

Nick Triggs

Professor Jesse Miller

ENG-110 G

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### To Eat or Not to Eat

In many things that humans do the question of whether it is ethical often arises. One of the greatest ethical dilemmas is found in our relationship with animals. Most people grow up with a diet that includes eating meat like beef and pork. With that in mind, a majority of those people do not take into consideration the fact that these animals are living things with consciousness. People take value in certain animals' lives like cats and dogs, but when it comes to other animals like cows and chickens, the value isn't considered to be the same. Why do people eat animals like cow or chickens but are mortified at the idea of eating a dog? What really determines a person's outlook on the moral quandary that is our relationship with animals and if that relationship is worth giving up for people.

David Foster Wallace uses his piece, *Consider the Lobster*, to talk about the issue of killing and eating lobsters. Wallace uses the lobster as a way of depicting the inhumanity of the way that people boil lobsters and not even bat an eye. Wallace provides plenty of evidence throughout the piece describing how lobsters, like other animals, feel pain when they die. When visiting the Maine Lobster Festival for the first time and after watching lobsters pile over one another into the world's largest lobster pot Wallace defends that the festival isn't just a giant medieval torture-fest. He states, "I believe that animals are less morally important than human beings...I have an obvious selfish interest in this belief, since I like to eat certain kind of animals and want to be able to keep doing it." (Wallace). Much like many other people, Wallace enjoys eating meat even though he knows that the animal experiences pain when they are killed for food. However, Wallace is not willing to stop eating meat. Wallace wrote *Consider the Lobster* as a

**Commented [JM1]:** Very interesting hook, really gets the readers attention.

**Commented [JM2]:** Good usage of rhetorical questions, be sure to include another question mark at the end of the second question.

way to get people to think about their values and the relationship that they have with animals in their lives. For Wallace, he believes that his relationship is worth giving up in order to keep eating meat

**Commented [JM3]:** This paragraph shows some excellent support to your claim as well as some unneeded information. I think you can take away from some of the summary portion of his article and include more support to the inhumane way of eating animals.

In the piece *Animals Like Us* by Hal Herzog, Judith Black is a woman that thinks she has found a solution to this ethical dilemma. When she was only twelve years old, she decided that killing animals is wrong. With this in mind she became a vegetarian with a slight catch, “while it was quite obvious that dogs and cats and cows and pigs are animals, it was equally clear to Judith that fish were not. They just didn’t feel like animals to her. So for the next 15 years, this intuitive biological classification system enabled Judith, who has a PhD in anthropology, to think of herself as a vegetarian, yet still experiences the joys of smoked Copper River salmon.” (Herzog). After deciding to become a “vegetarian” she never considered fish to be an animal, so she could keep eating fish. Judith was faced with the difficult decision to either give up fish and still be a vegetarian or stop thinking of herself as a vegetarian. When Judith gave up vegetarianism, she made a difficult decision that she wasn’t willing to give up eating meat. Like Wallace, she realizes and accepts that our reasons for killing animals is ethically and morally questionable, but she isn’t willing to give up eating meat for it. For Judith, being able to eat meat is more important than being able to say that she is a vegetarian. Like Judith, David Foster Wallace knows that he may not be taking the moral high ground by eating lobster or animals, despite the knowledge he has on their treatment, he does not think giving up meat is not worth giving up for him. I believe that Herzog chose to put in Judith’s story because it shows that people, even after many years of dedication, some things are just not worth completely giving up for people. For other people giving up meat is an easy decision and are more than willing to give up eating meat.

**Commented [JM4]:** Good support here, instead of following it up with more of a summary maybe add in some more explanation for why this part was an important inclusion.

**Commented [JM5]:** Good job bringing in a comparison between two of the articles and how they work together in one claim.

In the reading *What the Crow Knows*, by Ross Anderson, talks about the fact that animals are capable of doing intelligent things, yet they are not really seen as conscious beings. Once on stops ignoring an animal’s consciousness it makes eating meat a very difficult task. An ancient religion in India known as Jainism follow the commandment that forbids violence against humans and animals. The

followers of Jainism live a very restricting lifestyle in order to follow the commandment “The monks refuse to eat root vegetables, lest their removal from the earth disturb delicate subterranean ecosystems. Their white robes are cotton, not silk, which would require the destruction of silkworms. During monsoon season, they forgo travel, to avoid splashing through puddles with microbes, whose existence Jains posited well before they appeared under Western microscopes.” (Anderson). The monks that follow the religion are capable of showing levels of restraint that a majority of people will never have. They believe that animals are conscious beings that like humans, also experience emotions like fear, pain and sorrow. When one makes the choice to become Jain, they essentially give up everything they have ever known and trading it for nothing. The value that animals play in the world of Jainism is more than just taking the moral high ground, it is taking a completely new lifestyle. The Jain monks decided that animals are equal to humans and deserve the same treatment that we get

**Commented [JM6]:** Almost an extreme version here, good inclusion. Maybe consider a comparison here to another article.

\*\* Dear Nick,

Overall, this is a great start to your paper. I think that your ideas flow very nicely and everything is cohesive. Just like most of my comments state, I think you can strengthen your argument with more information put towards the arguments. If you draw away from the summarizing and more on your thesis your paper will be even better. Just be sure to double check for any grammar errors and try adding in some more quotations.