

Physicians Committee

for Responsible Medicine



What You Need to Know: Animal Extremist Groups

Physician's Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM)

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PCRM-Who They Really Are

Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine was founded in 1985 by Neal Barnard. Barnard wrote 18 books between 1990 and 2020, and in 2015 founded the Barnard Medical Center as part of PCRM. He was nominated for induction into the "Animal Rights Hall of Fame" in 2003. Barnard's training was in psychiatry, but he has spent the majority of his career masquerading as an expert in nutrition, promoting strict veganism and denigrating the use of animal products and animals in medicine and research. This has all been under the guise of advocating for human health. His namesake clinic adheres to the animal extremist ideology, irresponsibly "treating" patients with veganism as blanket cure for all manner of diseases and conditions.

Our American heritage is important, vital and what we value most. Unfortunately, extremists are working to control farming and ranching, land use, and to restrict animal ownership.

As farmers, ranchers, sportsmen, livestock and pet owners, we need to stand up and protect our way of life.



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Less than 7% of PCRM Members are Actual Physicians

PCRM's name itself, the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, is very blatantly and intentionally misleading. Currently less than 7% of reported members are actual physicians. The true number of PCRM members that are genuine medical professionals is also highly questionable, since anyone, with or without credentials, can join. The watch-dog group Activist Facts' website states: "PCRM has successfully duped the media and much of the general public into believing that its pronouncements about the superiority of vegetarian-only diets represent the opinion of the medical community."



PCRM Opposes Lifesaving Use of Animals and Campaigns Against Respected Health Charities

In addition to promoting veganism, PCRM fanatically opposes the lifesaving use of animals in the medical field, from research to the animal-derived products essential for numerous medical materials and medicines. The group has actively and aggressively campaigned against numerous widely respected health charities that support and utilize animal research to help cure human diseases—groups such as the American Heart Association, the American Cancer Society, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, the American Foundation for AIDS Research, the Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation, the American Red Cross, and the March of Dimes.

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PCRM is Harshly Criticized by Physicians and the American Medical Association

PCRM has been harshly criticized by a number of doctors and medical groups. The American Medical Association (AMA), once referred to PCRM as a “fringe organization” that employs “unethical tactics” and is “interested in perverting medical science.” Montreal, Quebec’s McGill University chemist Dr. Joe Schwarcz called PCRM “a fanatical animal rights group with a clear-cut agenda of promoting a vegan lifestyle” that “masquerades as a just scientific body.”

One former director of research for the Center for Consumer Freedom stated, “Neal Barnard is using his latest book to disguise animal rights propaganda as medical advice...Most Americans are too smart to take dietary advice from PETA. But that’s exactly what you get with Barnard’s anti-meat recommendations.”

PCRM Has Connections to Radical Animal Extremist Groups

It stands to reason that Barnard and PCRM have had long and well-documented interconnectedness with groups like the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and other animal extremist groups, including two that were considered to be “domestic terrorist threats” by the Department of Justice: Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and SHAC (Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty).

Former PCRM spokesperson, Dr. Jerry Vlasak, was quoted as saying: “I think there is a use for violence in our movement. And I think it can be an effective strategy. Not only is it morally acceptable, I think that there are places where it could be used quite effectively from a pragmatic standpoint... And I don't think you'd have to kill — assassinate — too many vivisectioners before you would see a marked decrease in the amount of vivisection going on. And I think for 5 lives, 10 lives, 15 human lives, we could save a million, 2 million, 10 million non-human animals. People get all excited about, “Oh what's going to happen when the ALF accidentally kills somebody in an arson?” Well, you know I mean, I think we need to get used to this idea. It's going to happen, okay? It's going to happen.”

PCRM does not openly advocate violence and thus distanced itself from Vlasak, but actively works to hide its ties to PETA and other blatant animal extremist groups to help maintain the charade of being simply doctors advocating for human health.

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PCRM Founder Has Served as PETA's "Medical Advisor"

The deep ties between PCRM and PETA are not only ideological but have been financial and operational as well. Over the years, Barnard has shared professional (and allegedly, even personal) relationships with PETA's leader, Ingrid Newkirk. Barnard has served as PETA's "medical advisor" and has penned numerous articles as such. He also served on the board of the PETA Foundation, now known as the Foundation to Support Animal Protection.



PCRM Features Past HSUS Director of Public Health and Animal Agriculture on their Website

Dr. Michael Greger was the Director of Public Health and Animal Agriculture with HSUS and a vegan nutrition specialist. Now he is one of the faces of PCRM and founder of Nutritionfacts.org. According to HumaneWatch, " Greger wrote the book *Bird Flu: A Virus of Our Own Hatching*, which attempts to tie livestock production methods to the spread of the H5N1 flu. He was also the BSE (mad cow disease) issue coordinator for the Organic Consumers Association, editing a [mad-cow-scare web page](#) for the group.

Like many other top dogs at HSUS, Greger is a long-time vegetarian evangelist. During his "Animal Rights 2002" convention speech, [he declared](#): "The future of the animal liberation movement depends on our ability to unite with other social justice movements, and corporate globalization is the key bridging issue we've been waiting for all of our lives."

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Smoke, Mirrors and Money

Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been funneled to PCRM from PETA via the Foundation. It is a common tactic among animal extremist groups to branch out and share members and leadership. It serves as smoke and mirrors when resources are diverted or pooled among such groups, as well as to present a façade of credibility to the public when such groups quote one another.

It's easy to see why PCRM has been referred to as "PETA's lab-coated sibling." In ad campaigns similar to those of PETA, PCRM has claimed that animal products are equivalent to drugs and that feeding children animal products is the same as child abuse, relying on shock value to catch attention and earn support from the uninformed. Examples of PCRM ads are an image of a corpse on a gurney holding a hamburger, and of the Wisconsin cheesehead on a grim reaper figure.

In a time when concerns about public health are at the forefront, it is reprehensible that PCRM is preying on society's fears to further their barely-cloaked extremist agenda.

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