

Our treatment of non-human animals



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Our Treatment of Non-human Animals Most people tend to think of human beings as superior to animals in most ways. It is necessary to think that way in order to continue mankind's place at the top of the species of evolution. In reality, beings are beings. All living beings are important, regardless as to their form. The argument for equality among beings really isn't one for intelligence, moral capacity, physical strength or other criteria which cannot possibly be equal among species. It isn't even equal among the beings of the human group. There are many people who may be considered human only by virtue of having been born from human parents; certainly nothing else qualifies them. For example, what about people with severe birth defects or irreversible brain damage? Does that somehow exclude them from the human group? Equality is a moral ideal in this case. The fact that animals cannot perform logical reasoning, or have different types of bodies, skin, and brains, does not negate their equality of beingness. Mankind, in his attempt to remain superior does not recognize other species of beings as worthy of humane treatment. It does not consider that all beings are deserving of equal consideration for having basic needs met. Admittedly, those basic needs are somewhat different in capacity; they still run along the same lines of providing for survival of the being. For example, we all need something to eat, a safe place to live, and companionship. All beings need these things and shouldn't be deprived of them as a result of not measuring up to the standard for humanness. One being is not more important than another. All life was created to be a part of the plan on this planet and an imbalance created by the human animal has begun the destruction of all life here. Animals are fully capable of emotions, desires, and the enjoyment of life. If given the chance they also interact well with the human subspecies under

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mutually respectful circumstances. Many animals are capable of higher functioning than some dysfunctional humans; does that make them not worthy of consideration as a species? Is the fact that they don't ascribe to a form of moral code make them inferior to humans? Well, if that were the case, then many of the humans wouldn't be worthy of consideration either. The institutions are full of such beings and we pay tax money to support their lives, even though their contributions to society are negligible, even harmful. We find nothing wrong with eating animals for food. Big business supports meat production facilities where animals are raised without any form of comfort or natural life for the explicit purpose of growth until we can eat it. That's barbaric in its concept! Even though the conditions are largely cruel and there is no consideration given the animals, the human doesn't step in to stop the cruelty until it somehow damages the end result; our money and our food supply. It's a proven fact that we can derive adequate protein from non-animal sources. There is no need to slaughter animals for food. This is a kickback to our earlier hunter-gatherer position in life. Even now, some people still go hunting for game; not so much to eat, although some do, as for the sport of killing. With all the available food at any given market, where is the need to kill defenseless animals for a game of some kind. How civilized is that? How do those hunting skills actually prove prowess in the modern society? Do we need them to hunt each other? There's the case of using living animals for research. If these animals, who are capable of emotions, desires, and enjoyment, in a similar way to that of an infant or retarded individual, are used for research, then doesn't it follow that because they don't have complex reasoning and functioning skills, those human beings could also be used for scientific research? That research

would be even more valuable because it would reveal the effects of science on an actual human being. If, all humans, regardless of shape, size, or mental capacity, are equal by virtue of their ability to experience pain and suffering, emotions, desires, and are capable of enjoying life, then all beings are equal and deserve to be considered. It doesn't mean that all beings are exactly equal, but rather that they have the right to be considered for what survival needs and comfort. The one oath that tends to be claimed in every circle is the one where more than anything harm must be avoided. We aren't plants, we are animals too! What can we say then; if we are to remain able to live on this planet in any form of civilized manner, we have to respond to the need for all species to be considered. As long as we consider humans the only beings worthy of consideration, then we will quickly exhaust the balance of nature and become hunted as well. We are only as civilized as our treatment of living beings goes; after all, we are just another subgroup of animals on the planet, too. Bibliography Singer, Peter. All Animals Are Equal. Animal Rights and Human Obligations. Tom Regan, Peter Singer, editors. New Jersey. 1989. pp. 148 - 162. Web. march 18, 2011. <http://www.animal-rights-library.com/texts-m/singer02.htm>