

## Are Animals Really Almost the Same as Humans?

### Animals and Humans

“95 [or whatever] per-cent of human DNA present in apes/bears/pigs ...” We often see headlines like this, and nothing convinces me so completely, that humans and animals have little in common, and that humans are (as was always assumed in past ages) utterly different. Yes, physically we are very similar, but in other ways, the difference is staggering, a difference that might just incline me to think that the “old” idea of humans being a special creation of an omnipotent intelligent being might just be true after all; it certainly increases my scepticism regarding evolution (as generally presented).

Of course, the idea of animals’ equivalence to humans is promoted by materialist philosophers who denounce the “speciesism”, which traditional thought has supposedly committed, in choosing to regard animals as lesser beings, beings that might not have the same “rights”. To pretend that animals can, or might be, “equal” to humans is ultimately to do them grave disservice, and commit wrongs (as is any insistence on the “equality” of disparate things). Our society’s obsession with non-human life-forms is at root caused by a loss of belief in ourselves, and our fellow-humans (“my dog is *far better* than most of the people I know”).

The right relationship with animals, in my view, is one of balance: it is morally wrong to abuse or misuse them (as in human “sports” which require distress and death of animals, and as with the gross overuse and disregard of working beasts, which is the concern of such as the Brooke Hospital). But equally bad, in my view, is the giving, to animals, of excessive regard and attention which in almost all cases they cannot reciprocate.

When a representative group of animals congregate, intent on formulating a proposed list of demands, designed to change the relationship of their kind(s) with humans, then I’ll begin to take notice of animal “rights”; but not until.

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