



STEVEN WISE'S « SACUDIENDO LA JAULA: HACIA LOS DERECHOS DE LOS ANIMALES » BOOK RELEASE EVENT IN BARCELONA: A WIDER AUDIENCE PROMISING FOR MORE LEGAL ACTIONS ON BEHALF OF ANIMALS?

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On April 19th, 2018, Steven Wise¹, American lawyer and emblematic founder and president of the Nonhuman Rights Project², presented the Spanish edition of his book written in 2000, « Rattling the cage: Toward legal rights for animals », at the occasion of its release in Spain under the title « Sacudiendo la jaula: Hacia los Derechos de los animales » in April of this year³. The event was organized at the *Museu i Centre d'Estudis de l'Esport Melcior Colet* of Barcelona, in partnership with the Private Foundation *CyO*, the NGO *Esport Solidari Internacional*, the publisher *Tirant lo Blanch*, the *Master of Animal Law and Society* of the *Autonomous University of Barcelona*⁴, and the *ICALP*.

Senator and President of the NGO *Esport Solidari Internacional* Josep Maldonado i Gili, Permanent Councilor of State Dr Enrique Alonso Garcia, Sabadell Judge Dean and ICALP researcher Gloria Pérez Padilla, and Dra Teresa Gimenez-Candela, Director of the ICALP and of the Master in Animal Law and Society at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, greeted the assistance with their presence to welcome the arrival of Steven Wise's work in Spanish libraries, addressing all a few special words to the author present in Barcelona for the occasion.

¹ Steven M. Wise is founder and president of the NhRP. He has practiced animal protection law for 30 years throughout the US and is the author of four books: *Rattling the Cage – Toward Legal Rights for Animals*; *Drawing the Line – Science and the Case for Animal Rights*; *Though the Heavens May Fall – The Landmark Trial That Led to the End of Human Slavery*; and *An American Trilogy – Death, Slavery, and Dominion Along the Banks of the Cape Fear River*. He holds a J.D. from Boston University Law School and a B.S. in Chemistry from the College of William and Mary.

² The Nonhuman Rights Project is the only civil rights organization in the United States working to secure legally recognized fundamental rights for nonhuman animals through litigation, advocacy, and education. To know more about the NHR: <https://www.nonhumanrights.org>

³ Published by Tirant lo Blanch: <https://www.tirant.com/editorial/libro/sacudiendo-la-jaula-hacia-los-derechos-de-los-animales-steven-m-wise-9788491696506>

⁴ Steven Wise gave a class on the strategies toward legal rights for animals to the students of the 7th edition of the Master in Animal Law and Society at the Autonomous University of Barcelona from 17th to 19th of April.



As underlined by the eminent table members during the venue, the translation of this classic in the animal rights field and international movement for the recognition of legal personhood and fundamental rights for animals will provide the Spanish-speaking public with the opportunity, more than 30 years after Steven Wise pioneered the fight for their legal rights, to understand the arguments that abound in favor of upgrading the legal status of animals and the mechanisms and legal techniques that are used to reach this goal before US courts.

Gaining such expertise in more countries could prove to reinforce the call for an improvement of the condition of animals, and especially of the most autonomous and intelligent among them as argued by Steven Wise, through challenging the refusal to grant animals at least bodily liberty and bodily integrity rights in spite of the great suffering such deprivation imposes upon these beings. The author exposes how the legal status of the animals, lacking the capacity to possess any legal rights as mere things, contradicts all established standards of morality and science.

Steven Wise's book, now available to a wider audience, is an excellent tool and very accessible book for those who want to understand the complexities of animals' minds and their apprehension by legal systems and the companies that use them. Hopefully, this publication will open the doors of litigation on behalf of animals in under new horizons.



Thanks to Wise, it becomes insolently easy to realize, once and for all, that animals are not objects denuded from personality, feelings and abilities. The book offers insights into the rich lives and inherent own interests of individual animals, contrasting them with the sad reality and inconsistency of their everyday treatment and invisibility on the legal scene to remedy such abuse, incompatible with their biological - and I would say, personal - needs.

The reader, himself, finally rattles the cage of its own ignorance of animals' inconsistent consideration by the Law, to learn the adequate strategies to address it; the first step on the way to breaking the artificial wall that separates animals from justice being the acknowledgement of who they are, what they need, and what they deserve. The approach in front of the courts is simple: demanding justice through filing *Habeas Corpus*⁵ lawsuits on behalf of the great apes, elephants, dolphins and whales clients⁶ that are held in captivity across the US, with supporting evidence provided by internationally renowned scientists and philosophers. Understanding the legal

⁵ Habeas corpus is a centuries-old means of testing the lawfulness of one's imprisonment before a court. It was used extensively in the 18th and 19th centuries to fight human slavery, and abolitionists often petitioned for common law writs of habeas corpus on behalf of enslaved individuals.

⁶ Currently Tommy, Kiko, Hercules, Leo, Beulah, Karen, and Minnie.



history of social injustice and appreciating other species' cognitive and emotional complexity are inprescriptible to anyone looking for a just moral and legal treatment of animals.

