Peter Singer (1946-)

Peter Singer (b. 1946) is an Australian philosopher and animal rights campaigner. He received a BA and MA from the University of Melbourne in 1967 and 1969 respectively, and a BPhil from the University of Oxford in 1971. In 1973, he had lunch with a vegetarian friend, and questioned him about his eating habits; this led to a conversation he describes as the decisive formative experience of his life. In 1975, Peter Singer published his argument for vegetarianism, Animal Liberation, which claimed egalitarianism should include animals.

***Peter Singer's key ideas are rational, because they appeal to reason rather than emotion or belief in God****. He acknowledges that the issues in animal ethics provoke strong emotions; however, he deliberately builds a rational argument,* ***because he believes that rational arguments are more convincing.***

**1. The principle of equality requires consideration of animal interests:**

In ethical decision-making, all interests should be given equal consideration. Consideration should not depend on arbitrary characteristics, like race, sex, or species membership; therefore, egalitarian principles should be extended to include animals as well as human beings.

**2. Ignoring animal interests is a type of discrimination against animals**

The basis of all fundamental interests is the ability to experience pain and pleasure, which gives rise to the interest to avoid pain. Ignoring the interests of animals because of their species membership is just as unethical as ignoring the interests of women because of their sex.

**3. Proper application of the principle of equality requires vegetarianism**

Human beings ignore the most fundamental interests of animals (i.e. to avoid pain and suffering) to satisfy their most trivial interests (e.g. taste preferences). Proper application of the principle of equality requires human beings to consider animal interests and become vegetarian.

**Egalitarianism - The belief that all human beings are equal and deserve equal rights.**

**Vegetarianism -The practice of abstaining from eating meat, often for ethical reasons**

Donna Haraway (1944-)

Donna Haraway was born on September 6, 1944, in Denver, Colorado. She completed her Ph.D. in biology at Yale in 1972 writing a dissertation about the use of metaphor in shaping experiments in experimental biology and the then trained in philosophy.

In 2003, Haraway published a book called *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness*. This book is interesting because it draws on evolutionary biology, philosophy and Haraway’s own experience as a dog owner. Haraway argues that human ‘companion’ relationship with dogs can show humans the importance of recognising and engaging with ‘significant otherness’. What Haraway means by this is that the relationship between humans and dogs can show people how to interact with other humans and non-humans. What we can learn is that humans and dogs are dependent on one another and have a clear emotional bond between them. What Haraway calls ‘Partners in the crime of human evolution’. Therefore, humans should not necessarily see themselves as superior to other animals because we are dependent on them as they are on us.

Soumaya Pernilla Ouis (1965-)

Soumaya Pernilla Ouis is a Swedish Islamic scholar. In 1998 Ouis published a journal article called *Islamic Ecotheology based on the Qur’an.* Ouis argues that Islamic attitudes towards the environment and animals should be based on the Qu’ran.

Ouis bases this argument on several Islamic concepts that are expounded upon in the Qu’ran. The first is tawhid (the oneness of God) that God is the creator of all things including the world and human beings.

The second is khilafah (trusteeship) this is the view that humans are stewards of Allah’s creation. The Qur’an declares that human beings are stewards of Allah’s creation “Behold, the Lord said to the angels: “I will create a vicegerent on earth” (Qur’an 2:30). Furthermore, human beings need to refrain from mischief (actions leading to the corruption of the environment). “Do no mischief on the earth after it hath been set in order, but call on him with fear and longing in your hearts: for the Mercy of God is always near to those who do good” (Qur’an 7:56).

The third concept of Islamic environmental ethics is akhirah (the life after death). This indicates that humankind is not only obligated as Allah’s steward on the earth, but will also be held accountable in the hereafter if there is any straying. In addition, the level of environmental maintenance is open to Divine judgement at the Day of Reckoning. Some hadith (accounts of the Prophet Muhammad’s teachings), note that cruelty to animals and defacement of nature is forbidden and warrants divine punishment. Alternately, kindness shown to animals bestows God’s reward. As prophet called Al-Sharid (narrated by Ahmad) reported that he had heard the Prophet say: “If you kill a sparrow wantonly it will hasten to God on the Day of Judgement saying : O Lord! So and So killed me for play and not for use!”

David Clough (1968-)

David Clough was appointed to a personal Chair in Theology and Applied Sciences in 2021. He writes extensively on Christianity and Christian attitude towards animals.

David Clough’s interest in animals was influenced by his own vegetarianism/veganism. Clough has been vegan/vegetarian since he was eighteen because of the unnecessary pain and suffering it causes innocent life and he saw eating meat as irreconcilable with his own Christian faith.

Clough based his arguments for treating animals based on Biblical evidence. Clough is critical of many Christians who reject any extensive concern for animals and other creatures on the basis that God made the earth for human beings and gave everything else into our hands for our use. However, this [according to Clough] does not have biblical grounds for saying God created everything else for human beings. That’s not what Genesis 1 says, and there’s plenty of evidence in the creation theology of the rest of the Bible that human beings weren’t God’s sole end. For example, the Psalms emphasize that the whole creation exists to praise God and we play our part in that.

Clough is also critical of Christian philosophers such as Augustine and Aquinas who do not regard looking after non-human life as important. For example, Augustine argues that ‘thou shalt not kill’ does not relate to animals. Here Augustine adopts the Graeco-Roman position that suggests, because animals don’t have reason then they don’t have society with us. As such, we can go ahead and kill them. Aquinas picks up on that and makes a similar claim.

However, Clough argues against this view by using other scriptures to suggest that humans should look after and protect animals. As Clough argues:

*‘Book of Job (Chapters 38–41) where God speaks out of the whirlwind to help Job see the immensity of the divine creative project. God shows intimate care for wild animals, celebrates the threatening strength and power of Behemoth and Leviathan, and Job realizes that he is one small creature among God’s other creatures, and cannot comprehend God’s work and ways. This does not mean that Christians need to doubt the importance of humans to God, which is affirmed in other passages, but it does mean that we need to realize that God rejoices in the uniqueness of every creature. Once we realize that, we can see that we should share in this celebration of all creatures.’*

Daivd Clough cofounded CreatureKind, a charity with the aim to encourage Christians to recognize faith-based reasons for caring about the wellbeing of fellow animal creatures used for food, and to take practical action in response