



Greyhound Shock Angers Australians

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by Michael Mountain on February 26, 2015

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"Make no mistake," [writes](#) greyhound racer Kevin Pitstock. "Greyhound racing in Australia is teetering on the brink of destruction."

In the wake of an investigative report from the Australian Broadcasting Company (ABC), Pitstock is warning his colleagues that "calls for an end to greyhound racing are coming from far and wide."



It's reached a crossroad, he says. "It can continue with new leadership and a new set of values; or it can go the way so many have before it."

Except you can't dress up dog racing with a "new set of values." The whole thing is just evil from top to bottom.

"Putting together animals, gambling and prize purses is a toxic mix. It's capable of turning men into monsters."

Reporters for the ABC TV investigation [Making a Killing](#), which aired across the nation last week, set up hidden cameras at the homes of breeders and trainers and captured video of helpless rabbits, squealing baby pigs and other defenseless creatures being stretched out on a lure and hurled around a track with dogs sent in hot pursuit.

In one such scene, a possum is flung around the track 26 times at high speed while being chased, grabbed and mauled repeatedly. When the dog trainers go to inspect the damage, one of them remarks, "This one's still alive." To which another responds, "F**k, it wouldn't have much go in it, mate. Its guts are ripped out." And a third one just laughs.

Millions of Australians have seen the TV report, which is now [going viral](#) around the world. Some of it is tough to watch; all of it is deeply insightful. Here's an excerpt:



[Animals Australia](#) and [Animal Liberation Queensland](#), the two organizations that led the investigation, are now taking legal action to rescue and find homes for the dogs and the surviving live-bait animals. They will all need lifelong care: some in adoptive homes, others in special-care sanctuary settings.

People will also need to be educated to the fact that greyhounds are, by nature, the gentlest and most placid of all dogs. As Paul McGreevy, professor of animal behavior at the University of Sydney, tells ABC:

"As pets they're remarkable. They've been described as the 35 kilometer-per-hour couch potato."

Meanwhile, the rescues and the revelations continue. In an email to us, Glenys Oogjes, Executive Director of Animals Australia, writes:

More and more people are coming forward now to give us tip-offs in regard to others who live-bait their greyhounds. It seems clear that it is the usual practice – and it may well be the beginning of the end for the sport.

[However,] the seized dogs may not be available to us due to protracted legal challenges. But we still have the proposal on the table to establish [a sanctuary] because we believe trainers will go out of the industry, and thus even more dogs than usual will be discarded.

In addition, she says, Animals Australia will be working with government agencies to demand strong new regulations and less breeding, which will also lead to fewer greyhounds being "retired". These dogs, discarded because they are no longer winning money for their owners, are frequently "donated" for a tax write-off to the vivisection industry, most often for use in surgery practice. A former student of the University of Queensland Veterinary School [writes](#):

The supply of greyhounds is quite regular, at least monthly if not fortnightly. It is also very easy for someone who knows where the dissection room is to walk by and actually see the killed and preserved greyhounds all lined up on their backs, legs in the air next to one another on racks.

At the beginning of the semester it is not unusual to see approximately 20 to 30 dogs. As there are usually around 100–120 students & one dog is shared amongst 4 students you can see that a lot of dogs end up used in universities.

Then you have second year as well to supply dogs to for anatomy practice.

It seems as if there is an agreement with the greyhound racing industry people & the university as anyone can see the dogs being led into the dissection room in broad daylight. Some of the students have even put some of the dogs down under supervision.



Hundreds of greyhound adopters meet for the annual [Greyhound Gathering](#) in Kanab, Utah.

In the United States, greyhounds who are no longer paying their way at the races are also "donated" to medical facilities. Claudia Presto, founder of the [Greyhound Gang](#), tells of a visit to Colorado State University, where the heads of decapitated retired greyhounds were on display in one of the labs. (Check out the story of [Blue](#), a dog she rescued from CSU just before he would have been used for terminal surgery.)

Racing in the U.S. is now in decline. According to [Grey2K](#), it's already illegal in 39 states, and the tracks have closed in four more where they're no longer profitable. The most active racing state is Florida, where the industry is subsidized by the state government in exchange for a share of the proceeds. (In fact, the State of Florida isn't even making back its investment since between 2006 and 2013 the amount of money gambled on races [declined](#) by more than 50 percent.)

Will the latest revelations be enough to put a serious dent in greyhound racing in Australia? In the first week following the ABC TV news report:

- Several of the industry's top sponsors, including Schweppes and Mazda, have already [cut their ties](#).
- More properties have been raided.
- Whistle blowers have come forward to tell their stories, adding chickens, kittens, guinea pigs and more to the list of animals tied to lures and mauled to death.
- And dozens of trainers, track operators and industry officials have resigned.

The low-lives who profit from cruelty to animals will do all they can to keep the money flowing in – even if it means having to clean up some of the most egregious cruelty. As Lyn White, Campaign Director for Animals Australia, puts it:

"Putting together animals, gambling and prize purses is a toxic mix. It's capable of turning men into monsters."

We're betting, however, that Ms. White and her colleagues have pushed greyhound racing

over a tipping point and that the writing is now on the wall for the end of this particular brand of evil.

You can support Animals Australia's campaign to bring an end to greyhound racing by making a donation [here](#).



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