

Life, Eating Animals, and Ethics

Louis CK is one of my favorite comedians. In his latest Netflix comedy special, he said something to the effect that life is not that important. I think I agree. Hear me out.

I don't mean *my* life. I mean "life" in general. It's just not that important.

Of course, there are certain lives that are very important to me. But there are trillions and trillions of other lives that are not important to me. It would seem that on balance life is not that important.

Why aren't they important? Because I don't know those people or those animals or those other life forms. I haven't bonded with them so that they gain some measure of importance to me.

I don't want to hear about people getting murdered. I think, superficially at least, that it's a moral outrage. Do I shed a tear? No.

Nor do I shed any tears for the plants, animals, and insect that are routinely slaughtered every second of every day, some of which end up in my stomach. I shed *zero* tears for them. In fact, I think they're delicious and nutritious and have chosen that my life is important than theirs. That's a fact.

Ethics, the science of morality, is important to me, but not for any religious or cosmic justice reasons, but because I value society with others, and behaving morally ensures that.

Do I value society with animals? Not really. I don't even like my dog very much. It's hard to like something that causes you allergy based discomfort. I probably wouldn't shed a tear if my dog were killed. My kids certainly would.

Do I value society with animals that I find delicious? No. Of course not. I value their taste and the nutrition that they provide. That's it.

And I obviously don't value the hordes of insects I slaughter on a daily basis with my car. Who does?

Why is that alright, but eating animals not alright?

Life is murder. Every form of life murders other forms of life for survival. And that's okay.