

## Animal Rights: Give Them a Voice

You finish up a savory burger. You apply a coat of makeup before your birthday party. You take some medicine when you have a headache. Do you ever wonder, how did it all come to be? Each year, more than one hundred million animals are killed in U.S. laboratories to ensure the medicine you take, and makeup you wear is safe for the human body. And nearly ten billion animals are killed in factory farms each year to produce the meat, eggs, and dairy you consume daily. It's out of the question how animals should be allowed rights.

Animals are very similar to us humans, and we wouldn't put ourselves in harm's way for the sake of medicine, would we? Of course, they may have fur, tails and four legs, but they eat and breathe. They feel sadness, pain, and loneliness, just like humans do. Animals are innocent and they deserve the right to live freely among us. All these animals are asking for is peace and love to fulfill their short lifespan. They deserve everything we do. They are like our children, like our family. They can't speak for themselves, so us as humans have to protect them. Taking animals lives in order to secure the use of medicine isn't right. Tom Regan, a philosopher at North Carolina University, says that, "Animals have a basic moral right to respectful treatment... This inherent value is not respected when animals are reduced to being mere tools in a scientific experiment." This explains that animals are much more than research tools, and medicine testing on animals should be forbidden- because we as humans are here to protect them, not harm them.

Most of us could eat meat every day for the rest of our lives. I can't blame you-meat's good, but the production of it isn't as delicious. According to SPCA, "About 10 billion animals never get to see the light of day each year, because they're raised just for meat, dairy, and eggs." These animals are crowded into tiny cages and sections, and are both tortured and harmed every day. In my opinion, this needs to at least be cut down for the sake of these innocent lives being take each year. As said before, animals don't have voices to speak out for themselves, so we need to grant them the rights they deserve ourselves. Along with the factory farms harming animals, it also harms the environment. "Factory farming accounts for 37 percent of methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) emissions. Methane has more than 20 times the global warming potential of CO<sub>2</sub>." (DoSomething.org) This concludes as one more reason for why humans should take into consideration the thought of cutting down on meat. "The waste lagoons on Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) not only pollute our groundwater, but deplete it as well. Many of the farms use the groundwater for cleaning, cooling, and drinking." Not only does it kill over 10 billion animals each year, it also harms the environment, potentially leading to more serious problems in the future.

Right now, millions of rats, rabbits, apes, dogs, and other animals are locked inside cold, penetrating cages in laboratories across the country. They dwindle in pain, anguish with loneliness, and long to ramble free. Instead, all they can do is sit and wait in anxiety of the next ghastly and painful procedure that will be tested on them. And all for what? To award us with the safety of pointless makeup? We're choosing to apply a thin coat of blush, over saving a fluffy, white life. Four Paws says, "Thousands of

ingredients that are already safely used by humans are available for use in cosmetics. This demonstrates that animal testing is not needed to produce traditional products.” It’s outrageous to think we’re still testing makeup additives on animals, when we already have useful elements that are safe for us to use! It’s like we’ve just finished a huge, delectable meal, but we’re still scavenging the pantry for more snacks- even after we’re full. It’s nonsense to continue killing animals for no apparent reason, and it needs to stop.

Although going vegetarian is a great thing to do, I understand it’s hard for a lot of people to accomplish. Meat includes protein, which is a key factor in being healthy. Eggs and dairy are also daily choices that keep your body running. So, in a way, we need factory farms to give us the food we need. But, there is another choice. Organic meat, dairy, and eggs are a healthier and safer prime. Cows, chickens, pigs, and other animals are raised on free-range farms, which are very different from factory farms. On free-range farms, animals are allowed to roam around fields, and are given healthier food to consume: no pesticides included. Although animals are still being killed for food, this way they get to enjoy a lot more of life than they would in factory farms.

Next time you pick up that burger, next time you look in the mirror before putting on some mascara- think of the cries and pain that got those items to you. Animal rights should be taken into consideration more seriously. These poor creatures are tortured in order to give us absurd things that are truly pointless, and/or have substitutions. We’re all animals with feelings, so why kill each other?

**Work Cited**

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