Teaching Animal Ethics

An example from the online course in animal welfare

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Cambridge e-Learning Institute

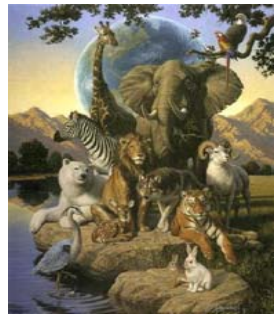
Animal Welfare Information Centre
AWIC
Cambridge University

The lectures

Unit 1: Attitudes towards animals

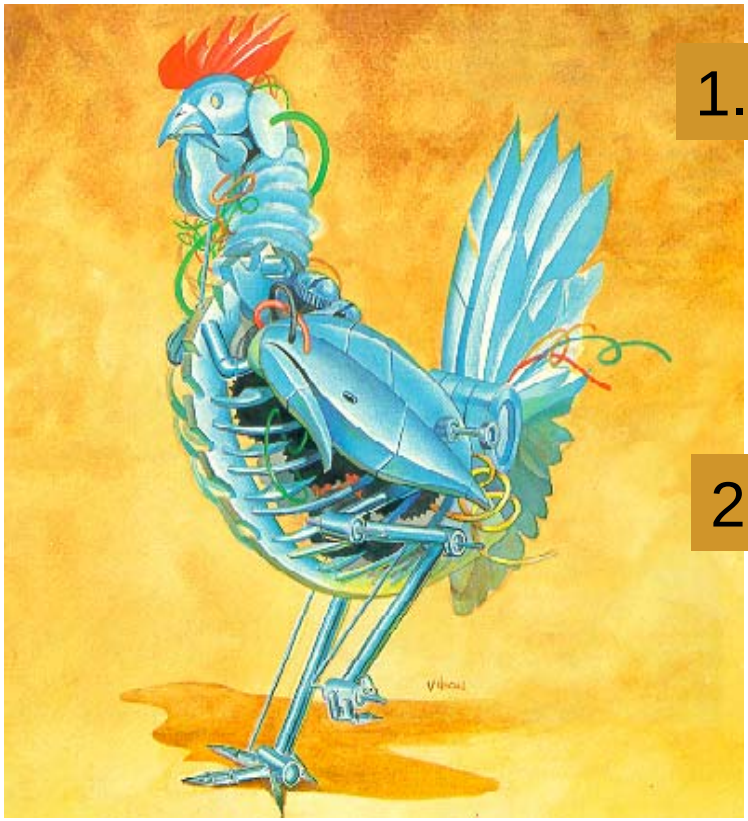
Unit 2: Introduction to Ethics

Unit 3: Applied Ethics



Unit 4: Ethical questions

Unit 1: Attitudes towards animals



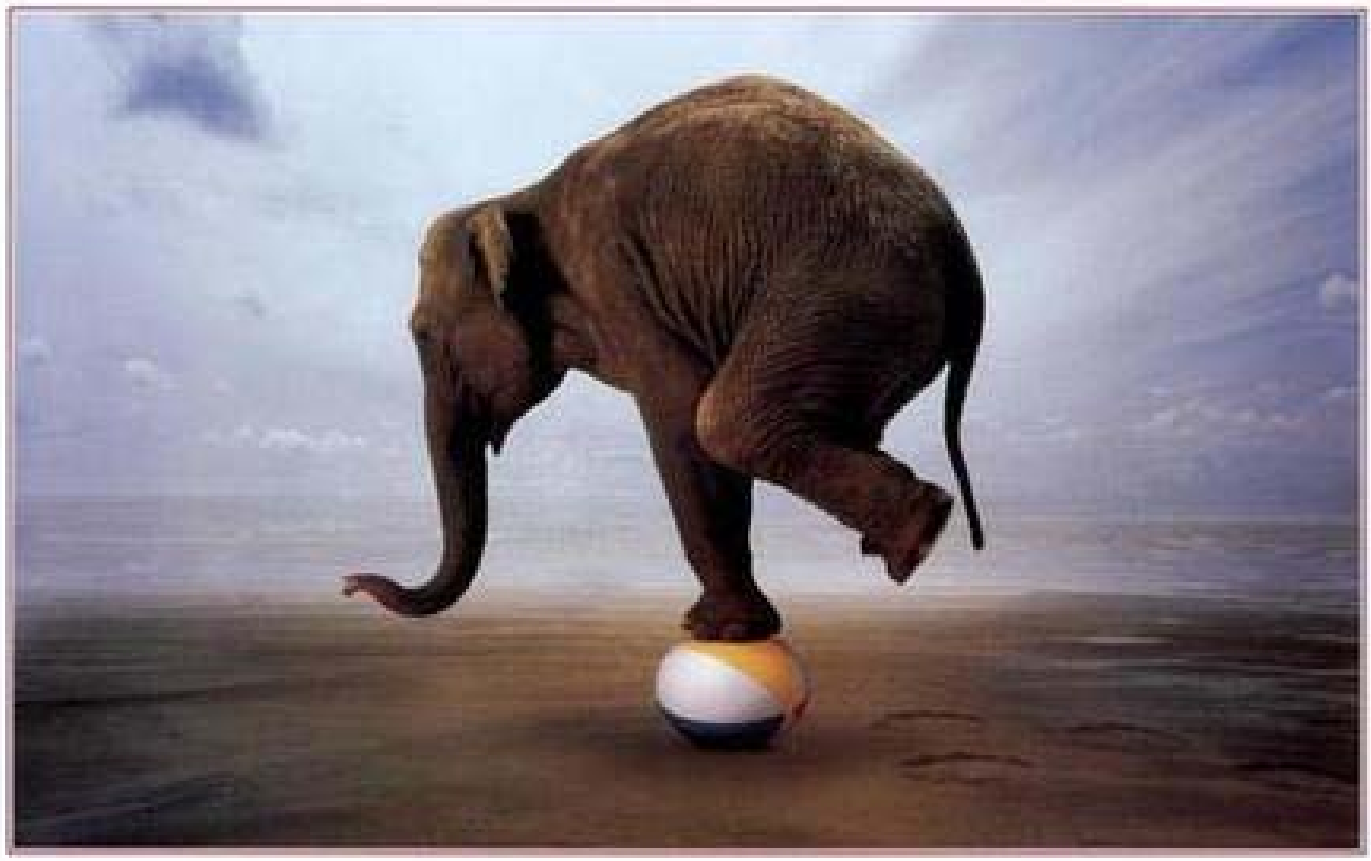
1. Attitudes towards animals

- **Religious**
- **Philosophical**
- **Professional**

2. Activism & Science

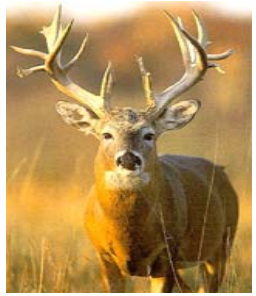
- **Movements**
- **Animal Rights**
- **Animal Protection**

Unit 2: Introduction to Ethics



The Key to Life is Balance

1-Why do we need ethics?



Ethical Dilemmas

Examples of ethical dilemmas in animal use

2- What is ethics?

Principles of ethical reasoning

Taxonomy of philosophy

3- Applied ethics

Society Ethics

Professional Ethics

Personal Ethics

4- Do animals matter

<u>WHY</u> should we care about animals?

<u>WHAT</u> should we do for animals ?

Principles of ethical reasoning

Introduction
Why do we need …
What is ethics ?
Applied ethics
Do animals matter?

1-ASSESSING: Identifying the ethical issue

2-WEIGHING: Considering the alternative courses of action and comparing the strengths and weaknesses of each

3-JUSTIFYING: Identifying the reasons supporting the proposed action and those that support **NOT** choosing other actions

4-CHOOSING: Making a choice and taking action; taking responsibility for outcomes

5-EVALUATING: Looking at the outcome.

- What was successful/unsuccessful?
- What could be done differently in a similar case in the future?

A branch of philosophy

Introduction
Why do we need …
What is ethics ?
Applied ethics
Do animals matter?

Philosophy

- Metaphysics
- Theory of knowledge
- Philosophy of mind
- Philosophy of science
- **Moral philosophy**
  - Questions about right and wrong
    - **Ethics**
    - Morals
    - Religion

Approaches

Introduction
Why do we need …
What is ethics ?
Applied ethics
Do animals matter?

Descriptive ethics

Is about **facts**

Description of the way in which people live, and the moral choices they make.

e.g.: most of the vegetarians made they choice to be so because they are against killing animals

Normative ethics

Is about **values**

Concerned with ideas about:
- **what is right**
- **justice**
- **how people should live**

e.g.: it is always wrong to steal

Meta-ethics

Is about **meaning**

What does it mean to say that something is right or wrong?

Morals and Ethics

Introduction
Why do we need …
What is ethics ?
Applied ethics
Do animals matter?

Moral is a collection of rules adopted by a social group

Ethics is the sequence of logic arguments that justify the adoption of a certain moral.

Theories of ethics

Introduction
Why do we need …
What is ethics ?
Applied ethics
Do animals matter?

Deontology

Duty is more important than the outcome of an action

- **Other theories**
- **Theory of Virtue**

Teleology

The result of the action is more important than duty

- **causes**
  - **Theory of Natural Law**
- **consequences**
  - **Egoism**
    - **Hedonism**
    - **Ethical Egoism**
  - **Utilitarianism**

Do animals matter?

Introduction
Why do we need …
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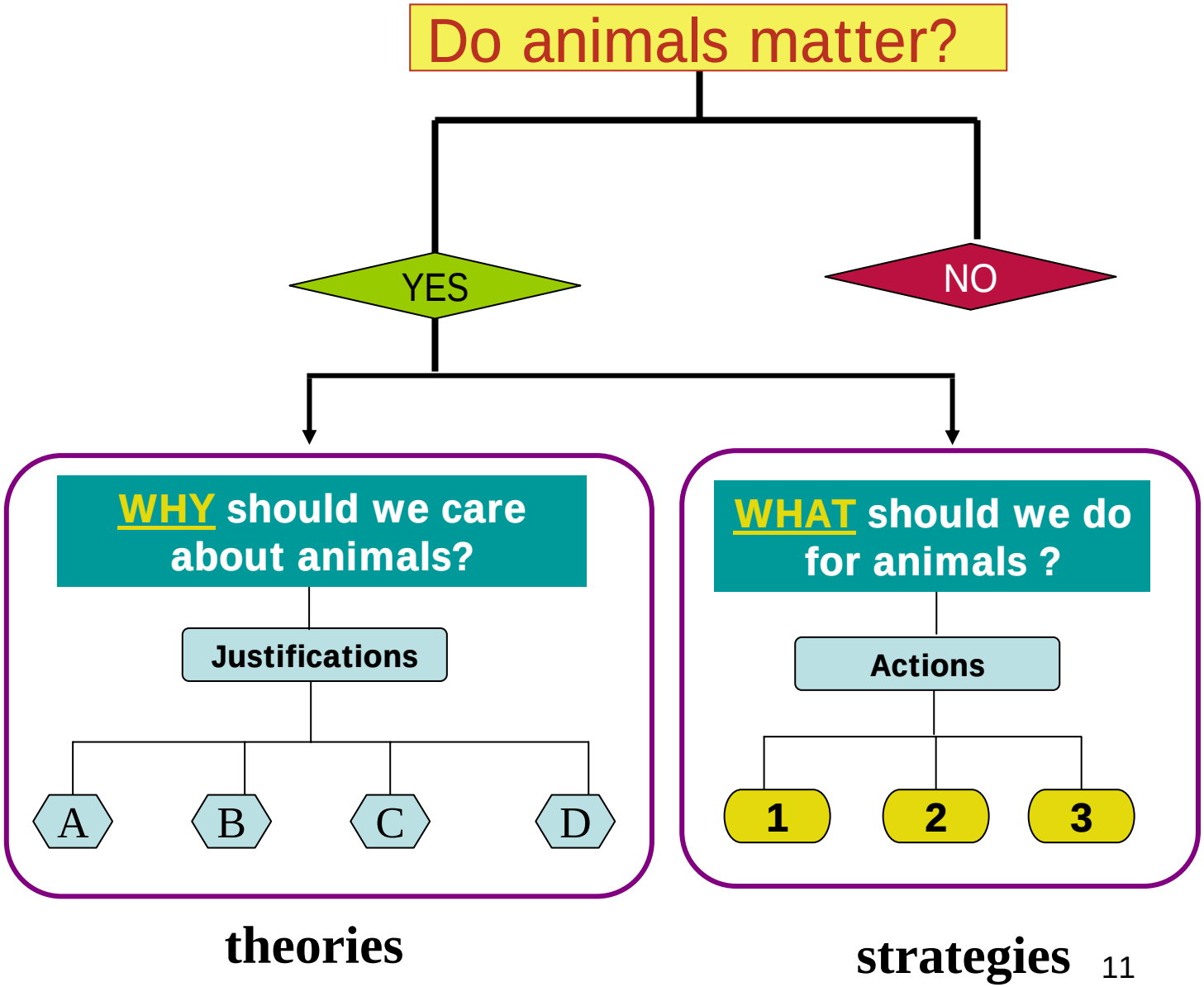

theories

strategies

Do animals matter?

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Why do we need …
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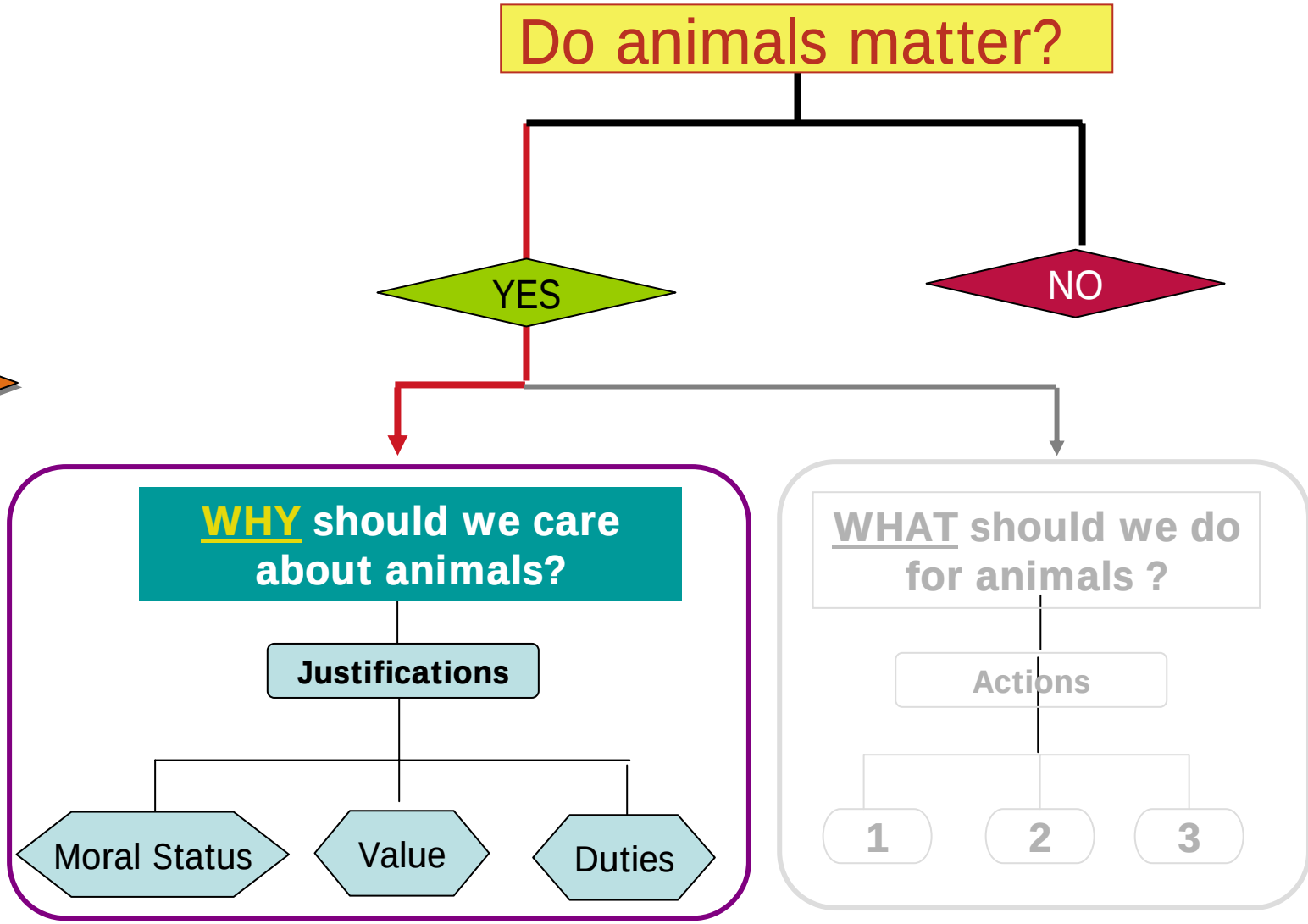

Ethical theories

strategies

Do animals matter?

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Why do we need …
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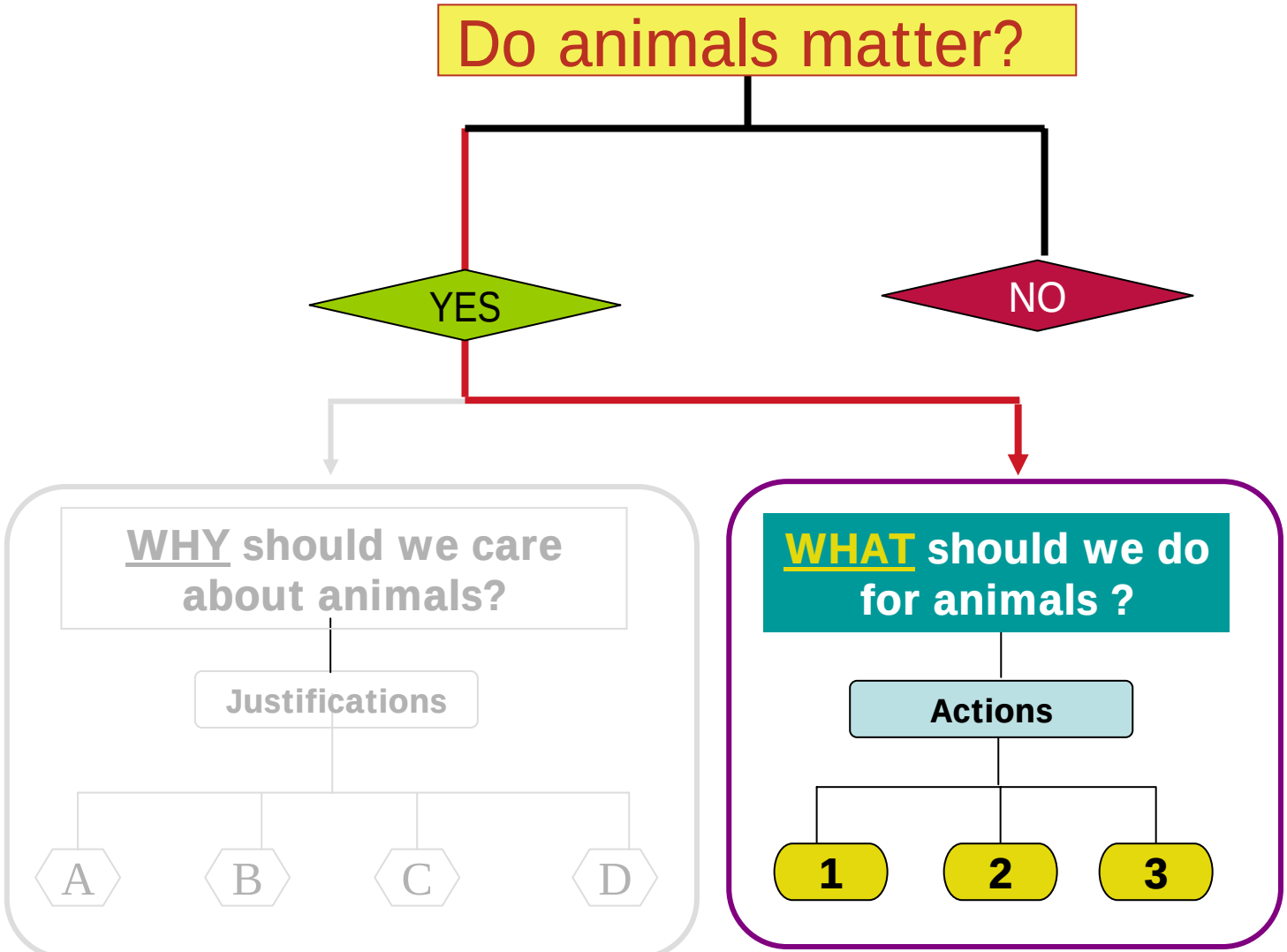
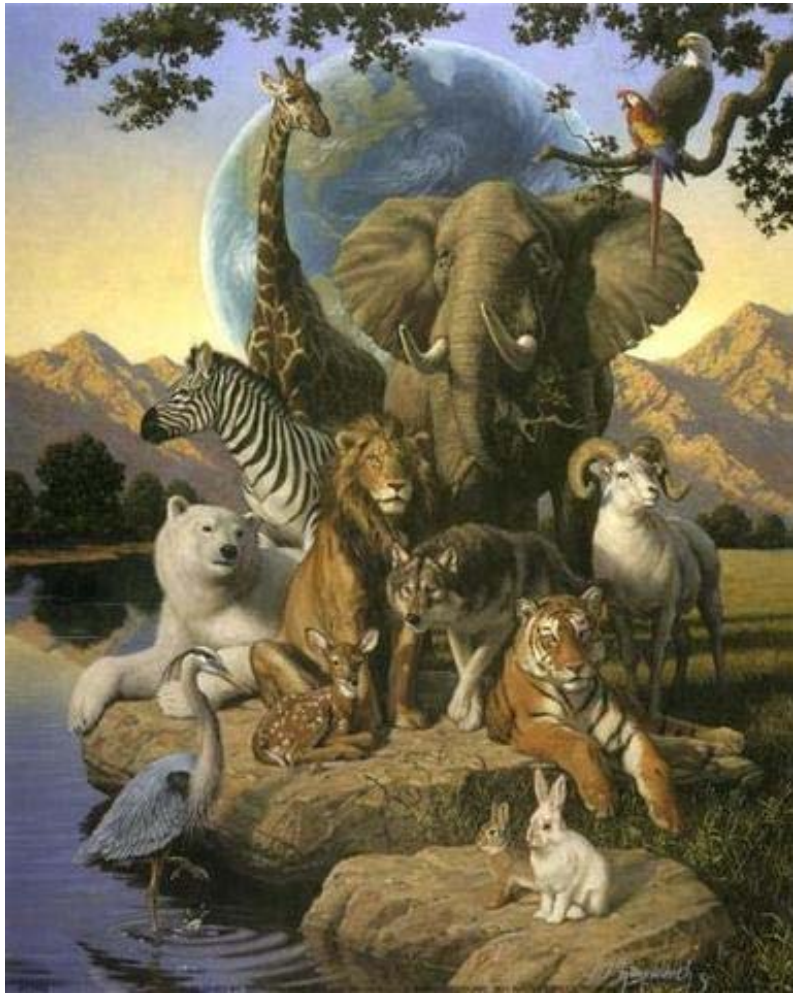


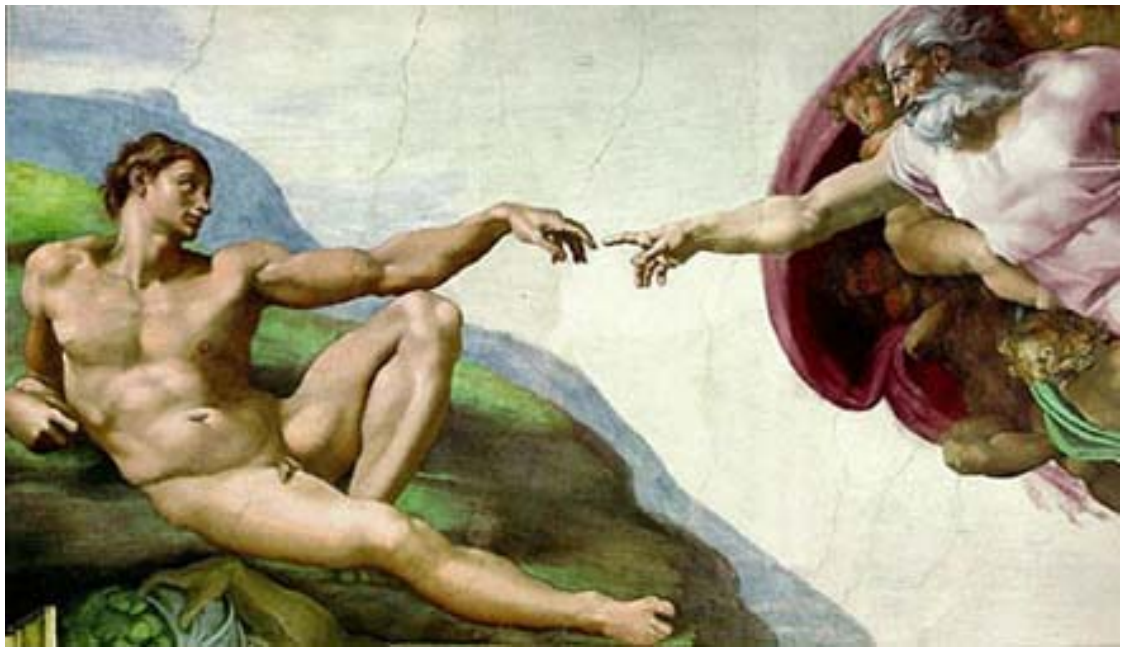
Applied animal ethics



1. Ethics and animal production
2. Ethics and animal in research
3. Ethics and wildlife
4. Ethics and decision making

Unit 4

Ethical Questions



- Animal suffering
- Who comes first?
- Legislation
- Human food
- Euthanasia
- Animals in war
- Animals in research
- Zoos
- Sports
- Shows
- Fashion
- Economics
- Companion animals
- Sacrifice