

# Second Philosophy

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Led by	Oswy Gothly / Keith Parker
Title	Animal Rights?
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## INTRODUCTION

Can an animal have rights for instance the right to life, the right to liberty and the right not to be exploited for human gain? For many, the proposition would seem absurd. There are many standard arguments against the idea and they include the following:

Animals are not as rational as humans; they have no complex language and no capacity to reflect on beliefs like humans. Although some may have the capacity to have intentionality their consciousness ranges from thin to none existent compared to humans. The idea that morality should grant them rights akin to human rights is absurd, it is a category mistake.

Animals are essential to human survival. They provide a source of power, food, clothing and many other products that humans use for survival. Many cultures still depend on these essential elements and our whole human way of life has developed in symbiosis with hunting or domesticating animals. In advanced societies the use of animals for testing products that might be harmful to humans and for experimentation in new technologies has saved countless lives.

Domesticated animals are the main providers of animal products. They are bred for this purpose and in general their domesticated lives are better, in qualitative terms, than they could ever hope to enjoy in the wild. Nature is red in tooth and claw at least domesticated animals can expect to live secure, well fed, lives before being humanely put to death. Even where hunting of animals continues it is by and large heavily regulated so that it does not cause unnecessary suffering.

Some animals are a direct threat to human survival ie creatures that carry disease or that can destroy food crops. Such creatures are vermin and human self defence justifies their elimination. This is a natural process of nature.

Opening the moral door to admit some animals, such as the great apes, because they appear similar to us means opening the moral door to all animals. Does a cockroach or a cow deserve equal treatment with a human or a great ape? Morality is a human construct linked to the concerns of humans the idea that all animals have rights dilutes it to a dangerous extent. It may be true that animals may benefit because of human moral practice eg: being kind, but this is a long way from granting rights. How could we imagine legally enforcing the moral rights of intestinal worm?

It is also just a fact of life, or evolution, that we are grouped by species and we have a sense of empathy with our own species. Imagine a sea going trolley problem. A ship has sunk and various beings are adrift in a lifeboat. The boat is leaking and someone has to go overboard. On the boat are a cage full of pet rats, a pig, your favourite pet Orangutan, a severely disabled human baby, a human stranger, and you. You have a gun and are calling the shots so who goes?

Well I would say it's in the order listed. All the animals would go before the disabled baby. Peter Singer has argued that if we afford all humans equal consideration whether they be Hitler, a psychopath or a mental defective then we cannot but extend this to Elephants Apes and Pigs. In reality we just don't do that. If you stretch morality too far away from nature then it becomes meaningless. That's just nature as it is. Imagine if the animals all had UN sanctioned rights, well it's just not imaginable.

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Now, these are just some of the arguments against the idea of rights. I know there are just as many counter arguments linked to speciesism, equality, our real needs the environment and so on. I am not going to list them here as this is an introduction and invitation to debate and I don't want to forestall it here.

NB: Once again this is a highly charged issue. The introduction above is deliberately skewed against the notion of rights. I have sought to make a strong case in one direction to give maximum scope to the discussion. It does not mean I endorse the views above. I ask people to respect each other's views, keep the language moderate and linked to the philosophical issue and not assume people are arguing in bad faith.

## QUESTIONS:

1. Isn't it just a fact that animals are so different to us in terms of consciousness that rights don't apply to them?
2. Is it not the case that the use of animal products (In the widest sense including using them for power and experimentation) is vital for human survival? Does this not trump any case for granting them rights?
3. Don't I have the right to self defence against vermin? Doesn't my right trump any possible vermin right?
4. If you opened the door for animal's rights where would you draw the line?
5. Isn't it just a fact of nature that you would throw all the animals out of the lifeboat before you touched a human of whatever condition?

## REFERENCE:

1. Anything by Peter Singer.  
See his essay "All Animals are Equal" in Applied Ethics, Oxford readings in Philosophy. Oxford.
2. Good survey in Wikipedia here:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Animal\\_rights](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Animal_rights)
3. More scholarly survey Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy here:  
<http://www.iep.utm.edu/a/anim-eth.htm>
4. Famous Article by Tom Regan:  
<http://www.webster.edu/~corbetre/philosophy/animals/regan-text.html>
5. The Posner Singer debate:  
<http://www.utilitarian.net/singer/interviews-debates/200106--.htm>
6. Case Against Animal Rights:  
[http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/animals/rights/rights\\_3.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/animals/rights/rights_3.shtml)
7. A well balanced survey and insightful view of the issues can be found in Craig Bourne's Philosophical Ridings Chapter 5 `Saving Our Bacon. The Rights and Wrongs of Wearing Leather.` Oneworld 2007

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## DISCUSSION:

- [12:06] Oswy Gothly: Ok The issue is should animals be granted rights and my intro said that this was an absurd and impractical thing
- [12:06] Thoth Jantzen: we're all animals, behind the keyboards....
- [12:06] Elfed Helendale: I agree with Oswy
- [12:06] Thoth Jantzen: and besides, jackals don't count?
- [12:07] Oswy Gothly: I think animals should be shown kindness but that's up to us and a long way short of rights
- [12:07] Oswy Gothly: so what do you think?
- [12:07] Elfed Helendale: I disagree with Oswy on that one
- [12:07] Oswy Gothly: OK Elfed why?
- [12:07] Elfed Helendale: the 'up to us' bit I mean; why should it be up to us?
- [12:08] Oswy Gothly: Well if they don't have rights then who else will grant them kindness?
- [12:08] Elfed Helendale: Whoooaa, hang on
- [12:08] Oswy Gothly: We might be kind because we don't want to see them suffer? I will pause to give everyone a chance
- [12:09] Elfed Helendale: 'If they don't have rights'? Let's start from there shall we.
- [12:09] Simulat Almendros: rights - are they something universal? Or something established by law and custom? if the latter then animals can have rights
- [12:09] Elfed Helendale: Let's assume that animals do have rights
- [12:09] Sunfire Langer: the former, Sim
- [12:09] Oswy Gothly: I think they must be universal
- [12:09] Elfed Helendale: why shouldn't they have rights?
- [12:09] Lokifluff Clarity: Sim I would think the latter... rights are a social custom in my opinion - a contract if you will
- [12:09] Thoth Jantzen: my position is that 'rights' are no more than a social contract between entities who can enter into and abide by them. I also think that humans can and should respect each other and all life, and therefore agree that it is wrong to inflict unnecessary suffering and pain on any creature, and therefore should enact laws to insure it. Rights have little value in any case unless a) people respect them and b) there is a way to enforce them.
- [12:10] Oswy Gothly: Elfed because they are inferior to us in terms of rationality . They don't even understand what rights are.
- [12:10] Simulat Almendros: well - since you are claiming that they must be universal how do you establish that?
- [12:10] Elfed Helendale: Well, Oswy, that's just what we say
- [12:10] Thoth Jantzen: rights are 'just what we say', no?
- [12:10] Elfed Helendale: The animals might think differently at the moment of interaction with humans
- [12:11] Macov Finkler: rights for animals can benefit humans, like 'cows can eat from this field' is a right
- [12:11] Elfed Helendale: why should humans benefit?
- [12:11] Oswy Gothly: Macov I am thinking of rights as the right of liberty . The cows could eat anywhere.
- [12:11] Sunfire Langer: well, if a human being can be accepted by a wolf pack or herd of Gorilla, then it seems animals are capable of extending their customs to include us
- [12:11] Lokifluff Clarity: Oswy you can't prove that animals don't understand rights... besides one could argue that there is evidence that animals understand right of way etc
- [12:12] Elfed Helendale: and territorial rights; the robins in our garden are heavily into territorial rights
- [12:12] Oswy Gothly: Loki I am thinking of rights as a legally enforceable thing that they should be able to do things or things are prevented from happening to them?
- [12:13] Elfed Helendale: Legally enforceable....as in the law of the jungle?

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[12:13] Oswy Gothly: I am thinking that things akin to human rights could be extended to animals. eg the right not to be used in experiments.

[12:13] Lokifluff Clarity: then if you are talking the law Oswy then that is a human consideration... as humans write and codify their own laws... I cannot speak for the animal kingdom

[12:13] Elfed Helendale: You seem to have things back to front Oswy?

[12:13] Oswy Gothly: Thoth if the rights are universal then they would be more than a local contract.

[12:14] Lokifluff Clarity: I would love for that to happen Oswy

[12:14] Thoth Jantzen: I think animals are best served by laws enacted among humans prohibiting cruel treatment and so on....

[12:14] Lokifluff Clarity agrees with Thoth

[12:14] Thoth Jantzen: rights, I think, do little for them without laws to enforce them and they can be taken away.

[12:14] Macov Finkler: rights have to be voluntarily taken up otherwise they become mandatory statutes

[12:14] Thoth Jantzen: I do not believe rights are universal, Oswy. Rights are an agreement between entities who can enter into such an agreement, implicitly or explicitly.

[12:15] Elfed Helendale: Perhaps it isn't whether animals have rights to protect themselves from human exploitation. Perhaps the question really should be, do humans have any 'rights' to do anything to animals that they do not like? Do as you should be done by...?

[12:15] Sunfire Langer: if rights are Universal then literally every being would violate other beings right to life in order to perpetuate their own, which seems to overturn the whole notion, and indeed in nature all things convert one form of energy and matter into others

[12:15] Oswy Gothly: Thoth so you are happy for animals to be treated in a certain way in one country and differently in another according to human custom?

[12:15] Thoth Jantzen: we are not born with rights except by virtue of the societies we are born into.

[12:15] Simulat Almendros: Oswy - why can't rights be usefully though of as a matter of law and customs - in that case its possible for some animals to be given rights but not others for instance - it seems that the one-size-fits all character of universal rights doesn't fit with the real world

[12:16] Thoth Jantzen: of course I am not happy about it, Oswy

[12:16] Elfed Helendale: rights with responsibility and contracts are completely a man made concept

[12:16] Thoth Jantzen: but the world is what it is; animal don't treat each other all that nicely.

[12:16] Elfed Helendale: neither do humans Thoth

[12:16] Lokifluff Clarity: human rights have been drafted with the same principles in mind that Thoth is describing - when they were being considered the UN undertook a study of the cultural values that were inherent in all if not most cultures... these were the initial foundations of the Declaration of Human Rights... there is no reason why such undertaking could not be done in relation to animals

[12:16] Sunfire Langer: animals in a group behave to each other with affection

[12:16] Thoth Jantzen: should a wildebeest have the right to be dead before lions begin to eat him?

[12:17] Sunfire Langer: animals with no instinct for social behaviour understand 'nice' differently

[12:17] Elfed Helendale: But Thoth, should the lions have the right to eat the wildebeest?

[12:17] Thoth Jantzen: they need to eat; it is not a question of rights, Elfed.

[12:17] Elfed Helendale: So do wildebeest

[12:17] Lokifluff Clarity: but we would not be dictating animal to animal relationships, this would be human to animal relationships

[12:17] Thoth Jantzen: rights are a human concept, not a natural or universal thing.

[12:18] Elfed Helendale: Well said Thoth. I agree with that. It gets us away from contractarianism and all that stuff.

[12:18] Lokifluff Clarity: yes, with humans involved

[12:18] Oswy Gothly: I think there are two different things here. You can have laws to control how we use animals and you can have rights to say animals have certain inalienable attributes such as the right to freedom. I am for the former but I think the latter are absurd.

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- [12:18] Macov Finkler: I agree
- [12:18] Sunfire Langer: excuse me, 'use' animals?
- [12:18] Elfed Helendale: why are the latter absurd Oswy?
- [12:18] Thoth Jantzen: you need the former to even enforce the former...
- [12:18] Simulat Almendros: yes Thoth - a human concept that we can apply to ourselves and to some other animals - it doesn't seem to apply to lions and wildebeests
- [12:18] Thoth Jantzen: so if u have good laws, then the rights are implied anyway.
- [12:19] Lokifluff Clarity: I am not so convinced, and think they go hand in hand
- [12:19] Oswy Gothly: Elfed, for one thing they would ruin our whole way of life. If an animal had the right to liberty and the right not to be domesticated we could not sustain our food supply.
- [12:19] Macov Finkler: right to freedom would not stop a wasp from laying eggs in a caterpillar, for instance
- [12:19] Sunfire Langer: that's not true, Oswy
- [12:19] Elfed Helendale: But we are ruining their lives!
- [12:20] Oswy Gothly: Sunfire, why not. Where would we get the meat supply from and the dairy products?
- [12:20] Lokifluff Clarity: or alternatively Oswy... it would force us to be more responsible with our food supply
- [12:20] Elfed Helendale: dairy products and meat are bad for us
- [12:20] Oswy Gothly: The right to freedom would be the right to live a natural life.
- [12:21] Elfed Helendale: not only that Oswy but it's bad for the planet too. Crops have a much smaller carbon footprint
- [12:21] Oswy Gothly: If we guaranteed the right of animals to live freely then we would all have to be vegetarians.
- [12:21] Simulat Almendros: where would that right come from Oswy?
- [12:21] Thoth Jantzen: Sunfire, do you believe rights are universal in some sense?
- [12:21] Elfed Helendale: Oswy, if we lived in a forest and needed to hunt to live, that would be natural. But that isn't the case
- [12:21] Sunfire Langer: it is proven that we can live quite adequately without meat, besides it is estimated that it takes 20 pounds of vegetable protein to make one pound of animal protein, its hugely inefficient at feeding ourselves, so if we didn't farm meat, more vegetable protein to go round, ie less shortage, Oswy
- [12:22] Elfed Helendale: well said Sunfire
- [12:22] Oswy Gothly: Sim The right could only come from us . We are the only animals rational enough to conceive of rights. That's why we would have to grant them and it would not be a contract or partnership. The partners are rationally unequal.
- [12:22] Thoth Jantzen: if animals had the right to live freely does that imply the right not to be killed and eaten?
- [12:22] Lokifluff Clarity: and let's not start on how much CO2 the production of meat emits over and above anything else
- [12:22] Elfed Helendale: Oswy, isn't that like the MPs deciding their own expenses?
- [12:22] Thoth Jantzen: that is BS Sunfire, honestly speaking. There are MANY nutrients and chemicals we cannot get from plants and need artificial supplements to get.
- [12:22] Elfed Helendale: we are the chosen ones? Where have I heard that before?
- [12:23] Ryou Debs: Iodine
- [12:23] Simulat Almendros: I agree with what you say about plants being a more efficient way of making food Sunfire - but not sure how that's relevant to rights
- [12:23] Thoth Jantzen: humans are omnivores for reasons.
- [12:23] Lokifluff Clarity: agree with Oswy re the unequal nature of the rights
- [12:23] Thoth Jantzen: good reasons.
- [12:23] Oswy Gothly: Thoth, no it means you take your chances in a natural environment including being hunted in a nasty way by us to get meat. It's better and after and less cruel to be domesticated for most animals.
- [12:23] Thoth Jantzen: right.
- [12:23] Elfed Helendale: Sim, it takes away Oswy's pragmatic argument
- [12:23] Simulat Almendros: doesn't mean that we can't do fine as vegetarians Thoth

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- [12:23] Oswy Gothly: I don't think rights are to the advantage of most animals.
- [12:23] Sunfire Langer: yes, but guys I was addressing the challenge that animal's liberty would cheapen our quality of life, when there are alternatives, Sim, Thoth
- [12:23] Lokifluff Clarity: I have been vegetarian for 13 years... it hasn't killed me yet
- [12:23] Elfed Helendale: Like slavery then Oswy?
- [12:24] Deoridhe Quandry: We currently produce enough food to feed everyone in the world, so far as I know; the issue is not production, but distribution. From what I understand, the distribution problems are largely war and embargo related. That being said, if we are affording animals rights as of a set date, those animals wouldn't disappear and their waste and carbon footprint disappear unless you planned to kill most of them the day before they got rights.
- [12:24] Thoth Jantzen: No, they can be limiting, Oswy. I agree, and still need to be respected by us. And if we just respect creatures to begin with, the effect of rights is accomplished anyway, rather the effect of the intent of rights.
- [12:24] Elfed Helendale: Oswy, you're getting worse! Now we're into positive freedom where we know what's best for animals, including eating them!!!
- [12:24] Simulat Almendros: when I think of animal rights I think of not tormenting them for fun - or even not tormenting them to test cosmetics
- [12:25] Oswy Gothly: Elfed Most animals meet a miserable death in nature. In domestication they live well until killed in a humane way.
- [12:25] Thoth Jantzen: humans have a need to eat meat, not a right.
- [12:25] Thoth Jantzen: well, not all farms treat animals humanely.
- [12:25] Oswy Gothly: Also we are naturally meat and vegetable eaters. We are scavengers we would eat meat naturally.
- [12:26] Simulat Almendros: we have societies that prevent cruelty to animals - and those societies are usually supported by statutes - and establish that not being cruelly treated is an animal right
- [12:26] Marya Blaisdale: not all people treat people humanely :P
- [12:26] Deoridhe Quandry: Some humans have a need to eat meat. Others can be vegetarian without ill effect. Not all humans need the same sustenance.
- [12:26] Lokifluff Clarity: that is not true Oswy... animals are more often than not killed in a merciless way
- [12:26] Thoth Jantzen: they need to be forced to
- [12:26] Sunfire Langer: I think in order to answer the question, we need to look at the purpose of rights, which I take to be the protection of each citizen in a community from other members of the same community, I would hold it that animals cannot be part of our community unless in the sense that Singer suggests, however, this is fraught with the problem of negative discrimination
- [12:26] Elfed Helendale: But the domesticated animals are only there because we breed them. Like battery hens for example. Ugh!
- [12:26] Oswy Gothly: Sim, rights would rule out animal experiments of all sorts . How would science react to that?
- [12:26] Thoth Jantzen: but that illustrates what i am saying. we need to respect creatures and enact AND enforce laws to that effect.
- [12:26] Lokifluff Clarity: Thoth that is not true - humans do not need to eat meat - vegetarians happily live to a ripe old healthy age, and are healthy throughout
- [12:26] Simulat Almendros: Thoth - around here farmers that don't take proper care of their animals face severe penalties
- [12:26] Thoth Jantzen: it accomplishes what u want rights to accomplish more effectively.
- [12:27] Lokifluff Clarity: agree Sunfire
- [12:27] Thoth Jantzen: they should, too, Sim, but many don't. We need to do better there. But that's going to happen - bad treatment, rights or none.
- [12:27] Elfed Helendale: Oswy, animal experiments - why would that be ruled out? Anyway, some of the best experiments have been conducted on humans

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- [12:27] Thoth Jantzen: until we get serious about enforcing them. Enforcing laws.
- [12:27] Deoridhe Quandry: Some vegetarians, Lokifluff. And others are informed that plant protein isn't getting them far enough to be healthy and they need to introduce animal protein. I know one of the later, personally.
- [12:27] Oswy Gothly: On the farming issue yes there are some rotten apples but we do take action against cruelty and bad practice but that I nothing to do with rights
- [12:27] Simulat Almendros: Oswy - scientific research is a hard issue - in science research on animals shouldn't be undertaken for trivial investigations
- [12:28] Lokifluff Clarity: that happens with anyone Deoridhe... you can be a meat eater and be anaemic
- [12:28] Simulat Almendros: But no right is absolute - even among people
- [12:28] Elfed Helendale: So, Oswy, you are suggesting that animals have no man-conferred rights. We can accept that as stated.
- [12:28] Thoth Jantzen: nope.
- [12:28] Oswy Gothly: Elfed you are exaggerating . This would rule out all experiments on animals including fruit flies. Imagine that.
- [12:28] Deoridhe Quandry: Not anaemic, Lokifluff. Not enough protein. Protein and iron are two different things. She supplements with fish. Fish is NOT a good source of iron.
- [12:29] Thoth Jantzen: fish are animals too. ;o)
- [12:29] Deoridhe Quandry grins at Thoth. "Yes, we are."
- [12:29] Oswy Gothly: Elfed I am saying they don't nor should they have.
- [12:29] Macov Finkler: protected animals tend to look like human children, large head with respect to body, large eyes with respect to head
- [12:29] Elfed Helendale: Oswy, are we concerned with the practical implications, or a normative position?
- [12:30] Oswy Gothly: The extent of rights would be devastating . No fish no insect no vermin killed
- [12:30] Simulat Almendros: in which case Oswy?
- [12:30] Oswy Gothly: Our whole way of life would be wrecked. Our species would be threatened.
- [12:30] Deoridhe Quandry: Practical implications, I believe, Elfed. Though it would be amusing to see the entire world attempt to become Jain Priests.
- [12:31] Wichard Wisent: But we're rather omnivorous as a species
- [12:31] Oswy Gothly: Sorry Sim, missed your point there debate moving too quickly to keep up. If I don't answer your point try again.
- [12:31] Macov Finkler: In war, we'd have to make sure that no bombs fell on pools of stagnant water that held mosquitoes
- [12:31] Deoridhe Quandry: .....I'm guessing you don't know what Jainism is, then, Elfed.
- [12:31] Lokifluff Clarity: our species threatened? Have you seen how overpopulated the planet is? I don't think the human race has any worries to be had over species annihilation!
- [12:31] Elfed Helendale: yes I do - just joking
- [12:32] Simulat Almendros: Oswy Gothly: The extent of rights would be devastating . No fish no insect no vermin killed
- [12:30] Simulat Almendros: in which case Oswy?
- [12:32] Oswy Gothly: Elfed, I don't think you can disentangle the practical from the normative in rights.
- [12:32] Wichard Wisent: There's always the Soylent Green Solution
- [12:32] Ryou Debs: I've got something, finally.
- [12:32] Deoridhe Quandry: The human species has huge worries about annihilation. We're astonishingly dependant on technology and there is very little genetic variation that would allow us to, for example, adapt to a planet wide ice age without technology.
- [12:32] Lokifluff Clarity: lol wichard re Soylent Green; great movie
- [12:33] Ryou Debs: I'm more of a person to say, "We're at the top of the food chain, we've got all the power." and we do. At the top, we possess the faculties to regulate which animals live (mostly) and which are to die. We will use them to our advantage, just as nature will demand we must. We're at the top after all. Lions will prey on the Zebras, as through evolution, they have.

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- [12:33] Elfed Helendale: Oswy, as a species we would need to eat or use animals where necessary to survive, but beyond that WE have no right to take advantage of our 'superior' (your word) position.
- [12:33] Wichard Wisent: In the movie the food product Soylent Green was made from human flesh and everyone was eating it, as I remember
- [12:33] Ryou Debs: But, humans are very aware of the fact that we overuse and abuse our power at the top of the food chain. I mean, we can, and we do. But we \*don't\* have to. You guys have discussed the possibility of there being alternatives, and there are. But I find that I believe that we should be able to take what we need, and use it.
- [12:33] Ryou Debs: I think most people in modern society might be drunken with our sumptuous lifestyle. There are certainly a lot of things we can do without for the sake of protecting the environment. We probably don't need to treat animals like humans, because they're not. But neglecting the fact that we're exerting needless pressures on our environments and the animals that sustain is, perhaps it is only just that we cut back on luxury for the sake of being 'humane' to animals.
- [12:34] Deoridhe Quandry: The food chain has no top; we are food for worms and mould.
- [12:34] Ryou Debs: Mould doesn't build bombs and sky scrapers. >\_>
- [12:34] Macov Finkler: I think whether to abuse our power as a species is a personal decision for everyone to make individually
- [12:34] Wichard Wisent: Yes, Deoridhe, it's more a circle
- [12:34] Deoridhe Quandry: And?
- [12:34] Simulat Almendros: good point Deo
- [12:34] Ryou Debs: While there's an endpoint, mould isn't going to destroy the planet. We have that power.
- [12:34] Oswy Gothly: I think people are beginning to agree that the effect of granting animal rights would be very significant for our way of life. Too drastic. We have the right to defend our species.
- [12:34] Elfed Helendale: Macov - it can no longer be a personal decision. We have overpopulated the world with our species and sooner or later we will pay the price
- [12:35] Thoth Jantzen: while we live, Deo, we are at the top.
- [12:35] Wichard Wisent: There are some moulds in New Orleans that are trying to at least take over this part of the planet
- [12:35] Lokifluff Clarity: I don't agree Oswy - I think we need to change
- [12:35] Deoridhe Quandry: I wouldn't count on that, Ryou.
- [12:35] Elfed Helendale: Oswy, how on earth did you conclude that?
- [12:35] Macov Finkler: Elfed, other people have, perhaps. 'We' is kind of arbitrary.
- [12:35] Deoridhe Quandry: I don't think anyone has moved, Oswy.
- [12:35] Simulat Almendros: Oswy - I think that that applies only for very extreme concepts of animal rights
- [12:35] Oswy Gothly: Wichard. This brings us to the point about our species. We don't eat humans and we will never agree to do so unless in an extreme position. We have to use animal products for our way of life.
- [12:35] Elfed Helendale: Deoridhe is right
- [12:35] Thoth Jantzen: and I basically agree with Ryou - we do not have to act as we do. We have the capacity to make judgements and control our behaviour and avoid excess.
- [12:36] Ryou Debs: Precisely; I mean, we need to protect our species, and to an extent, we can advance ourselves as we've been doing for as long as we've existed.
- [12:36] Sunfire Langer: but aren't we blotting out the natural way? this is that beings convert matter and energy in one form to another form. This is natural and we owe our very existence to this nature, to consume and acquire natural resources even if they are in possession of another being, in terms of nature, no being has a right to life, because the lives of further beings are built upon those beings' natural deaths. This is not savage, nor brutal except as possibly a statement of taste, it is a quintessential quality of nature, hence whilst humans have a right not to be killed by other humans to protect them within a community, animals have not the right to not be killed and consumed by humans because this would go against nature
- [12:36] Deoridhe Quandry: "Advance" is such a context-dependent word.

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- [12:36] Ryou Debs: But come on, there's a point where one must recognize that we exert too much pressure on our environment and cause needless suffering to the animals that sustain us.
- [12:37] Elfed Helendale: Oswy, let's say that a race decides it is superior, and then eats or enslaves people of another race. Is that right? It is the enslavers who are making up the rules.
- [12:37] Thoth Jantzen: and that involves not treating animals with unnecessary cruelty, etc. essentially, learning to respect each other and our environment...even as we exploit it as best we can, so long as we do so rationally/reasonably and to the extent possible, only as needed.
- [12:37] Ryou Debs: I can dig that.
- [12:37] Oswy Gothly: Sunfire . We are natural hunters as the Mammoths found out.
- [12:37] Simulat Almendros: so Sunfire, are you saying that if rights aren't absolute that there are no rights?
- [12:38] Oswy Gothly: Elfed Cannibalism never really caught on once we had domestication it looked pretty old hat.
- [12:38] Sunfire Langer: yes, Oswy. And, no I'm saying that rights only apply to members of a human community, Sim
- [12:38] Elfed Helendale: Just wait till after the nuclear holocaust Oswy ;-)
- [12:38] Wichard Wisent: Except for certain religions that practices or ritualize cannibalism
- [12:39] Elfed Helendale: I agree with Sunfire. Rights are done within human society.
- [12:39] Macov Finkler: Wichard, lol... transubstantiation?
- [12:39] Thoth Jantzen: in nature, 'might is right', Sunfire. We, however, have the option to redefine what 'might' is, or even if redefine what 'right' is.
- [12:39] Simulat Almendros: how about statutes that prevent cruelty animals, Sunfire - doesn't that confer a kind of right?
- [12:39] Wichard Wisent: Yeah, Macov, transubstantiation
- [12:39] Oswy Gothly: In my intro I mentioned the Trolley problem at sea. if we had to we would throw all the animals overboard before any human even a disabled human baby? We have allegiance to our species and that is natural and inescapable it trumps the idea of rights for animals?
- [12:40] Jen Dix thought there would be more furies here ;)
- [12:40] Sage Hartmann: lol!
- [12:40] Ryou Debs: Well, yeah. We're probably going to throw animals overboard.
- [12:40] Thoth Jantzen: Sim, I think that's the thing. The rights are implied there, and have more bite than just 'stating' animals have rights.
- [12:40] Wichard Wisent: Oswy, it always depends on the context
- [12:40] Thoth Jantzen: rights have no meaning or value unless codified in some enforceable way.
- [12:40] Ryou Debs: But that's just because most people probably view humans differently. I'm sure a lot of people outside of this circle, perhaps, don't think of themselves as animals at all.
- [12:40] Simulat Almendros: nods to Thoth
- [12:41] Wichard Wisent: Do we need to cook and eat the animals rather than throw them overboard?
- [12:41] Thoth Jantzen: and if u make laws, then the rights flow from them.
- [12:41] Lokifluff Clarity agrees with Thoth on this point
- [12:41] Oswy Gothly: Sunfire, you were saying it was not allowable for humans to kill animals I think? Or have I misunderstood?
- [12:41] Lokifluff Clarity: disagrees with the next part though
- [12:41] Elfed Helendale: Oswy, would we throw overboard an unconscious, paralysed human baby who could feel no emotion and was in constant pain, in preference to a young chimp who was laughing
- [12:41] Thoth Jantzen: I think the argument evolved, Oswy ;o)
- [12:41] Sage Hartmann: Could we argue that it's not acceptable to kill animals for some reasons, but that this isn't because the animals have rights, but because we lack rights?

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- [12:42] Sunfire Langer: no, it is not a right because animals are not a member of the very community that the right is defined by, it is something different. Perhaps it is a policy of human consideration, defined by humans, IE 'we find that to inflict unnecessary cruelty on other species is inappropriate', or some other policy in another community, Sim
- [12:42] Oswy Gothly: Wichard . The point was serious honestly. Peter Singer has questioned whether human disabled have the same rights as animals
- [12:42] Elfed Helendale: Exactly Sage!
- [12:42] Sunfire Langer: No, I'm saying that consumption of other beings is completely natural, and so humans can and may kill for food, Oswy
- [12:42] Simulat Almendros: don't understand your point about lacking rights Sage
- [12:43] Wichard Wisent: I agree with Sunfire; We can and do kill for food.
- [12:43] Thoth Jantzen: how about just because it is not necessary and is not respectful to nature - which includes us, etc. etc.
- [12:43] Ryou Debs: And have. For 200k+ years.
- [12:43] Wichard Wisent: It's just that modern life has packaged everything and so removed us from the killing
- [12:43] Elfed Helendale: Sim, why do we think we have rights to foxhunt, gas badgers, shoot crows, snare stoats...etc
- [12:43] Wichard Wisent: that many are revolted by the idea.
- [12:43] Thoth Jantzen: perhaps the idea of 'rights' itself needs to be 'rethink'
- [12:43] Sage Hartmann: Yes Thoth that is kind of what I was suggesting :)
- [12:43] Oswy Gothly: Thoth The issue is what sort of laws are you going to make. Laws can grant rights or they can restrict human behaviour. A law is not necessarily a right. I think we all agree we should be kind to animals and that should be in the law but that is not the same as rights.
- [12:44] Simulat Almendros: I thought that the right to foxhunts had been removed
- [12:44] Ryou Debs: <\_<
- [12:44] Thoth Jantzen: if you make a law that prohibits unnecessary killing or cruelty towards animals...
- [12:44] Simulat Almendros: and there may be a balance of values in the other cases
- [12:44] Nikki Zunimoor: Thoth, Animals have the right not to be treated cruelly.
- [12:44] Marya Blaisdale: well, as far as humans and animals are concerned, there are many of us that do not perceive there to be any such things as 'natural rights' - they are only agreements within communities, Sage
- [12:44] Simulat Almendros: as always
- [12:44] Thoth Jantzen: ...does not what is intended by according them 'rights' get achieved?
- [12:45] Macov Finkler: So, why should animals have rights? What about an animal gives them rights?
- [12:45] Ryou Debs: I don't think nature handed anybody any 'rights', but maybe a list of requirements
- [12:45] Sage Hartmann: Sim, 'rights' in my mind is a social construction -- it is intended for humans because that's how the concept developed. But it doesn't mean there aren't other moral reasons not to kill animals.
- [12:45] Oswy Gothly: Sunfire. My point is that human hunting is often cruel and destructive of the environment. Much worse than domestication. We have destroyed so many species via hunting them.
- [12:45] Elfed Helendale: Oswy, you keep moving the goalposts IMHO. Now we're on to laws.
- [12:45] Nikki Zunimoor: When you treat an Animal cruelly, it manifests itself in human behaviour. That's why a lot of serial killers start out torturing animals, and then move on to torturing people.
- [12:45] Wichard Wisent: Laws are often trying to regulate morality in a global sense. I don't believe that is a good thing, especially given my penchant for the importance of contexts and change.
- [12:45] Lokifluff Clarity: what I can never understand is how you all argue for us to have the right to kill animals, as it is needed for food, and yet so much food is wasted, at the moment all I can see is an argument to sustain the right to kill to waste it
- [12:45] Thoth Jantzen: elf, what good are rights without laws? Humans are notorious for not respecting 'rights' of others without some consequence to them when convenient for them.
- [12:45] Simulat Almendros: that's a good point Nikki

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- [12:46] Sunfire Langer: as has change of habitat, why name that natural and hence 'OK' and name extinction by human, unnatural and hence 'not ok', Oswy?
- [12:46] Oswy Gothly: Nikki Is using an animal an experiment cruel . There is no law against it?
- [12:46] Macov Finkler: I agree Wichard, I think morality should be personal.
- [12:46] Jen Dix: who is accorded "rights" has changed over time, with a general improvement (with notable exceptions like with the Taliban)
- [12:46] Nikki Zunimoor: Depends on the experiment, Oswy. It's fine to experiment on people for some things.
- [12:46] Simulat Almendros: Oswy - that gets into the balance of values again
- [12:47] Wichard Wisent: But our current moral and legal state has rules that provide certain protections for humans and for other animals
- [12:47] Simulat Almendros: that's in general the flaw in absolutist positions on things - it doesn't allow the balance of values that reality requires
- [12:47] Elfed Helendale: Thoth, I agree, but we need to focus on the 'should' perhaps
- [12:47] Sunfire Langer: I think that's more about torturous people, and restricting that, would have, and has had, little effect on serial killers, Nikki
- [12:47] Sage Hartmann: Yes I agree Nikki. A very good reason for not mistreating animals is that it amplifies unhealthy behavioral patterns in humans. Though that's a tricky domain because the same could be said of cyber-fantasies of rape/pain fantasies in SL :-)
- [12:47] Macov Finkler: I'm curious as to what about an animal gives it rights, because it's warm and moves?
- [12:48] Thoth Jantzen: well, sure, maybe. But reality deals with 'what is', not what 'should be'. to address 'what should be' we need to create conditions that allow it ...to make it 'what is'.
- [12:48] Wichard Wisent: We have participated through our representatives in the exercise of legal rights which restrain all of use through laws
- [12:48] Elfed Helendale: I think it was Kant who maintained that a man who treated his dog with compassion would also show compassion to humans
- [12:48] Oswy Gothly: I am not sure why so many people are in favour of the natural . The natural is red in tooth and claw. The domestic is much friendlier.
- [12:48] Nikki Zunimoor: Yes, Elfed.
- [12:48] Sunfire Langer: lovely, humans forever deciding 'what should be', its quite absurd from a certain perspective...
- [12:48] Lokifluff Clarity: so Macov... what gives you the right to live? You are warm and move
- [12:48] Wichard Wisent: Kant was often wrong, Elfed
- [12:49] Elfed Helendale: Thank you Nikki
- [12:49] Thoth Jantzen: Sunfire, only humans have that capacity.
- [12:49] Nikki Zunimoor: Wichard, you are often wrong, too.
- [12:49] Sunfire Langer: tosh, Thoth
- [12:49] Wichard Wisent: Hitler was a vegetarian, and loved dogs and children
- [12:49] Thoth Jantzen: it may be 'absurd', but that is the reality.
- [12:49] Ryou Debs: Marya said, "... there are many of us that do not perceive there to be any such things as 'natural rights' - they are only agreements within communities.." And she's right. Like I said, nature never gave us rights to life. Just requirements on how to continue it.
- [12:49] Elfed Helendale: Kant? Wrong!! <blush> Wichard
- [12:49] Nikki Zunimoor: Just because Kant has a probability of error doesn't mean he's always wrong.
- [12:49] Wichard Wisent: Nikki, I am always wrong in some context and I know it
- [12:49] Macov Finkler: Lokifluff, because if I stop living, people will seek vengeance, and that would be detrimental to society
- [12:49] Sunfire Langer: The natural is also abundant in diversity and population, Oswy
- [12:49] Thoth Jantzen: we can decide what is right or wrong. It only really exists in a human context, and therefore we define it.

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- [12:49] Sage Hartmann: Loki: it's to kill because it makes people happier with conveniences. Those pleasures have to be weighed against the moral risks I think, as is always the case
- [12:50] Lokifluff Clarity smiles
- [12:50] Thoth Jantzen: you beat a dog, it doesn't think you violated its rights. It doesn't like it, and it suffers, but it doesn't think of it in terms of right or wrong, just in terms of 'this sucks'.
- [12:50] Lokifluff Clarity: Sage I wish this is what would be addressed though as it feels like the elephant in the room
- [12:50] Sunfire Langer: that's not true, we can decide what we think is right or wrong for humans in a human context, but not the overall right and wrong, which is different entirely, Thoth
- [12:51] Oswy Gothly: Marya I agree with you and I think we have to take responsibility to manage things. That will include managing for the benefit of animals. They don't need rights they need our concern. A concern from our ultimate self interest.
- [12:51] Ryou Debs: People are beaten too, children are hit to exercise operant conditioning, after all.
- [12:51] Thoth Jantzen: there IS no overall right or wrong in the world, Sunfire; that is the point. The world doesn't care.
- [12:51] Ryou Debs agreeeeees with Thoth.
- [12:51] Lokifluff Clarity agrees with Thoth
- [12:51] Sunfire Langer: that's a matter of perspective, Thoth
- [12:51] Thoth Jantzen: no
- [12:51] Sunfire Langer: and I disagree
- [12:51] Thoth Jantzen: it is a matter of logic and proper context and perspective.
- [12:51] Ryou Debs: I want to give Thoth a medal right now.
- [12:51] Nikki Zunimoor: I can name a universally immoral thing to do, Thoth.
- [12:51] Wichard Wisent: So maybe we need to look more closely at suffering and see if we can use it to make some distinctions
- [12:51] Sunfire Langer: logical right and wrong? That's the wrong tools
- [12:52] Nikki Zunimoor: Thoth, I would say it's always Immoral to rape a woman, no matter where you are.
- [12:52] Elfed Helendale: OK. So, there is no absolute right or wrong. That is why Oswy says that we can do what we like - unless, presumably, it involves humans and learning to live in our human communities.
- [12:52] Wichard Wisent: Nikki, I would say it's always Immoral to rape a man, no matter where you are.
- [12:52] Nikki Zunimoor: No, Elf.
- [12:52] Macov Finkler: Nikki, rape implies an immoral act, it's a tautology, like saying 'it's wrong to do evil'
- [12:52] Nikki Zunimoor: Yes, Wichard.
- [12:52] Nikki Zunimoor: Okay.
- [12:53] Wichard Wisent: So Isn't there some "causation of suffering" issue that we find objectionable?
- [12:53] Nikki Zunimoor: It's always wrong to force sexual copulation on a woman/man no matter where you are.
- [12:53] Elfed Helendale: so is it wrong to rape an animal?
- [12:53] Nikki Zunimoor: Yes.
- [12:53] Ryou Debs: No. 'Wrong' and 'Right' is so, so subjective.
- [12:53] Sage Hartmann: Umm... well in bdsm the force is often welcome at a different level of consciousness, Nikki lol.
- [12:53] Nikki Zunimoor: No, Ryou.
- [12:53] Macov Finkler: is it wrong for an animal to force another animal?
- [12:54] Oswy Gothly: All I am not saying there is no absolute right or wrong I am a Kantian. I am saying that these do not apply to animal rights. They might apply to our behaviour towards animals. eg We should not kill animals for pleasure. That's absolutely wrong for humans.
- [12:54] Nikki Zunimoor: Sage, that doesn't prove me wrong at all
- [12:54] Ryou Debs: If somebody who likes to be forcefully sex'd (rape, I guess) then suddenly, it isn't wrong.
- [12:54] Wichard Wisent: I agree that it is wrong is to rape an animal

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- [12:54] Thoth Jantzen: depends on the perspective of which animal, Macov.
- [12:54] Nikki Zunimoor: People in BDSM WANT to be treated that way, sage.
- [12:54] Elfed Helendale: hang on Macov, we've decided there is no such thing as right or wrong
- [12:54] Macov Finkler: say a paramecium to force another
- [12:54] Elfed Helendale: Why Wichard?
- [12:55] Sage Hartmann: Nikki, people don't have one single want, they have many conflicting wants imo. And sometimes which one is dominant is decided retroactively imo.
- [12:55] Ryou Debs: Yeah. >\_>
- [12:55] Nikki Zunimoor: Sunfire, Morality is found through logic and reason.
- [12:55] Oswy Gothly: It's an emotive issue I know.
- [12:55] Wichard Wisent: If it causes suffering of the animal, but there's always context, so the bondage and S/M moves out of the suffering category
- [12:55] Thoth Jantzen: your position is that there is some general 'good' and 'bad' in the world...or 'right' and 'wrong', but I can see no way to support it.
- [12:55] Sunfire Langer: my decision upon it would be the wrong approach, Thoth
- [12:55] Nikki Zunimoor: Thoth, I can
- [12:55] Sage Hartmann: well getting back to the animals lol...
- [12:56] Elfed Helendale: Wichard, how can it be wrong to rape an animal when it is not wrong to kill them for fun?
- [12:56] Nikki Zunimoor: Imagine a world where everyone behaved on a moral rule you conceive?
- [12:56] Sunfire Langer: it may be established through logic and/or reason, however I think that that's only a lower form of what the appreciation we possess is that allows us to think n moral terms, Nikki
- [12:56] Nikki Zunimoor: Looks like I supported my argument, Thoth.
- [12:56] Wichard Wisent: Elf, I would argue that killing for fun is not acceptable, but for food is OK
- [12:56] Thoth Jantzen: :o)
- [12:56] Oswy Gothly: All It would be wrong to use any animal for the gratification of a pleasure. It is acceptable to use an animal as a necessity.
- [12:57] Elfed Helendale: So, Wichard, are you in favour of fishing?
- [12:57] Wichard Wisent: Elf, only for food
- [12:57] Oswy Gothly: The use in the second context should be regulated by law. Humans are not mere beasts.
- [12:57] Thoth Jantzen has ALWAYS felt bad for the worms.....
- [12:57] Elfed Helendale: But fishing is for food and fun, Wichard?
- [12:57] Sage Hartmann: Sun/Nikki, there's nothing wrong with establishing moral principles through reason, but the mapping of those principles onto reality is always a matter of interpretation. Morality might be considered universal, but 'rights' are most definitely context-dependent.
- [12:58] Nikki Zunimoor: No Elfed. Imagine a world where everyone hunted for sport?
- [12:58] Wichard Wisent: The worms are food for the fish, where's the problem
- [12:58] Thoth Jantzen: it's the hook bit, Wichard :o) I don't think they like that part much.
- [12:58] Sunfire Langer: and, perhaps you haven't noticed, but there is a universal right and wrong... its just that it wouldn't be directly understood at the same applied level as the prospect of animal rights
- [12:58] Elfed Helendale: The problem comes with whether we have the right to use an animal to kill another animal
- [12:58] Wichard Wisent: Ok, Thoth, tie them to the hook or use artificial flies, I hear the work fine
- [12:58] Macov Finkler: Sunfire, where is this universal right and wrong? Where does it exist?
- [12:59] Sunfire Langer: in the Universe
- [12:59] Oswy Gothly: Sage, Nikki - Kant always envisaged that the absolute rules of morality should have an acceptable universal application. He saw them founded in practical reason. They were still absolute
- [12:59] Ryou Debs: If there's a universal right and wrong, tell me where to find it. I need some of it.
- [12:59] Marya Blaisdale: can you explain that further, Sunfire?

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[12:59] Simulat Almendros: and how about duck hunting - there is a huge movement that defends duck habitat, and provides more, in order to ensure that there are ducks to hunt - so hunting individual ducks helps the species to prosper

[12:59] Nikki Zunimoor: Morality is very, very precise. When we get very broad rules, but think of objections, and then people think that morality is subjective.

[12:59] Thoth Jantzen: someday i would like u to prove that, Sunfire. A reasoned paper would be interesting, explaining all assumptions and assertions with logical foundations.

[12:59] Elfed Helendale: Sunfire has been reading Aristotle?

[12:59] Wichard Wisent: In Louisiana, we use nets for fishing, most of the time, but we have TEDs that let turtles out.

[12:59] Oswy Gothly: Macov. Don't kill things for mere pleasure would be one.

[13:00] Nikki Zunimoor: What's the point of discussion morality if you think it's subjective, anyways?

[13:00] Macov Finkler: Oswy, I'm not asking what it is, but where it is.

[13:00] Sage Hartmann: Oswy, I think Kant's reasoning is beautiful, but the application to reality is flawed imo

[13:00] Oswy Gothly: Dont torture conscious beings would be another.

[13:00] Nikki Zunimoor: It's like trying to convince people that they are solipists?

[13:00] Macov Finkler: The universe, capitalised U or not is kinda vague.

[13:00] Wichard Wisent: I disagree, Nikki, I think morality is vary subjective and based on culture contexts

[13:00] Nikki Zunimoor: Wrong wichard.

[13:00] Nikki Zunimoor: That means you cannot judge other cultures when they really do \*\*\*\* up.

[13:01] Sunfire Langer: but that's why in traditional philosophy papers they find no absolute right and wrong, because its basis is on a level that is inappropriate to access with the tool of a 'proper philosophical paper', Thoth

[13:01] Sage Hartmann: Umm... might I suggest that we don't really need to resolve the subjective/objective debate in order to talk a about animal rights...?

[13:01] Thoth Jantzen: I would agree. I'd prefer a paper to 20 paragraphs interspersed in an active text chat.

[13:01] Oswy Gothly: Macov. It's where humans consider these issues? Not sure exactly what you mean. Sorry?

[13:01] Nikki Zunimoor: Wichard, is morality was culture based, then you cannot cast judgement upon Nazi Germany when they come to obliterate your neighbourhood.

[13:01] Macov Finkler: Sunfire, is it wrong not to have a sense of a universal right and wrong?

[13:01] Wichard Wisent: Nikki, we have to discuss the contexts of the culture and what participants find as moral, It's not absolute

[13:01] Thoth Jantzen: :o)

[13:02] Nikki Zunimoor: Wichard, are you capable of reason?

[13:02] Oswy Gothly: Nikki There is a genuine debate to be had about relativistic morality. its just you and I don't agree with the relativists but its perhaps another debate?

[13:02] Ryou Debs: This is starting to look like a digression, or the Animal Right's discussion's bastard offspring.

[13:02] Thoth Jantzen: although the issue of 'animal rights' necessarily falls into the bigger argument as a sort of subset of it, and, of course, is dependent on it.

[13:02] Sunfire Langer: not wrong, but perhaps early in understanding, Macov

[13:02] Sage Hartmann: even if morality is absolute, the absolute rules sure must acknowledge cultural context as being important factors for making decisions. Why don't we focus on those factors, hmm? :)

[13:02] Macov Finkler: Oswy, the point is that the only place that a 'universal' right and wrong can be said to exist is in the minds of the people who hold it, so there's a copy for each person, imho

[13:03] Oswy Gothly: I agree Nikki that rights are universal and absolute if they are to mean anything substantial.

[13:03] Marya Blaisdale: Well, I fundamentally disagree with that Oswy :]

[13:03] Thoth Jantzen: in that sense, I agree, Macov.

[13:03] Jen Dix: that's after they are established, though, Oswy. Rights change

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- [13:03] Elfed Helendale: Are we still on animal rights. We could pretend that I am a pigeon, and then debate whether I think it is right for me to be eaten by Oswy, or made to fly home
- [13:03] Thoth Jantzen: it would be a sort of memetic pattern shared by those people, but, it exists in those minds only, and whatever materials they use to convey the idea
- [13:03] Rasecel Masatada: btw nikki I would add incest and child molestation to your list
- [13:03] Oswy Gothly: Macov No I don't agree we can draw up list of these universal rules. They don't have to be solipsistic
- [13:03] Macov Finkler: rasecel, without some initial incest the species wouldn't exist
- [13:03] Nikki Zunimoor: Let's talk about Animal rights, shall we?
- [13:04] Nikki Zunimoor: Moral relativism is another discussion.
- [13:04] Elfed Helendale: well said Nikki. Pigeon rights
- [13:04] Ryou Debs: @ Elfed, I think that if he were to eat you to survive.
- [13:04] Sunfire Langer: Like or dislike there is a nature to the Universe, what is right is whatever is in accordance with that, and that's not easy or straightforward, Macov, all
- [13:04] Ryou Debs: It would be totally acceptable by my standards.
- [13:04] Marya Blaisdale: I expect we have established that there is no such thing as animal rights, or no?
- [13:04] Nikki Zunimoor: No, Marya
- [13:04] Elfed Helendale: Ryou, I have a nest to go to and squabs to feed
- [13:04] Jen Dix: define animal? Weren't Africans considered animals? They had no rights to life, self determination, etc.
- [13:04] Lokifluff Clarity: no
- [13:04] Ryou Debs: That's nature, bub.
- [13:04] Macov Finkler: Jen, Kant described them as animals =(
- [13:04] Thoth Jantzen: why would it not be straightforward? Or is there some mystery to divine first?
- [13:04] Nikki Zunimoor: Marya, when you torture a squirrel, does it suffer?
- [13:04] Elfed Helendale: Good point Jen, but I think we covered it earlier
- [13:05] Ryou Debs: Things eat other things.
- [13:05] Rasecel Masatada: um...by law? No. by moral rights? Yes.
- [13:05] Jen Dix: Macov, most of Europe and America defined them that way
- [13:05] Jen Dix: sorry, elfed :)
- [13:05] Elfed Helendale: ah yes, - JS Mill also Macov
- [13:05] Nikki Zunimoor: Ryou, that's a very terrible point.
- [13:05] Oswy Gothly: Elfed. No that not what is being said. but take the pigeon. For some its a free natural creature. For some its a domesticated racing bird. for some its a pest threatening their crops. Do you give the pigeon rights. That's a serious issue?
- [13:05] Macov Finkler: Jen, it's just that Kant was made reference to before in this discussion
- [13:05] Ryou Debs: Tell me how it's 'terrible'?
- [13:05] Elfed Helendale: It's okay Jen, it supports my position :-)
- [13:05] Marya Blaisdale: Is there a point to the question Nikki, I think it is clear that any creature being tortured that has the capacity to suffer biologically, will then suffer
- [13:05] Ryou Debs: Actually, tell me in IM, I don't want to pollute this discussion further.
- [13:05] Nikki Zunimoor: I thought you wanted me to explain, Ryou?
- [13:05] Ryou Debs: I do.
- [13:06] Marya Blaisdale: Please do explain, Nikki
- [13:06] Sage Hartmann: I think it would be more productive to talk about moral considerations rather than 'rights'. 'Rights' implies some kind of inflexible line -- this is very rare if ever the case
- [13:06] Marya Blaisdale: Right, Sage
- [13:06] Sunfire Langer: because you cant describe the appreciation for morality in a single sentence or paragraph because the understanding for it would not necessarily be conveyed, but this doesn't lessen the value of that appreciation, Thoth

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- [13:06] Sage Hartmann: but there are still things that need to be considered in making a decision
- [13:06] Elfed Helendale: I agree with Sage re morals vs rights
- [13:07] Elfed Helendale: Oswy, I am that pigeon, and I don't like what you're saying
- [13:07] Sage Hartmann: surely our ability to recognize the sophistication of an animal and its role in our ecosystem is an important consideration, right?
- [13:07] Lokifluff Clarity: human rights only exist because they have been codified
- [13:07] Oswy Gothly: Marya, I think I agree with you that the case for animal rights seems weaker; the case for kinder consideration of animals seems stronger
- [13:07] Thoth Jantzen: I don't see the connection to 'universality' of right or wrong there though, Sun. But anyway...maybe another time. The basic thing is, we can talk all we want about rights and whether they are universal or not, and to whom or what they should be applied. but....
- [13:08] Sunfire Langer: rights are not universal, Thoth
- [13:08] Thoth Jantzen: if we do not respect those rights or the entities accorded them, it means nothing.
- [13:08] Elfed Helendale: Cool Oswy
- [13:08] Thoth Jantzen: I talked about right or wrong there, Sun.
- [13:08] Jen Dix: many people I know all went to a farm recently for a pig roast. the pig was there all pink and happy. And they all gathered round. And apparently the killing was so horrific that people couldn't even talk about it later. I'm a vegetarian and think it is abominable to kill an animal for my food when there's lots of other food. But I recognize that others do eat meat. Still, I was surprised they could be horrified by whatever happened, knowing in advance what they were going for
- [13:09] Oswy Gothly: Thoth, I really don't think anyone has disagreed with that right through the debate. How it cashes out in practice is a real issue.
- [13:09] Lokifluff Clarity: thank you Jen for noticing the elephant in the room
- [13:09] Sunfire Langer: sorry, missed that
- [13:09] Macov Finkler: Jen, I lived in Taiwan, and saw pigs killed everyday on people's porches, and they didn't seem to mind so much (the people)
- [13:09] Thoth Jantzen: well, it is the 'source' of rights, Oswy, and what value they have. They have none unless we accord them value. No matter how they are stated on paper.
- [13:10] Oswy Gothly: Jen Did you think the pig had a right to live?
- [13:10] Marya Blaisdale: It seems to me from the discussion that we have good reason to believe that there are no such things as animal rights, and I have not heard any arguments to support this not being the case - so, if there is anyone that would put forward such an argument - please do
- [13:10] Lokifluff Clarity: I suspect that none of those pigs ever went to waster either Macov... would that be fair to say?
- [13:10] Sage Hartmann: yes Jen, that is a wonderful point -- is it wrong to rely on things which if we knew about we might find abhorrent? But at the same time, if we became still more familiar with, might not mind?
- [13:10] Sunfire Langer: they do have a source
- [13:10] Ryou Debs: Well, discussion. Do you want to hear what Nikki and I have surmised in our IM discussion? Concerning needing the pigeon to survive?
- [13:10] Thoth Jantzen: sure.
- [13:10] Marya Blaisdale: yes please Ryou & Nikki
- [13:10] Lokifluff Clarity: I disagree Marya...
- [13:10] Oswy Gothly: Go ahead.
- [13:11] Elfed Helendale: Marya, there is no such thing as animal rights only because humans have no right to confer them
- [13:11] Jen Dix: I do think the pig has a right to live...but I am vastly out numbered on that and assume I am wrong
- [13:11] Ryou Debs: Well, if Oswy needed the pigeon to survive, (this implies there is no other resource available, like vegetables) then it is acceptable to eat it. But if there is an alternative, we say go for it, because it is senseless to cause suffering to the pigeon if you do not have to.

## Second Philosophy

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- [13:11] Macov Finkler: Jen, why does the pig have a right to live?
- [13:11] Lokifluff Clarity: and would argue that human rights have been brought into effect because we decided upon them and codified them... there is no reason why the same could not be done as far as how we wish to morally consider our actions in relation to animals - whether that is called an animal right or not is another topic
- [13:11] Oswy Gothly: Jen, I wouldn't be so sure you are wrong.
- [13:11] Thoth Jantzen: Jen, in your illustration, I'd go with Sage's previous comment about them not having 'the right' to kill the pig, but that said...taking another perspective...in nature, 'might makes right'...
- [13:11] Marya Blaisdale: just being outnumbered is no indication of being wrong, Jen
- [13:11] Elfed Helendale: Sage, one can become used to anything, however horrific
- [13:11] Simulat Almendros: Marya - I did put forward a case that statutes preventing cruelty to animals amounts to giving animals a right
- [13:12] Elfed Helendale: Jen I agree with you
- [13:12] Thoth Jantzen: so...my personal feelings are a bit in conflict with how reality works at times. which, I think, is what makes me...and us...humans.
- [13:12] Jen Dix: being out numbered does not mean an idea is wrong, but for culture-based ideas, it is an indication :)
- [13:12] Sage Hartmann: Sure, Elfed, but we can also be disgusted by something, however mild. Think of a child first learning about sex. :) Similar issues arise on farms as children learn their parents' procedures for handling the animals.
- [13:12] Oswy Gothly: Where is the pigeon stuff. Lots of them feed in my garden what should I do about them?
- [13:12] Thoth Jantzen: and that is the conflict we are wrestling with here...and in many other cases like this.
- [13:13] Jen Dix: yes, desensitizing does wonders :)
- [13:13] Marya Blaisdale: I see your point Loki and I think Sim too - so essentially you are saying that they 'can' have rights because humans can legally assign them rights, but you are not stating that there is any sort of 'natural' right there - so yes, I can agree with that
- [13:13] Lokifluff Clarity agrees with Jen
- [13:13] Lokifluff Clarity: yes Marya
- [13:13] Simulat Almendros: yes Marya - no natural rights
- [13:13] Nikki Zunimoor: well, I find that problematic
- [13:13] Thoth Jantzen: we do NOT have to allow ourselves to be driven or pushed by nature. we can make other 'decisions' based on other/deeper contexts.
- [13:13] Elfed Helendale: Oswy, we pigeons like millet and birdseed
- [13:13] Nikki Zunimoor: Just because people don't recognize those rights doesn't mean you don't have them
- [13:13] Lokifluff Clarity: a right is a way of engagement imo... it is a contract so to speak...
- [13:14] Sage Hartmann: well 'natural' right would just be whatever happens as far as I can tell lol
- [13:14] Oswy Gothly: Right its quarter past nine GMT and I think we are all exhausted. Thanks again for a cracking fizzling debate. I will open a Facebook discussion tomorrow so if you feel you didn't get your point across here then say it on Facebook. Many thanks to you all.
- [13:14] Sage Hartmann: whatever rights we assign are those that are 'natural' to us