

Introduction

This book is about animals, and more particularly about the most common manner in which most people relate to other animals: by eating them. The vast majority of people eat animals, but some do not do so. I used to eat animals almost every day until twenty-five years ago, when I stopped doing so, with the exception of fish who had not been farmed, whom I carried on eating now and again. My rationale for continuing to eat some fish was that, unlike many other animals, fish who had not been farmed might have had relatively good lives, and, given that they die naturally anyway, I thought it would be acceptable to 'kill them for food'; by which I mean—throughout this book—the killing of animals in order to eat them. This state of semi-vegetarianism continued for a few years, until I also started questioning the very practice of killing animals for food. As I adopted the view that it was better to avoid killing animals for food where there was no need for us to do so, I became a vegetarian. Having later adopted the view that it was not consistent to be only a vegetarian in light of the fact that the production of vegetarian food is inextricably linked, at least in the vast majority of situations, with the intentional killing of animals for food, I then became a vegan fifteen

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years ago. I define a vegan as someone who abstains from the consumption of substances that are part of, or have been created by, animals, with the exception of human milk and honey. Veganism is also sometimes referred to as ‘total vegetarianism’, but I define a vegetarian diet in this book as a diet that, whilst not including animal flesh, includes other animal products in addition to those mentioned in my previous sentence, for example milk from other animals or eggs.

Whilst this text might be perceived to be the exercise of a scholar who tries to understand his dietary choice, this is not the full story. I also have an interest in ethics, the quest for and the articulation of values that ought to be universally endorsed (Jamieson 1990; Daniels 1979; Rawls 1971). At this moment in time, I feel very strongly that veganism is the right choice for me. Even if I do not think that it is the right choice for all human beings, I think that it ought to be for those who are in morally similar situations to mine. To me, veganism is not a matter of taste. It matters, and I do not think it merely matters to me. What one decides to eat matters to many other people too, and it may matter also to those who are eaten. When I talk about ethics, I talk about what ought to matter, not just for me, but also for other human moral agents, and this raises the question whether the adoption of a vegan diet ought to be universally endorsed. Put more forcefully, it raises the question whether the consumption of animal products ought to be banned.

One reason why the answer that will be given to this question may not move everyone to appropriate action is that our dominant culture works hard to hide from public view the reality of the animals whose products are being eaten. One way in which this is done is by keeping the places where living animals are transformed into products away from places where many people tend to congregate. Though not all slaughterhouses may keep their doors closed, many are situated in areas where people will not go unless they deliberately want to visit them, and I have not seen any with glass walls. To some degree, the animals who are killed in slaughterhouses may even be hidden from those who kill them as well, depending on the extent to which the killing process is mechanised. In slaughterhouses, the real animals who were once alive and kicking are turned from concrete living beings into abstract products and concepts. Adams (1990, 40) has commented as follows: ‘Through butchering, animals become absent referents. Animals in name and body are made absent *as animals* for meat to exist’ [emphasis in original].

Indeed, not only are animals made abstract by being butchered, but their concrete bodies are also fragmented and then lumped together again into the concept of ‘meat’. Not only have abstract nouns such as ‘meat’, ‘livestock’, ‘pork’, ‘beef’, and ‘chicken’ been created and mobilised to express human separation from and domination of other animals, but the terms that are used to describe the killing of other animals and the killing of humans are also separated neatly, which is partly why the word ‘slaughter’, for example, has a very different connotation from the word ‘murder’ (Jepson 2008). Some concepts are also notable for their absence, which is what moved Joy (2010, 28–30) to launch the

concept of ‘carnism’. The view that it is fine to consume flesh has been so deeply ingrained in many cultures that only the aberrant ideologies of vegetarianism and veganism required labelling: Joy’s concept reacts to this, as it is more appropriate to refer to someone who believes that it is justifiable to eat flesh as a ‘carnist’ than as an omnivore, given that the latter term refers merely to a biological propensity.

Animals are also hidden from view in bioethics, a discipline that has frequently focused exclusively on human health care interests without regard for the interests of other species (Wolfe 2010, 56). However, when the word ‘bioethics’ is understood properly, it must be taken to refer to the application of ethics to all biological organisms. The reduction of bioethics to a narrow conception of human health care ethics stems from a strong anthropocentric view that reducing the nonhuman world to a collection of objects for our ends can be an adequate means to human health care. As the objectification of other animals for human food and the ideology of carnism are regarded as the norm, it is simply assumed that they do not need a defence—even if there are signs that this is now changing (see e.g. Scruton 2000). What most, if not all, people, carnist or otherwise, do agree on, however, is that human health—however badly it might be conceived of—ought to matter, which takes me to the first specific question of this book: might a vegan diet be healthy, or even healthier than a non-vegan one? This question is important as many people refrain from adopting vegan diets in the belief that they are nutritionally inadequate. If this were so, any moral theory that claims that veganism ought to be adopted by a lot of people would seem to be standing on very shaky ground. If it could be shown, however, that a well-chosen vegan diet might be healthier than alternative diets, it would provide an additional reason for adopting it.

In the main text of this book I assume that a vegan diet can be healthy. Accordingly, the objection that vegan diets ought never to be recommended on the grounds that they would necessarily compromise the health of those who adopt them is unsound. The assumption that a vegan diet can be healthy is based on my exploration of the nutrition literature, as there may be little debate that good human health cannot be achieved unless human diets are nutritionally adequate, regardless of all the other things that I shall consider to be necessary for diets to be healthy. As the nutrition literature is complicated and may distract from the moral argument in spite of its importance for that very same moral argument, my narrow, nutritionally-based answer to the first question of importance in this book has been reserved for the book’s appendix, which provides a detailed overview of the academic literature on vegan nutrition. A similar appendix was provided in the first edition of Singer (1975)’s *Animal Liberation*, but no longer featured in the second edition due to his view that the ‘nutritional adequacy of a vegetarian diet is not in dispute’ (Singer 1990, 258). As I shall argue that even within the theory adopted by Singer most vegetarian diets are beset with the same moral problems as those that are associated with many omnivorous diets, the question of real importance, however, is whether

there is no debate about the nutritional adequacy of a *vegan* diet. (Incidentally, this is not the only point where Singer (1990) and I differ.) From my personal experience, which is also informed by the research findings reported in chapter four (section 4.3.3), the belief that a vegan diet can be nutritionally adequate is much disputed. Indeed, a major obstacle to vegan diets being adopted more widely is the belief that they are nutritionally inadequate, or at least sub-optimal.

The view that any theory that jeopardises human health does not stand much of a chance of being universally adopted may not be contested. What may be more controversial is my claim, defended in an earlier work (Deckers 2011a), that health should be the only thing that ought to matter in bioethics. Hedonists might object that happiness, rather than health, is the crucial thing that ought to matter. Accordingly, they might argue that a life spent in merriment is better than a boring life in good health. I concede that they have a point and that the pursuit of happiness is not a bad thing, even if it might undermine one's physical health. However, provided that we understand the concept of health holistically, including both physical and psychological health—with happiness contributing to the latter—the objection does not undermine the theory that health, or well-being, is the only thing that we ought to be concerned with. Indeed, the concept of holistic health could also be replaced by that of welfare, provided that the latter is not interpreted in terms of a subjective feeling, but in terms of something that can be deemed to be good even if it is not consciously experienced as such. Accordingly, someone who feels great or someone who does not feel anything at all might still not fare well. In this respect, my concern with welfare does not preclude a concern with killing, which contrasts with the views of many members of the 'animal welfare science community' (Haynes 2008; see also K. Schmidt 2011).

Whereas the definition of health used in the appendix is very narrow in considering merely the nutritional health or otherwise of vegan diets, the main text of this book adopts a very expansive notion of health. If such a wide definition is adopted, I believe that this book's theory can also accommodate the key issues that both capability theorists and rights theorists are concerned with. In the capabilities approach adopted by Nussbaum (2006, 76), for example, the importance of 'flourishing' is repeated over and over again, suggesting that a flourishing or healthy life is at the core of her list of capabilities: life; bodily health; bodily integrity; senses, imagination, and thought; emotions; practical reason; affiliation; (a relationship with) other species; play; and political and material control over one's environment. Similarly, in the rights approach adopted by Caney (2008), it could be said that the human rights that he engages with, for example the rights to subsistence, property, and freedom from enforced relocation, are important precisely because they contribute to good health. Other human rights, such as, for example, the right to free speech or the right to privacy, are also important precisely because human health would be jeopardised if these rights were not protected.

In spite of its importance, we should also recognise that human beings do not have a right to health (Hessler and Buchanan 2002). This is so because, although human health is influenced by controllable social factors, our health is also influenced by things that are beyond our control. As some genetic and environmental factors cannot be controlled, some people just happen to be relatively healthy, whilst others happen to be fairly unhealthy, in spite of the fact that both groups may receive appropriate health care. If we do not have a right to health, perhaps it could be said that we should be granted a right to health care. In order for this to be possible, it is worth consulting what Raz (2010) has said about human rights. In his view, ‘their existence depends on there being interests whose existence warrants holding others subject to duties to protect and promote them’ (Raz 2010, 335). I may have an interest in flying to the moon, but the existence of this interest does not warrant that others should feel obliged to provide me with the means to do so. This is why Caney (2008, 538–539) has emphasised, inspired by Raz, that those interests that are sufficiently or vitally important, rather than trivial, and that can be accompanied by duties that are not ‘unreasonably demanding’ make good candidates for grounding rights.

This book shares with Raz (2010) and Caney (2008) a commitment to an interest-based theory, and focuses on our duties to protect and promote important interests. Whereas I shall sometimes spell out which rights are safeguarded by those duties, at other times I connect the duties of human moral agents directly to significant moral interests without mentioning the rights that may or may not be associated with them. Given that what may be reasonable in one context may be unreasonable in another, I do not adopt the view that rights must always be respected, but that talking about rights may nevertheless be useful to highlight important interests that must be attended to unless doing so conflicts with one’s duty. Some interests are clearly better candidates to deserve the protection afforded by duties than others. My interest in flying to the moon is not vital to me. Even if I might claim otherwise (perhaps because of my delusion), it would be unreasonable to expect that others should be obliged to provide me with the means, for example a rocket, to satisfy what ought to be no more than a trivial interest for me.

This book adopts the view that, in every situation, human moral agents must act in such a way that they prioritise their more important over their less important interests. In situations where we do not aim to achieve the highest good, less important interests would be granted precedence over more important interests, which would be wrong. This book breaks new ground by arguing that the most important interest that human moral agents ought to consider in relation to the consumption of animal products is their interest in their own health, holistically conceived. As there is no greater interest than this, all moral agents have an unconditional duty to strive for their holistic health. This does not imply that all moral agents also have unconditional rights to health care: moral agents may have the wrong ideas about what contributes to their holistic

health—for example, some may intend to kill other human beings for a goal that they wrongly claim to be necessary to obtain holistic health. In some circumstances, for example out of self-defence, it may be necessary to deny such people a right to health care; for example where injuring or even killing them may be necessary to thwart their plans. Nevertheless, I have argued elsewhere that all human beings, including those who may not be able to act morally because of a severe impairment, have a non-trivial interest in health care and that there are many situations where it is not too demanding on others to care for their well-being (Deckers 2011a). Whilst there is debate about what this right might entail and when it might be trumped (see e.g. Ruger 2006; Lautensach 2015), I like the fact that many nations show some support for the principle that limited health care resources should be available for all human beings, grounded in the human right to health care. All human beings therefore ought to possess a *prima facie* right to health care. The words '*prima facie*' are important here: duty-bearers are not always obliged to act on a particular duty, but they must do so unless their concern with holistic health demands that they prioritise another duty.

Whereas I adopt the view that moral agents have an unconditional holistic health care duty towards themselves, this does not imply that their personal physical health must necessarily be paramount, since human moral agents cannot promote their holistic health without caring for their moral health. By a concern for one's 'moral health' I mean cultivating the right virtues, values, and attitudes without which it would not be possible to act morally. Accordingly, tending to one's holistic health does not rule out the possibility that significant or even ultimate physical health sacrifices may be required to protect these moral qualities. I shall argue that other theories in animal ethics have either placed insufficient importance on this duty or misunderstood its content, resulting in problematic moral theories related to the consumption of animal products.

If we accept the view that, in order to fulfil their holistic health care duties, human moral agents must consider not only how their actions affect themselves, but also how they affect other human beings, we must explore not only how diets, vegan or otherwise, affect those who adopt them, but also how they affect others. Whilst moral philosophy has traditionally focused mainly on relationships between human beings in the here and now, in abstraction from their wider temporal and spatial contexts, the harms associated with localised activities may have global consequences, some of which are delayed. Examples are the activities that may contribute to the health risks associated with climate change. In this light, bioethicists increasingly recognise that we must consider not only the interests of human beings who live nearby or who are living now, but also the interests of people who live further away, both in space as well as in time (Gardiner 2001; Bell 2011). When we scrutinise our dietary choices, we must therefore also consider how they might affect the interests of people who live far away, as well as those of future generations.

Our choices also impact upon other animals. A growing number of bioethicists have argued that not only humans, but also some other animals have interests, and that these interests must be taken seriously (Singer 1990; DeGrazia 1996; Cochrane 2012). Accordingly, this book also explores whether the consumption of animal products can be justified in light of any duties we may have to other organisms. Elsewhere I have developed a moral theory based on duties related to positive and negative Global Health Impacts (GHIs), where the concept of GHI was introduced as a unit of measurement to evaluate the effects of human actions on the health of all biological organisms (Deckers 2011a). If health is the only thing that matters morally, it follows that, when we consider the moral quality of any particular action, we must assess its potential health impacts. The word 'global' has been added to emphasise three things. Firstly, it highlights that the concept of health should be understood broadly when we assess the health impacts of our (proposed) actions. It underlines a holistic understanding of health, encapsulating all things that are conducive to flourishing. Secondly, it stresses that the consequences of our actions upon the health of the global population of human beings, including those who have not yet been born, should be considered. And thirdly, the word 'global' also refers to the need to consider the effects of our actions upon all the nonhuman organisms that live on our globe.

Our holistic health care duty can also be understood as a duty to act in ways that maximise positive GHIs. An alternative formulation of this duty is a duty to minimise negative GHIs. The reason why these expressions are interchangeable relates to my use of the concepts of 'act' and 'actions' in this book. These are used to refer to both positive actions (commissions) and negative actions (omissions), where GHIs can be produced through either. This is an important point. It highlights that the duty to minimise negative GHIs is not a duty to act as little as possible out of fear that doing something would produce negative GHIs. Whenever we decide not to act, we must also consider the opportunity costs, which is why a decision not to act can produce more negative GHIs than a decision to act. Similarly, an action may fail to maximise positive GHIs by producing more negative GHIs compared to inaction.

In order to minimise negative GHIs or to maximise positive GHIs, moral agents must prioritise their greatest (morally relevant) interest or act in accordance with their (highest) duty in any particular situation. The relative wrongness of an action is therefore determined by the degree to which its negative GHIs exceed the smallest quantity of negative GHIs that might be produced by the action that fulfils one's duty. This duty-based theory is consequentialist: a particular duty must be ignored where the negative GHIs of fulfilling it are greater than the negative GHIs of fulfilling one's highest duty, where the latter is grounded in the most important interest. This may result, for example, in a duty to improve the health of one given child rather than the health of two other children where it is clear that this is one's overriding duty, for example because the former child happens to be one's own and the latter are unrelated

(Cottingham 1986). By not prioritising one's overriding duty, unacceptable negative GHIs are produced. This is why, strictly speaking, those duties that lose out are not really duties, but competing moral considerations, in the same way that, strictly speaking, rights are not rights in situations where morality demands that they are ignored. I shall nevertheless use the concepts of rights and duties to refer also to these overridden interests to highlight that, in many situations, it would be good to abide by them and thus to recognise their *prima facie* claims on us, even if they might be overridden in specific situations.

How the concept of GHIs may operate in a moral theory can be illustrated using a straightforward example. If my daughter has a right to education and if we assume that she is not schooled at home, it is my duty, as a parent, to live in such a way that I allow her to exercise her fundamental interest in education. If I am unable to fulfil this duty because I decide to intoxicate myself through the consumption of large quantities of alcohol, it might be said that I would act wrongly through my failure to maximise positive GHIs. However strong my interest in drinking alcohol might be, the satisfaction of this interest ought not to jeopardise my duty to produce a particular positive GHI, which in this case would be to facilitate my child's right to receiving an adequate education. If the reason for not taking her to school related to a conflict with my duty to take a relative to hospital for an urgent medical reason, however, her right would have been ignored, but justifiably so, namely to tend to one's highest duty. I would fail to prioritise the greatest interest (fail to maximise positive GHIs or to minimise negative GHIs) if I prioritised my daughter's education in this situation.

In light of this moral framework, the general question addressed in this book is whether or not human beings who consume particular animal products in particular situations fail to minimise negative GHIs. Put differently, this book aims to shed light on situations where consuming animal products does and where it does not violate human moral agents' duties to prioritise their greatest moral interest in any given situation. A charge that has been pressed against many people who adopt omnivorous diets is that they contribute to a 'food crisis' (Singer 2009, 122), or to 'world hunger' (Marcus 2001, 153–169; Webb 2010). Many vegan diets, by contrast, have been hailed for protecting the health care interests of human beings (ADA 1997; Marcus 2001; Lanou 2009). This takes me to the second specific question of this book: Does the consumption of animal products jeopardise the human right to health care by causing zoonoses (diseases that can spread from other to human animals) and resource shortages? In my first chapter, a survey of some of the negative GHIs associated with dietary choices will reveal that these choices can result in severe consequences for the health of human beings, warranting a positive answer to this question in some situations and a moral imperative for dietary change. The GHIs that are discussed here, however, do not include any that may be associated with how other organisms ought or ought not to be treated by us. Rather, they are limited merely to how the consumption of animal products affects human beings through the emergence and spread of zoonoses as well as through its effects

on land, water, fossil fuels, and atmospheric resources, regardless of how these issues affect the lives of nonhuman beings.

For analytic purposes, therefore, the first chapter ignores any questions related to whether moral agents should embrace particular duties towards the nonhuman world: chapter one is more empirical than philosophical. The balance is tilted in chapter two, where it will be argued that our duty to strive for holistic health cannot be fulfilled unless moral agents embrace particular duties towards nonhuman entities. In recognition of the interests of other animals, some bioethicists have argued that some animals should be granted particular rights, such as the right to be protected from the human infliction of pain or suffering (Singer 1990) or the right to treatment that respects the animal's inherent value (Regan 1983). Whereas Singer has opposed being classed as a rights theorist (Singer 1987), what is at the core of his work is the recognition that some animals have interests and that they deserve our moral consideration in light of these, which is why we may also say that they have certain *prima facie* rights against us, regardless of whether these might be trumped by the greater good (see also Llorente 2009). A different rights theorist is Francione (2010a): as Francione (2010a, 74) adopts the view that nonhuman animals have absolute rights not to be used for a wide range of human purposes, including for dietary purposes, he argues that veganism is a 'nonnegotiable moral baseline'. If this is a valid view, anyone who ever eats animal products, in any imaginable situation, would fail to minimise negative GHIs.

I explore theories about animal rights in chapter two. In doing so, I develop a new theory on the consumption of animal products, arguing that the duty to strive for holistic health demands that human moral agents adopt particular duties not only towards other animals, but also towards themselves. I have mentioned already that the latter duties have not been considered adequately in other theories. Whereas a new moral theory is proposed, I also appreciate that people's views on which actions should be considered to be duties and on how to weigh their relative importance may vary widely. The duties that are argued for in this book are based on my deliberations on my feelings, some of which relate to experiences that I have had in my life of looking after and killing other animals, particularly pigeons, whom I used to race for many years. The word 'feelings' is used here deliberately, as this theory is very much in agreement with Hume (1978, 470)'s view that 'morality ... is more properly felt than judg'd of' (although I do not wish to claim that judgements are based on anything other than feelings). Though this does not imply that all feelings are moral feelings, I believe that our feelings must nevertheless be taken seriously, and it is my view that any moral theory that suggests otherwise would not only lack a basis from which to do so, but also merely substitute some feelings with other feelings. To give adequate consideration to our interest in holistic health, I feel very strongly that a number of interests must be highlighted, where some of these have either been ignored or downplayed by moral agents and theorists who have considered this topic.

One interest that I value highly is logic, which is why I think that we should try to live consistently. A vegetarian who consumes eggs from hens who are killed when they are considered ‘spent’, but who opposes their being killed in these circumstances, for example, is not living consistently by supporting an activity that they object to. Another feeling that I cherish is one that Steiner (2008) has highlighted to have a crucial role in moral theory, the feeling of kinship with animals, which sits at the heart of my commitment to ‘*animalism*’. Our ‘*animalist*’ interest is an interest in attributing greater moral significance to either dead or living animals than to other biological organisms. It will be argued that the moral implications of this interest for the consumption of animal products, however, result in significant differences from the views of other scholars (e.g. Singer 1990; Francione 2008; Cochrane 2012). This is also because my theory argues for the importance of recognising a related ‘*evolutionist*’ interest, or an interest in attributing greater moral significance to those animals biologically closer to us.

Whereas my theory is new in arguing how these interests should be integrated, it also recognises the importance of interests that have been highlighted by other scholars, including moral agents’ interests in avoiding actions that either intentionally inflict or pose relatively high risks of inflicting pain, suffering, and death upon animals (e.g. Palmer 2010; Regan 1983; S. Davis 2003; Schedler 2005). It also draws on the work of others in exploring the relevance of different organisms’ capacities to enjoy rich experiences (e.g. Birch and Cobb 1984). A final interest that I consider to have been neglected is the safeguarding of the integrity of nature. Whilst this interest is relevant where we decide whether or not to allow other animals to live independently, I consider its relevance especially in relation to biotechnological projects that seek to alter animals through conventional breeding technologies and through genetic engineering, as well as in relation to projects that seek to develop in-vitro flesh for human consumption. By weighing these interests against one another, chapter two culminates in a defence of a new moral theory on the consumption of animal products: qualified moral veganism.

My commitment to veganism is qualified as my theory does not demand that human beings abstain from eating animal products in all situations. It is a moral rather than a dietary position that can be adopted by everyone, even by those who ought not to adopt vegan diets for justifiable personal, social, or ecological reasons. It is a vegan theory in the sense that vegan diets ought to be the default diets for the majority of the human population.

Chapter three is about politics. Few people appear to adopt qualified moral veganism. My view about laws, however, is that they should protect important moral values—for example those that might not be protected adequately because of the well-known free-rider problem (Hardin 1968). This also questions their validity where they fail to do so (see e.g. Bankowski 2001), raising the question of how legal change might be brought about to secure the important moral values that qualified moral veganism tries to protect. In pluralistic societies, people are

bound to have widely diverging views about what constitutes the moral good, what counts as a positive or a negative GHI, and how we should assess GHIs' magnitudes. Some might argue that the intentional killing of an animal for food, for example, is an act that always produces unacceptable negative GHIs, whereas others might argue that it is always justifiable. In light of this pluralism, some might argue that we should adopt a *laissez-faire* approach whereby we allow everyone to decide for themselves how they wish to live their lives. The problem with this approach is that it does not protect us against those who tarnish important moral values through unwitting or unwilling failures to embrace particular duties. Though it is fair to say that the introduction of laws may not necessarily protect moral values either, as many people still trespass against them, I nevertheless adopt the view that laws that are based on fair democratic procedures ought to be granted some respect as they may help to provide some orientation to people about what really ought to matter in this complex world. Whilst I believe that some laws are unjust and that they may thus contribute to the cultivation of the wrong attitudes, it does not undermine my belief that a society with democratically agreed laws is preferable to a society without such laws.

Those who adopt qualified moral veganism could pursue at least three political strategies to advance their cause. The first is to create or support educational campaigns in the hope that more people will adopt such a position; the second is to advocate the creation of better pricing systems that would result in products and services with relatively high negative GHIs being priced more highly than those with relatively low negative GHIs; and the third is to introduce a qualified ban on the consumption of animal products. The vegan project aims to bring about legal reform in the different nations of this planet to introduce qualified bans on the consumption of animal products and to promote the adoption of vegan diets for the majority of the human population. I shall engage with three objections that have been raised against this project. The first is that it would be pointless in view of the fact that many people are not prepared to embrace it. The second is that the vegan project should be rejected as it would jeopardise human food security unjustifiably. The third rejects the vegan project on the basis that it would alienate us from the natural world.

In spite of the fact that moral agents must take their duties seriously, few moral agents appear to adopt qualified moral veganism. This might stem from the possibilities either that people fail to act in accordance with their duties, either willingly or unwittingly, or that they fail to accept that they have a duty to adopt such a position. In chapter four I explore what other people think about qualified moral veganism by evaluating a number of discussions that others have had on the topic. Whilst chapters two and three engage with some academic criticisms of qualified moral veganism, chapter four evaluates the values of people who are not specialised in animal ethics on the issues raised by the consumption of animal products when they are stimulated to think about them.

Scholars are frequently criticised for locking themselves into the ivory towers of academia, and 'ethicists' are no exception. Chapter four is an attempt

to get out and to explore carefully whether we can learn anything from how non-specialists reason about these issues or whether their perspectives might be challenged in the light of the moral claims defended in the earlier chapters. Several studies have found that many people are reluctant to think about the human use of other animals when they make food choices, and that they hold contradictory views about the human use of other animals (Plous 1993; Macnaghten 2004; Wolfson and Sullivan 2004; NCOB 2005; N. Williams 2008). The sheer fact that many people are unclear about what really ought to matter when we make dietary choices is highly significant for a scholar in ethics. It provides food for deliberation. In the 'Deliberating the Environment' study that I conducted with some of my colleagues at Newcastle University, several participants recognised that they held conflicting views. The results of this study are reported and discussed in chapter four, which engages with data from this study as well as data gathered elsewhere. It features the views of the following: academic staff and philosophy students from Newcastle University; people from relatively deprived parts of Newcastle-upon-Tyne (a city in the north-east of England); and slaughterhouse workers from Oldham (a town in the north-west of England). The University staff came together with local residents in a series of one-to-one deliberative exchanges, facilitated by a researcher. A 'deliberative exchange' was defined as a facilitated discussion between two people from different backgrounds (Bell et al. 2005; Gundersen 1995), but it could also be defined more broadly as an exchange of views between two people that may or may not be facilitated by a third person.

The facilitated deliberative exchange was found to be a valuable tool to promote interaction and learning between people (Bell et al. 2005). The interest that has been shown in this method of interacting is situated within the context of a growing interest amongst political scientists in the study of alternative modes of political engagement that focus on deliberation, including focus groups, citizens' juries, and deliberative exchanges. These examples of 'deliberative democracy' aim to promote deep listening, reflection, and evaluation, in an attempt to transcend the adversarial modes of engagement that characterise much political praxis. My focus in this book is on the deliberative exchanges that took place on the topic of 'animals and biodiversity'. Though none of the people whose views I shall engage with were asked specifically whether they agreed with qualified moral veganism, my deliberation on their views reveals that the ways in which these people tried to justify the killing of animals for food and their consumption of animal products fail to provide sufficient grounds to reject qualified moral veganism. My analysis also provides some evidence for the view that what is needed might not quite be what Steiner (2013, 162) has called for, namely 'a kind of soul conversion that can change the sensibilities of people', but merely a willingness to deliberate on one's values and to act in accordance with one's sensibilities, which may be suppressed through inappropriate socialisation.