Speciesism Encyclopedia Article

Speciesism

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Speciesism

This term, popularized by author **Peter Singer** in his book *Animal Liberation* (1975), refers to a human attitude of superiority over other creatures and a tendency among humans to place the interests of their own **species** above all others. As Singer puts it, speciesism "is as indefensible as the most blatant racism. There is no basis for elevating membership of one particular species into a morally crucial characteristic. From an ethical point of view, we all stand on an equal footing—whether we stand on two feet, or four, or none at all. That is the crux of the philosophy of the animal liberation movement...Just as we have progressed beyond the blatantly racist ethic of the era of slavery and colonialism, so we must now progress beyond the speciesist ethic of the era of factory farming, seal hunting...and the destruction of wilderness." Opposition to speciesism has become one of the foundations of the modern **animal rights** movement.

See Also

Environmental Ethics