

**TITLE: ANIMAL BLOOD SPORTS AND CRUEL FESTIVALS**  
**AUTHOR: BASSAM IMAM**

---

ANIMAL BLOOD SPORTS AND CRUEL FESTIVALS

Animal blood sports are reprehensible activities that often shed blood, inflict mental and physical pain and agony, anxiety, and fear upon the unwilling participants, forced or induced into fighting their opponent and there is never an escape route. Depending upon the animal and venue of the activity, a wall, fence, enclosure, or humans can act as the impenetrable boundary.

Sport hunting involves unessential hunting and fishing. The targeted animal may be shot with a firearm, cross bow, bow-an-arrow, may be coursed or baited by a specially designated, trained animal/s, or be reeled in. Keep in mind that many targeted animals that are shot may escape with very painful, lingering wounds. They may live with the wounds, or die a slow agonizing death. Sport hunting involves the shooting of an animal from a short or intermediate distance or from a vastly long distance (internet hunting); sometimes the animal is baited

with food. In canned hunting, the targeted animal is in an enclosed area, unable to run or hide. Tying a targeted animal unto a pole or other solid inanimate object is yet another option for the prospective sport hunter.

The species discussed in this book are arranged in alphabetical order, however, there are three topics that are not entitled by species type, including The Gadhimai Festival, Blood Sports in the Roman Empire, and Sport Hunting. Following the body of this book is a comprehensive listing of URLs and Website addresses corresponding to the subject matter in this book.

Alligator wrestling (gator wrestling, gator handling) is a sport involving a man taking on an alligator. Alligator wrestling and hunting were, and still are a part of some South-Eastern Native American cultures, in particular the Seminoles and Miccosukee tribes. Alligators also provided a favourable source of food for dozens of generations.

"Alligator wrestling has immense growth potential as long as there is always going to be a part of the population who will want to see blood sports. And it doesn't get much bloodier than going toe to toe with a reptile that could turn a human limb from limb," said Richard Bowers, President of the Seminole Indian Tribe (By Spooky, March 16, 2010; odditycentral.com: Seminole Indians Hope to Revive Alligator Wrestling)

At the turn of the 20th Century alligator wrestling took on a new role for affected Native Americans, in the form of roadside attractions. For them, this was a good way to bring about dividends. Today, Seminole Indian entrepreneurs are attempting to return alligator wrestling to its departed glory, in order to make a fortune. Nevertheless, alligator wrestling is animal abuse and can be quite dangerous to the human participants. Just one snap from an alligator's jaws can easily result in the loss of body flesh and bone, or even death. Note that the alligators are never de-toothed or declawed.

THE RULES PERTAINING TO ALLIGATOR WRESTLING VARY. BELOW IS A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF WHAT A SPECTATOR MIGHT SEE AT ONE OF THESE EVENTS:

- The wrestler must take hold of and neutralize the alligator, especially its jaws (the upper jaw is the snapping jaw).
- The wrestler performs a series of tricks including slowly placing his head between two rows of 40 razor-sharp teeth (called the Head Trick)
- The wrestler sticks one or both of his hands between two rows of 40 razor-sharp teeth.

- The wrestler takes a firm hold of the alligator, clamps its mouth shut and then ties it.
- If a wrestler is injured the spectators must watch the gruesome, terrifying scene. Anything can happen in a split second, even to the best-trained alligator wrestler.

In February of 2011, Clinton Holt, famed Seminole alligator wrestler attempted a Head Trick with an eight and a half foot, 220 lbs. alligator named Houdini. The event took place at the Seminole Reservation in Brighton, Florida. Houdini literally had Holt trapped in a death grip. Holt suffered five serious punctures and a fractured skull.

"I realized my ear touched the inside of his mouth, and that contact made him snap shut ... When they pulled me out I was covered with blood," said Holt. (By Robert Nolin, Sun Sentinel May 9, 2012; sun-sentinel.com: Gator Wrestling Competition at Seminole Hard Rock)

Twenty-four year-old alligator handler {and wrestler} Chris Gillette works at the Everglade Alligator Farm, where he amuses and delights tourists by grappling with alligators. Gillette's routine entails pulling out an alligator by its tail from a swamp, and then springs onto its back. The climax occurs when Gillette manages to open the jaws of the alligator then rests his chin on the menacing teeth.

Gillette is an experienced alligator handler-wrestler, having begun this line of work to help pay his way through school, earning a degree in environmental studies. Nevertheless, alligator wrestlers in general do not, or simply refuse to acknowledge that this sport is unnatural for alligators. The 'I love alligators' line is disappointing and repulsive. This aforementioned phrase is used by other people involved in blood sports if they truly loved the respective animals leave them alone and do animal protection work. My message to them is if you are seriously injured in an encounter with an animal blame yourselves first, and under no circumstances should you blame the inherently wild, ferocious, and extremely dangerous animal for attacking you.

"I love alligators, they're fascinating animals and I feel very privileged to work with them," said Gillette. (By Daily Mail Reporter, July 18, 2012; dailymail.co.uk: He's heading for trouble! Alligator wrestler dices with death by sticking his face in monster's jaws)

Alligator wrestlers and handlers must always be on the alert. The reptile they are dealing with has a primitive brain and is a carry-over from the dinosaur era. There is no guarantee in this enterprise.

In July of 2013, at a private event at the Native Village Wildlife Sanctuary in Hollywood, 22 year-old alligator Handler Will Nace was entertaining a crowd. Everything appeared to be going just fine, but then the alligator felt that Nace had gotten too close to him. Without warning, the alligator lunged out of the water, and then grabbed hold of Nace's right arm.

This was a gargantuan crocodile, weighing up to 1000 lbs. and a whopping 13 feet long. The alligator nearly ripped out Nace's arm at the socket. Worse yet, Nace was pulled into the pond. An alligator trainer tried to break the alligator's hold by tapping on its head and ears. The alligator refused to let go but not before breaking Nace's arm in two places and inflicting serious bites on his forearm and hand. Meanwhile, Nace was underwater. Luckily, the alligator finally released its grip Nace was taken to the Memorial Regional Hospital.

"He just stood there without any reaction, holding his arm," recalled one witness. "Then he said, 'This is not good. I need to go to a hospital.'" (By Brian Abrams, July 23, 2013; deathandtaxesmag.com: Alligator wrestler's hand nearly bitten off by 1,000-pound, 13-foot alligator), Nace was not available for comment.

Another dangerous alligator-wrestling incident involved 55 year-old Seminole Chief Jim Billie, who lost his right ring finger to a 7-foot alligator, but Chief Billie affirmed the incident without any hesitation or objection.

"I'm fine ... My heart is a good three feet or so from my fingers. {I will} be all right ... The gator did his job. He won again ... I want to honour that gator. With all the help they (alligators) have given me, I guess (giving up a finger) is a small little payment . . . reminding me they can still dominate. Go gators!" (By Peter B. Gallagher; floridapanther.com: Chief Billie Loses Finger to Alligator)

#### ALLIGATOR WRESTLING IS A SHAMEFUL SPORT:

- A common attraction title is 'Gator vs. Man'.
- Not one of the alligators is a willing participant. The event is an imposition.
- Many events begin with the alligator dragged or pulled by its tail to the center of the pit or arena; in other events, the alligator is in a body of water, and must be dragged out of there.
- Alligators are treated roughly; the pulling, forcefully closing of its mouth and the grappling moves are not actions that an alligator enjoys. Even primitive reptiles feel pain.
- Some events call for the tying-up of the alligator's mouth.

- Wrestlers may intimidate and infuriate the alligator by poking it with a stick or striking it in order to make it open its mouth, a crowd pleaser. The spectators are bedazzled by the appearance of the menacing teeth.
- Wrestlers frequently hop onto the alligator's back and then force its mouth shut.
- Alligators might be flipped-over.
- Alligators might lose consciousness.
- At some events, the alligators appear too lethargic or intoxicated; there are no enforceable rules or laws pertaining to drugging an alligator at an event.
- Wagering is all-too-common.
- The alligator must withstand the cheering, jeering, shouting and gawking of many spectators.
- Spectators expect to witness aggression or some kind of a physical tussle. They paid money to see a 'match-up' between an alligator and a man.
- What happens to the alligators after the show? Where do they live? How are they treated behind closed doors? What happens to an alligator if it can no longer perform? These are important animal welfare questions.

Badger baiting is a blood sport wherein a badger is baited with a dog/s. Badger baiting was popular centuries ago it was outlawed in England in 1835, but is making a comeback. A typical badger-baiting event results in the death of the badger and potentially serious injuries to the face and neck to one or more of the dogs. The fighting took place in a pit, away from the badger's natural habitat.

Today, most people are against badger baiting. The typical badger is an easygoing somewhat quiet animal living in its own habitat. Badgers have incredibly nasty bites, and if cornered and feeling threatened will do whatever is necessary for self-preservation. Unfortunately, badger baiters know this, and as such, will bring out the fighter in their targeted animal. Badger's claws are another awesome weapon, naturally used to claw in hard earth.

'Drawing the badger' entailed the production of artificial badger dens, used to bring about the hostile showdown. A dog would then attack the badger, forcing the badger to defend itself, resulting in a deadlock. The owner of the dog would then retrieve his dog causing the badger to return to its artificial den. The process was repeated over-and-over again until the sought after result. Bets were commonplace. Pit fighting took place outside basements, lower floors, and bars to draw in customers.

Renowned wildlife artist Robert Fuller and his friend Ged Farmer were taking a leisurely walk on the bank of the beautiful River Derwent, North Yorkshire. They were searching for otters to photograph. Both men knew that otters are evasive therefore; they made sure to make as little noise as possible during their search.

As the men were nearing the most beautiful stretch of the river, the silence was shattered, a streak of high-pitched shrieks then the barking of dogs. The sound was coming from Paradise Farm. Peeking from behind a hedge, they came across a shocking sight. A pair of massively built dogs was viciously attacking a badger. Badger baiters using a new type of dog called a bull-lurcher. This monster of a dog has the massive jaws of a pit bull and the size and agility of a lurcher dog. Its razor-sharp teeth easily slice through flesh and its jaws can do serious damage to bones. It has a very ferocious fighting spirit, referred to as 'Devil's dog' by enthusiasts. It's commonplace for badger baiters to show off about how ferocious their dog is. Of course, wagering is quite commonplace.

One of the dogs was gripping the throat of the badger, while the other was ripping through its side. Expectedly, fur was flying through the air. Worse yet the entrails of a previous victim and the fetuses of a pregnant badger they lay on the ground.

Undoubtedly, the most troubling aspect of this horrible scene was the eight men who were encouraging the dogs. An unknown number amongst them were roaring with enthusiasm, and some were laughing, feeling delight every time the dogs attacked the badger. This was another one of those creepy underground badger-baiting spectacles. The countryside is large and spacious, prompting some fans to travel hundreds of miles to watch this sort of spectacle.

"I watched in sheer disbelief ... It was a Sunday afternoon, right next to a public footpath, and we were watching a scene straight out of a horror story ... There were 13 dogs and they were being set upon the badgers in groups of two. I almost had to rub my eyes to make sure it was real," said Fuller. (By Danny Penman for Mail-online, January 21, 2012; dailymail.co.uk: The 21st century badger baiters: They plot their sick fights on the internet, film them on mobiles and have bred a lethal new super-dog to rip their prey to pieces)

On a positive note, Fuller and Farmer were able to call the police who arrived at the scene and made arrests. Alan Alexander, 32, Richard Simpson, 37, Paul Tindall, 31, and William Anderson, 26, received a 16-week jail sentence. Christopher Holmes, 28, and Malcolm Warner, 28, received a 12-

week suspended sentence. A 17 year-old male received a youth rehabilitation order.

What the police discovered was a horrific site. Evidence of other atrocities was apparent. The men were very dedicated badger baiters.

"They were very efficient and hardened badger diggers ... It had been planned like a military operation ... The men had carefully removed the turf from the badger sett and placed it on the side ready to cover the hole when they'd finished," said Paul Stephenson, the sergeant from North Yorkshire Police who investigated the case. (ibid)

In June of 2015, a horrible discovery was made in Flintshire, Wales. A female badger and a male bull breed lurcher cross were forced to fight each to the death; the badger was found in a pool of blood. The lurcher cross was found near Cornist Park County Primary School. The dog suffered horrendous injuries to an ear, broken teeth, and puncture wounds throughout its body. It was a ghastly sight, indeed.

"It looks like someone has set this dog onto this badger and then just left them to fight it until the death ... The badger would have had a horrific death, and she was a female so could well have young somewhere needing her care," said RSPCA inspector Anthony Joynes . (June 13, 2015, [bbc.com](http://bbc.com): Badger and dog made to 'fight until the death' in Flint).

Bear baiting is a blood sport that was very popular in England during the Elizabethan Era. Its rapid demise ensued following the passing of the Cruelty to Animals Act (1835), literally outlawing blood sports. (NOTE: I will discuss modern day bear baiting in Pakistan in the next section).

Queen Elizabeth enjoyed watching bear baiting events, doing so on a regular basis. People from all walks-of-life watched bear baiting events. They actually enjoyed the blood, gore, and pain, so much so that wagering was a common theme.

The most preeminent bear baiting arena was the Bear Garden, located in Paris garden in Southwark, today a district of Central London. The Bull Ring Theatre in London could house one thousand spectators. Unfortunately, many bears were kept for baiting. Baiting pits contained a high fenced place, and raised seating for spectators.

Highly trained, ferocious dogs were let loose upon a bear that was, at a grave disadvantage. The bear was chained to a post by a hind leg or the neck. Worse yet, if the dogs became incapacitated or were unable to continue their onslaught they were promptly replaced by other dogs. In rare circumstances, a bear was set free. An uncommon alternative style to orthodox bear baiting was to whip a blinded bear. It is safe to assume that its keepers blinded it.

BELOW IS A DESCRIPTION OF A BEAR BAITING EVENT WITNESSED BY QUEEN ELIZABETH CHRONICLED BY ROBERT LANE-HAM:

"... it was a sport very pleasant to see, to see the bear, with his pink eyes, tearing after his enemies approach; the nimbleness and wait of the dog to take his advantage and the force and experience of the bear again to avoid his assaults: if he were bitten in one place how he would pinch in another to get free; that if he were taken once, then by what shift with biting, with clawing, with roaring, with tossing and tumbling he would work and wind himself from them; and when he was loose to shake his ears twice or thrice with the blood and the slaver hanging about his physiognomy." (elizabethan-era.org.uk: Elizabethan Bear & Bull Baiting)

In rural Pakistan, Sindh and Punjab provinces, large crowds converge upon a designated fighting area where a defenceless bear is pit up against ferocious well-trained dogs. Local gangsters that own the dogs coordinate the events. Often the case, the Asiatic black bears and Brown bears are victims of the poaching industry. The captured bears must endure lifelong pain and agony, with little or no empathy. Their teeth and claws are yanked out. The luckier bears have their teeth filed down; the general rule is that no anaesthetic is used. Their diet consists of low-grade nutritionally deficient foods the owners want to reduce expenses. No wonder, many of the bears develop digestive disorders. These bears almost never live past the age of eight. When one fighting bear dies, another one replaces it.

The initiation begins with the dragging of the horrified bear, using a rope, into the fighting arena. The rope is then tied to a post or other solid inanimate structure. The bear may try to flee the area but soon realizes that it cannot. The dogs are let loose heading straight to the bear. There is no doubt in the bear's or the dogs' minds that a fight will ensue.

On occasion, a bear may squash an attacking dog, often-times, flesh from the bear's body is bitten and ripped off, in particular, injuries to the nose and mouth. The scent and sight of blood further excites the fighting dogs. The fights last around three minutes a 'tribunal' decides who the winner is. Fight promoters try to ensure that the bears are involved in several fights per event.

Thankfully, caring organizations like World Animal Protection and Pakistan Bio-resource Research Centre are working hard to help eradicate bear baiting in Pakistan, dozens of bears have been rescued and sent to sanctuaries. Furthermore, the number of baiting bears has dropped significantly. Dealing with the remoteness of the fighting arenas, local corruption,

criminal gangs, and wagering is imperative. The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act of 1890 outlawed bear baiting in Pakistan. Laws are useless unless they are enforced.

## WORLD ANIMAL PROTECTION: METHODS USED TO COMBAT BEAR BAITING:

- Preventing bear baiting events, by working with wildlife officials and local partners to share information.
- Strengthening legislation and making sure laws banning bear baiting are enforced.
- Seeking new legislation that will make it illegal to own a bear, or will at least ban the use of bears for baiting, dancing and begging.
- Reducing demand for bear baiting, by working with teachers, religious leaders and influential property owners to promote animal protection and raise awareness that bear baiting contravenes Islamic teachings.
- Offering alternative livelihoods for bear owners, so that they leave bear baiting behind for good.
- Providing sanctuary for bears who are surrendered or rescued from bear baiting - though our ultimate goal is for bears to remain in the wild.
- Exposing cruelty, by monitoring, uncovering and tackling the exploitation of bears, including bear dancing and begging, which may be increasing as bear baiting declines? (worldanimalprotection.org)

Bear wrestling is a blood sport wherein a supposed somewhat 'tamed-bear', grapples and/or boxes with a human opponent. Bear wrestling began in the mid-19th century in Europe reaching the U.S. in the late 1870s. Naturally, the bear is not able to use all of its weaponry; it likely had its teeth yanked out, was declawed and is muzzled and equipped with gloves or special mittens during the fight. In addition, the bear may have the tendons on its legs and arms cut, and be drugged. The level of maiming and handicap depended on the fight promoters and trainers.

"With muzzles over their mouths, their claws removed and their front teeth taken out, surrounded by the ring ropes and a curious crowd, bears once found themselves in the thick of pro wrestling promoters' drives to increase ticket sales." (By Brian Dilbert, WWE Lead Writer August 13, 2015; bleacherreport.com: Exploring the Strange History of Pro Wrestlers Battling Bears)

The 19th century already had its share of sideshows and freak shows primarily in circuses, wherein strange or freaky-

looking humans and animals were displayed in front of amused patrons. Promoters decided to boost exhibition of anomalies by organizing ring fights between bears and wrestlers or boxers. Surprisingly, the bears learned wrestling moves, nevertheless, it was animal cruelty and humiliation; by no stretch of the imagination was it a fair fight.

Today in much of the world there is no tolerance for this kind of a spectacle. Bear wrestling likely began with the Germanic and barbaric peoples, wherein, the courage and fortitude of a warrior could be measured. In days of old, Russian children would wrestle young bears. Although young bears are comical and gamesome, they can lose their temper, thereby becoming a serious danger.

Terrible Ted (wrestled from the 1950s to 1974) was a highly famed North American black bear Canadian wrestler who was part of wrestling promotions and circus routines. Ted had his teeth pulled out and claws removed, thereby seriously curbing his ability to harm his human opponent. This kind of maimed animal will not be able to fend for itself in the wild, or correctly chew on solid foods. In all likelihood, painkillers were not used during the cruel procedures.

Ted was pit up against human wrestlers in front of spectators. His trainer offered \$3000 to any person who could defeat Ted. A welder named John Szigeti defeated Ted, but the trainer refused to dole out the money. The defeat had the effect of further popularizing Ted. Other famed bear wrestlers included Battling Bruno, Buster Bruin, Big Boy, Gorgeous Gus, Jiggs and Victor.

Bears pit against bulls were a crowd-pleasing form of entertainment in 19th century California; Spanish settlers transported this blood sport to the so-called New World. Events commonly occurred following Church services. To ensure an action-packed fight, the bear's hind leg was tied to one of the bull's forelegs. The fights commonly occurred in an enclosed ring; spectators including men, women, and children enjoyed the scene. Specially designated armed men sat on horseback in case one of the fighters escaped the enclosure. The fights were always bloody, and death was the inevitable outcome.

"We used to make bears and bulls fight {,} For which purpose we tied the bull and bear together, the bull having one of his fore legs strapped, and the bear one of his hind legs. Sometimes the bull came off victorious, and at other times the bear, the result depending somewhat upon the ages of the beasts ..." said Blas Pena. (Hubert Howe Bancroft, *The Works*, Volume XXXIV, 1700-1848 California Pastoral (1888) via yankeebarenos.com: *Gladiator Games of Bulls and Bears: A California Blood Sport (1800s)*; Posted August 3, 2012)

Another bear blood sport played by the Spanish settlers of the time involved finding a wild. The extra-ordinary pursuers carried a machete and a rope to lasso a bear.

The animal blood sport of bullfighting draws in crowds of people into a bullfighting stadium. Although bullfighting once flourished for generations-on-end, its support has dwindled. Today, many people around the world routinely speak out against a sport that entails the terrorizing, hacking, spearing, intimidating, and spearing to death of an innocent bull. Be aware that the agony of the bull usually begins before the bullfight. The bull may be starved, have hot pepper shoved into its anus, is beaten, and have wet newspapers jammed into its ears, cotton put into its nostrils to hinder breathing, an abrasive substance rubbed onto the legs, vase-line or another vision impairing substance rubbed into the eyes, and a needle may be stuck into its genitals. Stimulants, tranquilizers, or laxatives are often used. The spectators want the matador to win, killing the bull. Later, its ears may be sliced off, a trophy of sorts. The weapon of choice is a banderilla or lance. There is no such thing as a fair bullfight. The odds are stacked in favour of the matador.

Even without the incredibly excruciating physical pain the bull must endure, the mental stress can be overwhelming. The bull finds itself in an arena, having to hear the jeering, screams and shouting from large crowds of humans. On an instinctive level, even before the fight begins, the bull likely knows that it is the prey animal, the target of the predator-matador. There is no escape for the bull. Small wonder, 250,000 bulls are brutally killed every single year in this heinous enterprise. The over-whelming rule is that no bull dies a quick death; death is always slow and agonizing, caused by loss of blood, repeated strikes, dehydration, exhaustion, and mental torture. No bull deserves this kind of treatment or death.

Organizers of bullfights portray an exalted image of the sport, a match between a heroic matador, risking life and limb to fight a savage, murderous bull. In reality, it is quite the opposite. The bull is the innocent victim the matador is a hired and paid torturer-killer of innocent bulls. Under normal circumstances, a bull would not be as threatening and combative. Sadly, it is the beatings and tormenting the bull has endured prior to the fight that causes the change in personality and behaviour.

Thankfully, attendance at bullfights is at an all-time low. Some cities and countries have banned all bullfighting events. Yet bull fighting still occurs in Columbia, Ecuador, France, Peru, Portugal, Spain and Venezuela

## THERE ARE FOUR STAGES IN A BULLFIGHT:

The first stage involves the beginning of the bullfight. Although they are supposed to last in the 20-minute range, match times are quite variable. Keep in mind that the bull is enduring a living hell through every single second of the ordeal. It has no one on this planet to speak or complain to, and cannot communicate in the language of its tormentors. Even a pride of lions, pack of hyenas or wild African dogs would never torment the bull in this manner; it would be below them, and rightfully so. A tune played on a trumpet signifies the official start of the bullfight. Some bulls run out into the arena and then collapse shortly afterwards. Pre-fight exhaustion has taken its toll upon them. Nonetheless, specially trained workers in the arena force them into an upright posture.

The second stage involves the bull facing off against the picadors (tormentors on horseback). The picador further drains the bull of its strength, fighting spirit, and energy reserves. A pica is a weapon used to slice into the neck muscles of a bull whereupon entering the flesh the pica is twisted creating a vast wound. If everything goes according to plan, this is when the bull starts to bleed to death.

Hundreds of horses die every year due to goading by enraged bulls. The horses fall onto the ground, wherein they are quickly fixed and then may be sent back into the arena; there are instances wherein horses are disembowelled. In addition, horses' ears have wet newspapers shoved into them, are blindfolded, and their vocal chords are cut ensuring that no one can hear their cries of terror. Nevertheless, the horses know enough about what is happening, causing them to sweat profusely placing them in a state of fear and terror.

The third stage begins following the end of the picador's work. Assistant matadors attack the bull with banderillas (sharp, bayonet-like jagged instruments). The banderillas, a maximum of 6 are plunged into the bull's body. With each thrust, the bull stops in its tracks and gives out a bellow of pain and agony.

The fourth stage involves the killing of the bull by the primary matador. A trumpet tune signals this final stage. If there are unforeseen problems or dangers for the matador, the other tormentors come to his rescue. Yet even in this final stage, the bull suffers immensely, dying a slow agonizing death. The bull's ears and tail are cut off, sometimes while it is still conscious. The bloodied body of the bull is then dragged away by donkeys.

'The Running of the Bulls' is an activity associated with letting loose up to a dozen bulls to run within a crowd of

stimulated, raucous people, and thousands of jeering and taunting crowds, along a specified route to the final stop, the bullring.

The Pamplona Bull Run is the most promoted bull-run. This event lures in thousands of tourists from around the world, aside from local supporters each year. There are also many bull running's and festivals that operate in small towns in France, Mexico, Portugal, Peru, and in a few areas in the U.S., all of which entail cruelty and ridicule onto the bulls.

Unlike bullfighting wherein the danger to spectators is quite rare, the running of the bulls poses incredible dangers to any, and all human participants.

People who are silly enough to run with dangerous bulls are asking for trouble. Bulls are very powerful, fast runners and can stop without warning and turn, and have two incredible weapons at their disposal. A bull may seem like it wants to strike the closest or most convenient person in its path, but this is no guarantee that the bull won't suddenly shift its gaze, zoom in on another specific target, and then charge. A bull can inflict incredible injuries or even fatal ones in just one goring, and this animal is so powerful it need not charge a person to do so. The simple act of swiftly raising its head and using its two horns is more than enough of a danger.

On July 10, 1947, a bull named Semillero killed two people during one run. Another double killing occurred on July 13, 1980, wherein a bull named Antioquia killed 2 persons. There have been other killings, and many other injuries. Injuries incurred by locals are often times not even heard about by the international community.

During the Running of the Bulls festival in Pamplona, every single morning the bulls are forced to run a kilometre through the cobblestone streets of the town, driven and hounded by rowdy participants and jeering spectators. The cobblestone street are unnatural terrain for the bulls, add to this the incredible anxiety of the ordeal, it is little wonder many bulls slip and slide, enduring shock, pain, and agony, but are still unable to ward off the thousands of tormenting humans. The chase ends when the bull is inside a holding pen at the bullring, wherein, the bull will endure ever-greater harm and injustice.

Starting in February into March and ending on Easter day, a cruel and sadistic festival known as Fara do Boi (Festival of the Ox) takes place in the Brazilian state of Catalina. The festival involves the torture, torment, and abuse of many oxen throughout Catalina, for fun and pleasure.

The torment of the oxen starts days before the festival. The oxen are starved and to drive them crazy food and water are placed just beyond their reach. The festival begins when

intoxicated local villagers release the oxen, whereby, they begin to chase, slug, kick, and brutally assault the oxen using sticks, knives, whips, stones, bamboo lances, ropes, and whatever else they can get their violent hands on.

This is not the worst of it. Shockingly, the torment intensifies as time passes; hot pepper, is rubbed into the eyes then these same burning eyes are gouged out. The oxen's limbs are broken tails are yanked and then hacked off. Some of the oxen are doused with gasoline and then set ablaze. A few oxen are able to run into the sea wherein they drown to death. An ox that is unable to escape the clutches of the murderous mob will eventually be killed. As a final insult to the ox, it is slaughtered, the flesh passed around, to be eaten and enjoyed.

Although in June of 1997 the Supreme Federal Court of Brazil outlawed Farra do Boi, Santa Catalina State officials have consistently rejected the court order.

The annual Fiesta de la Virgen de la Asuncion festival held in the month of August in Chalhuani, Peru involves the tying of a dog onto the back of a bull and then allowed to be aggressively attacked and killed by other bulls; the animals are tied to each other and then tossed into a bullring.

Naturally, the tied bull and dog are horrified as bulls chase and charge them, a sadistic concoction indeed. The usually result is for both animals to sustain horrific injuries. The victimized bull is unable to ward off his tormentors because of the dog that is tied to him. There is nowhere to hide; blood and gore are inevitable.

The villagers give a sorry excuse for tying the dog to a bull, claiming that the dog was mischievous. Peru's animal cruelty laws state that an individual who (unlawfully) tortures or kills an animal can be subject to a 5-year prison sentence. Unfortunately, la Fiesta de la Virgen de la Asunción Festival is considered a religious tradition as such it is not in violation of the law.

The killing of bulls at the annual town festival of Toro de la Vega was outlawed in May of 2016 in what animal protectionists believe is a major victory in their campaign to banish festivals that involve animal cruelty. The Toro de la Vega festival occurs every September. It entails the spearing of bulls during a chase conducted on foot and horseback. Thankfully, many local, national, and international voices of protest have made their mark. Nevertheless, we must always remember that the other side is often adamant in defending their position, in spite of the horrific consequences upon innocent animals.

"The vice president of the Toro de la Vega organising committee, Ramon Muelas, said Tordesillas would 'fight for its

dearest traditions' and warned that the government measure 'could end in conflict'. Any official voting in favour of the law would not be welcome in Tordesillas, he told the Spanish news agency Europa Press." (Associated Press in Madrid, May 19, 2016; via theGuardian.com: Bull spearing outlawed by Spanish regional government)

To torment a bull, and then to be praised by others for the act is shocking indeed. In one particular example among countless, Marcos Rodriguez San Jose', a want-to-be-matador grasped a blood-drenched bull's ears and then bowed passionately to the horde of participants and spectators. Meanwhile, the bull was dying, having endured torture and brutalization by many bull spearing fiesta participants, nevertheless, it was able to muster enough energy to raise its head a bit and try to stare down its tormentors. Marcos reacted by brandishing a menacing knife and then stabbing it in the back for the second time. The bull's head collapsed onto the ground, it had died. Marcos then howled in triumph.

As the official butcher of the bull, Marcos was granted the right to parade the bull's ears, tail, and testicles throughout the town on a ritualistic spear. Marcos was also granted the right to eat the bull's testicles, commonly believed in Spain to be the best cuts of meat. Marcos got what he wanted, to be a hero for brutalizing an innocent bull.

Shockingly, in Spain, bull spearing is more common than bull fighting. The main reason for this is that blood fiestas in Spain are maintained and supported by local tradition rather than tourism dollars. Many animal protectionists around the world are unaware of the existence of these blood fiestas. Worse yet, these bloody fiestas torture, brutalize, and kill many more animals than bull fighting.

Shockingly, the European Union spends nearly \$50 million a year directly subsidizing Spanish blood fiestas. Furthermore, it harvests tens of millions of U.S. dollars into the towns that carry the fiestas, and helps to refurbish broken down bullrings.

"We're all tightening our belts in Britain and yet our money continues to flow into bullfights and blood fiestas across Spain ... The Spanish can support these fiestas with their own money, if they want to, but there's absolutely no way they should be using ours to do so. I have been unable to find a single good reason why we are being forced to pay for these horrible sports," said says Jaqueline Foster, Conservative MEP and vice-president of the European Parliament's Intergroup on the Welfare and Conservation of Animals. (By Danny Penman in Tordesillas, September 20, 2010; dailymail.co.uk: Spain's Sickening 'Blood Fiestas' Make Bullfights Seem Tame)

Every year in early in February, in Tlacotalpan, Veracruz, Mexico, local ranchers give away at least six aged worn-out bulls for the Fiesta de la Candelaria de la Festival. The bulls have not been bred for aggression, but are for the most part docile.

Tlacotalpan is a town of 8,000 people. For them, the festival is a time of fun and joy, but not for the bulls, it is more like a time of hell-on-Earth. Although the Candelaria Festival is also celebrated in parts of South America, it takes on a stronger role in Tlacotalpan.

In Tlacotalpan, the festival lasts a week, during which time many of the residents are drinking a homemade brew known as 'Toritos'. The bulls are forced to run a gauntlet, tormented by an intoxicated, depraved lunatic mob, wherein they are kicked, punched, slapped, yanked, jabbed, stabbed, showered in bottles, bombarded with stones, and may have their ears cut or sliced off. Originally, the bulls were also forced to cross a river, wherein many drowned but as a result, of a major uproar the authorities ordered that the rules of the festival be modified, in essence, reduce the level of cruelty and brutality.

As conveyed to Reuters in 2009 by a resident of Tlacotalpan, "People cut off their ears, kick them ... There is a new rule that you are not supposed to touch the bulls but after so many 'toritos' it's hard to control." (By Christian Cotroneo, January 25, 2016; thedodo.com: Town's Version Of 'Running With The Bulls' Is A New Kind Of Hell)

With the new rules, the bulls cross the river in a riverboat, nevertheless, some of them fall off, and the so-called new rules are not always observed, with officials ignoring clear violations; sometimes, a stray dog is tied to the bull adding more excitement to the savagery. The bulls that miraculously survive the ordeal are supposed to be let free to pasture, however, some residents believe that they've seen particular bulls in more than one annual festival; it wouldn't surprise me if this was the case. Thankfully, there are many voices of shock and protest against this savagery.

"This is another example of man's inhumanity to animals, which I simply can't get my head around ... Fiestas like this take place particularly in Spain and Mexico with the sole purpose seemingly for people to get their kicks by torturing and killing defenceless animals," said Dominic Dyer of Care for the Wild International. (ibid)

The Zulu festival of Ukweshwama (or the First Fruits Festival) in South Africa requires young warriors to kill a bull with their bare hands. The fact that they cannot use any other weapons literally guarantees a long, painful, and agonizing

ordeal for the targeted bulls, not to mention an ever-present potential danger to the 'warriors'.

"We must use our bare hands. Its cruelty, we agree, but it is our culture. We cannot change our culture ... for 40 minutes, dozens trampled the bellowing, groaning bull, wrenched its head around by the horns to try to break its neck, pulled its tongue out, stuffed sand in its mouth and even tried to tie its penis in a knot. Gleaming with sweat, they raised their arms in triumph and sang when the bull finally succumbed." (Quote is from Simply Green blog via right-tourism.com: Culture or Cruelty. The Zulu Festival of Ukweshwama)

Shockingly the Ukweshwama festival's purpose is to show gratitude to GOD for the first crops of the season. The festival begins by releasing a bull into a crowd of young warriors, intent on proving their manhood. Although the ordeal may last up to an hour, it must feel like an eternity for the bull. The bull's neck is broken, the eyes and tongue are ripped away and sand is shoved into its mouth, whereby the bull dies of asphyxiation or bleeds to death.

Although protests, both national and international abound, the South African government will not ban the Ukweshwama festival due to its importance in Zulu tradition.

During the Middle Ages in England, animal baiting was a crowd-pleaser, this included people from every social class. What's more, much wagering ensued in this enterprise no wonder events were highly publicized.

"After a coming Bull-baiting had been advertised, the bull, decorated with flowers or coloured ribbons would be paraded round the streets of the town, and the dog which pulled off the favours in the subsequent baiting would be especially cheered by the spectators. The parade ended, the bull, with a rope tied round the roots of his horns, would be fastened to a stake with an iron ring in it, situated in the centre of the ring," as described by the French Advocate Mission, quoted from Chamber's Book of Days. (By Catherine Marien-de Luca; bulldoginformation.com: BULL BAITING)

Cities and towns throughout England had at least one special baiting ring, wherein animals were trained to be baiters, while others animals were baited. There was no mercy or compassion upon the animals in these hellholes.

The aim of bull baiting was to use a specially trained and bred dog to 'pin and hold', to grip the bull by its nose (its most delicate part) and not release the hold, rendering the bull helpless; some dogs would not release their hold unless pried off by humans or death overtook them. The bull was already at a great disadvantage even before the fight began. It wore a collar around its neck that was secured with a hook that was fastened

## Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

