Extrinsic and Intrinsic Arguments: Strategies for Promoting Animal Rights

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Introduction

Animal rights campaigners disagree as to whether *empirical arguments*, based on facts such as those concerning nutrition, or *ethical arguments*, based on values such as the wrongness of hurting sentient beings, have greater validity and potential effectiveness. I want to address the issue in terms of "extrinsic" and "intrinsic" arguments – a distinction that corresponds only partly to the empirical and ethical couplet – and to make the case that animal rights campaigns are most effectively advanced through intrinsic appeals.

"Extrinsic arguments" are those that seek to promote an aim and its underlying principle by appealing to considerations politically, historically, or logically separable from that aim and that principle. "Intrinsic arguments" appeal to considerations within and inseparable from the aim and principle. In this case, the aim is animal liberation and the principle is the moral equality of species.

For example, the claim that vegetarianism (ideally, veganism) helps reduce animal suffering is an intrinsic argument, but it can also be justified on extrinsic grounds through appeal to its environmental benefits. You can separate vegetarianism from the benefit to the environment, since it is logically possible that the one might not lead to the other, and environmentalism is an independent political cause. But you cannot separate vegetarianism from the benefit to animals, since the word vegetarianism, whatever its etymology, is used to mean abstention from meat or from all animal products. You might say that "benefit to animals" is an independent issue in that there are other means of ameliorating animal suffering besides vegetarianism, or you might promote vegetarianism only for human health benefits. But in terms of animal rights campaigning, vegetarianism is advanced for the intrinsic reasons that it benefits the animals themselves.

The case for intrinsic arguments rests not on a concern for ideological purity, but on the need to reach a public that, although partly responsive to our ideas in some areas, has stopped far short of the acceptance needed to make significant breakthroughs. At some point in the encounter with us, the reaction sets in of either, "Yes, it's terrible, but it's justified if it saves human lives," or, "Yes, it's terrible and unjustifiable, but we have more important [i.e. human] things to worry about."

We need to *tackle speciesism head-on*, instead of relying on less challenging extrinsic arguments – "widely-accepted and existing frames" in Yates's (2006) formulation – which tacitly consign "animal rights" and its policy demands to a marginal, indeed "extreme," position. Besides disowning animal rights, extrinsic arguments contain inconsistent or evasive implications that can leave the audience doubtful and confused without being able to pin down what is wrong.

It is true that extrinsic arguments have had some positive effect. If, for non-animal rights reasons, even one person has turned vegan or decided to oppose vivisection, while another has taken a small step in the right direction, such as by giving up "red meat," there are nonetheless

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benefits for animals and the planet. But what is truly needed to free billions of animals is a *qualitative transformation* in people's thinking. Without a *moral paradigm shift*, the public may never be motivated to overcome either its own self-interest in using animals or governments' aggressive protection of animal-abusing industries.

Types and Sub-Types of Argument

In making this case I discuss, among extrinsic arguments, appeals to authority, the linkage of human and animal rights, and appeals to expediency. In relation to intrinsic arguments, I address appeals to compassion and attacks upon speciesism. The critique of speciesism has two main components: the assertion of moral equality, and the exposure and repudiation of the power-ethic. Of the myriad forms of animal exploitation and abuse, I treat only vegetarianism and anti-vivisectionism because they affect the greatest number of animals and thus are the most important areas to target.

In practice, extrinsic and intrinsic arguments are usually combined. The campaigner might wish to make an intrinsic point, but feels that it is inadequate and needs extrinsic supplementation. Lewis (2004) gives an example of the complications campaigners get into as a result:

> It would seem to follow … that animal rights activists would want to argue that the *similarities* between humans and fellow animals make animal experimentation unjustified. Nevertheless, when they employ scientific arguments, they claim just the opposite – animal experiments are wrong because other animals are *different* from us! … they are reduced to making the argument that "We're all similar, but not too similar.

This is a tenuous rhetorical position in which animals are just enough like us to merit a ban on experimentation while they are just different enough to make experimentation 100% inapplicable to humans. While this may or may not be true, it does not make for a strong, coherent argument.

In reality, this is the reverse image of the vivisectors' own confused claim, namely that animals are different enough to make vivisection morally acceptable, but similar enough to make the results reliable. Instead of exposing such confusion, some abolitionists unwittingly copy it. Yes, we are both like and unlike animals, but to the uncommitted and conservative public the argument sounds like a desperate attempt by abolitionists to profit from conflicting claims.

Extrinsic points may have their place within an intrinsic framework, for example as reassurance that vegetarianism or (vivisection) abolitionism can promote better health or medicine, but if these points are not assigned a clearly subordinate role, they can distort the real argument, which is intrinsic and moral. In any case, for the purpose of analysis, I treat the types and sub-types separately.

Extrinsic arguments

Appeals to authority

Campaigners often point to people like Leonardo da Vinci, Perce Shelley, George Bernard Shaw, and Mohandas Gandhi, not to mention pop stars and actors, who were or are vegetarian.

There are also numerous efforts to prove that Jesus was vegetarian (e.g. Regenstein 1991: 181; Akers 2000 throughout).

On this tactic, Walters and Portmess have commented: "the case for ethical vegetarianism is weakened rather than strengthened by uncritically claiming famous-named 'proponents' who at best penned an ambiguous line or two about diet" (2001a: x). But the argument would still be weak even if all the great names invoked were known beyond doubt to have been consistent practitioners, because for every famous vegetarian there are a hundred or more famous meat-eaters, and whom are you to follow? Even if you feel that the few vegetarians are more important, on the basis of their other beliefs or accomplishments, than the meat-eaters, are you then prepared to accept their views about everything? And if not, why accept their views about meat-eating – unless you shared those views anyway, for your own reasons?

The same questions apply to famous anti-vivisectionists such as Albert Schweitzer (Fadali 1996: 53), Victor Hugo (ibid.: 54), Cardinals Newman and Manning (Ruesch 1983: 315), Tolstoy, Mark Twain (ibid.: 146), and Helena Blavatsky (Page 1999: 174). For we can also find among abolitionists such dubious characters as Bismarck (Ruesch 1983: 146) and Carlyle (ibid.: 323), and we can hardly appeal to their authority when we agree with them but reject it when we don't.

And the hidden inconsistency of the "famous-supporters" line arises from its irrelevance to the question of animal rights. It may inspire us, as convinced animal liberationists, to learn that humanitarians like Cesar Chavez and the wife and son of Martin Luther King are vegetarian, and certainly a person already considering giving up meat, for animal-related reasons, may be finally persuaded by the example of a worthy role model. But the speciesist is likely to dismiss the person's vegetarianism as unimportant. However, it can be relevant to share a famous person's apt turn of phrase on the subject, the words, rather than the individual from whom they came, being what matters.

Famous people who have helped both humans and animals

"Many anti-vivisectionists distinguished themselves for services to humanity," writes Ruesch (1983: 54). Schwartz notes, "While it is true that there are people who love animals but are cruel to people, some of history's greatest humanitarians were vegetarians" (1992: 238). These observations, aimed at refuting the charge that animal-rightists are misanthropic, not only depend upon the authority of famous people, but also implicitly accept human superiority by seeking to validate animal advocacy by associating it with support for humans.

Yet consider the marked absence of reciprocal claims by campaigners for human causes. Spokespersons for the child protection agencies do not feel obliged to protest that they care about animals. It is only animal rights people who point out that, both in Britain and America, the founders or earliest supporters of the children's societies also started the SPCA in Britain and America (mentioned by Ruesch 1983: 54 and Linzey 1994: 37). It would not occur to either the UK or US Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children to call attention to this fact. Then why must we put ourselves on the defensive, tacitly accepting that our cause must be marginal and unpopular, by protesting that we care about humans?

The question is not rhetorical, because if we give our campaigning time to animals, we are indeed taking it from humans, except in the holistic sense that all good causes enhance each other,

so that helping animals does help human beings in the long run. It is true of any choice of how to spend one's time that one activity's gain is another's loss. A collector for Oxfam is taking time from the Respect party, and vice versa. But in the eyes of the public, that is all right because – although an individual might prefer one cause to the other – both types of beneficiary are human and thus morally equal.

Where animals compete for political resources, however, it is a different story; then we are told that it is "'far from clear … why so many British people appear to prefer to take up what they think to be injustice to animals rather than directing their energies to the needs of their fellow humans'" (Trevor Parfitt, quoted in Hollands 1980: 117). If that attitude were taken to its logical conclusion, all the animal protection societies and laws would be abolished to free organizational and police resources until all human ills had been overcome. That conclusion is proclaimed almost literally in advertisements displayed on 10 January 2007 by the disabilities group "Enable." This organization "wants the posters to show that animal charities attract almost twice as many donors as disability charities" (MacDonald 2007), and so to include "punch lines such as a disabled person saying 'If I ate out of a dog bowl would you like me more?'" (Robins 2007).

Since we cannot deny that time spent on animals represents, from a narrow perspective, a political opportunity cost to humans, the proper response to remarks like Parfitt's is to assert the moral equality of humans and animals. To say "but we care about humans too; William Wilberforce opposed slavery, and I was on an anti-war demo last week," is to offer "important" action as a token of mitigation for "unimportant" relevant action. So the argument, by going outside our real concerns, offers a concession to speciesism.

And as long as we allow this concession, the mitigation will never be good enough, for speciesists will argue that Wilberforce and we should have spent *all* available time on the human causes. Even though our aim is simply to redress the balance and achieve equality, and even though we feel that we are part of a total liberation project, opponents will still cry, "You care more for animals than for people!" To this we should answer, "In the sphere of public campaigning, yes we do, because their need is greater by virtue of their worse treatment, their helplessness, and their neglect by the political system." We should respond in this vein instead of weakly insisting that we, and the celebrities whose names we summon in support, are really nice people who campaign for human causes also.

I don't mean that as animal advocates we should refrain from supporting those causes when they matter to us. But such actions, whether conducted by ourselves or by famous people, should not be offered as part of the animal rights case.

Linkage of human and animal rights

Similar to the "cross-species humanitarians" argument is the association of human with animal rights. True, some people have gone from human rights to animal rights campaigning by motives such as Henry Spira's:

> To me, animal liberation means an expansion of human liberation. … Animal liberationists … identify with the powerless and the vulnerable, the victims, all those dominated, oppressed, and exploited. And it is the nonhuman animals whose suffering is the

> most intense, widespread, expanding, systematic and socially sanctioned. (Spira 1992: 338).

But although Spira is, for whatever biographical reason, uninfected with humanist bias, in the wider public the linkage may evoke only a limited, indirect-duties claim on behalf of animals, or entail that in a pinch, humans come first. Indeed, analogies with racism, sexism, slavery, the Holocaust, and human "marginal cases" (e.g., the comatose) often not only fail but are turned against us, as people express indignation at the comparison of human victims with animals. It is no use pointing out that the comparison is between *the oppression of* human and animal victims; speciesists quickly re-read it to suit their horror at any identification with non-humans.

Nor is it any use insisting that we are not downgrading humans, but only upgrading the animals, for that too is a threat to the differential on which the human being's sense of worth has depended for millennia. Consider Blakemore's defence of experiments on the great apes, in which he virtually extolled vivisection for its own sake. Along with a fig-leaf of concern for human health, he declared that he was opposed in principle to banning the tests

> … because it muddles the boundary between people and animals. He said: "I worry about the principle of where the moral boundaries lie. There is only one very secure definition that can be made and that is between our species and others" (Anon. 2006).

Faced with such attitudes, we can only, very cautiously, see human and animal rights as co-existing "as long as human rights doesn't include the 'right' to exploit animals in any way" (Lee 2006).

The "one struggle, one fight", viewpoint, I fear, exists more in the rhetoric of animal rights activists (see Taylor 2005: 4), than in the minds of the public or of human rights campaigners. It was not manifest in the thoughts of Amnesty International when they accepted torture research done on pigs in 1977-78 (Noske 1997: 37), nor was it evident in the outlook of the group's Spanish representative, Delia Padron, who "said she was 'surprised' by moves to recognize the 'human rights' of apes when many humans still lacked for those rights" (Deutsche Press-Agentur 2006).

When drawing the parallel between human and animal rights/liberation, campaigners must ask themselves to what extent they are hanging onto the coattails of the more respectable human rights movement rather than promoting their own.

Appeals to expediency

Arguments on behalf of vegetarianism and animal rights often appeal to "expedient" considerations such as human health, the environment, poverty, and world peace.

In earlier times, the monastic orders advanced the health argument for vegetarianism partly for reasons of survival, inasmuch as the Church had associated it with heresy, so that "ethical reasons for vegetarianism were eliminated, but health concerns were admitted as legitimate" (Akers 2000: 133). You can see the parallel with some modern campaigners for whom animal rights apparently has such disreputable connotations – medieval "heresy" parallel to modern "extremism" – as to make appeals to expediency seem more realistic, even safer.

Richard Schwartz argues for vegetarianism on grounds of health, compassion for animals, sharing, environmental protection (1992: 233), and peace. He appeals to peace insofar as world

hunger and environmental damage are both aggravated by meat production, and food scarcity can lead to war (1988: 64). On its home page, the vegetarian advocacy group, Viva! (2006), actually place the animals last:

> Eating meat causes environmental destruction, damages human health, contributes to global hunger and inflicts immense suffering on billions of animals across the world. Viva! believes that the solution to all these problems is in our own hands: the best way to stop the destruction and the cruelty is to stop eating animals now.

Viva! does care primarily about the animals; its home page and campaigns against factory farming feature a flashing message that "Every 7 seconds a sheep has its throat slit in a UK abattoir." A report on a successful "Veggie Roadshow" includes the comment, "I believe it indicates a fundamental change in people's attitudes to animal cruelty, health and the state of the planet." Here at least the animals are put first, but their suffering is not considered an adequate ground for justifying vegetarianism.

The literature of even the most ethically committed anti-vivisection campaigners may consist of lists of false positives and false negatives resulting from animal experiments and assertions from distinguished medical people that vivisection is unscientific. The slogan of the National Anti-Vivisection Society declares animal experiments to be "unreliable, unethical, unnecessary"-- as though the ethical claim were best sandwiched discreetly between human-centered considerations.

Noah Lewis mentions several anti-vivisection or animal rights organizations that promote mostly "bad science" claims, consigning the animal-centered ones to a lesser role. Even worse, he believes, are groups such as the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine who deny animal-related motives, base their arguments entirely on human health, yet reveal their true sympathies in various ways. The PCRM "have no problem frequently working with PETA … many of their employees and members support animal rights" (Lewis 2004). Their behavior suggests both timorousness and duplicity,yet their elusiveness is in vain, since "[w]ithin the medical community, they are perceived as an animal rights group" (ibid.), or what I am tempted to describe as an animal rights front group.The appeal to human health can appear suspicious even – or especially – where the campaigner avowedly supports animal rights. When an organization founded to promote vegetarianism or to oppose vivisection on largely animal-related grounds triumphantly flaunts the latest pro-veggie health findings or harmful drug scandal, people understandably suspect an ulterior motive, and the movement loses some credibility.

Apart from seeming dishonest, expediency claims fail the "What if it were humans?" test. In this case, reference to human rights abuses can usefully expose a double standard on our part, in that we would not offer on behalf of oppressed humans the type of extrinsic arguments that we reserve for animals. As Lewis (2004) observes:

> Although slaves were integral to the production of tobacco, abolitionists never resorted to explaining that we should not have slavery because it results in lung disease, yet this is exactly the line of reasoning followed by some animal rights activists. Similarly,

abolitionists probably never claimed that there was surplus cotton …
(i.e., some slave labor, like experiments, was redundant).

Analogously, Proctalgia (2006) writes, "we wouldn't argue against experimenting on Jews because such experiments 'didn't work.' We'd be uncompromising in saying that even if experimentation on Jews produced valuable scientific data (it did: read up on Operation Paperclip) it was evil nonetheless." Even if cruelty were mentioned first, an additional point based on the self-interest of the perpetrators would be seen as demeaning to the victims. Would anyone protest against boiling people in oil on the grounds that it was cruel *and also* that it wasted natural resources?

Yet Peter Singer (2006), after spending seven paragraphs reviewing the horrors of factory farming, adds two more showing that the practice is inefficient, making possible a headline giving equal weight to both facts: "Meat production is not just inhumane, it's inefficient."

The British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV) tells us that primates "quickly learn to fear laboratory technicians who may have previously hurt them. The stress this causes means they often have to be dragged screaming from their cages" (2006). But they then add that their new report "gives numerous examples showing how primates make crude – and often misleading – models for human conditions."

Consider comments from the National Anti-Vivisection Society (2007) on Chinese dog-burning research, They begin by noting, "These are perhaps the cruellest experiments we have ever uncovered, these dogs must have been in almost unimaginable agony." They then write, "*Worse still* [my emphasis], these animals suffered and died in vain, there are ways of conducting this research without animals, and dogs are simply a bad research model for human beings."

Does the calf care whether factory farming is efficient, or the monkey whether vivisection works? Was the uselessness of the Chinese experiments really worse than the dogs' suffering? When we offer these expediency arguments, because of feeling impelled to go outside our own politically unpopular concerns, we unconsciously betray the animals in a way that human rights protesters, having a more socially secure status, would not betray their fellow species members.

George Bernard Shaw wrote: "If you attempt to controvert a vivisectionist by showing that the experiment he has performed has not led to any useful result, you imply that if it had led to a useful result you would consider his experiment justified. Now, I am not prepared to concede that position" (quoted in Ruesch 1983: 345). His challenge provides a second test: "What if the empirical claim weren't true?" – a question always lurking in the background. If meat-eating were found to be healthy, or if animal experiments were known to be efficacious, would you be in favor of either? If the answer is no, the expediency argument is redundant. If the answer is yes, you are not an animal rights supporter.

What about animal advocates who are genuinely concerned both with the effects of meat-eating or vivisection on human health, as well as with animal abuse? Despite these campaigners' sincerity, a problem remains with the argument, "Vivisection and meat-eating are cruel – and one is fraudulent while the other damages your health." If the answer to "what if it weren't true?" is, "I guess experiments should be permitted but under much more stringent conditions," or, "I guess I can eat meat but only if it's free range," then, again, you are not an animal rights advocate, but rather a welfare campaigner with speciesist biases.

The ambiguity exposed by the Shavian test results from the campaigner's reliance upon contingencies outside our movement, rather than upon certainties central to it: the axiom that humans make animals suffer and our moral conviction that this should end.

And here is a third test of animal-focused vs. expediency arguments: How immediate and certain are the projected consequences in each case? There may be a connection between meat-eating and war, but at several steps removed. We have evidence that animal exploitation contributes to environmental damage, world hunger, and human illness. Most strikingly, the UN recently reported that "[l]ivestock are responsible for 18 per cent of the greenhouse gases that cause global warming, more than cars, planes and all other forms of transport put together" (Lean 2007). Periodically, there are similar findings concerning the use of arable land for grazing; the unhealthiness of meat; and adverse drug reactions resulting from misleading animal experiments.

Yet these are things that the public has to be told by experts, who often disagree with each other. In the case of any one of these evils, people, including experts, cannot be sure how long it takes for the animal abuse to produce it, or how long it would take for the evil to cease if the animal abuse were given up. The picture is further complicated by the other known causes of these problems.

By contrast, people can be certain that animals are suffering and dying right now for the sake of human food and medicine. People know that meat-eating, by its nature, must entail the killing of animals. They know that laboratory animals are killed. They know about factory farming, about the suffering of dairy cows and their calves, and of animals used for experiments. The animal abusers themselves admit all these things (e.g. government regulations on levels of allowable suffering), but defend them on speciesist grounds.

The animal factor, being intrinsic to the policies we promote, is neither remote nor uncertain, either in itself or in the public mind. Thus it offers a stronger basis for argument than the complex realms of war, environmental damage, poverty, and human disease.

It might be objected that those problems are also immediate and certain, in that they are unquestionably occurring now. And for a campaigner in those fields – including the animal rights campaigner who ventures abroad politically and dons a green, pacifist, or anti-poverty hat – or for a genuinely and exclusively scientific anti-vivisectionist, these issues are the source of intrinsic argument, and are determinant.

It is the connection of these projected non-animal outcomes with meat-eating or vivisection that is comparatively remote and uncertain; so within animal rights advocacy, they are less determinant than the animals' fate.

Intrinsic arguments

In regard to exclusively intrinsic arguments, one might object: "True, the animals must come first, but what's wrong with reinforcing that advocacy with additional valid reasons for pro-animal policies? Surely those reasons can only help." But because the addition of those other reasons conveys the message that the animals' suffering and death are not important enough to make the case, the appeal to extrinsic reasons in fact can be harmful. If we ourselves are not willing to

proclaim unequivocally, "To hurt or kill animals is wrong, regardless of any other considerations," how can we expect the uncommitted public to believe it?

Still, one might argue, isn't it tactless and thus counterproductive to suggest that people are behaving irrationally or unethically? Wouldn't an indirect approach yield better results? Of course we cannot win hearts and minds by frontally criticizing individuals, but when addressing a group in an impersonal manner, as when we denounce certain social practices and deconstruct social attitudes, we allow our hearers or readers to reflect in private with their self-esteem intact.

Despite the lack of confidence betrayed by our reliance on extrinsic arguments, we are actually in a stronger position when sticking to our immediate subject. Speciesists, after all, are obliged to justify what even they would acknowledge to be prima facie wrong – namely hurting and killing animals – while we are not obliged to justify a policy of not hurting and killing them. The only obstacle to acceptance of our policy is the feeble case for human moral priority.

In regard to the intrinsic arguments themselves, they must first call attention to human abuse of animals, then attack speciesist excuses for it. The appeal to compassion is necessary because if we did not harm animals, which includes imprisoning and killing them, debate about speciesism or animal rights would be of only academic interest. Roger Yates (2006), in his plea for a philosophical animal rights stance, notes that arguments based on cruelty can be welfarist or tactically oriented. But if accompanied by a call for liberation, the exposure of cruelty is not welfarist, and in no case is it tactical in the sense of being insincerely manipulative.

On its own, however, compassion comes up against humanist barriers in people's minds, especially where they feel their vital interests are threatened. So the attack upon human supremacism, though still implying an appeal to compassion, is indispensable. But the genesis and growth of our movement is rooted in the awareness of how humans make animals suffer and die.

Appeals to compassion

In keeping with Isaac Bashevis Singer's well-known remark, we should be vegetarian out of concern for the health of the chicken, rather than for our own (Kanfer 2006). Although the argument from compassion is necessarily derived from emotion, its steps – from "these animals are suffering from human actions" to "we are suffering with them" to "we do not want to suffer" to "so we must stop these actions" (or in ethical language, "they are wrong") – are rationally connected. In this way, sentiments are "the very building blocks of morality," as ethologists Flack and de Waal (2002: 67) have concluded.

The usefulness of appeals to sympathy should not be dismissed. In a 1998 survey by pro-vivisectionist Americans for Medical Progress:

> The only time when respondents were not convinced by arguments in favor of animal experiments was when nonhuman animal suffering was mentioned. Fifty-six percent were convinced and 39% were not convinced by the following statement: "Animal research is cruel to the animals and they are often mistreated. Additionally, the research often is duplicative and wastes even more animals. We need to protect the animals and not allow abusive testing on them." (Lewis 2004)

True, the tripartite statement leaves the respondents' feelings slightly unclear, but two of the three parts suggest compassion as a motive for rejecting animal experimentation. More important is the fact that this statement was the only one in the survey to provoke a majority of anti-vivisection responses.

Thus the public should be made fully aware of the cruelties for which human beings are responsible. Nor should the natural empathetic response humans have to another's suffering be blunted by so-called objective language, or by sparing the public "offensive" pictures. To the animal, the gruesomeness and horror are the truth; inoffensive language is a lie, and the very opposite of "objective."

But we must go on to ensure that the plea for compassion is not blocked by human supremacist dogma, – an intrinsic consideration – since animal abuse could not take place without the support of speciesist beliefs. The attack has two necessary stages: the assertion of moral equality and the repudiation of the power-ethic that underlies inegalitarian claims.

Moral equality

> PETA believes that animals have rights and deserve to have their best interests taken into consideration, regardless of whether they are useful to humans. Like you, they are capable of suffering and have an interest in leading their own lives; therefore, they are not ours to use – for food, clothing, entertainment, experimentation, or any other reason. (PETA 2006)

Here, since animals are declared to be ends in themselves, they are accorded moral equality with humans. It is not a factual assertion, since ethical values cannot be derived from facts, but rather represents a choice of policy (to treat all species with equal consideration); it is "prescriptive, not descriptive" (Regan 1988: 212, summarizing Singer's view). And it carries argumentative weight because it conforms to the culturally accepted prima facie value of non-harming sentient life. We can then point out that the speciesists' claims reflect the opposite policy choice, namely a willingness to harm, although they try to justify it with the fact that humans have some unique qualities.

That rationale contains two mistakes that we can expose. The first is the implication that the possession of certain qualities, such as intelligence, confers a right to exploit those who lack these traits. This is the aforementioned fallacy of basing a moral right upon an empirical fact. The second mistake is the attempt to confer moral status on the fact by claiming that human qualities are more valuable than animal qualities. This is erroneous because "value" here relies on the circular argument "Class A deserves more well-being because it has Quality X." By a happy coincidence, "Quality X confers merit because it is unique to Class A" – sometimes expressed as "This is what distinguishes us from the beasts." Eckersley calls it the "differential imperative," which involves "selecting certain characteristics that are believed to be special to humans ... as the measure of both human virtue and human superiority over other species" (1996: 283).

We can call attention to the motive behind such illogic, observing that "[w]e don't exploit them because they have no value: we give them no value so we can exploit them" (Currie 2006). And we can point out that the human qualities commonly labelled valuable are those that confer the

power to exploit: intelligence, organizational skills, language, etc. Birds can fly unaided; fish can breathe underwater; four-legged animals are faster and/or stronger than humans; but only in respect of power are humans objectively "superior" to all other animals. So we can show how inegalitarian claims, irrational to begin with, are used to promote a hidden ethos of might-makes-right that is inconsistent with our culture's professed moral values.

Repudiation of the power-ethic

True, if someone openly avows a power-ethic and embraces its consequences, there can be no further dialogue. But if people profess our culture's precepts of benevolence and altruism when dealing with other humans, they cannot reasonably become tyrants when dealing with animals. Currie (2006) urges his audience to ask themselves: "Do I want to live in a world in which the end justifies the means? Do I want to live in a world where the rules of right and wrong apply only to the select and the strong have the right to exploit the weak?"

It is not a case of threatening people with a fascistic world, for that would be a human-centered extrinsic argument, and one lacking in immediacy and certainty. It is rather a matter of arousing revulsion towards an unacceptable ground for the wrong treatment of animals, while exposing the use of a double standard – fellowship with humans, oppression of animals.

We can show that only human power enables the government to express such baldly discriminatory principles as "without animal testing it is highly likely that … dangerous medicinal products would be tested in healthy volunteers and patients in clinical trials. This would be quite unacceptable" (Corbett 2006). We could demonstrate that only human power enables the media and the public to get indignant over animal rights violence while accepting or ignoring the greater violence done to animals.

While there is, of course, much more to an intrinsically based animal rights position than the few points I have suggested, these are the parameters within which we should argue. People will not be convinced right away or, in many cases, at all. They will often have counter-claims which we must answer. And since views are formed partly from personal experience, even the soundest argument may not by itself convince people, although it can influence their thinking where they are favorably disposed. But once they have been presented with an intrinsic case for animal rights, people will at least know what the debate is about. Without that as a starting point, there can be no progress towards the public pressure necessary to defeat exploitative industries and those industries' governmental servants.

Let the animals establish an example. In a tenth-century document of the Ikhwan al-safa ("Pure Brethren"), the *Case of the Animals versus Man before the King of the Jinn*, the animals put humanity on trial, appealing to compassion and attacking the rationalizations of the powerful:

> We were fully occupied in caring for our broods … with all the good food and water God had allotted us, secure and unmolested in our own lands. .....God created Adam ... and made him his viceregent on earth. His offspring ... encroached on our ancestral lands. They captured sheep, cows, horses, mules, and asses ... and enslaved them .... They forced us to these things under duress, with ... torture and chastisement our whole lives long. Some of us fled to deserts,

> wastelands, or mountaintops, but the Adamites pressed after us .... Whoever fell into their hands was yoked, haltered, and fettered. They slaughtered and flayed him, ... and put him onto the fire to be cooked .... Despite these cruelties, these sons of Adam are not through with us but must claim that this is their inviolable right, that they are our masters and we are their slaves ... – all with no proof or explanation beyond main force. (quoted by Foltz 2001: 5)

The Merits of Sticking to the Subject

Vegetarianism is separable from endorsement by famous people; from human rights; and from benefits to human health, the environment, world nutrition, and peace. But it is not separable from the benefit to animals, because the word is used to mean abstention from meat or other animal "products." Anti-vivisectionism is separable from endorsement by famous people; from human rights; and from benefits to human health. But it is not separable from the benefit to animals, because the word is used to mean ending animal experiments.

When animal rights arguments are based on extrinsic features, or even include them prominently as supplements, the result may be inconsistency, concessions to speciesism, concealment of moral principles, unconscious double standards, ethical ambiguity, remoteness and uncertainty of projected outcomes, and the suggestion that animal-related considerations are not important enough to make the case on their own.

Intrinsic arguments that arouse compassion for animals and attack speciesism's faulty reasoning and underlying power-ethic are the most consistent, honest, and supportive of a cause that has culturally accepted moral values on its side. There is "a real debate here about why human beings believe they have a right to inflict suffering on other species" (Coull 2006) and we cannot win that debate by talking about something else.

References

It will be noticed that several of my references come from the literature on religion and animals, the area in which much of my previous research has been done. But the substance of the passages cited or quoted is not theological.

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