

Humans and Other Living Creatures

Chapter 7

Learning Objectives

- After reading this chapter, you will be able to:
 - 7.1 Explain the different criterion for extending or denying rights to animals.
 - 7.2 Evaluate the ethical issues involved in the use of animals for product testing and for scientific research.
 - 7.3 Critically evaluate Peter Singer's Utilitarian argument for animal rights.
 - 7.4 Create an argument for or against animal rights.

Overview of Animal Rights

- Arguments pertaining to animal rights run the gamut from "They have none" to "They are equal in moral status to humans." Most reasonable views, as with many issues, fall somewhere between these two extremes. The analysis of the moral status of animals involves several questions. The first question is what, if any, rights they possess. The question of rights is complex, and there are still contentious debates as to what rights, if any, humans have, let alone other sentient nonhumans. The second question involves the treatment and use of animals.

Humans use animals in various ways

- Food
- Medicine
- Research
- Cosmetics
- Clothes
- Sport

Main Philosophical Arguments

- Rene Descartes
- Immanuel Kant
- Utilitarian arguments

Rene Descartes

- Descartes maintained that animals were nothing more than unconscious machines.
- He felt that an animal's cry was akin to the squeaking of a clock that needed oiling.

No Soul, No Rights

- On Descartes reading of spiritual scripture, animals lack a soul; if you do not have a soul you do not feel pain or pleasure, therefore, they do not have any rights.

Animal Rights

- Descartes:
 1. If you do not have a soul,
Then you do not have rights.
 2. Animals do not have souls.
 3. Therefore, Animals do not have rights.

Kant- Animal Rights

1. If you do not have rationality;
Then you do not have Rights.
2. Animals do not have rationality.
3. Therefore, Animals do not have rights.

Reductio Adsurdum

1. If you do not have rationality;
Then you do not have Rights.
2. Babies do not have rationality
3. Therefore, Babies do not have rights.

Rationality/ Moral Responsibility

1. If you do not have rationality; then you do
not have Moral Responsibility.
2. Animals do not have rationality
3. Therefore, Animals do not have Moral
Responsibility.

Utilitarianism: Animal rights

1. If you have the capacity to feel pain or pleasure, then you have
rights.
2. Animals have the capacity to feel pain and pleasure.
3. Therefore: Animals have rights.

People have Rights too

1. If you have the capacity to feel pain or pleasure, then you have rights.
2. People have the capacity to feel pain and pleasure.
3. Therefore: People have rights.

Crazy Utilitarian Argument

1. People have rights.
2. Animals have rights.
3. Therefore, people and animals have the same rights.

People are equal to Goats.

Equivocation in the term rights

- Equivocation in the use of the term "rights"
- People have the right to drive and vote,
- Goats have the same "rights" too.

What Rights do animals have?

- People have Rights
- Animals have Rights
 - But it is not specified what rights each have - there is no reason to assume they have the same rights.

Babies = Animals

- Babies can't vote or drive, and yet they have rights-
- As such, Goats (any animal) have the same rights as Babies.

Babies = Goats

1. Babies have rights.
2. Animals have rights.
3. Therefore babies and animals have the same rights.

Babies are equal to Goats, cows, dogs cats....

Immanuel Kant

- "[Animals] are not self-conscious and are there merely as a means to an end. That end is man. ... Our duties towards animals are merely indirect duties towards humanity.

Kantian Counter argument- Potential rationality

1. If you have the potential for rationality, then you have rights.
2. Babies have the potential for rationality.
3. Therefore, babies have rights.

Animal Potential Rationality

1. If you have the potential for rationality,
Then you have rights.
2. Animals do not have the potential for rationality.
3. Therefore, Animals do not have rights.

The Notion Potential Rationality Applied

- Mentally handicapped people, fetuses with birth defects, people with brain injuries, and people in comas or vegetative states all lack the potential for rationality - as such, on this view they lack rights.

Food and Farming

- 9.7 Billion Animals are killed for food every year in the USA.
- 95% of these animals are factory Farmed.
- Factory farms are vast warehouses which are used to raise livestock.

DOWNED ANIMAL PROTECTION ACT

- **S. 267: DOWNED ANIMAL PROTECTION ACT**
- A Bill to amend the Packers and Stockyards Act of 1921, to make it unlawful for any stockyard owner, market agency, or dealer to transfer or market nonambulatory livestock, and for other purposes.
- (b) **UNLAWFUL PRACTICES** - It shall be unlawful for any stockyard owner, market agency, or dealer to buy, sell, give, receive, transfer, market, hold, or drag any nonambulatory livestock unless the nonambulatory livestock has been humanely euthanized.

Animal testing has led to human deaths

- **Asbestos and Cancer**
- Year that the carcinogenic effects of asbestos were suspected, based on clinical (human) studies: **1907**
- Year that the New York Academy of Sciences assured people that animal studies indicated that there was nothing to fear from asbestos: **1965**
- Year that the EPA recommended an immediate ban on asbestos: **1986**

Polio

- "The work on prevention was long delayed by the erroneous conception of the nature of the human disease based on misleading experimental models of disease in monkeys."
— Dr. Albert Sabin (scientist credited with development of polio vaccine, along with Dr. Jonas Salk)

Penicillin

- "How fortunate we didn't have these animal tests in the 1940s, for penicillin would probably never been granted a license, and possibly the whole field of antibiotics might never have been realized."
Sir Alexander Fleming (scientist credited with discovering penicillin)

FDA and Animal Testing

- FDA Study: Of 198 new medications introduced to the market between 1976 to 1985, 52 percent were either withdrawn or relabeled because of severe side effects not predicted through animal studies.

Rats and Mice

- Studies conducted on mice and rats found that 46 percent of chemicals found to be cancer-causing in rats were *not* cancer-causing in mice.
- Of 20 compounds known *not* to cause cancer in humans, 19 caused cancer in mice.
