Primate morality lecture notes

**From paul bloom’s class**

Are animals moral agents?

Darwin- the descent of man

* All social animals should develop moral concerns?

It looks like animals have moral concerns!

Suffering/harm

* Do non-human animals feel the pain of others? Do they feel motivated to help others?
* Frans de waal annecdotes; caress those who were in pain
* Rice and Gainer (1962)
  + Training rats to see if they would help other rat
* Masserman et al (1994)
  + Resus monkeys they could learn that they get food. If he pulls lever and gets food but also shocks another monkey. Monkeys would forgo eating for up to 12 days
  + Impressive compared to Milgram
* Warneken studies: helping humans, helping other chimps
* Frans de waal giving is self-rewarding for monkeys: prosocial token or selfish token; monkeys did not give for strangers, anonymous
* ANIMALS are sometimes motivated to reduce others’ pain but its unclear if animals really empathetically feel others’ pain
* Primates are sometimes motivated to help others but it’s limited on who and when to help

Reciprocity/fairness

* Do animals care about reciprocity? Do they have intuitions about fairness? Do they punish cheaters who behave unfairly?
* Vampire bats – blood barfing, tit for tat, reciprocity black hamlet fish turn take who is the female first because they are hermaphrodites
* Del waal and berger (2000)
  + Drop food for guy in other monkey, food sharing
* Brosnan and de waal (2003)
  + One monkey is getting better food (grapes)
* Range et al (2009)
  + Pet dogs and inequity
* Disadvantageous inequeity aversion VS. advantageous inequity aversion = the dislike of a reward distribution in which you get less than someone else VS dislike when you get more that someone else; nonhumans tend to only do the first one
* Chimpanzees never reject unfair offers in dictator like game, only similar to humans with lesions in brain
* Some animals are motivated to perform tit-for-tat, not sure why. Some animals reject unfair payoffs but only when they don’t get as much, very little evidence for costly punishment

-bull elk have antlers that can cause of lot of damage, but they rarely hurt each other

- within species, rarely kill each other

- chimps and bonobos are our closest relatives

- chimps are a lot more violent than bonobos, intragroup violence, hurting children and women

-chimps will gang up on one chimp and kill him, usually the small ones so not self defense

- war – victors get access to more land, more females

-HOWEVER bonobos are very peaceful, no intragroup violence, little male violence towards female, children; socio-sexual behavior seems to be at the root of this; females cooperate with each other, group together to fight off men; females have very strong bonds

-demonic male hypothesis- bonobos are eating food on the ground. Chimps have to go up, so female chimps are left vulnerable

This is what we see… there are limitations though