

Virtue Ethics and Animal Ethics

- 1. **What** is virtue ethics and how does it work?
- 2. **How** is virtue ethics applied to issues in animal ethics?
- 3. **Why** is the application of virtue ethics to issues in animal ethics important?

1. **What** is virtue ethics and how does it work?

Virtue ethics is a branch of normative ethics, which is concerned with investigating different frameworks that help decide whether an action is right or wrong. Different normative ethical theories provide different frameworks for ethical decision-making, and virtue ethics is one of these frameworks. As a theory, it is most famously associated with Aristotle (385-323 BCE), although Elizabeth Anscombe and Rosalind Hursthouse revived it during the twentieth century. Write a definition for "virtue ethics".

Virtue Ethics

Virtue ethics has various components that are relevant to its application to issues in animal ethics. Make a note about the various components (i.e. virtue, action, human flourishing (eudaimonia), and the hierarchy of souls) and how they work.

How Virtue Ethics Works	
Virtue	Action
Human Flourishing (Eudaimonía)	Hierarchy of Souls

2. **How** is virtue ethics applied to issues in animal ethics?

Virtue ethics can be applied to issues in animal ethics, including farming, medicine and science, and sport, by using it as a framework to guide human actions when addressing ethical decisions relevant to these areas of debate. Generally, Aristotle's presentation of virtue ethics promotes acting in accordance with virtues in order to achieve

human flourishing (eudaimonía), and accepts actions that involve using animals to fulfil this purpose (because animals are lower down his hierarchy of souls than human beings). Make a note about how virtue ethics is applied to each issue in animal ethics, and what human actions it allows.

How Virtue Ethics Is Applied to Issues in Animal Ethics	
Issue	How
Farming	
Medicine and Science	
Sport	

3. **Why** is the application of virtue ethics to issues in animal ethics important?

The application of virtue ethics to issues in animal ethics is important, because it influences what the lives of animals look like, and the ethical decision-making of human beings who follow this normative ethical framework. Make a note of three reasons why the application of virtue ethics to issues in animal ethics is important.

Why the Application of Virtue Ethics to Issues in Animal Ethics is Important	
1	
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3	