

Would you wear dog fur?

The article about designer Jerry Sorbara's badger fur coats for men and the photos of Sorbara wearing his fur coats (Jan. 21) shocked and sickened me. Here is a man proudly admitting that he kills animals and makes money out of their skins.

There must be quite a few women who own fur coats in Japan, even among so-called animal lovers. Some may have been given fur coats as presents by their husbands and lovers, and some may have bought them. As a woman who made the big mistake of buying a fur coat several years ago, I would like to suggest to those who are too ashamed to wear their fur coats now but do not know what to do with them that they should offer their fur to an antifur organization called "NO FUR FUND" (Box 245, Shinjuku Post Office 163-91) so that they could be made good use of in their vigorous antifur campaigns.

The pain and agony fur-bearers and other victims suffer can be understood only when you are aware of the cruelty behind fur coats. "Fur is dead, so too is the fur industry" (Elizabeth Oliver's opinion, Jan. 27) is true for other countries, but unfortunately not true for Japan, which has become No. 1 fur-consuming country in the world.

Women, mostly middle-aged, are seen wearing fur coats, and young girls wearing beautiful kimono on Coming-of-Age Day were seen wearing fur neckpieces, too. They were either ignorant of or indifferent to the suffering of animals.

I would like to ask those who still support the fur fashion the following question: Would you wear a fur coat if it were made of dog skins? In Korea, they not only eat dogs (2 million a year) but also use their skins (1 million a year) for export. How would you feel if your fur coat, bearing a fancy name, turned out to be a dog fur coat? Would you still wear it?

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Furs are a symbol of greed

Elizabeth Oliver is right when she stated (Jan. 27) that fur is dead.

The fur industry can no longer hide the appalling life and death of the original owners of fur coats. Around 44 million wild fur-bearing animals — raccoons, coyotes, bobcats, lynx, beavers, otters and others — are trapped in the barbaric leghold trap. The sadistic leghold trap is now banned in over 50 countries as more and more people learn about the horrors of trapping animals. For example, beavers and muskrats can take up to 20 agonizing minutes to drown in water-set leghold traps.

And contrary to the fur industry's propaganda, trapping is not an effective tool for "wildlife management." Trapping disrupts wildlife populations by killing healthy animals needed to keep the species strong, and populations are further damaged when the parents of young animals are killed. Around 74 per cent of all fur garments come from trapped animals.

Consumers and retailers alike are turning away from this cruel industry. Two major department stores in my home country, Australia, have now disassociated themselves from fur fashion and have stopped selling furs. This is just part of the worldwide trend away from a diabolical and destructive industry. Wearing fur is absolutely unnecessary in countries like Australia and Japan. Fur garments are now only a symbol of greed, death and destruction, not beauty and glamor.

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