

What qualifies us to make the decisions whether it is just or not to kill an animal for food, or even put them through scientific experiments to advance human knowledge? Our perception of events and morals lead us to decide whether our actions are right or wrong, but everyone is influenced by different events in their life and no one's morals are all the same. These theological topics are discussed in Hal Herzog's article, "Animals Like Us" where he discusses several stories of people's experiences with animals that ultimately left them pondering why we treat our animal counterparts. In one of these stories it discusses one of Herzog's graduate school friends, Ron Neibor. Ron was studying how the brain reorganizes itself after injury. This required Ron to surgically destroy specific parts in the cat's brains, let the cats heal, then go through a fairly gruesome process of decapitation and chipping away the skull to examine the brains. Throughout the experiment Ron had no issues until the end when he was required to kill the cats in order to examine the brains. At this point Ron had become very attached to the cats, coming in often to play with the kittens, and had several personality changes after having to kill all the cats. He displayed several signs of "moral injury" such as changes in personality, outgoingness, and even sleeping and eating habits. As stated by Herzog, "It took Ron several weeks to perfuse", kill, "all the cats. His personality changed. A naturally cheerful and warmhearted person, he became tense, withdrawn, shaky." This shows how badly this experience affected Ron. Other people had the morals to allow them to say and think that it was ok to kill several cats in order to advance the knowledge of brain injury for the human race, however, Ron could not think this way. Because of this several health consequences manifested as a result.