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2 **The Replaceability Argument in the**  
 3 **Ethics of Animal Husbandry**

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AU4 7 **Synonyms**

8 [Conscientious omnivorism](#); [Happy meat](#); [Sustain-](#)  
 9 [able meat production](#)

10 **Introduction**

11 Most people agree that inflicting unnecessary suffer-  
 12 ing upon animals is wrong. Many fewer people,  
 13 including among ethicists, agree that painlessly  
 14 killing animals is necessarily wrong. The most  
 15 commonly cited reason is that death (without  
 16 pain, fear, distress) is not bad for them in a way  
 17 that matters morally or not as significantly as it  
 18 does for persons, who are self-conscious, make  
 19 long-term plans, and have preferences about their  
 20 own future. Animals, at least those that are not  
 21 persons, lack a morally significant interest in con-  
 22 tinuing to live. At the same time, some argue that  
 23 existence itself can be good, insofar as one's life is  
 24 worth living. For animals, a good life can offset a  
 25 quick, if early, death. So, it seems to follow that  
 26 breeding happy animals that will be (prematurely)  
 27 killed can be a good thing overall. Insofar as

slaughter and sale makes it economically sustain- 28  
 able to raise new ones, who would otherwise not 29  
 exist, raising and killing animals for food who will 30  
 have lives worth living is good overall. It benefits 31  
 them as well as consumers and makes the world 32  
 better by adding to the sum of happiness. The 33  
 process of raising and killing animals with posi- 34  
 tive welfare produces a sequence of replacement 35  
 that maintains or increases overall welfare, all else 36  
 being equal (assuming in particular no overall 37  
 negative impact on the welfare of other parties). 38  
 Call this the *replaceability argument* (RA) and the 39  
 ensuing controversy the *replaceability problem* 40  
 (RP). This is a problem at the crossroads of the 41  
 ethics of killing, agricultural ethics, procreation 42  
 ethics, and population ethics. Peter Singer gave 43  
 the idea its most precise and controversial formu- 44  
 lation in *Practical Ethics* (2011: Chapter 5), first 45  
 published in 1979. 46

**History of the Problem** 47

In 1789, in the *Introduction to the Principles of* 48  
*Morals and Legislation*, Bentham (1907) wrote: 49

If the being eaten were all, there is very good reason 50  
 why we should be suffered to eat such of them 51  
 [animals] as we like to eat: we are the better for it, 52  
 and they are never the worse. They have none of 53  
 those long-protracted anticipations of future misery 54  
 which we have. The death they suffer in our hands 55  
 commonly is, and always may be, a speedier, and by 56  
 that means a less painful one, than that which would 57  
 await them in the inevitable course of nature... 58

59 [W]e should be the worse for their living, and they  
60 are never the worse for being dead. But is there any  
61 reason why we should be suffered to torment them?  
62 Not any that I can see. Are there any why we should  
63 *not* be suffered to torment them? Yes, several.

64 Bentham went on to formulate his oft-quoted  
65 criterion for equal consideration:

66 It may come one day to be recognized, that the  
67 number of the legs, the villosity of the skin, or the  
68 termination of the *os sacrum*, are reasons equally  
69 insufficient for abandoning a sensitive being to the  
70 same fate. What else is it that should trace the  
71 insuperable line? . . . the question is not, Can they  
72 *reason?* nor, Can they *talk?* but, Can they *suffer?*  
73 (Bentham 1907: XVII.1)

74 Bentham, the founder of classical utilitarian-  
75 ism, appears to endorse a version of RA: pain-  
76 lessly killing animals makes everyone better off  
77 than they would otherwise be – it does not harm  
78 them – meat eaters are better for it. Given the more  
79 sophisticated cognition of mature human beings,  
80 killing them requires stronger justifications,  
81 although Bentham believed the main reason  
82 against murder lied in the terror (foreclosed to  
83 animals) it would induce in *other* people.

84 Early animal rights advocate Henry Salt,  
85 despite Bentham’s influence, called RA “the  
86 logic of the larder” (1914). Salt was responding  
87 to the essayist Leslie Stephen’s (1896) argument  
88 against vegetarianism:

89 Of all the arguments for Vegetarianism none is so  
90 weak as the argument from humanity. The pig has a  
91 stronger interest than anyone in the demand for  
92 bacon. If all the world were Jewish, there would  
93 be no pigs at all.

94 Salt took Stephen’s remark to be premised on a  
95 fallacy:

96 It is often said, as an excuse for the slaughter of  
97 animals, that it is better for them to live and to be  
98 butchered than not to live at all. Now, obviously, if  
99 such reasoning justifies the practice of flesh-eating,  
100 it must equally justify *all* breeding of animals for  
101 profit or pastime, when their life is a fairly happy  
102 one. . . . In fact . . . there is hardly any treatment that  
103 cannot be justified by the supposed terms of such a  
104 contract. Also, the argument must apply to man-  
105 kind. . . .The fallacy lies in the confusion of thought  
106 which attempts to compare existence with  
107 non-existence. A person who is already in existence  
108 may feel that he would rather have lived than not,  
109 but he must first have the *terra firma* of existence to

argue from; the moment he begins to argue as if  
from the abyss of the non-existent, he talks non-  
sense, by predicating good or evil, happiness or  
unhappiness, of that of which we can predicate  
nothing. (Salt 1914: 221–222) 110 111 112 113 114

Peter Singer, in the first edition of *Animal*  
*Liberation* (1975: Chapter 6), agreed with Salt.  
He changed his view while writing *Practical*  
*Ethics* (first published in 1979, revised in 1993  
and 2011), influenced by ingenious arguments put  
forward in the late 1970s by Derek Parfit about  
impersonal wrongs and the widely discussed  
“nonidentity problem” (1984: 351–374). Based  
on the fictional case of two prospective mothers  
and medical programs (367), Parfit showed that  
one could act wrongly without harming anyone in  
particular. Despite a plausible asymmetry  
between harms and benefits, and the fact that  
parents are under no *obligation* to bring to life a  
child whose existence will very likely be happy,  
one needs to explain why it is wrong to bring a  
miserable being into existence (even one who  
would otherwise not exist) yet not equally good  
to bring a happy being into existence. “Sound  
explanations for this,” Singer and Mason wrote,  
“are extraordinarily difficult to find” (2006: 252).  
It may be at most “morally neutral” (optional), but  
it is at least good. 115 116 117 118 119 120 121 122 123 124 125 126 127 128 129 130 131 132 133 134 135 136 137

**Structure of the Argument** 138

In its basic form, RA states that one can increase  
or maximize value in the world (happiness, plea-  
sure, preference satisfaction, objective list) by  
increasing the number of happy or fulfilled sen-  
tient beings. Applied to farming, it states that  
humanely raised animals (HRAs) that live pleas-  
ant lives and can be killed without pain and dis-  
tress can be replaced, without loss, by new HRAs,  
which thus offset the good prevented by the kill-  
ing. Humanely raising and killing animals bene-  
fits animals, consumers, and the world. 139 140 141 142 143 144 145 146 147 148 149

There are two ways to interpret the offsetting of  
an early death by a good life: either animals are  
*personally* better off with a happy, if short life,  
than with no life at all or, even if the personal harm  
of death is not offset by the benefit of existence, 150 151 152 153 154

155 the *impersonal* marginal benefit “for the world”  
 156 offsets the total sum of personal harms. Each  
 157 interpretation requires different arguments: either  
 158 to the effect that death does not significantly harm  
 159 animals (so the net sum of personal benefits minus  
 160 harms for the individual is positive) or that imper-  
 161 sonal benefits may override personal harms  
 162 (so the overall sum of benefits minus harms, for  
 163 all affected, is positive). Either way, one has to  
 164 show that the total benefits of eating meat out-  
 165 weigh the costs to animals (McMahan 2008).

## 166 Contemporary Applications

167 In the context of intensified industrialized farm-  
 168 ing, critiques and alternative methods have  
 169 flourished. A popular trend in animal husbandry,  
 170 espoused by food writers, celebrity farmers, and  
 171 academics, focuses on the possibility of eating  
 172 better *and* treating animals better – in part by  
 173 eating fewer of them. “Conscientious,” “ethical,”  
 174 or “compassionate” omnivores embrace the  
 175 humane, pasture-based, grass-fed, and, often-  
 176 times, organic and local production of meat as a  
 177 sustainable solution in the ailments of the modern  
 178 Western diet. Humane husbandry and a conscien-  
 179 tious omnivore diet minimize environmental dam-  
 180 age, animal suffering, and public health issues  
 181 while preserving a (culturally, aesthetically, and  
 182 economically) worthwhile practice. Animals, in  
 183 exchange for life and care, offer us their own  
 184 life. Ethically produced meat ideally comes from  
 185 free-ranging animals who enjoyed (slightly)  
 186 extended life spans (allowing animals to live  
 187 their expected natural life span would dramati-  
 188 cally increase market prices), increased outdoor  
 189 access, environmental enrichment, a more natural  
 190 diet (grass, organic cereals, fruits, vegetables,  
 191 roots), and social relations. Contemporary practi-  
 192 tioners and/or advocates include Hugh Fearnley-  
 193 Whittingstall (2004), Nicolette Niman, Joel  
 194 Salatin (Polyface Farms), Michael Pollan (2006),  
 195 and Allan Savory, among others.

196 There is another purported benefit of hus-  
 197 bandry to animals. Its end would not only deprive  
 198 billions of future *individuals* of a good life, it  
 199 would ultimately mean phasing out entire

domesticated *species* and *breeds*. Thus, Pollan 200  
 writes, chickens “depend for their well-being on 201  
 the existence of their human predators. Not the 202  
 individual chicken, perhaps, but Chicken – the 203  
 species. The surest way to achieve the extinction 204  
 of the species would be to grant chickens a right to 205  
 life.” (2006: 322). This is assuming, controver- 206  
 sially, that limited populations of such breeds or 207  
 species would not thrive in the wild or sanctuaries. 208  
 This is also suggesting, again controversially, that 209  
 these kinds have intrinsic value and lack wild 210  
 counterparts. Moreover, RA only applies to 211  
 those individuals and kinds that would not exist 212  
 otherwise, hence, for instance, not to wild-caught 213  
 fish or independently reproducing game. Finally, 214  
 any given type of agriculture will affect the num- 215  
 ber, species, and well-being of the animals that 216  
 will exist on the land used or converted (Matheny 217  
 and Chan 2005). There is also a widespread 218  
 assumption that domestication is an advantageous 219  
 bargain for animals, insofar as husbandry pro- 220  
 vides for their needs, food, shelter, veterinary 221  
 care, and protection against predators and diseases 222  
 and ensures the reproductive success of the popu- 223  
 lation (Budiansky 1999; Pollan 2006), but as sec- 224  
 tion “Philosophical Controversy” shows, such 225  
 comparisons involve complicated metaphysical 226  
 questions. 227

228 In the actual world, RA strikes more directly at 228  
 veganism than ovo-lacto-vegetarianism, since 229  
 producing dairy, eggs, and other animal 230  
 by-products cannot be dissociated from killing, 231  
 in part because the profitability of livestock 232  
 depends on the marketability of by-products and 233  
 because male calves and chicks and spent females 234  
 are not useful to the industry. Critics, on the other 235  
 hand, point out that, even granting its validity, the 236  
 logic of the larder does not entail that such prac- 237  
 tices will be morally acceptable. RA entails, at 238  
 best, that one *could* hypothetically have reasons 239  
 to eat animals – with meat probably becoming a 240  
 luxury good (McMahan 2008). But further obsta- 241  
 cles stand in the way of even heirloom husbandry: 242  
 the unreliability of labels; inevitability of slaugh- 243  
 terhouses for animals raised for commercial pur- 244  
 poses; limitations of mobile slaughter units and 245  
 gruesomeness of “backyard butchers” 246  
 (McWilliams 2015); reduced life spans; mother- 247

248 offspring separation; castration, clipping,  
 249 docking, and other mutilations; increased mortal-  
 250 ity and morbidity rates; and environmental con-  
 251 cerns (waste, GHG emissions, land and water  
 252 use), let alone empirical and ethical uncertain-  
 253 ties regarding the badness of death for real and  
 254 hypothetical HRAs (Višak and Garner 2016).  
 255 Singer and Mason (2006) note: “[humanely  
 256 raised] cattle, like all the animals we eat, died  
 257 while still very young. They might have lived  
 258 several more years before meeting one of these  
 259 other forms of death, years in which they matured,  
 260 experienced sexual intercourse, and, if they were  
 261 females, cared for their children” (253). There-  
 262 fore, even without granting animals a right to  
 263 life, RA does not settle by itself the permissibility  
 264 of the current humane omnivore diet.

265 **Philosophical Controversy**

266 Philosophers accepting RA (e.g., Hare 1999;  
 267 Scruton 2004; Singer 2011; Varner 2012) assume  
 268 at least a version of these two claims: death is not a  
 269 significant harm to nonperson animals; existence  
 270 is better than nonexistence (for HRAs, other sen-  
 271 tient beings, and/or from the point of view of the  
 272 universe). Singer and Varner also accept that these  
 273 may be matters of degree.

274 Hare, Singer’s mentor at Oxford, considered  
 275 Stephen’s comparison very sensible: “happy  
 276 existing people are certainly glad they exist, and  
 277 so are presumably comparing their existence with  
 278 a possible non-existence” (1999: 239). If he were  
 279 to choose between the life of a trout in a small  
 280 farm in the English countryside, Hare would  
 281 certainly “prefer the life, all told, of such a fish,  
 282 to that of almost any fish in the wild, and to  
 283 non-existence” (240).

284 Singer (2011: Chapter 5) now accepts that a  
 285 good if short life is better than nonexistence. Sen-  
 286 tient life even has a preference-independent  
 287 (objective) value, such that more good lives are  
 288 better than either a less happy or a non-sentient  
 289 universe. These claims are even easier for Singer  
 290 to accept now that he espouses *hedonistic*  
 291 act-utilitarianism (Lazari-Radek and Singer  
 292 2014): the permissibility of a given act of killing

293 depends on the overall resulting balance of enjoy- 293  
 294 ment and suffering. On this view, persons are also 294  
 295 replaceable, although, given the richness of their 295  
 296 lives and the numerous side effects, not as easily 296  
 297 as merely sentient beings (also see Varner 2012). 297

298 **Distinctions**

299 At the crux of RP stand unresolved questions in 299  
 300 moral theory, applied ethics, and axiology (Višak 300  
 301 and Garner 2016): When is death a harm? What is 301  
 302 the relevant point of comparison to assess 302  
 303 (momentary or lifetime) welfare? How does a 303  
 304 short happy life compare with nonexistence, life 304  
 305 in the wild, or a longer life? Each comparison has 305  
 306 its own complications, including nonidentity 306  
 307 problems between wild and domesticated ani- 307  
 308 mals, different generations, and different life 308  
 309 stages of individuals. 309

310 The theoretical application of RA to nonperson 310  
 311 animals, but not to persons (self-conscious, ratio- 311  
 312 nal, and autonomous), hinges on the assumption 312  
 313 that death is normally distinctively bad for the 313  
 314 latter if their lives are worth living. Death can be 314  
 315 a tragedy only for persons. RA thus rests on two 315  
 316 central distinctions: *suffering* versus *death* and 316  
 317 *persons* versus *nonpersons*, which may explain 317  
 318 why many people opposing animal suffering do 318  
 319 not necessarily oppose the killing of animals for 319  
 320 food, and why people who would consider killing 320  
 321 human beings, including anencephalic children, 321  
 322 for horrific medical research generally accept 322  
 323 experimenting on at least as sentient nonhumans. 323  
 324 Non-speciesists substitute persons/nonpersons for 324  
 325 humans/nonhumans, since some nonhumans can 325  
 326 be persons (e.g., great apes and cetaceans) and not 326  
 327 all humans are persons (e.g., fetuses and anence- 327  
 328 phalic children). Even a non-speciesist can there- 328  
 329 fore deny that the death of a cow and the death of a 329  
 330 *normal* human being are on a par, given their 330  
 331 different cognitive capacities (Bentham 1907; 331  
 332 Singer 2011; Varner 2012). 332

333 **Metaphysical Issues**

334 Utilitarian versions of RA depend on the crucial 334  
 335 assumption that the interests of nonexisting 335  
 336 beings matter – not simply those of beings that 336  
 337 do exist or will exist (regardless of one’s choices) 337  
 338 but also those of beings who *would* exist *if* one 338

[Au2]

Insert:  
 “and  
 never  
 existing”

339 chose to bring them into existence (i.e., whose  
 340 existence and identity depend on one's choices).  
 341 The question is whether the interests of already  
 342 conceived future children matter like those of  
 343 *merely possible* children. If interests count only  
 344 once one has determined that a being will exist, it  
 345 is problematic to balance the interests of possible  
 346 farm animals against their interests if they exist.  
 347 Critics of RA say one ought to ensure existing  
 348 animals are made as happy as possible when they  
 349 are alive but ought not to make as many happy  
 350 beings as possible (Višak 2013).

351 RA proponents can press that acknowledging  
 352 that existence can be good implies that existence  
 353 can be *better* than nonexistence (benefit) and  
 354 hence that nonexistence can be worse (harm).  
 355 RA opponents insist that nonexisting beings  
 356 have no welfare so there is no one for whom  
 357 existing is better than never existing. Existence,  
 358 on this view, is an *absolute*, i.e., non-comparative,  
 359 benefit. Secondly, accepting that *existing* beings  
 360 can prefer their existence to nonexistence does not  
 361 commit one to accept that *merely possible* beings  
 362 would prefer a short happy life to no life at all. In  
 363 fact, preferring existence to never existing may as  
 364 well count *against* killing (no longer existing). It  
 365 is an open question whether absolute benefits can  
 366 compensate for harms such as death, but it is  
 367 plausible that happy animals, if they were in a  
 368 position to assess such benefits and harms,  
 369 would prefer life to death. They would, moreover,  
 370 not be swayed by the fact that, had one not  
 371 planned to kill them, they would not exist, since  
 372 existence is not a comparative benefit.

373 **Utilitarianism**

374 Hare (1999: 239–239) makes a clear utilitarian  
 375 case for replaceability:

376 doing wrong to animals must involve harming  
 377 them. If there is no harm, there is no wrong. Further,  
 378 it has to be harm overall; if a course of action  
 379 involves some harms but greater benefits, and  
 380 there is no alternative with a greater balance of  
 381 good over harm, it will not be wrong. We have to  
 382 ask, therefore, whether the entire process of raising  
 383 animals and then killing them to eat causes them  
 384 more harm overall than benefit. My answer is that,  
 385 assuming, as we must assume if we are to keep the  
 386 “killing” argument distinct from the “suffering”

argument, that they are happy while they live, it 387  
 does not. For it is better for an animal to have a 388  
 happy life, even if it is a short one, than no life at all. 389

Although, existence is not “a benefit in itself,” 390  
 “it is a necessary condition for having the benefits 391  
 that we can have only if we are alive” (239). 392  
 Existence can be compared (and preferred) to 393  
 nonexistence and existence allows for more pref- 394  
 erences to be satisfied. Hare endorses *total* 395  
 (as opposed to average and person-affecting) 396  
*utilitarianism* – i.e., we ought to “maximize the 397  
 total amount of preference-satisfaction that is had 398  
 in the world . . . and distribute it impartially.” 399  
 Painlessly killing animals, as opposed to making 400  
 them suffer, does not frustrate their preferences. 401  
 Assuming there are no uncompensated negative 402  
 side effects, the permissibility of killing thus 403  
 depends on “how many live animals, of different 404  
 species including the human, we ought to cause 405  
 there to be” or, more accurately, the number of 406  
 quality-adjusted life years (QALYs) (239). Hare 407  
 concludes that traditional “organic” husbandry 408  
 (replaceability), especially in parts of the world 409  
 where growing crops is impractical, is 410  
 optimific. Note that Hare’s argument is stronger 411  
 than Singer’s theoretical endorsement of 412  
 replaceability. It states not only that replacing 413  
 animals is permissible, but that it is *required* 414  
 when optimific. Lazari-Radek and Singer (2014) 415  
 have recently come closer to such a view 416  
 (hedonism aside). 417

As is clear, RA follows naturally from certain 418  
 versions of utilitarianism. In fact, Pollan’s (2006) 419  
 defense of meat, besides its empirical and axio- 420  
 logical assumptions (predation as symbiosis; spe- 421  
 cies matter more than individuals), echoes 422  
 utilitarian commitments (Singer and Mason 423  
 2006: 252). Replaceability is, indeed, a crucial 424  
 ground for deontological and rights-based objec- 425  
 tions to utilitarianism, insofar as the latter sees 426  
 individuals as replaceable “*receptacles of value*” 427  
 (pleasurable experiences) (Regan 1983). Yet, 428  
 while RA squares well with utilitarianism, 429  
 rejecting its conclusion need not entail rejecting 430  
 utilitarianism. 431

Further distinctions are necessary here. There 432  
 are personal and impersonal values, which can be 433

434 ranked differently. A state of affair can be imper- 482  
 435 personally good independently of its goodness-for 483  
 436 particular beings, from what Sidgwick called “the 484  
 437 point of view of the universe.” The existence of 485  
 438 more happy animals might be impersonally better 486  
 439 even if it were better for no one in particular. On 487  
 440 the other hand, states of affairs can be personally 488  
 441 better or worse for those existing in such states. 489  
 442 Happy/long lives are better for cows than short/ 490  
 443 miserable lives. So, a state of affairs could be 491  
 444 personally worse than its alternatives while 492  
 445 being impersonally better: e.g., replaceability is 493  
 446 worse for cows, who live shorter lives than they 494  
 447 could and are not better off for existing, but the 495  
 448 world is better in virtue of containing more hap- 496  
 449 piness than a world of irreplaceable cows. 497

450 On *total impersonal* utilitarianism, impartiality 498  
 451 requires that one weighs the interests of actual 499  
 452 (present and future) beings and possible beings 500  
 453 equally, in proportion to their strength rather than 501  
 454 whose interests they are. But several authors 502  
 455 emphasize the compatibility of prior-existence/ 503  
 456 person-affecting utilitarianism (let alone rule con- 504  
 457 sequentialism) with the irreplaceability of persons 505  
 458 or of all sentient beings. They assume, as men- 506  
 459 tioned earlier, that nonexistent animals have no 507  
 460 welfare, so they cannot be harmed or benefitted by 508  
 461 existence or nonexistence. The interests of possi- 509  
 462 ble beings thus do not matter as much, if at all, as 510  
 463 those of actual beings (Sapontzis 1987; Višak 511  
 464 2013; cf. Parfit’s 1984 and Singer’s 2011 [1979, 512  
 465 1993] discussion). These views thus reject a cen-  
 466 tral tenet of RA.

467 Both person-affecting and impersonal views 513  
 468 may have bullets to bite. The former are hard-  
 469 pressed to account for the intrinsic wrongness of  
 470 breeding animals that will undergo lives of suffer-  
 471 ing, if one cannot be harmed by being brought into  
 472 existence. Of course, once one exists, it is wrong  
 473 to be made to suffer. But one lacks *direct* reasons,  
 474 on the person-affecting view, to avoid breeding  
 475 animals that will have miserable lives as a result of  
 476 genetic defects or induced disabilities.  
 477 *Wide*-person-affecting views, however, offer  
 478 interesting resources (Višak 2013). On the other  
 479 hand, purely impersonal views cannot easily  
 480 account for the intrinsic wrongness of killing and  
 481 involve comparisons between states of affairs that

are not straightforwardly meaningful from the  
 point of view of those they affect. They can accept  
 that not breeding conscious animals has neutral  
 (neither positive nor negative) value. But they  
 cannot make a difference between the good that  
 is achieved by prolonging an existing being’s life  
 and creating beings that would not otherwise have  
 existed. Moreover, *hedonistic* impersonal utilitar-  
 ians lack resources to account for the distinctive  
 wrongness of killing persons except in terms of  
 their side effects on other parties and the relative  
 richness of their future lives, all of which can be  
 compensated for on such views. Singer’s chang-  
 ing views over the editions of *Practical Ethics* are  
 representative of these difficulties. His recent shift  
 from preference utilitarianism to hedonism  
 deprives him of his previous arguments for the  
 irreplaceability of persons.

To conclude, RP thus leaves us with the theo-  
 retical challenge of providing a compelling case  
 for the replaceability of nonpersons that does not  
 apply to persons. Most authors either accept  
 replaceability for *both* persons and nonpersons  
 (Lazari-Radek and Singer 2014; Varner 2012) or  
 deny it for both (Višak 2013). Further, practically,  
 RP does not settle all of the morally relevant  
 aspects of animal husbandry. The best defense of  
 conscientious omnivores rests on several empiri-  
 cal and philosophical assumptions still being  
 hotly debated (McWilliams 2015; Višak and Gar-  
 ner 2016).

## Conclusion

513 Controversies regarding the ethics of animal hus- 514 Au3  
 515 bandry and eating meat sometimes revolve around 516  
 517 the idea of replaceability, namely, that killing cer- 518  
 519 tain animals can be permissible insofar as they 519  
 520 live pleasant lives and are replaced by new ani- 520  
 521 mals with equally pleasant lives. The controver- 521  
 522 sies touch upon foundational issues in moral 522  
 523 theory, practical ethics, as well as contemporary 523  
 discussions of “ethical,” “conscientious,” or  
 “humane” omnivores.

524 **Cross-References**

- 525 ▶ [Meat: Ethical Considerations](#)
- 526 ▶ [Peter Singer and Food](#)
- 527 ▶ [Sustainability and Animal Agriculture](#)
- 528 ▶ [Vegetarianism](#)

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