

## **Professor Francione Delivers Keynote Address at "Animal Rights July"**

*July 22, 2009 at University College London*

[Part 1]

**Roger Yates:** Okay, we'll make a start. This is our keynote event in Animal Rights July, so I'm very pleased to have secured Professor Francione for this. We should have a lively evening I think.

Gary Francione is a Distinguished Professor of Law and Philosophy, he works at Rutgers University in the United States. He teaches human rights law, he teaches animal rights, seminars on animal rights theory and also the law in terms of animals and the law. He looks at courses in criminal law, criminal procedure, jurisprudence and legal philosophy. Now, in terms of our involvement with him, we are going to look at his animal rights theory and his animal advocacy, and that spans thirty years. Therefore, sometimes, by his less kind critics, Francione is regarded as an ivory tower academic, but this is far from being the case. For example, Francione was heavily involved in the animal advocacy group in the States called PETA, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, when they began in the early eighties.

Indeed it's his direct involvement which informed his writings on animal welfare and also on animal rights. His first book was co-authored with Anna Charlton in 1992. This in itself is a practical guide to students who objected to classroom vivisection and dissection. When we get into the more theoretical work, his first book, *Animals. Property and the Law*, saw the emergence of the importance of the property status of non-human animals in Gary Francione's writing. This was closely followed in 1996 by *Rain Without Thunder: The Ideology of the Animal Rights Movement*. In this book, he first outlines the concept of 'new welfarism' and also the incremental steps that are consistent with notion of abolishing animal use rather than regulating it. As its subtitle suggests, this is an analysis of the animal movement, it remains one of the best and up-to-date. In 2000, his book *Introduction to Animal Rights: Your Child or the Dog?*, was published. This book, with its common moral dilemma subtitle, has proved to be quite a hit in terms of introductory steps to animal rights philosophy. Here Gary Francione spells out the difference between welfare and rights once more, the rights approaches, he looks at the 'tricky issue', as he puts it, of vivisection, and he tells about interesting characters like Simon the Sadist and concepts like moral schizophrenia.

In 2006, Francione launched his web and blog site. This provides what Gary calls ‘bite-sized’ pieces of his theory on animal rights. It included text, audio presentations, video presentations and a regularly-updated blog. Gary’s latest book which is published is called *Animals as Persons*. This outlines the philosophical and legal notion of animal personhood which is obviously a controversial issue at the moment. The book also brings us up to date, in a series of essays, all the themes are covered in his earlier body of work. His forthcoming book (I’m going to transfer now back to Skype), is with political scientist Robert Garner. It’s entitled *The Animal Rights Debate: Abolition of Regulation?*, the same as this evening’s talk, so in effect this is a big advert for the book folks.

Finally I should tell you that Professor Francione donates the money made from his books to animal causes like sanctuaries. Okay, thanks very much, ladies and gentlemen, Professor Gary Francione.

**Gary Francione:** Hello, hello, can you hear me all right?

**Roger:** Yeah, you’re coming over fine Gary.

**Gary:** Fine, alright great. A couple of things. First Roger, thank you very much. I do have to tell you, you threw me into a mid-life crisis when you raised the fact that I’ve been doing this for thirty years now. But then again, I remember you were around back then too, so we both are in a mid-life crisis. In any event.

A couple of things I wanted to say. I’m going to be talking about the difference between rights and welfare. And I have, as you may or may not know, a rather negative view of the animal welfare approach. I don’t think that we can regulate animal exploitation. I think it’s an abysmal failure. I think it’s morally problematic but I also think strategically it’s very, very, much unsound. I understand that sometimes upsets people, particularly people who are involved in the animal welfare movement. And they think that I am making judgements about them. That’s not really what it’s about and I don’t want it to be, I hope it won’t be, understood that way. It’s not a question of being critical of individuals, it’s a question of ideas. It’s a question of what works, what doesn’t work, what’s morally consistent, what’s consistent with

our moral theory, what our moral theory is, and what plays out strategically and practically. So I want to make that clear.

And so you know I want us to have a good discussion, an animated discussion, but it's not my intention to upset anyone. But I am going to be fairly critical of animal welfare reform. The other thing I wanted to say is, I'm a New Yorker, and I speak pretty quickly and I try to moderate that with greater or lesser success. I do try to talk slowly but I almost invariably fail to do that. But I will try to be aware that because this is a Skype transmission and we might have some problems with it anyway, I will try to make sure that I speak clearly so that the Skype transmission doesn't make things worse.

Also, there are four dogs in this house. We've had up to seven, we've had three of them die in the past year and a half or so, but we still have four left. And at any given time anything, including a deer in the back garden, or a rabbit in the back garden, or anything, could cause them to go into spasms of barking. So I will try – as a matter of fact let's see, Katy's here, Katy come here. Because Katy figures into my lecture, I mention Katy. Katy come here, can you come here? Come on. Okay, that's Katy [laughter]. She is a rescued Border Collie, she was going to be euthanized at a local shelter.

No, no not euthanized, that's the wrong word, she was going to be *killed* at a local shelter because she was supposedly hostile to men. She is the most unaggressive dog I have ever met. She is a Border Collie, she is very excited about today because as a Border Collie she knows that there's a difference between Scotland and Ireland but she feels that as a Celtic dog she bonds you see with you people. So she's all excited about today.

Alright, let me say that there is a sense in which we don't even really need animal rights theory. There's a sense in which the moral principles that should lead us to abolish – not regulate, but to abolish – most animal use are accepted not just by animal advocates but by the population as a general matter. Now, what do I mean by this? What I mean is we all accept the principle that it's wrong to inflict unnecessary suffering on animals. As a matter of fact in the whole time that I've been doing this I have never ever, ever, encountered anyone

who disagrees with that. I remember once some years ago I stood outside the university at lunchtime with Anna Charlton, who is my partner, and also she is a colleague of mine, we ran the Animal Rights Law Clinic together. Let me just say, this goes to sort of Roger's view about my role as an academic and as an activist, for ten years Anna and I ran something called the Rutgers Animal Rights Law Clinic together, which was the only thing of its kind in the United States, indeed I don't anything like it existed anywhere else in the world. It was a litigation clinic where law students would get six credits in an academic semester (which is a lot for us because our academic year is divided into two semesters, students take twelve credits for a semester, so half of their credits would come from working with Anna and me on actual cases involving animals). So we would represent students who didn't want to dissect and vivisection in the classroom or we would represent people who wanted to engage in demonstrations against whatever and the local municipality wouldn't let them, we represented animal organizations including organizations like PETA, we were very deeply involved with PETA for many years; we would represent them in various things that they were doing.

One day, several days actually, Anna and I and some of the students stood outside the law school and we stopped everybody who was walking by at lunchtime and asked them "Do you disagree with the proposition that it's wrong to inflict unnecessary suffering on animals?" And, with the exception that of the few people who thought it was such an incredibly stupid question that they used some sort of rude profanity and walked off, everybody agreed that it was wrong to inflict unnecessary suffering on animals. Now, we can have an interesting philosophical discussion about what 'necessity' means and we could also get into a very boring discussion about what 'necessity' means. We thankfully don't need to do that. Whatever necessity means, if it has any coherent meaning whatsoever, it means we can't inflict suffering for the purpose of pleasure, amusement, or convenience. I mean, if you have a rule that says that the infliction of unnecessary suffering is wrong but that it's alright to inflict unnecessary suffering if you get pleasure from it, amusement, or convenience, well then you've now got an exception which has swallowed up the rule. What I would suggest is 99.9999999999 percent of our uses of animals run afoul of that rule. That is, those uses can *only* be justified, and that suffering can *only* be justified with by our pleasure, our

amusement, or our convenience. Indeed, I would suggest this: the only use of animals that we make that is not transparently frivolous is the use of animals to cure serious human illnesses.

I don't think that's morally justifiable either, but I think that at least raises some interesting questions. The rest of it is really sort of a no-brainer. If you take seriously the notion that it's wrong to inflict unnecessary suffering, let's look at the use of animals for food because numerically that's the most significant number of animals that we use. We use worldwide, according to the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations, *53 billion* animals a year for food and that doesn't include fish and other aquatic non-humans. So we're talking about an absolutely enormous number of animals. I mean, 53 billion. I find that hard to even wrap my head around in terms of a number. But 53 billion. With fish there are different estimates, but you can have the same number – some people estimate that we're talking about roughly the same number of fish. A hundred billion is just an extraordinary number.

It's certainly not necessary for us to eat animal products for us to lead an optimally healthy lifestyle, indeed an increasing number of mainstream healthcare people maintain that animal products are detrimental to us. As an ecological matter, animal agriculture is destroying the world. It takes between six and twelve pounds of plant protein to produce one pound of flesh, it takes a thousand times more water to produce a pound of flesh than it does to produce a pound of wheat or potatoes, the conversion ratios are horrible. One acre can feed over twenty vegans in a year, whereas it takes I think it's four and half acres or three and a half acres, I always forget which, but a lot more acreage to feed one omnivore in a year. So the environmental impacts – I mean, the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the UN last year came out with a report that animal agriculture was more responsible for greenhouse gases and for global warming than was burning petroleum for transportation purposes. So we are talking here about: it's not necessary for human health, indeed it's probably detrimental. We could debate about that but so what?

What you can't debate about it nobody, not even the United States Government, which oftentimes disseminates the wrong sort of information, nobody maintains that you need to eat meat or dairy products to lead an optimally healthy lifestyle. So whether or not it's detrimental we can debate, I think the evidence is quite compelling that it is detrimental, but

whether it is or isn't it's not necessary. It's an environmental disaster. The best justification that we have for killing 53 billion animals per year, not including fish, is that they *taste good*. That's the best justification we've got.

So how does that square with the principle that it's wrong to inflict unnecessary suffering on animals, where we understand that if necessity's going to have an incoherent meaning whatsoever it's got to be the case that we can't inflict suffering or death for reasons of pleasure, amusement, or convenience. You know there was an interesting phenomenon that happened here a couple of years ago, it must have been 2007. And that was an American football player named Michael Vick was arrested and prosecuted because he was running a dog fighting ring. And these things are very popular; dog fighting and cockfighting are very popular in various parts of the United States. And he was running a dog fighting ring and he was arrested and he was prosecuted and there was this outcry. When I tell you there was an outcry here, it was remarkable. And everybody was all upset about Michael Vick.

And I started getting suspicious in the same way I started getting suspicious when we had the O.J. Simpson phenomenon in the last decade. Celebrities commit all sorts of crimes and sometimes they commit murder but they're usually white males - but O.J. Simpson, I think it's rather difficult to understand that except as a manifestation of American racism: that black man is accused of killing a white woman and this triggers all sorts of problems that we have as a nation in dealing with issues of race. But I thought that the Vick thing also involved issues of race, but I also thought that it involved a curious form of what I call 'moral schizophrenia.'

I mean what the hell difference does it make? Michael Vick likes sitting around watching dogs fight, the rest of us like sitting around a barbeque pit roasting their corpses. What difference does it make? He enjoys it, *we* enjoy it. I suggest to you - I certainly don't approve of dog fighting so don't get me wrong. But my strong suspicion is (indeed I would say to a moral certainty) that the dogs that he used in dog fighting were probably better treated and had better lives than the cow or the pig or the chicken that most people ate or will eat today. And so I wrote an editorial called "We're all Michael Vick". After hearing the eighty millionth story about Michael Vick, I just sort of sat down in front of the computer and I just

wrote this thing out and I sent it out and one of the major newspapers picked it up, it was quite a long editorial. And I basically said, "I don't understand this. Why is everybody all upset about Michael Vick when most people eat meat, drink milk, what difference does it make?" And it was interesting because I got within the space of about four or five days about twelve hundred emails. Obviously I didn't count it but roughly half of the people who wrote said, "This is really interesting, I hadn't really thought about it that way" and the other half said they wished that I was dead, they were very upset and angry about what I had said, that I was analogizing them to people who did dog fighting, that I was analogizing them to black people who did dog fighting. There were a lot people who just freaked out over it. But I really believe it. I obviously knew it was going to be controversial. I wanted it to provoke some controversy but I wanted it to provoke what I think is a perfectly valid discussion about a perfectly valid position that I was expressing that there ain't no difference between sitting around watching dogs fight and sitting around roasting them, or frying them, or whatever the hell we do with them, there's no difference. Absolutely none. As a moral matter there's no difference, you can't distinguish those things. He does it because he enjoys it. We do it because we enjoy it. So I suggest that if we took seriously the principle that it's wrong to inflict unnecessary suffering on animals, one thing that would logically follow from that very clearly is that in situations in which there's no conflict there's no justification whatsoever for inflicting harm on animals. And there *isn't* any conflict. When you're thinking about what you're going to eat tonight, there's no conflict between you and the cow that you're thinking about eating or you and the chicken that you're thinking about eating, or you and the glass of milk that you're thinking about drinking; there's no *conflict* there. It's not that it's your life or the animal's, it's not a question of you or the animal, it is a question of you like the taste.

So, what's wrong? If we all accept this principle of unnecessary suffering, why is it that we behave in a way that seems to be completely inconsistent with that principle? What went wrong? Why is it that we have the 'moral schizophrenia' that we have?

And I think there now comes in this overlay, or this filter, through which we interpret the principle that it's wrong to inflict unnecessary suffering on animals. That is the filter of what we call the 'animal welfare' view. The dominant position in our culture is that animals are

members of the moral community, but they're not full members of the moral community. They matter but they don't matter as much as we do. That's the animal welfare view.

That view, by the way, that view has been with us from the outset from the development of the animal welfare view in Britain in the nineteenth century when you had the utilitarians Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill and it even exists in Singer's – Peter Singer, who is very much a utilitarian in the mould of Bentham, also maintains that animals have moral value but less moral value than humans have. So, therefore it is alright for us to use them as long as we apply the principle of unnecessary suffering to their *treatment*, it's alright for us to use them for non-necessary purposes. So the principle of unnecessary suffering gets filtered through, or translated through this filter, in which what we say is that it's alright to use animals for *unnecessary* reasons as long as we don't inflict *unnecessary* suffering on them.

Now if that gives you a mental cramp then – good - it should, it doesn't make any sense. This divorce, this separation of use and treatment, that it's alright for us to use them as long as we treat them humanely, as long as we don't inflict unnecessary suffering on them, is a deeply problematic position. Now where does it come from? Why did Bentham think that? Why does Peter Singer think that?

Why was it part of the development of animal welfare and why do people like Peter Singer maintain it? Well because, although Bentham, and Peter, and everybody else, recognises that animals are sentient, they're perceptually aware, they're able to feel pain, they're able to experience pleasure et cetera et cetera, everybody recognizes that, it is still believed that animal minds are different from human minds. Particularly with respect to self awareness. That is, Bentham maintained that the cow doesn't care *that* you eat her, the cow only cares about how you treat her and how you slaughter her. Singer basically says the same thing. Basically, many people believe that animals live in sort of an eternal present, they're not aware of themselves. So as a result they don't have a sense of their lives. They don't have a sense that they have a life. They don't really care about their lives and whether we end their lives. As long as we treat them alright while they're living, as long as we kill them painlessly, we're not inflicting any harm on them.



There's this notion – it's such a powerful notion - that even Tom Regan, who is a rights theorist...Tom Regan is a philosopher, well he's retired now, he was at North Carolina State University, he wrote a book in 1983 called the *Case for Animal Rights*. He argued that we ought to give rights to animals and not just do the utilitarian balancing that Peter Singer had advocated for. But even in Tom's book he has the following scenario, he says: imagine you're out on a lifeboat and you've got a human and a dog - or a million dogs. If you've got a choice as to who you're going to throw overboard, whether it's going to be the human or the dog, you're morally obligated to throw the dog - or the million dogs - overboard because death is a greater harm for a normal human than it is for any animal. That the opportunities for satisfaction for humans are far greater than the opportunities for animals, so therefore death is a qualitatively greater harm for humans than it is for animals. Now I think that that's crazy. I have a whole chapter in *Animals as Persons*, which is the book I did last year, in which I talk about the dog and the lifeboat and why that simply doesn't work.

But this is the view that is articulated by Singer, even by Regan, it was a foundation of the animal welfare theory that we live with, it's promoted by most groups. As a matter of fact PETA takes a certain number of animals at its Norfolk shelter. It kills a larger portion of those animals than any shelter in the state of Virginia. I believe the most recent figures were they were killing 92% of the animals that came in, and no-one's maintaining that those animals are all sick or ill or in pain or anything. They're killing healthy animals. Why? As Roger mentioned, I was involved with PETA for much of my youth, indeed was involved with them right about the time it was all founded in the early 1980s. And so therefore I know the PETA people quite well. And we used to have these discussions about whether animals had a right to live. Certainly they should have a right not to suffer but do they have a right to live? And that then requires that we look at the empirical proposition as to whether they have an *interest* in living. If they don't have an interest in living, then it doesn't make sense to talk about protecting that interest and giving them a *right* to live. Because, if they don't have the interest, talking about the right wouldn't make any sense.

All a right is, is a way of protecting an interest, there's nothing mystical about a right, it's simply a way of protecting an interest. Okay. I'm just taking a couple of breaths because I

realise I'm getting into my New York head and I'm starting to talk quickly, so now I will slow down. Okay.

So, I think that what I want to do is talk a little bit about the response I have to all of this because it's obviously a mess. I call our thinking about animals 'moral schizophrenia.' By which I mean – I don't mean to say split personality because that's not what I mean by schizophrenia, what I mean to say is delusional. It's delusional and it's confused. The one thing that is clear to me is that we do not think clearly about non-human animals. We think in very, very confused ways. On one hand we say it's wrong to inflict unnecessary suffering but in another sense we use them for all sorts of unnecessary purposes, because we say that we take them seriously but we believe – even people who write rights theory, even people who run supposed animal rights organisations – maintain that animals don't have an interest in their lives. So it's alright to use them as long as we treat them in a particular way and as long as we kill them in a particular way. I maintain that that way of looking at things is wrong. It's wrong as a matter of morality, it's also wrong as a matter of practicality. It doesn't work, it doesn't work.

Why is it wrong as a matter of morality? It is simple, speciesism and elitism. I mean, look, do I think that animals are self aware in the same way that I'm self aware or that you're self aware? I don't know what goes on in your heads because I don't have access to your minds. But I assume that what goes on in your head is relatively similar to what goes on in my head. And it is clear to me that, obviously, because we are animals that use symbolic communication, language, a particular sort of language, symbols, we use symbols. The fact that we use symbols – it certainly means the concepts you have in your head, the concepts I have in my head are intimately intertwined with this symbolic communication. But it's also clear to me that animals are self-aware, they're just not self-aware in the *same* way that we're self-aware, but that doesn't mean that they do not have an awareness of themselves. It doesn't mean that any differences mean that they have no concept of themselves or they have no concept of their lives.

I mean, yes, it is true, I am now looking at, the thing I'm looking at right now is my computer screen and I can see you, and then in the corner of the screen I can see a little picture of me,

because I get animated and use my hands a lot and stuff, so I have to be careful I don't move out of the picture, et cetera, but I have this little thing. I can look at that and say yes, that's me. And I can say: was a green shirt appropriate, should I have worn a different colour shirt? Or something like that. I can think that way. I can recognise myself in that picture, I can recognise myself in a mirror, I can think of myself in particular ways. Is that the only way to be self-aware? I can think about what I'm going to do when I finish up here tonight, I can think about what I did this morning, I can think about what I did this past weekend, I can think about whatever.

But does that mean that's the only way to be self-aware? And the answer is of course not. I recognise myself by looking in a mirror, looking in a small box on my screen. My Border Collie who you met just a few minutes ago, she can go out and urinate on a bush and find that bush three months later. I can't do that [laughter]. She can recognise her scent, she can recognise herself in scent, that's something I can't do.

There are all sorts of things – she is clearly self-aware, she is clearly aware, when she has pain she clearly is aware that *she* has the pain and it's not being experienced by some other being. Does she have a sense of the future? Sure she does. She clearly has a sense of the future. She loves to go out in the car. She loves to go for a ride. That's the high point of her day is going out, if I have to run an errand or something like that, she loves to do that. I generally do that late in the afternoon. Mid-afternoon she starts going back and forth between the garage and my office, she clearly has a sense of expectation. Does she think about what am I going to be doing in the next five to ten minutes, what's my long range plans, how should I deal with my investments, what about retirement? She's not thinking about those sorts or things, but so what? It's clear that she's got a sense of the future and she's also got a memory and a sense of the past.

There was an interesting movie, it was called Memento. And the guy in this movie, he had what they called transient global amnesia where he had a sense of himself in the present. It's a medical condition in which you have a sense of yourself – you can't think too far in the future and you can't think too far in the past, too far back, too far forward. As a matter of fact, people who have severe transient global amnesia can't think at all in the future and can't

think at all in the past, they have no memory, they have no future plans. But they have a very strong sense of themselves right now. Now, is that different from me and you? Yes. Is that difference relevant? Yeah, it might be for some purposes. If you're going to appoint someone as a history lecturer and university college, it may not be good to give that job to someone who has transient global amnesia because they probably wouldn't be able to do the job.

But for purposes of being used as a non-consenting subject in a biomedical experiment, or being a forced organ donor, or being treated instrumentally, exclusively as a means to the end of others, is there any difference between me and the person who has got transient global amnesia? I would say no.

We also tend to focus on intelligence. We say we're more intelligent than animals. Well what the hell does intelligence mean? Intelligence is a tricky concept. There are certainly differences between human intelligence and non-human intelligence, and it's also interesting that we are the only species that seems unable to live on the planet without destroying the place the resources that we need for continued existence and without destroying our home. Intelligence: funny concept. Am I capable of doing calculus, am I capable of quantum theory or something like that? Yes. Is Katy capable of it? Well she's a Border Collie, and they're quite remarkable, but probably not. And the answer is so what?.

There are a lot of human beings that are not particularly intelligent. As a matter of fact in my country you can be completely unintelligent and you can get high government office [laughter]. Are differences in intelligence relevant? The answer is, for some purposes, yeah. If you've got one maths scholarship left, and you've got two people who want it. Mary is an excellent mathematician and she wants this scholarship, and John, he can't add two and two and he wants the scholarship. Well for the purposes of the scholarship it would make more sense to give it to Mary because she's better at math. But now if the question is we're going to use one of these people as an unconsenting subject in an excruciatingly painful biomedical experiment, is it alright to take the organs out of John because he's not very smart? John's not very smart, he's not very smart. Can we kill him and take his organs out so we can save the lives of smarter people?

Nobody – Peter Singer might think that’s okay. But apart from Peter Singer, nobody else would think that that’s okay. And I’m not sure Peter would even think it’s okay, he likes to say those things because they’re controversial. I understood that about Peter when he wrote something, some years ago, in which he reviewed a book about bestiality - sex with animals. And he thought that humans could have meaningful sexual experiences with animals, and it was at that point that I decided that Peter liked being controversial. Either that or – he either likes being controversial, or I should never, ever, ever let him near a dog again. But in any event.

So there are differences in self-awareness between humans and non-humans. There’s difference in the levels of intelligence. There is a difference of levels of intelligence among human beings. Is it okay for us to differentially treat people? And the answer is yeah, unless you’re going to be a radical egalitarian, a radical, radical, egalitarian and say that a brain surgeon should be payed the same amount of money that a janitor makes. Actually, I think a very good argument could be made for that but we’ll save that for another session. For our purposes today, I’m not suggesting that you can’t pay a brain surgeon more than you pay someone who is an unskilled labourer and collects trash. But I’m saying for purposes of whether or not we’re going to use the brain surgeon or the trash collector in an instrumental way as a resource, as a *thing*, I suggest there’s no difference between them, none. There may be differences that are relevant for some purposes but those differences are not relevant for purposes of whether we use the lesser intelligent person in a biomedical experiment as a forced organ donor, whatever. As a slave. Let’s say, oh fine, we’re going to make everybody property, we’re going to turn everybody into chattel slaves who have below a certain intelligence level. Most of us would find that to be remarkable offensive.

So remarkable offensive even if you didn’t think it was remarkable offensive you wouldn’t *say* that you agree with it because you know everybody else thinks it’s remarkably offensive. I mean it is. So yeah it’s alright to pay the brain surgeon more than it’s alright to pay the janitor - but it’s not okay to make the janitor a slave. It’s not okay to put the janitor through some painful experiment to find a cure for cancer for smarter, better, more valuable people. It’s not okay to take the organs out of the janitor so that you can save the brain surgeon. But, yet, we recognise this when it comes to humans. But with non-humans all of a sudden our

thinking gets very, very, confused and clouded and we say these differences translate into something. I suggest to you that's nonsense. That's absolute nonsense. Animals are self-aware. Any being that is sentient, that is perceptually aware, is self-aware. Maybe not self-aware in the same way you and I are self-aware. What difference does it make?

That animal that is suffering pain, that animal that fears – that's all that's necessary for self-awareness for moral purposes. It's not necessary that you have complicated concepts in your mind. It's no more necessary to have that concept of self-awareness as it is to have a certain level of intelligence to be a member of the moral community. Again, that's not to say we don't treat people differently. It's to say that at certain points we say differences don't justify our commodification of others. So they have minds different from ours doesn't really matter, what it comes down to: they're a different species, we can do what we want to with them. Which is really no different from saying: they're black, we're white, they're female, we're male, they're gay, we're straight, whatever, doesn't really matter, it's all the same.

Anna and I teach a course which we're going to be teaching this coming semester called 'Human Rights and Animal Rights' in which we talk about these things. We talk about the relationship between sexism, heterosexism, racism, various forms of human discrimination, classism and speciesism, and we relate them all together. They all function the same way. They all have to do with some empowered group defining the 'other.' That's what it is. So it doesn't really matter whether the empowered group are white males who define the other as people of colour, women, or whether it's straight white males which define the other as everybody else on the planet, it doesn't really matter. It's a question of the creation of the other. And what we've done with animals is we've made them the other when there is no moral justification for that, absolutely none.

I have yet to hear a good logical argument made to me that justifies our thinking of animals as having less moral value. And I would also say with respect to Regan's argument that humans have greater opportunity for pleasure and satisfaction, that's nonsense. We're messers; we go through life, we're anxious, we're depressed. Most of us enjoy life to some degree, some of us may enjoy it a whole lot; many people don't enjoy it at all. And let me tell you something, my dogs have more fun in a day, they have more opportunities for

satisfaction in a day than most human beings have in a month or year. So this nonsense that Tom has in saying that animals have fewer opportunities for satisfaction so, therefore, their lives are worthless is just nonsense. This is all nothing but elitism and speciesism.

That's a theoretical end, let's go to the practical end.

The idea that it's alright for us to use animals as long as we treat them humanely and don't inflict unnecessary suffering on them has no coherence whatsoever. Why does it have no coherence? It has no coherence because animals are property, they are chattel property, they are economic commodities. They have no value other than what we, or the market, gives them. When I say 'we,' I mean the market. They have market value is what they have. They don't have inherent value, they don't have any intrinsic value. They have only extrinsic value, they are chattel property, they are commodities. As a result, animal welfare reform will, as a general matter, never provide a level of protection that goes beyond what I call economically efficient exploitation, which is another way of saying: the only time we will spend money to protect animal interests is when we get an economic benefit in return. Let me give you an example.

In 1958 – it seems like a long time ago, but I was actually a young kid – we had something called the Humane Slaughter Act which required that – it didn't apply to poultry, it applied to cows, pigs and whatnot, calves – they had to be stunned before they were shackled and hoisted. I don't know if you've ever been in a slaughterhouse. They have to be stunned before they're shackled. Unless it's a Kosher slaughterhouse or halal, what is generally done is you put a chain around one of the legs of the animal and you hoist the animal up and then you slit the animal's throat and then you gut the animal. So they were doing this with the animals being alive much of the time (and the news is folks, they *still* do it with animals being alive much of the time). We had this law in 1958 that said you had to stun them before you shackled and hoisted them. Why did they have that law? Well if you look at the legislative history, it was all based on the notion that you've got a two thousand pound cow moving around there. You know what happens? That animal hits workers and then workers have lawsuits and that results in a cost. And it also results in carcass damage.

So we pass a law – I mean, animals suffer throughout their entire lives. But we pass a law to say that the moment of slaughter they're supposed to be unconscious. Why do we pass that law? Because we get an economic benefit, it reduces carcass damage and it reduces worker injuries. Animals suffer a whole lot at other points in their lives including in the pre-slaughter process. We don't protect those interests because we don't get an economic benefit from doing so. But keeping a two thousand pound cow from moving around and injuring her flesh and whacking into workers that she'll injure, that's worth money to us, so we'll pass that law.

Doesn't apply to chickens. Interestingly there's a big campaign going on in the United States now that PETA is doing. Basically, they're trying to get Kentucky Fried Chicken and these other chicken outlets to go to what they called controlled atmosphere killing or stunning. Presently, when chickens are killed, they take them and they stick them in a – let's see if I have one here. – you know, these clamps, that you use in school for your papers and stuff. What they do is they stick their feet in the clamp like that so that they're hanging upside down. And then they're on a conveyor belt and they go through this bath of water that's supposed to stun them, and then they go through a revolving blade that's supposed to cut their heads off, and then they go into a tank of scalding water that's supposed to de-feather them. Now the problem is lots of times, because the birds are struggling, they don't get stunned. Or if they do get stunned they're conscious when they get to the blade. And lots of times because you have the animal up, she's hanging upside down, right, and struggling, and, so lots of times, if the head is raised or there's an angle to the body, the blade will only cut the top of the head off, won't cut the head off at all, or miss the animal entirely, and then the animal goes into the scalding tank completely conscious.

Now this is really quite horrible. And PETA is saying it'll be better if we gas them, if we had this gassing mechanism. Now there are some people who say that that also creates a horrible situation – there are animal welfare people like Bernie Rollin who's a Professor at Colorado State University, or the University of Colorado, I always get confused which, but someplace out in Colorado. And Rollin is an animal welfare guy, he's an animal person, whatever the hell that means. He maintains that controlled atmosphere killing or stunning is not a particularly nice or particularly more pleasant way to kill them. But, if you look at PETA's literature, PETA argues that this is cost-effective. That if industry accepts this – and I think it



is. If you were starting a chicken slaughtering operation tomorrow, you would be insane not to use controlled atmosphere killing or stunning because it's much cheaper, it results in much less carcass damage, and you have fewer worker injuries not because chickens will injure you if they're moving around because they don't weigh very much, but you'll have injuries because you have people, whenever you have people doing things with animals like that, with thousands and thousands of animals every day, you're going to have worker injuries. Workers are going to come in contact with the equipment, they're going to injure themselves, they're going to come in contact with each other, they're going to injure themselves, they're going to come in contact with the electric bath and injure themselves, they're going to come in contact with a knife and injure themselves, they're going to come in contact with the scalding water, they're going to injure themselves, in moving animals. So it would be much better – studies have been done that show that controlled atmosphere is much more economically beneficial.

So if you're starting up – as a matter of fact some British studies have shown that although it costs money to switch equipment from stunning to controlled atmosphere killing, the bottom line is that you can recoup those costs in about a year and you'll be making a whole lot more money. This is what animal welfare is.

Animal welfare is a set of instructions to rational property to owners who if they have full knowledge, they'd be doing the same stuff anyway. Because all animal welfare is, it requires that animal interests be protected only and to the extent that we humans get an economic benefit from them. There are very few instances of animal welfare reform that don't fit this paradigm. You could say well what about the European ban on eggs by 2012, battery eggs have to be banned. Well first of all if you think that's going to happen by 2012 then you probably also think believe in Santa Claus because that is *not* going to happen by 2012. But there's also a requirement – under the European community laws you can have what they call 'enriched' cages, which everybody including the moderate organizations like Compassion of World Farming and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and all these horribly conservative organisations, even they maintain that these enriched cages are worthless - or not worth much. They add about maybe a penny to the egg. That can be passed along to the consumer and many consumers think that these eggs are healthier anyway – consumers for some reason think that brown eggs are healthier than white eggs, they have

studies that show that people will buy brown eggs rather than white because they think they're healthier. A lot of people will spend a few cents more for an organic egg because they think that these eggs are healthier for them and whatever. But the bottom line is that animal welfare is never going to reach a very, very, high standard because it can't. Particularly know that you have things like the European community and GATT and NAFTA and these free trade arrangements where even if, for example, if Britain requires that pigs be given more space which Britain did – actually I'm not sure if that's by law.

But in Britain many pigs are given more space than they are in intensive situations. That causes the price of British 'pork' to go up and then what happens is, since the demand is not affected, the 'pork' just comes in from Spain or France – France, where they haven't yet heard of animal welfare let alone animal rights – and so it comes in from one of these other countries. And you can't stop it. Under the rules of the European community you can't stop those exports.

Same thing with NAFTA. Same thing with GATT, the General Agreement on Trades and Tariffs, the North American Free Trade Agreement. And all of these free trade arrangements make it impossible to sort of – if by some miracle nation X raises its level of animal welfare, nation X is going to be forced out of business basically. The producers are going to be forced out of business. Which is one of the arguments that's being made right now whenever animal welfare standards, people want them to go up, the response is if you do that you're going to destroy the industry. So what ends up happening is animal welfare stays at a very, very, low level.

And you know what? We've had animal welfare for two hundred years now. Two hundred years. And indeed the nineteenth century, in England at least, was quite active. The twentieth century in the United States and in most parts of Western Europe, pretty active. We're using more animals in more horrific ways than ever before in human history. Animal welfare doesn't work. There are people who maintain that we can reform our way to abolition, those are people I call new welfarists, I think that's nonsense. There is absolutely no empirical evidence whatsoever that reforming animal use and, quote, "improving" animal welfare regulation is going to lead to abolition. If anything, the contrary is true. The empirical

evidence seems to suggest that animal welfare makes people feel more comfortable about exploiting animals, it doesn't move them in an abolitionist direction.

Why do you think that the RSPCA has a Freedom Food label? Why do you think that PETA supports the Wholefoods Animal Compassionate standard or whatever it's called. Why do you think that the Humane Society supports the – all of these large organizations have labels. You pay them - they allow you to use a label. What is the purpose of that? The purpose of that is to make the consumer *feel better* about consuming animal products. That doesn't lead to abolition, it leads to more animal exploitation. There have been hundreds of articles – Google them if you don't believe me – in the past several years about people who used to be vegetarian going back to eating animal products because now they're being produced better, and now the animals are suffering, and they've been told by the RSPCA that this food is produced in a 'Freedom Food farm,' and they've been told by PETA that this comes from Wholefoods and Wholefoods has animal compassionate standards and blah, blah, blah, blah...it makes people feel better about consuming animal products.

What is the practical strategy that I propose? The answer is easy: veganism. I did an interview this morning in which I addressed the question about animal rights people talking about 'the exploiters': we've got to fight the farming industries and the furriers, they're the enemy. They're not the enemy, we're the enemy.

They do what they do because we demand their products. They're capitalists, they're indifferent to where their capital is invested; they'll put their money where they get the greatest return. That's what capitalism is. That's what rational acting irrational economic acting is. So if we weren't demanding products they'd move their money somewhere else. They'd make golf balls, they'd do something else with their money, they'd get out of the animal business. *We* are the exploiters because we demand the products.

Nothing will ever change until the paradigm shifts. Until we stop demanding, until we stop seeing animals as things that we can eat, that we can wear, that we can use on our bodies, until we stop seeing them that way and until *we* decrease the demand, nothing's ever going to change. I remember in 1985 – that's twenty four years ago, oh my God, almost twenty five

years ago – I remember being at a meeting with a bunch of animal people, with PETA, Fund for Animals (which doesn't exist anymore, it's now been taken over by HSUS) and people from all the groups at the time. And the issue was whether or not the animal community should support certain reformist legislation. And everybody thought they should, except me. And everybody thought this was curious because – I have graduate training in philosophy – I have a law degree and I'm a law professor, my primary appointment is in the law department. And I was practicing law, I used to do a lot of law practice back then, I was representing a lot of these groups and what not. And I said look, people, we're wasting our time with this legislation, it's nonsense, it's never going to do anything – I won't bore you with the particular legislation, maybe we'll get into it in a question-and-answer period because there is something of interest to talk about there but I won't get into that now.

I maintain that we should take all of our money and all of our resources and put it into vegan education. And if we did that – clear, *unequivocal* vegan education, not this confused morass of nonsense that exists now where you have groups saying maybe you should be vegan but you don't have to be vegan, you could be a conscientious omnivore, here we have a label, buy our humanely raised eggs, but our humanely raised corpses, but maybe you should be a vegan, but maybe not, but you don't really have to, this sort of complete mixed message. If we made it clear that if we take animal interests seriously there is only one response, and that's veganism.

That's not to say everyone's going to become a vegan, they're not. And we need to come up with creative, non-violent, ways of encouraging people to become vegans, and there are lots of ways. There are lots of ways of educating people about veganism. I do it every single day of my life. Lots of ways to do it, lots of ways in which you can successfully do it.

If we put all of the money and all of the labour that's gone into all these crappy welfare reforms that haven't amounted to a hill of beans in the past twenty five years since I had that discussion with those folks, we would have hundreds of thousands more vegans than we have right now here in this country. And we would have a basis, we would have the foundation of a political movement. Of a non-violent political movement that could support some prohibitions on animal use, that could start forming the nucleus of support for some

meaningful legislation, we're never going to get meaningful legislation as long as most of the population thinks it's okay to eat them.

Animal welfare standards are never going to rise. The stuff that is being promoted in the United States now as 'progressive welfarist legislation' is no different from the stuff that was being proposed in the 1950s in the United States. The stuff that's being proposed by HSUS and PETA is really no different from the Humane Slaughter Act in 1958. Indeed probably the Humane Slaughter Act was more meaningful than most of the stuff that PETA, HSUS and Farm Sanctuary, and all the rest of these groups, are promoting. Remember something: it's a zero-sum game. Every minute of time that you spend, every penny of resource that you spend on encouraging people to eat cage-free eggs or humanely-raised meat of happy meat of some sort or mucus of some sort, however much you spend doing that, that's less time that you spend educating people about veganism. It's a zero-sum game.

So people say, why can't you do both? The answer is because you're sending a mixed message, a very unclear message and in the end – I have news for you. I have seen battery cage operations, they're horrible. But you know what? So are cage-free operations, they are absolutely horrible. The idea that animal people are going around telling people, "Eat cage-free eggs because it eliminates one of the worst abuses of animal agriculture" – I'm sure they believe sincerely that they're right. I believe sincerely that they're wrong. I've been in those places. I cannot for the life of me understand – cage-free facilities are like one huge cage, you've got a gazillion birds and they're all like walking over each other and urinating on each other and defecating on each other, and they all have to be de-beaked anyway because they're in these intensive circumstances. Is it better than a battery cage? I guess it's like one *big* battery cage. Rather than having a cage in which you've got a four foot square that you've got a bunch of animals, you've got like a huge barn with zillions of animals, what the hell difference does it make? It's clear to me that both constitute torture.

And if you think about it, if I said to you hey look, we torture people by tying them into a chair and administering painful electric shocks to them. Right now we use these hard chairs and we tie them into these hard chairs, would it be better if we tie them into padded chairs? The answer might be: "I guess." But wouldn't it be odd if our reaction to torturing people by

electric shocks was to say let's have a campaign in which we guarantee that everybody who's going to be tortured by electric shocks is sitting on a padded chair. Isn't that like crazy?

I find that very odd. People say animal exploitation is going to continue, and the answer is it's going to continue as long as we allow it to, and as long as we don't take it on frontally as a real issue and try to educate people, because you know what? Maybe it's my delusion, I don't think so. I think most people do care about this issue. Many people certainly care about this issue. And I find that the reaction I get – I have more opposition if I go to a group of “animal rights” people and talk to them about veganism, I get more crap from the animal rights people who try to tell me that there's a distinction between eating flesh and eating dairy, which is nonsense. There's probably more suffering in a glass of milk than there is in a pound of steak. Animals used in dairy are used longer, they're treated worse and they all end up in the same slaughterhouse anyway, so there's probably more suffering in a glass of milk than there is in a pound of steak. But I get more arguments with people in animal rights meetings than I do if I go to a university where it's just a general audience or I go and I talk to a general community group and I explain these sorts of things, I get more understanding from them than I do from animal people. We have to really be clear about what the message is.

But animal exploitation is going to continue. The answer is what's going to be our response to it? Are we going to make the moral argument that it's wrong and people ought not to do it and try to get everybody we can on our side who is open to that argument? Will everybody be open? No. Are there a lot of people? Yes. Absolutely, no doubt about it.

By educating them clearly and unequivocally we'll get a lot of those people. Will we get everybody? No, but you aren't going to get everybody doing everything, number one. And number two, what is being done right now – cage-free eggs, organic eggs or free range eggs, controlled atmosphere killing, getting rid of gestation crates, all these sorts of things – to me, it's like painting the walls of the concentration camp. It does nothing. It makes us feel better because it cleans it up a little bit, but it's still torture. It is still torture. And I suggest that the campaigns are no more – rape is always going to exist, rape has been going on forever, it will go on forever, it is a serious problem, it is a serious problem which is taken more seriously now, but it's still not taken seriously. Nevertheless, I would be offended if someone

said “Rape is a problem, it’s going to continue to be a problem, so why don’t we have a campaign that says “If you’re going to rape somebody, you should rape them humanely, don’t be too rough, don’t beat them up”, I would find that offensive. The only response to rape is no rape. It’s wrong. It can’t be justified. Is it better to inflict less suffering than more suffering? The answer is yes. But should we have campaigns in which we encourage people to engage in humane rape, should we be telling people that eating cage free-eggs is a morally defensible – as Peter Singer says, he talks about being a “conscientious omnivore” as a defensible moral position. He is the father of the “animal rights” movement. So if the father of the animal rights movement is busy telling people that they can eat meat as long as it’s raised and killed in a particular way it’s alright, I suggest that’s confused.

Anyway, I hope that’s been communicative and if it hasn’t let’s talk about it. And if it has and you disagree let’s talk about it [applause].

[end of Part 1]

[Part 2]

**Female 1:** My question was in relation to when you were saying about schizophrenia with the welfare group. It’s just that it occurs to me that it’s like religion and brainwashing for children is where your schizophrenia comes in, where you’re taught as a child that you can eat an animal but as you get older and you think this is wrong, logic just doesn’t seem to be able to win the case and so you end up making excuses which ends up sort of being an animal welfare mentality.

**Gary:** You’re right. That’s a good point. I think that it’s interesting. Most children are concerned about this issue and then they’re told by their parents that God wants them to –

the typical response is that God made animal for our use or, God wants us to use animals. I think the eating of animal products is actually – and Roger can probably speak to this more and certainly better than I can – because I think this is a sociological thing as much as anything else. It seems to me that human beings are obsessed with hierarchy, for want of a better word. We are obsessed with hierarchy obsessed with domination. Domination is something in which we are very, very much drawn to in terms of our social organisation. And it's almost as if we celebrate our superiority and our domination by what we stick in our mouths. What we eat actually – and I'm not saying wear as well because we shouldn't be wearing wool or leather or silk or any of that stuff. What we eat takes on this tremendously, sort of metaphysical meaning, and I'm not sure I even understand that. For me becoming a vegan was pretty easy, I've been a vegan for almost thirty years now and I went to a slaughterhouse and I saw a slaughterhouse and I immediately stopped eating all flesh. Now remember something: thirty years ago there wasn't an animal rights movement and I had never even heard the word 'vegan', I didn't know what a vegan was. And I did not know that there were people who did not eat animal products at all, so I thought it was a big deal I was giving up meat.

So I stopped eating meat and about a year later I read an article – because I didn't even know fish felt pain. I never really encountered animals very much, I didn't know much about animals. As a matter of fact, I will say to you now I didn't use to acknowledge this before but now I don't care anymore: I didn't know cows had to be pregnant to give milk, I thought they just did it automatically. And then someone pointed out to me that, no, they're mammals and like all mammals they have to be pregnant. But in my early days of this I thought cows gave milk automatically. But I read about fish feeling pain and I stopped eating fish, and then I learned about the dairy industry and I stopped immediately. As a matter of fact I read a book called *Fettered Kingdoms* that was written by a guy who now works for the League Against Cruel Sports, and his name is John Bryant. And he wrote a book a book a million years ago called *Fettered Kingdoms* in which he talked about the dairy industry. It was eighty pages long or thereabouts, I picked the book up, I put the book down several hours later, and I haven't knowingly eaten a dairy product since that time, not once. It convinced me.



Interestingly I met John Bryant years later in London, I'd never met him before, and he and I met each other in the 1990s and I was quite surprised that he told me that he was no longer a vegan because he found it very difficult to eat vegan when he travelled around Britain. And I thought if you find it difficult to eat vegan when you travel around Britain you ain't trying too hard. And I was very disappointed about that. But in any event he wrote this book, this was a big deal for me. But for a lot of people I think they associate what they eat with various family things: what their grandmother made, what they ate at particular holidays and stuff and what is culturally significant. I have a lot of students for example – in my university we have a lot of diversity, so I have a lot of students who are Hispanic and many of them take my animal rights course. And they always say I want to go vegan but I'm afraid I'm going to get a really negative reaction because if I tell my parents or my grandmother that I don't want to eat the pork sausage that was made, this will be perceived as a rejection of them and as a statement of non-love of them. And I remember when I first became a vegetarian when I would go home my mother would make all this stuff and I wouldn't eat it and she would look really hurt and she would say what's wrong? And she would interpret this as – so these things have cultural meanings and I don't mean to say that they don't.

But I agree with your question that a lot of it starts when you're kids and you ask your parents how is it we can justify eating animals and you're told God wants you to. Interestingly, by the way I should say, if you read – I don't identify with the Christian tradition, at least not metaphysically, or the Judeo-Christian tradition – but if you read Genesis, the first creation story, God creates the world and nobody kills anybody. He gives the animals the herb and seed to eat, that shall be their food. It's only when there's a rupture and humans are driven from the Garden of Eden as a result of a conspiracy between a woman and a snake, then killing begins. But killing doesn't exist before that time. But we're told God intended this to be the case, et cetera, et cetera, because we all sort of buy into, or many of us, buy into some aspect of the Judeo-Christian thing. We sort of accept this as truth and we don't question it. And a lot of it also has to do with just plain selfishness. If I had a nickel for every time at an animal rights conference I have an animal person tell me, "Yeah I know but I just love the taste of cheese or I just can't give up ice-cream". If I had a nickel for every time I heard that I could retire right now which I would like to do. A lot of it is selfishness. But the one thing that I'm convinced of is there's a zillion people out there who are receptive to this

message. I get dozens of emails every week from people who have read something on my blog, who have heard me on some radio station or have seen something like this or whatever who say “You know, I’m thinking about this. And you’re right, I can’t justify it. I love my dog, there’s no difference between my dog and the pig that I’m eating, or the cow that I’m eating, or the fish that I’m eating; they’re all sentient, they all have an interest in their lives, they all want to live, they don’t want to die. And so I’m going to go vegan”. And what I will get is people say “I don’t feel I can do it right away”. Should I eat cage-free eggs in the meantime? And I always tell them no. I say first of all you can go vegan right away but if you feel you can’t then what I recommend you do is go vegan for breakfast for three weeks, it’s easy to go vegan for breakfast.

You will see that your arms and legs don’t fall off, you don’t go blind, nothing bad happens. Then go vegan for lunch for a few weeks, and then go vegan for dinner for a few weeks and then get all your snacks and late-night foods and stuff like that, make all those vegan. And transition into it. I never tell people that they should eat cage-free eggs or humanely-raised meat or anything like that because I think that’s like saying “Well if you’re going to continue to torture people at least tie them into a padded chair rather than a hard chair”. That I think is morally deceptive and I think it makes them feel better but it has no meaning in terms of the real world, it has no meaning whatsoever.

I’m very optimistic about the reaction that I do get and given that I don’t have an organization backing me, I’m an individual professor, my website it maintained by volunteers. I have some student volunteers, the guy who basically runs it he volunteers his time, and I have students who help. I don’t have an organization. I don’t collect funds. And I’m just thinking imagine what we could do if we took the zillions and trillions and quadrillions of dollars and pounds and whatever that groups like the Humane Society of the United States have and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals have, I mean these organizations are like banks, they’re huge, they’ve got zillions of dollars. If you took their resources, if they took their resources and put it in to this sort of education, think of what could be done.

Now their answer is – because I’ve had these sorts of discussions with them – yeah, if we did that we wouldn’t have as much money because we get money from dog and cat people who don’t want to give up eating animals. And the answer is you’ve got to make decisions about whether or not – if what you want to do is perpetuate your huge bank accounts, then that’s what you do. But what these organizations end up doing in the end – I was thinking about this the other day. The animal welfare movement now is really no different now from the medieval church, it sells indulgences where you can sort of do whatever you want to and then you go to the church and you would say yes I’m having sixty five affairs but let me give you a contribution and you can give me an indulgence. It was like a ‘get out of hell free’ pass or whatever, that sort of thing. But that’s exactly what’s going on with these animal welfare organizations is people say “I’ll give you a contribution, you absolve me by telling me it’s okay for me to eat happy meat or cage-free eggs or whatever” and that makes it all better. Fundamentally its business and that’s the problem, it’s business.

**Female 2:** Hi, I’m currently vegan and I feel discouraged a lot of the time. So I come to talks like this to sort of bolster my confidence and to keep me going. You said that there were lots of ways to successfully promote veganism. What I personally do is, I bake for my friends and I love to feed people, and they know that I’m vegan so it’s not like I’m trying to trick them or anything. Obviously that are ways that I’ve heard of promoting it, but what can I do in your view as one person?

**Gary:** You know what? I think that’s great. That’s one of the things I really encourage people to do is make good vegan food – I mean, people think that if you eat vegan it’s like you’re going to eat styrofoam and soy waste or something like that, they don’t know how easy it is. I have to tell you, thirty years ago when I first became a vegan, the first soy ice cream I ever ate made me ill, it was horrible. When I tell you it was bad – it was horrible. But things have changed now and there’s a lot of really fine – you can make almost anything vegan now, and I’m not a big sweet eater but I have friends who make fabulous cakes and pies and all sorts of pastries and stuff like that, they make them completely vegan. They have all these fake vegan meats now – I don’t eat that stuff, first of all it has a huge amount of salt and it’s not good for you, secondly the stuff tastes so much like meat that it actually sort of creeps me out to eat something that tastes so much like meat, some of this stuff has the consistency of meat which

is very weird, I find it very, very strange, I don't eat it. I'm not saying it's morally wrong, I'm saying that it's just odd.

But I think you're right – activism can take different forms. And one of the most important forms of activism is what we do with our friends and our neighbours and people whose lives that we have contact with. And by inviting people over to your house and making really good vegan food for them and discussing the issue with them, that to me is one of the most important forms of activism. To me, the most important form of activism on the individual level is becoming vegan; that to me is the most important thing. And then after that it's creative, non-violent vegan education. What do I mean by that? What you're doing is creative, you're bringing people into your home, you're making food for them, you're educating them in a way in which you're coupling the ideas with an experience, that's creative. And it's not violent. I really think the idea – we've got to be very, very careful about understanding that it's not a matter of making moral judgements about people. Because it's complicated, it's really, really complicated. It's important to sort of come across to people as trying to educate them, and you can't – Ghandi said you've got to be the change you want the world to become. And if you're a violent, angry person then you aren't going to help people become non-violent. And to me this is really all about non-violence, that's what this is really all about. That's why Anna and I teach this course on animal rights and human rights, because we see all forms of discrimination, whether on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation or species, as forms of violence. And we need to sort of take a step back from that and we need to really see we have become a pathologically violent culture. And I think in many ways that starts with what we eat.

I think it was Tolstoy who said that as long as there are slaughterhouses there are going to be wars. And he was right, there is no doubt in my mind about that. So I do think that it's really important that we see this as part of non-violence.

I had many reasons for breaking with PETA, lots of them, more than I could consciously tell you. But one of the things that really bothered me was the 'I'd rather go naked than wear fur' campaign. Why did that bother me? Because sexism is a form of violence.

We supposedly reject speciesism because it is like sexism. And to say that sexism is okay or that we can use sexism as a means to the end of eliminating or reducing speciesism strikes me as the same sort of thinking that says, “What’s wrong with using a few animals if we can find a cure for cancer?”. It’s utilitarian thinking. So I think it’s really very important – and I have very, very serious issues with those sorts of campaigns because I think as long as we are commodifying each other, as long as we’re treating women like meat, we’re going to continue to treat meat like meat.

I think it’s really important to see these issues as *related* and to recognise what we’re really talking about is the non-violent movement, what I call a revolution of the heart. It’s a revolution but it’s not a violent revolution, it’s a revolution of the heart in which we re-learn – our natural default position is to be violent about everything, about what we eat, if we don’t like people we get angry, we have wars, the world’s in a mess right now. It’s in a mess because our default position is that violence is a good thing. We’ve got to get away from that, we’ve got to get way the hell away from that. We’ve got to rethink things.

Which is why whenever I talk to young people – you are young people, you’re young people to me, but I’m talking about young, young people like teenagers and stuff. I always tell them about not – these video games that some people play are just shocking to me. And I’m not talking about censorship, censorship doesn’t work. It’s a question of why the hell do we find it amusing to play these violent video games, why do we find it amusing to watch these movies with all sorts of violent death and stuff like that? Why? Why do we find it entertaining?

Think about that. If you take a step back from that there’s something really sort of morally bankrupt about the fact that we watch all this crap, it gets into our heads, we find it entertaining, we find these really violent movies entertaining, we find these games entertaining. Why? We need to get away from that and that’s what I’m talking about, I’m talking about a real serious paradigm shift. And you could say that’s really ambitious – I’ve got news for you: it’s the only thing that’s going to work. All this other stuff is like paining the walls of the concentration camp, it’s tinkering with death, it’s tinkering at the edges of death. It’s never going to work, the only thing that works is a real transformation.

**Female 3:** Hello?

**Gary:** Hi.

**Female 3:** Thank you first of all for your very interesting talk. I agree with you on everything, it's common sense. I've been campaigning in various campaigns for about twenty years now and I'm impatient. I'm impatient for the abolition of several practices and I don't think I want to wait to convince the critical mass of Irish people that we should become vegan for this to happen. I think – it makes perfect sense to you and to I, for example, that animals suffer, animals are self-aware, animals anticipate, and so on. But if I were to lobby for legislative change, does it not make common sense to you that when I say that to a politician or to a veterinary person is not going to cut any mustard, so what we're going to need is scientific proof basically that these animals are suffering. And I think the crux of it is to prove suffering and to prove that suffering is unnecessary. And I think in order to do that, what we have to do – and I am vegan, I've been vegan for twenty years, I obviously agree with everything you say about it, but I don't think we can wait to convince people they have to become vegan. I think we have to go down the route of developing animal welfare science which raises the issue about the individual animals that we use to prove that every member of that species suffers in X, Y or Z conditions. While my heart is with you on veganism from a purely practical point of view – I just think you're talking hundreds of years from now and I think we have to come up with another strategy and we have to come up with a more practical approach which will prove that there is suffering, will prove it's unnecessary, and will therefore create a critical number of people who are in a position to do something about the laws and to change. Because we can argue, and I love philosophy, I love pointing out that no matter what criteria you use to distinguish non-humans from humans there will always be some humans who will fail that test – that's wonderful. But at the end of the day we have to get the rights enshrined in law, and in order to prove our case with the legislators I think we have to be a lot more hard-headed than simply going down 'everyone has to become vegan' or 'critical mass'.

**Gary:** Okay. The bottom line is – look, you raise a whole bunch of really interesting issues. First of all, I find it interesting that you say we need animal welfare science to show that animals suffer. You see, to me that indicates how confused we are about things. Because none of us doubts – if you ask me or if you ask anybody else whether an animal suffers, then that is like asking whether the dog has a tail; it's something you can observe, it's very, very clear. You might not know all the empirical dimensions of it. It reminds me of – in the 19<sup>th</sup> century there were works who were working in particular industries and they were getting tuberculosis. We didn't understand the causal mechanism but we understood that they were getting tuberculosis from working in particular industries. So the choice is what do you do?

Do you shut down the industries or do you put a bunch of rabbits in cages so you can try to understand the causal mechanisms? Well that's what we did and a lot more people ended up dying but the capitalists were happy because they kept their factories going. So if you're telling me that what we need is science to ascertain whether animals are suffering and you're worried that my proposal's not practical because it's not going to take hundreds of years, yours is going to take even longer than mine because in a sense if we don't know that – I mean, we know that already because we have animal welfare laws that don't apply to rocks or bicycles, they apply to animals because we know that even though animals are property they're unlike other forms of property in that they *can* suffer. We know that they can suffer. And so I think that the idea that the first step has to be hard-headed science, I'm saying that as a logical matter assumes that the question is an open question and I think that in and of itself, characterising it as an open question, is not a descriptive matter or an empirical matter but a normative, moral, statement that I find problematic. I'm not saying you're making a moral statement I find problematic, I'm saying that strategy would strike me as being one of incredible play. It's like – in one of the articles I wrote a couple of years back I argued about the idea that animals – first we wonder whether animals are intelligent, then we find out that parrots have the intelligence of five year old children, but then the question becomes do they have the intelligence of eight year old children? What human quality do they have to have before we say they're members of the moral community? And it's a game that animals are never going to win. So I think that the idea that what we've got to do is ascertain exactly how animals suffer is simply something that is going to delay progress even further. Just think about what I'm saying as a purely practical matter.

You take all the animal groups that are in existence right now – and you know what, there are zillions of them okay. Unlike other movements, the animal rights movement has zillions of organisations with lots of money and lots of people. If all of those people really believed in the end point of abolition and *really* believed in that – see I think that’s part of the problem – and they pulled their resources and started a massive vegan education campaign, there is no doubt, not a scintilla of doubt, in my mind, that we would make much greater progress than doing animal welfare science research and trying to ascertain exactly what mechanism it is that causes the chicken to suffer or exactly how cows suffer when their cows are taken away from them or how pigs suffer in intensive situations, what exactly is the mechanism, what exactly is the nature of the suffering. I think that’s all smokescreen, it delays things. I think that if we had a vegan agenda and we were clear and unequivocal about it and we put our resources into non-violent, creative vegan education I think we could change the world in a fairly short period of time,

I really do, I honestly believe that. As a matter of fact I have no doubt about that. I would also say this to you: as far as the politicians are concerned, politicians are nothing but people who serve corporate interests for the most part. The politicians can’t respond. You’re never going to get the political system or the legal system to respond in some radical way. I always tell my students: the law follows social change, it doesn’t lead to social change. The law is essentially a conservative mechanism, politics and politicians are inherently conservative people. And they respond to corporate interests.

At this point in time, it really wouldn’t matter if tomorrow some brilliant scientist found out that animals suffer in exactly the same way we do. I think they probably do, similar, but let’s say it was exact. Any politician who proposed animal welfare reform that went about above what I call efficient exploitation, and actually imposed a real opportunity costs on animals so that supply and demand were affected so that basically you cut down on the productivity and profits of the industry and the access of people to animal products, there’d be a horrible reaction. As a political matter that would never work.



So I think that you're begging the question by assuming that the political system, the legal system, is ever going to respond differently from the way it does. What we have right now is a result of the political and the legal process. These ideas that you're articulating, they're not new. They were talked about in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. People said: we got have the facts, we've got to go to the legislators, we've got to go to the courts. That's what they did, they did that in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they did that in the 20<sup>th</sup> century; what do we have? Nothing.

We have a level of animal welfare that is appalling, we're using billions and billions of animals, we're subjecting them to horrible amounts of suffering, and we really haven't made much progress. So I don't really think that same-old, same-old is going to get us anywhere. I think we need to sort of rethink this issue and I am convinced that what I'm proposing is completely pragmatic. I'm a very pragmatic person. Yes I think about philosophy because I think you have to have some idea of theory so that you know what your actions are going to be.

The relationship between theory and action is a necessary one. But I also am a very practical person, extremely practical actually, and if I thought animal welfare worked I would say: I don't like it, it's inconsistent with my moral view that if it's wrong we've got to stop it, we ought to abolish the concentration camps not regulate them. But if I thought that animal welfare was working and moving incrementally towards the abolition of animal exploitation, I would at *least* understand its attractiveness to people. What I don't understand is why anybody finds it an attractive proposition when it is going nowhere and doing nothing. It is really going nowhere and doing nothing. I don't see it progressing. And what you're proposing, people have been doing that for years; poultry scientists have been saying we measure this and we measure that and we think there's less stress level or more stress level.

The bottom line is we're going to be chasing our tails around - to use this speciesist expression. We're going to be sort of chasing our tails around forever if this is the way we pursue things. And I don't think that my way or my proposal is one that's going to take a longer period of time than yours is, I think proceeding they way we're proceeding is going to push us in the wrong direction.

**Female 3:** I mean I agree with you and I honestly am saying I'm not interested in making chains longer or the cages bigger either, but what I'm saying is that perhaps I don't share your thing in philosophy to affect immediate change, as much as I love philosophy.

**Gary:** I have a lot of faith in philosophy and I have a lot of faith in people. I really do. I have a lot of faith in people. I just went through a presentation in which – I hope it was accessible, I hope it was easy for everybody to understand. Actually there was all sorts of philosophy in that, it just wasn't expressed as – I didn't say Immanuel Kant's deontological theory of this or that, my view is that that has limited utility. I do believe that most people are smart enough to understand the basics of this. I think that most people or at least many people care about this issue. I will walk into a room of people and ask them: how many of y'all have dogs or cats, have them now or had them in the past?

Most people will raise their hands and I'll elicit stories from them about how much they love their dogs and how much they love their cats and blah blah blah blah. And then I'll say: I'm confused. Then I'll say: how many of y'all eat meat? Ninety nine percent of hands will go up. And I'll say: someone's got to explain this to me, someone's got to explain this to me. How is it that some animals are members of our family and others we stick forks into. I don't understand that, can somebody explain that to me. You can't believe a single statement like that can keep a group of university kids going for two or three hours discussing, debating because they've never thought about it that way before. These are not complicated ideas. And I do have faith, I do have faith that we can educate people. Are we going to educate everybody? The answer is no.

But we can certainly do a lot better than we're doing right now. Right now we're failing in my judgement. We're sending out such a confused, mixed message. Right before this presentations started today I was reading something on the internet about HSUS, the Humane Society of the United States, had a fundraiser at some posh restaurant in Washington D.C last night. And it was a big meat restaurant, and the purpose of it was to get a group of chefs together to persuade them that they should boycott Canadian seafood until the Canadians stopped killing seals. Now, what the heck sort of message does that send out? It sends out the message that we're going to boycott Canadian seafood – it's okay to eat other fish, we're

going to boycott Canadian fish because we're concerned about the killing of seals. I don't want anybody killing seals but you know what? There's no difference between a seal and any other animal skin we wear or a cow or the wool that we take from sheep. It's all the same; seals, cows, sheep, silkworm - all the same.

This idea that we fetishize the cute little seals – the seals are cute and stuff – that we fetishize the cute animals sends out a very, very, confused message. The idea that we should boycott Canadian seafood sends out the message that the fish don't have any inherent value but we can use them as sort of bargaining chips in this political thing to save these cute little animals that have big eyes and cute little noses and stuff like that. These sorts of messages are very, very, confused. That's not getting us anywhere. If you think that's getting us someplace, I respectfully disagree with you. I really don't agree. I think we need to rethink how we think about these issues. Those of us who take this seriously, veganism is the first response. I really think if more of us – one of the things that troubles me is that the animal rights organisations portray veganism as an extreme thing. They're the ones out there who are out there making it difficult because they portray veganism as: only the strong can do it, it's only for real men, or whatever the heck it is that they're busy talking about. It ought to be portrayed as a – first of all I think it's extremely easy to do. And we ought to be *teaching* it as easy.

We ought not to be teaching it as some great horrible sacrifice, God forbid you're not going to be able to eat all this stuff which is killing you anyway. I don't think we should be presenting it that way, and I think it's deeply troubling that the animal organisations – RSPCA, HSUS, PETA, all of them, they're all portraying veganism as the *extreme* position.

Many of them saying that explicitly, saying: veganism is extreme, but we're not telling people to go vegan. Why not? We shouldn't be telling anybody to do anything, but why aren't we encouraging people to become vegan? And, instead, encouraging them to believe that if they go to the store and they buy something called a cage-free egg that there's some sort of moral ubermensch, that they're doing something morally good. That's deceptive. I think that's really really deceptive, I think we've got to get away from that, far away from that and really focus on the reality that happy meat and happy animal products is deceptive, it's dishonest. It's not going to lead us in the direction you're talking about. Bottom line is moral

progress is going to take a long time. But we really need to be thinking radically, I'm using that word literally, getting to the roots of problems, and the roots of our problem have to do with our acceptance of violence, our acceptance of domination, the fact that we make a fetish out of hierarchy, those sorts of things, that has to change.

**Female 4:** Just a few comments, I've just arrived into the debate, I suppose my first comment is in relation to people going into labs and taking out animals.

**Gary:** Um, Roger, you're going to have to paraphrase that, I could hardly hear that at all.

**Roger:** That's okay, the mic failed, Gary, so just hold on a second.

**Female 4:** I suppose my first comment was on going into labs and taking animals. It does I think help in some ways. The animals aren't that easy to replace from what I've read and even talking to people who actually do animal testing as they've done in the past, they actually cost thousands of Euros to replace, causing massive delays to the work that's being done. I would disagree with this plan to say, they just replace the animals overnight, from talking to people who study these and do a lot of animal testing as they have done in the past and they point out how incredibly difficult it is to do that.

Second of all, in terms of legislation, I work in environmental education and I think that education has its role but legislation has a massive role to play. I reckon environmental education encouraging people to recycle – but if the legislation isn't there to provide support mechanisms to people it can make it incredibly hard for them to recycle. If the mechanisms aren't there to provide people with access to food that allows them to live a vegan lifestyle, easily, then it's going to be incredibly hard for people to do it. If the legislation is not there to change how our agricultural practices take place, there is going to be less incentive and supports for people to do organic farming, to do the mechanisms, again to make this food readily available to people. And while this may be Ireland compared to other countries, legislation can change things overnight. I've studied about waste in Ireland and waste legislation changed waste practices in Ireland overnight. We had 220 landfills that got shut down literally in the space of five years because of legislation.

Legislation has a massive role to play and it's a case of just how to convince governments to make the changes so that both sides, working in education – which is what I do for a living - working with legislation and with lobbying government and a lot of other things to make the changes to support people to be able to live that kind of lives easily and make it more accessible to more people. It's really expensive to buy organic food and again that boils down to legislation, how easy it is for large scale industry, dairy industries, especially in Ireland, versus organic farmers, legislation will change all of that, education can only go so far and that's my experience from working in environmental education. Also in terms of welfare, welfare agencies tend to see themselves like a patchwork quilt, there are so many animals that are being so badly abused, they're like the orphan agency, they're taking in all these animals and trying to give them homes, trying to help them. I don't think they see, unfortunately, their roles as trying to lobby or do advocacy or preparing type work, they leave that to other types of organisations in order to be at the receiving end of the sufferers. They don't work enough or support of other agencies like animal rights agencies – I know in Ireland the domestic animal rights and welfare organisations purely just talking in all 70,000 abandoned animals in Ireland every year, trying to give them homes, so they don't have the scope to go out and do campaigning and lobbying – they don't have the expertise or the time – so they're relying on other organisations to really do that and I think, yes, all the organisation do need to work together but every has a place to play and you can't just rely on one out and legislation is being underestimated in my opinion.

**Gary:** Alright, I would say this, because you've raised about three dozen different things. I would say to you that if you're in a situation in which you're in America in 1840 and you have slavery, it's perfectly plausible and coherent to say that what you ought to is be taking the position that slavery ought to be abolished and that we ought not to be try to make slavery more humane or something like that, or that we ought to have a dozen different approaches to the issue of slavery. If slavery is wrong, the response to slavery ought to be the abolition of slavery. So I don't think that there's anything problematic about saying that if we think that animal exploitation is morally wrong unjustified and we really believe that – see, I think the problem is some of us don't. I think a large segment of the animal community – and I think that's a serious problem – doesn't want to see the end of animal exploitation. They are

perfectly happy meat; they regard happy meat as a really good sort of goal to reach and I think that's really problematic. That's number one.

Number two, I'm not saying legislation is useless for all things, I think it's useless in the animal context because animals are chattel property. In the environmental area, have there been some laws that have been useful? Yes. But remember something: at least some of us are beginning to wake up to the fact that environmental laws are necessary for us, for our self interest, so we're willing to pass some of those. Having said that I also think that the bottom line is changing your light bulb or putting solar panels on your house and driving around in a Prius and stuff like that, it's better than doing nothing, but the bottom line is, with respect to the ecological crisis, we're actually doing very, very, little; probably way too late. It's not clear to me that the legislative process has been successful in that realm as well. You said what about the organizations that are taking in the stray animals and stuff like that, they've got a really horrible job to do, I agree with you.

You'll never find anybody in the world who loves dogs more than I do – except the person I live with – and if there were two dogs left in the world and it were up to Anna and me as to whether or not we continue breeding them so that we could have pets, the answer is no. The logical implication of what I'm saying is we should stop bringing domesticated animals into existence completely. We should take care of the animals we have now but we shouldn't bring anymore domesticated animals into existence. I have great sympathy for the people who do the sanctuary work and the shelter work, I support those organizations actually, I give money to them, I help them out in any way that I can, I believe in no-kill shelters, I believe in sanctuaries. But to say that those organisations are doing something different from what other organizations are doing, yes I agree, what they're doing is necessary, but I don't see that as inconsistent.

One of the organisations I really love is a group in the United States called Peaceful Prairie Sanctuary out in Colorado because it is a sanctuary for 'farm animals' and they've got about three hundred 'farm animals' out there with really sad stories and they take care of those animals but at the same time they very actively promote veganism and they very, very actively dissuade people from thinking that free range or organic or any of those 'solutions'

are solutions at all. In fact they've got great videos that I recommend people to watch. They have animals that have been rescued from so-called *humane* farms and you see the horrible shape that these animals are in. And so I don't see anything inconsistent with running a sanctuary or doing sanctuary work and also taking an abolitionist position with respect to animal exploitation and veganism. I mean they're very strong on veganism, they're very strong on abolition, but they also take care of a lot of animals. So I don't see that as being inconsistent.

But again, with respect to legislation, I think when it comes to animals, at the present and for the foreseeable future, as long as we are proceeding in the way that we're proceeding, we're never going to see animal welfare legislation that does anything other than make animal exploitation more efficient. In a sense there's an irony in that the animal community, the animal advocates have become advisors to the animal industry, advising them on what ways, how their production can actually be made more efficient. [And...I thought one of my other dogs wanted to meet you.] And so I think this is very, very important to focus on. Intensive animal agriculture for example is something that developed in the 1940s and 1950s. And it is only now that the inefficiencies are becoming clear. For example, there's a large literature out there about how gestation crates and veal crates – look at the veal crate for example. In Europe there are a lot of places in which veal crates are giving way to larger social units. Why is that happening? Is it because we believe that veal calves have inherent value? The answer is no, if we believed that we wouldn't be eating them.

We're doing that because the agricultural economists are telling us that animals that are raised in intensive conditions have higher veterinary costs because they suffer more stress. So in a sense what the animal people are doing is, they're collecting information and they're working with industry, trying to make industry more efficient. Do those efficiencies reduce animal suffering? They might marginally in some cases, they might result in the person who's getting the electrical shocks, getting them a comfortable chair to sit on. But is that really going to address the problem? And the answer is no that's not going to address the problem. As a matter of fact the irony - I was discussing this with Dr. Yates yesterday – was that I think that there's a sense in which when it's becoming clear to the industry that a particular practice is inefficient the animal people identify that and they start a campaign and that has the effect

*delaying* the industry from making the economically efficient change because industry doesn't want to be dictated to by the animal rights movement.

It is clear to me that controlled atmosphere killing is an economically much better way, it's financially a lot better for the poultry industry, much, much, much better. And that's why Canada's going that way, that's why Europe is going that way. America will go that way but there's a resistance in part because industry doesn't like to be dictated to because they worry that, well: if we give in – first of all there's that sort of natural resistance, you don't want to be told what to do by anybody, but there's also this notion that if we give in to this particular reform, then we have to worry down the line that people are going to force reforms on us that won't be economically efficient that we won't like. So we'll go, we'll transition towards controlled atmosphere killing but we're going to do it on our terms not their terms because we need to impose an opportunity cost on them so we make it clear that they can't dictate us because if we do that we're opening the doors to a situation that might cause us real problems down the road.

This is all very complex, it's all very complicated. I do suggest that you cannot say that legislation is the solution here because I am yet to see – I would love somebody to tell me what piece of legislation that's *really* made a difference. I've been having a debate with Robery Garner who's a professor of the University of Leicester, he and I have just written this book together. And Robert thinks the ban on hunting foxes with dogs in Britain is some sort of great – I don't understand that. There are more hunts meeting now than ever, there are more foxes being killed. Yes you can't use hounds to kill the foxes but you can use hounds to flush the foxes out and you can shoot them, you can use hounds to flush the foxes out and you can have birds kill them; you can still *kill* the foxes, you simply can't use hounds to kill the foxes.

I don't see this as being any sort of great victory, particularly when there are more foxes being killed than before the supposed ban. I have yet to see a piece of legislation that is worth a damn when it comes to recognising that animals have any sort of inherent value, I just don't see it, I honestly don't. If somebody can come up with one please do so.



**Female 4:** I think that would be an example of badly-structured legislation and the problem is – I’m not saying that legislation is the cure-all – I’m saying that you need a mix of things, I’m not saying it going to brings us all the way to the end of what’s trying to be achieved, but at least its taking us in a step in the right direction. It has potential to do it, I’m not saying that it *is* doing it, but it has the potential. If enough people were in talking to the politicians then maybe the bad legislation wouldn’t happen [inadible]. ...Hunting tourism. People are now coming to Ireland to hunt with hounds because they can’t do it in Britain but it is a classic example of badly-structured legislation, legislation has a place to play, it can stop things overnight. It has led to reform in labs in Ireland, there are no apes being used, it is a gradual, hopeful, step towards fewer and fewer animals...

**Gary:** But there are more mice being used. Look, if you want....

**Female 4:** it’s at least a step in the right direction, and gradually... it’s a step in the right direction...

**Gary:** So you say. You say it’s a step in the right direction. I think that that’s open to argumentation because I think that if they’re using more mice – and clearly Britain as a general matter, I don’t know about the numbers in Ireland, but Britain is using more animals now and has been using more animals. The number of animals being used in vivisection is going up, it’s not going down. So I don’t see – this whole business about the non-human great apes, all they’re doing is saying certain animals are privileged because they’re like us. So what they’re doing is: here’s the line, humans on one side, animals on one side, and what we’re doing is removing some of the animals over – and it’s not even clear to me that they’re doing that – arguably they’re privileging certain animals.

All that’s doing is drawing the line in a different place and re-establishing the hierarchy. As far as I’m concerned, I don’t care whether they’re using great apes – the fact that that they’re using fewer great apes or more mice or more dogs is for me significant. I don’t see it as a step in the right direction, that’s where you and I disagree. You assume that legislation is a step in the right direction, you don’t. I don’t see cage-free eggs as a step in the right direction, I see it as a step in the wrong direction because what it does is it sends the message to people that

eating cage-free eggs is morally desirable and I think that's a step backward, not a step forward. You and I just disagree on that.

**Roger:** I'll just interject here Gary, we've only got about five minutes left. There are a couple of people who want to – you might just have to agree to disagree with the last speaker there. Can we go to Paul there?

**Paul:** I have two questions. One is I'm involved in vegan education and I wonder what your thoughts are about people who become vegans for ethical reasons and people who become vegans for dietary reasons. The second question is I'm very interested in what you're saying about violence and I'm wondering what your thoughts are about how we as humans should deal with our own violence and in fact how we should become aware of our own violence and the extent to which we act on our violence.

**Gary:** Those are two great questions to try and answer in five minutes Paul. I'll do my best. When I talk to people about veganism I always talk to them about the moral issues but I also talk about the health reasons and the ecological reasons. But I always make clear that I think that the *compelling* reason is the ethical reason. Certainly there are health benefits and I think that's clear, all the empirical evidence is that you if you eat a vegan diet, a *careful* vegan diet, not just eating iceberg lettuce leaves, but if you eat a good variety of vegan foods, you are far more likely to be healthy, far less likely to get heart disease, far less likely to get virtually all forms of cancer. The evidence is quite clear. And the environmental consequences of animal based agriculture are quite clear. But obviously if someone becomes a vegan simply for health reasons, that person is going to look at the issue differently from the person who does it for moral reasons.

I'm not saying all of these things ought not to be brought into play, I discuss them all but I always make it clear that the moral reason is the compelling one. A friend of mine, Bob Torres, who's a sociologist, he gives the following example: using the environmental argument when you're talking about this is like saying concentration camps were bad because they had a large carbon footprint because they used a lot of trains to transport people to the concentration camps. Well that's true, they did, they certainly did environmental damage in

that respect but that's not why concentration camps are bad things. They're bad things because they deny basic moral rights to sentient beings who are members of the moral community, we end up excluding members of the moral community from the moral community, and that's the primary reason it's bad. So I think it's always important to talk about the benefits of a vegan diet, the benefits of veganism, the ecological consequences, but I always come back to the moral argument. As far as violence is concerned that's a really very interesting thing. I am very, very influenced by the spiritualist religion called Jainism. And one of the things that we talk about in Jainism all the time is Ahimsa, which is non-violence. And we talk about how it is important to always – violence is not just a matter of conduct, it's a matter of thought and it's a matter of speech, and that we ought to be non-violent in the way that we think about others, speak to others and act towards others, the way we actually conduct ourselves. And I think that it's very, very important when we talk to people that we talk in non-violent ways to them and that we not feel violence towards them. I know a lot of animal people get very angry with people who are not vegans and they'll yell at them and they'll hector them. That's not good. What we really ought to be doing is approaching this in a non-violent way. And another way we can do this is by cutting down violence in our lives. As I said, thinking, speaking, acting non-violently. But also not watching a lot of violent stuff – not being entertained. Asking ourselves why it is we're entertained by violent things. I think it's very important to not watch a lot of that stuff and not – the idea that we find really horrible violent things entertaining indicates a sort of deep pathology and I think we need to move away from that. And I think by the way pornography is part of that, which is one of the reasons why I have really serious problems with a lot of these PETA campaigns. Sexism and pornography is a really insidious form of violence, it's all around us, it's so much around us that we don't even sort of recognise it because sexism is so pervasive.

As a matter of fact – although I certainly would not want to discount racism – I think sexism is in many ways more insidious because we don't even recognise it. Racism we can identify in certain ways, there are certain ways, there are certain markers for racism and racist behaviour. But sexism is something that is so much a part of the society, we haven't even really come to grips with it and I think that sexism is a really important form of violence that we need to confront. And that's why it really saddens me when I see my friends at PETA using these really horrible sexist campaigns to try to 'liberate' animals, I think that's

nonsense. It's not going to work, first of all it won't work. I remember saying to Ingrid Newkirk twenty years ago it wouldn't work and you know what, the fur industry is stronger now than it's ever been. And it hasn't worked. I'm not saying it would be okay if it did work, I'm saying that it hasn't worked. We need to rethink how we do these things. But again, becoming non-violent within ourselves and thinking very carefully about not being violent not only in our conduct towards others but in our speech and in our thinking – not entertaining violent thought about others, not using violent speech towards people, not saying harsh things towards them. If somebody comes up to me at a lecture and says – some people do, some people will come up to me and say fairly nasty things. You ought to see some of the emails I get. You know what? You just sort of say okay, that's fine, if that's the way you wish to deal with me I'm not going to reciprocate, I refuse to reciprocate to deal with you that. And I have found in a lot of cases that when somebody comes up to me after a lecture and basically says something really nasty to me and I don't respond to it, and I say why do you feel that way? Why are you angry with me, why are you responding in an angry way? Tell me, share that with me. And I find I have some wonderful discussions that way. It takes a lot of patience –

**Roger:** Gary?

**Gary:** Yes?

**Roger:** Is interrupting a form of violence because [laughter] –

**Gary:** Yes Roger it is, it's an insidious form of violence.

**Roger:** Oh well okay, I don't mind.

**Gary:** Thank you all very much for having me, I appreciate it very much [applause]. It's been fun.

**Roger:** I'm going to do my final ceremony which is to press the button on Skype which says goodbye to you, Gary, and so I end the call. Thank you very much for your contribution and we will see you again – and maybe even in flesh - you never know.

**Gary:** Very good. Be well, be vegan, bye.

**Roger:** Thanks very much.

[end of Part 2]