

# BRIEFING BOOK



**For Members and Principal Staff of the  
Advisory Council on Wildlife Trafficking**

This document has been prepared  
for the review of members and principal staff of the  
Advisory Council on Wildlife Trafficking  
by the

**POLITICAL ACTION NETWORK OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL IVORY SOCIETY**

a group of  
collectors, curators, scholars, preservationists, traders,  
dealers, auctioneers, artisans, writers, and others from  
North America, Europe, Asia, and Africa.

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**IVORY EDUCATION INSTITUTE**  
an independent, nonprofit organization  
dedicated to enhancing understanding  
of the historic, practical, and cultural  
importance of ivory

**THE POLITICAL ACTION NETWORK  
OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL IVORY SOCIETY  
IS DEDICATED TO THE BELIEF  
THAT THE  
CONTRIBUTIONS OF IVORY  
TO THE PAST  
AND ITS  
SIGNIFICANCE TO THE FUTURE  
ECLIPSE ANY  
UNREASONABLE OR INEFFECTIVE  
RESTRAINTS ON ITS  
TRADE OR MOVEMENT.**

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**IVORY'S CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:  
EXCERPTS OF A DECLARATION ISSUED ON  
SEPTEMBER 19, 2013**

Members of the International Ivory Society abhor the barbarity, greed, and criminality of poachers who jeopardize the existence of endangered ivory-bearing animals in any habitat anywhere in the world.

We support the trade in tusks and teeth that have been taken in approved hunts, held in storage, extracted from archeological sites, produced by natural causes, arisen from planned culls, yielded by non-endangered species, or recycled from previous uses. We strongly believe that objects made from or with ivory, before 1975 as well as those made afterwards from legal sources, have important artistic, practical, and decorative value to all societies.

We believe that the voice of specialists who study, trade, exchange, work, and use ivory legitimately — collectors, curators, academics, preservationists, traders, appraisers, auctioneers, artisans, musicians, and others — need to have their ideas carefully considered in the process of creating the rules and regulations that will protect various species in the future.

Toward this goal, it must be noted that ivory has fulfilled a key role in most of the world's civilizations since the beginning of recorded time. Indeed, because of its near permanent properties, it has been one of the most important ways to preserve significant facts. But ivory has also served over human history to:

- Express the spirit, majesty, and beauty of religious themes;
- Meet the exacting requirements of tools, implements, measuring devices, and musical instruments;
- Capture the artistic schools, decorative styles, informational needs, cultural heritage, and utilitarian requirements of countless societies; and

**IVORY HAS  
ARTISTIC,  
PRACTICAL,  
AND  
DECORATIVE  
VALUE**

**IVORY ALSO  
FULFILLS AN  
HISTORIC  
NEED**

- Provide the joy, skills, and learning gained from toys, games, and detailed miniatures.

Like gold and other precious materials, every scrap of an ivory tusk finds a practical, artistic, or decorative use — from billiard balls to blouse buttons, from piano keys to religious emblems, from furniture inlays to personal ornaments, from stethoscopes to statuary. Ivory was also among the first and remains among the most consistently recycled materials.

But all of this legitimate interest in understanding, preserving, and appreciating the beauty of objects made from and with ivory could be jeopardized if rules adopted with the best of intentions to create an effective National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking results in unnecessarily harmful consequences for cultural specialists and devoted collectors.

**IVORY IS  
AMONG THE  
MOST  
RECYCLED  
MATERIALS**

## IVORY'S CULTURAL IMPORTANCE: EXCERPTS FROM A WHITE PAPER\*

Page 7 We believe that to limit the trade and movement of legitimate ivory objects would be a major disservice to society as well as be questionable in terms of Constitutional protection afforded free expression and the Constitutional prohibition against the seizure of property without due process of law.

**QUESTIONABLE  
CONSTITUTIONAL  
GROUNDS  
FOR A BAN**

Page 11 ...history has shown that coveted products, driven from the open market by governmental fiat or other restrictions, tend to increase in value as a black market develops, abetted by ever deepening levels of corruption. Consider the pickpockets who worked their trade among the crowds watching a public hanging of other pickpockets. This famously dramatizes what happens when the rewards are more attractive to some than the penalties.

**ARTIFICIAL  
SHORTAGES  
ENCOURAGE  
BLACK MARKETS**

Page 17 While ivory became popular in France and England because of billiards, it became a near necessity in the United States after the Civil War. As the nation filled in the open land between East and West, respectable middle-class families aspired to have one of the newly designed, space-saving upright pianos in their Victorian-era living rooms. Field organs became a necessity in every church.

Page 26 The Chinese economy had grown quickly from sixth to second place in the world. A burgeoning number of wealthy Chinese across East Asia could now afford ivory seals, chopsticks, and decorative pieces that had been out of reach just a short time before. What with continuing demand for hanko (personal seals) in Japan and for religious items (mostly crosses) in the Philippines, the demand for ivory generated another wave of elephant killing.

**MODERN  
DEMAND FOR  
IVORY GOES  
BEYOND CHINA**

Page 33 The Society supports the international regulation of wildlife products and recognizes the difficulties inherent in formulating the rules. But our hope is that any future controls will take into account the special status of ivory. We offer our experience in designing restraints that are both effective in protecting ivory-bearing animals as well as reasonable in the obligations it assigns to collectors, dealers,

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\* Harris, Godfrey, *Ivory's Cultural Importance*, The Americas Group, 2014

scholars, conservationists, artisans, and others involved with ivory.

Page 39 A story now circulating on the Internet:

*A year or so ago, the Lord came to a descendent of Noah, who was living in Oregon, and said: "Once again, the earth has become evil. Build another Ark and save two of every living thing along with a few good humans." He gave Noah the original plans for the Ark, saying: "You have 6 months to build it before I start the unending deluge again for 40 days and 40 nights."*

*Six months later, the Lord looked down and saw Noah in his backyard — but no Ark. "Noah!" He roared, "I'm about to start the rain! Where is the Ark?"*

*"Forgive me, Lord," begged Noah, "but things have not gone well. I needed a building permit and the inspector insisted on the installation of a sprinkler system. My neighbors claimed that I would violate the area CC&Rs and would exceed its height limits. We had to go to the Planning Commission for a variance.*

*"Then the City Council and the electric company demanded payment for the future cost of moving power lines and other overhead obstructions to clear passage for the Ark's move to the sea. I told them that the sea would be coming to us, but they would hear nothing of it.*

*"Getting the wood was another problem. There's a ban on cutting local trees in order to save a particular owl. I tried to convince the environmentalists that I needed the wood to save the owls — but no go! Then when I started gathering the animals I was taken to court by another group. They insisted that I was confining wild animals against their will. They argued the accommodations were too restrictive, and it was cruel and inhumane to put so many animals in a confined space.*

*"At about the same time, I learned that I couldn't build the Ark until I hired a consultant to write an environmental impact report. I was given the name of a relative of a council member who could do the study. And now one of the labor unions claims I can't hire my sons because they lack the required experience in ark-building.*

*"So, forgive me, Lord, but I am guessing it could take a few years to finish the Ark." Suddenly the skies cleared and the sun began to shine through the clouds. Noah looked up in wonder and asked, "You mean you're not going to destroy the world?" "No," said the Lord. "The government beat me to it."*

**AN  
OVERZEALOUS  
GOVERNMENT  
CAN DO MORE  
HARM THAN  
GOOD**



# OBAMA'S IVORY-TRADE REGULATORY OVERKILL

## Turning Antique Collectors into Criminals will Boost the Black Market

Doug Bandow

*Doug Bandow is a senior fellow at the Cato Institute and a former special assistant to President Reagan. He is a member of the Chess Collector's Society. This article appeared in The Washington Times on February 22, 2014.*

The Obama administration is preparing to treat virtually every antique collector, dealer and auctioneer in America as a criminal. In the name of saving elephants, the administration is effectively banning the sale of all ivory objects, even if acquired legally decades ago. Doing so will weaken conservation efforts and enrich those engaged in the illegal ivory trade.

Elephants are being killed in Africa. Under the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, only ivory from before 1989 can be sold. Unfortunately, ivory-sale prohibition has not stopped the slaughter. The greatest demand for new ivory comes from Asia. Most ivory in America arrived legally, many years ago. The owners followed the rules as they invested hundreds, thousands or tens of thousands of dollars in art objects.

Until now, the rules were simple and sensible. Ivory imported legally — that is, prior to 1989 or after 1989 with convention certification — could be sold. Older ivory usually can be identified by coloring, stains, style, wear, quality, subject and more. Most of the older work simply isn't replicated today. Moreover, the burden of proof fell on the government, which had to prove that an individual violated the law to convict him. That's the way America normally handles both criminal and civil offenses.

However, in mid-February the administration issued what amounted to a ban on ivory sales. In practice, virtually every collector, dealer, auctioneer and other person in America is prohibited from selling ivory items — even if acquired legally, owned for decades, and worth hundreds or thousands of dollars. Every flea market, junk shop, estate sale, antique store, auction showroom and antique show is at risk of raids, confiscations and prosecutions.

First, no imports are allowed, not even of antiques, which before could be brought to America with a convention certificate. Second, all exports are banned, except antiques (defined as more than a century old) in what the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service says are "exceptional circumstances." At best, the administration is raising the administrative and cost burdens of exporting to countries that already limit ivory imports to items with appropriate documentation. Or the new rule may restrict the sale of items previously allowed, thereby hindering Americans in disposing of their legal collections.

**THE OBAMA  
ADMINISTRATION  
IS ABOUT TO  
TREAT SOME  
OUTSTANDING  
AMERICANS AS  
CRIMINALS**

Third, interstate transactions are prohibited, except for antiques. Explains Fish and Wildlife: “Sellers of antiques in interstate commerce must prove through documented evidence that items qualify as bona fide antiques.” Unfortunately, such evidence rarely exists. Thus, the sale of almost all ivory across state lines is effectively banned. Fourth, intrastate commerce, said the agency, is “prohibited unless seller can demonstrate item was lawfully imported prior to” 1990, when the international ban took effect.

But how does someone “demonstrate” when, say, a gift from his parents was imported? Without such proof, the item is not marketable — even though brought to America legally. By any standard, the administration rule is grossly unfair to thousands of Americans. Why is the administration penalizing the law-abiding? The U.S. officials complained about the difficulty in distinguishing ivory imported legally and illegally. No doubt, banning everything eases enforcement, but the policy fails to distinguish between guilt and innocence.

Moreover, much older ivory, given its manifold unique characteristics, is easily distinguishable from new work. The illegal ivory supply also is small compared with that of legal ivory. Rather than ban the latter in an attempt to limit the former, the government should concentrate resources on aiding African countries in protecting their elephants, better interdicting illegal imports, and identifying sellers who specialize in new ivory.

In fact, targeting owners of legal ivory will perversely undermine such enforcement efforts. Making most ivory in America illegal will vastly expand the ivory black market and dramatically dilute enforcement resources. Ivory commerce will continue, only more often underground. More objects will privately pass among dealers and collectors, never reaching public view. The interstate ban, too, will be flouted. Owners also may hand-carry items to other nations without similar restrictions. Moreover, documentation will be faked. Collectors and dealers will turn to those already participating in the illegal market, helping criminals expand their networks and increase their profits. Finally, overtaxed federal Fish and Wildlife agents may prefer to go after easy targets, such as local antique flea markets, rather than secretive smugglers.

If the administration does not withdraw its rules, Congress should overturn this unfair attack on the law-abiding. Washington should penalize poachers and their seller allies — not collectors and dealers who have followed the rules. The administration’s new regulations will divert enforcement resources, and push owners of legal ivory into the illegal trade, meaning more elephants are likely to die.

**HOW DOES ONE PROVE THE BACKGROUND OF A GIFT FROM A PARENT?**

**WILL A BLACK MARKET IN IVORY WASTE LAW ENFORCEMENT RESOURCES BETTER USED FOR REAL CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES?**

**CONGRESS NEEDS TO GET INVOLVED**

# IT WON'T SAVE A SINGLE ELEPHANT IN AFRICA!

## Oppose the Obama Administration's War on US Antique Collectors

David S. White

*David S. White is principal of David S. White & Associates, a real estate and general business law firm in Los Angeles. He is a real estate lawyer and board member of the International Netsuke Society. This article was published in February 21st, 2014 in Fox & Hounds.*

Last week, in a stunning suspension of logic and good sense, the Obama Administration declared war on law-abiding US antique collectors, maybe on you. In essence, the administration is seeking to ban the sale of all ivory products even if legally purchased decades ago.

In a nutshell, if you have not been following this one, elephants in Africa are increasingly being slaughtered for their tusks, 70% of which go directly to China to satisfy their insatiable demand for ivory, both a status symbol for their newly wealthy, and a material with supposed medicinal properties. Do not mistake my point here – I love elephants. I love my dog. But, take a deep breath fellow animal lovers, and please explain to me how the new Obama Policy to criminalize Americans who own antique elephant ivory, will help save the life of even a single African elephant roaming the plains of the Serengeti. You can't because it won't.

Millions of Americans own antique elephant ivory, obtained many years ago in a much simpler world, and most importantly, obtained legally. In the 1970's and 1980's the slaughter of African elephants was stepped up and it resulted in the treaty called by its acronym, CITES, (Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species) enacted in 1989, and purporting to control the traffic in endangered animal parts, and in particular for our purposes here, elephant ivory.

CITES has not succeeded in protecting African elephants from slaughter, and frankly, CITES rules are a confused mess which even lawyers have trouble understanding and which our regulators have trouble enforcing, and forget about enforcing these rules fairly – that has not been the case. Far from it.

I am an antique netsuke collector, and I am the Chair of the Los Angeles Chapter of the International Netsuke Society – you know, those miniature carvings which you can see in the Bushell Collection at Los Angeles County Museum of Art, one of the finest ever assembled, a showcase of this amazing art form which tells stories of Old Japan, a world and culture now vanished. Our members, 500 of them located all over the world, are now threatened by the new Obama Policy, as is every American antique collector and owner of antiques, some of which may be inherited.

Many of our members have been collecting and writing scholarly articles

**WAR DECLARED  
ON LAW-ABIDING  
CITIZENS**

**CITES HAS  
NOT PROTECTED  
ELEPHANTS**

Owning these beautiful sculptures threatens no living elephant. Destroying these breathtaking works of fine art, or rendering them valueless because the Obama Policy would seem to envision that, is right up there on the same level of Kafka-esqe madness of the Taliban destroying Buddhist artwork, or book burnings by countless totalitarian regimes.

Most outrageous of all, the Obama Policy actually includes provisions for being able to hunt and take sport trophies, all the while criminalizing a whole entirely innocent segment of our population for presuming to own, perfectly legally acquired, fine art carved in the form of netsuke, an art form which has truly enchanted millions since Japan opened its doors to the world back in the 1850's!

Heaven forbid if you still own an old piano – you know, the one with the ivory keys? You should look around your church or other place or worship and note how many antique ivory pieces are used in regular services. How about that old musical instrument you inherited from Grandpa Harry? It has ivory inlays. I could go on and on and on . . . . You would be amazed how much antique ivory is owned and loved by Americans.

Ivory has been worked and carved for thousands of years. It has a rightful place as fine art in our culture and in our world. Elephants should not be slaughtered for their tusks – recent polls in China found that many Chinese citizens believe that tusks grow back like your fingernails – they don't, and it costs the elephant it's life. Ivory trades at \$1500 per pound in China, and yet, since last Summer, we have witnessed public Ivory Crushes by the regulators, where they destroy tons and tons of confiscated elephant ivory. This is pure insanity. Why destroy valuable property that cost elephants their lives? Yet, each country now is lining up to have their own public Ivory Crush. The UK's, backed by a few of the Royals – including Prince William, who made the astoundingly stupid statement that he would like to destroy the thousands of ivory fine art antiques in Buckingham Palace – was last week along with a Seminar on Wildlife Trafficking.

The Obama Policy is being driven by extreme animal rights factions. They have abandoned all reason and logic with this one. We need to respond strongly and definitively to this latest example of horrendously bad government and stupendous irrationality. Nobody can explain the connection between declaring war on collectors of antique ivory in the US and stopping the modern slaughter of African elephants, because there is no connection in logic or reason. We are addicted to prohibiting things, but all our experiments in prohibition end the same way – in failure.

Let's not keep doing stupid things. Oppose the Obama's war on law abiding US collectors of antique ivory – it won't save 21st century African elephant lives, it is probably unconstitutional, and it is frankly an absurd reaction.

**WHY ALLOW  
IVORY SPORTS  
TROPHIES AND  
PROHIBIT FINE  
ART?**

**IVORY  
CRUSHINGS ARE  
PURE INSANITY;  
THEY  
ACCOMPLISH  
NOTHING.**

**WHAT IS THE  
ACTUAL  
CONNECTION  
BETWEEN  
ANTIQUE IVORY  
AND MODERN  
ELEPHANTS?**

## IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMERTIME

Godfrey Harris, M.A., and Daniel Stiles, Ph.D.

*Godfrey Harris is principal representative of the Political Action Network of the International Ivory Society and Daniel Stiles is an ivory trade investigator headquartered in Kenya.*

It was 1862. Abraham Lincoln was in the White House. “Taps” was first sounded as a lights out bugle call. And Steinway & Sons was building its first upright pianos in New York.

That space-saving design would help change the cultural face of America. After the Civil War, many middle-class families installed one of these new instruments in their parlors. It was thought that an ability to play the piano was nearly as important to the marriage potential of the single ladies of a household as their skill in cooking and sewing; its mastery signaled a young woman’s gentility and culture.

The keys on these instruments were all fashioned from ivory, not the hardwoods frequently found on the keyboards of harpsichords and clavichords. In America’s hot and humid summers, ivory absorbed the perspiration on the fingertips of performers and provided the slight tackiness so important to an individual pianist’s technique.

Now the ivory keys on an historic Steinway piano are at the center of a Kafkaesque situation unfolding in Japan and the United States. It involves an upright Steinway that in 1995 was salvaged from certain destruction by Ben Treuhaft, a professional piano technician. After a Steinway factory restoration, it became the centerpiece of his family’s possessions. When his wife took a scientific position in Japan, their household goods were shipped to Tokyo. But after the Fukushima meltdown, the family decided to move to Scotland. The instrument was put in storage. Now Mr. Treuhaft is ready to return it to the United States.

But the piano is stuck in Tokyo. It lacks the paperwork necessary to clear customs at a U.S. port of entry. It appears that when the piano left the United States, Mr. Treuhaft failed to obtain an export license from the federal Fish and Wildlife Service. That paper would have identified the ivory keys, officially established the piano’s provenance, and would have exempted it from the ban on the trade and movement of endangered species orchestrated by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

U.S. rules require that every time anyone exports or imports an instrument containing a part made from one of the hundreds of protected species designated in Appendix 1 of the treaty — a violin with an ivory bridge, a Tourte cello bow with an ivory tip, or a Martin guitar with ivory elements and a Brazilian rosewood back — he or she must obtain an export/import permit. Never mind that Steinway issued a certificate naming the Treuhaft piano the company’s oldest in use in the United States; never mind that it is registered as the fifth upright piano crafted by the legendary company.

The Fish and Wildlife Service is adamant: No proper paper, no U.S. entry.

**AN HISTORIC,  
AMERICAN-  
OWNED  
STEINWAY PIANO  
IS STUCK IN  
TOKYO.**

**IT LACKS THE  
NECESSARY  
USFWS PERMIT  
TO COME HOME**

What can be done to permit a culturally significant, historically important, museum-quality American artifact to come home? It seems that the federal office that issues the necessary certificates is currently staffed by just two people. According to George Gruhn, a prominent Nashville guitar expert, the current waiting time can be as long as four months. He says American-based performers face a dilemma when they go abroad and are expected to play their sometimes historic instruments in concerts. It is the nightmare of “not knowing whether they can enter a CITES country or return to the U.S. with their instruments.”

Do we need all of this heavy-handed bureaucratic procedure for obviously important, culturally historic treasures in the name of protecting wild elephants? What is the proven relationship between limiting the trade and movement of all ivory objects and the well-being of ivory-bearing animals in the wild? Do the recent widely publicized crushings of ivory by the US-FWS as well as those engineered by French and Chinese government agencies actually change demand for ivory, or rather does the threat of ivory’s unavailability increase the market price of ivory and fatten the profit potential for poachers?

Now the White House has moved to ban all ivory sales in the U.S. and the import or export of all elephant ivory products. While there will be an exception for antiques, they will require an almost impossible-to-produce documented proof of age and background. How does this make any sense? What about ivory used for the American tradition of scrimshaw, for all manner of musical instruments, for artistic expression, and for medical experiments? There is abundant legal raw ivory already in the United States to allow these culturally important activities to continue.

The pending rules are likely to put all the power in the Fish and Wildlife Service to decide if the age and origin of an ivory object has been properly established. Instead of trusting experienced dealers, specialists, and experts, all ivory is likely to be considered blood ivory.

We are revisiting the mistakes of Prohibition and the failures of the War on Drugs to show our concern for the plight of elephants. Yet research by economists has made it clear that bans and artificial supply reductions actually harm wildlife. The products of these animals become scarcer and prices rise, making them more attractive to criminal traffickers. It will no doubt happen again as the thousands – if not tens of thousands – of currently legal ivory pieces in the U.S. find their way into an underground smuggling network.

Leaving the Treuhafts’ piano in Japan will not save elephants. But it will endanger the lives of elephants — and diminish the lives of those who recognize and value the role of ivory in history and culture.

**DO CRUSHINGS  
CHANGE  
DEMAND?**

**WHAT ABOUT  
ESSENTIAL USES  
OF IVORY?**

**WHY DO WE  
INSIST ON  
REPEATING THE  
ERRORS OF  
PROHIBITION  
AND THE WAR  
ON DRUGS?**

## A STATEMENT FROM THE JAPANESE REPOSITORY

February 17, 2014

**Ron Fromkin**

*Ron Fromkin is the President of the Japanese Repository, a member of the International Ivory Society, and an ivory restoration specialist located in Margate, Florida.*

I am a retired Police Lieutenant from South Florida and began doing ivory restoration about 23 years ago as a side business. My police career was mainly working local and large scale drug cases with DEA. Over the years, I seized many millions of dollars in assets and millions more in narcotics. Investigations took me all over the United States. I am very familiar with how law enforcement agencies work and I have the utmost respect for enforcement officials caught in the politics of this situation.

I am now a nationally recognized ivory restoration craftsman. I have repaired thousands of ivory carvings, chess sets, canes and countless other items made from natural materials. I have spent thousands of hours learning my craft (there is no school or book for this kind of work) and I have spent a small fortune building a reference library and acquiring the tools and equipment to restore damaged ivory objects. I have built a stockpile of ivory materials for my repair work through the years — itself now worth quite a bit of money. The result of all of this effort is a very successful business and a very important part of my life. I know most dealers and many collectors of ivory and have watched the events surrounding the Presidential Task Force on Combating Wildlife Trafficking develop over the last several months.

I read most of the news releases put out by the Government or environmental groups and cringe at the outright lies and distortions that result. The message from these agencies and groups is that the public destruction of ivory will send a message to the poachers and save elephants from slaughter.

There have been three or four destruction operations in Africa in recent years; the U.S. just supposedly destroyed six tons, and now several foreign countries have also destroyed stockpiles of their own or plan on doing so.

After all of this noise making, the message the poach-

**WHAT HAPPENS  
TO LEGITIMATE  
RESTORATION  
SPECIALISTS?**

**THE MESSAGE OF  
THE CRUSHINGS?  
BUSINESS IS  
BOOMING FOR  
IVORY POACHERS**

ers seem to have heard is this: “Business is a boomin.” More poaching and smuggling than ever according to the Government’s own statistics. The destroyed ivory could have funded anti-poaching efforts in Africa, re-education, job training, and eco-tourism for dozens of years. I believe that environmental groups and Government agencies have committed 60 million dollars or more to fight poaching and smuggling. Exactly what has this money bought besides fancy conferences all over the world? Seized ivory should have funded additional law enforcement efforts as confiscated assets do now for many domestic police agencies. Ivory, after all, is a commodity, not an illegal narcotic that must be destroyed lest it fall into the wrong hands.

The destruction operation in Denver a few months ago was another distortion. The government implied that the 6 tons of ivory had been seized in the USA. After all, it was USFWS that crushed it, right? Wrong. The ivory had been accumulated over 25 years, but most of it was from foreign countries who had sent it to the USFWS lab for testing and prints, etc. Another distortion expressed by FWS officials: “We can’t tell old ivory from new.” That’s very funny. I know dozens of people in the trade that can ID quality ivory from tourist junk or modern Chinese made carvings from old masterpieces. The experts on ivory were specifically excluded from giving any input on the USFWS stockpile — not only its age but the origin of the ivory as well. Were there any mammoth or masaton ivory pieces in the ivory crush? Why were outsiders excluded from inspecting the USFWS warehouse?

Even the big NY seizure a few years ago of “\$2 million” worth of ivory raised my suspicions. The USFWS has repeatedly claimed that the USA is the second biggest customer for ivory in the world — implying that the ivory involved in the statement is all illegal ivory. It isn’t. Besides, there is no evidence to support the assertion that the U.S. is the second largest consumer of ivory. No one is importing ivory, so what does this mean? Simply, that there is a lot of ivory in the USA already and it is bought and sold between citizens as any other commodity. So what. We are the biggest consumers of everything in the world.

**DID THE US  
CRUSH INVOLVE  
ALL ILLEGALLY  
IMPORTED  
IVORY?**



I believe the NY seizure was nothing more than tourist trinkets that no serious dealer or collector would waste any money on. I believe the \$2 million number is a gross exaggeration. If that seizure had been examined by independent experts, it would probably have revealed a whole lot of tourist junk.

I am sure that the claims of Customs or USFWS of hundreds of seizures of illegal ivory will boil down to a lot of innocent citizens who unknowingly bought \$3 dollar trinkets overseas and got “caught” when they declared these items as they came back to the USA. Each little \$3 carving contributes to a statistic, but the truth is that there is virtually no market in the USA for illegal ivory. There are large quantities of legal ivory carvings and tusks in this country already.

Another issue is the Government demanding documents to show when ivory was imported into the USA (before 1989). No one, with the exception of a hunter who went to Africa on a safari and shot an elephant, would have such documentation. There was no requirement to keep records of importation after the items entered the country lawfully.

The standard assumption has always been that tusks in the USA were legal as they had gone through the importation process. You could buy, sell and move elephant tusks — and all that was required was a normal receipt. Now, with the stroke of a pen, you can only sell a tusk in your own state and you must have import documents to do. Those document rarely exist.

I own tusks that were hunting trophies from the fifties, sixties and seventies. I know the hunter’s name and have some history of their hunts. I am confident that if I gave the names of the hunters to any relevant government agency and said: “You made the rules, you kept the records, now you find the documents you generated 30 to 50 years ago.” My bet is that they could not find their own records. Why is it practical to think ordinary citizens could do better? The proposed rules are clearly set up in pursuit of an agenda. If the government makes my property worthless by imposing rules that prohibit me from selling things that I purchased legally, then the government ought to be prepared to pay a fair value for that property?

**IS THE  
GOVERNMENT  
PREPARED TO  
COMPENSATE ME  
FOR MY LEGAL  
IVORY IT WILL  
RENDER  
VALUELESS?**

I have a stockpile of scrap ivory that I use for restoration work. Some pieces are tiny and some are very large. This scrap is from countless sources. I repair carvings from all over the USA. Will I be able to do repairs using my pre-ban, but not necessarily antique, ivory? The sad part is the people who have pushed this agenda, have purposely left people who know ivory or earn a living from it out of the discussion. The Advisory Council strikes me as political appointees with the same mind set.

If the Advisory Council has little or no knowledge of ivory and the USFWS has almost no knowledge of ivory, how did they come up with this set of proposed rules.

## THE 'INCONVENIENT TRUTH' ABOUT THE IVORY TRADE

Daniel Stiles

*Daniel Stiles, Ph.D. is a Member, IUCN/SSC African Elephant Specialist Group and has been researching the elephant trade since 1999.*

The argument of many NGOs is that increased elephant poaching is largely a result of renewed demand caused by two 'one-off' ivory auctions from selected southern African countries to Japan in 1999 and to Japan and China in 2008, authorized by the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). They contend these auctions spurred consumers to buy ivory by making them believe it was now legal to do so, triggering more elephant poaching and all the associated corruption. These groups also seem to think that these two experimental sales of relatively small amounts of raw ivory to two countries somehow represent what a regulated, legal raw ivory sales system would constitute over the long term.

Both these beliefs are seriously flawed and have led to a common perception amongst both the media and the public that instigating a legal, regulated regime of selling raw ivory - from vetted seller countries to vetted buyers - would only worsen the current elephant poaching situation. In my opinion, this simply is not true.

We all agree on one thing: demand for worked ivory, mainly in China, is driving the elephant poaching. But we disagree strongly on how best to stop the poaching.

In her *Ecologist* article, Ms Rice reiterated what all the opponents to international raw ivory trade regulation propose as the only way to stop poaching. CITES parties should be '... investing in intelligence-led enforcement, multi-agency operations, securing convictions and raising penalties – including the seizure of assets and proceeds of wildlife crime – and communicating and cooperating internationally'.

In other words, law enforcement cutting off supply is the answer. Unfortunately, law enforcement is not the answer, though certain types of law enforcement can help. I believe that law enforcement under current circumstances is actually exacerbating the poaching. Seizing illegal ivory shipments constricts supply

**EARLIER, THE  
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STOCKPILED  
IVORY. DAN  
STILES  
STRONGLY  
DISAGREES.**

and makes elephant poaching even more profitable by raising raw ivory prices. It also forces ivory smugglers to instigate a 'maximum quota' of elephant poaching to make up for lost shipments and future supply uncertainties.

Unless the laws of supply and demand are recognized as the primary problem, and economic and psychological remedies applied, elephants stand no chance of surviving.

I have been investigating wild resources trade since the 1970s, specializing in ivory since 1999. I have spent considerable time with ivory hunters, traders, craftsmen and vendors in the key ivory supply and consuming nations, including the Central and West Africa regions, China, Thailand, Vietnam and the USA. Informants when asked all replied that the CITES-authorized ivory sales had had no impact on demand for ivory. This has been reported in many publications and the conclusions substantiated by TRAFFIC reports and independent resource economists' studies. So why do the ivory trade opponents persist in ignoring this information?

The 1999 and 2008 ivory auctions are irrelevant to rising demand for worked ivory in China and among Chinese people in other countries. If these raw ivory sales stimulated demand, why is the worked ivory demand rise only seen in the richer parts of China and in other countries where Chinese people work on infrastructure projects or have set up businesses?

Recent research carried out by Dr Esmond Martin, a noted wildlife trade expert, and myself in Japan, South East Asia, Europe and the USA has found no rise in worked ivory demand in these markets in recent years. In fact, demand has fallen in many places. Dr Martin even found that ivory demand was moribund in poorer parts of southern China. Why didn't the sales spur demand in those places?

One of the trade aspects that should be understood is that the CITES ban only concerns ivory that is traded internationally between countries party to CITES. It is permitted by national laws to manufacture ivory items and trade legal ivory within most countries, including the biggest ivory consuming countries in the European Union, the USA, Japan, China, Thailand and others.

**APPLY THE LAW  
OF SUPPLY AND  
DEMAND TO SAVE  
ELEPHANTS**

With the CITES ban in place, we have the economically irrational situation of permitting ivory working and selling in most high-consumption countries, while prohibiting supplies of legal raw ivory to feed that consumption. This situation promotes illegal elephant killing to obtain supply to satisfy demand.

It is widely recognized by everyone, even the anti-ivory trade NGOs and individuals, that rising demand for worked ivory in China is the result of a combination of a deep-rooted cultural veneration for ivory and economic development. Millions more Chinese now have the money to buy ivory. It is legal for them to buy the ivory that they see in shops. Few Chinese consumers, until very recently, were even aware of CITES, an ivory trade ban, or even of where the ivory came from, as NGO studies have attested. Since the mid 1990s, ivory demand in China has steadily been growing in tandem with greater prosperity.

There really is no reason or basis in fact to invoke the two CITES ivory sales as causing the rise in demand and poaching, unless there is another agenda for doing so, such as an entrenched opposition to a stable, legal, regulated trade system of raw ivory. By linking the experimental sales to increased poaching, ivory trade opponents can then state that a regular legal trade system would also increase elephant killing. (They fail to point out that the ban on international trade in worked ivory – which is what consumers buy – would remain in place).

I am greatly concerned, along with others, by the spike in elephant killing in parts of Africa by organized gangs of poachers that has occurred in recent years. Seizures of illegal ivory shipments and reports of elephant massacres have reached unprecedented heights. Ivory trade opponents have blamed these horrifying developments largely on the two CITES ivory sales. As Ms Rice stated in *The Ecologist*, ‘...CITES’s ivory trading system ... is deeply flawed, prone to manipulation and, we contend, has been a significant factor behind the catastrophic rise in elephant poaching during the past decade.’

I contend that this widely held view not only is incorrect, it is significantly harmful to elephants. I agree that the two experimental ivory sales were a bad idea and they should never have been held, but not because they stimulated ivory demand. The

**THE EVIDENCE IS CLEAR: THE TWO CITES AUCTIONS DID NOT CAUSE A RISE IN DEMAND FOR IVORY PRODUCTS.**

two ivory sales inherently did not harm elephants by raising demand, but they seriously impacted the elephant poaching situation by creating first hope, then uncertainty, with ivory traders and manufacturers.

Since 1990, it has been illegal to export or import non-antique commercial ivory in CITES parties countries. Prior to 1990, key ivory traders in places such as Hong Kong, China and Japan stockpiled large quantities of raw ivory in anticipation of the CITES ban. Concomitantly, due to negative NGO and media publicity aimed at ivory buying, demand dropped precipitously in the West and Japan, at that time big ivory consumers. Raw ivory prices dropped and elephant poaching in many places decreased. The ban was declared a great success.

When Esmond Martin and I carried out our first ivory market survey in Africa in 1999, aimed at assessing effects of the 1989 ban and 1999 sales, we found that all ivory markets where data were available were smaller than in 1989, except for a slight apparent rise in Nigeria. We also noted, however, that, ‘... in parts of Central and West Africa there appears to have been a slow revival since the mid-1990s.’ In 2001 we surveyed South East Asia and found, in part, ‘Unfortunately, it appears that demand for ivory has remained steady or increased in some places in Asia since the mid-1990s, stimulating elephant poaching.’

We attributed this growth in ivory market activity from the mid 1990s to a combination of rising demand in eastern Asia with economic development depleting ivory stockpiles and the organization of illegal raw ivory supply networks in Africa. The large difference in raw ivory prices in eastern Asia, at least five times that in Africa, further stimulated the poaching of African elephants. This trend has continued over the past decade-plus.

Thus, we now have well-established illegal operators of elephant poaching and ivory smuggling in Africa in reaction to the CITES ivory trade ban. When legal trade opponents criticize the corruption and crime involved in ivory trading today, they should realize that this was all created under a ban regime, not a legal trade system. The two ‘one-off’ sales can hardly be blamed for the illegal activities - they were already in place by 1999 and are even more pronounced now.

**POACHING WAS  
ENCOURAGED  
BY THE CITES  
BANS, NOT BY  
THE LEGAL  
SALE OF IVORY  
STOCKS.**

The first action that broke down the budding agreement between CITES and Chinese and Japanese ivory traders was a 2007 CITES decision. In exchange for withdrawing opposition to four southern African countries selling raw ivory, trade opponents obtained an agreement that no future sales could be made by those same countries before 2016. The final nail in the coffin of cooperation was pounded in 2010 when Tanzania and Zambia submitted proposals to CITES to sell their ivory stocks. The proposals were defeated (rightfully so, in my opinion).

Ivory traders now believed that no legal raw ivory would come onto the market until 2017 at the earliest. Trader agreement with CITES to buy only legal ivory was now null and void and they returned to the poachers and smugglers. Orders no doubt went out that any and all ivory would be bought, causing the spike in elephant poaching. When I worked for IUCN in Central Africa in 2010-2011, local ivory carvers complained that almost no ivory could be found. It was all being exported to eastern Asia.

The inconvenient truth is that the CITES ivory trade ban and the 2007 and 2010 CITES votes to cut off legal raw ivory supplies are the real causes of the recent elephant holocaust, not the red herring 1999 and 2008 ivory sales authorized by CITES.

The crux of the problem is demand for ivory. Fighting supply through law enforcement is basically futile, though it could slow elephant killing down marginally by arresting a few of those who order the kills and buy the tusks from poachers. Seizing illegal shipments only makes things worse. The only viable solution is to try to regain the trust of eastern Asian traders for them to stop buying the poached tusks and buy only legal ivory, authorized by a regular CITES trade system. Please, no more 'one-off' sales!

Even more important, public awareness campaigns should be started in Asia to drive ivory demand down by creating a huge stigma associated with owning ivory, as was done in the West at the time of the 1989 CITES ivory trade ban. WildAid and others have been doing this, but much more needs to be done to break down a centuries old tradition of venerating carved elephant teeth. It worked in Japan, why not China?

Remember, when the buying stops, the killing stops.

**FIGHTING  
POACHING  
THROUGH LAW  
ENFORCEMENT  
IS BASICALLY  
FUTILE.**

## HOW TO DETERMINE THE AGE OF IVORY

Robert Weisblut

*Robert Weisblut founded the International Ivory Society in 1996 to bring together collectors, artisans, and experts to exchange information about this unique material used for cultural, practical, and artistic purposes. He is contributing editor to Schroeder's Antique Price Guide for ivory and the author of numerous articles on ivory.*

One of the key new rules proposed to implement the National Strategy on Wildlife Trafficking has to do with the age of an ivory object. It has been suggested that a 100-year rule would be enforced in the United States for any future trade or movement.

While that traditional gauge of what constitutes an antique is not surprising, the requirement that the age be documented is. One hundred or more years ago most people didn't have checking accounts and none had credit cards. Business was conducted in cash or barter.

Because of this, we need a more practical way to determine the age of an item and we urge that these alternative ways be incorporated into whatever rules or interpretations are forthcoming in the future:

- Age cracks and patina of the ivory.
- Photographs of ivories in combination with known people along with the year in which the photograph was taken.
- Copies of wills to demonstrate when the current owner of an object took possession.
- Old or current copies of insurance policies that list information on ivories covered.
- Actual dates incised into a carving.
- The known initials, marks, or names of carvers to help determine the dates these artists were working.
- The style of a piece — perhaps the single most important characteristic to determine age.
- The base or stand on which an item is mounted — some of which are unique to a particular period of time.
- The subject matter of the piece. (The object depicted may have been changed after its original carving

**HOW MANY HAVE DOCUMENTS THAT PROVE AN ITEM IS 100 YEARS OLD?**

**METHODS, OTHER THAN DOCUMENTS, CAN ESTABLISH AN IVORY ITEM'S AGE. FOR EXAMPLE, REVIEWING THE BACKGROUND OF THE IVORY PORTRAIT BELOW SHOULD ESTABLISH ITS PROBABLE AGE. (SEE NEXT PAGE)**





and thus alters the perception of age.)

- The use of other materials used with an ivory portrait — such as the wood involved in Simon Troger carvings.
- Notarized statements by relatives or experts attesting to relevant facts that help date the item in question.
- Comparison of the item to pictures of similar items in published books.
- Early auction house catalogues.
- Sworn testimony of recognized experts in various artistic and cultural fields.

To adopt these criteria for establishing the age of a piece in lieu of a bill of sale or other such historic documentation, it should be noted that numismatists had a similar problems years ago. They could not be sure that a coin was genuine, and whether it had been circulated, and most importantly, its quality. As professional numismatists knew, the price of a coin could double with each higher grade. Their solution was to form coin grading services. These services were made up of three experts who graded each coin without any input from the buyer or seller. Today there are numerous such services and it is the basis for pricing in the coin industry.

Why not apply the same proven approach to ivory objects? Why not authorize one or more services to certify or authenticate an ivory carving as a 100-year-old antique? The members of the various services need not be restricted to appraisers, but could also include a variety of specialists including but not limited to museum curators, university researchers, prominent collectors, restoration experts, historians, book authors, and auctioneers.

As I see the work of these services, they would only work with elephant ivory carvings, not with mammoth, walrus, hippo, boar, warthog, or whale. They would not assess items of mixed media, such as pianos, musical instruments, silver serving items, or inlaid furniture. The fees required for the services to assess the age of an item should

The original depiction of the Apollo on the previous page is on an old Roman coin. It had no arms. When a friend of Michelangelo was commissioned to create that Apollo in marble, he added arms. The arms were removed in the early 1900's for historical accuracy. The fact that the ivory portrait has *arms* indicates that it was carved prior to 1900. This kind of visual evidence and explanation can establish the age of an ivory in lieu of other forms of documentation.

**THE NUMISMATIC  
MODEL IS  
WORTH  
COPYING FOR  
DETERMINING  
THE AGE OF  
IVORY**

be reasonable — perhaps in the \$15 to \$20 per item range under current economic conditions, increasing as conditions dictate. The services would have to be local to each state, as current law would prohibit sending them interstate for inspection.

Each ivory object subjected to the process could then be assigned a number to accompany it for the rest of its journey through collections and museums. An internet website could maintain the relevant number of the item along with pictures and measurements for all to see including USFWS inspectors, potential buyers, museum curators, and the like. Any ivory with such certification could be shipped, sold, or purchased in interstate commerce.

Using the above guidelines, a substantial number of ivories can be returned to a legal status immediately, and over time art deco, mid-20th century Chinese, and other such items can be brought back into the system. Just as importantly, collectors can retain the investments they have made, many people can retain their jobs dealing in ivory, and citizens of the United States who bought their ivory objects in good faith and when it was legal to do so will not be cast into the role of criminals by flouting unfair laws.

**A NUMBERING  
SYSTEM WOULD  
ALLOW NEWER  
IVORIES TO BE  
BROUGHT INTO  
THE MARKET**

## DEALERS DEFEND TRADE IN IVORY OBJECTS

Dalya Alberge

*The complete, illustrated article appeared in The Financial Times of March 8, 2014  
(<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/d1d013e0-a2c8-11e3-ba21-00144feab7de.html#axzz2vIbxrLMC>.)*

Antique dealers and museum curators have attacked a proposed US ban on American commercial trade in objects made of elephant ivory as a philistine wrecking act. They claim certain provisions in the National Strategy for Combating Wildlife Trafficking will have a drastic impact on exhibitions, scholarship and the trade in antique masterpieces, while doing nothing to stop the slaughter of an endangered species. The warning was sounded by art experts after the US government announced in February that it would no longer allow commercial imports of African ivory of any age, including antiques – which were previously exempt. Domestic and export trade will also now be limited to artefacts more than 100 years old.

In an effort to stop the massacre of thousands of elephants each year, the new rules will revoke the previous exemptions for antique ivory. But the art world points out that antique ivories – often carved with virtuosity centuries ago – came from tusks that were gathered from elephant “cemeteries”, and created when these magnificent creatures roamed the plains of African and Asia in their millions. The World Wildlife Fund estimates that there were some 5m elephants in Africa until the 1930s, numbers that have dwindled by at least 50 per cent.

No art lover wants elephants to suffer, but curators and dealers oppose the new ban on two counts. The first is that since almost all the artefacts in question were made decades ago, it would have little or no effect on the slaughter of elephants at present or in the future. The second is that it would hinder art historical and curatorial work, as well as the antiques market.

Some feel that museums will be deterred from acquiring artworks seen as tainted under the proposed legislation. James Cuno, president of the J Paul Getty Trust, whose ivory holdings include a 1680s goblet – a tour de force of carving – feels that “it would inhibit our appreciation ... of these antique objects” and their cultural role.

**A BAN ON  
COMMERCIAL  
TRADE IN  
ELEPHANT  
IVORY IS A  
“PHILISTINE  
WRECKING  
ACT.”**

**WILL MUSEUMS  
HAVE TO STOP  
BUYING ART-  
WORK WITH  
IVORY?**

Martin Levy of Blairman's, a leading London dealer, says: "The impact on scholarship, museum collections, private collectors – not to mention on commerce – would be huge and pointless."

Art experts are astonished that the legislation would at the same time allow imports of "elephant sport-hunted trophies" at "two per hunter per year". New York dealer Scott Defrin mocks what he sees as double standards: "They'll allow hunters to bring home trophies from Africa," he says, " ... but not antiques!" His antique ivory sales to museums have included a 17th-century St Sebastian to the Metropolitan in New York. These pieces aren't blood-covered tusks, Defrin says: "They were made hundreds of years ago."

US legislation on the international and domestic trade in elephant ivory has long been notoriously bureaucratic. Art specialists had urged change, but nothing like this. They wanted "passports" for individual pieces, rather than a complex system that involves a series of licence applications and six-month delays for approval. Dealers fear that the US legislation will be replicated in Europe, killing the trade completely.

New Yorker Anthony Blumka deals in the medieval, renaissance and baroque periods, when ivory was the preferred material for church and royalty. At Maastricht he will exhibit a 14th-century diptych with scenes of the Passion of Christ. He fears that restrictions will drive the trade underground: "A collector is not going to stop wanting what he craves," he warns.

The art world is all the more unnerved because the US ban coincides with reports in the British press that Prince William had told primatologist Jane Goodall that he wants ivory antiques in the Royal Collection destroyed and that Prince Charles, his father, has requested their removal from his homes. A spokesman for the prince refused to confirm or deny a private conversation.

Critics also point to the irony of Prince William's pledge to save wildlife coinciding with a hunting trip with his brother Harry. The wild boar and stags they hunted are not endangered, but the animal blood on the princes' hands did not help their cause

**DEALERS FEAR  
U.S. PROCEDURES  
WILL BE COPIED  
IN EUROPE AND  
HAMPER TRADE.**

**PRINCE WILLIAM  
WANTS ALL IVORY  
IN ROYAL  
COLLECTION  
DESTROYED.**

## MAMMOTH TUSK FOUND IN SEATTLE

A Mythical Special Report Filed by an Active Participant  
in the Political Action Network

*Seattle, February 2014.* When a construction crew working for Chanler Excavation in nearby Lake Union unearthed an unusual object they called for the company's conservationist, Dale Denholm. Denholm identified the piece as the tusk of a woolly mammoth and called the Seattle Natural History Museum, expecting the museum might take it for its collection.

Museum director, Sherree Stevens, said they already had more woolly mammoth tusks than they needed. She suggested giving the piece, judged to be 20-50,000 years old, to a charity which could then sell it at auction to raise funds.

Word of the discovery quickly got to government law enforcement officials. Agent-in-charge, Russ Tonick, explains: "We got the White House directive today telling us what needed to be done to save the African Elephant, and we take that seriously."

Federal agents from various agencies, all armed and fitted out with SWAT gear, swooped down and took possession of the entire construction project. The area was marked with "crime scene" yellow tape. Everyone at the site was taken into custody.

Agent Tonick explained that under the law, and pursuant to the new White House directive, a mammoth tusk, even tens of thousands years old, is no different than those of an African elephant shot today. He added, "The means by which the prisoners claim they came into possession of the contraband tusk is no different than smuggling. They acknowledged they did not have the requisite import license for the tusk. Prisoner Stevens abetted the crime by encouraging the others to put the tusk into commerce. She should have known better."

Chanler employee Juan Ribiero stated he had shown an agent pointing a gun video he had taken with his iPhone. "They were real careful, they dug it out with their hands. He told me it all looked fake and took the phone." An arraignment is set for a week from Thursday, February 19. In the meantime, the eight people under arrest are being held without bail in the Patty Murray Federal Detention Facility.

A member of the Presidential Task Force on Wildlife Trafficking later stated, "I applaud the prompt and decisive action taken by Agent Tonick. More will be needed if we are to save the African elephant. This is only the beginning. We are looking at the marketing of pearls, as well. While the oysters that produce pearls are not endangered, those in captivity are forced to create pearls or be killed, and after they produce a pearl are killed anyway. They might as well be at Auschwitz. Blood Pearls will be next."

**US AGENTS  
TREAT A TUSK  
FOUND AT AN  
EXCAVATION  
SITE AS A  
CRIME SCENE  
BECAUSE NO  
PAPERWORK  
IS AVAILABLE  
TO ACCURATELY  
AND RELIABLY  
DATE WHEN THE  
IVORY ENTERED  
THE COUNTRY.**

# A FEW OF THE TWEETS ISSUED DAILY ON WWW.TWITTER.COM/@IVORYPOLITICS

## TWEETS QUESTIONING THE LOGIC OF THE GOVERNMENT BANNING THE TRADE AND MOVEMENT OF IVORY IN THE U.S. IN THE HOPE OF SAVING ELEPHANTS IN AFRICA

If an endangered African elephant were munching on an endangered African plant, what should a conscientious conservationist do?

American doctors ought to be banned from writing new prescriptions since they are now the proven cause of the pain pill narcotic epidemic.

Shouldn't we ban all silk products given the selfishness of having to kill 3000 silkworms to unravel a pound of thread from their cocoons?

Avocados from Mexico are tainted by gang killings in the same way as blood diamonds from Africa. Should we give up guacamole?

If you want to stop ivory sales in the US to protect elephants in Africa, stop driving your car to save polar bears from global warming?

If rain forests are endangered by lumber interests, why not ban the trade and movement of mahogany furniture and sailboats with teak decks?

Should ALL diamond sales be banned to prevent blood diamonds entering the U.S.? NO? Then elephants are clearly more valued than humans!

Shouldn't we ban ant farms as cruel to innocent social creatures rather than praise them for their educational and entertainment benefits?

Since ivory black paint was used in many old masterpieces, will their sale at auctions be illegal without USFWS-approved documentation?

How is it right to allow the importation of trophy tusks from an elephant shot by a hunter, but prohibit an antique bought by a collector?

When the Taliban destroyed the Buddha statues, did anyone stop seeking spiritual images? Why should crushing ivory end the market for ivory?

Count most ivory collectors among the 72% who say big government is now a bigger threat to democracy than big business or big labor.

If acquiring ivory objects are responsible for killing elephants, why are museums and educational institutions exempt from FWS restrictions?

How can the Obama Administration justify a free pass to windmills killing American eagles while banning ivory to save African elephants?

**IF IVORY IS  
BANNED FOR  
THE WRONG  
REASONS, WHY  
SHOULDN'T  
OTHER  
PRODUCTS BE  
STOPPED AS  
WELL**

**HAS  
GOVERNMENT  
HAD ALL THE  
RIGHT  
ANSWERS TO  
PUBLIC POLICY  
NEEDS IN THE  
PAST?**

The "Monuments Men" is about saving culture from destruction. We are trying to do the same by protecting ivory's historical contributions.

Could paid admissions to a museum devoted to or featuring ivory objects be interpreted as a commercial use of ivory that ought to be banned?

Should the U.S. Senate's historic ivory gavel be labeled vanity ivory and be destroyed in a demonstration of our fealty to elephants?

Doug Bandow writes: Congress should spend money on those who traffic in illicit ivory not fund efforts to criminalize legal ivory ownership.

Sanctioned hunting of older, belligerent male rhinos provides sufficient funds to allow many rhino cows and calves to prosper in Namibia.

Wild animals in Africa ought not be further endangered by the unproven assertions of shortsighted, overly protective American do-gooders.

What is the difference between burning "treasonous" books in Chicago in 1927 and banning ivory to "save" elephants in Africa in 2014.

California's drought will reduce crops and increase grocery prices. Doesn't the same economic law of supply and demand hold for ivory?

If ivory sales are totally banned, ivory prices will zoom, poaching profit will kill all the elephants, and then ivory sales can resume.

Anyone who thinks that publicly destroying ivory will prove that it has no real value is clearly economically challenged.

Prohibition left a trail of graft and slime, the US mired in vice and crime. Do we want a worldwide duplication of this by banning ivory?

Our politicians complain about a Russian ban on NY yogurt lacking proper paperwork, but say nothing about an 1862 Steinway stuck in Japan.

A famous guitar with ivory fittings just sent to Singapore with proper documentation can't come back for repair without all new paperwork.

If New York loosens its restrictions on marijuana use, how can antique ivory objects constitute a continuing threat to society?

Collectors are crucial to every culture because they preserve the objects that become part of the key holdings in the world's museums.

Excess should not be replaced by abstinence—an easy, but unenforceable end; finding balance between extremes should always be our goal.

**HAVE THE LAWS  
OF ECONOMICS  
ESCAPED  
THOSE WHO  
SEEM TO KNOW  
WHAT'S BEST  
FOR ELEPHANTS  
AND IVORY?**

**NEVER DO  
MORE HARM  
IN SOLVING A  
PROBLEM THAN  
ALREADY  
EXISTS JUST TO  
SHOW YOU ARE  
DOING *SOME-  
THING.***

**FOR MORE INFORMATION  
ABOUT THE TOPICS  
DISCUSSED IN THIS  
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