



EDITORIAL RESPONSE | The Art of Deception

by Vicki Tobin 2012.06.10

Sue Wallis [or whoever pens her ramblings] has mastered the art of writing fictitious statements and making them sound feasible.

In a cover letter to the release of her latest piece of fiction, she states her paper is a representation of the horse industry. Where is the data to back that statement? She is well known for making baseless statements and then when challenged, she cuts and runs.

She wants to kill horses. Period. How is that going to help the beleaguered horse industry that makes its billions from live horses? The answer is obvious. It won't.

Wallis speaks for a foreign meat industry. When did the horse industry ever produce meat? They produce athletes and performance horses, not horse meat.

The first section is nothing more than an attempt to build a market that doesn't exist and never will exist in America. If Americans ate horses and there was a buck to be made, horse meat would be in our grocery stores. There was nothing stopping the selling of horse meat in the U.S. during all the years slaughter existed on our soil and never a mention of wanting to sell horse meat.

She babbles on and on about the foreign countries consuming meat. Really, now. Who cares? Every country has its own culture and is free to eat and do what they please. In our country, in our culture, we do not eat our horses. She claims she'll feed the hungry. Do we really want the U.S. to be known for wiping out world hunger by feeding the hungry toxic meat?

We agree with her comment that journalists don't always fact check but this is a positive for Wallis, not a negative. If journalists did check facts, none of her nonsense would be published.

She claims horse slaughter is humane but hasn't provided any evidence. There are mounds of evidence to the contrary. Continually citing *Humane Methods of Slaughter*, she fails to state that having regulations and enforcing them are not the same. There aren't enough inspectors and yet, she wants to expand their workload to horse slaughter plants that will further compromise our food supply. Government authenticated undercover footage has proven over and over again just how inhumane horse slaughter really is. Not being able to explain away the cruelty, she simply states they are all fabricated. If she pulled FOIAs from the former U.S. plants, she would realize just how baseless her statements really are.

All we hear is humane and regulated horse slaughter plants. This is coming from someone who thought it was good clean fun to crawl around in the bloodied carcass of a horse. Someone that defends a livestock plant owner wanting to open a horse slaughter plant that was shut down by the USDA for inhumane treatment of slaughter animals and someone that defends a feedlot owner that has been cited over and over again for violations. Listen to her carefully. She defends the cruelty and attacks the individuals that expose it.

Next, we move on to food safety. She makes the statement that horse meat is safe. Horse meat from horses in other countries may be safe but it certainly isn't from horses raised in America. U.S. horses are not raised or regulated as food animals. We race horses; we raise horses to perform, to work, for law enforcement, as therapy animals, for sport, for pleasure and as companions. The foreign countries that consume horse meat raise horses as food animals. They do not raise their horses for other purposes and then send them to the butcher. They have

passport systems requiring a veterinarian record every medication given to the horse from birth. They do not allow a horse to obtain a passport over 6 months of age. The passport systems are national systems to ensure food safety, not a home grown system devised by those who will profit from horse slaughter.

Once again, she reaches out to equine scientists and veterinarians to give her ammo to get around food safety regulations. Medical doctors determine the levels of medications that are safe for human consumption and what medications are banned in food animals. Food safety is to protect humans, not animals. Equine scientists and veterinarians are not medical doctors.

Stating that horse meat is nutritious and including pictures of plates of horse meat does not portray meat from American horses. Add a little Phenylbutazone (Bute) to the meat and the nutrition is outweighed by the risk of developing cancer. Included in her paper is a letter from [again] non medial doctors that unsuccessfully attempted to refute a paper published on Bute in the Food and Chemical Toxicology Journal. In typical Wallis fashion, she failed to print the response to the letter that was published in the same journal that validated the original study.¹ A comprehensive study was also published by a group of veterinarians in Ireland on the effects of Bute in humans and the consequences for violating the passport system.²

One constant with Wallis is that you can always count on her rabidly trying to find a way around food safety laws—in particular, with Bute. The reason she is so irrational on food safety is that if food safety regulations were enforced with U.S. horses, there would be no horses to slaughter. So she does what she does best; explains it away with irrelevant documents and statements from individuals [or herself] that have no training or qualifications to speak to food safety.

One of her favorite tricks is to include a link to prove something, counting on the reader never actually reading the document. As one example, she cites a 2008 European Union (E.U.) report as proof that drug residues have never been found in U.S. horses. The report she cites has nothing to do with results—it was about establishing protocols concerning drug residues.

In December of 2010, the E.U. released a report on how well the slaughter plants were implementing the recommendations of the 2008 audit and this one did include drug residues in U.S. horses. Not only did they find several banned substances but also discovered that the accompanying paperwork was falsified.³ Of course, she ignores the report because it blows her argument out of the water.

She disregards the documents that disprove her statements and when challenged, there is never a response other than to start name calling. How dare those tree hugging, vegan, radical animal activists provide facts.

In another example, Wallis talks about the rate at which Phenylbutazone disappears from the blood stream, implying that it simply goes away in a few days. In fact, the drug does two things Wallis doesn't mention. First, it metabolizes into Oxyphenylbutazone, a compound with a much longer rate of decay and the same toxic properties. Secondly, it takes up in injured tissue. This accounts for its extreme effectiveness, but it also makes it reappear in the blood later. The bottom line is that Bute is banned in all meat animals for very good scientific reasons.

¹ http://www.equinewelfarealliance.org/uploads/Henneke_and_Marini.pdf

² http://www.equinewelfarealliance.org/uploads/Ireland_-_bute.pdf

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<http://www.animalsangels.org/images/stories/pdf/fvo%20inspection%20at%20mexican%20plants%20december%202010.pdf>

Bute is known as the aspirin of horse world. It is as common as the bottle of aspirin in your medicine cabinet. Walk into any barn in the U.S. and you will find a form of Bute or Bute compounds. Bute is banned in all food producing animals and is banned by the FDA and the E.U. that consumes the meat from U.S. horses.

The GAO report that Wallis frequently quotes is primarily anecdotal comments and she validates this with the comments in her paper. Comments and interviews are not data.⁴ As one example, veterinarians from the meat industry were interviewed regarding *abandoned* horses instead of the state agencies that receive and record the reports. When EWA requested the underlying data that formulated the assumptions, our request was denied; a further indication that data did not exist. Wallis completely ignores the GAO recommendation that horse slaughter be banned permanently.

Wallis blames the closure of the U.S. horse slaughter plants for the decrease in horse values and all the woes of the horse industry. Not only did horse slaughter not end but it increased. Nothing changed other than where they were being butchered. Anyone possessing even a rudimentary knowledge of cause and effect would understand what a ridiculous conclusion that is. One year after the plants closed, our country experienced an economic crisis that has been compared to the Great Depression. Every industry in this country experienced declines. Does she honestly expect anyone to believe that if the plants had remained opened, that only the value of horses wouldn't have declined?

A recent poll by the prestigious pollsters, Lake Associates, revealed that 80% of Americans are against horse slaughter. Wallis can continue starting new organizations, changing the names and aligning with foreign meat businesses. She can continue making unsubstantiated statements and claims of support but in the end, she will be run out of town as she has been every time she tried to shove a slaughter plant down the throats of communities in America.

And that, my friends, speaks volumes of the opposition to horse slaughter in our country.

⁴ http://www.equinewelfarealliance.org/uploads/GAO_Response-final.pdf