EVERY FUR COAT HURTS!

"The raccoon did not run away as we slushed downstream toward it. Running was not an option. One of its feet was held tightly in a No. 2 steel trap.

"The trapper I was with paused momentarily appraising the animal for size and quality of fur. 'Look at those ears,' he said. 'That old fellow has been in plenty of fights.'

"Then, with a carpenter's hammer that is standard equipment on his trapline, he aimed a blow at the raccoon's head intended to fulfill the trapper's promise of a quick and humane death for animals caught in leghold traps.

"When the trapper opened the jaws of the trap, the raccoon, frothing blood, attempted to crawl away. Not dead yet. With one quick motion the trapper grabbed the wounded animal by its hind legs, swung the body in a smooth arc, and crushed its skull against a log.

"That ended the raccoon's struggles. His fighting days were over, his life traded for his fur. On that day, his fur was worth $12 to the trapper."

— Reprinted by Permission of Floridian Magazine, The St. Petersburg Times
— Photo by John Pennicott
Whims of Fashion Fatal to Furbearers

The raccoon on the cover of this report is just one of about 17 million U.S. furbearers killed each year. Most have been made to suffer the agony of the steel jaw trap. The trap’s cruel grasp is often administered with a club, a noose, or a boot heel. And let us not forget the millions of other fur animals which are raised and slaughtered on so-called fur ranches! All of this death and suffering in the name of fashion.

Killing fur animals for luxury products is both a moral and an ecological problem. Each and every fur coat creates a demand for more and more pelts. This intensive trapping pressure stimulates “game management” programs that promote the propagation of economically valuable species at the expense of other living creatures in the ecosystem. These creatures are essential to the efficient operation of natural systems. And our insensitivity to the terror, pain, and suffering brought about by the use of the steel jaw trap adversely affects our relationships with all living things, including fellow human beings.

The trap is a blind instrument of death. A trapper may set up his trap to catch a fur bearer. But a bird might swoop down to take the bait and be trapped. This not only disrupts the chain of life which is essential to the preservation of the balance of nature, but causes needless suffering and death to so-called “trash” animals. And that’s if not bad enough, The HSUS has accumulated a library of case reports documenting incidents in which domestic pets have been maimed and have lost their paws or legs in steel jaw traps.

A fenn-wolf emerges from the swamp grass and moves toward the bank of the river. She zooms off his foot. The terror-stricken fox is about to be caught in the line of fire of a semiautomatic rifle. This is the last thing our fur animals are simply at the mercy of their owners.

Economics of the U.S. Fur Trade

The HSUS estimates that there are about 300,000 trappers in the United States, the vast majority of whom are not proficient in trapping methods which cause mutations, electrocution, or clubbing.

The principal species raised in captivity in the U.S. are rabbit, mink, fox, and chinchilla. Mink is by far the most popular species raised on ranches expressly for fur. The total retail sales of all fur garments in 1978 brought 725 million dollars into the coffers of the fur industry, an industry that employs fewer than 5,000 people in about 663 firms.

Outlawing the Trap: An Uphill Battle

More than 19 other nations outlaw the steel jaw trap. To date, no federal legislation has been successful. Trapping is established as a “rational” right.

There has been some moderate success reforming trapping laws on the state level but very little success in banning the trap. Only five states substantially limit the trap: Massachusetts, New York, and Michigan.

Pet and animals and children often fall victim to the steel jaw trap. U.S. animal shelters are often called upon to rescue and euthanize cats and dogs that have been trapped. This unfortunate dog was a victim of the “blind” trap.

In March of ’79, animal control officers in the San Diego area were forced to euthanize this bobcat. He had escaped from a trap in which both left feet had been caught.

How Many Skins Make a Coat?

As you see the real profits are being made by the furriers and the fur designers. Their share of the pie is an honor role of the fashion world:

How Many Skins Make a Coat?

As you see the real profits are being made by the furriers and the fur designers. Their share of the pie is an honor role of the fashion world.

What’s It Like to be Trapped?

A fox emerges from the swamp grass and moves toward the river. She is about to be caught in the line of fire of a semiautomatic rifle. This is the last thing our fur animals are simply at the mercy of their owners.

Outlawing the Trap: An Uphill Battle

More than 19 other nations outlaw the steel jaw trap. To date, no federal legislation has been successful. Trapping is established as a "rational" right.

There has been some moderate success reforming trapping laws on the state level but very little success in banning the trap. Only five states substantially limit the trap: Massachusetts, New York, and Michigan.

Pet and animals and children often fall victim to the steel jaw trap. U.S. animal shelters are often called upon to rescue and euthanize cats and dogs that have been trapped. This unfortunate dog was a victim of the "blind" trap.

In March of ’79, animal control officers in the San Diego area were forced to euthanize this bobcat. He had escaped from a trap in which both left feet had been caught.

How Many Skins Make a Coat?

As you see the real profits are being made by the furriers and the fur designers. Their share of the pie is an honor role of the fashion world:

What’s It Like to be Trapped?

A fox emerges from the swamp grass and moves toward the river. She is about to be caught in the line of fire of a semiautomatic rifle. This is the last thing our fur animals are simply at the mercy of their owners.

Outlawing the Trap: An Uphill Battle

More than 19 other nations outlaw the steel jaw trap. To date, no federal legislation has been successful. Trapping is established as a "rational" right.

There has been some moderate success reforming trapping laws on the state level but very little success in banning the trap. Only five states substantially limit the trap: Massachusetts, New York, and Michigan.

Pet and animals and children often fall victim to the steel jaw trap. U.S. animal shelters are often called upon to rescue and euthanize cats and dogs that have been trapped. This unfortunate dog was a victim of the "blind" trap.
Seals: The Cruel Clubbing Continues

On the ice floes off Canada's Newfoundland, and the rocky shores of the U.S. Pribilof Islands and South Africa, fur seals are clubbed to death every year. These annual carnages have caught the attention of the world—a world that has howled in protest—to no avail.

In Alaska and South Africa, young adult seals are harassed and rounded up. Then, clubbers wade into the pack and begin their deadly chore. On Newfoundland's ice they kill baby seals because their white protective fur is prized. The young must be slain before the fur changes color.

The clubs may look like baseball bats, some with iron spikes. The scenes are ghastly. Clubbed animals are skinned with such speed that many carcasses are still quivering after death. Clubbers claim their method of death is humane. The HSUS believes it to be brutalizing to both animals and people.

Perhaps the labels on the sealskin coats should say, "Clubbed to Death in...." Then maybe the buyers would think twice before supporting the slaughter.

Help HSUS Help Furbearers!

Your contribution of $10, $25, or more will help us work toward the end of the pain and suffering...

Your contribution will enable The HSUS to continue its fight against cruelty to animals whenever and wherever we find it.

All contributors of $10 or more will receive HSUS's EVERY FUR COAT HURTS decal. By displaying the glue-on-back decal, you will help HSUS spread the word to those who have not thought about the behind-the-scenes cruelty which is an essential part of every fur product.

Made of weather-resistant material, the decal can be affixed to your car window, your briefcase, a book cover, or the back of your jogging suit!

Use the postage-paid envelope to send your tax deductible contribution today.

It's not enough to say you like animals!