

Article

Supplementary Materials: Interspecies Sustainability to Ensure Animal Protection: Lessons from the Thoroughbred Racing Industry

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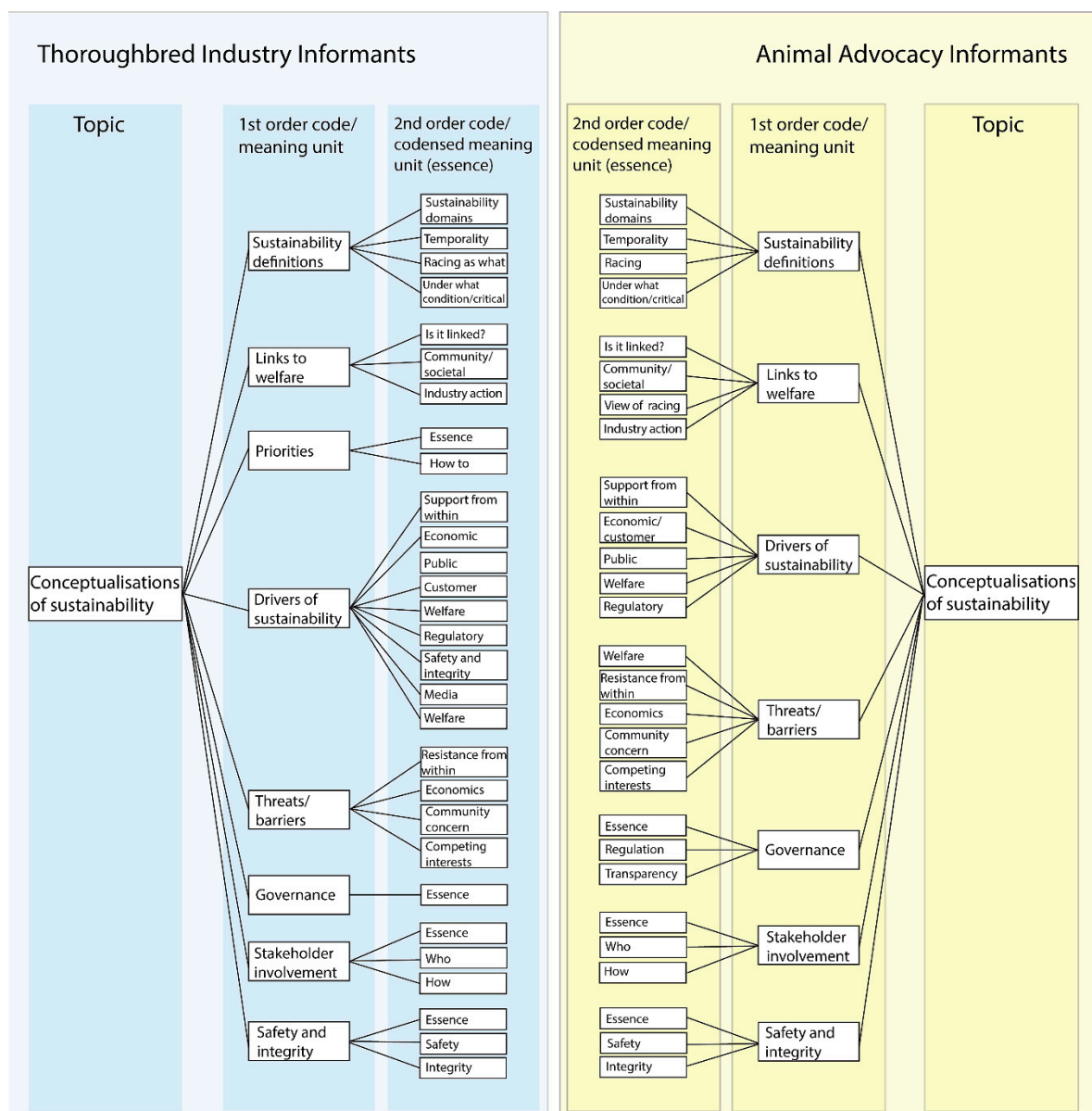


Figure S1. Coding trees including meaning units.

Table S1. Thoroughbred industry informants' definitions of sustainability.

Thoroughbred Industry Informants T1-T9*
T1: The continuing development of the environmental, social, economic aspects for generations to come. [...] Maintaining racing where it is viable and integrated in our culture. We accomplish this by developing policies to sustain it in the long-term, as a sport, agriculture, business, leisure activity, and a form of gambling.
T2: It's where there is an enduring thoroughbred racing industry into the future that is associated with the community's engagement with the sport and of course the financial and economic and social gains that come about from engaging with the sport of thoroughbred racing.
T3: The thoroughbred industry of course has to maintain itself. So the revenue streams for thoroughbred racing come out of the wagering partners in South Australia. [...] And the revenue generated by off-course and on-course wagering funds the requirements for horseracing. And that is not just price money, that is infrastructure, workplace health and safety issues, and also the upgrades we have spoken about [...].
T4: There have been over the years and there still are, a lot of people are saying racing is doomed, racing is a dying sport, racing participation is down. Well, that's all rubbish because it's not. I mean, the price money is unbelievable, the horse sales - obviously they can dip and dive depending on the economy - but they have been through the roof up around 30% the last few years. [...] I don't think this talk of whether or not racing can be sustained, that's the way I understand it when we talk about sustainability, I think it's very negative and I don't think it's realistic. [...] Because Australia is a country where racing is loved by many [...] I think the love of the horse and the love of the sport will continue on generation after generation. I don't think that racing itself is under threat.
T5: We have to have customers or no one is going to pay the bills. We have to have customers and we have to have owners wanting to participate, otherwise it is unsustainable. [...] Sustainability is, the economics [...], the incentives are there for, the incentives and reasons are there for the thing to keep going on its own merits. So in the case of horseracing, we have to have owners willing to own horses and participate and we have to have customers, actually it really stops with owners because even if we don't have customers, you still have to have people willing to race, to breed and race racehorses.
T6: For the sport to continue on in a healthy fashion, not only economically, but healthy as for the participants, the human and the equine.
T7: Sustainability [...] from the aftercare perspective, we are doing all we can do while the horses are racing, to ensure that they are going to go on because [on the track and when they retire], they turn only 6 or 7, and when we consider they can live to be 30 years old, [they have a whole life ahead of them]. And we have got to position them to be in the best position to continue on and have a successful career off the track.
T8: If we are talking about sustainability of the industry in general, thoroughbred racing as a viable sport, there's certainly been challenges to that. And particularly in this country, it's a game that takes up enormous amounts of space, if you will. And I don't mean that in the financial realm. I mean it takes up a lot of space in terms of land and resources. And it is also very labour intensive. So both of those are great challenges, particularly here where major metropolitan areas, racetracks and racing venues sit on real estate that is much more valuable than the return from those properties can sustain. So we have been challenged, really, probably over the last 50 years of major racing venues shutting down, of farms being developed, and housing developments and shopping areas. And, I think, that is probably, the overall economics is the greatest threat to the sustainability of our sport, at least in the United States.
T9: We don't talk about sustainability frequently here but I guess we probably should. I think sustainability is the ongoing vitality of the industry as a whole [...] economics drive the vast majority of it. [...] If there is a downfall on the economy, anyone of those can fall down and then it hurts everybody. They all rely upon each other for the success of the industry.

* T1-T9 are codes for the nine industry informants.

Table S2. Animal advocacy informants' definitions of sustainability.**Animal Advocacy Informants A1-A7***

A1: Sustainability is ensuring that whatever the undertaking is, is able to continue in perpetuity, it's not using human resources, something that the community is likely to accept on an ongoing basis, so it is something that is well based. [...] Sustainability in the racing industry, it would be where it could be shown that horses' welfare was well looked after, and that that was in line with community thinking. And that is certainly not the case at the present time. So that would mean absolutely cleaning up their act so that their wastage was absolutely minimal, their injury rates and their death rates were reduced, they get rid of the risky elements of the racing industry that I talked about already, so that the horses are not placed at the unacceptable risk that they are at the present time.

A2: As applied to the thoroughbred racing industry, I think sustainability has to encompass animal welfare. If the industry wants to be sustainable, then it has to meet public expectations about animal welfare into the future. And whilst they have made some efforts to do that, I think there is a very long way to go. [Public] expectations are increasing and people's knowledge about what's good animal welfare is increasing, so that to me, I mean, sustainability has to encompass animal welfare.

A3: Sustainability is where there is a capacity for ongoing survival or continuation of either a practice or an industry in its own right, that it doesn't need external support to keep propping it up so to speak, that it is self-generating and can be independent and self-reliant for its future established and maintained in such a way that it will survive and continue without other external support. Along with sustainability, I think, comes acceptance as well. It's not just about the resources to be sustainable you need to recognize and meet acceptability within the community. And you've obviously got to meet legal requirements as well that relate to the area that you are talking about. The other part of sustainability is maintaining relevance in an ever changing society. You either have the capacity to continue to be relevant or you adapt accordingly to maintain that relevance.

A4: Sustainability is to maintain what is a man-made system with regards to racing. It's an economic managed system, and it is about maintaining that through horseracing and associated industries. [...] It is maintaining that system of exploitation of the horse and ultimately that sustainability is by, is wrongly I believe, by producing vast numbers of horses and then thrown at, ruthlessly, at an industry where some succeed and many don't. It is unsustainable. [...] Sustainability in an industry is managing an economic system for it to be able to continue, not necessarily grow, but certainly continue.

A5: For me, to sustain the racing industry, for it to stay a sport that the public wants to go and watch and that people actually want to buy and own and have racehorses trained, then from a sustainability point of view that it is important that both the welfare side of things is well catered for, because that's certainly an issue that the public are much more aware of than they used to be, that the rules and regulations of racing are properly adhered to and properly followed and regularly reviewed and that to sustain racing though, it still has to maintain its public interest and without doubt if some of that revolves around the betting side of things, and so there does have to be the competition element of it but without endangering the horses. So in terms of keywords, I would say you've got to have good welfare, you've got to have good education, but you do you still have to have an element of competition there that makes it something that the public wants to go and watch.

A6: To my understanding, sustainability would refer to, how does the horseracing industry keep itself alive and viable and looking at a future that isn't diminishing. In other words, what is it going to take to keep racing an active sport. It's been propped up over the last 10, 15 years by money from other sources. And there is discussion, at least in this country, taking away that money, what would happen to racing then? Then it becomes revealed that it really isn't sustainable because it can't keep itself in business, financially. So, that's my understanding of it.

A7: The model that applies for the thoroughbred racing industry in the United States [...] it basically shows that society will not tolerate abuse [...] they also recognize that the American people, and generally globally, people won't accept animal abuse [...].

*A1-A7 are codes for the seven animal advocacy informants.

Table S3. Essence of the meaning unit “Priorities”^{**} (industry informants).

Thoroughbred Industry Informants T1-T9**

T1: Adapting to the changing cultural and social viewpoints.
T2: Next generation of consumers.
T2: Healthy flow of participants.
T2: Maintain adequate assets and facilities, safe and fit for purpose, aligned with contemporary Workplace, Health and Safety obligations.
T2: Ensuring a sustainable business model.
T2: Ensuring community acceptance; acknowledgment of responsibility of our oversight and management of issues such as welfare and safety of horses and the participants themselves.
T2: Ensuring the right digital strategy and vision of broadcast strategies aligned with customer tastes.
T2: Responsible management of the horse while in the racing industry.
T3: Infrastructure, workplace health and safety issues, upgrades to make racing safer in all climatic conditions.
T4: Significant decline of small breeders, need to not losing loads of money; foal crop has suffered massive decline, but it is not catastrophic.
T5: Safety and Integrity as a basic concept are absolutely critical.
T6: Work through the RMTC for medication reform; education for owners.
T6: Improve the economics. It’s a very expensive sport and a losing proposition financially for probably the vast majority of owners participating in the game.
T7: To ensure that they [the horses] are going to go on because [when they retire], they turn only 6 or 7.
T7: Always in need of new owners, new participants.
T8: To increase the return, to promote the sport as a viable sport, as equally exciting and interesting as American Football.
T8: Increasing the overall visibility [...] and hopefully more money.
T9: From a tradition and economics standpoint, [this material asset] is everything that this company has.

* This meaning unit is based on the question: “What is your priority in working toward a sustainable thoroughbred racing industry?” This question was not put to the animal advocacy informants. ** T1-T9 are codes for the nine industry informants.