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THINK LIKE A VEGAN

What everyone can learn
from vegan ethics



Agenda



Introduction

Us vs Them

Vegan - a simple definition and a bit of history

30 seconds to vegan

The core of veganism: basic fairness

Factual context: human entanglements; social justice; what about plants?!

Q&A

Us vs Them

The existence of species is not an ontological fact, it's a practical one

Life belongs to all the species, and the powers that define each of them must be held in common



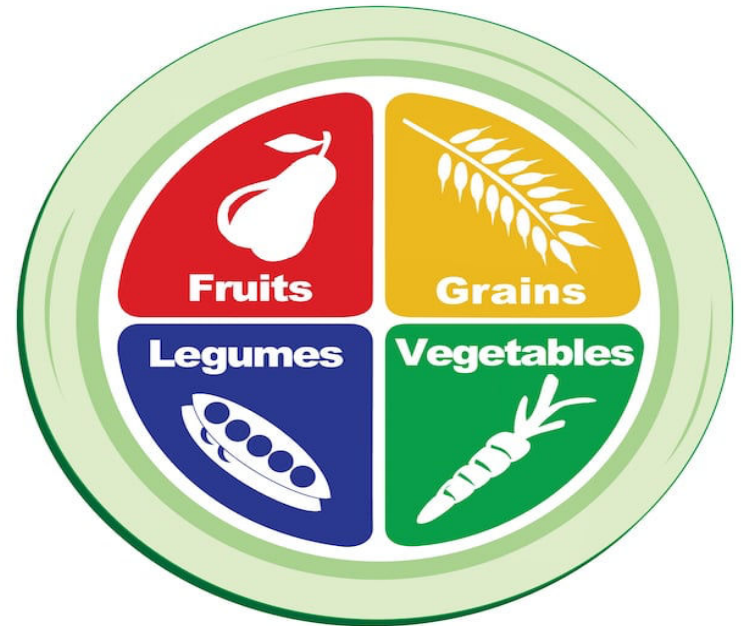
Emanuele Coccia

philosopher and author at the École
des Hautes Études en Sciences
Sociales, Paris

Vegan - a simple definition

To the extent possible and practicable, vegans avoid using animals for food, clothing, entertainment or other purposes.

This means vegans don't consume animal flesh, fish, insects, molluscs, eggs, dairy, cheese and honey; don't ride horses, visit zoos or aquarium; and don't wear leather, fur, wool or silk



Who coined the term?

Donald Watson

and

Dorothy Morgan

coined the term in 1944



A Wedding-Day Picture of Mr. Donald Watson and his wife, Dorothy.

Is veganism a European or Western thing?

There were people living as vegans as part of their culture prior to this term existing. Veganism has never been an exclusively European or Western experience



30 seconds to Vegan

Like us, animals aren't things. They feel, think, dream, play, have friends and families. They do these things differently than us, sure. They have different intelligence and skills than we do. And they look different from us. But so what? We all look different or live differently, and have different intelligence and skills. None of these are good enough reasons to exploit and kill anyone. All of us, human or animal, want to live. We all don't want to be exploited and used as objects.



Basic fairness

Afford the same moral treatment to everyone,
unless there's a morally relevant reason to justify
treating someone differently

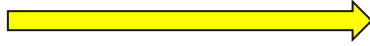
(for example, not allowing human children, or non-
human animals, to vote)



How are people and animals the same?



We all belong to the animal kingdom



All animals, including people, aren't *objects*



All animals are sentient

Why should we share the same moral sphere?

All animals have needs, wants, fears, abilities, intelligence, skills, social habits and emotions, which they demonstrate in ways like, and different from, humans

These aren't morally relevant differences



What is relevant for basic fairness?

Our

shared sentience

is the only morally relevant

starting point from which to determine whether the rule of fairness also applies to animals

Use is the problem

Imagine swimming in a polluted river ...

Using animals is an analogous problem



A symptom of the problem is how animals are treated

Being concerned with how they're treated before animals become food or clothing is relevant, and like the recurring infection the cycle won't end unless the cause is addressed

Basic rule of fairness including animals



We owe animals the same moral treatment as people, unless there's a morally relevant reason to justify treating animals differently

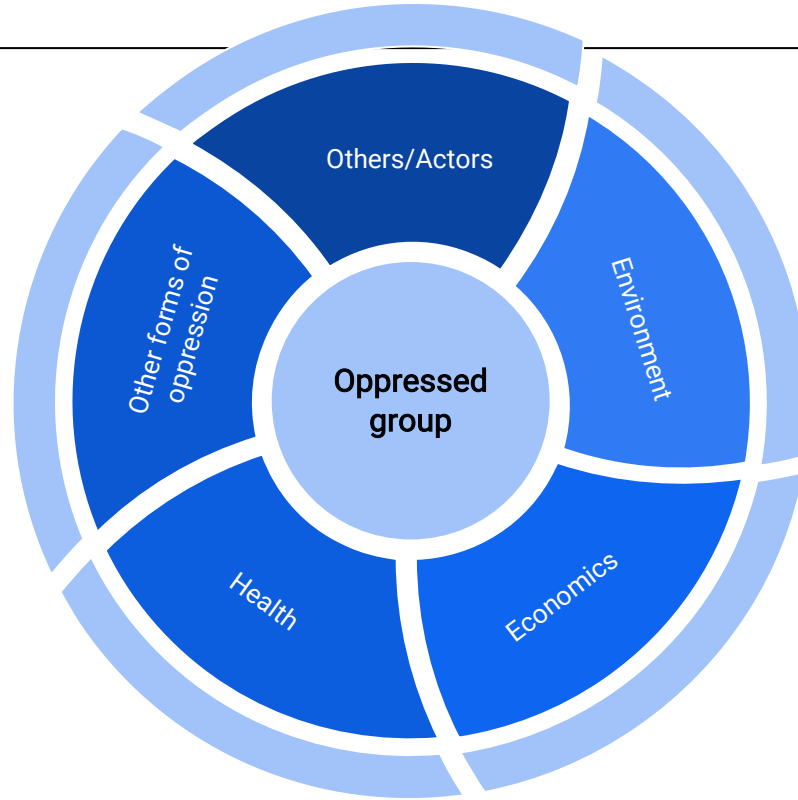


We don't, or at least we can agree we shouldn't, deny humans fundamental rights if they have different needs, wants, fears, abilities, intelligence, skills, social habits or emotions



Understanding we owe a group the same moral treatment is important because it makes clear these essential rights aren't something we give and take as we fancy or as a matter of kindness

What would
the answer
be in a
human
context?



Human analogies

We're not equating human suffering and animal suffering. Or minimising human suffering

We're using our understanding of human injustice and unfairness to expand our circle to include all sentient beings and help facilitate a deeper level of understanding about the impact and effects of our actions and our choices

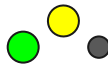


Rejecting all bigotry

Although our primary focus is the injustice of animal use, we recognise society's systemic injustices are related and interconnected. Seeking a fair world for animals means we must also seek to reject and redress the injustices perpetrated on humans

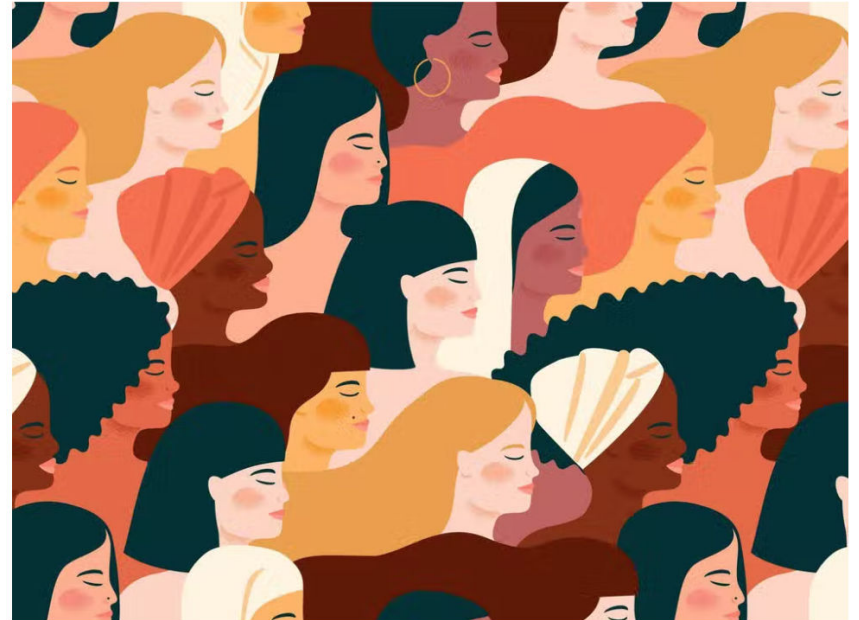
These aren't mutually exclusive goals or mutually exclusive ideas. Seeing the vulnerability of one will open our mind, eyes and heart to the other

All human injustices may be opposed, fought, addressed, dismantled, read, written, learned and talked about, whilst sticking to eating plants and being vegan



Feminism

Females of other species are exploited for their reproductive systems



Race

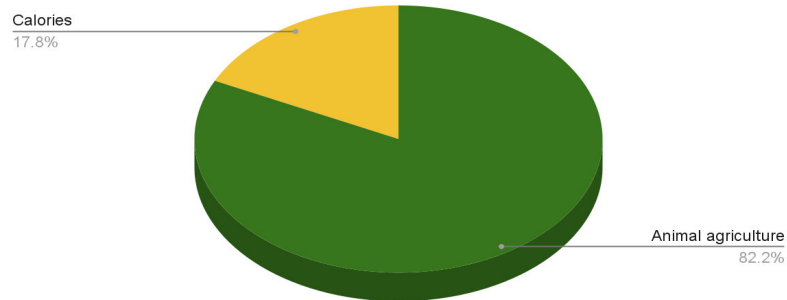
Veganism is **one** fitting response to the systemic issues of race, colourism, migration and ethnicity

Characteristics of all U.S. workers and of animal slaughtering and processing workers in the U.S.		
	All US workers	Animal slaughtering and processing workers
White	63.5%	34.5%
Black	11.3%	21.9%
Latinx	16.8%	34.9%
Citizenship status among foreign-born workers		
Naturalised	49.6%	29.1%
Non-citizen	50.4%	70.9%

Source: Economic Policy Institute (2020)

Environment

Global farmland use and calories it provides



Land animals slaughtered annually:

62.01 billion chickens

1.47 billion pigs

648.74 million turkeys

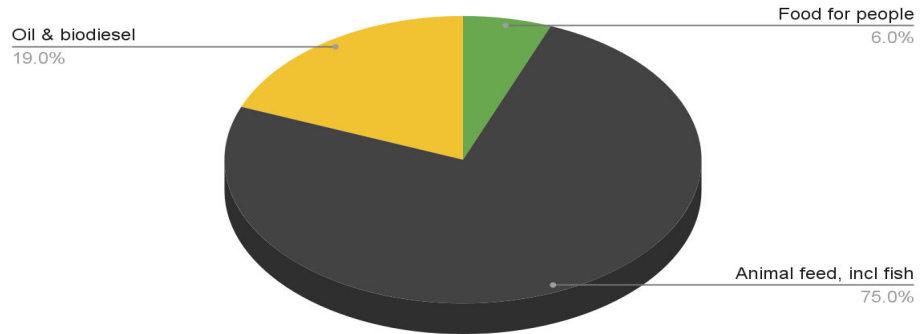
300.07 million cattle

Source: Springmann et al, Nature (2018)

Source: Our World in Data (2019)

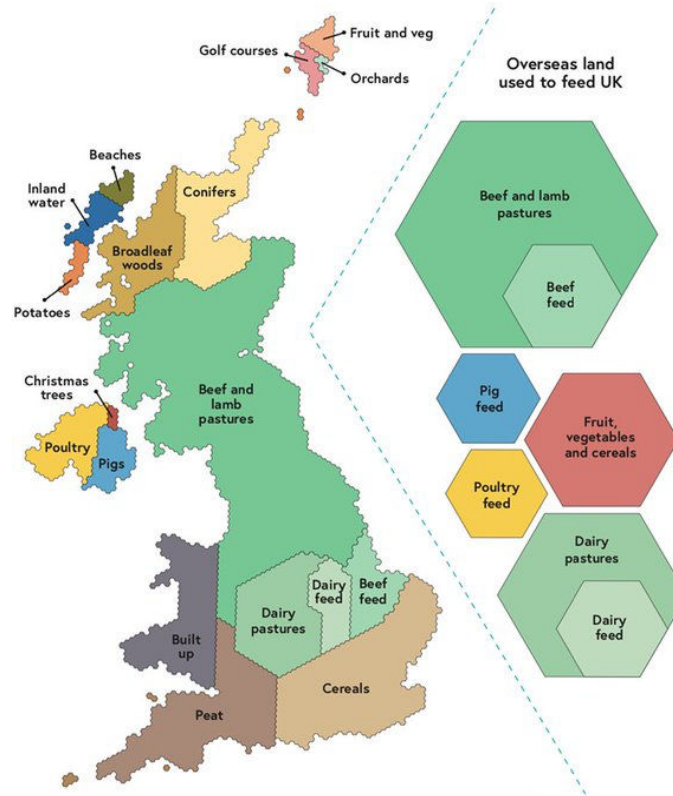
What about all the soya?

Global soybean production & use



UK land use

UK land area divided up by purpose. About 70% is devoted to agriculture, mainly livestock and livestock feed and pasture. The right-hand side of the chart, using the same scale, shows how much land is used overseas to produce food for the UK. About half of the total land use takes place overseas. The combined land area for rearing beef and lamb for UK consumption is larger than the UK itself.



Health

Well-respected medical
and dietary institutions
agree

being **vegan**

is **healthy**

at **any stage** in life

**Academy of Nutrition
and Dietetics**

**Harvard Medical
School**

**National Health
Service**

**Dietitians of
Canada**

Mayo Clinic

Cleveland Clinic

British Dietetic Association

Dietitian Association of Australia

Cost

If we're concerned about how to think about poverty and veganism then we need to address both, and acknowledge one doesn't preclude the other



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Think Like a Vegan

Book: available wherever books are sold and in libraries or ask your library to carry it

Audiobook: available on all major audiobook platforms

Podcast: streaming on Apple, Spotify and all podcast platforms

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