Ethical Essays

Ethical Essays

A collection of work by students on applied philosophy

edited by
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Preface

Be a free thinker and don't accept everything you hear as truth. Be critical and evaluate what you believe in.

Aristole

Before becoming a student of the 'Environmental Ethics and Sustainable Development' Master course at Utrecht University, I believed that philosophy was an academic domain untouchable for those lacking an understanding of the complexities of philosophical theories, authors or subjects. I quickly learned that the essence of philosophy is a central part of life as a human being, as we are constantly seeking to understand the fundamental truths about ourselves, our world and the interconnectedness of existence. On a personal level, I realized that I have been thinking philosophically on a daily basis for as long as I can remember, with my curiosity and wonder at the world generating a constant list of questions in mind, many which I still have no answers to.

Through learning about concepts in environmental ethics, I began to utilize this inherent philosophical curiosity on a deeper level by questioning my true values and beliefs in relation to my connection to the world around me. Most importantly I started to question if my behaviours reflect my beliefs, and thus began to think critically about how modern societal systems subconsciously shape our behaviours and ideas. Ultimately, I felt empowered to be given the tools to question and challenge the everyday ethical issues which I had grown to accept, particularly in relation to humanity's treatment of the natural world. This act of empowering students to challenge everyday norms through philosophical thinking is at the core of the 'Philosophy of Science and Ethics' bachelor's programme at Utrecht University, led by Dr. Floris van den Berg.

This book is a collection of work written by a sample of students of the 'Philosophy of Science and Ethics' course in the 2021-2022 academic year, and aims to elucidate how environmental philosophy empowers students to think critically about everyday ethical issues. The range of assignments and appendices demonstrates the many creative ways in which philosophical tools can be used. There is also a 'Bildung' honours component of the course, which is open to all students who wish to work on self-development and flourishing through cultural enrichment. This is achieved through extra-curricular group meetings and assignments on a variety of topics aimed at stimulating their philosophical reflection, which are also sampled in this book. Although this book is aimed at students of this course, we encourage anyone to enjoy it no matter what stage of their philosophical journey they are on. We hope it sparks interest, raises questions, starts discussions and encourages readers to be creative and think outside the box. Start reading, start writing and start thinking about the wonder of the natural world. We hope you enjoy!

We also encourage readers to go on a walkshop, which are walking-workshops created by Floris for students to experience the deep ecology approach to nature. The basic premise of this experience is to spend time consciously connecting with and reflecting on the natural world. In July 2022, Floris and I recorded a walkshop podcast to be used as a guiding tool for anyone who would like to go on a walkshop. This podcast is available on Floris's YouTube page and is titled: '*Podwalk DIY walkshop with Floris and Sarah*[1]': We encourage you to listen to it and hope that by completing a walkshop, on a singular or regular basis, you will gain a deeper understanding of the intrinsic value of the natural world, your connection with it and of what you can do to protect it.

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1 The walkshop podcast can be accessed through this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZgMDOnS_jfM

Thank you to all the students for their creative contributions and hard work in completing the course. Thank you to Mark Huisjes for insightful and constructive edits to this book, following his work as the editor of previous edition in 2015. And thank you to all the dedicated teaching staff for the positive impact they have on the many individuals who have taken this course over the years. To Floris van den Berg, Natalie Herdoiza Castro, Laura Bello Cartagena, Luna Steenbergen and Amy Newsom, the changes of hearts and minds you have generated is immeasurable.

Be the change you want to see in the world,

Sarah Nolan

Philosophy of Science and Ethics teaching assistant
Autumn 2022

Introduction

How are we to live?

The importance of critical thinking

Floris van den Berg

There is nothing irrational about insisting on a more humane world.

James Garvey, *The Ethics of Climate Change*

SAPERE AUDE (Latin for 'dare to know') is the slogan of the project of the Enlightenment as coined by philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). Critical thinking takes both courage and effort. Critical thinking is not the same as thinking a lot or thinking the opposite. Critical thinking means you have to discipline and practice your mind by mastering skills like argumentation, conceptual analysis, (informal) logic and applied philosophy of science (see for example: Stuart Hanscomb, *Critical thinking. The Basics* (2016).

Ethical Essays shows some of the results of students who dare to think. As a lecturer in philosophy, I try to stimulate, encourage and coach the critical thinking skills of students. In my Bachelor course 'Philosophy of Science & Ethics' at Utrecht University, students write an individual and a group essay. These assignments encourage students to practice philosophy by writing clearly and accessibly for a broad audience and taking a moral stance.

In the individual essay students explore a moral case study and apply normative theories and relevant philosophical concepts to make a case for their statement. In order to be able to participate in public debate as an academic, students learn to argue for a normative standpoint. The essays were critically reviewed by co-students (also known as 'pal review'). Reading and grading the assignments of more than 100 students is

a lot of work – even when working with a team – but it is an interesting experience in which students continue to fascinate our teaching team with their work. The students come up with surprising topics, ideas, arguments and sources. It is stimulating and inspiring to see them develop intellectually during this course. The aim of this philosophy class is two-fold. First, to make students reflect on the scientific method, or in other words, on why science is the most reliable way to gain knowledge. And second, making students think about what is good and bad, and what is a just society.

The students also write a group essay, conducted in a limited time, in which they compare two philosophers which are assigned to them, with a set of criteria. With this assignment, students learn how to quickly grasp the essence of a philosopher without studying her or his whole oeuvre. The set of criteria gives them guidance in how to find out what are the main standpoints of the philosopher at hand. Reading the group essays that have been selected in this book will not only give you a brief but sharp introduction to these philosophers, but will also shows how to get a grip on a philosopher. In doing group work students experience how it is to work as a team – just like in real life people work together to get things done all the time. Practicing group work is a worthwhile life skill.

In the early 20th century, the German philosophical Frankfurter Schule invented an important distinction between two types of reason (or rationality): instrumental and value reason. The first, instrumental reason, deals with using reason (and thus science and technology) to overcome concrete problems. Value reason, on the other hand, addresses the purposes of science and technology: what should we actually use them for? Unfortunately, science and technology can be used for both good and bad purposes; this is why value reason is of fundamental importance. Too often, in education there is a narrow focus on instrumental reason. Critical thinking should include value reason, and thus questioning assumptions, like

our attitude towards non-human animals, nature, future generations and people in poor conditions.

In this philosophy course big questions are addressed and discussed such as:

- What is good?
- What is a good and just society?
- How should I live my life?
- What are the important questions of our time?
- How do I gain reliable knowledge?

When we start to ask these important questions, to zoom out and to look for the big picture, a dramatic change in perspective takes place. The inconvenient, horrible and often neglected elephant in the room become visible: the rapid on-going and increasing disastrous ecological crisis. We are heading towards environmental collapse of the ecological balance of our planet, and this will be the end of western, modern, industrialized society. We are on the brink of ecological suicide. This is the inconvenient and horrible truth, which becomes clear when we see the big picture. We will have to do everything we can to save ourselves, our children, future generations and nature. Unfortunately, philosophy and critical thinking is no guarantee for happiness and tranquillity. Ignorance seems bliss.

The essays by students in this book are the result of opening Pandora's Box of philosophical problems. I hope these essays make you think and create some new perspectives. The most fundamental question anyone can ask is: do I want to be part of problem, or do I want to be part of the solution? As long as we continue to have a huge ecological footprint, for example by not being vegan, not quitting flying and staying addicted to plastic and consumerism, we are not going to make it. And we know it. We care and we don't care. Time is running out. SAPERE AUDE.

What you teach is what you learn

A reflection on the value and responsibility of teaching

Natalie Herdoiza Castro

Education without philosophy would mean a failure to understand the precise nature of education.

John Adams

Despite coming from a family of teachers I never foresaw myself as one. In all honesty, being a teacher seemed rather boring. In my younger years, I thought I would become a field ecologist, a veterinarian, or with a bit of luck, a nature photographer at *National Geographic*. Nevertheless, working as a junior teacher, has been one of the most interesting and gratifying things I have done professionally. But most importantly, the experience opened my perspective about the value and responsibility of being an educator. I have come to realize, that the knowledge I have shared throughout the years would not have been as valuable if I did not encourage students to analyze it from a philosophical lens. Hence, it is my belief that beyond providing knowledge, the main purpose of teaching should be guiding students to question the purpose of their newly acquired knowledge. This can be done by encouraging them to reflect on how they want to apply what they learn; be it in their own life, in their communities, and hopefully in benefit of the planet at large.

The course 'Philosophy of Science and Ethics' (previously called 'The Microscope and the Elephant'), was my first experience as a junior teacher. I had no clear expectations, since it was the first time I was involved in a philosophy course. I swiftly realized that this was very different to other courses I followed throughout my own academic education. The premise

reflected on the fact that when an elephant is analyzed with only a microscope, you won't easily grasp the larger picture. That is the risk of scientific specialization. Hence, this course was about zooming out and observing patterns in a broader context. Our main role as teachers was to encourage students to ask and attempt to answer a series of challenging questions. Through this process, they were frequently confronted in their own views and beliefs. Hence, they had the opportunity to question their selves, their lifestyles and their world views by bringing difficult philosophical questions to their academic and personal experiences. Interestingly, when receiving feedback from students, this was what they appreciated the most from the course.

There is a level of amity and reciprocity that develops when you have the opportunity to discuss philosophical questions with students. While you are the one sharing the theoretical knowledge, you also get to learn from their views and motivations. One example of this process was the animal ethics lecture, which I had the opportunity to impart as part of the curriculum of the 'Philosophy of Science and Ethics' course. While the lecture was full of confronting and difficult topics, most students were open and receptive to what they learned. In fact, there were always students who left the lecture with unaddressed questions. So they sent me emails, or approached me after class, eager to learn more about how they could make a difference to end the needless suffering of non-human animals. Even though frequently I did not have concrete answers to these challenging quandaries, we worked together to come up with plausible answers. After this process, a few of them also decided to shift their lifestyles to align them with their own personal and professional expectations.

It has been six years since I started working as a junior teacher, and I have learned throughout this journey that everything students learn, even in the academic setting, is filtered through their own world views and paradigms. Ultimately, how they decide to apply this knowledge will be a

very personal moral experience. Nonetheless, I hope to have encouraged at least some students to challenge their own views and values, and to put their learning into practice. This can be at a small scale, by shifting their lifestyles, or at a larger scale, by taking part of important collective decisions. What really matters, is that students find the inspiration to use what they learn in benefit of others, their fellow humans, future generations, non-human-sentient beings, and maybe even, the whole planet.

Ethical Case Studies

The use of philosophical theories and tools allows one to approach and understand ethical issues from new perspectives, encouraging one to be more critical and inquisitive about subjects which have become accepted or normalized in modern society. This assignment aims to instil this level of critical reflection within students. In this essay, students show their mastery of the 'Philosophy of Science and Ethics' course subject by actively applying some of the ethical theories and tools on the topic of a moral case study of their choice. The following are a selection of students' work showcasing their perspectives on a variety of their chosen subjects and from their personal perspectives. A detailed instruction of prerequisites for a good essay can be found in the appendices.

Industrial animal agriculture is the biggest source of mammal suffering

Why our current food system is unethical, unsustainable and inefficient

Lennart Wittstock

Could you look an animal in the eyes and say:
'my appetite is more important than your suffering'?

Moby

Approximately 70 billion animals are currently held in captivity for food. Based on federal reports from the meat industry, 36 million cows, 124 million pigs and 8 billion chickens are slaughtered in the US alone (Animalclock.org). These shocking numbers show that animal agriculture has not only grown to an unprecedented magnitude but evolved to be the single biggest source of suffering for mammals on Earth. Yet we are arguably less reliant on animal agriculture than any other time in the course of human history. In many countries including the US, the Netherlands and Germany, only around 1-2% of the population are employed in agriculture and in most developed countries households spend less than 15% of their income on food (The Global Economy, 2019). This indicates that these societies have much leeway on how to structure their food systems. In other words, the existence of industrial animal agriculture and the suffering it causes for the subjected animals is not a necessity but a choice. Furthermore, it is not only a bad choice for the animals held as livestock. It also endangers species and ecosystems due to land use change, while contributing heavily to greenhouse gas emissions and thereby threatening current and future generations of humans. Therefore, industrial animal agriculture must be stopped and

removed from our food system.

For a large part of society, the practice of industrial animal agriculture seems to be strongly out of tune with current worldviews and believes. Religion has continued to lose relevance in most western societies and has been replaced by science in its function to tell us how the world works. It is also replaced by the pursuit of pleasurable emotions as functions to give us direction. These shifts in the understanding of the world also entail consequences for our relationships with animals. Unfortunately, most of our society has kept old, formerly justifiable views, on animals and thereby lives in a state of moral and rational inconsistency. If we do not believe in a God then that God cannot give us allowance to use and abuse animals, as it is stated in the Bible for example: "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the Earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the Earth." (Genesis 1:26-28). In modern societies that dismiss religion and the idea of a human divinity, such domination of the natural world as insighted in the Bible should be opposed. However, industrial agricultural practices take this biblical approach of humanity controlling the natural world and all its beings. If our worldviews are moving away from religious fundamentals, then our behaviour should too.

Additionally, science tells us that humans evolved through evolutionary processes just like any other creature on Earth. Therefore, a different treatment of humans and non-human animals can only be justified by a feature rather than the process of creation. Certain features in humans differ from non-human animals such as the ability of rational reasoning or the extensive proficiency in language. But these features fall short as a justification for the use and abuse of a being, as this would mean that babies or mentally disabled people are also undeserving of moral status. As Bentham (1789) put forward: "the question is not, can they reason? Nor can they

talk? But can they suffer?". And here again science can give clear guidance. The domain of welfare biology has come up with certain measures to classify the ability a being to suffer such as its level of awareness, social complexity, and ability for future planning. Unfortunately, the animals that rank high on these classifications such as cows and pigs make up a big part of the livestock in factory farms. Furthermore, neurobiology can tell us that the processes and chemicals involved that cause a human to experience the feeling of pain, anxiety or sadness are strikingly similar in non-human mammals that are held in industrial agriculture (DeGrazia 2002). We must therefore assume that the process of getting castrated without anaesthesia or being stripped of a new-born is experienced with similar horror for a pig, cow or a human. Someone with a scientific worldview thereby must acknowledge that industrial agriculture causes suffering among billions of sentient non-human animals.

This status is mostly held alive through the unwillingness of a majority to sacrifice the tastes involved in a carnivore or omnivore diet, or to change habits and make extra efforts in the transition to a vegan diet. As put forward by Singer and other philosophers, a utilitarian calculus should weigh pain stronger than pleasure (Blackburn, 2003). Thereby, even if the abusive live and ultimate killing of pig can give joy to a multitude of people in the form of its meat, the suffering involved in the painful process outweighs the joy its flesh creates for those people. But even if we were to disregard non-human animals in our moral concerns, supporting industrial animal agriculture would remain unethical due to its horrific effects on ecosystems, climate and ultimately the lives of current and future human generations. To understand the implications of our eating behaviours on the planet, we need to grasp the scale at which agriculture is impacting the world. According to a report by the World Resources Institute (2019), cropland and pasture occupy half of the fertile land on Earth of which more than two thirds are used for livestock. Furthermore,

they state that if the human population continues to grow as projected and current levels of productivity remain until 2050, then "feeding the planet would entail wiping out thousands more species and releasing enough GHG emissions to exceed the 1.5°C and 2°C warming targets enshrined in the Paris Agreement – even if emissions from all other human activities were entirely eliminated" (World Resources Institute, 2019, p. 2). This would be in stark contrasts to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out by the United Nations, namely goals 12 for responsible consumption and production, goal 13 for climate action and goal 15 for life on land.

The findings of the World Resources Institute (2019) report therefore make it clear that we need to be as efficient as possible in our endeavour to provide enough food for all humans on Earth. Under dominant carnivorous diets, providing for oneself in an efficient way may directly result in less resources being left for everyone else, which leaves two scenarios that are both ethically reprehensible. Either others must starve, which is opposing SDG 2 (no hunger), or more resources have to be used that are available to ensure a liveable world for future generations, which is opposing SDG 12 (sustainable production and consumption). The former is violating universal human rights, and the latter is presentist, as it hurts future generations for a small pleasure in the present generation. As it happens to be, a plant-based diet is the most efficient way to supply enough food to everyone (Castañé & Antón, 2017), whereas a carnivore diet is the most inefficient. This is vividly exemplified by the fact that more than half of the greenhouse gas emissions in agricultural production come from meat, but even in a country with a high share of meat consumption such as the USA, only 3% of calories come from meat (World Resources Institute, 2019).

Technology has helped to increase the efficiency of agriculture over the last decades, and it has been argued that technologies that are not yet invented might be able to continue this trend and thereby curb our impacts to some

degree (World Resources Institute, 2019). At the same time, the current technologies and areas used for agricultural land are sufficient to feed the projected ten billion humans if everyone were to adopt a plant-based diet, not over-eat and not waste food (World Resources Institute, 2019). From an ethical point of view, it thereby becomes highly dubious why one would risk the lives of millions if not billions of humans by taking the risk that these technological advances do not occur at the needed magnitude and pace if a sufficient solution already exits that only asks for minor sacrifices. Therefore, the only realistic solution to counter our impact on the environment is to adopt a plant-based diet which involves stopping industrial animal agriculture.

One can understand the variety of options to minimise suffering by once again utilizing the utilitarian calculus, but this time disregarding all non-human animals. Scenario one would be a multiplication of two factors; the probability that technological advances are not quick and extensive enough to radically raise the efficiency of a meat producing food system, multiplied by the suffering experienced in a world where almost all forest has to be cut. In this case, climate change unfolds in one of the worst cases predicted by the IPCC and a considerable percentage of humanity would starve. Scenario two would entail the unpleasant feelings that are experienced when not being able to eat the desired food, having to change habits and potentially feel patronised. I assume that a vast majority of people presented with this information would conclude that scenario two is the best choice to reduce suffering or simply reduce the risk of suffering. We then must think of the potential of suffering for both human and non-human animals when choosing our diets, in which it is clear that suffering from a loss of meat consumption is far outweighed by the suffering of beings slaughtered to provide that meat.

However, some people justify their consumption of meat by stating that they only eat ethical animal products such as free-range chicken, beef or milk from an organic farm or meat

that a hunter shot (Scruton, 1991). We can again look at this argument with and without giving moral status to animals but will conclude that the consumption of animal products remains unethical in both cases. Firstly, for animals living in a farm that does qualify for some kind of animal welfare certificate, the suffering is not eliminated but slightly reduced. A cow that is used for milk production will still have to be separated from her new-born, and all of these animals will still have to be slaughtered somehow. This means if we accept sentience, the ability to suffer and thereby assign moral status to a being (van den Berg & Meindertsma, 2012), we cannot justify its unnecessary suffering by stating that it could be suffering slightly more in a different context. Similarly, it is unethical to strip humans from their right to freedom of movement no matter how bad other people are treated somewhere else in the world. Secondly, even if we disregard the moral status of non-human animals once again and solely focus on the interest and needs of human beings, we can see that this attitude does not pass the test of Kant's categorial imperative. If everyone behaved this way, there are not enough resources to feed the world and meet the needs of future generations, as laid out in previous arguments. Additionally, if we want to treat an animal better it usually means it needs to be provided with more resources. The aim to make the process of raising an animal as cost-effective as possible is what led to cruel but also resource saving inventions such as battery cages. It is therefore clear that we simply do not have enough space on Earth to give the billions and billions of chickens the space to roam so that everyone can eat free range chicken. The same applies to meat from hunters, there are simply not enough wild roaming animals that we can shoot to feed every carnivore on Earth with meat from this source.

To conclude, it can be stated that there is no ethical justification for keeping the cultural practice of using and abusing non-human animals in industrial agriculture. From a moral perspective, there is high certainty that this industry

is causing suffering for billions of sentient animals and puts humanity at risk of not being able to provide basic needs for billions of its members. Furthermore, the practice of eating meat is unethical if we assign moral status to non-human animals or not. Since justifications for eating meat fall short, this practice seems to be rooted not in logic but habit, cognitive dissonance and egoism. Industrial agriculture therefore must be stopped as it is cruel, harmful and cannot be justified.

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European countries must stop the refugee crisis

Those fighting for their fundamental human rights deserve our help

Roos Wiessing

A nation ringed by walls will only imprison itself.

Barack Obama

The European refugee crisis has been ongoing for years. 2015 marked the peak inflow of refugees Europe had faced since World War II (Niemann & Zaun, 2018). As defined in the 1951 Refugee Convention, "refugees are people who have fled war, violence, conflict or persecution and have crossed an international border to find safety in another country" (UNHCR, 2001). The core principle of the convention holds that "a refugee should not be returned to a country where they face serious threats to their life or freedom" (UNHCR, 2001). However, European Union (EU) Member States' responses to the humanitarian crisis do not respect this principle and have been insufficient and unwelcoming to refugees in desperation. European countries have a duty to grant asylum as it is unethical to prevent refugees from living a better life.

The EU refugee crisis reflects the lack of progress made towards the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically goals 10 and 16. SDG 10 aspires for "reduced inequality within and among countries" (United Nations, 2015). Statistics show that since 2010, the number of refugees has more than doubled. To illustrate the magnitude of the problem, the European Commission (2020) stated that "in 2020, 186 deaths and disappearances were recorded on migratory routes". The EU has arguably become numb to the graveyard in the

Mediterranean (Trew, 2021). This is the ongoing fight many face for their fundamental right of freedom (United Nations, 1948). Yet, EU Member States chose to discriminate against desperate people arriving to their countries, exacerbating inequality. The refugee crisis is also closely linked to SDG 16: "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels" (United Nations, 2015). However, some of the main drivers of forced displacement are conflict, violence, and injustice, and therefore go directly against the premise of this goal. The discrimination against refugees therefore needs to be addressed and resolved to effectively strive for achieving the SDGs.

Additionally, according to the theory on utilitarianism developed by philosopher Peter Singer, Member States have a duty to grant asylum to refugees (Gibney, 2018). The theory of utilitarianism it argues that actions that maximizing the happiness and well-being for most individuals involved is the most ethical approach (Mill, 1863). Hereby a distinction is made between right and wrong by focusing on outcomes and weighing the costs and benefits of an action, thus it is a form of consequentialism (Blackburn, 2002). The costs and benefits of granting refugee's asylum in the EU can be measured through the following arguments.

Firstly, Europe has an ageing population as fertility has declined whilst life expectancy has increased by 12 years compared to 1950 (Diaconu, 2015). Migration has prevented the shrinking of the European population by half a million in 2019 (European Commission, 2020). In 2020, the EU population was reduced by approximately 300 thousand people due to fewer births, increased deaths, and a net reduction in migration (European Commission, 2020). Therefore, an influx of working aged people would help to counter this problem whilst bringing and integrating new skills in the host country.

This requires the application of the ethical concept of expanding the moral circle and thinking past nationalism.

Expanding our moral circle entails having equal considerations of equal interests for a wider range of beings deserving a moral status (van den Berg, 2021b). Currently, refugees who are not welcomed in the EU reside outside of the boundaries of the moral circle, thus they are deemed unworthy of moral consideration (Laham, 2009). This is clearly reflected in the lacking political response of EU Member States in taking in refugees, as the number of refugees resettled in EU was 59% less in 2020 than 2019 (European Commission, 2020). Moreover, 396,000 non-EU citizens were ordered to leave the EU in 2020 (European Commission, 2020).

Additionally, by equally considering the interests of refugees, we acknowledge that despite them having different nationalities, cultures, and mother tongues, they are human just like us and thus deserve equal rights. In fact, in articles 13 and 14 under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, everyone "has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State" and "the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution" (United Nations, 1948). Therefore, EU Member States have a moral duty to grant asylum to refugees as it is unethical to prevent them from living a better life. This is elucidated by John Stuart Mill's no harm principle; you may do whatever you like as long as you do not harm others (van den Berg & Huisjes, 2016). From anthropocentric worldview, 'others' includes all humans. According to Singer, this is a form of speciesism where we consider all beings belonging to our species without moral justification (DeGrazia, 2002). Furthermore, we can extend our moral circle further to have moral consideration for all being that can suffer through 'sentientism' (van den Berg & Huisjes, 2016). In both scenarios and according to the 'no harm principle', which serves as a guideline for what constitutes moral behaviour (van den Berg & Huisjes, 2016), refugees fall into the category of 'others' that should not be harmed and should be deemed moral consideration. Refugees are suffering and should thus be treated accordingly, rather than

disrespected and discarded as is currently the case.

Although the UK is no longer part of the EU, its policies and attitudes towards refugees serves as a primarily bad example of dealing with this humanitarian crisis. There has been an increase of anti-immigration sentiment across the UK, and such rhetoric has been reflected in tabloids where racial hatred against migrants have been instigated through mediums including cartoons (Dathan et al., 2017). This illustrates a pattern of dehumanisation and lack of empathy for those fleeing conflict in their home countries (Dathan et al., 2017). This discriminatory response is arguably illogical because Britain is desperate for workers (Jenkins, 2021). There is especially high demand for physical labour such as picking fruit or working in factories (Jenkins, 2021). Refugees may be willing to do work that is needed, yet instead of welcoming them with gratitude, Britain is desperate to keep them out (Jenkins, 2021). Furthermore, the refugees arriving at Britain's coasts are skilled workers including doctors, engineers, academics, and farmers, who are simply trying to find safety. Refugees could therefore increase economic growth whilst preventing issues associated with an ageing population, yet Britain is denying itself this fortune due to racist and xenophobic ideas. According to Singer's utilitarianism, allowing refugees in would maximise benefits for all individuals, making it the most ethical course of action.

However, it can be argued that Europe is too full and simply does not have the capacity to accept thousands of refugees. Although Europe's population is ageing, the number of people has been ever increasing as life expectancy has risen in many countries. Therefore, Europe is indeed getting fuller with an increase of megacities. This results that the refugee influx is concentrated in certain areas which may cause local tensions within communities (Debating Europe, 2017). In turn, this creates tension within the EU as refugees are not fairly distributed among Member States. Namely Sweden and Germany are unfairly burdened (Debating Europe, 2017).

Moreover, worries exist that accepting many refugees can be seen as an 'invasion' of different cultures and a 'clash of civilizations' (Debating Europe, 2017). This goes hand in hand with the idea that terrorism and crime rates may increase and make Europe less safe. Finally, many share the fear that the economy will be overburdened and that social benefits used by host citizens will have to be shared amongst foreign refugees.

These counterarguments to the acceptance of refugees in the EU must be considered and carefully analysed. Firstly, according to the European Commission (2020), although Europe's population is overall increasing, only 10% of the world's total amount of refugees were living in the EU at the end of 2020. This is 0.6% of refugees compared to Europe's total population. Moreover, most refugees move to neighbouring countries rather than to Europe. These statistics show that although refugees are unequally distributed among EU Member States and this must change, the number of refugees granted asylum remains extremely low overall. Furthermore, it is unfair that 86% of refugees are hosted by countries neighbouring the crisis areas and low- and middle-income countries (UNHCR, 2001). A greater burden of hosting refugees is placed upon developing regions, rather than EU Member States who are more capable (UNHCR, 2001). Even though there is a concentrated influx of people in cities, there is a diminishing need for people to accumulate in cities due to globalization and increased communication (Hedberg & Haandrikman, 2014). This further increases the capacity for Member States to grant refugees asylum despite having high population concentrations in megacities. Singer's concept of effective altruism can also be applied here. Altruism entails that we have a responsibility to help if we can help (van den Berg, 2021a). However, effective altruism focuses on helping in a rational way, where resources should be placed to have the biggest possible impact (van den Berg, 2021a). In this case, the EU is responsible to help refugees as they possess the resources to do so. Directly granting refugees asylum and altering EU

policies would arguably be a more helpful use of resources than donating the original countries to try and improve citizens quality of life there.

Finally, although refugees usually have different cultures and/or religions, the limited proportion that are granted asylum in the EU will not cause an 'invasion' or 'take-over' of native cultures in the EU. The number is simply too small. The fear of terrorism among EU Member States is mainly directed at the Muslim religion due to events such as 9/11 and train bombings in London, Madrid, and Brussels (Maliepaard et al., 2010). However, a study conducted by Maliepaard et al. (2010) show that there has been a decline in religious and ethnic identity among young Muslim people living in the Netherlands. This deconstructs the fear that refugees coming to the EU are religious extremists or nationalists with terrorist intentions. Taking Germany as example, there has been a positive association between the increase in refugees and the overall crime rate (Dehos, 2021). However, this rise in crime rate has been drive by non-violent property crimes and frauds (Dehos, 2021), which may stem from desperation of those neglected by the system. Integration programs to ensure a good quality of life for refugees in hosting countries may pose as a solution to such crimes. Therefore, the counterarguments to allowing refugees into the EU stem from fear, racism, and xenophobia, which is irrational when looking at the statistics and data outlined above.

In conclusion, there are many arguments illustrating that granting refugees asylum in EU Member States would produce the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. Hosting refugees would counteract Europe's ageing population and the diminishing working age group. It would also help to solve the refugee crisis thereby making progress in SDGs 10 and 16. According to Singer's utilitarianism, the benefits outweigh the costs and thus hosting refugees is the most ethical action. This is supported by the concepts of effective altruism, expanding the moral circle and the no harm principle. Fear is

unfortunately the leading factor preventing Member States' borders from opening. However, the EU must recognise that they have a moral obligation to allow refugees access to a better life. This is especially relevant since the number of displaced people is bound to increase with the ongoing threat of climate change. Cultural integration is not something to be feared but something we should all strive for.

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We should all be against palm oil

The consumption of palm oil is unethical and harmful for humans, animals and nature

Janna Verstraeten

Palm oil is the dirtiest ingredient on our shelves.

Joanna Blythman

If you ever eat chocolate, pizza or ice cream, or use shampoo, soap or lipstick, chances are that you have consumed palm oil. The palm oil industry has been more prevalent in global news for the past few years for multiple reasons. Firstly, the production of palm oil has detrimental effects on the environment, such as a contribution to the emission of greenhouse gases, ozone deformation and atmospheric acidification, which are all harmful for humanity (Saswattecha et al., 2015). The fact that the palm oil production is contributing to these issues is contrary to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13 on Climate Action. Additionally, palm oil production significantly contributes to deforestation in tropical areas as the oil palm crop grows only in tropical areas. This has adverse effects for animals in these tropical regions since the production sites are not liveable habitats for native mammals and birds that lived there before the land-use change (Sheil et al., 2009). SDG 15 states that the sustainable management of forests and the conservation of biodiversity is needed, which is being prevented by the palm oil production process. Moreover, the palm oil industry is violating human rights. News articles have explored how large companies expand and take over land from local native people, ultimately having detrimental impacts on the livelihoods of these communities (Gyuse, 2021). These reasons have quite factually

explained why palm oil production is harmful, namely as it is involved with violating human and animal rights and while also contributing to global warming. However, this paper will focus on why the production and consuming of palm oil is bad from an ethical perspective. Thus, everyone should stop using products containing palm oil as it is unethical.

As previously explained, the usage of products that contain palm oil contributes to environmental damage in a multitude of ways. To produce palm oil, tropical forests have to undergo land-use change to be converted into plantations. Land-use change results in regional climate change, soil degradation, the reduction in ability of ecosystems to support human needs and an imbalance in the carbon cycle (Lambin et al., 2003). These effects will most likely have irreversible impacts on the Earth and thus affect all people, including future generations. According to liberalism, people should be able to do as they please to maximize individual liberty, which in this case, is consuming products with palm oil in them. However, liberalism states that one can do as they please with one condition: it does not harm others. Green liberalism goes even one step further and includes both non-human animals and future generations in that ideology. As the production of palm oil harms people of both present and future generations by contributing to environmental damage, it is in contrast with green liberalism. If one wishes to live by the moral rules of green liberalism, they should attempt to limit the amount of harm done by them. The harm impact scale is a method in which one can assess how much harm is being done to others through performing certain actions (van den Berg, 2022). The harm that one inflicts on another being cannot be undone, which is why people should try to reduce the harm they inflict upon others. In this case, consuming palm oil results in harming future generations and non-human animals, which can be reduced if one stops buying products containing palm oil.

While most people will be able to understand why harming the environment is wrong as it has negative impacts for all

living beings on Earth, not everyone's attitude towards nature is the same. By consuming products that contain palm oil, one has devoted themselves to despotism. Despotism is about self-interest and the denial of environmental problems (van den Berg & Meindertsma, 2012). In this case, despotism is carried out by buying products with palm oil and denying that there are any consequences. To counteract despotism and avoid such consequences, people should obtain a different attitude towards respecting nature. One could take a partnership stance, in which they understand that humans are equal to nature and nature should be conserved. One could also take a further step to be a participant with nature, which involves going out of their way to have the lowest possible harmful impact on the natural world. Ultimately the attitude that would result in the least impact on nature overall is unio mystica, which is when someone is in complete harmony with nature (van den Berg & Meindertsma, 2012). If people acquired any of these attitudes towards nature, they would understand the need to stop using palm oil.

Another aforementioned reason to not use products containing palm oil is that the production of palm oil endangers animals. A significant example is the increasing danger of extinction of the orangutan, in which palm oil is the leading cause (Orangutan Foundation International, 2021). Palm oil production is directly responsible for between 1,000 and 5,000 orangutans being killed every year, which is a large portion of the orangutans that are left on Earth. Other critically endangered species that suffer from the production of palm oil are the Sumatran elephant, the Sumatran rhino and the Sumatran tiger (WWF, n.d.). As explained in the paragraph above, green liberalism condemns the harming of non-human animals and therefore condemns the production of palm oil due to its detrimental effects on these living beings.

However, one may ask why should we care about the suffering of non-human animals? To explain this, the concept of moral status must first be explained. When a being has

moral status, it means that it has intrinsic value. This is a value in itself and not only in relation to humans (Attfield, 2018). A common thought on this is that only humans can have moral status, as they are the only ones who can recognize moral claims and are thus the only beings that can be wronged (Gruen, 2017; DeGrazia, 2002). This is often described as speciesism, the favouring of one's own species over another (Gruen, 2017). The term was popularized by Peter Singer who compared speciesism to racism as the fundamental belief system is the same. Therefore, animals being different species is a morally irrelevant characteristic. The scale of suffering is a concept in which biology plays a part in answering how much a being can suffer. This scale should help in deciding which beings to include in the moral circle by having a moral status. Singer was an advocate for sentientism, which suggest that it is unethical to exclude non-humans who can visibly suffer from the moral circle (Gruen, 2017; van den Berg & Meindertsma, 2012). Singer was a supporter of utilitarianism, which is an ethical theory that focuses on calculating the best consequences of an action, in which the value of the action is determined by the welfare of individuals (van den Berg & Meindertsma, 2012). Accordingly, the harming of animals for a small personal benefit is frowned upon, similarly to green liberalism. All in all, there are many theories and concepts supporting the fact that animals do have moral status and therefore, that it is wrong to harm them through the production of palm oil.

Arguably one of the most obvious reasons not to buy products containing palm oil is that human rights are violated in the production process. For example, in south-western Nigeria, the Okumu Oil Palm Company, which possesses a certification from the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO), took over a significant amount of community land. Local people were dependent on the resources that these lands provided (Gyuse, 2021). Moreover, reports have accused armed men working with Okumu Oil Palm for burning down a local village (Gyuse, 2021). Additionally, in Indonesia, millions of hectares have

been grabbed from small-scale producers through violating their land rights and/or threatening and harassment (Ahmed, 2021). Alongside such aggressive forms of human rights violations, the production of palm is also indirectly harming local people. In Malaysia, Papua New Guinea and Indonesia, palm oil production has polluted local rivers, threatening not only livelihoods of local people but their health and access to clean water (Chao, 2012).

All of these examples are in violation with multiple articles in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, written by United Nations General Assembly in 1948. Article 5 states that "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" (United Nations, 1948). It is evident that palm oil companies have not respected this as people were threatened and harassed and their villages were burnt down. In addition, the actions of these companies are in violation with article 12, which states that "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation; everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks" (United Nations, 1948). This is in contrast with the actions of palm oil companies responsible for forcing people from their homes.

While it should be clear that the violation of human rights is unethical, every major ethical theory agrees. Firstly, it does not comply with liberalism, and thus green liberalism, as this theory suggests that one can do as they please without harming others (van den Berg & Meindertsma, 2012). As illustrated by the examples above, people living in areas where palm oil production takes place are being harmed, thus consuming products containing palm oil is unethical. Secondly, utilitarianism focuses on calculating the best consequences of an action by determining the welfare of individuals related to that action (van den Berg, 2022). In this case, people are being robbed of their homes and their health and livelihoods are threatened just so that others can buy products containing

palm oil. The production process provides them with much more costs than it gives others benefits. It is impossible that anyone would think that a bottle of shampoo containing palm oil is worth the consequences of such terrible examples of human rights violations.

As a counterargument to the points made above, one could state that palm oil is the most efficient vegetable oil and is therefore better to use than its alternatives (Ritchie & Hoser, 2021). It has been found that palm oil produces 20 times more oil per hectare than the alternatives and has therefore used less land in the production process. However, this argument should not convince anyone to keep using products with palm oil in them, since the costs easily outweigh the benefits. The production of palm oil as it is done now results in the extinction of animals, people losing their homes and their health, and ultimately contributes to environmental damage and global climate change. So even if palm oil is the best option from a land-use perspective, it still does more harm than good and should not be used.

However, there are options to improve palm oil production as it is arguably a more efficient option than the other vegetable oils. One that is currently in use is the certification of RSPO, which claim to make sure that the palm oil companies produce fairly and sustainably (RSPO Certification, n.d.). This would obviously change everything if implemented correctly. Unfortunately, the RSPO certifications are not always given to companies that are fair and sustainable, but the exact opposite. As mentioned before, Okumu Oil Palm Company has taken over community lands and allegedly burned down a village, even though it was certified. Furthermore, Nestlé is a member of RSPO, but was in the news a few years ago concerning a scandal about not using sustainable palm oil, which again proves that the RSPO is not yet credible (Tabacek, 2010). There are many more examples of the firms working with RSPO not living up to the standards set, such as Goodhope Asia Holdings in Indonesia clearing out thousands of hectares of forest

illegally (Earthsight, 2019). Thus, before the RSPO certification can credibly state that companies are producing palm oil sustainably, or other methods are implemented to validate sustainability in the production process, the usage of products containing palm oil should be avoided.

Products containing palm oil are not worth buying. The environmental impacts of palm oil are detrimental and cannot be justified, which is affirmed by green liberalism that argues against harm to future generations. Additionally, animals are being threatened to the point of extinction due to palm oil production. The moral status argument, sentientism, the scale of suffering, green liberalism and utilitarianism prove that the harming of animals in the production process is unethical. Lastly, companies producing palm oil are directly going against article 5 and article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which should be enough to stop anyone from using palm oil. This is also supported by fundamentals of liberalism, green liberalism and utilitarianism. While palm oil is argued to be the most efficient vegetable oil, the costs outweigh the benefits. Since there is no sustainable option for palm oil, it is vital that people stop consuming it to save the Earth, all living beings and future generations.

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Make Anarchism Great Again

The need to overthrow capitalism to protect the planet

Lina Miller

If we succeed in clearing the soil from the rubbish of the past and present, we will leave to posterity the greatest and safest heritage of all ages.

Emma Goldman

Humans are an extraordinary result of evolution. To be the most highly evolved creature in our conceivable knowledge is a great power and, in that, each one of us has a great responsibility to think critically. Problem solving is something that all humans do intuitively every day. It matters not what class, race, age, educational level; every single person can and does solve problems every day. The size, form and manifestations of those problems vary greatly but there is one major problem that transcends the rest and affects every single one of us. That problem is capitalism. This form of free-trade economics based on infinite growth models has proven to be unsustainable. A modern-day solution to the problems posed on Earth and faced by all animals, human and otherwise, due to human activities can be found in the United Nation's (2015) 17 Sustainable Development Goals. A political philosophy has also existed since as early as the 19th century that can provide a self-governing socio-political, and economic framework to accompany the well-defined scientific solutions to our environmental issues (Miller, 2003). Anarchism, as a political philosophy, realizes that society is entirely able to govern itself (Miller, 2003). It is not within the realm of this essay to defend anarchism against the negative portrayal it has received. Instead, Proudhon's political anarchism, which was originally

introduced as a critique to industrial capitalism (Proudhon, 1893), will be shown to accompany the UN's Sustainable Development Goals as a social, political, and economic framework for a sustainable planet.

Goal 16 of the Sustainable Development Goals calls for "peace, justice, and strong institutions" (United Nations, 2015). Arguably, these virtues are something the global community lacks. Conventional anarchism focuses on individual and societal cooperation and cohesion and "urges man to think, to investigate, to analyze every proposition" (Goldman, 1921, p. 22-23). Instilling Proudhon's anarchic political philosophy, ideologies, and practices will make achieving this goal more realistic because they have been developed through inductive reasoning (Proudhon, 1893). As seen on the 'scale of knowledge' from Dr. Floris van den Berg, the same highly certain method of acquiring knowledge is also used in the natural sciences, such as physics and chemistry (van den Berg & Meindertsma, 2012b) In this sense, anarchism is something of the science of politics. As our species developed free-will over basic survival instincts, people were the first animals to live outside of natural law. This affords us countless innovations that provide the comfort and safety to question existence. Before science, it was widely believed that we were descendants of divine beings and, given only the condition that we follow a set of rules established by these gods, the Earth and everything on it was infinite and made for us. This anthropocentric perspective instilled with heteronomous ethics is still widely engrained in global society. However, the recognition of anthropogenic environmental impact can be dated back as far as Plato's Critias dialogues where he unconcernedly notes soil erosion and deforestation due to agricultural advancements (Attfield, 2018). The fatal flaw of humanity is therefore the continuance of anthropocentricism. If one can only view humans as the apex of life for whom the Earth was created, as opposed to one step in evolutionary time, it is not possible to live sustainably. This alongside prescribed

heteronomous ethics systematically removes the virtues of self-awareness, self-responsibility, and autonomy necessary to understand that the ecosystem is finite and that perhaps we are not the be-all and end-all of biological evolution.

Anarchism attempts to bring these virtues to the forefront of humanity by calling for the elimination of overruling heteronomous virtues found in the institutions of religion, property, and government (Goldman, 1910; Proudhon, 1892). Following the Green Revolution in the 1950s, which involved using newly developed artificial fertilizers and heavy irrigation techniques to maximize food production, the development of environmental science and concern for the effects of increased large-scale agriculture and industrialization rapidly became more prevalent. With the release of The Silent Spring by Rachel Carson in 1962, the non-scientific community was able to read an alluring and beautifully written prose that clearly outlined the spread of pollutants from one side of the world to the other (Attfield, 2018). In 1972, The Limits to Growth was published. Written by an international team of multidisciplinary academics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, it evaluated that those factors which limit growth of our species could be narrowed into five basics: population growth, nonrenewable resource capacity, industrial and agricultural production rates, and pollution output (Meadows et al., 1972). Clearly, these five indicators hold true today. The Limits to Growth also set out to provide an accessible handbook for how people can "achieve a state of global equilibrium" by limiting ourselves and our production of material goods; thus, we can "live indefinitely" (Meadows et al., 1972, p. 206). These texts were some of the first initiatives by environmentalists to provide complex information in a concise, accessible manner for the general public. In this sense, the various researchers concerned for the environment aimed to expand the anthropocentrism that dominated to a more 'ecocentric' (Attfield, 2018) worldview. While it is a much more distorted and silenced voice, anarchism (Goldman, 1910; Proudhon,

1893) recognized this ecocentric worldview by maintaining the philosophy that Gods and the State are socially constructed authoritative figures that can only exist through peoples' submission to the rules outlined by these archetypal figures.

Meanwhile, just around the time The Limits to Growth was published, a new manifestation of capitalist ideology had been introduced and rapidly appropriated by governments and industries worldwide. It promoted most notably three assumptions: (1) "commercial value could be maximized by handing management of companies and public policy to exceptionally smart, and highly motivated people", (2) "commercial value, so maximized, would be a good proxy for social value without government interference", and (3) "the redistributions of income resulting from this maximization, whether within countries or between them, were not a proper concern for economists" (Collier et al., 2021, p. 638). These quotations are from 'Capitalism: hat has gone wrong, what needs to be changed, and how it can be fixed', a 2021 article in the Oxford Review of Economic Policies which poses these questions to a selection of leading capitalist economists. Their summation of these assumptions is immediately followed by the statement: "Unfortunately, no part of this new ideology proved to be correct" (Collier et al., 2021, p. 638). As well, the article states that these three main drivers of the newest manifestation of capitalism "resulted in social and political polarizations which have become unsustainable" (Collier et al., 2021, p. 638). It is clear there is now consensus on all sides that the current dominating economic methodology and resulting society is unsustainable and the result of misinformed, misdirected guidance (Attfield, 2018; Collier et al., 2021; Goldman, 1910; Miller, 2010; Proudhon, 1893; van den Berg & Meindertsma, 2012a). In this realization, it gives hope that there are grounds for systemic change.

A common term used to critique globalization and free-market capitalism is 'neocolonialism'. It describes the phenomenon wherein nations that were previously ravaged

due to colonialism are now targeted for extremely valuable resources such as precious metals and oil. In statements such as "the major untapped pool of cheap young workers for the next few decades is Africa and the region is ripe for conventional capitalism" (Collier et al., 2021, p. 643), it is clear we must be vigilant in deciding on a global system that will not lead us back but forward. Global free-market capitalism is seen as a 'neo' or new form of colonialization. Another view of this can be found in the article in defense of capitalism in the distinction between "winners" and "large groups of uncompensated losers" under the capitalist system (Collier et al., 2021, p. 638). Aptly so, the result was and is "disaffection and political activism with unpredictable repercussions" (Collier et al., 2021, p. 638). No deliberation is provided in the article. The only understanding of political activism in this statement is with the vague, negative association of "unpredictable repercussions". This presents a fallacy of what can come from positive political activism in response to unsatisfactory laws and regulations.

One direct example of positive political activism by anarchists is dumpster-diving. Meneley (2018, p. 120) presents specifically the point of view of Danish dumpster-divers that, "it is perceived as functional, as wasting is seen as stupid", though this is a view taken by most modern anarchists. Meneley also recognizes the group 'Food Not Bombs' which is an international anarchist collective that feeds the impoverished and homeless populations with meals cooked entirely from 'dumpstered' food. Dumpster diving is an act of direct rebellion that only exists when a nation lives outside of its means. Living within means is related to the concept of 'Equation of Stupid', which discusses, in part, that the combined ecological footprint of the global population must stay within the planet's carrying capacity for our species (van den Berg & Meindertsma, 2012a). The same concept is found throughout The Limits to Growth report (Meadows et al., 1972). The seemingly incendiary title of this ethical concept sets to reiterate an ethical standard that has resounded in the speech of many great minds such

as Albert Einstein who is famously quoted to have said: "The world is a dangerous place to live, not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing". In the age of knowledge and technology, it is no longer acceptable to feign ignorance of the various consequences of lives based on production, consumption, and infinite growth in a finite ecosystem. At this point, there is only stupidity in those of us who know and do not act.

Aside from the environmental and societal devastation caused by global trade and industry practices, consumerism as the driving force of capitalism is inherently unsustainable. Though once viewed as a sign of wealth and well-being when a country's citizens were able to be effective spenders, nowadays, consumerism is being discussed more frequently as a health detriment (Meneley, 2018). On one hand, citizens in impoverished regions, i.e. the 'losers', live lives of "involuntary simplicity" (Meneley, 2018). Meanwhile, mental illnesses exhibited in behaviors such as hoarding and physical illnesses such as morbid obesity are rampant in wealthier nations, or the nations of 'winners'. Consequently, initiatives encouraging minimalism, or 'voluntary simplicity', immerge in response to these ailments of overconsumption (Meneley, 2018). Capitalism focuses on unbridled maximization of profit through consumer spending, thus requires branding and advertising techniques to promote greater consumption. These tactics often include creating a sense of self for the consumer and encouraging 'self-branding', as the consumer should view themselves as a commodity (Meneley, 2018). Anarchism brings value to individual freedom of expression and calls for the elimination of property (Goldman, 1910; Proudhon, 1893). As expressed so eloquently by Emma Goldman, a distinguished anarchist and feminist pioneer, value is manifested by someone "to whom the making of a table, the building of a house, or the tilling of the soil, is what the painting is to the artist and the discovery to the scientist, – the result of inspiration, of intense longing, and deep interest in work as a creative force" (Goldman, 1910,

p. 24). In other words, anarchism encourages the individual to find what work they can do that does not ultimately feel like work but feels like the fulfillment of one's personal values. This recognition of 'self' in a career path allows for a level of self-responsibility and social obligation often not afforded by a consumer driven society.

So, while globalized trade ravages the underdeveloped nations and consumerism plagues the rest, the greatest damage is ultimately incurred by the ecosystem and non-human animals. Just as no one would deny the atrocities of imperialism, colonialization, fascism, or any other form of absolute authoritative rule, the vast disparities between the winners and losers under capitalism are well-known. Additionally, the complete devastation of the planet's biodiversity, natural resources, and the ecosystem is not news. The current world economic system and alleged lack of political interference have failed. The solution needs to be a complete reformation of these elements. In the conclusion of the Oxford Economic Policy Review, the capitalist economists sum up underlying issues that are commonly reported on about how "the pathologies of economics have misdirected policies" (Collier et al., 2021, p. 647). Conventional anarchism has always encompassed these exact ideologies, as it is a century-old political reformative plan developed due to disaffection with the capitalist economic system in an industrializing, globalizing world (Proudhon, 1893). With this, Proudhon's anarchic political philosophy is arguably the only available, long-standing social, political, and economic framework to achieve a sustainable planet.

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The Taliban are violating the fundamental rights of Afghan women

Why the world has a duty to intervene

Annelie Vuik

No country can ever truly flourish if it stifles the potential of its women and deprives itself of the contribution of half its citizens.

Michelle Obama

On August 15, 2021, news reached the world that the Taliban had captured Kabul, Afghanistan. Since then, conditions for women and girls have changed dramatically. Since September 20th of the same year, girls over the age of 12 have not been allowed to attend school, and opportunities for women at universities are also severely limited due to the strict segregation between men and women. Women are no longer allowed to go out in public without being accompanied by a male guardian (with a few exceptions, such as health care workers). The state's ability to govern effectively is compromised when women are dismissed from government positions (Amnesty International, 2021). The ban on women working means economic hardship for many families. In short, the situation can rightly be described as alarming. This essay argues, using various philosophical theories and concepts, that the Taliban's violation of women's rights is unethical and that the rest of the world therefore has a duty to intervene.

The Taliban's violation of women's rights is unethical because Afghanistan is legally obligated to guarantee human rights to everyone, regardless of their gender. This is due to international human rights laws that do not allow the oppression of human beings. In addition, the state has been

a party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) since 2003. With this, the country promises to take measures to eliminate discrimination against women. This obligates Afghanistan to end discrimination against women in its political and public life and to guarantee women the right to hold public office on an equal footing with men and to participate in government policy development. This duty applies regardless of who governs the country (United Nations, 2021). Therefore, even now that the Taliban is in control of Afghanistan, the country remains obligated to protect human rights. The oppression of women is not only contrary to international legal obligations and the country's previous commitments but is also detrimental to peacebuilding and sustainable development processes in Afghanistan. The Beijing Platform for Action and the Sustainable Development Goals 5 (gender equality), and 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions), demonstrate that peace and sustainable development are inextricably linked to gender equality (United Nations, 2021). As quoted at the beginning of this essay, Michelle Obama also argues that excluding women from public life has major consequences for a country's prosperity. The Taliban are therefore not only legally obliged to treat women equally, but there is also an intrinsic motivation for this as a means of enhancing the country's development and prosperity.

In addition to this legal obligation, the Taliban should also have a moral obligation to protect women's rights. This is illustrated by the philosophical theory of the ethics of care. Each of us was once a child, and as children, we depended on the care of our parents or other caregivers. Not only then, but throughout our whole lives, we depend on others in fundamental ways (Held, 2006). Many moral concepts are based on the image of the independent, rational, autonomous individual and ignore this reality of human dependence and the morality implied by it. However, the philosophical theory of the ethics of care teaches us that people are interrelated and

interdependent. The ethics of care addresses moral issues that arise in relationships between unequal and dependent people. The central idea of this theory is that we are morally obliged to meet the needs of others for whom we are responsible (Held, 2006). Consider, for example, the care of a child. The needs of this child should be taken care of and thus hurting them should be avoided (Cusveller, 2014). According to Joan Tronto, this also applies to politics (Held, 2006). The ethics of care argument therefore shows that the government, and in this case the Taliban, has a moral duty to care for its subjects. The ethics of care rejects violence and domination and calls for the equality of those under its responsibility, both men and women, within existing social structures. Thus, it can be concluded from the ethics of care that the Taliban's behaviour toward women is immoral.

However, one could argue that the cultural context explains and justifies the Taliban's behaviour. The Taliban act from convictions rooted in fundamentalist Islam, and thus have a religious basis. This idea, that different rules apply in different contexts, is called the theory of relativism (Blackburn, 2003). In this case, there does not seem to be one truth, but different truths from different communities. The oppression of women in Afghanistan is immoral in the eyes of Western people, but not in the eyes of people from more traditional cultures like Afghanistan. However, it is important to note here that the theory of universal subjectivism teaches otherwise. According to this theory, there are universal moral outcomes, i.e., independent of cultures, individual preferences, or time (van den Berg, 2011). These universal moral outcomes can be discovered through a thought experiment described by John Rawls in his book A Theory of Justice (2005), in which he argues that one must lift their 'veil of ignorance'. This is by imagining that one has the power to determine the rules and customs of society while not knowing what position one will take in this world. In this way, principles will emerge that are fair to every group and to every individual at every time

and place (Blackburn, 2003). No one will choose to oppress a particular group, because there is a chance that they will be part of it themselves in the future. It follows from this thought experiment, then, that gender equality should be understood by everyone as a universal right. The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action acknowledges that taking into account the importance of national and regional characteristics and different historical and cultural backgrounds is the duty of states, but adds to this the following: "the human rights of women and of the girl child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights" (United Nations, 1993). Therefore, treating people equally is always a duty, not relative to time or place, and no exception should be made for the Taliban in Afghanistan.

This is equally evident in the French Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted in 1789 and widely influenced political movements across Europe and the world. This declaration states that all human beings are equal. Many years later, Peter Singer wrote the book The Expanding Circle: Ethics and Sociobiology, in which he describes how humans have expanded, or should expand, their moral circle over time (Singer, 1981). Whereas in the past only family or tribal members were considered equal to the individual themselves, according to Singer and the French Declaration of Human Rights, this applies to all people. All people are equal, and it is wrong to treat women, slaves, children, or anyone else differently. Therefore, there should be no laws that leave room for different treatment of citizens. Miller (2003) also says that justice implies that all people, unless there are relevant differences between them, are always treated equally. But as stated in the introduction, the Taliban do treat their citizens differently, and only on the basis of gender, which is an irrelevant difference in this case. Therefore, in Miller's eyes, their actions are unjust. Also, according to the ethical concept of expanding the moral circle examined by Singer (1981), it can be shown that the actions of the Taliban are

morally reprehensible. As this is so apparent through acts of discrimination against human beings based on their gender alone, it should not be condoned by the rest of the world. Rather, it is a moral duty to intervene.

It is not the goal of this essay to determine in what ways countries should intervene, but only to show that it is a moral imperative to do so. Several options for ways in which intervention by countries can be undertaken have been put forward in a statement by human rights experts of the United Nations (2021). This statement urges countries to draw attention to the situation and to call on the Taliban to change its shameful policies. What impact this would have on a country is difficult to predict. It could be, for example, that a country will suffer a financial loss as a result. However, the hedonistic calculus shows that this should not be an excuse. This calculus arises follows from the theory of utilitarianism, introduced by Jeremy Bentham (White, 2017). According to utilitarianism, something is morally right when it causes the most pleasure and the least pain for the most people (Blackburn, 2003). The hedonistic calculus is a way to measure the amount of pleasure and pain caused by an action (White, 2017). By using this approach, it is clear that the harm posed to the intervening country would be much less than the harm caused by the Taliban to the many women in Afghanistan. There are seven aspects of this pleasure and pain calculus that are important here. One is whether the action will cause pain. For the Afghan women this pain is certain because it is already happening in reality, whereas for the intervening country it is not at all certain that the action will cause pain. Other aspects are the duration and extent of people affected by the pain. These are also both almost certainly less for the intervening countries than for the Afghan women. This also applies to a fourth aspect of the intensity of the pain, and for the intervening countries it may cause material damage, whereas for Afghan women it has a severe impact on every aspect of their lives. It therefore follows from Bentham's hedonistic calculation that it is the

duty of the rest of the world to intervene against the Taliban's actions against women to bring about the least pain for the least people.

In short, the Taliban are legally and morally obliged to respect and advocate for women's rights. This follows from international human rights and agreements, but also from the theory of the ethics of care. The cultural context does not justify the oppression of women, because through the concept of the 'veil of ignorance' it can be shown that equality is a universal right that is independent of religious and/or cultural context. Singer's perspective of the expanding moral circle shows that all people are equal and should therefore be treated equally. Finally, the concept of the hedonistic calculus proves that countries are obliged to intervene because that way most pain for most people can be avoided. The harm to an intervening country does not outweigh the harm done to Afghan women. In conclusion, the Taliban's violation of women's rights is unethical, so the rest of the world has a duty to intervene. Action must be taken now to prevent continued oppression and violation of Afghan women and to secure the country of Afghanistan.

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One should not waste time cleaning up after others

The ethics behind waste and responsibility

Erik Verhagen

There is no such thing as 'away'. When we throw anything away, it must go somewhere.

Annie Leonard

In this day and age, it has become more visible than ever that the way in which we are managing the waste generated by humankind is utterly problematic. The detrimental effects are clear: vast amounts of litter are present in the oceans; soil, air, and drinking water are polluted; and the spread of diseases is enhanced (Ferronato & Torretta, 2019). This has led to environmental deterioration and poses a serious threat to both human and non-human health, especially in developing countries, where waste is often dumped and burned openly due to a lack of proper treatment facilities (Ferronato & Torretta, 2019). However, many of the countries classified as developed are equally responsible for these issues as they dump part of their waste, often electronic, in developing countries for them to deal with (Zhang et al., 2012; Ferronato & Torretta, 2019). Still, most concern regarding waste in 'developed' countries lies within their own borders. To foster global cooperation in solving the waste problem, one of the Sustainable Development Goals has even been dedicated to responsible consumption and production (United Nations, 2015). On a more local scale, most environmentally aware members of society are familiar with the type of person that simply throws their trash on the ground without second thought. After seeing the accumulation of litter on streets and in nature, cleaning up after these individuals

might feel like the right thing to do. However, various parallels can be drawn between the case of developing and developed countries and that of the concerned and unconcerned individual. Moreover, from an ethical point of view it is wrong to take responsibility for someone else's waste in both cases. The following arguments will emphasise why being careless with one's waste is unethical using several philosophical theories and concepts. Ultimately, everyone is responsible for the negative impacts of the waste they themselves generate. Therefore, countries and people should not take over this responsibility from others as it promotes unethical behaviour.

There are many arguments to make in favour of this statement, but the most obvious and possibly most important one is that cleaning up after others promotes irresponsible behaviour. It makes those people, groups or countries who do not clean up after themselves think it is okay to do so because there are others who will take care of it. This can lead to cognitive dissonance, which is the incompatibility of several of one's beliefs (van den Berg & Meindertsma, 2012b). This is evident as most people wish to live in an unpolluted environment, but they are not discouraged from continuing their polluting behaviour because they do not truly believe they are responsible for it. Carelessly polluting individuals and nations should learn to behave more virtuously to create the litter-free world that the majority of us desire to live in, and others cleaning up after them evidently do not assist in this process. As said by Blackburn (2001, p. 113): "We should educate people for whom we care into the habits that are most likely to benefit them, and on this account, these will be the paths of virtue." It is not possible to propose any concrete solutions to this behavioural challenge as this is a whole new topic, but further justification can be provided for why it is necessary.

A well-known theory that provides justification for this statement is Kantianism, which tells us that to act in a morally right way people must act from duty and follow universal laws without exception (Blackburn, 2001; van den Berg &

Meindertsma, 2012b). This is especially the case for situations in which disaster would occur if everyone were to evade their duty. When we adhere to this theory, it follows that no exceptions should be made for those that do not follow the rule of cleaning up one's own waste. If no one would follow this rule, everyone would leave their waste to be attended to by others, whether it be countries or people. As one can imagine, the results of such a scenario would be disastrous. Consequently, the duty of cleaning up one's own waste should apply universally, and if it were to be followed perfectly, there would be no need to clean up that of others. Therefore, the Kantian point of view seems to argue that there should be no need to concern oneself with others' waste. Moreover, one could also regard it as one's duty to teach others that the responsibility for their waste lies with themselves, therefore providing another reason for inaction. Opponents of this conclusion may argue that the law of cleaning up after oneself, if it were not to be adhered to universally, would not be mutually exclusive with a law that requires everyone to clean up after others. A combination of these two laws would then result in less litter overall. Of course, both laws are currently not universal, but we should stil we should strive for what is most just and logical.

There is certainly an urgent need for transition towards behavioural change concerning waste. One of the ways to stress this is by using the equation of stupid, which states that our combined ecological footprint should be smaller than the carrying capacity of Earth (van den Berg & Meindertsma, 2012a). This equation can be compared to the case of the Greek Titan Atlas holding up the Earth: if the burden on his shoulders were to grow too large, he might very well drop the ball, literally. When applying the equation of stupid to focus on trash, it works on a national level as well; a country should only produce as much waste as it can process itself. However, like what is currently happening on a global level, many countries generate more waste than they can or want to handle and either ship it off to other nations or dispose of it in the environment

(Ferronato & Torretta, 2019; Zhang et al., 2012). Based on this behaviour it seems as though everyone wants the largest share of the cake without having to deal with the consequences. Atlas's knees are already shaking as we are currently facing an immense ecological crisis. It seems unwise to add more waste onto the pile of ecological problems we are dealing with right now, such as climate change, ocean acidification, dwindling biodiversity, and air pollution. On a more personal level, the equation of stupid tells us that we should not generate any waste if we have nowhere to dispose of it, i.e. when the carrying capacity is too low. Although this simple rule is applicable on many levels, following it currently seems to be challenging on all of them. If everyone were to realise the true responsibility they bear for their waste, this might change for the better.

On a national level, both developed and developing nations are undergoing severe moral blunders. It is of course unethical to expose others to the negative effects of one's own waste, yet many of these countries are to take blame, often coming to their own defence with the excuse of economic benefits derived from these mishaps. This is not a valid reason, as can be explained by the theories of utilitarianism and green liberalism. Both state that harm to others should be avoided if possible (van den Berg & Meindertsma, 2012a). The famous philosopher Karl Popper argued that the utilitarian principle of minimising pain should be prioritised over maximising pleasure (Popper, 1945). If we adhere to Popper's point of view, the economic benefits (pleasure) a country derives from processing others' waste are less important than preventing the suffering (pain) that results from exposure to chemicals in processing plants and nearby areas. By examining international waste streams more closely, it becomes apparent that China is among the countries which have processed the largest amounts of imported e-waste (Zhang et al., 2012). Although regulations have been sharpened over time, the high demand for rare metals makes the processing of e-waste profitable in developing countries. Because of this, it has helped to industrialise rural China and

alleviate its natural resource scarcity (Zhang et al., 2012). However, the frequent mismanagement of waste leads to the release of toxins and poses a serious threat to human health (Ferronato & Torretta, 2019; Zhang et al., 2012). Popper's take on utilitarianism would say it is unethical for a nation such as China to expose its citizens to this type of suffering through inadequate handling. Developed nations are just as guilty since they should hold the means to process their own waste, following the previously mentioned equation of stupid. Instead of dumping their waste elsewhere under the guise of bestowing economic benefits upon the poor, aid without any of the aforementioned downsides would seem like a much more humanitarian approach.

Despite the previous argument, using the same utilitarian principles one can conclude quite differently from the statement in the introduction. According to utilitarianism, when waste causes suffering, the morally right thing to do would be to clean it up. For example, the Great Pacific Garbage Patch causes suffering of oceanic wildlife, which implies it should be cleaned up if possible, regardless of who does so. This would also apply to waste which has the potential to cause suffering but has not done so yet, e.g. waste in a forest which could be ingested by wildlife. It would be unethical to remain passive because it is not regarded as one's responsibility. Although this is a valid point, it can be refuted in a utilitarian way as well. By collectively cleaning up others' waste we are creating a culture in which polluting is not as condemned as it should be and happens in extreme amounts, i.e. it is counterproductive on a larger scale. Instead of shifting ethical responsibility to others, the ones who are responsible should prevent and end the suffering, and this requires a new culture in which they are held accountable for their actions. Although this claim is not testable, remaining passive around others' waste could very well reduce suffering as long as it is accompanied by societal change.

Various philosophical arguments have been given above

to argue for individual responsibility in removing one's own waste, but it is important to now emphasize that it is more efficient to focus on waste prevention than removal. The energy spent on clean-up campaigns would be better spent on promoting prevention and its enforcement. An example of how difficult it can be to clean up waste is the infamous project called The Ocean Cleanup. In addition to being expensive, it has experienced many technological difficulties and is believed to have ecological drawbacks (Martini, 2014). Instead of short-term thinking and being forced to come up with solutions like The Ocean Cleanup, it seems to be more efficient to prevent the large streams of waste we are currently generating. A related concept is the precautionary principle, which is based on the idea that an action should be prevented if there is a possibility that it will have undesired consequences (Attfield, 2018). If this principle had been applied in the past, humanity would have been more careful with unforeseen consequences of plastics and other waste and there would be no need to devise complicated clean-up procedures. Despite the fact that most of these consequences are well-known nowadays, being precautious is still very much necessary in present operations.

It has been made clear that one should take responsibility for one's own waste, which is already a widely held opinion. This has been done by using several arguments: it follows the equation of stupid; it is unethical to expose others to waste and its negative effects; Kantianism says universal laws should be adhered to; and prevention is easier than removal. Additionally, it has been argued that one should not take responsibility for the waste of others, which is a far less popular opinion. Several arguments have been made for this statement: it promotes irresponsible and unvirtuous behaviour; is not in line with universal laws either; and nations doing this expose their citizens to suffering. In conclusion, an extreme paradigm shift is necessary to change the behaviour we as humans are currently exhibiting around waste. This seems to be the only means to achieve rapid change since we do not have as much

time as the plastic that is floating in the ocean, still a long way from disintegrating. In other words, a culture of responsibility ought to be facilitated, because as Mahatma Gandhi once said, "it is wrong and immoral to seek to escape the consequences of one's acts." Therefore, it is important to reiterate the opening statement: everyone is responsible for the negative impacts of the waste they themselves generate. Therefore, countries and people should not take over this responsibility from others as it promotes unethical behaviour.

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Zoos and aquariums must be closed

Uncovering the anthropocentric and unethical nature of keeping animals in captivity

Naomi Jankee

The only creature on Earth whose natural habitat is a zoo is the zookeeper.

Robert Brault

Distress, ill-health and abnormal behaviors were the repeated observations made in a recent investigation assessing conditions for animals held in aquariums (Freedom for Animals, 2021). The investigation, which studied seven aquariums across England, not only highlighted the concerning living conditions provided to resident species, but upon closer investigation, exposed concerning death rates for these animals (Freedom for Animals, 2021). Considering that this investigation covered only seven of the 300 zoos and aquariums in the United Kingdom (Born Free Foundation, 2022), the question that now arises is how are the welfares of other resident species in zoos and aquariums maintained worldwide? This question is not new. Animal activists have been asking this whilst applying pressure on zoos and aquariums for decades. It is, nonetheless, coherent and demands attention. With over 5 million non-human animals in captivity today, the ethical nature promoted by zoos and aquariums demands considerable thought (Bennett, 2019). Zoos and aquariums support their existence by advancing ethical actions with three of the most prominent being; spreading conservation education, non-human animal conservation and scientific research (Hutchins et al., 2003). Furthermore, though these actions are portrayed ethically, there is evidence to contest and argue them to be

unjustified reasons for the captivity of non-human animals (Bennett, 2019). Building on this idea, the ethical theory of utilitarianism will be used to assess zoos and aquariums in the following paragraphs. Ethical concepts such as expanding the moral circle, ethical relations and the scale of suffering will also be applied. Ultimately, this will show that zoos and aquariums are unethical and should therefore not be allowed to continue functioning as institutions in modern-day society.

Firstly, with 2030 approaching, effective consideration and action is required to ensure progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, namely, goals 14 and 15: life below water and life on land (United Nations, 2015). These goals aim to protect and preserve the resources of land and ocean including their wildlife and biodiversity (United Nations, 2015). Nevertheless, while protecting the wildlife on land and in water; let us not forget those on land but in cages and those in water but in pools. The lack of moral status awarded to these non-human animals in zoos and aquariums has led to their suffering. To understand this statement, we must first make clear what moral status is and its relation to sentientism. An entity with moral status is identified as being morally important (Bennett, 2019). Moral status, however, is only awarded on the basis that the entity is sentient (Bennett, 2019). An entity is sentient when it can feel and can exist in a state of awareness, namely that it can experience physical sensations such as pleasure and emotions such as sadness and joy (DeGrazia, 2002). For decades, it was a common belief that non-human animals were insentient (Hoole, 2017). This theory has since been refuted as scientific works over the years proved non-human animals to experience emotions and feelings such as pain (Hoole, 2017). With this knowledge, one can conclude that animals are sentient and deserve moral status. In the paper of Bennett (2019, p. 178), he states: "once it is determined that an entity can experience things such as pain, this alone should be enough to make those capable, considerate of the entity's interests". Considering their established sentience, just like

humans, non-human animals have interests in avoiding negative sensations and are benefitted from positive ones (DeGrazia, 2002).

Zoos and aquariums should therefore avoid causing negative sensations such as pain, discomfort and stress on all non-human animals in their care. 'All' is important in this statement as the relative scale of suffering is unimportant once sentience is established (Bennett, 2019). Conversely, resident species of zoos and aquariums often experience physical and physiological changes while in confinement (Mahajan, 2020). Many take anti-depressants to reduce abnormal behaviors (Kearney, 2016) such as aggression, self-harm and pacing, with numerous showing signs of stress and depression (Mahajan, 2020). Utilitarianism concentrates on maximizing the balance of good over bad where all interests are considered in an impartial manner (DeGrazia, 2002). The value or ethicality of an action is dependent on the consequence it has on the wellbeing of involved parties (van den Berg & Meindertsma, 2012). Therefore, according to utilitarianism, the confinement of non-human animals in zoos and aquariums is unethical as it leads to negative consequences for their wellbeing.

Additionally, captivity robs non-human animals of their freedom. Sentient non-human animals have interest in the ability to move freely and act out their natural behaviors (Bennett, 2019). When unable to act on such interests, it is likely that they will suffer from physical and psychological pain. Physically, confinement harms non-human animals by placing constraints and contributes to bodily discomfort and the prevention of normal exercise (DeGrazia, 2002). Mentally, it harms by contributing to stress, depression and boredom (Bennett, 2019). This has been exhibited by shark behavior in capacity. Zoos and aquariums have limits to how they construct their exhibits, not only due to financial reasons but also logistical reasons (Worland, 2017). Visitors will not be able to see the resident species if the exhibits are too large. However, sharks swim as much as 72km per day (Sea World of

Hurt, 2018). With exhibits a fraction of the size of their natural environment, sharks often display repetitive behaviors such as circle swimming and often die from within days of being placed in captivity (Sea World of Hurt, 2018). Zoos and aquariums are aware of harm such as this that resident species endure. These problems, however, are not resolved by removing species from capacity. Instead, exhibits are enlarged as much as possible, toys or décor are added, and some species are even subject to anti-depressants. In such scenarios, non-human animals not only lack the freedom to move freely but lack the freedom to feel or express their true emotions. According to utilitarianism, such issues highlight the unethical nature of zoos and aquariums as they lead to negative consequences for the species in captivity. Confinement is often the cause of mental or physical harm for any living being. Negative consequences are also experienced by species born into and living through confinement. They are robbed of the opportunity to ever explore their natural behaviors fully, and in turn experience harm.

Building on this harm, the confinement of non-human animals also decreases their intrinsic value. By placing human interest above that of non-human animals, this is anthropocentrism at its core. To start, visualize the following images which many of us have already seen. The first shows an orca performing for an excited crowd. Its mouth is partially open, giving the impression of a smile. The second portrays a rhinoceros lying in an exhibit giving the expression of tiredness or sadness. Controversially, though these situations are very different, they are both equally damaging. The situation portrayed in image one is a chief example on how non-human animals in captivity are utilized as props for human entertainment and therefore maintain zoos financial stability (Jamieson, 2003). Human entertainment does not and should not justify the harm and suffering inflicted on non-human animals in captivity (DeGrazia, 2002). The separation created by the cage indoctrinates the dangerous worldview

of anthropocentrism (Jamieson, 2003). To break the mould of anthropocentrism and create ethical relationships between human and non-human animals, we must acknowledge the importance of non-human animals through expanding our moral circle.

Unfortunately, zoos and aquariums often discourage this by displaying non-human animals in poor conditions. This leads us to image two. Here the rhinoceros is in a relatively compact exhibit which poorly resembles its natural habitat. In a study, images of non-human animals in varying settings were shown to college students to rate on semantic scales (Rhoads & Goldsworthy, 2007). The images displayed the species in natural, semi-natural and unnatural (zoo) environments. The results showed that non-human animals in the zoo environments were considered "undignified, unhappy, tame and dependent" (Rhoads & Goldsworthy, 2007, p. 283). They proved the relation between human attitude towards non-human animals and the settings in which non-human animals are displayed (Rhoads & Goldsworthy, 2007). In both situations, the species were seen as either entertainment, undignified and dependent. This reduces their intrinsic value in the eyes of humans and can be detrimental towards their care and moral consideration. Furthermore, utilitarianism is focused on consequences (Blackburn, 2001). Therefore, the consequence of non-human animals being pushed lower down the hierarchical structure within an already anthropocentric society is harmful. This is unethical and unfair for both current and future generations of non-human animals if zoos are allowed to remain open.

However, some claim that zoos and aquariums are beneficial for conservation education (Hutchins et al., 2003). With increasing urbanism and the growing separation between humans and non-human animals, some people people do not care about addressing environmental problems like biodiversity loss (Hutchins et al., 2003). Therefore, ensuring public awareness is important for conservation efforts

(Hutchins et al., 2003). Zoos claim to achieve this by having a direct connection to the public (Hutchins et al., 2003). There is no dispute in the argument that public awareness is important for conservation efforts, but there is dispute in the claim that zoos and aquariums are an ethically justified or effective way of achieving it. Research has shown short-term effects on public awareness and appreciation. However, it does not measure up to the lifetime of suffering that most non-human animals experience in captivity. Additionally, a study identified shallow words such as "cute", "weird" and "dirty" as the norms when describing non-human animals at zoos, rather than deeper reflections of appreciation or understanding (Bennett, 2019). These two facts prove the reasoning of education to be unjustifiable, especially in our multimedia society where there are numerous means of spreading information (DeGrazia, 2002). Furthermore, even if we were to say education transpires in zoos, one must question what is taught: conservation or anthropocentrism? Lastly, it is an unfair and unreasonable idea that resident species should be responsible for ensuring the future of their species (Hoare, 2017). For this reason, writer Philip Hoare says zoos and aquariums are "a slippery divide between exploitation and education" (2017, p. 2).

Zoos and aquariums also justify their existence by utilizing breeding and in some cases reintroduction programs for species conservation (Hutchins et al., 2003). Although this reason is noble, it is however ineffective as any breeding and reintroduction programs are unsuccessful (DeGrazia, 2002). A study done on reintroduction programs' effectiveness showed only half of the successful 11% were endangered species (Bennett, 2019). To justify confining non-human animals, we must provide reason to believe that the benefits can be obtained by no alternative, yet breeding facilities successfully exist in front of the public (Jamieson, 2003). Additionally, unless non-human animals are captured from the wild, inbreeding will occur. This unfortunately creates offspring that have different traits from their species members in the wild

(Jamieson, 2003) and are therefore more susceptible to disease and environmental threats (DeGrazia, 2002). What species are zoos and aquariums then creating? It is also disputable whether endangered species should be preserved in captivity. One can argue that the difference between a species being extinct and a few members surviving in captivity is negligible, and potentially unethical if they will be subjected to a life of suffering (DeGrazia, 2002). We once again cannot render the existence of zoos and aquariums justifiable.

Lastly, zoos and aquariums proclaim their justification with their contribution to scientific research. They claim that in a time of biodiversity loss, scientific research is important for both human and non-human animals as it is crucial for conservation efforts (Hutchins et al., 2003). Zoos and aquariums contribute large amounts of money towards research, employ scientists and state that many studies would be impossible to conduct in the wild (Hutchins et al., 2003). Yet, most research on non-human animals is independent of zoos and aquariums (DeGrazia, 2002). Besides, most zoos and aquariums do not conduct research (Jamieson, 2003) and many non-human animals in captivity are not endangered (DeGrazia, 2002). Their research is primarily a human interest (DeGrazia, 2002). Humans are then not providing a service to animals, but a service to humans through the exploitation of animals (Jamieson, 2003). This reason does not outweigh the unethical and unnecessary suffering of non-human animals in captivity. This is evident if one was to measure the negative versus the positive consequences using hedonistic calculus of utilitarianism (Blackburn, 2001), in which the suffering of non-human animals outweighs the entertainment experienced by humans. Therefore, one must question why our entertainment is deemed more important than the freedom, integrity and respect of non-human animals.

To conclude, zoos and aquariums are unethical and should not continue as institutions within modern society. Their existence is merely the documentation of the lack of moral

consideration awarded to non-human animals and highlights the prevalence of anthropocentrism in our world. This is proven through the negative consequences experiences by non-human animal through their suffering, lack of freedom and loss of intrinsic value. These reasons should not be ignored or outweighed by the unjustifiable reasons of education, conservation, or research. It is only through the discontinuation of zoos and aquariums that we will fully protect and respect all life on land and in water.

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Egoism can be the driver of climate change mitigation

How promoting self-centeredness can lead to pro-environmental behavior

Bente Schalkx

> *Egoism, which is the moving force of the world, and altruism, which is its morality, these two contradictory instincts of which one is so plain and the other so mysterious, cannot serve us unless in the incomprehensible alliance of their irreconcilable antagonism.*
>
> *Joseph Conrad*

On December 10th, 2021, a strong storm front brought about an estimated 70 tornado-like events across the Midwestern United States (US), causing widespread damages and loss of human lives (NASA, 2021). According to the Centre for Climate and Energy Solutions (2018), the quantity and strength of droughts, downpours, and hurricanes in the United States is increasing and therefore threatening the lives of humans and non-humans alike. In the sixth assessment report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, scientists state a definite relation between anthropogenic activity and global warming (IPCC, 2021). Predictions are that extreme weather events are expected to become more frequent worldwide as temperatures increase globally. Many scientists and advocates of the environmental movement have been broadcasting the dangers of climate change and the need for human behavioural change for years. As such the threat of climate change can be linked to the aims of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This is particularly true for goal number 13 on 'climate action', which focuses on integrating pro-environmental

measures into national policies, improving education, and raising awareness (UN, 2015). However, there is arguably a fault in the way many environmental movements promote pro-environmental behavior. To date, their endorsement has dominantly focussed on altruistic and biocentric motivations, neglecting societal groups with egoistic value orientations. Increasing occurrences of extreme weather events result in societal groups with egoistic value orientations to notice the dire reality of climate change. This new sense of urgency is key in combating climate change. Previously used altruistic and biocentric pro-environmental behavior promotion is not working sufficiently, therefore the environmental movement should shift its focus to egoistic reasoning.

Numerous studies have examined the link between individual and collective values and environmental attitude (Schultz et al., 2005). People's attitude towards nature presents itself in varying degrees of care. Where despotism takes an oppressive approach towards nature from a standpoint of self-interest, religious or secular stewardship shows ethical responsibilities for its care (van den Berg & Meindertsma, 2012; Attfield, 2018). The normative ethical theories of altruism, biocentrism, and egoism are all incentives to engage in pro-environmental behavior. Altruism is characterized as conducting oneself for the benefit of others (humans) (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2013), while biocentric motivations implicate the assumption that all life (humans, non-human animals, and plants) deserves equal moral consideration and standing (DesJardins, 2015). Egoism is motivated by the pursuit of self-interest (Blackburn, 2002). For example, egoistic individuals may be concerned about the pollution of drinking water because it could negatively affect their health. The value orientation of egoism is thus more despotic as environmental problems are only seen as such when they directly influence the individual. Altruism and biocentrism can be linked to stewardship or attitudes that show even more acknowledgment for the care that the environment is due.

In a study by Stern and Dietz (1994), the link between values and environmental attitudes was researched by deriving the environmental behavioural response to damage of valued objects. These objects were assigned to one of three categories of moral standing, namely self, others, or all living species. This study sought to examine the individuals moral standing, which is their perception of which beings are of ethical concern and should be taken into consideration when making decisions. This standing ultimately defines the individuals' moral circle (Attfield, 2018). Accordingly, each value orientation showed environmental concern based on these varying moral circles. An individual's personal value orientation thus influences what they see as moral issues. For example, the deontic suggestion that one should behave pro-environmentally for the benefit of others and nature is not viewed as a moral issue by egoistic people in the same way it would be by those with altruistic or biospheric attitudes (Knez, 2016). This links to deontology, also known as Kantianism, which emphasizes the significance of duties and rules. People must act from a point of duty and rules to be capable of behaving in a morally right manner (van den Berg & Meindertsma, 2012; Attfield, 2018). Hence, those with egoistic attitudes won't behave pro-environmentally unless environmental concerns influence them personally.

De Dominicis et al. (2017) provide a similar argument by stating that egoistic and biospheric or altruistic environmental concerns are hierarchically structured. Biocentrism includes altruism, which in itself contains egoism. To back up their argument, the authors conducted three experiments. The first two experiments focussed on motives for conserving energy and using public transportation, while the third researched reasoning to partake in a beach clean-up event. All experiments were based on hypotheses that participants would act a certain way based on the situational value frame that was applied. The frames used were either self-enhancing (egoistic) or self-transcending (altruistic or biocentric). The results of the experiments demonstrate that individuals with

egoistic attitudes act pro-environmentally when their behavior benefits their self-interest. In addition, the studies showed a negative correlation when there was solely an environmental benefit. In contrast, those with biocentric and altruistic motivations participate in pro-environmental behaviors for both environmental benefits and personal interest. However, the promotion of altruistic and biocentric behavior would mean that those with egoistic attitudes would have to expand their moral circle, while with promoting pro-environmental egoistic behavior this would not be needed. To increase efficiency and effectiveness of environmental campaigns, behavior promotion should therefore focus on self-interested environmental concerns.

Besides the advantages of targeting self-interested environmental concerns, there is also a benefit in focussing on self-interested social concerns. This is because people may act pro-environmentally for reasons not related to the environment, such as gaining social status or personal health. An example of pro-environmental behavior to gain social status is given in a research paper by Griskevicius et al. (2010) on the success of the Toyota Prius in the United States. Even though it is not an extraordinary car in terms of looks or engine power, customers pay high costs as it runs on a hybrid gas and electric fuel system. Whereas purchasing motives could thus be pro-environmental, an article in the New York Times discussing the Toyota Prius showed that the results of a survey taken among owners of the car displayed different motives. According to the survey, the predominant purchasing reason was that the car shows the outside world that its owners care for the environment and society (Griskevicius et al., 2010). Buying so-called green products can show to other people that they are willing to make sacrifices and are financially capable, as they purchase a product that is often of lower quality and higher cost. Owning a Toyota Prius thus arguably gives individuals a social status akin to being a humanitarian or a philanthropist. Where customarily status is linked to luxury,

promoting status motives can be an incentive for people to act for the environment.

Gifford et al. (2014) compare non-environmentally motivated pro-environmental behavior to 'honeybees pollinating fruit trees', as the bees support the environment while satisfying their own needs. Individuals that show pro-environmental behavior while motivated by their own personal health contribute as much to the environment as those making the same choices with an underlying environmental motivation. An example of pro-environmental behavior for personal health is following a vegetarian diet. As reported by Harvard Health (2020), individuals with a vegetarian diet consume "less saturated fat and cholesterol and more vitamins C and E, dietary fibre, folic acid, potassium, magnesium, and phytochemicals (plant chemicals), such as carotenoids and flavonoids" in comparison to those who consume meat. Correspondingly, they have lower cholesterol levels, lower blood pressures, and lower rates of obesity. As a result, non-environmental benefits of vegetarianism include a reduced risk for chronic diseases such as diabetes and cancer. The environmental benefits include lower livestock emissions, a reduced energy consumption, a lower ecological footprint, and a multitude of other reasons. Although these dietary choices could likewise be based on environmental motives, many people who do so are driven by a desire to be healthier. By appealing to such self-centred social concerns, one directly appeals to egoism and thereby targets all three discussed environmental attitudes. Advertising the personal benefits of green products makes the need for convincing people of the positive effects for society and the environment redundant. It is thus more effective and beneficial for pro-environmental behavior promotion to focus on egoistic concerns.

However, while promoting self-enhancing motives may prove very influential on the short-term, it could sabotage the intrinsic motivation to act in a pro-environmental manner in the long run which would result in less pro-environmental

behavior overall (Dominics, 2017). When people's moral circle is not expanded, the underlying motivation of egoistic pro-environmental behavior leads to an uncertain position for the environment. Motivating people to act from self-interest is precarious as those interests can change. For example, financial factors strongly influence people's decisions and behavior (Kollmuss et al., 2002). Purchasing solar panels may elevate one's social status but will only be of interest as long as they stay financially attractive. The increasing costs of the rare metals used in solar panels could influence the selling price to such an extent the benefits of social status no longer exceed the disadvantages of the additional financial costs. The interests of those with egoistic attitudes will change. In contrast, people with altruistic or biocentric motivation would have an additional underlying pro-environmental incentive, making a change of interest less likely. Yet, in the long run, the changing climate will result in growing levels of environmental concern, regardless of the influence of the environmental movement. Even though the current underlying motivation of pro-environmental behavior may not be altruistic or biocentric, eventually those with egoistic attitudes will show interest. Therefore, egoistic behavior promotion is still the right course of action.

In conclusion, at a time where extreme weather events are becoming more frequent worldwide as temperatures increase globally, the new sense of urgency among societal groups with egoistic value orientations is key in combating climate change. To summarize, individuals with egoistic value orientations will act pro-environmentally when their behavior positively affects their own interests. Meanwhile, a negative interconnection was proven when the behavior in favour of the environment was promoted with solely an environmental benefit. On the other hand, people with biocentric or altruistic orientations engage in pro-environmental behaviors for both self-centred interests and environmental benefits. Advertising biocentric or altruistic attitudes towards nature would signify

that those with egoistic attitudes need to expand their moral circle, while this would be unnecessary when promoting pro-environmental egoistic behavior. Secondly, in addition to targeting self-interested environmental concerns, there is a benefit to investing in self-interested social concerns as individuals may behave pro-environmentally for non-environmental reasons. By appealing to self-indulgent social concerns, the environmental movement directly appeals to egoism and thereby targets egoism, altruism, and biocentrism. The advertisement of social benefits makes convincing people of the possible environmental benefits redundant. Lastly, while the intrinsic motivation for pro-environmental behavior may not be altruistic or biocentric, egoistic behavior promotion is still the right course of action. Prior pro-environmental behavior promotion by the environmental movement has not been working sufficiently enough, therefore a focus on egoistic reasoning as a driver of climate change mitigation is needed.

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Orphanage tourism in Cambodia needs to end

Why we need to project and respect orphans by staying away

Lot Heeremans

Children are not tourist attractions.

Child Safe Movement

Volunteer work in orphanages is a quite a prevalent industry in Cambodia. However, this industry led UNICEF to start a campaign with the hashtag #stoporphanagetourism (UNICEF NL, n.d.). Orphanage tourism can be defined as "the donation of money and goods, attending performances, or volunteering on a short-term basis at orphanages as part of one's holiday" and has emerged in Cambodia as an activity among backpackers who seek to 'give back' while on holiday" (Guiney & Mostafanezhad, 2014, p. 2). In 2017, it was estimated that 48,775 children resided in orphanages in Cambodia. It is not that these children did not have parents, which is often assumed in the Western world when the term orphan is mentioned. About 80% of these children did have one or both parents (Miller & Beazley, 2021). The motivation for these parents to send their children to orphanages is mainly the belief that their children will receive care, food, security, and education, which they are unable to provide due to the poverty in which they live (Miller & Beazley, 2021). However, the orphanage tourism industry in Cambodia is going against the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) number 1 (no poverty) and 3 (good health and wellbeing) (UN, 2015). The reasoning behind this will be examined will be substantiated with arguments that are based on the ethical theories of utilitarianism, the expanding moral circle, and the harm

impact scale. Ultimately, it will be argued that orphanage tourism cannot be morally justified and must therefore be stopped.

To begin with, children in Cambodian orphanages that rely on orphanage tourism are being commodified and must show physical affection towards the tourists in order to receive donations (Miller & Beazley, 2021). Directors and employees often direct the children to perform physical affective and emotional engaging behavior such as sitting on laps and hugging and holding hands with the tourists (Miller & Beazley, 2021). An example of this particular behavior is given in a case study examining an orphanage that relies on orphanage tourism in Siem Reap in Cambodia, where a twelve year old girl living in the orphanage stated: "we give hugs and do drawings for the teachers because we want the education very much and we want the teacher to like us so they will come back" (Miller & Beazley, 2021, p. 6). In other words, these children are being controlled by directors and employees to collect donations and are watched by volunteers as if they were showpieces. This physically affectionate and emotionally engaging behavior is also described with the term 'emotional labor' and is associated with attachment disorders and other developmental delays (Guiney, 2017; Guiney & Mostafanezhad, 2014). Looking at the idea of the harm impact scale, which pleads that we should keep our direct and indirect harm impact as low as possible (F. van den Berg, 2021), it becomes clear that this direct harm caused to children in orphanage tourism should be stopped. This is also supported by Singer's utilitarian view, which states that "the right action or policy is that which maximizes the balance of benefits over harms, where the interests of all affected parties – including both humans and animals – are impartially considered" (Degrazia, 2002, p. 22). From the standpoint, the 'right' action would be to stop orphanage tourism due to the harm caused to children within this industry.

Orphanage tourism also causes separation of children from their parents, which causes harm to the children as well as

to their parents. As described earlier, children in Cambodian orphanages are being commodified. In other words, children are becoming a product to consume through the 'bucket list' volunteering opportunity orphanages offer (Guiney & Mostafanezhad, 2014). The commodification of these children fuels the demand for so called 'orphans' and therefore there has been an increase in the number of children that still have one or both parents staying in orphanages (Carpenter, 2015; Miller & Beazley, 2021). An example of this also becomes clear in the Siem Reap case study that was previously mentioned. In this study a girl was asked why she was sent to the orphanage and responded by saying that a man came to her village and offered her parents the opportunity for her to go and live in the orphanage to obtain an education (Miller & Beazley, 2021). This is an example that clearly shows that people are actively trying to get children to go to orphanages to meet the demand for orphans. Thus, orphanage tourism causes separation of children from their parents (Guiney & Mostafanezhad, 2014). Here, using the expanding moral circle, which involves expanding moral justification to include beings that can suffer (van den Berg, 2021), it becomes clear that not just the children suffer but also their parents who lose their children. By using Singer's view on utilitarianism, which states that the value of an action's consequences can only be determined by the welfare of relevant individuals (van den Berg & Meindertsma, 2012), is evident that harm and suffering of children and their parents in these scenarios should be reduced through stopping orphanage tourism.

By once again using the expanding moral circle, light can also be shed on the fact that not just the present generation of children will suffer due to orphanage tourism, but also future generations. The expanding moral circle gives room to think about several different moral circles of groups to consider when applying ethical standpoints. Anthropocentrism is the circle which beholds all living human beings (van den Berg, 2021) such as the children in orphanages that live right

now. It has become clear that orphanage tourism cannot be morally justified as many in present generations are suffering as a result. It is also important to look at extended anthropocentrism, which also includes future generations. As long as orphanage tourism and poverty continue to exist, new generations of Cambodian children will also have to deal with orphanage tourism and will suffer from the consequences as well. By expanding the moral circle and taking the future generations of Cambodian children into account, it becomes clear that this industry will continue to cause harm if it is allowed to continue. Therefore, orphanage tourism cannot be morally justified and should be stopped.

A counter argument could be that children do also experience positive consequences from orphanage tourism and that therefore orphanage tourism can be morally justified. However, with Singer's vision on utilitarianism this argument can be refuted. As mentioned in the introduction of this essay parents sent their children to orphanages because they want them to get the education and care they need (Carpenter, 2015). It is in fact true that orphanages that are supported by volunteers can provide education, health and opportunities for survival and development (Miller & Beazley, 2021). In the case study done in Siem Reap a child stated the following: "I am very lucky to live here in this happy place. I go to school, and I am not hungry or sick anymore. If I stay in my village, I am hungry" (Miller & Beazley, 2021, p. 5). This highlights the positive consequences that follows from orphanage tourism. But it is important to not forget the point made by Singer, where he prioritizes happiness over suffering when looking at the moral justification of actions. Following this view, orphanage tourism still cannot be morally justified as children in poverty are separated from their parents and commodified. In this sense, the consequences that cause suffering weigh heavier than the consequences that cause happiness, and thus are immoral.

A solution has been created following the idea that orphanage tourism cannot be morally justified, but this solution is

however still morally problematic. The Cambodian government has taken measures following the criticism on orphanage tourism by committing to closing down orphanages while striving for the reintegration of 30 percent of the children that were in residential care (Miller & Beazley, 2021). Even though this measure can take away consequences such as attachment disorders and developmental delays that cause the suffering of children, these consequences are just being replaced by another form of suffering: poverty. The reason that children are sent off to orphanages is because their parents live in poverty and cannot provide the care and education the children need. By just sending children back to their parents the children will still suffer of the consequences of poverty such as hunger and a lack of education and therefore, using the view of Singer, this 'solution' still inflicts suffering and therefore cannot be morally justified. Thereby just shutting down orphanages does not stop harm caused to those dependent orphanage tourism. To further explain and perhaps make a suggestion for a solution that can be morally justified, it is interesting to take a look at the following quote: "It is not the job of a moral philosophy, and more than that of a constitution or a government, to make people happy, but only to set a stage within which they can be happy" (Blackburn, 2003, p. 94). When looking at the solution the Cambodian government has proposed to stop children suffering in orphanages, it becomes clear that they did not make a stage within which the children can be happy. It is instead important that suffering is reduced by providing the means for children to be with their families while also receiving the resources, support and care that they need. They should not be commodified to obtain these basic human rights.

However, both orphanage tourism and poverty are complex problems that are difficult to resolve. Therefore, with the urgent message for us all to think about is how we can generate happiness for Cambodian children by striving to end poverty and orphanage tourism. A first suggestion that could be investigated for ending orphanage tourism is

to encourage informative campaigns to show people that although they believe they are helping children by supporting orphanage tourism, they need to consider and understand the consequences first. A suggestion for people who want to help Cambodian children might therefore also be not to spend their money on a plane ticket to visit a poor Cambodian child, but on a project that provides free education and care for these children in such a way that they can live with their parents at home. Let us free the present and the future Cambodian generation of children from their suffering and confinement and give them the happiness they deserve.

In conclusion, orphanage tourism in Cambodia causes children to suffer and therefore cannot be morally justified. To stop such suffering and create a stage within which children in the present and future can be happy, the issues of both orphanage tourism and poverty need to be addressed. The SDGs of 'no poverty' is clearly far from being reached in Cambodia and is preventing children from having good health and wellbeing both at home with their parents as well as in orphanages. Singer's view on utilitarianism shows that the suffering experienced by children within the orphanage tourism industry outweighs the benefits they may experience there. When also considering expanding the moral circle to include future generations, it is clear that this suffering would continue to affect children for years to come if the industry is not stopped. Suggested solutions to simply close these orphanages is not enough to ensure that suffering will stop, and instead we may look deeper to address issues of poverty experienced by many Cambodian citizens. We must all properly inform ourselves about what we can do to effectively help those in need and try to do what we can to reduce the suffering of others.

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The following essay was written for the previous edition of 'the Microsoft and the Elephant' book in 2015, with the subsequent essay written as a follow-up by the same author in 2022 in light of recent tragic events in Ukraine.

The dangerous pseudoscience of Vladimir Putin

Mark Huisjes

The struggle for world domination by Russia h
as not yet been settled.

Alexander Dugin

Russia's international revanchism since the fall of the Soviet Union has been legitimized by Alexander Dugin, the country's most famous philosopher, through what he calls 'Eurasianism'. He first published his ideas in his book The Foundations of Geopolitics (1997) which is now standard literature for anyone of any importance within the Russian government. This book states that Russia has a fundamentally different culture than the West because Russia is based on land whereas the West is ocean oriented. This difference he terms tellurocracy (land-rule, Russia) and thallasocracy (sea-rule, the West). He claims that since antiquity these two systems have been locked in a mortal struggle for world domination. And in order for Russia to prevail it should first reconquer its former empire and then forcefully break the alliance between Europe and America. This has been neatly summarized by Dugin's line: "The struggle for world domination by Russia has not yet been settled." These ideas are dangerous pseudoscientific nonsense.

First of all while Eurasianism claims to be a science, it does

not seek objective truth, seeking 'National Truths' instead. By doing so it is, completely opposite to the scientific method, which relies upon intersubjectivity and realism state among other things that there exists only one truth and that multiple 'truths' are either partially missed truth or entirely false, and furthermore that this does not change depending on the 42 43 observer, (Osaka, 2004). By rejecting these ideas Eurasianism places itself outside the domain of science.

Additionally it becomes apparent that Dugin is wilfully dishonest about the idea of sea- versus land-based struggle. He presents it as a widely accepted millennia old phenomenon while in fact the idea dates back only to 1904. In that year the British geographer and politician Halford Mackinder published an article called The Geographical Pivot of History in which he predicts conflict between the sea-based British Empire and the land-based Russian Empire. Worse still nowadays these ideas have disappeared from Western literature altogether because they became associated with the Geopolitik of Nazism and clash with our understanding of the laws of physics, which rule out things like fate. So the idea is neither old nor widely accepted leaving Dugin's representation, dishonest at best, thus failing the honesty demarcation criterion.

Furthermore a beautiful example of why Eurasianism is a pseudoscience is given by Dugin himself. He states that in the days of the Soviet Union when geopolitics and all its different manifestations were banned there must have been a secret institution within the government that steered the country to take geopolitical actions. How else could interventions in Eastern Europe be explained? Eurasianism is always right even when it isn't, because whenever the ideas don't fit the facts, the facts are changed to fit the idea instead of the other way around. It is therefore unfalsifiable and cannot be scientific.

Finally Eurasianism cannot actually be verified because it does not make any predictions. Instead it just states things like "Kazakhstan and Ukraine are not real nations". The only prediction in The Foundations of Geopolitics is that Russia

will conquer the world. This one-time event however has been placed so vaguely and indeterminately far into the future that even if it somehow came to pass verification would still be impossible. In conclusion, Eurasianism can be added to the list of pseudosciences. Sadly for humanity this pseudoscience holds sway over a vast number of people who have a large amount of power in this world. In this case the chances of irrationality causing actual victims is high.

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Being right isn't always fun

How my fears in 2015 became reality with the renewed Russian war against Ukraine and what may happen next

Mark Huisjes, 12-05-2022

In late 2015 I wrote "The dangerous pseudoscience of Vladimir Putin" which is attached in this volume. A little over a year earlier the Maidan Uprising had led to a pro-democratic and pro-Western government coming to power in Kyiv. In response to this Russia invaded Ukraine by annexing the Crimean Peninsula and starting a proxy war in the Donbass region in the east of Ukraine. As justification for these actions Russia used arguments stemming from Eurasianism, a fascistoid political ideology by Alexander Dugin (that I promptly started to read up on). Most Western commentators at the time expected both invasions to result in so-called 'frozen conflicts' without active warfare but without a peace treaty either. I was more sceptical. While frozen conflict status would have served certain purposes such as keeping Ukraine out of NATO, it seemed to conflict with Eurasianism. Eurasianism denies the very existence of Ukraine as a nation, or a country, separate from Russia. While my column mostly debunked Dugin's claims that Eurasianism is a science, I ended my column by expressing worry about the millions of people believing in Eurasianism and the power they had in the world. I worried that the chance was high that this irrational ideology would cause more victims. Unfortunately, I was right.

The conflicts in Ukraine did not freeze, and in the seven years that followed, 14 thousand people died in the low-level military conflict. On February 24th, 2022, Russia kicked their war against Ukraine into overdrive in what it called "a special military operation". Putin's popularity among the Russian populace and the ruling elite had been declining due to the coronavirus and the associated economic downturn.

To regain popularity Putin ordered attacks along a nearly 2000-kilometre-long front from bases in Belarus, Russia and the occupied Donbass and Crimea. The stated goals: demilitarise Ukraine, 'denazify' Ukraine and destroy the very idea of Ukraine. The Ukrainian army put up a tougher defence than anyone would have expected but Russia still occupied about a quarter of the country. Massacres followed.

When the small town of Bucha just north of Kyiv was liberated on March 31st by Ukrainian forces, the sheer barbarity of the Russian occupation became clear. According to the major of the town, 412 civilians were killed. As you entered the town you could see the streets were littered with bodies, many of which had just been left there for days to weeks. Some had been shot while trying to get food or water. Some bodies had been fed on by hungry pets whose owners had died or fled for their lives. Intercepted phone calls record snipers bragging about killing unsuspecting civilians. Some inhabitants had been killed using flechettes, razor sharp dart like objects that can be fired from small arms and artillery to inflict maximum damage to the human body. Investigators on site have reported evidence of beheading and a body being turned into a trap with a mine and tripwire. Some bodies had been mutilated. Teeth were pulled, ears and genitals were cut off. It is unknown if this was done to torture or to take souvenirs. A group of men was found in a basement, shot in the back of the head with their hands bound in summary executions. Many other basements were in frequent use as the Ukrainian army shelled the town trying to liberate it from the Russian forces. A torture chamber was discovered in one such a basement below a Russian command post. From another basement a group of women were rescued who had been repeatedly raped for weeks. Nine of whom subsequently became pregnant. A girl, just 14 years old, was gangraped by five Russian soldiers. A boy, 11 years old, was raped in front of his mother. Retreating Russian soldiers tried to burn some of the bodies of the women they had raped, to hide the fact of what they had done. Many countries have since

condemned these atrocities as war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

So far, however, that seems to be all that the Russian army is capable of today. Since the rapid advances in the first few days, the Russian army has been incapable of advancing further. Plagued by corruption, logistical problems, low morale and desertion the Russian army has been forced to evacuate back into Russia and Belarus along almost half of the front. Tank fuel had been sold on the black-market causing convoys to grind to a halt. Money to replace emergency rations had been siphoned off leaving soldiers with food that spoiled years ago. Truck tires tore themselves to pieces in the Ukrainian mud because they had been replaced by cheap Chinese knockoffs instead of the military-standard tires that were required. All in all, the Russian leadership vastly overestimated the effectiveness of its own forces and underestimated the Ukrainian tenacity and willingness to fight. Some reports even state that Russian soldiers made dinner reservations in Kyiv scheduled two days after the initial invasion. Two months later they retreated from the city having never reached their destination.

Of course, Western arms deliveries to Ukraine and sanctions on the Russian economy also have greatly helped in the battlefield defeats of the Russian army so far. Saint Javelin, a depiction of the Virgin Mary carrying an American made shoulder-fired Javelin anti-tank missile, became a national icon. Western militaries and agencies also provide Ukraine with near real time intelligence. This has allowed Ukraine to sink several Russian warships, such as the cruiser Moskva, in what my friends from Ukraine now jokingly call ‘special submarine operations’. More Western aid will be necessary to fully defeat the Russian army and liberate the occupied regions of Ukraine.

These developments have also had major implications inside Russia and for Alexander Dugin personally. As war rages in Ukraine the violence has also spilled over into Russia itself. So far almost fifty major industrial and military complexes have mysteriously gone up in flames thousands of kilometres away

from Ukraine. It is unknown whether this is due to Ukrainian special forces operating deep within enemy territory or due to home-grown anti-war resistance groups. Additionally late in the evening on the 20th of August 2022 a car bomb exploded outside Moscow destroying the car that Dugin was supposed to have driven in. The assassination attempt failed to kill Dugin who had decided to drive in a different car but did kill his daughter Darya Dugina. Both Dugin and Dugina have incited hatred against Ukrainians and called for violence against them on national Russian television. Seen in this light the attack is not surprising. We reap what we sow.

Putting on my prediction-hat once again, I fear however that defeating the Russian army will not be enough to end the suffering in Eastern Europe. The vast casualties Russia is taking and its reduced fossil fuel income now that Europe is hastily transitioning away from them, have weakened Putin's regime. If Putin's regime survives it will only do so through extreme violence and repression of its own population. In this scenario the dangerous and pseudoscientific Eurasianist ideology will not be removed from Russian society and Russia may rebuild to try once again to 're-gather the empire' in a weaker nation such as Kazakhstan. If Putin's regime does not survive, currently frozen conflicts such as Abkhazia, Ossetia, Ingushetia, Chechnya and Dagestan may reignite and new ones may start in ethnic enclaves such as Kalmykia, Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Mari-El, Chuvashia and the Tuva Republic. This may well result in a further collapse of Russian imperial might akin to the collapse of the Soviet Union, though on a smaller scale.

Regardless of how the future plays out more people will die as long as Putin's regime and the Eurasianist ideology on which it is built exist. At the very least it must be kicked out of Ukraine. I think Ukraine will likely win this war, but Western support must make sure of this. In the words of Edmund Burke: "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."

Slava Ukraini!

Comparing Philosophers

This assignment is about co-developing and writing an essay in which students work in groups to analyse and compare two moral philosophers assigned to them during an exam-style time limit. They do this by using some of the ethical theories and concepts studied throughout the course. The goal is for students to collectively write a well-structured essay with convincing arguments in which the reader should be able to understand the ideologies and claims of these philosophers. The following essays give insight into what teams of students wrote in this exam-style assignment and provides an overview of several influential moral philosophers of our time.

Peter Singer and Arne Næss

Different points of view on why we need to protect the natural world

Lola de Gans, Kristina Kotova, Lis Reichelt and Lilli Rieks

All the arguments to prove man's superiority cannot shatter this hard fact: in suffering the animals are our equals.

Peter Singer

Self-realisation cannot develop far without sharing joys and sorrows with others. […] The ecological movement […] asks for […] a deep identification of people with all life.

Arne Næss

In 77 years there will be no rainforests left on Earth, resulting from decades of ongoing environmental destruction (The World Counts, n.d.). Up to 150 species are forever lost every single day. This is due to habitat fragmentation, hunting and diseases transmitted by humans (Yale, 2015). Human behaviour is the main driver for the current global issues we face. Environmental philosophy aims at studying this behaviour and suggesting changes based upon theories and concepts developed by philosophers seeking to (re)connect humans with nature.

This is particularly true for two leaders in environmental ethics, Peter Singer and Arne Næss. They are both focused on protecting natural beings in their philosophical standpoints and have two distinct points of views towards the promotion of sustainability. Singer is a follower of utilitarianism and the founder of sentientism (Degrazia, 2002). He argues that if utilitarianism is universally applied, all sentient beings have to be taken into account, implying the recognition of human-

and non-human animals. Næss is a Norwegian philosopher and founder of the deep ecology movement (Attfield, 2018). He emphasises the intrinsic value that nature has, independent of its use for humans. In this sense, both have very different philosophical foundations, but unite in their aim to protect the natural environment. This duality of similarities and differences is evident when examining their normative ethical theories, core ethical considerations and moral standings.

Singer is a pioneer in practical or applied ethics, which are ethics relating to actions and their moral considerations (Thompson, n.d.). He was inspired by the philosopher Karl Marx as he used philosophy to make the world a better place. Singer uses sentientism to represent the suffering and consciousness of animals (Singer, 1981). He came to the conclusion that animals can suffer and that this is often ignored by society (Singer, 1981). For example, he emphasised that veganism is needed to overcome speciesism. This reasoning stems from his idea that even if humans are superior, the suffering of non-human animals and humans is equal (van den Berg & Rep, 2016). Singer's normative ethical theory falls under utilitarianism. Utilitarianism assesses ethical values and discusses what is right, what is wrong and how one should live with the perspective of creating the greatest happiness for the greatest group. A utilitarian discussion is based on the weighing-up of positive emotions such as happiness and negative emotions such as pain or suffering. This involves considering the intensity, duration and volume of such emotions for the greatest number of individuals (Blackburn, 2002).

Singer does this in the form of a so-called 'hedonistic calculus', which zooms out and evaluates the total created sum of consequences from certain actions. Since early in his career, Singer took a stance for weak negative preference utilitarianism. This means that he prioritises reducing suffering over increasing happiness, since suffering cannot simply be outweighed by happiness and is arguably more severe. In utilitarianism according to Singer, we do not consider the

intrinsic value of living-beings, but rather their interests and preferences. He states that we should equally consider equal interests. Further, he adds that non-human animals are equal to us humans, especially in their ability to suffer (van den Berg & Rep, 2016). Based on these utilitarian foundations, Singer advocates welfarism, which is concerned with increasing the welfare of every animal, both human and non-human. This perspective supports his philosophical practices (van den Berg & Rep, 2016).

Similarly, Næss was one of the most prominent philosophers in environmental ethics and developed the philosophy of deep ecology. He coined the term "deep ecology platform" which "rejects all forms of exploitation, and supports the broadest possible interpretation of the fight against pollution and resource depletion" (Attfield, 2018, p. 94). Therefore, he was concerned with the well-being of all living beings on the planet and that of future generations. Moreover, he discussed human-nature-relation as he believed that humans are inseparable from nature and therefore should not overexploit and destroy the natural world as this would mean harming themselves.

Deep ecology can be seen as part of liberalism, however it does not fully overlap with it. Liberalism seeks individual liberty as long as no other individuals are harmed (van den Berg & Rep, 2016). This has been developed further into green liberalism which extends this to non-human animals (van den Berg & Rep, 2016). Deep ecology can be seen as a further development of green liberalism as it aims at the protection of ecosystems, the planet and future generations (Attfield, 2018). It opposes "inter-human oppression such as exploitation through economic advantage or the power of class" (Attfield, 2018, p.94). The absence of oppression can be considered as advocating negative liberty, which means advocating for freedom from external restraints instilled by humankind (Miller, 2003). Thus, it can be seen that deep ecology strives for not only the care for non-human animals, but the care for the planet and its ecosystems as a whole from negative human

interference. Both liberalism and deep ecology have negative freedom as a core value. Singer and Næss are departing from different backgrounds through utilitarianism and deep ecology, but both emphasise the importance of not oppressing non-human nature. While Næss puts nature's intrinsic value centre stage, Singer chooses equal consideration of its interests. However, both are active in the field of environmental ethics and emphasise the need to take the non-human environment into account and become more sustainable in our practises. Both give practical suggestions and are therefore philosophers of applied ethics. This is evident when examining their moral circles.

A moral circle is a tool which reflects one's values and includes everything one can find worthy of moral consideration (van den Berg, 2018). The extent of this consideration can be classified depending on who's moral standing is taken into account. Singer uses the moral circle to indicate that animals have a mind (DeGrazia, 2002). He states that the ability to suffer is central in examining who deserves consideration. By doing this, he specifically asks for the current moral circle to be expanded to all beings which can suffer. This moral circle, which goes above and beyond the human, is called 'sentientism' (DeGrazia, 2002). Næss expands the moral circle even further than Singer as his moral circle aims at including entire ecosystems. This point of view becomes clear when analysing once again his deep ecology philosophy, which "advocates defending planetary nature everywhere" (Attfield, 2017, p. 94). This shows that the moral circle of Næss includes everything from humans to entire ecosystems, which is called 'ecocentrism'. The difference between the moral circle of Singer and Næss is that Singer mainly looks at whether animals can suffer, while Næss looks at the intrinsic value of beings in the ecosystem as a whole. The similarity between these two approaches is that they agree that non-human animals must be given a moral standing and included when assessing the ethics of human behaviours.

However, criticisms have been made against the approaches of both philosophers. The main critique of Singer's philosophy concerns his emphasis on interests of living beings which he mainly bases on their ability to suffer. Some criticise however that there is an intrinsic value in all life, which has several implications. For example, imagine it is found that a foetus is severely disabled, such that to be born and live could be considered suffering. Singer would then suggest an abortion since that would mean less suffering for that human being. However, many strongly disagree and emphasise that there is an intrinsic value in every human being, no matter if they are disabled or not. For Næss, his philosophy of deep ecology was criticised for being misanthropic, meaning that it promotes a dislike or distrust of the human species and its behaviour (Bookchin, 1987). Bookchin (1987) argued that deep ecology presents humanity as an "ugly anthropocentric thing" that is overpopulating and destroying the Earth "as though some vague domain of "nature" stands opposed to a constellation of non-natural human beings". One of the main arguments supporting Bookchin's criticism is the emergence of radical environmental groups which could justify misanthropic measures such as reducing population size through genocide. This misrepresents the deep ecology movement as a whole because while voluntary extinction and anti-natalist sentiments are fairly common in the deep ecology moment, deep ecology does not call for genocide against humanity. Bookchin further argues that deep ecologists fail to recognise the potential of humans to solve environmental problems (Bookchin, 1987). The criticism on the ethical theories of both philosophers concerns the extreme extents to which they can be taken. Næss' deep ecology, when understood radically, can lead to extreme measures such as genocide. At the same time, it is argued that Singer's attention to suffering could result in infanticide.

Another comparison can be made between the philosophers when assessing their place on the Scale of Zweers, created by

environmental philosopher Wim Zweers to describe one's attitude towards nature (Zweers, 2000). While the scale is seen as continuous, he distinguished six stances towards nature: despotism (short term egoistic self-interest); enlightened despotism (believing that technology will solve all problems); stewardship (caretaking of the planet for personal motivation); partner (being equal with nature and conserving it); participant (preserving nature and having minimum harmful impact on the planet); and unio mystica (selfless harmony with nature) (van den Berg, 2012). On this scale, Singer and Næss arguably fall under different categories. Singer's attitude towards nature could be described as taking a partnership standpoint. He partly sees humans and nature as equal partners, which is visible in the fact that he puts the suffering of non-human animals equal to human animals. However, Singer is not totally on board with a partnership viewpoint as it acknowledges the intrinsic value of nature, since Singer does not emphasise intrinsic value at all. Conversely, Næss has a participant attitude towards nature. Participants believe that humans are a part of a bigger whole and therefore should restrict their impact on nature (Van den Berg, 2019). Moreover, they recognise the intrinsic value of nature. Næss believed that all people, non-human animals, and future generations have "equal right to live and blossom" (Attfield, 2018, p. 29). As a deep ecologist, he advocated for equality between and within species and rejected all forms of exploitation, thus opposing the instrumental use of all living beings. Furthermore, Næss emphasised that people are not above or better than other beings but just a part of a complex natural world. The main difference between the philosophers' attitude towards nature is the recognition of an intrinsic value of nature. While Næss emphasises the inherent worth of nature regardless of its instrumental value to humans, Singer takes a different approach to assigning value to living beings and the natural world by considering interests of sentient beings only.

The moral standpoints of the two philosophers will now be elucidated by using the case of fox hunting to assess how their

views would be applied. According to Singer's utilitarianism, foxes should not be hunted because it would cause greater harm to the non-human animal than happiness to the human. Næss would agree, but from the perspective that the fox is vital to the ecosystem and should therefore not be hunted. The same appears when applying their moral circles. As both moral circles include non-human animals to have a moral standing, the fox should not be hunted. This is also evident when comparing their place on the Scale of Zweers, with one being a participant and the other a partner, showing they both would choose not to hunt the fox.

In conclusion, it is evident that Singer and Næss have different ethical theories, moral circles and issues they address, but hold a central similarity in their viewpoints of reducing human harm to nature. It can be said though that Næss' approach is more inclusive of the intrinsic value of nature, while Singer is focused solely on the interests of (non-)human animals. Thus we see that both philosophers have different views on what deserves ethical consideration. However, they are both spreading a similar message: that nature is being severely harmed by exploitation and oppression from humankind, and that we need to include the natural world in our ethical considerations.

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Greta Thunberg and David Orr

An intergenerational fight against the ecological crisis

Annaflavia Tarullo, Esmee de Haan, Roos-Marijn and Donna Calis

The climate crisis has already been solved. We already have the facts and solutions. All we have to do it wake up and change. ***Greta Thunberg***

The planet does not need more successful people. But it does desperately need more peacemakers, healers, restorers, storytellers and lovers of every kind. ***David Orr***

The problem of climate change is currently one of the most discussed and prevalent topics on a global level. As with every subject, people have differing opinions; one might say climate change does not actually exist, the other might think that we are doomed. One of the most well-known modern-day environmental philosophers is Greta Thunberg, a nineteen-year-old woman, known for her sharp comments about the current political system regarding climate change. However climate change is not a problem that arose in the twenty-first century. In 1988 it started to become a national issue in the United States, but it was already addressed by scientists decades before (Brulle, 2018). A philosopher and climate activist who has been advocating for the matter of climate change for three decades is David Orr, who focuses on ecological design and environmental education (The Oberlin Project, n.d.). To get a deeper understanding of these influential individuals, their opinions regarding climate change and the ways they show similarities in their thinking will be discussed. This will be done through examining their ethical issues, moral

circles, normative ethical theories, and attitudes towards nature, focusing on the similarities and differences present.

First of all, it is relevant to look into the ethical issues with which both philosophers are concerned. For both Thunberg and Orr it can be argued that the focus is on the ecological crisis, however, their specific point of view of what is particularly problematic differs. Thunberg is extensively concerned with the emission of carbon dioxide, as she often refers to the carbon budget in her argumentation (Broome, 2021). By means of activism and referring to scientific facts, she urges adults to take action and to include the ecological crisis on the political and economic agenda, challenging their 'escapism' (Broome, 2021; Leer-Salvesen, 2021, p. 35). Additionally, Thunberg claims that "no one is too small to make a difference", for instance, through political action (Broome, 2021, p. 77). In contemporary democracies, citizens may show little interest in participating in politics and might not check the actions of elected representatives enough (Miller, 2003), while Thunberg stresses the importance of doing this.

Instead of the lack of individual responsibilities Thunberg refers to, Orr stresses the importance of ecological relationships and how humans lack harmony with nature (Mitchell, 2009). Consequently, the cause of the ecological crisis can be grounded in humans being unable to think critically about their actions and the effects thereof (Mitchell, 2009). According to Orr, environmental education is critical for how humans should live a sustainable life, and the current climate crisis can be attributed to a shortcoming of ecological literacy (Mitchell, 2009). The difference between the two philosophers thus seems to be in the cause of the ecological crisis and the way in which the problem should be addressed. Nonetheless, both seem to be concerned with the future perspective of the ecological crisis (Broome, 2021; Mitchell, 2009).

As has been noted, both philosophers have concern for the future and thereby acknowledge the responsibility of people living now and their actions as they will affect coming

generations. It can be argued that future generations have moral standing (Attfield, 2018). The moral circles of both philosophers reflect this and thus have been extended to include future generations. This is the case for people far in the future, but Thunberg also brings seemingly far away generations closer to the present during one of her speeches by referring to 'stealing' the future of 'your children' and representing her rights as a future victim of the climate crisis (Broome, 2021). Additionally, the moral circle of both Thunberg and Orr is evidently also extended to an ecocentric stance, a view in which species and/or ecosystems also have moral standing (Attfield, 2018). For instance, Thunberg often refers to the issues with the ecology of the Earth (Leer-Salvesen, 2021). Orr is perhaps a more convincing ecocentric than Thunberg because he is very much concerned with human-nature relationships and sees humans as part of ecosystems through pointing out the importance of harmony with the planet (Baily-Mitchell, 2009). Furthermore, Orr also stresses the importance of non-human animals in his Theory of Ecological Literacy, which argues that non-human animals and humans are not very different except for certain capacities related to decision-making (Baily-Mitchell, 2009). Consequently, Orr acknowledges that non-human animals have a certain degree of moral standing, which can, for instance, be related to non-human animals having awareness (DeGrazia, 2002). It can be concluded that both philosophers apply their ethical ideas broadly and thus have expanded their moral circle beyond the individual. However, this is more the case for Orr than it seems to be for Thunberg.

The extension of the philosophers' moral circles can help us distinguish their underlying normative ethical theories. To begin with, the characteristics of Orr's philosophy and theory of ecological literacy point to Sen's and Nussbaum's capabilities approach (Berg & Huisjes, 2016; Mitchel., 2009). The capabilities approach states that human capabilities can be stimulated and facilitated depending on several conditions (van

den Berg., 2012; SEP, 2011). In Orr's case, humanity's ability to create greater harmony with nature is through knowledge (Mitchell, 2009). As previously mentioned, Orr's main focus lies on ecological literacy, as he believes that the "disorder of ecosystems reflects the disorder of the mind, thus an ecological crisis is an education crisis" (Mitchell, 2009, p.197). As such, since the role of education is to aid the improvement of minds, our education's focus should be environmental in nature (Mitchell, 2009). Moreover, he believes that we should apply our ecological literacy to redesign our technologies, physical structures, and social institutions, aiding eco-design (Mitchell, 2009).

On the other hand, Thunberg's philosophy, which focuses on individuals and future generations, leans more towards green liberalism, but also contains some aspects of deontology. Green liberalism entails the no harm principle, where individuals are free to act but should not harm others, including non-human animals and future generations (van den Berg, 2012; van den Berg & Huisjes, 2016). Thunberg argues that by exploiting natural resources and polluting the environment, we are harming future generations by diminishing their potential quality of life (Hailwood, 2004; Broome, 2021). At the same time, she also recognizes the need to act in a morally right way by following certain principles and norms and acting on the basis of reason and duty (Broome, 2021). This reflects deontology, as she is known for creating a sense of urgency to remind society that "we are setting fire to our own house" through absurd actions, including emission of greenhouse gasses, over-consumption, and more.

Both Orr and Thunberg focus on the necessity of doing good for society and the environment, respectively through education and individual action. Moreover, they both acknowledge that individuals and communities can act in certain ways that reflect their ability to reduce environmental harm. Nevertheless, Thunberg places greater emphasis on the no harm principle, where future generations must be protected.

Orr, instead, looks at sustainability from a more communal and intrinsic side, focusing on ways in which the relationship between communities and nature can be harmonized. He also aims at addressing the inescapable ecological ignorance present in society, linking to Blackburn's (2002, p. 111) argument that "ignorance is a recipe for acting disastrously, both to ourselves and others."

Differences are also apparent when applying the Scale of Zweers to both Thunberg and Orr. Starting with Thunberg, as already mentioned, she emphasizes the impact of climate change on our generation's future (Sabherwal et al., 2021). By including this view she can be regarded as a steward within the scale of Zweers. It can be argued that the stewardship or conservation and care of the natural environment is a duty of humanity. This means that when one does not conserve the environment sustainably, they owe their justification to all humans (Attfield, 2018). This stewardship viewpoint is evident in Thunberg's ideologies. A steward often has instrumental values, which can also be recognized in Thunberg's views. One could say that by impacting future generations by not conserving the Earth correctly, our physical environment will be harmed. This will result in fewer resources for future generations confirming the instrumental value approach.

However, within the scale of Zweers, Orr can be regarded as a partner. For example, Orr acknowledges that the climate crisis expands in combination with a growing disconnection between nature and humans (Mitchell & Mueller, 2010). Whereas Thunberg acknowledges the instrumental value of nature, Orr acknowledges the intrinsic value of nature (Freudenthal Instituut, 2019). Besides, Orr regards the humanity as an equal partner of nature and conserving nature is therefore emphasized (van den Berg, 2012). As such, Orr is aligned with Leopold's concern for people lacking harmony with the land, reflecting ecocentrism as the stance of applying an ethical standing to ecosystems (Mitchell & Mueller, 2010).

There are people, however, who do not agree with the points

of view of these philosophers. The main critique Orr has received is based on the fact that he refers to climate change as an 'environmental crisis' (Mitchell., 2009). However, this crisis is driven by anthropogenic factors, and therefore, it would be more appropriate to call it a humanity crisis (Mitchell, 2009). Furthermore, using this narrative implies that the most effective way for people's behaviour to change is through science, given its higher status in society. This undermines the importance of values and experiences, which Thunberg instead focuses on (Mitchell, 2009). The critique of Thunberg is mostly based on the fact that she focuses on the individual being able to make a difference, as some believe that one person's actions are simply not enough to make a significant difference (Broome, 2021). However, by reflecting our opinion on these critiques we agree with Mitchell's statement on changing the 'environmental crisis' into a 'humanity crisis'. We think so, as the 'humanity crisis' directly mentions the problem of climate change due to anthropogenic actions. Therefore it puts the climate crisis better into perspective. Besides, we expect that by the use of 'humanity crisis' people will feel more intrigued as it directly mentions us humans having a problem. Hopefully 'humanity crisis' will result in a different reaction on climate change resulting in more action and thus individual and political change.

In conclusion, both Greta Thunberg and David Orr have certain similarities and differences in their philosophies. While both address the ethical issue of climate change and the ecological crisis, their standpoints differ. Thunberg sees the ecological crisis mainly as an issue of greenhouse gas emissions, while Orr believes it is more a problem of ecological illiteracy (Mitchell, 2009; Broome, 2021). Their moral circles both extend to non-humans and future generations, however, the emphasis differs. Orr's philosophy is characterized by the capabilities approach and his theory of ecological literacy, while Thunberg's is characterized by green liberalism and some aspects of deontology (Mitchell, 2009; Broome, 2021).

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Gary Francione and Ayn Rand

Two ends of the moral spectrum from egoism to abolitionism

Ophely Regout, Susanne Bartels, Koen van Ederen and Jascha de Ruijter

We do not need to eat animals, wear animals, or use animals for entertainment purposes, and our only defence of these uses is our pleasure, amusement and convenience.

Gary Francione

Learn to value yourself, which means: fight for your happiness.

Ayn Rand

Gary Francione and Ayn Rand, hold quite conflicting and disconnected ethical theories and views on ethical issues which they seek to address. Francione is a philosopher and professor at Rutgers University in New Jersey. He wrote numerous books and articles on animal rights. In 1989, he was the first academic to teach animal rights. He worked on three issues related to animal ethics: the property status of animals, animal rights and animal welfare, and the relation of animal rights and sentience (Unferth, 2011). With his work as an animal rights advocate, he pioneered the theory of abolitionism. Abolitionism argued that all animal use is unethical. The moral baseline should be veganism, meaning that the use of any animal product should be avoided. He argues that all sentient beings share the right to not be owned, regardless of whether they are human or not. Therefore, veganism is the moral obligation for anyone with the ability to do so. Although some say that abolitionism must be achieved through political advocacy, Francione believes in non-violent dialogue and education, including the personal benefits of adopting an animal-friendly lifestyle.

On the other hand, Rand was a novelist and philosopher and is the founder of objectivism. This is a movement that received a lot of reaction, especially in the United States, where her books *Atlas Shrugged* (1957) and *The Fountainhead* (1943) are still very influential.

Objectivism advocates individual freedom and personal responsibility. This viewpoint believes that a society with a capitalist system goes hand in hand with productivity, creativity and the protection of an individual's rights in order to lead a happy life. Rand et al. (1970) state that man must be freed from his fellow man in order to be able to shape his own life. Rand preaches about rational egoism as a moral virtue. According to Rand it is important that the government should withdraw as far as possible from society and allow people to develop themselves. Here, the strongest survives and is glorified (Shaver, 2002). With this, it is evident that the theories from the different philosophers are not in line with one another. Francione's abolitionism is contradicting with Rand's theoretical viewpoints of objectivism and rational egoism which argue that one cannot expect others to alter their behaviour. This contradiction of philosophical stances is also evident when applying the moral circle.

Humans are part of the moral circle, which is a fictitious boundary we form around subjects we believe are morally significant (Singer, 1980). Those who are in the circle gain rights. Francione argues that every sentient being should be included in the moral circle as they experience pleasure and pain (DeGrazia, 2002). They should then gain value and rights as humans do, which goes against the dominant viewpoint which does not hold strong moral convictions when it comes to animal rights (Miller, 2013). Francione challenges this by arguing that through the abolishment of institutionalized animal exploitation, non-human animals would no longer be seen as property to serve humans but considered as equal beings. Rand, however, has a different view. She argues that maximum societal benefit will be achieved when everyone

acts out of self-interest. From her perspective, actions which benefit others are motivated by personal benefit, highlighting her lack of empathy and misunderstanding of the related 'prisoners dilemma' in philosophical thinking. Therefore, the moral circle remains as small as possible and only considers the individual. The moral consideration of animals is therefore always out of question as they are not considered from the individual human-centred perspective. However, if we look at Francione's vision, sentient beings like non-human animals should be within the moral circle. Regardless of their capability to claim their right, all sentient beings are worthy of moral consideration according to Francione.

Francione fights for the rights of non-human animals and opposes the common attitude that animals are property and therefore have no rights. This oppressive viewpoint harms the welfare of animals because as long as they are seen as property serving humans, they will suffer (Stoop, n.d.). Therefor the needless harming of animals should be considered as a wrong action (DeGrazia, 2002). This goes together with the ideology of Francione, however, he takes it one step further by believing that animals should not be harmed in any situation. Any matter of animal exploitation is in his eyes a wrong action. The abolishment of animal exploitation is necessary according to Francione, who believes it cannot happen abruptly but can be an incremental change. He states that following a plant-based diet is necessary for individual animals to have in their own life (Stoop, n.d.). This conflicts with Rand's speciecist philosophy as the right to self-determination of humans, in which one should be able to make one's own choices and be independent as an element of personal freedom (Amnesty, 2020). According to Rand, this is only possible when a person is completely free to make choices, which requires radical individualism (Burns, 2004). Here it is said that acting from the perspective of contribution to the common good and thus assuming moral correctness makes people passive. This would thus be an impediment to the growth of the individual and to

making individual choices (Rand et al., 1970). The extension of rights to non-human animals is evidently the divisive subject between these two conflicting philosophers, which can be further elucidated by applying the Scale of Zweers.

The scale of Zweers was created by Wim Zweers as a scale of attitudes towards nature from human perspective. There are six attitudes described starting at despot, with a view on considering nature out of self-interest, up to unio mystica, with a view of perfect symbiosis of humans and nature. Out of those, the fifth attitude, participant, is most applicable to Francione. Participant is described as having the least potential negative impact on the environment, appreciating nature's intrinsic value, and attempting to preserve as much wilderness as possible. However, in her essay called *The Anti-Industrial Revolution*, Rand opposes the ideology of environmentalism by stating that it was not motivated by a genuine concern but rather by hatred for technology and capitalism. Placing this in the context of the Scale of Zweers, she fits somewhere in the beginning, around the enlightened despot. She does not deny the existence of environmental problems, but rather questions the motives of those advocating for them. She relies on technological fixes for these issues, showing that her attitude is based on anthropocentrism in which the human interest is most valued (Attfield, 2018). Using the Scale of Zweers, it is again evident that the philosophers disagree fundamentally in their attitudes towards nature. Francione values nature and wants to exclude harm. Rand, on the other side, views nature as something that can be utilized for the benefit of humankind, and that environmental problems should be solved solely to prevent a hinderance to human activities.

Although they hold opposing viewpoints, both philosophers have been subject to critique. Francione argues that animals have a right to be treated as equals and that humanity has a moral obligation to preserve and enforce their rights. However, this comes with a set of problems. Firstly, the question must be raised whether or not animals inherently should be treated as

equals. Carl Cohen (1997) describes a right as a potential claim that one party can exercise on another party. Humans have the capabilities to claim these rights and are therefore self-legislative. Animals, however, do not have these capabilities and it therefore should be questioned if animals, in principle, should have rights. It must be stated that in marginal cases, however, humans also do not have these capabilities, such as infants or people with cognitive disabilities, which challenges the basis of this line of argumentation. Nonetheless, this fundamentally undermines the foundation on which animal rights is build. Rand however agrees with Cohen (1997), as there is a double standard that contradicts the principle that individual rights have uniformed and universal roots. For example, it is expected that humans could change their behaviour at the acknowledgement of animal rights. However, an animal could not be expected to change its behaviour toward a human in recognition of their rights, which is a double standard. Furthermore, Rand would argue that from an egoist perspective, if an individual eats animals and benefits from it that it is morally justifiable. Our stance is however aligned more with Francione's abolitionism. We believe that egoism is a rather limited and self-centred view, and we feel that an expansion of the moral circle beyond the individual is important for the benefit of many.

In conclusion, it is explicitly evident that the philosophies of Francione and Rand are fundamentally different. Both of them had a major influence in their philosophical stances of abolitionism and rational egoism, which when compared are fundamentally different and incompatible. Francione argues for the rights of animals, while Rand argues that everyone should act out of self-interest, implying that animals are not worthy of consideration. This is clear in the extension of their moral circle, which is rather small and individualistic for Rand, and large and holistic for Francione. When placed on the Scale of Zweers, the underlying reason for their incompatibility becomes apparent as they are on almost opposite sides of the

spectrum. While it is clear that these philosophers will have trouble finding common ground on their views, both views provide valid arguments supporting their statements, showing us the difficulty of dealing with different world views.

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Jeffrey Sachs and Noam Chomsky

Anarchism versus capitalism: opposing views on social equality

Sara Matthée, Valerie van Beurden, Lilian Dora Maimu Yallop and Daan Bozon

History is written by the rich, and so the poor get blamed for everything.

Jeffrey Sachs

He who controls the media controls the minds of the public.

Noam Chomsky

In philosophy, one of the most contested topics is what the ideal organisation of society is to generate social equality. The philosophers Jeffrey Sachs and Noam Chomsky have contrasting views on this topic. While Sachs supports capitalism as an instrument to decrease inequality and as a reformed version of the social contract theory, Chomsky promotes anarcho-syndicalism. It envisions the ideal society as decentralised communities being governed through direct democracy and having abolished capitalism (Davis, 2019). The two philosophies will be analysed and compared to gain a deeper understanding of these contrasting views. The feasibility of reforming capitalism through Sachs' social contract versus Chomsky's anarcho-syndicalism in the current political system will be assessed.

Jeffrey Sachs states that globally there is huge economic inequality. He argues that it is the duty of richer Western countries to help reduce the poverty that exists in the global South as the welfare of humanity is severely impacted by extreme poverty. Sachs believes that improving welfare means

that an investment should be made by higher income society to help other disadvantaged human beings. Sachs argues that global justice should be achieved through capitalistic economic growth because it narrows social inequalities instead of widening them (ADB, 2015). He has also worked on transitioning former Soviet countries to capitalistic economies. However, Sachs differentiates between environmentally destructive and non-destructive capitalism. He attributes environmentally destructive qualities to the free neoliberal market trade, which also causes the rising inequality gap. Attfield (2018, p. 105) stated that "some form of liberalism insists on an untrammelled economy" which can cause environmental problems. Sachs agrees with Attfield and insists on social democratic capitalism, where the freedom of choice is constrained to benefit the society. Furthermore, Sachs argues that these issues are not exclusively caused by capitalism as these problems were highly prevalent in the communist USSR. Consequently, Sachs states that capitalism in the form of social democracy is the solution to inequality and can enhance sustainable development. This societal structure can be found in Scandinavian countries (Economic times, 2020). In other words, capitalism that serves to benefit society as a whole instead of individuals is the key to social equality. This way economic growth can help narrow the inequality gap.

Noam Chomsky on the other hand has a different approach to solving the aforementioned problems and reaching the desired goals of societal welfare, equality, freedom and justice. Contrary to Sachs, he is a strong opponent of capitalism (Palladino, 2018). Chomsky believes that capitalism is an exploitative system since it is built on a model where wage workers labour in order to make their bosses richer (Brian, 2021). In modern capitalism, workers often do not have the freedom to stand up for their rights due to the power of wealthy companies, which ultimately increases inequality (Brian, 2021). When asked in an interview if the rising living standards in America due to capitalism justify the current

system, he answered: "no I don't think so, I mean there were rising standards in slave societies" (Chomsky's Philosophy, 2015). This underlines his strong stance against the neoliberal economy and system of the Western countries. Chomsky instead argues that social equality is achieved by the ability of people in a democracy to have sufficient knowledge about societal and political topics in order to form well-informed opinions (Britannica, n.d.). He believes that this is necessary because, in his opinion, journalists often seem to filter or leave out information in their work as a means to convince the wider public that the economic system is in a strong place (Chomsky, 1967). He argues that if people do not get informed correctly, this will limit them from being able to make up their own mind about economic issues. He therefore states that it is the duty of intellectuals to educate ordinary citizens on these topics (Britannica, n.d.). This conviction relates well to the ethical concept of justice, which can be described as individuals being treated fairly with every member of a society having the same amount of liberty (Miller, 2003). In the case of the described situation, this would mean that everyone should be provided with enough information to live a life with as much equality and liberty as the so-called intellectuals. Sachs evidently believes that justice can instead be reached through improving economic equality, which is a different stance on how to achieve social equality.

The ideas of Sachs and Chomsky lend themselves well for an ethical analysis. One of the ethical concepts that could be applied to their ideas is the expanding moral circle. This concept holds that we should apply our moral standards not only to humans, but that they should also be applied to other sentient creatures, future generations and nature as a whole (Van den Berg, 2012). Chomsky would agree with this in part, as he advocated for the protection of the Earth and its ecosystems by acknowledging the moral case of vegetarianism. However, Chomsky is not a vegetarian himself which arguably shows that he does not extend his moral standing to non-human animals.

For Jeffrey Sachs, his moral circle is also quite explicit but much more limited. This is due to his vision of helping humanity as a whole through to reducing economic inequality on national and global levels. He does not mention or elaborate more on the importance of protecting other beings. Therefore the moral circle of Sachs could be described as anthropocentric. From this perspective, it is evident that Chomsky has a more holistic view on what deserves moral standing, while Sachs approach is quite limited.

Sachs believes that to achieve global equality, there needs to be a reform of the current social contract. The social contract theory states that moral rules are governed by a mutual agreement within society (Berg, 2021; DeGrazia, 2002). Sachs believes that the current social contract has been proven to have failed society. The proof of this is extreme poverty around the world. As a result, Sachs wants to create a more efficient social contract. For Sachs, this would mean that the government is the main provider of social and environmental welfare. He advocates for a social contract where the government must provide stronger education, health systems and environmental policies under strong laws. The aim of this is that the government would support the vulnerable and reduce exploitation. (Vinals, 2021; Bidder, 2020).

Chomsky's aim is also to improve global equality and wellbeing. However, he applies a different normative ethical theory to the problem and therefore proposes a different solution than stronger government involvement. He is a self-prescribed anarchist and more specifically an anarcho-syndicalist (Brian, 2021). The 'anarcho' part of this system is the critical questioning of hierarchical power structures in our society. He underlines that if the authority is not questioned and is seen as self-justified, it leads to inequality. Therefore, it is important to analyse the legitimacy of current political structures and if found illegitimate, then they should be abolished in favour of less hierarchical systems (Mars, 2022). The 'syndicalist' part of the system refers to a labour movement

which wants to establish workers' unions and more rights for workers through direct actions such as strikes. Syndicalism generally wants to abolish capitalist order and give the power back to the people (Mars, 2022). Miller (2003, p.5) describes the anarchist argument as "that societies can perfectly well govern themselves without [political authority]". Chomsky agrees with Miller but also emphasises the initial phase of questioning authority. In this new system, decisions should be taken by workers and citizens forming unions or communities on the basis of direct democracy (Davis, 2019). In this system there is little to no hierarchy (Davis, 2019) which is according to Chomsky one of the shortfalls of our current system. This conflicts with Sachs' social contract theory which argues for top-down government involvement to improve social issues.

Another ethical concept which gives some interesting insights when applied to the conflicting theories of Chomsky and Sachs is the Scale of Zweers. This scale distinguishes six different attitudes towards nature. Within this scale, Chomsky arguably fits well with the category of participant as he thinks that humans are intrinsically linked to nature, and therefore preserving nature is necessary (Palladino, 2018) The participant is someone who wants to have as little of an impact on the planet as possible while respecting the beauty of nature (Van den Berg & Rep, 2016). However, the fact that Chomsky acknowledges the moral significance of being a vegetarianism without being one himself questions whether he truly respects the intrinsic link between humanity and nature. Sachs on the other hand has the attitude of the enlightened despot. The reason behind this is that he does not see humans as a part of nature.

Both of the viewpoints and workings of these philosophers have been subject to criticism. Sachs' work in the post-soviet Russian economy between 1991-1994 was widely dubbed a 'catastrophe', as his attempts to make Russia capitalistic resulted in a decrease in living standards (Henwood, 2006). Henwood (2006) has also stated that Sachs' ego is too high for

him to admit to his mistake in Russia. One of the main reasons for this failure was that he arguably forced Russia to become capitalist with little popular support (Henwood, 2006). As noted by Miller (2003), justice and equality are largely based on context of the situation, in which misunderstanding the context in decision making can cause outcomes to be perceived as unethical. From this perspective, it can be argued that Sachs failed to comprehend the needs of the Russian people in their national context. Therefore, the main critique of Sachs is that he has an inadequate understanding of other cultures.

Similarly, there is also criticism against Chomsky's anarcho-syndicalist systems, especially concerning feasibility and large-scale issues. Since this system proposes that society would be set up in small communities and small-scale, local economies, it seems difficult to tackle large-scale problems such as climate change in an effective way because they often need collective and centralised action (Jay, 1976). Chomsky's response to this is that the collaboration between worker unions is the solution. Such a collaboration would mimic an industrial planning process (like how a car is assembled) and with the right expertise could solve large scale problems (Jay, 1976). However, Sachs' ideology is arguably more feasible to implement in modern-day society as it has been proven to increase social equality in Scandinavian countries. Chomsky has yet to provide evidence whether his theories are applicable to the real world.

In conclusion, both Sachs and Chomsky aim to accomplish social equality, but have contrasting opinions on how to achieve this. Sachs advocates for social democratic capitalism as he attributes liberalism as the cause of destructive capitalism. Hence, the government must have a strong role in providing good social welfare and protecting the environment, which he argues should be done by reforming the current social contract. He has however received criticism of being too narrow-minded when implementing his capitalistic views to other nations. Chomsky on the other hand argues for anarcho-

syndicalism as the solution to inequality. He is against the idea of a strong government since representative democracy practised in a centralised state is not legitimate. His solution for social inequality is a decentralised, community-based society that has abolished capitalism in favour of workers' unions and is governed through direct democracy (Davis, 2019). By comparing the two philosophers, it is clear that Sachs philosophy would be more feasible in our current society since a reform of capitalism and top-down governance is more likely than abolishing it.

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Arne Næss and George Monbiot

Two perspectives humanity's role in protecting the environment

Vera Appelo, Mees Bogaards, Guus Kloos and Douwe de Kok

What we are doing to the forests of the world is but a mirror reflection of what we are doing to ourselves and to one another.

Arne Næss

The wealth creators of neoliberal mythology are some of the most effective wealth destroyers the world has ever seen.

George Monbiot

The environment around us is filled with living and non-living beings. The view on how to care for this environment can be very different from person to person. Environmentalism is one of these views, which argues that the natural environment is of utmost importance and should be saved by a change in human activities. Environmentalists believe that beings and systems other than human societies simply matter and should be considered (Britannica, n.d.). The philosophers Arne Næss and George Monbiot are environmentalists who use their philosophy to fight for the protection of the environment. Næss is widely influential in the environmentalist movement with his philosophical insights elucidating his great care for nature. Monbiot is also an active player in this movement and believes that in order to fight climate change, political action is needed. Both environmentalists agree with each other on some points, but also they show contradicting views on some aspects, which will now be explored.

Arne Næss (1912-2009) was mainly known for being strongly

caring for nature (Grimes, 2009). To be more specific, his life was marked by his concern for the destruction of nature prevalent in global societies. Issues about environmental and climate change are thus the most important ethical issues to Næss. He believed that the nature we live in should not be neglected (Nnaemeka et al., 2016). This refutes an anthropocentric worldview and egoism, which states that one should only think about their own direct, physical self (Blackburn, 2002). Stemming from his concerns about the state of the planet, Næss came up with an ethical theory that became one of the most influential in environmental ethics: deep ecology. The basic idea of this ethical standpoint is that humans should radically change their attitudes towards themselves to protect nature and the living beings in it. Instead of believing that your true self is confined to your physical body, Næss believes that your identity extends to the whole of nature. Fighting to preserve nature and animals thereby becomes a fight for self-defence. An important part of deep ecology is the belief that every living being has intrinsic value (Grimes, 2009). In fact, Næss even believes that species and ecosystems as a whole have value. This stance implies that Næss' moral circle is ecocentric as it includes all living beings as well as ecosystems and species. On the Scale of Zweers, Næss would be seen as a participant in nature. This conclusion can be drawn considering the fact that Næss doesn't believe that humans hold any special place in the world as we are just participants together with all of the other inhabitants of the planet (van den Berg, 2012).

George Monbiot is also an influential environmentalist philosopher. As a British-born writer and columnist, he became known for his critical weekly column in The Guardian. He mainly focuses on environmental and political issues and repeatedly participated in activism (Monbiot, 2022). His view on the world encompasses both humans and non-human animals. Although he actively pursues animal rights, he discriminates between the privileges of humans and non-human animals (Monbiot, 2020). In an article on his website,

Monbiot wrote: "Yes, I am a speciesist. Not because I believe human beings are innately superior to other animals, but because I believe we cannot live together (or even alone) without privileging our own existence" (Monbiot, 2020). He argues that every being would prioritise its own wellbeing and that humans should do this too, while alleviating environmental damage. This could be considered as a form of enlightened self-interest (Berg, 2021). Monbiot however believes that types of animal testing can be morally acceptable when it benefits human welfare, aligning with that belief that animal research can be used in the pursuit of original scientific information and knowledge (DeGrazia, 2002). Monbiot nonetheless advocates for the preservation of nature, and states that "without massive and immediate change, we face the possibility of cascading environmental collapse" (Monbiot, 2021b). He encourages walking, cycling, electric cars and public transport, and criticises private jets and yachts, extra homes and other "planet-trashing extravagances" (Monbiot, 2021a) to address the environmental crises.

Monbiot is also concerned with the discrepancy between the rich and the poor. He addresses this problem in several ways. On the one hand he criticises the political power attained in by the rich in a "democracy to be eroded by lobbyists" (Monbiot, 2021), and on the other hand the ecological footprint the rich have by saying that "the richest 1% of the world's people [...] produce 15% of the world's carbon emissions: twice the combined impact of the poorest 50%" (Monbiot, 2022a). Monbiot has a strong sense of the need for communities within societies, evident in his statement that "our intuitions are shaped by and help to bind, the groups or tribes to which we belong" (Monbiot, 2015). On multiple occasions, he has attacked the British government for its authoritarian tendencies and lack of care about the wellbeing of the overall population. It can be argued that Monbiot can be classified as a partner on the Scale of Zweers due to the combination of his views on animals, the environment and individuals within

society. Even though Monbiot allows humans to prioritise themselves, Monbiot could be considered an ecocentrist, since he sees intrinsic value in all living things as well as in ecosystems as a whole. This can be deduced from his reasoning that humans, non-human animals and nature itself have to live together in harmony to function properly (Monbiot, 2020). This is aligned with the views of Næss.

However Næss has been criticized, most notably by the important ecofeminist thinker Marti Kheel. Ecofeminism is a social movement that connects women and nature. This belief argues that the environment should not be degraded in order to improve women's equality, and women's equality should not be diminished for improvements in the environment (Buckingham, 2015). Ecofeminism and deep ecology align because they both support the development of a new self. In addition, both schools of thought put forward the importance of the environment. However, Kheel does not fully comply with Næss' ideas. She states that too much emphasis is placed on the whole and too little attention is brought to the independent self, who is often degraded under current societal systems. Deep ecology, thus, fades the lines between the nature around us and us as human beings (Kheel, 1991).

Monbiot was also subject to criticism due to his identification of the neoliberal political system as one of the main drivers for the loss of community and the societal problems that we currently face (Monbiot, 2018). Conservative Australian author Ted Trainer disagrees with Monbiot as he believes that neoliberalism is not the main cause for our problems. Trainer argues that socialism also poses issues which could destroy us (Trainer, 2018). According to Trainer, the core issue is the drive towards affluence and economic growth that exists within our society. This problem cannot be solved by removing the neoliberalist doctrine, as a society driven by socialism would eventually face the same problems. Trainer shows some fallacious reasoning here as socialism is not the only alternative to neoliberalism. However, he believes that to solve this, a

large-scale transition to a new economic and political system is needed and Trainer argues that Monbiot fails to comprehend the drastic and radical changes that are necessary to accomplish this. This is an interesting critique as it goes to the core of this problem. Many 'green-thinkers' believe that abandoning the capitalistic system will be sufficient to resolve the sustainability problem. Here, Trainer challenges this widespread belief and warns of the magnitude of the issue. A change in values and lifestyle behaviour will be harder to achieve than a change in the political system. It can be argued that Næss shares this stance, and therefore conflicts with the beliefs of Monbiot. However, the following deeper comparison between the two philosophers will elucidate their level of alignment.

It is evident that the two philosophers share similar goals as both thinkers fight against climate change, environmental degradation and biodiversity loss. In this fight, both thinkers pay attention to the inequalities between richer and poorer nations. Both philosophers also fundamentally believe that all individual animals, as well as the ecosystems in which they live, have intrinsic value. For this reason, both Næss and Monbiot can be considered ecocentrists. In this context, it is however important to note that Næss and Monbiot do not necessarily agree on the amount of moral consideration all these animals should get. Næss believed that our true identity incorporates everything we are related to: our family, the living creatures around us and even the trees and plants around us (Attfield, 2018). To Næss, this concept of the self is an essential building block in his argument about caring for the environment. Monbiot, on the other hand, does not agree with Næss' concept of the self. In his In *Defence of Speciesm* (2020), Monbiot argues that separate and clear identity is not a barrier, but rather a necessity in the fight against environmental change and biodiversity loss, since "no animal can sustain its existence without privileging itself above other lifeforms". So, while Næss encourages an identification with nature to stimulate climate awareness, Monbiot believes that to achieve

this same goal, the discrimination between non-human and human species should be preserved.

Another difference between Næss and Monbiot is their place on the Scale of Zweers. While Næss is a clear example of a thinker who considers humans to only be participants who should not be considered as having a significantly special place within nature, Monbiot's attitude towards nature is a bit less progressive. Even though Monbiot actively denies the idea that humans hold a divine power over nature, he doesn't agree that humans deserve no special consideration when making a moral decision. Following his belief that every animal should mainly care for its own survival, Monbiot believes that even though we should still consider nature and all its inhabitants, humans are allowed to prioritise their own species when making a moral decision. This thought, in combination with Monbiot's strong focus on preserving nature, makes that he can be labelled as a 'enlightened despot' rather than a 'participant' of nature.

In conclusion, both Næss and Monbiot think that protecting and respecting the environment is very important. Næss formed his thoughts into the theory of deep ecology which aims to show that we should have a participatory role in the planetary system. This great care for ecosystems reflects an ecocentric view. Monbiot believes that every being should pursue their own wellbeing and minimise their environmental impact. Furthermore, shifting away from the consumer-capitalist society is a necessary action that will allow us to continue life sustainably on this Earth. Even though both of the philosophers have a slightly different perspective on personal identities and our relationship with nature, both thinkers agree that we should start caring for our environment. We hope you share that opinion.

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Poetry from Bildung Students

The Bildung honours component of the 'Philosophy of Science and Ethics' course is open to all students who wish to work on self-development and flourishing through cultural enrichment. This is achieved through extra-curricular group meetings and assignments on a variety of topics aimed at stimulating their philosophical reflection. The following poems were written by Bildung students for the assignment to write poetry.

My Shell – Lis

I break the shell,
I break ... free
From harm and injustice,
I do what I ... feel.
I am sorry dear forest, animals and ocean
I can be selfless, with real devotion.
Like a being that is not driven
by its perverse pleasure
I can be part of the change,
that's the real treasure.
Break free from milk, honey and meat
At the end of the day, you are what you eat.
Say yes to the change, join the motion
We will all walk together,
with forest, animals and ocean.
A whole new world
As it will reveal,
You can fly like a bird
It can be so real.
You can break the shell,
You can break free
From harm and injustice,
You do what you feel.

Tiny Planet – Lilla

Hey there, tiny planet
Are you going somewhere?
To discover your destiny
In this cold universe?
You're chasing a bright star,
The light of your life
One day you'll reach it,
And the world will be fine.
But can you not see that
you've been going round in a circle?
The star doesn't care
That you've fallen for its glimmer.
You may be bigger, but tell no lies:
You're just a lonely moth
Drawn to the light.
Little tiny planet,
Is this your destiny?
To circle around a star:
so much more shiny,
and ever so far.
To be part of a dance you can never quit
With all your planet siblings
Each trapped in their orbit.
They may all be distant, never to touch
But all your moves change theirs,
And their movement yours.
So stop thinking of destiny,
Just enjoy the ride,
And cherish the planets
That are there by your side.

Winter – Anonymous

Through the big window,
The wind blows against the trees.
They are dancing, I say.
See the snowflakes fall.
In the cold they choose to come,
Falling like tear drops.
Cold weather comes again,
Welcomed by open arms.
Winter be cherished.
Winter come at last.
Together we can hold warm,
By my spirit.

Nostalgia – Luna

Nostalgia
How can one word have so many faces
It holds melancholy about what used to be
A realisation of what we have lost
I was happier back then, wasn't I?
The world was kinder; I was loved
It warns me life is fleeting by
I'm older but it feels like only yesterday
It reminds me I need to start living now
But somehow life gets in the way
Sometimes, it fills me with a certain zest
A lust for life, looking back with a smile
I feel like I lived a full life
The most content, I've been in a while
It hides in seasons, in music, in smells
Sometimes it's personal, and then it's not
It can make me miss things I have never known
Oh sweet feelings of nostalgia; for a time, a person, a home
It is present in stuffy bookstores in Amsterdam
You can feel it when you're willingly soaking in the rain
A complex feeling of appreciation for life's beauty,
Mixed with an unshakable pain
The first sun rays in spring, and the smell of pine
My family home in Spain, I want to travel back in time
To when I was young, happy and unbothered
Or passionately in reciprocated love, smothered
Those were the moment before everything happened
I think to myself, but it's not the truth
In those loving memories
...I was nostalgic too

Water from the sky – Floris

The water from the sky
Has many faces
Do you see them now?
Which one of them?
The water from the sky
The warm summer rain
On my salty skin
The water from the sky
The cold windy rain in autumn
Cycling soaking wet
The water from the sky
The frozen water
That silences the world
The water from the sky
That comes pouring down
And flushes everything in its way
The water from the sky
That is awaited long
and does not come
The water from the sky
That nourishes the land
And greens the leaves
The water from the sky
That varnishes everything
With a glittering light
The water from the sky

Death – Jascha

Pain
A thousand shards in which I broke into cut my nerves like it's nothing
Lightness
A light feeling from bottom to top softens the pain after which I do not feel the ground once more
Flash
A light flash thus bright that I think I will never see a glimmer of light anymore and it blinds me
Darkness
A darkness as if the moon will never be lighted by the sun again and is fed with silence
Light
There is a little dot of light in the distance, getting bigger and bigger and it fills the space
Warmth
A heavenly warmth embraces me as a mom that holds her child for the first time
Home
I've made it, I'm here, a feeling of coming home overflows me like I have never been away

Creative Philosophy

The creative assignment is a task for students which aims to inspire them to visualize their essay in a creative way. The purpose of this assignment is not only for students to engage with philosophical tools and concepts creatively, but even more so for them to practice with and develop their visual thinking skills. The instructions are that their visual should be creative (anything goes!) and, perhaps more importantly, it should be functional: the visual should serve as a vehicle for conveying the meaning of the philosophical tool or concept to a general audience. Students approach this assignment in a variety of ways, including drawings, poems, presentations to even making music! The following examples show some examples.

Egocentric shopping: e-commerce

Casper Seuren

E-commerce has grown a lot since the beginning of the Covid crisis. Ordering goods which are not necessary, just to try, or not to your likings; it all contributes to more production and delivery of goods. Consequently, there is an increase of packaging waste, transport pollution and waste of goods. It only costs you... well, maybe time to stick on the free return label and bring it down the street. However, this trend should not be encouraged to live by. It is an egocentric point of view, which causes neglection of a personal impact on the environment.

Unequal moral circle of non-human animals

Rosa Leeuwe

This cartoon illustrates the moral circle of non-human animals. Cats and dogs belong to the same moral circle as pigs, cows and chickens. However, these different types of animals are treated very differently by humans. The point I try to make with this cartoon is to show that even though all the animals at the table belong to the same moral circle of 'animal life', attitudes towards them differ extremely, and we do not apply ethics (and animal rights) in the same way to these animals. The cow is wondering why they are treated so badly, especially in intensive factory-farming.

The future: delivered in 3-5 business days!

Jim Gelderen

My poster highlights a dystopian future where capitalism got the best of the world. My ethical concept was egoism, and I think this little guy in the bunker doesn't care about the world, but only about himself.

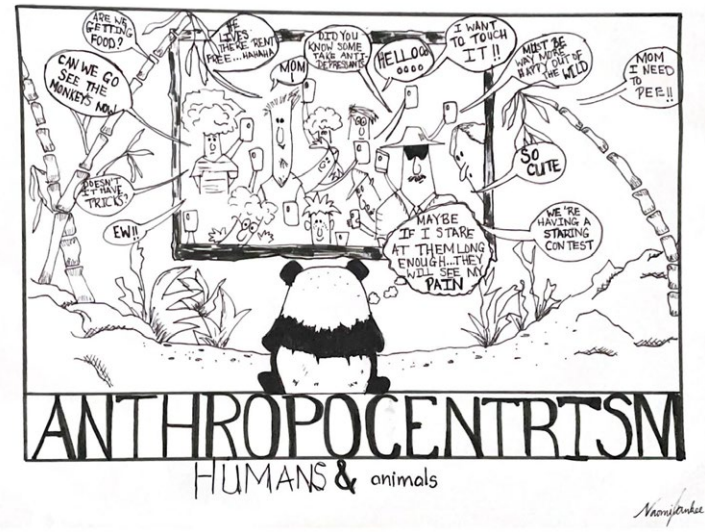
Turkey dinner

Julia Strijbosch

This illustration depicts a well-known scene of a family around the dinner table at Christmas time. Surrounded by decorations, gifts and a Christmas tree, these characters prepare to eat their turkey dinner, a common Christmas practice. The distressed turkeys waiting to be eaten show how these animals have no moral standing from the humans, and thus are not included in their moral circle. I hope this image makes people question what are their common practices that inflict suffering.

Anthropocentrism: the common moral circle

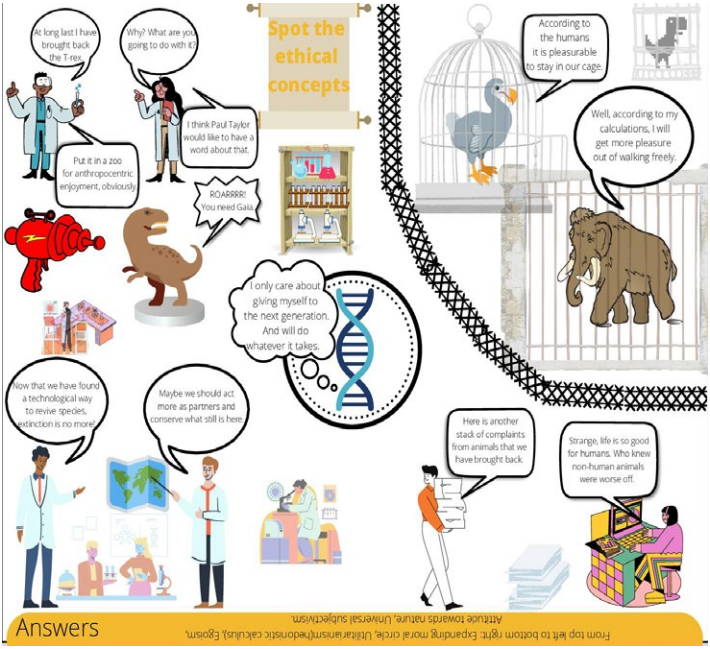
Naomi Jankee



This drawing/comic portrays a panda bear in an exhibit filled with pain and suffering but the humans viewing him are so caught up in their world they do not see the inhumanity in front of them. This is where anthropocentrism comes to play as some/most humans see themselves as the centre of the universe and anything else is below them and unworthy of moral consideration. The word "humans" is purposefully written bigger than the word "animals" to portray this.

Spot the ethical concepts

Nehis Osagie



In this poster there are five ethical concepts. So test your knowledge. Can you spot them all? You can find the answers at the bottom, by flipping the file. No cheating, Kant would not like that. Enjoy.

From reconciliation to continued discrimination

Noor Lammers

This poster illustrates my essay which is the continuous discrimination of the Indigenous land rights in Canada. The image depicts how indigenous land is continuously being degraded through deforestation and subsequent loss of biodiversity and ecological stability. From the perspective of the indigenous community member, it is hard to understand why more land is being taken when so much has already been destroyed.

The greatest happiness for the greatest number

Renée Simons

I created a poster on how the unethical consumption of fast fashion by consumers still enables the occurrence of child labour in countries in the Global South. People all over the world consume fast fashion, accounting for a group way larger than the group creating our fast fashion. Hence, according to the concept of the greatest happiness of the greatest number, there is more pleasure than suffering and therefore it can be justified. This is however very contradictory and I hope my poster visualizes this contradictory concept placed in the context of child labour caused by fast fashion.

Interview with Floris van den Berg

Sarah Nolan

The lecturer of this course, Floris van den Berg, is well known for his thought-provoking views. During his lectures, many students pose questions to him about his philosophical standpoint and his opinion on a variety of topics. To give readers some insight into his interesting perspectives on life, the following interview was conducted.

What is your goal for the course?
The predecessor of the Philosophy of Science and Ethics only covered philosophy of science. For many students this course is the only philosophy course they get in their entire program. It is important that students should know some basics about ethics, so I decided to make it a combined philosophy of science plus ethics course. This way they will know at least a little bit of both.

The aim of this course is to counter the cultural-relativism and truth relativism. The most important goal of the course is to get students to learn how to think for themselves and to think critically. "Why is science the best way to get knowledge?" And: "Why isn't every opinion equal?" These are questions I hope to clarify during the course. But above all, I want to make students think critically.

What do you think students will take home from it?
I hope that the students actually dare to think and that they reflect on how they want to live their life. I hope to give them the tools to not only be able to think critically, but also dare to act that way.

You have strong opinions. Don't you think you might scare some students away with that?
Maybe. However, my personal opinion actually doesn't matter. It is important to find out what the best arguments are. I am an explicit, hard-core thinker. Many people do not voice their opinions, so being explicit might be confronting for people and may scare some of them.

You are a free thinker and an atheist. When did you start thinking this way?
I was brought up as a Catholic, but I don't think I have ever believed in any of its dogmas. I watched people's shoes during Mass when they got their biscuit from the priest. When I entered Leiden University where I enrolled both History and Japanese Language and Culture, I found out that I was an atheist.

How is it when you speak to religious people?
Most of my friends and acquaintances are non-believers or liberal 'believers'. However, I am now and again invited to discuss atheism with believers. I like discussions with (Orthodox) Christian student groups. Sometimes they start with prayer. Then there is discussion and afterwards we drink a beer together. The sphere is amicable.

I was interviewed on national television by two Muslim ladies (Meiden van Halal) about religious schools. This interview is a hit on YouTube.

You are a vegan. How long have you been one?
Unfortunately, and I am ashamed to say so, only for twelve years. I have been a vegetarian for thirty years. I became a vegetarian after reading Peter Singer's work *Animal Liberation*. To see that it has taken me twenty years to listen to my own arguments is disheartening. I have failed to live up to my own principles all those years. Changing behaviour is difficult.

Why not sooner?
Nobody in my social environment was vegan. Until you start looking into it, veganism is something distant and vague that nobody does. Thankfully there is help, like the Nederlandse Vereniging voor Veganisme and the Vegan Society, which give useful tips about health and cooking.

I knew the arguments all that time. I remember exactly at what point I decided to go vegan: it was during one of my lectures when I saw *Meet your Meat* for the umpteenth time and realized that milk is also part of the institutionalized cruelty and killing of animals. I thought: "I cannot do this anymore! I have to act and become vegan." I could not live with that moral dissonance any more. There is a difference between intellectual knowledge and realizing what it really means! From then on I gave up all animal products and became a happy vegan.

When I turned vegan, I lost some friends along the way but made new friends as well. I find it difficult to sit at a table when people eat murdered animal corpses. In restaurants it is sometimes difficult. Usually we check beforehand where we can eat vegan.

Is veganism only about diet or do you also avoid any other animal products?
I strive to live a vegan, cruelty free lifestyle. I try to live without harming animals. As I give public lectures, I am some kind of a role model. Therefore I decided to give away all my leather shoes, belts, bags, and wool prunes and whatever I had left.

Many students wonder about the health aspect of a vegan diet. How do you get your proteins, calcium and vitamin B12?
When you are in a certain diet and you look at a vegan diet most people think of their own diet and think: "Well, then I have to leave that out and I cannot eat that" and then there is only a tiny range of food left. This is not the way you should look at it. Being vegan means a shift in taste, you eat more legumes, vegetables and fruits. The organization of Dutch vegans is

a great help: they give great tips on how to take in enough of everything you need. B12 is the only vitamin, which cannot be obtained from a plant-based diet. Therefore, I take a daily vitamin B12 supplement, which are easy to obtain in any drug store. Luckily, a well-balanced plant based diet is healthy and even healthier than a standard western diet. There are even vegan top athletes and body builders, like Frank Medrano.

But even if it were the case that a plant based diet would lead to nutritional deficiencies, it still wouldn't ethically justify murdering animals and I would not do it. Imagine that people would have nutritional deficiencies if they would not eat human babies. Would that justify eating them?

So are you then against all animal testing as well, even when it saves lives?
Yes, I am against all forms of animal testing. We can use all the results from animal testing so far. I am against using animals (both human and nonhuman) as a mere means.

You have two children, are they vegan as well?
No they are vegetarians. We tell them the reasons why we do not eat or use animal products. My sons were raised as vegans; now they are 18 and 19 and they choose for vegetarianism.

Aren't you afraid your children will revolt someday?
I will see, I am not going to worry about that now. They know the answers, and for now they stand behind their food choices. If they decide that they want to eat meat when they are older, it is up to them. I will not buy meat for them. If they want it, they will have to pay for it themselves. Maybe I will show them the clips I show my students, but in the end it is their life, their decision.

You think religion should not be imposed on children by their parents. How is imposing your children a vegan lifestyle different?
Non-religion and veganism are both the default position of liberal moral education. Children should be free from religion

and they should be free from institutionalized cruelty – including cruelty to nonhuman animals. The basic principles of education and parenting are 1) to help the child/student to gain knowledge about the world and 2) to become a critical citizen of the world. The education of children should be in accordance with the no harm principle – and consuming animal products is obviously not in accordance with that principle. It is a paradox of liberalism that there are limits to the freedom of parents to do what they want to their own children. Individual freedom of the child should not be hampered by parental control; on the contrary, the freedom of the child should be encouraged. Veganism is not only the moral default position for children; it is the moral default position for all.

Philosopher Karl Popper speaks about open versus closed societies. Analogue with that, there are open versus closed ways to raise children. There is a fundamental difference between those two styles of upbringing. (See my book: *On Green Liberty*).

The animal agriculture industry is central to the Dutch economy, with many livelihoods and incomes depending on it. If everyone went vegan, that industry would collapse and leave many jobless. Should we put animal suffering over human suffering in this context?

Yes, because it is animals lives versus human livings – and those are not on equal footing. Being alive matters more than earning a living. However, I think that society as a whole is responsible for the situation the famers and workers are in and that we should have a compensation scheme for them. In the 1970's the coal mines in the Netherlands were closed down which led to many workers loosing their job – the government has tried to help them with schemes.

You argue that institutions, such as universities, should only provide vegan food. Do you think this is feasible in a primarily carnistic diet society, and do you think it's fair that people are forced to eat vegan food?

I argue that veganism is a moral duty (following the abolitionist approach by Gary Francione). If universities claim to lead the way and be progressive, certainly in the field of sustainability, it seems logical that universities change to a vegan diet (and vegan campus). If the food offered on campus is fully vegan, then people are not forced to eat vegan – they have a choice to eat of not to eat the vegan campus food. Apart from that, I do think that a decent moral society should have veganism as a moral minimum, just like it is not tolerated that people murder each other, the murder of nonhuman animals and the sale of body parts should not be allowed. (This reasoning sound extreme because it reasons from beyond a moral blind spot which we don't see because we have been willingly indoctrinated in the ideology of carnism which makes it seem justifiable to use nonhuman animals for any purpose human animals seem fit, including killing them by the millions).

You don't fly. What do you say to the argument that an individual not flying won't make a difference? Some argue that the plane will be flying anyway with or without you, how do you justify this?
I made a pledge to myself not to fly anymore – I must confess that I have flown over the world, including the USA, India and Australia. An individual's actions and choices are not going to change the whole system. However, living an ethical life is a matter of each individual individually, and individuals might gather and collectively they might have an impact. Certainly they can be role models.

You argue that we as human beings in today's world live in alienation. What do you mean by this?
People have become estranged to the ecosystems they live in and they are dependent on. The supply of food in supermarkets makes it easy to forget what seasons are because fruit and vegetables are on the shelves the whole year around. By being inside buildings, we are not so much aware of nature. We live large part of our lives in artificial surroundings with electrical

light. We transport ourselves at speeds much faster than our natural pace of walking.

Do you ever doubt?
Nice question! About what? That there is a god? That Saudi Arabia is not immoral in how it treats women, infidels and homosexuals? That it is not wrong to kill and abuse nonhuman animals? That we are not wrecking the planet? No, I never have doubts about these core statements. I do have doubts about my own behaviour: am I living up to my own ethical standards? Am I doing the best I can to ameliorate suffering?

The climate crisis is out of control, and it is impossible to reverse the damage that human activity has done to the natural world. Does this make you question the purpose of living in an environmentally ethical way? How do you motivate yourself?
I am a desperate optimist: I do think the climate crisis (as part of the larger ecological crisis) is out of control and we (and future generations) will have to face the dire consequences of this. But for now, despite the many catastrophes around the globe, I still live a happy and enjoyable live. I try to reduce my ecological footprint (too little, now that I think of it), and I am involved in some environmental activism (too little, now that I think about it). What motivates me is my love of life and compassion for the victims of unnecessary and avoidable suffering.

Do you think that it is possible to have a fair society, or is unethical behavior a natural trait of human beings?
In theory, it is definitely possible to have a fair/jus/ethical society (which is hopefully sustainable as well). The Netherlands is an example not of Utopia, but of the possibility for moral progress, in which homosexuals (LGBTQIA++ people) have equal rights, where there if freedom of expression and some kind of healthcare and social welfare system including general education. Historically speaking, the Netherlands

shows that the unethical behaviour of humans can be tamed in a decent society. Education plays an important role; education is not only about knowledge and skills, but should also be concerned with ethics and moral virtues.

Do you have hope for the future?
I am quite pessimistic, but I also know that predicting the future is something we humans a prone to fail. I do hope for a world with less suffering and more happiness for the next say 200,000 years. I do hope Utrecht University will be the first fully vegan university in the world and that the Netherlands grant non-human animals rights and thereby abolish livestock farming.

Is there anything you would like to say to the future students of this course?
My hope is that they will dare to think, just like Kant said, *sapere aude*, dare to think. But remember: critical thinking is dangerous!

About a quarter of the students make significant lifestyle changes after this course. Some become vegetarian, others vegan, some become more environmentally conscious. Others become more critical of religion, pseudoscience and quackery like acupuncture and homeopathy. You never know when it affects them, sometimes it is directly, but it can be a long term process.

I hope my students will strive to help make the world a better place with less suffering and more happiness.

Appendices

A: Mediagraphy

Continue on your philosophical journey by exploring the following documentaries, books, and readings.

Shock docs

- *8 Billion Angels*, 2021 by Victor Velle
- *A Plastic Ocean*, 2016 by Craig Leeson
- *An Inconvenient Truth*, 2006 by Al Gore
- *An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power*, 2017 by Bonni Cohen and Jon Shenk
- *Before the Flood*, 2016 by Fisher Stevens
- *Blackfish*, 2013 by Gabriela Cowperthwaite
- *Chasing Coral*, 2017 by Jeff Orlowski
- *Chasing Ice*, 2012 by James Balog
- *Cowspiracy: The Sustainability Secret*, 2014 by Kip Andersen and Keegan Kuhn
- *Crude*, 2011 by Joe Berlinger
- *Dark Waters*, 2019 by Todd Haynes
- *Darwin's Nightmare*, 2004 by Hubert Sauper
- *David Attenborough: A Life on Our Planet*, 2020 by Alastair Fothergill, Jonnie Hughes and Keith Scholey
- *Dominion*, 2018 by Chris Delforce
- *Earthlings*, 2005 by Shaun Monson
- *Eating Animals*, 2017 by Christopher Dillon Quinn
- *Eating Our Way to Extinction*, 2021 by Ludo Brockway and Otto Brockway
- *Extinction: The Facts*, 2020 by David Attenborough
- *Fantastic Fungi*, 2019 by Louis Schwartzberg
- *Food Inc.*, 2008 by Robert Kenner

- *Forks over Knives*, 2011 by Lee Fulkerson
- *Gasland*, 2010 by Josh Fox
- *H.O.P.E: What You Eat Matters*, 2016 by Nina Messinger
- *Home*, 2009 by Yann Arthus-Bertrand
- *Human Flow*, 2017 by Ai Weiwei
- *I am Greta*, 2020 by Nathan Grossmann
- *Into Eternity*, 2011 by Michael Madsen
- *Kiss the Ground*, 2020 by Joshua Tickell and Rebecca Harrell Tickell
- *Meat the Truth*, 2007 by Partij voor de Dieren
- *Meet Your Meat* (on Youtube), 2008 by Peta.org
- *Minimalism*, 2015 by Matt D'Avella
- *More Than Honey*, 2012 by Markus Imhoof
- *My Octopus Teacher*, 2020 by Pippa Ehrlich and James Reed
- *Our Big Little Farm*, 2018 by John Chester and Molly Chester
- *Our Daily Bread*, 2005 by Nicolaus Geyrhalter
- *Our Planet*, 2019 by David Attenborough
- *Plastic Island*, 2021 by Dandhy Laksono and Rahung Nasution
- *Plastic Planet*, 2010 by Werner Boote
- *Racing Extinction*, 2015 by Louie Psihoyos
- *Sea the Truth*, 2010 by Partij voor de Dieren
- *Seaspiracy*, 2021 by Ali Tabrizi
- *Sharkwater*, 2007, by Rob Stewart
- *Speciesism: The Movie*, 2013 Mark Devries
- *Taste the Waste*, 2010 by Valentin Thurn
- *The 11th Hour*, 2007 by Leonardo DiCaprio
- *The Age of Stupid*, 2009 by Fanny Armstrong
- *The Call of the Mountain*. Arne Næss and the Deep Ecology Movement, 1997 by Jan van Boeckel (on Youtube)
- *The Cove*, 2009 by Louie Psihoyos
- *The End of the Line*, 2009 by Ruppert Murray
- *The Game Changers*, 2018 by Louis Psihoyos
- *The Green Lie*, 2018 by Werner Boote
- *The Hidden Life of Trees*, 2020 by Jörg Adolph and Jan Haft
- *The Meatrix*, 2003, www.themeatrix.com

- *The Milk System*, 2017 by Andreas Pichler
- *The Plastic Nile*, 2021 by Toby Scunthorp
- *The Salt of the Earth*, 2014 by Wim Wenders and Juliano Ribeiro Salgado
- *The Social Dilemma*, 2020 by Jeff Orlowski
- *The True Cost*, 2015 by Andrew Morgan
- *Tomorrow*, 2016 by Jiseung Lee
- *Vanishing of the Bees*, 2009 by George Langworthy, James Erskine and Maryam Henein
- *Vegucated*, 2011 by Marisa Miller Wolfson
- *We Feed the World*, 2005 by Erwin Wegenhofer
- *What the Health*, 2017 by Kip Andersen and Keegan Kuhn
- *Who we Were*, 2021 by Marc Bauder

Mandatory reading for the course

Books

- Attfield, D. (2018). *Environmental Ethics. A very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Blackburn, S. (2002) *Being Good. A short introduction to Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford Paperbacks.
- DeGrazia. D. (2002). *Animal Rights. A very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Miller, D. (2003). *Political Philosophy. A very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Okasha, S. (2016, preferably the second edition). *Philosophy of Science. A very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Book chapter

- Pigliucci, M. (2010). *Nonsense on Stilts: How to Tell Science from Bunk*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Posters

- Berg, F. van den. & Borghart, S. (2020) *Climate Change Denialism Refuted*. [Poster]. Utrecht: Utrecht University.
- Berg, F. van den. & Meindertsma, J. (2012) *Philosophy*

of science & critical thinking. [Poster]. Utrecht: Utrecht University.
- Berg, F. van den. & Meindertsma, J. (2012). *Ethics: Philosophy for a better world*. [Poster]. Utrecht: Utrecht University.
- Berg, F. van den. (2015). *Political Philosophy*. [Poster]. Utrecht: Utrecht University.

Resources for background on philosophy
- *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (http://www.iep.utm.edu/)
- *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* (https://www.rep.routledge.com)
- *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (http://plato.stanford.edu/)

Recommended books

- Berg, F. van den & Rep, T. (eds.). (2016) *Thoughts on Oughts. Inconvenient essays on environmental ethics.* Utrecht: Utrecht University.
- Berg, F. van den. (2020). *On Green Liberty.* Brave New Books.
- Curry, P. (2011). *Ecological Ethics*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Jacques, P. (2014). *Sustainability. The Basics.* London: Routledge.
- Joy, M. (2020). *Why we love dogs, eat pigs and wear cows: An introduction to carnism, 10th Anniversary Edition.* Massachusetts: Red Wheel.
- Kandpal, A. (2022). *We Get to Live.* Bilaspur: Evincepub Publishing.
- Næss, A., Drengson, A. [Ed] & Devall, B. [Ed]. (2008). *The Ecology of Wisdom: Writings by Arne Næss.* Berkeley: Counterpoint.
- Oreskes, N., & Conway, E. M. (2014). *The collapse of Western civilization: A view from the future*. New York: Columbia University Press.

- Safran Foer, J. (2009). *Eating Animals.* New York: Little, Brown and Company.
- Van den Berg, F. (2013). *Philosophy for a better world.* New York: Prometheus Books.

B: How to write a good essay

Here are some tips on how to write an essay on an ethical case study of your choice. The essay should make one clear point, be supported by good arguments, presented in a logical way and be both professional and accessible to a general audience. The following outlines an overview of the prerequisites for a good essay.

1. Structure

a. *Basic information:* mention your name, student number and word count at the top of the page.
b. *Word count:* 2000 words, including in-text references and excluding reference list.
c. *Titles:* clear title and subtitle, in which you make a clear and bold statement. Don't pose a question!
d. *First paragraph – introduction:* problem description and clear and bold normative statement at the end;
e. *Next paragraphs – body:* one argument per paragraph.
f. *Last paragraph – conclusion:* no new arguments/information in conclusion, come back to your statement (and title);
g. *Coherence:* content in titles, statement, arguments and conclusion should be aligned.

2. Argumentation: The most important prerequisite for a good essay. This argumentation involves the adequate use of philosophical theory and relevant literature to make a compelling argument in favour of your statement.

a. Relevance of topic for the assignment.

b. Use of course literature (use and include references to at least two of the mandatory books).
c. Use of philosophical theory.
d. Your own research on the topic and philosophy (include and include references to at least three peer-reviewed publications).
e. Sound logic: avoid logical fallacies.
f. Clarity of statement.
g. Argumentation is convincing.
h. Argumentation is built up logically (i.e. well-structured).
i. The essay should contain (at least) one contra-argument, which then should be refuted.

3. Language and professional style

a. Avoid grammar mistakes.
b. Avoid typos and spelling mistakes.
c. No informal language (i.e. blog style, slang).
d. Tone of writing is professional and accessible to a general audience.
e. Use non-biased language, e.g.:
   i avoid gender bias, for example: use humankind instead of mankind.
   ii avoid speciecist bias, for example: distinguish human- and non-human animals instead of saying animals.
f. An image is worth a thousand words: include a relevant quote and/or image to support your line of argumentation.

4. Layout and referencing

a. Clear separation between paragraphs (i.e. indent or empty space between paragraphs).
b. APA-style referencing (both in text as well as a reference list).
c. Include references to at least two of the mandatory course books.
d. Include references to at least three relevant peer-reviewed publications.

5. Final evaluation of your work

a. Are all prerequisites for a good essay (as outlined above) present?
b. Did you read your essay out loud to someone?
c. If your neighbour would read your essay, would they understand?
d. Is your essay interesting to read, both concerning writing style and content?

C: Philosophical questions that spark discussion

The following questions were written by Bildung students with to spark philosophical conversations. See if they actually do start a meaningful dialogue on issues that matter.

> Is happiness just chemicals flowing through your brain or something more?
> What is a good life?
> Is there a God?
> Is there an alternative to capitalism?
> Is it more important to be respected or to be liked?
> Have we become less happy in this age of technology?
> Is there a meaning of life?
> Is having a big ego a negative or positive trait?
> Is the most important purpose in life to find happiness?
> Do we have a free will?
> Does life require a purpose and a goal?
> What is happiness?
> Do acts of kindness have a motive?
> Is love different from sexual desire?
> If everyone spoke their mind freely would this world be a better place?

> Is there a perfect life?
> Which is more important: justice or mercy?
> Is torture ever justified?

About the editors

Dr Floris van den Berg (1973) is Assistant Professor at the Copernicus Institute of Sustainable Development at Utrecht University. He studied Japanese Language and Culture at Leiden University and studied for some time in Japan. He also studied Philosophy at Leiden and Utrecht Universities and specialized in applied ethics. In his PhD thesis titled *Harming Others. Universal Subjectivism and the Expanding Moral Circle* (2011) at Leiden University, he developed the theory of Universal Subjectivism, about applying ethical consideration to all who can suffer, thereby expanding the moral circle to include nonhuman animals, future generations, and indirectly, nature. He published more than a dozen books on popular philosophy, including *Philosophy for a Better World, On Green Liberty* and *Ask Me Anything.* Floris likes reading, writing and running. He lives a vegan lifestyle and made a vow to not fly.

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Sarah Nolan (1997) is an Earth System Governance and Sustainable Development Masters student at Utrecht University. Her main passion and research interest is in the area of sustainable food systems, with a particular focus on the governance of local and regional food supply chains. She believes that we can make a huge impact across environmental, social and economic pillars of sustainability by buying locally sourced food and thus (re)connecting with the people and environment around us. Upon completing her studies, she will begin work as a research assistant for the *EU4Advice* project which aims to develop enabling methodologies and tools to connect short food supply chains advisors in a common network across EU member states. Sarah likes being in nature, practising yoga and spending time with friends.

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