

A philosophical approach to animal rights philosophy essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Rights are certain codes of freedom or some sort of allowed medians based on certain legal system or ethical theories. Every organism born with some rights, it is the society or the system which understands and allocates these norms to that particular individual and also does the grading among the living beings. This paper is mainly concern with the animal's rights, their legal position in our society and also their autonomy. Human being is by nature a selfish being and if we look through the window of history, man has been using animals for their benefits without caring about their rights and freedom.

From very beginning human and animals are in close interactions with each other, human use them as food, make them to do their work, use them for decoration purpose, use them as watch man, use their lather and also use them for experimentation. In spite of hundreds of benefits which animals provide to human, human do no or less care about their rights and legal position and is busy in harming animals and violating legal norms which should be given to these animals. Non-human animals should be given rights and protection in the society and there should be a governing body which should govern and implements these rights and norms. It is a fact that animals are an important component of a country economy, the use of animals is a bit compulsory nowadays. Many industries such as lather industries, diary industries, pharmaceutical industries, food industries, and textile industries all rest on animals and their products. I have no objection regarding the use of animals but this use should be justified and limited and if the use is experimentation then the 3Rs Principlesshould be followed, which are Reduction, Refinement and Replacement. By reduction he means

that reduce the number of animals used, if you are using 100, use 50.

Similarly by refinement he means that refine your method so that less or no harm is given, by replacement he means that replace higher animals by lower animals or animals by computer models. There is a difference between use and cruelty, use and harm, it is clear that their use cannot be avoided but what can be done is to follow certain rules and guidelines regarding their use. These rules should be provided by an ethical committee and implemented by government. This paper will give you an idea about the thinking of various philosophers and great persons regarding animal rights from the very beginning till date.

Ancient world and Animals:

Human dominancy has been reported in “ Genesis” which quotes that Adam was told to be dominated over fishes, creatures of winds and all creeping creatures, keeping this in mind man had violated animal rights for centuries and centuries. But in fact the quote does not mean that human should be cruel to animals; it only represents supremacy of humans over other creatures. On the other hand certain people believe that they are inferior to human because they lack rationality and language. These two reasons were considered as a right to use animals as food, clothing, for entertainment and as research subject.

Animism:

The first ever school of thought who believed that human and non-humans have the same kind of soul, one spirit which infuses into the cosmos and make us one with animals. Pathagorous was the renowned figure of this school and he is also recognized as “ first animal right philosopher “ and “
<https://assignbuster.com/a-philosophical-approach-to-animal-rights-philosophy-essay/>

first animal liberationist". He was against the use of animals in religious sacrifices and believed that these are our ancestor and killing them is killing our ancestors.

Aristotle:

Aristotle teachings gives a fundamental importance to animals, he recognized some sort of relationships between human and animals and attempt to create a taxonomical classification. He reported that human and animals differ by possessing certain character and stated that some animals possess similar rational capacities to humans. However he denied non-human rationality and ethical morality, plants are created for the benefit of animals and animals are created for the benefit of human.

Locke: (1632-1704)

A prominent philosopher of modern age who spoke up hardly against animal cruelty, he stated that animals do have feelings like us and harming them is morally and ethically wrong. Further he forbid children from tormenting animals which give them pleasure, because he argue that this is hardening their mind towards men. .

Immanuel Kant: (1724-1804)

Of all philosophers Kant has an isolated thinking, he strictly oppose the idea that human have duties towards animals. Cruelty to animals is bad only and only because it is wrong for human beings. Humans have to take care of humans. " Cruelty to animals is contrary to man's duty to himself, because it deadens in him the feeling of sympathy for their sufferings, and thus a

natural tendency that is very useful to morality in relation to other humans is weakened.” “ Animals are here just as a mean to an end and the end is man”.

Bentham: (1748-1832)

The founder of utilitarian school of thought strongly opposed the “ natural right” concept which was previously presented by Rousseau, he argued that ability to suffer and ability to reason cannot be a base to treat other beings. If so then human babies and disabled persons should be treated as things. “ The time will come, when humanity will extend its mantle over everything which breathes.” He points out that the world is moving towards a state where lower animals will acquire those standard rights which they were never given before. In an infant of human no faculty is fully developed then why we respect him and full grown dog or horse is however more rational and diverse as compare to that child.

Martin’s Act: (1822)

It is known as the world first major piece of animal protection legislation, presented by Martin. This was mainly to protect cattle from cruelty and also an amount of punishment as fine was fixed as penalty.

Peter Singer: (DOB: 6 July 1946)

An eminent representative of the utilitarian school of thought preferably act utilitarian. His great contribution to animal rights is his famous book “ Animal Liberation” published in 1975. Singer holds a position on equal consideration to interest of human animals. He says that it is not necessary that both

<https://assignbuster.com/a-philosophical-approach-to-animal-rights-philosophy-essay/>

human and animals be treated on a similar basis but it is necessary that both have similar capacity of feeling pain or in other word suffering. In accordance to suffering or feeling of pain both human and non-human are equal and same.

Tom Regan: (DOB: 1938)

Tom an American philosopher, who is specialized in animal right theory, according to his theory animals are subject of life, he mentioned that the moral value of human are due certain abilities. These abilities also are sometime found in animals, so according to rule the animals must also have the same rights as that of humans. Like human infants which is not capable of moral actions but he is still having moral values similar is the case of animals. . His views tie to that of Kant views, but Kant talks about human and Tom is talking about non-human animals that they must not be used as mere mean.

There are many organizations which are working for the benefit of animals. There sole motto is to stop the violence against these innocent creature of God. They are also organizing different seminars and conferences to arouse awareness regarding animal rights. Some of them are Animal Aid (UK), Animal Liberation Leagues, and Center on Animal Liberation Affair etc.

From above discussion it can be concluded that animals are an important part of our society, they can suffer, they can feel and they can react. They are innocent and loveable; they have some basic rights which should be given to them. As the world grows the use of animals also increases if human are not caring about animals, nothing can stop them from being diminished
<https://assignbuster.com/a-philosophical-approach-to-animal-rights-philosophy-essay/>

from earth. Taking care of animal rights is just like taking care of ourselves because it is a fact that human race is highly reliant on and on animals. Experimentation use of animals must be minimized as it is selfishness that human is using animals for their own benefit, of course some time the benefit is mutual but it is in rare cases. Special guidance should be followed while using animal as a subject to handle them with an ethical manner. Similarly honesty, pity and softness is demanded in dealing with animals as they are not as rational as we are, as a sole rational animal of this world, we must care every organism because we are superior, and being superior is being responsible.

Bibliography:

Bentham, Jeremy. Principles of Penal Law. Part III, 1781.

—Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation, first published 1789.

Bentham, Jonathan. “Animal liberation and rights”, Anthropology Today, volume 23, issue 2, April 2007, p. 1.

Brooman, Simon. Law Relating to Animals. Cavendish Publishing, p. 40.

Encyclopedia Wikipedia, , 28-01-11)

Francione, Gary. Animals, Property and the Law. Temple University Press, 1995, pp. 36-7.

Gary Steiner, The Moral Status of Animals in the History of Western Philosophy, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005, at page 47.

<https://assignbuster.com/a-philosophical-approach-to-animal-rights-philosophy-essay/>

Kant, Immanuel. Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals, part II

— Lecture on Ethics. L. Infield (trans.) HarperTorchbooks 1963

Locke, John. Some Thoughts Concerning Education, (1693).

Mark R. Fellenz, The Moral Menagerie: Philosophy and Animal Rights,
University of Illinois Press, 2007, p. 90

Russell W. M. S. and Burch R. L. The Principles of Humane Experimental
Technique, (1959).

Scruton, Roger. “ Animal Rights”, City Journal, summer 2000.

Singer, Peter. Animal Liberation. Second edition, New York
Review/Routledge, 1990, pp. 7-8.

Taylor, Angus. Animals and Ethics. Broad view Press, p. 34..

Tom Regan, The case of animal right, University of California Press, 1985