

Brief History

Louise joined the Argus Group of newspapers as a cub reporter in 1970 and continued in mainstream journalism until 1984. During this time, she spent six years as Supreme Court reporter for The Star newspaper in Johannesburg and also served as the newspaper's foreign correspondent in London, Paris, and freelance correspondent in Washington DC.

In 1989, in the process of establishing The Humane Education Trust, she started the first newsletter in South Africa focusing on the plight of chickens in battery cages. Initially titled 'Humanity for Hens', the newsletter evolved into the magazine 'Animal Voice' and in 1994, exposed the live plucking of ostriches before slaughter. This exposure resulted in an official ban on the practice.

The vast coverage of institutionalized abuse imposed on farm animals, as well as huge lobbying efforts made by The Humane Education Trust (HET) to improve the lives of farmed animals, is recorded in 88 issues of Animal Voice archived under 'magazines' on the website:
www.animalvoice.org

A significant breakthrough was achieved in 2004 when leading food retailer Woolworths invited Louise to address delegates at its official launch of cage-free eggs, in Elgin, Western Cape. This coincided with Woolworths' ban on all eggs laid by hens in battery cages, in all its stores, nationally.

The archived magazines represent a professional, in-depth reflection, in a South African context, on attitudes towards farmed animals, as the movement inched along over more than 34 years, and continues to do so, to date.

In parallel to lobbying efforts on behalf of farmed animals, The Humane Education Trust (HET) initiated the inclusion of humane education in the South African curriculum and developed resources that supported this effort. See www.naturebased.education

Milestones along the road

1999: HET sponsors a lecture tour of South Africa by internationally acclaimed expert on 'the link between animal abuse and human violence', and co-author of the resource 'Child Abuse, Domestic Violence and Animal Abuse: Linking the Circles of Compassion for Prevention and Intervention.'

2000 – 2002: HET is given permission to bring humane education into the WCED's Safe Schools programme as one of the ways to eliminate crime and violence in schools. HET's video on this effort, titled 'Proudly Human' is included in an international humane education conference in Brussels.

2002: Invitation to participate on a voluntary basis in the Department of Education's National Environmental Education Project, for the purpose of including animal welfare in the new CAPS Curriculum that was under construction and came into being in 2012. This effort was supported by struggle-icon Kader Asmal who was Minister of Education at the time. Multiple humane education opportunities are now included in 'Topics' in Life Skills, Life Orientation, and Social Sciences

2012: Principal Tony Austen gives permission for HET to bring humane education to his class of Grade 7 learners at Golden Grove Primary School, Cape Town. He said: "In the months that learners in Grade 7HS received humane education every week, their marks for Life Orientation improved by a full 20% which reflects their amazingly improved ability to express themselves, to read, write and discuss issues intelligently, and to think creatively. What humane education achieved for these learners is remarkable."

2017/18: The Humane Education Trust conducts a pilot project to assess the impact of humane education on learner behaviour over a two-year period, in co-operation with Forest Heights Primary School, Eerste River, Stellenbosch.

2019: The outcome of the above-mentioned pilot project is presented to an international audience when Louise is invited to speak at the Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics, UK.

2022: The Humane Education Trust launches an online platform titled Caring Kids, later to evolve into Nature-based Education, where curriculum-aligned, humane education resources, approved by the Department of Education, can be downloaded in pdf format:

<https://www.naturebased.education/>

Over the decades, altogether 35 resources created, sourced, and/or developed by The Humane Education Trust are approved and accepted by the Department of Education for inclusion in national education. These resources include 5 novellas authored by Louise. One of the readers, titled Heroes and Lionhearts, based on the NSPC's Awards for Bravery, is the recipient of a local as well as an international award.

2024: The Department of Education requests that we put our resources into interactive e-formats. This effort is currently underway.

2024: HET is invited to become a member of the World Link Coalition and to attend, virtually, the United Nations' 95th Session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, vice-chaired by Dr Rinchen Chopel. He calls for all member nations of the UN to become involved in protecting children from violence towards animals, as set out in General Comment 26, Article 35.

2024: The Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics selects Louise's paper on the impact of humane education on learner behaviour, for inclusion in its Handbook of Humane Education.

2024: The Humane Education Trust is accepted as a stakeholder by UNESCO (AFRICA) with an invitation to present our work at its NATCOM meeting in April 2024. This is in response to the United Nations Charter on the Rights of the Child which, through GC26 Article 35, has brought animal welfare into the Child Rights domain. Our website explains this development in detail: See here: <https://www.naturebased.education/>

2024: The Nelson Mandela Children's Fund includes The Humane Education Trust as a stakeholder in the Africa Children's Summit to be held in Johannesburg in 2025.

Between **January 2022** to **November 2024**, The Humane Education Trust's online platform, trading as www.naturebased.education, was used by 412 teachers, 345 schools and it reached 57 515 learners.

Acknowledgements of Louise's work

2003: Recipient of '*Campaigner of the Year Award*' presented by the International Fund for Animal Welfare

2011: Recipient of the '*Feather Award*' in recognition of 'the tireless and selfless work to bring attention to the plight of animals in South Africa', presented by The Female Tribe and First for Women Insurance Brokers.

2013: Recipient of Award for '*Outstanding contribution and commitment to humane education and environmental awareness*' presented by the City of Cape Town's Environmental Management Department.