BETWEEN THE SPECIES

The Intuitiveness of Animal Rights: Audi's Epistemology, Kantian Ethics, and Regan's Case

ABSTRACT

In this paper, I will argue that ethical intuitionism and Robert Audi's work on its moral epistemology as applied to Kant's formula of humanity can offer grounding and support for an animal rights position that approaches that of a view articulated by Tom Regan. The combination of these positions will be done by testing our intuitions concerning non-rational individuals—leading one, I argue, to an animal rights view. Then I will briefly note the skeptical concerns about the role of intuitions in our knowledge of the moral status of human animals and non-human animals alike.

Ultimately, I will conclude that intuitions can support a case for animal rights.

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Introduction

In exploring a way to support a case for animal rights, I will apply ethical intuitionism to the question of the moral status of non-human animals. Specifically, I want to apply to animal ethics the intuitionist position of Robert Audi (2004, 142) in that the dignity for persons, as expressed in Kant's formula of humanity has an "inherent goodness [that] is intuitively knowable." The work of Audi has been to expound Rossian intuitionism while incorporating elements of Kantian ethics to develop what Audi calls "Kantian Intuitionism." My interpretation of Audi, then, is that the respect owed to persons, as in the case of many of our *prima facie* duties such as a duty of non-maleficence, is intuitive. Yet, I extend Audi's project in that the intuitiveness of the formula of humanity, more broadly construed but arguably more intuitive, also informs us of the dignity possessed and, accordingly, respect owed toward many non-rational beings, including severely intellectually disabled humans and some non-human animals.

To make the case, I will argue that this broader formula of humanity is supported by our intuitions concerning the moral status of non-rational humans and non-human animals alike, while the narrower formulation, as originally conceived by Kant and continues to see support today, commits us to strongly unintuitive beliefs concerning these individuals. The view defended here is that, if the epistemic case for the formula of humanity can rest on intuitions, then it ought to comport with our intuitions (as the broader account does) rather than go against our intuitions (as the narrower, traditional account does). Following this, a more consistent, intuitive approach to this important principle of Kantian ethics will lead one to a view not too far off from an animal rights position as articulated by Tom Regan. Accordingly, for Regan's theory of animal

rights, both humans and many non-human animals possess an inherent value and, according to Regan's (1983, 264) respect principle, "we are required to give equal respect to those individuals who have equal inherent value, whether they be moral agents or moral patients, and, if the latter, whether they be humans or animals."

This project seems worthwhile, as defenders of Tom Regan's view or those adjacent to it acknowledge the strength of his position, but also seek additional philosophical bedrock. For example, Julian H. Franklin (2005, 22) agrees in spirit with Tom Regan on animal ethics but states that a "truly fundamental ground for Regan's case is . . . lacking." Going forward, Franklin argues that Kantian ethics should serve as this fundamental ground. In agreement with Franklin's concerns, I, too, believe Regan's project would be served well by further philosophical backing. While Franklin attempts to bolster Regan's animal rights theory with Kantian ethics, I now wish to bolster both Kantian ethics and, by extension, Regan's animal rights theory with an explicit intuitionism.

Regan and intuitions

Readers of Regan may see my introduction of intuitions into animal rights as redundant, with Regan's work being accused by some of having an intuitionist bent already. That said, I think the relation between intuitionism and Regan's animal rights theory is hazy, so, before going to my working definitions of ethical intuitionism and animal rights, a couple of admissions will be made. The first admission is to acknowledge arguable strains of intuitionism in Regan's thought. The second admission is that philosophers have labeled and attacked Regan for the very thing I am attempting to bring to the table: his ostensible intuitionism.

For the first admission, Regan himself acknowledges the indispensability of intuitions in ethical theory and does not necessarily shy from them. For example, Regan (1983, chap. 6) argues against Peter Singer's previously expressed uneasiness about the epistemic primacy or importance of intuitions in moral philosophy. Audi (2021) sheds light on the ethical debate seemingly being had here in that the difference in philosophical methodology may be that of a bottom-up approach versus a top-down approach. The former is associated with intuitionists such as Ross by moving from the particular to the general. The latter is associated with diverse ethical leanings, from Kant to Mill, in which one moves from the general or master principle to the particular. Singer (1980, 327) had taken umbrage with the sort of bottom-up approach to moral philosophy as practiced by intuitionists, and instead advocated one to "work from sound theories to practical judgments." Regan expresses, I believe, warranted doubt toward the prospects of discovering a sound ethical theory independently or prior to our (reflective) intuitions.

Regan (1983, 258) proposes that the methodology of testing our moral principles, including the respect principle he defends, involves our prereflective intuitions (i.e., our unexamined moral beliefs) being critically assessed so that we may arrive at "intuitions in the reflective sense." Yet, Regan's use of intuitions cannot be considered straightforwardly intuitionist or not, as the process Regan employs for vindicating our intuitions is understood as John Rawls' reflective equilibrium, and it hosts its own controversies concerning intuitionism.

On one hand, it has been claimed by philosophers such as Peter Carruthers (1992, 8) that "reflective equilibrium is best seen as an application of the coherentist picture of knowledge

to the moral domain." On the other hand, reflective equilibrium has been characterized by critics as a "method [that] is . . . a thinly disguised form of intuitionism, and hence, is committed to foundationalism" (DePaul 1986, 60). Additionally, Audi (2004, 66-7) himself has made use of reflective equilibrium as a potential method to resolve ethical disagreements for the intuitionist—giving it a welcoming spot in Audi's moral epistemology and perhaps intuitionism as a whole. For these reasons, Regan's use of the reflective equilibrium leaves one with an ambiguous view of him as a committed intuitionist. On this matter, I think use of reflective equilibrium is not sufficient to determine one's epistemic allegiances, and, perhaps more controversially, use of reflective equilibrium seems epistemically neutral in the sense that both foundationalists and coherentists can employ it without obvious tension. Absent a necessary supposition of foundationalism in the methodology, my thoughts are captured by Georg Brun (2014, 238) in that "reflective equilibrium is neither tied to intuitions nor a form of intuitionism . . . [but] proponents of intuitions can make use of reflective equilibrium."

As for the second admission, philosophers have criticized Regan's position for being (at least implicitly or potentially) intuitionist, and, as a result, seriously defective (Carruthers 1992; Sztybel 2010). One could question whether this is a fair caricature of Regan's views, as Daniel Dombrowski (1997, 125) has expressed, given that Regan (1983, 133) seemingly denies that he is speaking about the same intuitions as G.E. Moore or W.D. Ross have defended.

Regardless, Regan's intuitionism, whether real or exaggerated, does not change the shape of the following arguments, as

the goal here is to offer a reasonable defense of a complementary epistemology to animal rights in the form of intuitionism.

Ethical intuitionism

Intuitions, as proponents of the theory propose, are "initial, intellectual appearances" (Huemer 2005, xiii), with ethical intuitionism, specifically, being the view that we can grasp moral truths through intuition. Early support for the theory can be found, for example, in the work of Richard Price (1758) and the previously mentioned Moore (1903) and Ross (1930). In opposition, skeptics of the theory, such as David Sztybel (2010, 126), have defined "intuitions" as "fundamental beliefs thought by intuitionists not to require any justification." The intuitionist should hesitate to accept Sztybel's definition of intuitions, however, as such a definition seems to not account for intuitionism's theory of justification. Importantly, intuitionists do not think that intuitions do not require any justification. Rather, intuitionism does not shy from a foundationalist theory of justification, given that "ethical intuitionism claims that there are non-inferentially justified ethical beliefs" (Cowan 2013, 1097). To say that intuitionists believe intuitions do not require any justification is, I believe, to not give either intuitionism or foundationalism their fair shake.

Intuitions, then, are not absent justification, but instead hold non-inferential justification. Specifically, in being foundationalist, it posits that these justified beliefs are "not justified in virtue of their logical or evidential relations to other beliefs" (DePaul 2000, viii). This foundationalist aspect of intuitionism has made it unpopular among many philosophers, as they see it as "the epitome of an antiquated view of epistemic justification" (Shafer-Landau 2007, 250), and distaste for the view

especially goes for philosophers who adhere to a coherentist theory of justification.

Animal rights

Animal rights, as understood here, is the view that many non-human animals (in addition to human animals) possess natural rights, such as a right to life. A "right" is to be understood here as Joel Feinberg (1970, 257) defines it, in that, "To have a right is to have a claim against someone whose recognition as valid is called for by some set of governing rules or moral principles. To have a *claim* in turn, is to have a case meriting consideration . . . ." Feinberg's definition is helpful in that it does not beg the question against the animal rights advocate by defining "rights" simply in terms of human rights. Additionally, it suggests there are rules and principles that would relate to these claims by rights (and, as I will try to show, the formula of humanity, broadly conceived, can help make sense of both human rights and animal rights).

As mentioned earlier, inherent value plays a central role in Regan's theory of animal rights, and the steps from inherent value to natural rights can be followed by Mark Rowlands' (2009, 58) expounding of Regan's theory as, "[Regan's] argument appeals quite centrally to the concept of inherent value, viewed as an objective moral property which attaches to certain things, and which does so irrespective of whether those things happen to be valued or not." As a result, and as Rowlands explains, if this right to life is a natural right, then it is not a moral or legal right that is contingent on the willing, recognition, or conferring of any institute or individual—be it society at large or the individual (thereby making non-linguistic, non-rational humans as potential candidates, as well as many non-human animals). Rowlands (2009, 58) continues, saying that, "In this

sense at least, Regan is an inheritor of the conceptual framework embodied in natural rights doctrine."

The Kantian exclusion of intellectually disabled people (the first problem from intuitions). One of the ambiguities in the formula of humanity is how we ought to understand "humanity." Kant held that a "rational nature exists as an end in itself," and it served as the ground for the practical principle of treating humanity as ends in themselves and not merely as a means—to recognize and treat them as beings of inherent worth. Yet, as Tom Regan (2001, 13) notes,

> All humans, Kant implies, exist as ends in themselves. To restrict this supreme moral value to humans only among terrestrial creatures is not arbitrary, Kant believes, because unlike the other animals, humans are unique in being rational and autonomous. However, not all humans are rational and autonomous. Humans who are intellectually disabled and deranged, for example, lack these capacities.

Regan is raising the argument from marginal cases by pointing to the lack of morally significant qualities, as proposed by Kant, in that of intellectually disabled humans. Therefore, Kant cannot hold that all members of humanity exist as ends in themselves. In Kant's philosophy, humans who are not sufficiently rational would be as equally disposable as non-human animals. This position, however, seems far too restrictive in moral scope and, importantly for my view, counterintuitive. It does not seem obvious that we may treat intellectually disabled humans as mere means as we do animals. In fact, quite the opposite seems to be true. Non-rational humans (e.g., the severely mentally impaired) seem to have value independently

of the utility they provide others. It would be impermissible to treat children with Down syndrome as mere tools or commodities—to treat them as slaves, to rear them for slaughter, or to experiment on them for medical benefits. Rather, we would confidently say that severally intellectually disabled humans exist as ends in themselves, as beings of inherent worth. Even so, Kant and many others who hold the narrow formula of humanity cannot easily account for this moral standing.

To deny the inherent worth of non-autonomous humans and to entail treating them as we do many non-human animals is, as Regan (2001, 13) states, a "morally grotesque" consequence of Kant's theory and likely a consequence Kant himself would have liked to avoid. This consequence, however, follows from Kant's exclusion of non-human animals from the full scope of morality. For the intuitionist, it may be wise to do away with Kant's criterion of rationality as being a necessary condition for inherent value, while still allowing it to be a sufficient condition. By doing so, the principle opens up to the possibility of comporting to our intuition that it is severely and directly wrong to torture and slaughter people who have severe Down syndrome. Holding steadfast to Kant's original principle would only serve to undermine it both morally and epistemically on an intuitionist front. We will say, instead, that "humanity" in Kant's principle is to be understood as referring to *humanity*, whether those humans be rational or not. This understanding of the principle better comports with our belief that it is wrong to torture and kill severely intellectually disabled humans for our ends. At bottom, someone with severe Down syndrome has the same claim to being an end in oneself as an Albert Einstein.

When discussing the formula of humanity, Audi (2016, 137-8) himself offers a way in which the principle may be under-

stood as being more inclusive when he suggests that there are "objective, external constraints on treating persons as ends. Most obviously, such treatment requires caring about their pains and pleasures, but it also requires at least a disposition to care about their deepest concerns." So far, non-rational individuals could seemingly qualify as such, and Audi (2016, 120) makes a point about interests more explicit for "children, non-competent adults, and animals," requiring us to take their interests "into account in some hypothetical way" and, as in the case of children or intellectually disabled people, "we can frame a notion of the good of animals [who are] incapable of a conception of their own good." It can be seen then that not only may non-rational humans be included under the formula of humanity, as Audi expounds, but non-human animals may comfortably fall within its scope too.

The Kantian exclusion of non-human animals (the problem from consistency). The formula of humanity has seen its first growing pains. Kant and many of his followers have traditionally restricted the formula of humanity to rational humans or rational beings only. However, there are humans who do not meet the criterion of rationality (such as those humans with severe Down syndrome), but we nevertheless recognize that they are individuals of inherent worth. So, the formula of humanity must expand in scope to include rational and many non-rational humans, but it still stops short of any radical beliefs concerning the inherent value of, say, a cow or pig. I think many who reflect on this issue are happy to stop at this point: "Humans, whether they be rational or not, are inherently valuable, but the same is not true for non-human animals. *This* is common sense/intuitive." I believe Roger Scruton (2000) and Carl Cohen (2001), for example, express positions that border on this view. Their answers appear vague, at best, however, and Na-

than Nobis (2004) has articulated the lack of clarity with such answers—that is, they seemingly amount to a coy resort to speciesism by placing moral primacy in belonging to the group of *Homo sapiens*.

The speciesist, however, may remain defiant in claiming intuition for the basis of moral delineation by mere group membership. Similarly, one can echo Shelly Kagan (2016, 5) by asking, "What exactly is the argument that establishes that [speciesism] is mere prejudice, rather than moral insight?" In response, I would argue that an animal-friendly response to this view—whether the speciesist view is claimed as common sense or not—could be derived from the intuitionism as developed by both Ross and Audi. Specifically, we begin with prudence to avoid accepting a "mere prejudice [that] can masquerade as an intuition" (Audi 2004, 66). Franklin (2005, 47-8) seemingly takes this step and initiates a similar position when he criticizes the "imagined intuition" that "only humans can have moral standing" as a "prejudice rather than a valid intuition."

Separating prejudice from intuition appears incoherent for those who define the two as being synonymous, but the intuitionist accepts a genuine distinction here. To distinguish them in method, and to see how speciesism may be revealed as a prejudice as opposed to an intuition, Audi (2004, 67) describes how intuitionism may, through some use of reflective equilibrium, distinguish true intuitions from "false or merely apparent intuitions" by noting that, "If the judgment is incongruous with similar ones, as where one makes opposite moral appraisals of highly similar deeds, or if it conflicts with a plausible principle, as where one judges non-self-defensive aggression to be unobjectionable, this counts against its justification."

Turning to speciesism, it can be defined as "the view that preferential treatment may be accorded to one being over another purely on the basis of species membership, even though both beings are similar in relevant ways" (Pluhar 2006, 338). Under this definition of speciesism, it seems that this sort of moral judgment is "incongruous with similar ones" and "conflicts with a plausible principle." That is, when we reflect on our more egalitarian principles, beliefs, or intuitions, acceptance of speciesism appears to conflict with our rejection of racist moral judgments that seek justification by way of mere group membership, regardless of similarities in relevant ways. Imagine we were to follow Singer's (2016) critique of speciesism and replaced "species" with "racial" in the above definition of speciesism. By replacing one criterion of group membership with another, the difficulties in accepting speciesism are made more apparent. Speciesism's similarity to racism, then, poses a problem when we reject racism and still entertain speciesism. Namely, it appears to both accept and deny incredibly similar moral beliefs. In expressing dissatisfaction with those who cite "the right kind" or species membership to solve the issue, the same challenge Regan raised for Kant appears to be unmoved by such philosophers.

Leaving speciesism behind, a possibly worrisome question arises though as to whether the exclusion of non-human animals from the formula of humanity is a question of consistency rather than, as was the case for non-rational humans, one of intuitions. Why I raise this as worrisome is that perhaps such an epistemic difference suggests something amiss with my attempt at arriving at animal rights under ethical intuitionism. After all, the case against the Kantian exclusion of non-rational humans primarily rested on intuition, and so an intuitionist case could be presented. Non-human animals, however, re-

quire the intuition concerning non-rational humans in addition to an argument from moral consistency to begin to build a case for animal rights.

This epistemic difference may suggest that my use of the argument from marginal cases itself has something amiss in it, and so we should hesitate in accepting it—in other words, the consistency it promotes has a tension between an intuitive claim (people with Down syndrome have inherent worth) and a potentially unintuitive claim (cows have inherent worth). As the criticism could go, only a formula of humanity that broadens "halfway" to include rational and non-rational humans can be intuitive, as the unintuitive claim that animals have inherent value is perhaps derived from a pro-animal bias and not an intellectual appearance.

My response here is that we already do, in fact, have intuitions about the moral status of *some* non-human animals that are similar to our intuitions concerning the moral status of many non-rational humans. This, in turn, pushes back against the skeptic in that we do have intuitions concerning animals as ends. The charge of pro-animal bias will be touched upon later, and, in doing so, I will briefly suggest an answer as to why many non-human animals (such as cows and pigs) may fail the test of intuition, which sees speciesism make a return. However, for the animal-friendly intuitions hinted at, the paradigmatic example I have in mind is that of our intuitions concerning dogs.

The Kantian exclusion of non-human animals (the second problem from intuitions). If one discovered a neighbor who was abusing and killing dogs for fun, one would condemn the neighbor's actions. Kant believed that he could adequately ac-

count for the moral status of dogs and perhaps other animals by appealing to indirect duties. For Kant and many others, we do not owe any moral duties directly to non-human animals. Instead, we owe only indirect duties to them. In other words, absent of direct duties, we do not owe duties *to* dogs. Rather, we only have duties *with regard* to dogs.

The famous example purportedly given by Kant in *Lectures on Ethic*s (specifically the section "Of Duties to Animals and Spirits") involves an old dog who has faithfully served his master. Kant reasons that, to put the geriatric dog to death because the pup can no longer carry out the same functions (e.g., hunting and protecting), the master would be acting immorally and cruelly. So far so good, as Kant sounds aligned with common sense, but there is a controversy underlying his position. For Kant, the master does not owe this treatment *to* the dog, but instead for the benefit of humanity (or perhaps, as we will discuss, for the benefit of the master himself). If the master callously kills the dog, then the master becomes hard in his dealings with other people. Those people are who he has direct duties to, and if killing the dog (or failing to pamper the dog after years of service) makes the master liable to violate his direct duties to those people, then an indirect duty is generated in which, for the benefit of the people, he must treat the dog decently.

Critics of the above Kantian account argue that it does not capture the full extent of the duty to, say, not abuse non-human animals, in that it would disallow it for "an intuitively unsatisfying reason" (Cholbi 2014, 339). Further worrisome is that its basis may too easily permit animal abuse under certain conditions. To preserve the indirect duties view against these problems, philosophers have argued (or have interpreted Kant as

arguing) that moral focus is instead placed on development of one's character, as opposed to merely our liability of slipping into abusing rational humans after committing dog abuse. Specifically, the indirect duty here is arguably based on a direct duty in which one "[adopts] a maxim whereby one strives to develop morally virtuous dispositions" that, in turn, "plausibly . . . give rise to indirect duties regarding non-human organisms" (Svoboda 2014, 315).

Yet, placing the moral focus on development of one's character seemingly fails to protect the indirect duties view from our two initial worries. First, one can still have the sense of an intuitively, unsatisfying reason for the wrongness of dog abuse under this account. Specifically, if one were to witness dog abuse, it does not seem that the wrongness of the act would immediately appear to us as the abuser failing to develop virtue—or, at least, it would take a backseat to other moral considerations. Rather, it seems that one would take immediate consideration of the pain of the dog or perhaps the dog's interest in avoiding the abuse. Second, there is always a contingency, whether it be in our relations with others or the development of our virtues or vices, as to whether treating something will have a certain outcome on the psychological factors that influence either the development of one's own moral character or, even consequently, the treatment of someone. For example, it could just as well be the case that some people may be quite good at not developing a cruel, cold heart from abusing dogs. If the dog abuser avoids "damages [to] the kindly and humane qualities in himself" (Kant 1997, 212), then we come closer to Kant and the indirect duties view via virtue leaving us empty-handed on the immorality of abusing dogs.

Granted, the virtuous view seemingly considers more than one simply not developing vice, and it would want to say, too, that the dog abuser, even if he avoids developing vices, misses the morally important feature of developing virtue. Yet, again, a particular problem for the indirect duties view remains. Namely, given its contingency on how it will affect the "hearts" of people, there could be a case where, upon abusing a dog, the master grows a deeper appreciation for the pains and hardships of humanity—potentially developing one's virtues of fortitude or temperance in the process. Just as a long day of labor from, for example, swinging a hammer into inanimate objects may build one's character, it does not appear implausible that the same sort of character building could not be accomplished, for the Kantian under the right conditions, if the inanimate objects were replaced with dogs. Allen Wood (1998, 194-5) paints a similar picture in that ". . . if it happened to be a quirk of human psychology that torturing animals [made] us that much kinder toward humans (perhaps by venting our aggressive impulses on helpless victims), then Kant's argument would apparently make it a duty to inflict gratuitous cruelty on puppies and kittens so as to make us that much kinder to people." With this psychological stipulation, not only would traditional Kantians have us abuse dogs to be kinder to people, but, as a matter of virtue, they would also ask us to do so to be kind people. The possibility of this psychological quirk, then, raises issues for either an indirect duties view that emphasizes maintaining good relations between rational humans as well as an indirect duties view that emphasizes cultivating a virtuous disposition.

Schopenhauer (1995, 95-6) puts the point finely, citing the conflict with "genuine morality" when one holds that non-humans serve simply as a "pathological phantom for the purpose of practicing sympathy for human beings." If we ask ourselves

which of the two wins our hand in epistemic confidence: abusing dogs is directly wrong, or Kantian ethics is completely correct, I think the former comfortably edges out the latter. Kantian ethics, then, faces a two-pronged attack when faced with common sense morality. The first prong is that many non-rational humans exist as ends in themselves. The second prong is that it would be a direct wrong to abuse, for example, dogs, which is to suggest that some non-human animals do not have the moral status as mere things and instead are ends in themselves, or alternatively, "If 'wrong' can be done to animals, they must have rights" (Franklin 2005, 48).

Prejudice vs. prudence: a question for the intuitionist and the skeptic

The anti-intuitionist or anti-animal rights advocate may argue that, by claiming to defend animals on intuitive grounds, I may be experiencing a cultural prejudice and attempting to pass it off as an intuition. Sztybel (2010, 134) appears to do this by labeling intuitions as "disguised appeals to personal prejudice." So, in appealing to the intuitiveness of the immorality of dog abuse, a skeptic could reply that, while clear to a 21st century American, this is not obvious for individuals raised in other cultures. As Carruthers (1992, 19) states, "intuitions seem, to a remarkable degree, to reflect the norms that are current in their surrounding society."

Skepticism of intuitions under the worry of dogma, cultural bias, or personal prejudice has generated discussion among intuitionists such as Huemer (2008) and Audi (2004, chap. 2). What I wish to draw attention toward, however, is that the skeptic's retort of bias and prejudice against the intuitionist—specifically, in relation to animal rights—is a charge that skeptics themselves must also diffuse. Russ Shafer-Landau (2003,

262) has raised the concern that there may be "impediments to assent" to self-evident beliefs, with such impediments taking the form of "gullibility, lack of experience, brainwashing, morally impoverished upbringings, facile thinking, etc." Focusing the point on moral principles, Audi (1997, 103) states that "since moral principles are practical in implying reasons for which we should act or at least be disposed to act, there are biases that may impede accepting them," and such biases may become pronounced, Audi suggests, when we take into consideration that "moral principles are constraining, even a burden." The moral obligations generated by animal rights, then, may provoke the biases that impede assent by morally requiring changes to one's ordinary habits and choices. The same can be entertained for skepticism of self-evident beliefs being a matter of an impediment to assent rather than a justified position in itself. This is to say that denial or incredulity of the self-evident, such as in the case of the moral status of some non-human animals, does not serve to undermine its self-evidency, as "the reluctance of some to acknowledge the truth of what we take to be self-evident is not by itself a sufficient to show that such principles are not, in fact, self-evident" (Shafer-Landau 2003, 262). Rather, such reluctance (and thereby conflict) may be better explained by some of the impediments to assent that skeptics themselves may experience.

Perhaps, then, that contrary to the skeptic's earlier claim of prudence, it is the individual who denies the inherent value of some animals who suffers from an impediment, such as the resistance to obligations generated by an animal rights position or the influence of pervasive cultural assumptions that views many animals as things to be used and replaced. For the former, the denial of the inherent value of pigs as opposed to dogs may be explained, at least in part, by the changes people must

enact in order to respect pigs in a culture that routinely eats them, whereas the same adjustments do not have to be made to treat dogs respectfully. For the latter, cultural assumptions may work toward explaining the line we draw between dogs and pigs or cats and rats—that is, speciesism, if it has been correctly identified as a prejudice or bias in favor of some species while being against others, seemingly offers an explanation regarding our incongruent moral judgments and intuitions about animals. None of this is to say that the intuitionist is off the hook for the problem of prejudice, but both the intuitionist and the skeptic are saddled with questions of prejudice that invite caution for each side.

Conclusion

To conclude, I want to briefly comment on the implications of my view. There are at least two ways in which my view, if true, has something to say about animal ethics: one, just as we can directly see that many non-human animals are maimed, terrorized, and killed, we can intuitively know that these animals have a dignity that is deserving of respect, not subjugation; two, ethical intuitionism, as applied in animal ethics, can provide animal ethicists and animal rights advocates a more philosophically unified means by which to defend animal rights and, most importantly, those animals whose rights are violated.

This all provided, however, if we come to accept a couple conditions. The first is that we non-inferentially grasp moral truths through an intellectual appearance (i.e., intuition). Anti-intuitionists (either pro- or anti-animal) will not like this proclamation, but this is to invite further debate on the epistemic merits of these various positions. The other and more controversial condition is that we already intuitively recognize the inherent value of many non-human animals. Lastly, the problem

of prejudice weighs on both the intuitionist and skeptic, but, in place of intuitions being mere bias, there is a question as to whether the bias rests in those who deny the intuitive dignity of animals.

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