

Environmental ethics

Differences between humans and non-human animals

Each of the following is an alleged difference between humans and animals, which is supposed to be relevant to 1 and 2 in Singer's argument (see other handout).

- Eliminate any that are not relevant to Singer's claim.
 - Of those which remain, turn each into a conditional:
"If being A and B are different in the following way _____, then a certain amount of pain for A is less intrinsically bad than that same amount of pain for B."
 - For each conditional, are there counterexamples?
- a. Humans and animals experience the same event differently (e.g. slapping baby vs. slapping horse).
 - b. Animals can't contemplate the future; humans can.
 - c. Humans can understand the context of an experience, but animals cannot.
 - d. Animals are less intelligent than humans.
 - e. Animals have less memory capacity than humans.
 - f. Animals are not innovative; humans are.
 - g. Animals are more habit-governed than humans.
 - h. Animals bond faster than humans.
 - i. Animals don't build societies; humans do.
 - j. Animals hurt other beings for self-interested reasons; humans do not.