

## 0.1 Harm and necceccity

The general argument I will be tackling in this book is of the following form.

1) Causing unnecessary harm is bad 2) Eating animals causes unnecessary harm Therefore eating animals is bad.

I use the word harm but the word suffering or pain would also do. Harm is more general than suffering or pain but I think it implicates a wider concept. If a word like suffering or pain was used 2 would be open to refutation by empirical facts through a painless way of killing.

The reason "harm" is more useful is that there is a general aesthetic revulsion which causes vegetarians to not eat animals which isn't about pleasure or pain. For instance if we imagine that cows are reared completely freely, and during the end of their life they undergo a completely painless death, I imagine most vegetarians would not be swayed into eating meat. At the core, the revulsion we have is not some cost benefit calculus but is more aesthetic, factory like killing.

In other words I think harm includes the concept of "killing", whilst suffering is neutral to it. So I take their revulsion to be revulsion to the actual killing of the cow. They would consider this killing as unjust.

Perhaps the more interesting part of the vegetarian argument is the first premise.

The word "unnecessary" does a lot of work, but what exactly does this word mean? In it's everyday use necessity is a constraint, but for a constraint to be meaningful there must be some objective. For instance if I want to make a cake it is necessary that I use the ingredients necessary to make the cake. The sentence "flour is neccesary to make the flour cake" makes sense.

So with this new understanding of the word neccesary. We can go back to the animal example and ask, what is the "cake" of the suffering of animals? Typically, vegetarians will go after the "taste" argument.

The taste argument is related to the empirical world in a peculiar way. If it is true that eating animals is the only way to produce that taste, then the argument is clearly false, because CLEARLY it is neccesary to cause harm to create the taste.

If we CAN emulate the taste then that means we can create that taste without suffering.

The choice is self evident if the production method is less costly, but less so if it is more costly.

## 0.2 calculus

Another argument vegetarian may make has more intuitive appeal: If the costs exceed the benefits, it is bad. The suffering from animals exceeds the benefits. Therefore you ought not to eat animals.

This may seem like a striking argument, the obvious question to ask is "how do you know?" More specifically:

How come 1) we can measure the benefit and the harm? What exactly makes these categories measurable? It is perhaps intuitive that every human can measure their own suffering, it is less clear that they can measure their own happiness or joy. But even if they could, this is different than actually measuring the happiness of another.

2) the measures we come up with are comparable? Did we assert that these are of the same kind? How do we know it isn't like comparing temperature to distance? Even if we suppose that the two are measurable, how come they also also comparable?

3) The benefit is lower than the harm? How come the benefit is lower than the harm? It is obvious here that the vegetarian must attempt to define what the benefit is.

### 0.2.1 Lifestyle preferences

It is often assumed that good is attributable to specific actions. However there is a complete failure to articulate the discontinuities of life. Archetypes or cultural goods are non reducible. It is NOT true that you can remove the olive oil from the greek diet and still have the greek diet. Some things are just fundamental.

How people measure the good and bad is with lifestyles, not with individual deeds. In other words, one may in theory be content with their daughter sleeping around with a different guy every night. However the repugnance to this may in fact be with the lifestyle that is associated, the alienation from feelings, the frequenting of night clubs. When someone tells you they want x, this is not necessarily because they want x in itself. Indeed it may be that they simply want things that are associated with x.

For animals specifically the reason is easy enough to see. I want a reason to live with animals. Or I want a reason for animals to exist or to exist in greater number. And by wanting x, I am creating that reason.

One may try to envision different ways that we can live with animals, but it is ultimately an empirical question. One such way we could imagine is to worship the animals, perhaps

between the gaps we have at work, we could go to the chicken altars and worship them. One may imagine simply that these animals are publicly financed to live in the streets, were they are fed or their poop is cleaned at public expense. This all sounds reasonable, and it is likely a few meat eaters would be convinced if this was shown to work in practice.

Of course if the animal rights activists position becomes less extreme the answer is quite natural for a few animals. Perhaps cows sheep goats and chickens could all give us ample reason to live with them. But still there remain animals which don't have this property, such as pigs.

It is wrong to want to have kids for your own pleasure. You should want to have kids because your gut tells you to. You can't articulate WHY you should have kids, but there is this tendency in you to have kids. It is not that you think kids will make you happier, but that having kids itself is what life is about, it is simply the expression of who you are, just like a flute gains no pleasure from being played, but it is its purpose. Indeed it is its very reason for existing, it is the cause of it existing.

Dogs have found their place with us and most of us are thankful. Perhaps a significant difference between dogs and other animals.

It is perhaps a typically modern tendency to try and calculate the costs and benefits of all structures. The search for deductive beauty is often a homogenizing force. However inductive beauty gives very different results. Deductively we may have a positive impression of an idillic community where everyone has the same life. But inductively there is something disgusting in knowing that everything is the same everywhere. Diversity is a value in itself, we want everyone to plant different plants in their gardens. We can imagine that the diversity is such that everyone plants the same different plants.

### **0.2.2 Formulation vs induction**

It seems like philosophers have taken up a task that the ancients never dared. That is to assume that if an argument cannot be formulated, that the position is incoherent. It is hard to imagine a more arrogant position than the position that if something cannot be defended, it should be abandoned.

In reality even though you cannot defend an action as such, you can imagine reasons why it emerged. And without whosing that those reasons are no longer neccesry, it is incoherent to throw it away.

### **0.2.3 Failed arguments**

Failed arguments; Eating Meat is natural Doing what is natural is good eating meat is good. They sometimes dispute the naturalness but most evolutionary biologists agree that we have evolved because we have used less energy on digestion and more on brains.