

## Perspective #1 Ethics

Welcome to the first installment of a (hopefully) three part series on veganism. This is my foray into fulfilling stereotypes as the pushy vegan, and I hope you will not write me off for it and give my logic a try. Ethics is the most solid, but also most easily ignored, reason for veganism. This is simply because the exploitation involved in omnivorous/vegetarian life is societally acceptable, and even when confronted with the ethical dilemmas it raises, most people are content with cognitive dissonance. However, I hope that a reader of this would attempt to see past any justifications that they have that may not be morally consistent. The other two planned parts of this series are going to be on health and environment, but for now, let's get into the meat (ha ha) of the moral argument. It is a rather heady and logical formula to test the consistency of your beliefs relating to the treatment of animals called name the trait. I'll more carefully explain each part as the essay goes on, but to start, here is the entire argument.

Key:

P = postulate or point

C= conclusion

### **Argument for animal moral value:**

P1 - Humans are of moral value

P2 - There is no trait absent in animals which if absent in humans would cause us to deem ourselves valueless.

C - Therefore without establishing the absence of such a trait in animals, we contradict ourselves by deeming animals valueless.

### **Argument for veganism from animal moral value:**

P1 - Animals are of moral value

P2 - There is no trait absent in animals which if absent in humans would cause us to consider anything short of non-exploitation to be an adequate expression of respect for human moral value

C - Therefore without establishing the absence of such a trait in animals, we contradict ourselves by considering anything short of non-exploitation (read on to see why this is veganism) to be an adequate expression of respect for animal moral value

### **Explanation:**

Let's start with the argument for animal moral value. The first point of this argument is pretty self explanatory, assuming that you agree that humans have a degree of moral value for simply

existing we can continue. If you don't, then you have a way out of this argument, but you also believe that human life has no value, I would think this through a few times before using this as a justification. The second point is a bit more complicated, basically what it is saying is that there is no single thing that animals don't have that if a human didn't have you'd think it was okay to take away all of their moral value. A good way to explain this would be through some common examples people use, for instance that animals lack intelligence; when we plug intelligence into this formula we get the idea that if a human were not intelligent it would be okay to take away all of their moral value: not quite such a good argument when you think of that is it? Another example often used is that animals taste good. If a human tasted good it would be okay to take away all of the moral value granted to them? This also ends up being not a super good argument when you think about it. From these two points, this argument states that you can logically come to the conclusion that animals have moral value.

Now let's talk about the argument for veganism from animal moral value. The first point of this argument is the conclusion of the last one. Assuming you did not find a logical way to refute the last one then you should be on board for this one. The second part of this logic is similar to the second part of the other, but also different in a meaningful way. While the last was about the very existence of moral value, this one is about the effect of it, saying that there is no trait that animals lack that if it weren't present in humans would warrant anything less than non-exploitation to be respectful to their human moral value. This is the place where you need to create a definition of exploitation, what does that mean to you? For me, what constitutes non-exploitation is a life that everyone inherently deserves, free of things such as rape, murder, slavery and other similarly horrid experiences. Once you define that definition, try and apply some of the same arguments you may have had against the second postulate in the animal morality argument to this one, for example: if a human were not intelligent, it would be okay to exploit (by my definition rape, murder, enslave) them, if a human were good tasting, it would be okay to exploit them. Once again, we see that these arguments don't fare so well when sent through this logic. From these two postulates, we can come to the conclusion that it is, similarly, not okay to do anything short of non-exploitation to an animal assuming you can not find a trait that they would lack but a human would not.

Hopefully, you now understand how this logical system works, now let's take a bit to go through common points that people raise against these arguments:

1. Is this saying that animals deserve all rights that humans have?
  - a. No, try replacing non-exploitation in the argument for another right you're skeptical about ex:
    - i. There is no trait absent in animals which if absent in humans would cause us to consider anything short of allowing them the right to vote in their society to be an adequate expression of respect for human moral value
  - b. It is pretty easy to think of a trait for this that fits both humans and animals, for example, I don't believe that someone who is exceptionally mentally challenged needs the right to vote in their society.

2. Is this trying to say that there are objective morals?
  - a. No, this is just simply a way to check if your personal moral values are consistent, whether they be derived from your feelings or some belief in an objective morality.
3. How do I define exploitation?
  - a. Do you recall the question I addressed earlier about animals deserving all of the rights that humans have? Try plugging things in that you think could be in the definition of exploitation to that.
4. Why isn't vegetarianism good enough for this system?
  - a. Assuming that things such as protection from unreasonable imprisonment, murder, and rape are in your definition of exploitation then vegetarianism is simply not good enough to make you morally consistent. Baby chicks grown in the egg industry that are male are [sent down a conveyor belt to be ground up](#) and cows need to be [forcibly artificially impregnated repeatedly to continue making milk](#), not to mention the fact that all factory farming involves imprisonment of the animals and many other terrible things that happen in the egg and dairy industry. I will go over this more later.
5. How about 'humane' slaughter?
  - a. For humane slaughter, try plugging something like that into the second argument, you would need to find a trait for this:
    - i. There is a trait absent in animals which if absent in humans would allow you to take them and kill them before their time after they had a generally good life.

Now that you hopefully have a set of rules for what animals deserve, here are a few reasons that will hopefully help you understand why each popular non-vegan industry is probably breaking those rules. Please note that my list is not comprehensive and if you want to learn more please click on the links embedded in each industry's name.

Slaughterhouses:

- [Beef Industry](#):
  - Terrible living conditions
  - Terrible diet
  - Killing far before they would normally die
- [Chicken Industry](#):
  - Male chicks are either ground up or thrown in bags to suffocate
  - Extreme overcrowding of areas where they live
  - Sickness rampant in their populations
  - Killed far before they would normally die
- [Pork Industry](#):

- Females are forcibly impregnated repeatedly until their bodies give out and then are sent to be slaughtered
- Terrible living conditions
- Teeth pulled out, tails cut off and castrated (if male) without painkillers
- Killed far before they would normally die
- [Fish & Seafood:](#)
  - If farmed:
    - Disease and parasites are rampant
    - Terribly overpopulated
    - Starved before transport for up to 10 days
  - If wild:
    - Cause fish and other species to go extinct
  - Both:
    - Gutted crushed or suffocated while still conscious and alive

#### Non-slaughter Industries:

- [Dairy:](#)
  - In order to continue producing milk, a cow must be repeatedly artificially inseminated (raped) by a human to constantly be pregnant.
  - Baby cows are taken away from their mothers often when they're less than a day old and kept in very small crates where they can't move so their flesh will stay tender.
  - Same terrible living conditions as beef.
- [Eggs:](#)
  - Terrible living conditions, not even large enough to spread their wings.
  - They have their beaks cut off with no anesthesia.
  - Although in nature clean, they are forced to defecate on one another.
  - Male chicks are either suffocated or thrown into grinders when hatched because they are mostly useless to the industry.

If you have further questions or feel like you've come up with a way to logically refute this argument, feel free to contact me at: bunnyapoc (at) gmail (dot) com!