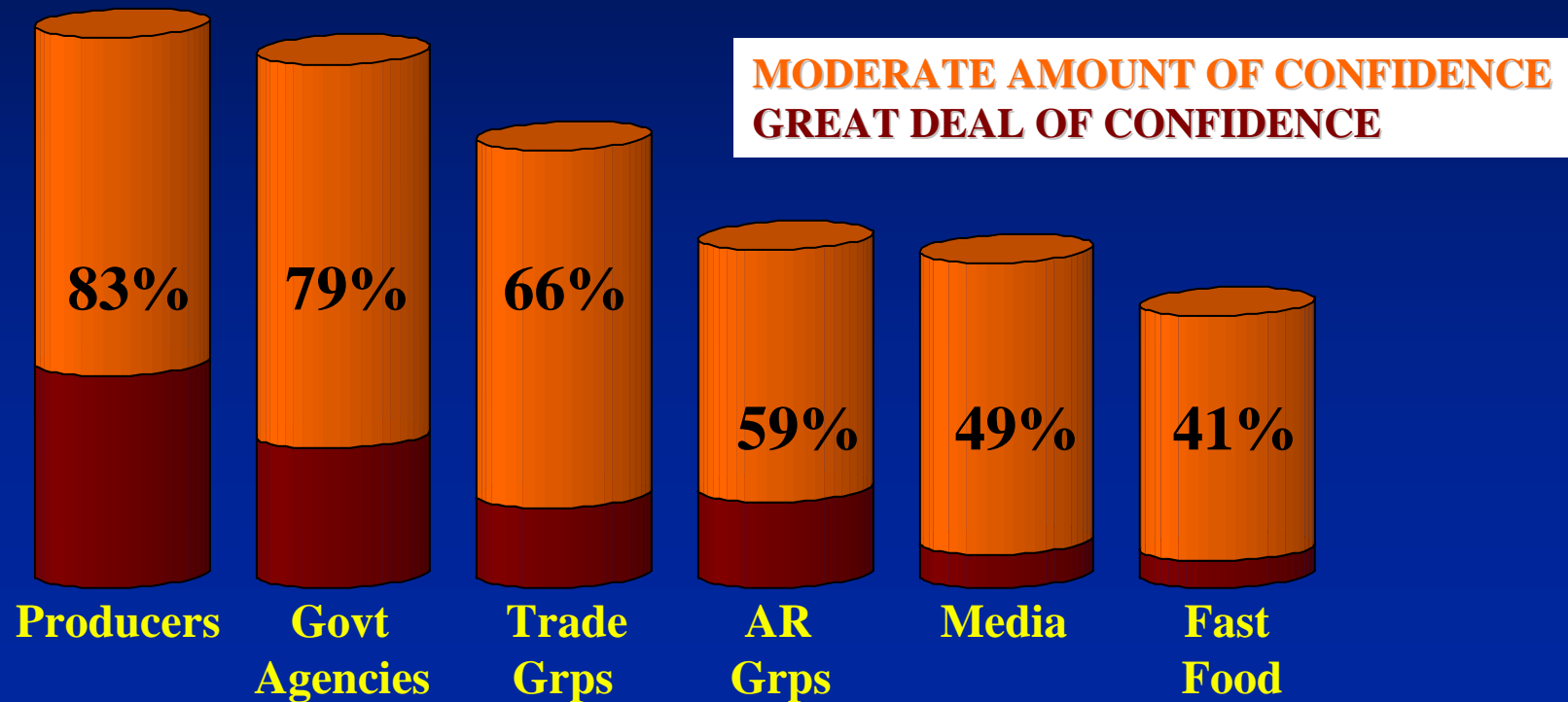
- **1974/6** – Joint meetings on pet overpopulation
- **1978** – John Hoyt of HSUS on Board of Visitors at Penn vet school, Dean Marshak joins HSUS Board – but both resign in 1981/2
- **1981** – AVMA reconstitutes its Animal Welfare Committee
- **1982** – IRS rules income from full-service clinic at mid-western humane society is taxable
- **1984** – IRS rules Mich. HS' clinic to be charitable
- **1986** – AVMA asks Congress to impose taxes on non-profits operating businesses not directly related to mission – vet hospital issue again

Veterinary Profession and Animal Welfare: Developments - 3

- **1990** – 6 of 27 vet. schools mention animal welfare as a strategic issue – 3 saw it only as a threat
- **1990** – AVMA Animal Welfare Forum begins
- **1997** – Leininger (AVMA President) speaks at HSUS Expo
- **2005** – AVMA establishes Animal Welfare Division
- **2006** – AVMA President Henry Childers proposes closer ties but AVMA Executive turns down initial proposal.

Current Situation: Public Attitudes – 1

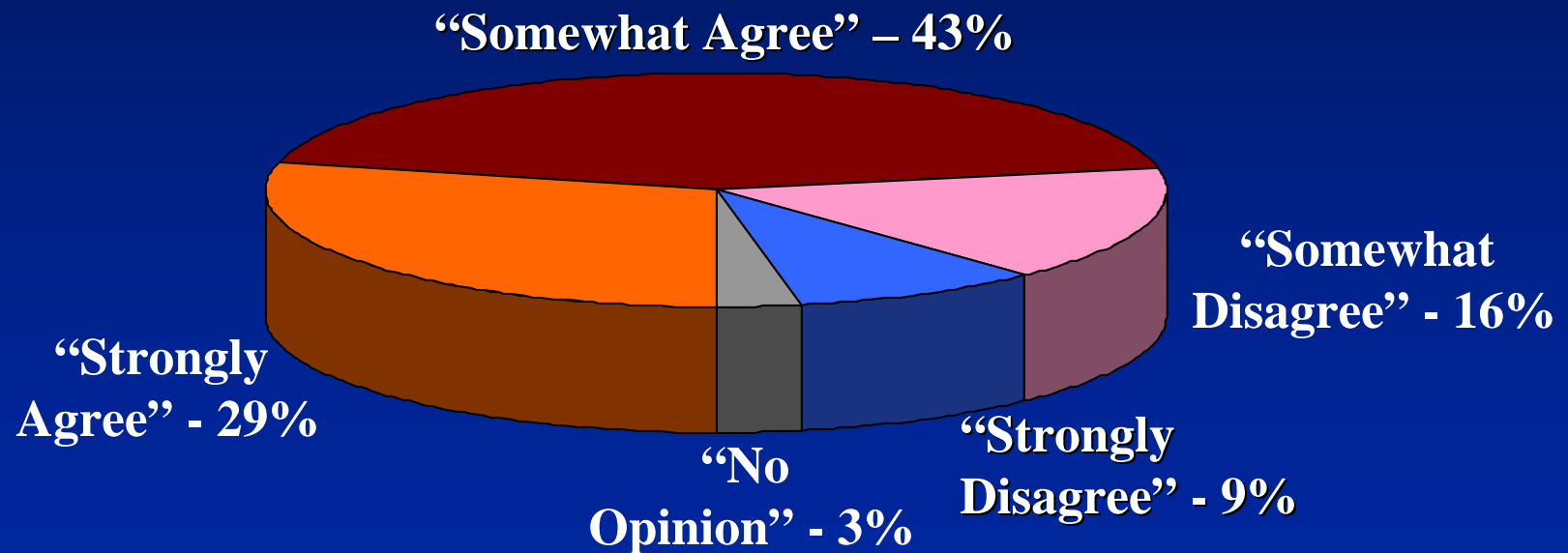
“How much credibility do consumers give to different information sources?” [1,004 sampled; 2001]



Source: Pork Magazine, 2001; “Animal Welfare – What do Consumers Think?”

Current Situation: Public Attitudes – 2

“Do you agree or disagree with the goals of the animal rights movement?” [1,004 sample]



Source: Gallup poll, 2000

Current Situation: Public Attitudes – 3

- Thinking about various groups and industries in the US, how favorably do you view each of the following groups? (% Extremely/Very Favorable)

School teachers	66% (NSB-47%)
Veterinarians	56%
Farmers	48%
Animal Rts activists	18%
Trial lawyers	9% (NSB-15%)

(From: Animal Agric. Alliance (April 5, 2004); Consumer Attitudes about Animal Welfare)

Current Situation: Public Attitudes – 4

- **Substantial shift in public attitudes in past 25 years**
 - National Science Board survey – support for animal research dropped by 21 % points (65-44%) from 1985
 - Public more concerned about moral status of animals
- **65 million households have dogs & cats today**
 - 50% very attached, 35% attached, 15% slightly attached
 - Reflected in growth of veterinary income/business – animals are “worth” more

Current Situation: Veterinary & AP Descriptors

DEMOGRAPHIC ASPECTS

	<u>VETERINARIANS</u>	<u>AN. PROTECT.</u>
● Gender	80% fem students	85% female
● Diversity	5% minority	3% minority
● # in profession	80,000	200,000
● # hosp./entit.	22,000	9,500
● Potl public base	45 m. hshlds*	20-50 m. hshlds
● “GNP”	\$10-20 bn	\$2 bn

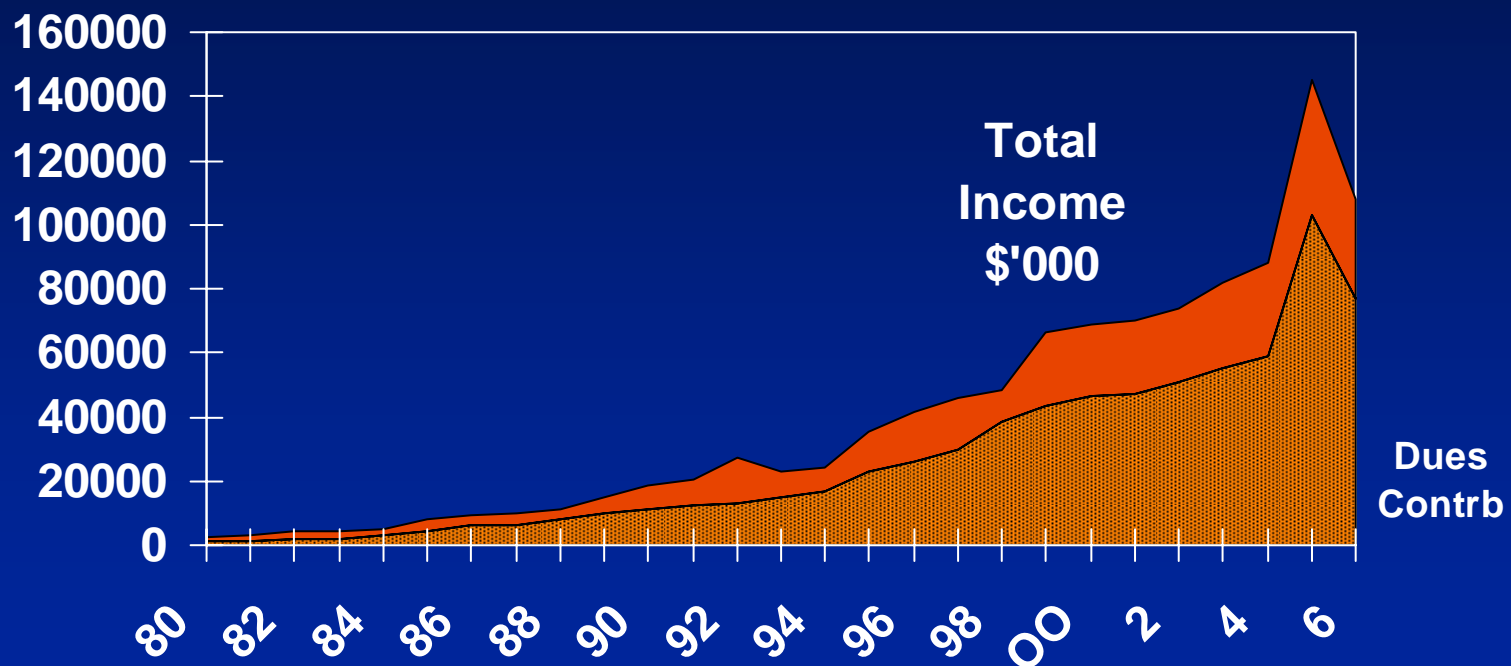
* 75% of veterinary income from dog/cat medicine

Current Situation: Animal Movement \$ Resources

Org.	Inc.			Ass.		
	1996	2000	2004	1996	2000	2005
HSUS	37.8	60.0	85.9	58.0	99.4	125.7
ASPCA	20.3	19.3	31.8	18.0	60.9	64.7
PETA*	11.5	16.5	30.7	4.1	5.9	22.5
PCRM*	1.4	2.2	13.0	0.3	1.1	6.8
AWI	0.7	1.8	2.9	0.5	1.5	4.8
AHA	6.1	8.8	8.6	2.9	10.2	7.8
All			\$2 bn			

(* Includes allied foundations)

Current Situation: Animal Movement Growth (e.g. HSUS)



Note: 2005 is an anomalous year – Katrina donations of \$34 million

Current Situation: Veterinarians & Animal Welfare - 1

- **Public view veterinarians as animal welfare experts – majority would go to veterinarian for help with animal issue**
- **In reality, relative few veterinarians are actively involved in scholarly activity in animal welfare (beyond providing for/researching animal health)**
 - **Only 8 of 15 animal issue “Centers” at veterinary schools directed by a veterinarian**
 - **Only 23.8% of authors in JAAWS from 2001-2004 were veterinarians**
- **Veterinary organizations scrambling to address and/or catch up with public expectations**

Current Situation: Veterinarians & Animal Welfare - 2

- **Animal Protection and Veterinarians – At odds**
 - CVMA – battles on “guardianship,” ear cropping, declawing, GMOs
 - AVMA – at odds with animal groups over foie gras, horse slaughter, treatment of food animals; expels AVAR over NYT advertisement
- **Animal Protection and Veterinarians – In harmony**
 - HSUS RAVS program – 900 students in 2005
 - HSUS & LSU/MSU developing disaster response
 - ASPCA and animal poison control center
 - Humane Alliance and s/n programs

The Potential

- **Veterinarians and their professional organizations have high credibility with policy makers and the public**
- **Animal organizations have become much more professional and have developed large groups of high energy activists**
- **The combined forces could wield significant political heft**

The Challenges

- **Veterinary schools are currently very reliant on animal agriculture to support state funding requests – even though less than 10% of graduates go into food animal medicine**
- **There is no Companion Animal lobby (apart from animal protection groups) to speak of at either Federal or State levels**
- **Still considerable mistrust & misunderstanding between Veterinarians and Animal Protection**

Developing a New Alliance

- **Veterinary schools and shelters**
 - Many opportunities for enhancing student training – e.g. in s/n programs, indigent care programs
 - For example, change in practitioner behavior was very important in decrease in unwanted animal euthanasia but their role unrecognized by both veterinary medicine and 3,300 shelters

Euthanasia in Nation's Shelters

(Rough Estimates - Millions)

YEAR	1973	1981	1992	2002
Dogs & cats in homes	65	81	110	130
D&C euth. in shelters	13	9	6	5.5
% of D&C in homes	20	11	5.5	4.2

For references for the above, see Rowan (1992) *Anthrozoos* 5:140 and AVMA 2002 survey for 2002 population. The shelter number for 2002 is a guesstimate based on trends in states and individual shelters.

Political Potential

- Money in animal protection in animal protection programs for veterinary schools but will require significant changes in approach and thinking
- The Dialogue is still desultory – focused too much on differences rather than areas of agreement
- Potential for Federal Animal Care Commission – enforce federal laws, provide research funding for dog/cat health

Policy Issues – Joint Programs?

- **Animal fighting & Animal Cruelty (forensics, reporting, etc)**
- **Farm animals & food production**
- **Wildlife – humane care & conflict management**
- **Shelter matters**
- **Indigent care**

CONCLUSION

- **No easy answers – still much suspicion**
- **Animal protection and veterinary community making cautious steps to forge better relations**
- **Animal welfare – not simply absence of disease – other value components that veterinary community not yet comfortable addressing.**