

ALBERT W. MUSSCHENGA

NATURALNESS: BEYOND ANIMAL WELFARE

(Accepted in revised form August 15, 2001)

ABSTRACT. There is an ongoing debate in animal ethics on the meaning and scope of animal welfare. In certain broader views, leading a natural life through the development of natural capabilities is also headed under the concept of animal welfare. I argue that a concern for the development of natural capabilities of an animal such as expressed when living freely should be distinguished from the preservation of the naturalness of its behavior and appearance. However, it is not always clear where a plea for natural living changes over into a plea for the preservation of their naturalness or wildness. In the first part of this article, I examine to what extent the concerns for natural living meet “the experience requirement.” I conclude that some of these concerns go beyond welfare. In the second part of the article, I ask whether we have *moral* reasons to respect concerns for the naturalness of an animal’s living that transcend its welfare. I argue that the moral relevance of such considerations can be grasped when we see animals as entities bearing non-moral intrinsic values. In my view the “natural” appearance and behavior of an animal may embody intrinsic values. Caring for an animal’s naturalness should then be understood as caring for such intrinsic values. Intrinsic values provide moral reasons for action iff they are seen as constitutive of the good life for humans. I conclude by reinterpreting, within the framework of a perfectionist ethical theory, the notion of *indirect* duties *regarding* animals, which go beyond and supplement the *direct* duties *towards* animals.

KEY WORDS: animal welfare, duties to/regarding animals, intrinsic goodness, intrinsic value, moral status, naturalness, natural living

To be a living bat is to be full of being; being fully a bat is like being fully human, which is also to be full of being. Bat-being in the first case, human-being in the second case, maybe; but those are secondary considerations. To be full of being is to live as a body-soul. One name for the experience of full being is *joy*.

Elisabeth Costello in J. M. Coetzee’s *The Lives of Animals*¹

WELFARE AS A CRITERION FOR MORAL STATUS

In our society there is nowadays a broad consensus that the fate of animals – at least of certain categories of animals – should not completely depend

¹ The novelist J. M. Coetzee was invited to give the 1997–1998 Tanner Lectures at Princeton University. His lectures were fictional in form. The main character in the lectures within the lectures is Elisabeth Costello, also a novelist who delivers two lectures on a topic of her own choice at Appleton College.



on the contingent and changing interests and preferences of men. The moral indignation about the abuse and maltreatment of animals was led to developing the view that cruelty by humans against animals constituted an offence against their own humanity. This argument justified only *indirect* duties not to harm animals. The accepted position in animal ethics is now that many animals share morally relevant features with humans that justify assigning “moral status” to them. If entities have moral status, humans may not treat them in just any way they like. They then are members of the moral community, which implies that humans have direct duties to them.

Entities having moral status are equal members of the moral community. They deserve to be treated as equals, which does not imply getting equal treatment. Humans are morally obliged to give weight in their deliberations to the needs, interests, or well-being of all entities having moral status. These entities have, in other words, moral importance *in their own right*, and not merely because protecting them may benefit human interests or should prove, as with Kant, our humanity.

Many animal ethicists restrict moral status to entities that have a capacity for *subjective* welfare.² They have this capacity if they are sentient beings, that is if they are capable of having positive experiences – pleasures – and negative experiences – pains. The capacity for suffering and enjoyment does not coincide with having consciousness, because there may be entities that have consciousness but do not experience pain or pleasure. Utilitarians such as Peter Singer hold the opinion that sentience is the necessary and sufficient condition, the sole valid criterion for ascribing moral status (Singer, 1975).³

It is important to stress that the question what the appropriate criterion is for admission to the moral community should be distinguished from the issue what kind of duties humans have to the non-human members of the moral community. Accepting sentience as criterion does not imply that

² I use the term “subjective welfare” for referring to the presence of positive experiences and the absence of negative experiences, thus to inner, mental states. The term “objective welfare” refers to an external state of affairs, such as flourishing. All natural entities that have a capacity for flourishing, are capable of having objective welfare. When speaking of welfare as such, I refer to both inner and external states.

³ In her *Moral Status: Obligations to Persons and Other Living Beings* (1997) Mary Anne Warren criticizes the view that there is only one criterion that is the necessary and sufficient condition for assigning moral status. She argues for a multi-criterial account in which several criteria are a sufficient condition for assigning some moral status. She thinks that this account accords better with common-sense judgements about moral status than uni-criterial theories like the Sentience Only View of utilitarian authors such as Singer (Warren, 1997, p. 181). I regard her approach as sound and plausible. In my view sentience – capacity for welfare – is a sufficient, but not a necessary criterion for assigning moral status.

the moral duties to sentient animals are exhausted by the concern for their subjective welfare. It does imply, as I shall argue below, that something can only be said to affect the welfare of a sentient being when it also affects its subjective experience. I call this "the experience requirement."

A BROADER VIEW ON ANIMAL WELFARE

Some authors in animal ethics are dissatisfied with approaches in which animal welfare is limited to inner states such as freedom of pain, disease, absence of urges to self-mutilating, and aggressive behavior. They argue that no one will conclude from observing that hostages are well fed, healthy, and quiet, that they are happy. The explanation given will be that they have temporarily resigned to their fate, hoping for a happy end. Analogously, one should not conclude from observing that, e.g., battery chickens are well fed, healthy, and non-aggressive, that they fare well, flourish. We all know that humans flourish when they have the opportunity to do what they like and find important, and have success in the projects they pursue. There is also every reason to assume that if an animal has the opportunity to do all the activities that are characteristic for its species, this contributes to its flourishing. Pigs should have the opportunity to root in the mud; chimpanzees to live in groups; chickens to pick in the sand for seeds, worms, and so on. In this view, caring for the welfare of animals includes creating conditions in which they can have a life that accords with their species-specific capacities and adaptation patterns. Animals should not only *feel well* – be free from prolonged and intense fear, pains, and other negative states – and *function well* – have a satisfactory health, normal growth, and normal functioning of physiological and behavioral systems – but also *lead natural lives* through the development of their natural capabilities and adaptations (Fraser et al., 1997).

One of the notions developed to cover the concerns about animals that go beyond subjective welfare is "animal integrity" – a notion similar to that of "the fullness of being," used by Elisabeth Costello, the famous writer in John Coetzee's novel. The Dutch animal ethicists Bart Rutgers and Robert Heeger define animal integrity as "the wholeness and completeness of the species-specific balance of the creature, as well as the animal's capacity to maintain itself independently in an environment suitable to the species." They explicate this definition as being made up of three mutually linked and complementary elements: (1) wholeness and completeness, (2) the balance in species specificity, and (3) the capacity to independently maintain itself.

An animal can only be said to be in a state of integrity if all three elements are present (Rutgers and Heeger, 1999, p. 43). Respect for the integrity of an animal demands from us not only to abstain from infringements on its physical wholeness and completeness, but also to create conditions in which they can show the behavior characteristic for the species.

Rutgers and Heeger do not propose capacity for integrity as an alternative criterion for assigning moral status. They regard the concept of animal integrity as a *heuristic device*. It should help us to discover those actions and conditions that impede an animal in leading a life that accords with their species specific capacities. Rutgers and Heeger do not reject the experience requirement, but seem to assume that infringements on an animal's integrity also affect its subjective welfare negatively.

NORMAL FUNCTIONING IN A NORMAL ENVIRONMENT

The problem with concepts such as the integrity of animals is that they presuppose a reference point, an idea of what the animal's species-characteristic capacities, behavior patterns, and physical appearance are. Proponents of a broad concept of animal welfare look into the behavior of animals living freely because they assume that domesticated animals preserved many of their wild ancestors' capacities and behavior patterns. Evolution has equipped these animals with motives and desires to show certain behavior patterns that are adaptive to living in a specific environment, which is then called their "natural environment." These motives and desires may still be present in domesticated animals, even when their adaptive function has disappeared.

Although these broad welfarists need not be essentialists in answering the question which behavior patterns are typical for a species, they meet similar epistemic problems as essentialists. If we want to argue that an animal species should be enabled to show a specific behavior pattern also in a context of domestication, we must be able to distinguish between behavior that is constitutive of that species's flourishing, and other behavior. In such cases we cannot just state that that behavior is on our list of things that make the lives of members of a species go well. This is what is done by what Philip Kitcher calls "bare objectivists" (Kitcher, 1999). Essentialists have to explain why they put a specific behavior on the list – why they think it is essential – and broad welfarists why they think it to be typical of a species's functioning. The essentialist argument could be that an allegedly valuable item is connected to a certain property of which we know that members of a species exhibiting it, are flourishing. This

property should identify the lives of species members going well. Only then an explanation meets what Kitcher calls “the Reductivist Challenge” (Kitcher, 1999, p. 60). This challenge is not met when value judgments are imported to identify an essential property, which then is represented as the criterion of a species’s flourishing. If I value rationality highly in humans and consequently state that the level of intellectual capacity is the criterion for determining the extent of human flourishing, I do not meet the Reductivist Challenge.

Broad welfarists do not have to justify the inclusion of an item by connecting it with an essential property that flourishing members of a species possess. They can suffice by showing that a behavior is always present in the repertoire of those members of a species that apparently flourish. But who are members of a species? What property does an animal need to have to qualify for membership of a species? Kitcher discusses some candidates for properties that qualify entities for membership of the human species. Although he discusses human perfectionism, the statements he makes about the human species can easily be generalized (Kitcher, 1999, pp. 64 ff.). Obvious candidates are some genetic or chromosomal properties. Is the number of chromosomes a plausible candidate? Kitcher argues that in the case of humans, most members of that species have 23 pairs of chromosomes, but not all do. Should we conclude that the organisms with a different number do not belong to the human species? According to Kitcher, not necessarily. We might reason that species have normal as well as abnormal members. But how do we determine what are normal members? A possible answer is: on the basis of statistical considerations. As to genes, there are some loci for which the human species is highly polymorphic, such as blood type. Should we equate normalcy with having the most common genotype? However, suppose a world in which the background levels of radiation are so high that most human zygotes have properties that we would intuitively count as abnormal. When applying statistical techniques to the species in that world, we arrive at a different conception of normalcy and consequently a different species essence. However the members of this species are still able to interbreed with “our” human species. Let us suppose that we were able to find a set of chromosomal or genetic properties that was a plausible candidate for a species. We would not simply suggest that the good of that species consists of developing those properties. Insofar as properties constitutive of a species ground its perfection, it is through the phenotypic characteristics to which they give rise. However, phenotypic traits result from an interaction between genes and environment. And most genes can be expressed in various ways, dependent on the nature of the environ-

ment. Thus, we cannot argue that the chromosomal and genetic properties making up the essence of a species determine a distinctive set of phenotypic traits whose development is particularly pertinent to the goodness of the life the members of that species. This problem can only be solved by introducing another notion of normalcy, that of “normal environment.” The defining characteristic of a species could then be said to consist of a set of chromosomal and genetic properties as expressed into phenotypic traits in a “normal” environment. However, how do we determine a species’s normal environment? Statistical considerations will not work, since we select environments as normal in virtue of the fact that they permit genotypes to issue in the traits we value. Kitcher gives the example of children, which bear the PKU-genotype (1999, p. 68). We give them a diet so that the build up of amino acids does not interfere with cognitive development. We don’t think that the development of cognitive skills is part of the human good because we have an independent notion of normal environment that permit people who have the chromosomal and genetic properties essential to our species to exhibit higher cognitive functions. We take environments to be normal for humans because we already perceive cognitive developments as something good for us. Using our species essence c.q. our conception of normal functioning to identify the human good fails, because ideas of the good have to be imported if we want to link the essential properties with the right phenotypes. This kind of a theory does not meet Kitcher’s Reductivist Challenge. The conclusion must be that we cannot identify in a value-free way the properties characteristic of essential to a species. Consequently we cannot explain why we include an item on the list of a species’s objective goods, by connecting it to those properties.

Broad welfarists cannot evade the problem of identifying properties specific to a species in a value-free way. They need a reference point for formulating presumptions or hypotheses about which capacities and adaptations might be essential for, e.g., husbandry animals. This reference point is usually the way of life and behavior of their freely living relatives.⁴ However, the danger exists that by lack of knowledge of other suitable living conditions one comes to regard a domesticated animal’s wild relatives’ way of life as a model that should be simulated as much as possible.

⁴ Stephen Clark says that there is no need to suppose that there is only one environment for an organism and only one successful phenotype of its kind. Evolutionary theory itself suggests that species divide, or are divided: but the new species do not step entirely outside the older ways of life (Clark, 1997, p. 71)

NATURAL LIVING AND NATURALNESS

One of the reasons to plead for “enrichment” of the environment especially of animals held in captivity was the growing insight into stereotypic behavior.⁵ Stereotypic behaviors prove that otherwise healthy and well-fed animals can suffer from living in a “wrong” environment.

Extensive research has been done on the environmental enrichment of zoos. Many zoos, influenced by the back-to-nature approach, attempted to compensate the environmental deficits by simulating the “natural” environment of animals. Trevor Poole argues that this approach is deficient for two reasons. The first one is that simulation only partly can work while natural features such as predators, disease, hunger, and other life-threatening challenges will also be absent in enriched environments. The second is that at least mammals readily substitute one form of action for another depending on the facilities that are available to them. He refers to studies showing that the absence of a forest full of interesting foods may be of little concern to a chimpanzee or mandrill when they have the opportunity to play computer games. Chimpanzees who enjoy working with computers have not been reared in forests, while those whose home is the forest are unlikely to show interest in computer games. The environment in which an animal has developed, is of great importance (Poole 1998, pp. 83ff.). Poole denies that natural selection has precisely shaped a mammal’s behavioral needs to its habitat. If that were so, zoos would have to do everything possible to create a closure exactly like the wild, to satisfy the mammals’ needs. However, their intelligence enables the mammals to modify their behavior to suit a wide range of situations. Their behavioral capacities are flexible enough (p. 85). Technology can also enrich the lives of mammals by providing challenges and opportunities for achievement. He concludes by saying that, although enclosures that look natural to the human eye or were more aesthetically pleasing, zoos must not be afraid to provide artificial features if these meet a mammal’s psychological needs (p. 93).

⁵ Some animals living in barren environments (zoos, cages, stables) develop forms of stereotypic behavior, namely repetitive behavior patterns that have no obvious goal. There are two categories of stereotypic behavior: movement stereotypes, such as weaving (horses, polar bears), pacing (carnivores), and rocking (primates, men), and oral stereotypes, such as bar-chewing (cattle, pigs), crib-biting and wind sucking (horses), tongue-rolling and sucking (especially veal calves). Stereotypic behavior can be a mechanism for coping with environmental deprivation (thereby avoiding suffering), an outward and visible sign of distress, or a relatively harmless way of passing time. The induction or performance of stereotypes may be related to the presence, or the absence of stimuli from the external environment but they are also regulated by states of mood. States of mood such as boredom or arousal, anxiety or excitement can be linked to the chemistry of the brains and modulated by drugs (Webster, 1994, pp. 56ff.).

Let's take for granted that computer games might indeed be a good alternative for the explorative behavior that chimpanzees show when searching for food. Chimpanzees playing with computers then can be said to lead a life in accordance with their natural capabilities. If we nevertheless think we ought to provide them with an environment in which they can show the original "natural" behavior patterns – the patterns they show when living freely – our reasons for that are clearly not reasons of welfare – neither of subjective nor of objective welfare. They can be said to flourish although they do not lead a natural life.

Another example might corroborate this assertion. In the Netherlands, a discussion has started about the pros and cons of so-called "agro-industrial parks" in which intensive breeding of, e.g., pigs or chickens, is combined with the production of food and the conversion of manure into useful products such as fertilizers. It is argued that such parks are desirable because of the efficient use of the scarce space and the reduction of the stress on the environment by animal excrements.⁶ One of the plans under discussion is that for a "Deltapark" in which pigs will be held in apartment buildings. It is argued that such housing can be acceptable from the point of view of animal welfare, provided that the pigs have more living space than in the existing intensive farms. An additional pro-argument is that the pigs need not be transported over a long distance to a slaughter house which always causes a huge amount of stress to the animals.

Let's assume for the sake of argument that these apartment buildings will be acceptable from the point of view of animal welfare. The only objection that is left is that such housing is "unnatural," doesn't accord with how people think that humans should live together with their animal husbandry. The authors of the report would probably qualify such an objection as "romantic."

A last example: In the Netherlands cows are obligatorily marked with rather big plastic yellow earmarks carrying a number. All the relevant data about a cow, its parents and different owners are filed into a central computer. These marks make it possible, e.g., in case meat is contaminated, to track down the particular cow. A number of farmers refuse to mark their cows. They are now offered the alternative identification of a DNA-test. Although the earmarks sometimes cause the ear to become inflamed, they don't constitute a serious welfare problem to the animal. I think it would do injustice to the objecting farmers to say that their objection is purely aesthetic. They regard it to be unnatural. It is connected with how they want to shape their relation with their animals.

⁶ See: *Agroproductieparken: Perspectieven en dilemma's*, The Hague, October 2000, <http://www.agro.nl/innovatienetwerk/>.

My conclusion here is that many authors in animal ethics are interested in the “natural life” of “wild” animals because they assume that the capabilities expressed in the behavior of animals living freely are still present in their domesticated relatives. They want domesticated animals to flourish, which is much more than not to suffer. However, Kitcher made clear that what are considered to be natural capabilities of a species, might just be the valued characteristics of “normal” exemplars of a species living in a “normal” environment. Poole’s discussion of the “enrichment” movement shows that lack of knowledge of a species’s behavioral flexibility and of other environments suitable for living than that of their wild relatives, may lead to think that living conditions of animals held in captivity and of domesticated animals should simulate the conditions of living freely as much as possible. This tendency is strengthened by the clear appreciation among many of us of the naturalness of “wild” animals’ behavior patterns and physical appearance. However tricky it may be to draw conclusions from the study of the behavior of animals living in the wild about their species specific capabilities, this kind of research is necessary if one wants to develop a broader view on animal welfare. But *I think that the interest in natural living driven by the desire to improve the welfare of, e.g., husbandry animals, should be distinguished from the interest flowing from an admiration of wild animals behavior and appearance.* Concerns for the welfare of animals and for the preservation of their naturalness are separate issues. What matters to the (subjective) welfare of animals is the presence of sufficient opportunities to employ their natural capabilities, not the naturalness of the environment that offers such opportunities.

In the next sections, I will analyze the concern for naturalness in more detail. I will argue that they provide legitimate moral reasons for action in dealing with animals. Thus, some of the moral reasons we have to guide our interaction with animals go beyond their welfare.

THE LIMITS OF A NARROW ANIMAL ETHICS

David DeGrazia, who presents a sophisticated view on animal welfare, admits that the sentience requirement does not tidily account for all our ethical intuitions regarding animals and the rest of the non-human nature. He admits that “we” think that there would be something wrong with gratuitously cutting down a magnificent oak tree, even if no sentient beings are negatively affected. He goes on saying that while some common ethical convictions seem to lean in the direction of attributing interests to non-sentient beings, the bulk of our ethical convictions are better accounted for if we require sentience. In his view, many of the “recalcitrant” beliefs

may lose their intuitive grip when other alternative explanations are offered and we discover that no satisfying theoretical account supports them (DeGrazia, 1996, p. 228). I think that his conclusion is too hasty. He seems to assume that such an account is only satisfying when it provides an alternative criterion for moral membership. In my view we should not look for a rival account of moral status. We should drop the idea that a seamless, monist ethical theory can justify all our moral intuitions regarding animals.

This insight is present in pluralist theories that work with the distinction between narrow and broad morality. I take the example of Thomas Scanlon's contractualist theory, which is a narrow theory of morality. In Scanlon's opinion, only narrow morality can be justified within a contractualist perspective. But morality should not be reduced to narrow morality. In his theory, humans have only duties to conscious beings, capable of feeling pain, and also capable of judging things as better or worse and, more generally, capable of holding judgment-sensitive attitudes (Scanlon, 1998, p. 179). He allows of a certain extension of the scope of this morality: it also covers principles forbidding bringing experiential harm such as pain and distress to non-rational animals. These are the principles, which trustees representing these creatures lacking themselves the capacity to assess reasons, could not reasonably reject. Only human beings and non-rational animals have moral standing. Extending the scope of morality to all objects having a good is, according to him, not plausible (p. 183). However, Scanlon does not conclude that what happens to non-conscious entities has no moral importance at all. It is in a *broad sense* morally wrong to wantonly harm or destroy things as trees, plants, wetlands, and so on. But they are not *wronged* by such actions (Scanlon 1998, pp. 179 ff.).

Although neither DeGrazia nor Scanlon help us by providing us with a theory that justifies welfare transcending concerns, Scanlon at least recognizes that his theory does not cover all legitimate intuitions. A theory that covers what DeGrazia calls the "recalcitrant intuitions" requires, firstly, a change in value theory, and, secondly, a theory of obligation that knows of other duties than just duties to others. I start with the change in value theory.

INTRINSIC VALUES AND INTRINSIC GOODNESS

Theories of narrow morality hold that the right has priority over the good. The theory of animal ethics I propose as a complement to theories of duties to animals is founded on a theory of non-moral values. In this theory it is the intrinsic goodness of animals that gives us the reasons for our dealing with them. Concerns that go beyond the welfare of animals still make sense

morally when we conceive them as referring to non-moral intrinsic values. In my view, the appearance and behavior an animal shows when living freely may embody intrinsic values. To explain what I mean by that, I have to unfold my view on intrinsic value not only of animals, but of nature at large.

Talk of intrinsic value is often confusing because it conflates two meanings: intrinsic value as a *standard of evaluation* and intrinsic value as a *measure*, signifying the extent to that an entity answers to some standards of intrinsic value. I prefer to distinguish these meanings also terminologically. I will use the term “intrinsic value(s)” when referring to (a) standard(s) of intrinsic evaluation, and the term “intrinsic goodness” when referring to the measure that results from applying such standards. Environmental ethicists often just state that nature has intrinsic value (in my terminology: intrinsic goodness) without clarifying what the intrinsic value consists in and in virtue of what kind of properties it has this value. In my approach, intrinsic value is not a kind of property of an entity, it is an evaluative standard, a standard for determining intrinsic goodness.

In many theories, intrinsic value is conceptually primitive, that is, it cannot be explained in terms of other values. I assume that there are many intrinsic values. Therefore entities can be intrinsically good in more than one respect. I call the diverse values that are relevant for assessing an object’s intrinsic goodness its *intrinsic value components*. When speaking of the intrinsic goodness of an entity, I will usually mean its overall intrinsic goodness, and not its intrinsic goodness in a certain respect. Entities have intrinsic goodness in virtue of certain properties. In my view these are not only intrinsic, but also relational properties. A property is good making, first, with respect to particulars of a specific kind and, second, with respect to a specific type of value. Integrity is good making with respect to organisms as particulars and perfection as intrinsic value. The good-making property is *constitutive* of whatever value belongs to the objects that possess it. Hence it is constitutive of the goodness of the objects that possess it.⁷ I call such a good-making property a “*value constituent*” – which should be distinguished from (intrinsic) value component as defined above.⁸ A property can be constitutive of diverse aspects of an entity’s (intrinsic) goodness.⁹ What kind of intrinsic values

⁷ This view is inspired by Warren Quinn (1974).

⁸ I have come to realize that in certain places in my “Intrinsic Value or Intrinsic Valuing?” (1999) I confused “value constituent” and “value component.” However, some terms can refer to value constituents as well as value components, as is the case with “rarity” and “uniqueness.”

⁹ Shelley Kagan gives the example of the pen used by Abraham Lincoln to sign the Emancipation Proclamation, freeing the slaves. This pen clearly had *instrumental* value.

are relevant when speaking of the intrinsic goodness of animals? I will mention a few that come to my mind. One can think of an animal's strength, its "autonomy," its agility, its velocity, its ferocity, the beauty of its colors, the beauty and complexity of its courting behavior, its adaptation to the environment, the complexity of its social behavior, the ingenuity of its nests, the beauty of its songs, its rarity, and so on.¹⁰ These are all values actualized by animals when living freely.

DUTIES REGARDING ANIMALS

I said before that the broad theory of animal ethics I want to offer, should not replace but complement narrow theories.¹¹ This forces me to clarify how my theory relates to theories of duties to animals, which are in a way extensions of duties of humans to each other.

Duties to animals provide narrowly moral reasons for action. What kind of moral reasons are provided by values of naturalness, such as actualized by animals when living freely, and for whom are they reasons for action?

Thomas Nagel distinguishes between the subjective and the objective point of view, which offer different perspectives on the world of values (Nagel, 1986). The values connected to the objective point of view provide agent-neutral reasons for action that are independent of the particular perspective and system of preferences of the agent. Examples of these values are pleasure and pain, satisfaction and frustration (p. 170). Contrary to agent-neutral reasons, agent-relative reasons are those "[] stemming from the perspective of a person's own life, which though they can be publicly recognized, do not in general provide reasons for others and do not correspond to reasons that the interests of others provide him" (p. 172).

Personal projects are not just desires or preferences, they are responses to values shared within a particular community. These values are thus not less "objective" than other values. Subjective reasons refer to a person's

Now it also has *intrinsic* value (intrinsic goodness) – the continued existence of the pen has value for itself (Kagan, 1998, p. 285)

¹⁰ My view on the intrinsic values present in animals is different from views in which the intrinsic value of animals is seen as a criterion for assigning them moral status. This is the view of Henk Verhoog. Recognizing the intrinsic value of animals implies for him that animals deserve to be treated as a goal in themselves, and not merely as a means towards the well-being of others, and that they have characteristics constitutive of their nature that justify considering them as morally respectable. He seems to identify the Kantian narrowly moral notion "being a goal in themselves" with the Aristotelian broadly moral notion "having a telos," which means "having an end in themselves" (Verhoog, 1992, p. 270).

¹¹ This is also the view of Robert Heeger and Frans W. A. Brom (2001).

interests. I can justify my buying a certain type of car by referring to subjective reasons. But if a couple justifies its decision to have an abortion, the public will not accept it when they solely refer to subjective reasons. In public justification, one expects reasons to be objective. Objective reasons are based upon shared values and principles. An objective reason is only then a reason for action for someone if it refers to values, principles, projects, or relationships that he has recognized as valuable, as *worthwhile*. I agree with Christine Korsgaard in her “The Reasons We Can Share” when she says that the “agent-relative” component of personal projects – or “ambitions” as she prefers to call them – is not the source of subjective reasons. The act of identification does not confer value upon the things an agent identifies with. They already have value for him (Korsgaard, 1996).

All objective reasons that are reasons for action for an agent are in a sense relative to his values and projects. Only some of these values and projects are constitutive of his personal identity. Reasons flowing from this kind of personal project differ in providing the agent special reasons for action. Instead of “agent-relative reasons,” I prefer to call them “*identity-constitutive reasons*,” which should be distinguished from “*identity-neutral reasons*.” Identity-constitutive reasons do not differ in normative force from identity-neutral ones. They get a greater weight, are valued higher because of their essential role in the agent’s identity.

Duties of welfare to animals that can be justified within Scanlon’s contractualist theory, apply to all persons. They have to be accepted by all moral persons. Welfare transcending moral concerns, such as the concern for naturalness, cannot be justified within a contractualist perspective. They can, but need not be accepted by all moral persons.

My view on the intrinsic values of the naturalness of nature in general and animals in particular, is embedded in a particular conception of what constitutes the good life for humans. The reasons stemming from them only have a special weight for those who have identified themselves with the underlying values. Understanding the intrinsic goodness of a thing or a state of affairs gives them a reason to promote or preserve it. This also applies to understanding the intrinsic goodness of animals. In this conception of the good, it might be considered to be wrong to transfer a wild animal to a zoo – even when this new environment is enriched to such a degree that living in it will cause the animal no harm – because its intrinsic goodness is diminished.¹² This conception of the good life

¹² I agree with Stephen Clark that there is a difference between free living, in a habitat adapted to one’s interests, and being provided with sufficient space, proper facilities and company of one’s kind. He connects this intuition to “some recognition that a ‘normal life’ is normative” (Clark, 1997, pp. 70f.). He seems to assume that leading a normal life is

justifies an agent's commitment to a subset of values out of the pool of diverse and possibly conflicting and incommensurable, values. I may come to recognize many things as intrinsically good, but not all of them can be equally important to me. There are simply more things worthy of being valued that can provide me with reasons for action than, with my limited talents and limited resources, I can realize in my limited lifespan. No one can have a special relationship with all the values he recognizes as values. Everyone who thinks about what kind of a life he wants to lead, will have to make some choices. He will decide, more or less consciously, to dedicate his life to furthering particular values, projects, and so on. These are the values and projects that constitute his identity.

CONCLUSION: DUTIES TO AND REGARDING ANIMALS

I argued that moral intuitions about preserving the naturalness of animals cannot be justified within an ethical theory that assumes that only welfare concerns are valid moral reasons for action in our relation with animals. I then developed a view in which naturalness is a component of the intrinsic goodness of animals. Care for an animal's naturalness provides those who adopt a particular conception of the good, moral reasons for action. I assume that my argument will not convince animal rights activists. They will object that the argument is too anthropocentric. Let me try to respond to this objection. My first reaction is to stress that I do not offer an alternative to theories that aim to protect animals by assigning them the moral status. My approach complements these theories and sometimes offers an additional reason to support their claims. We can both have duties *to* an animal and duties *regarding* an animal to ourselves. Cruelty to animals is a violation of both our duties to animals and duties to ourselves regarding animals. Secondly, Scanlon makes a distinction that enables me to respond to the objection of anthropocentrism. From a third-person perspective, striving for the intrinsic values embodied in animals does indeed contribute to one's quest for the good life. But from an individual's point of view many of the things that contribute to his well-being or his good life are valued for quite other reasons (Scanlon, 1998, p. 133). It is evident that my daughter contributes to my well-being and my good life. I would become extremely unhappy if I lost her. This does not imply that the reason why I care for her is that she contributes to my good life. Enjoying the behavior preferable for reasons of an animal's subjective welfare. I explain the normative appeal of leading a "normal life" by referring to the intrinsic values actualized in that life. My approach does justice to this appeal without assuming that a normal life is required from the point of view of animal welfare.

of animals living freely contributes to our well-being as humans. But the reasons we care for this behavior need not be that it contributes to our good life. We care for the intrinsic goodness of animals as an end in itself.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I benefited from discussions with Robert Heeger and Frans Brom about earlier versions of this article.

REFERENCES

- Clark, Stephen R. L., "Natural Integrity and Biotechnology," in David S. Oderberg and Jacqueline A. Laing (eds.), *Human Lives* (London etc.: MacMillan 1997), pp. 58–77.
- Coetzee, John M., *The Lives of Animals* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).
- DeGrazia, David, *Taking Animals Seriously* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
- Frazer, D., D. M. Weary, E. A. Pajor, and B. N. Milligan, "A Scientific Conception of Animal Welfare that Reflects Ethical Concerns," *Animal Welfare* 6 (1997), 187–205.
- Heeger, Robert and Frans W. A. Brom, "Intrinsic Value and Direct Duties: From Animal Ethics to Environmental Ethics?" *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics* 14 (2001), 241–252.
- Kagan, Shelley, "Rethinking Intrinsic Value," *Journal of Ethics* 2 (1998), 277–297.
- Musschenga, Albert W., "Intrinsic Value or Intrinsic Valuing?," in Marcel Dol, Martje Fentener van Vlissingen, Soemini Kasanmoentalib, Thijs Visser, and Hub Zwart (eds.), *Recognizing the Intrinsic Value of Nature* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1999), pp. 97–199.
- Kitcher, Philip, "Essence and Perfection," *Ethics* 110 (1999), 59–84.
- Korsgaard, Christine, "The Reasons We Can Share," in *Creating the Kingdom of Ends* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 275–311.
- Nagel, Thomas, *The View from Nowhere* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).
- Poole, Trevor B., "Meeting a Mammal's Psychological Needs," in David J. Shepherdson, Jill D. Mellen, and Michael Hutchins (eds.), *Second Nature* (Washington/London: Smithsonian Institute, 1998), pp. 83–97.
- Quinn, Warren S., "Theories of Intrinsic Value," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 11 (1974), 123–132.
- Rollin, Bernard E., "The Frankenstein Thing: The Moral Impact of Genetic Engineering of Agricultural Animals on Society and Future Animals," in J. W. Evans and A. Hollaender (eds.), *Genetic Engineering of Animals* (New York: Plenum Press, 1986), pp. 285–297.
- Rollin, Bernard E., "On *Telos* and Genetic Engineering," in Alan Holland and Andrew Johnson (eds.), *Animal Biotechnology and Ethics* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1998), pp. 156–171.
- Rutgers, Bart and Robert Heeger, "Inherent Worth and Respect for Animal Integrity," in Marcel Dol, Martje Fentener van Vlissingen, Soemini Kasanmoentalib, Thijs Visser, and Hub Zwart (eds.), *Recognizing the Intrinsic Value of Nature* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1999), pp. 41–53.

- Scanlon, Thomas, *What We Owe to Each Other* (Cambridge, Mass./London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998)
- Singer, Peter, *Animal Liberation* (New York: Avon Book, 1975).
- Verhoog, Henk, "Ethics and Genetic Engineering," in A. W. Musschenga, B. Voorzanger, and A. Soeteman (eds.), *Morality, Worldview, and Law* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1992), pp. 267–278.
- Warren, Mary Anne, *Moral Status* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).
- Webster, John, *Animal Welfare: A cool eye towards Eden* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994).

Institute of Ethics Vrije Universiteit
De Boelelaan 1105 HV Amsterdam
The Netherlands
E-mail: aw.musschenga@dienst.vu.nl