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WHAT  
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*REALLY*  
STANDS FOR ...



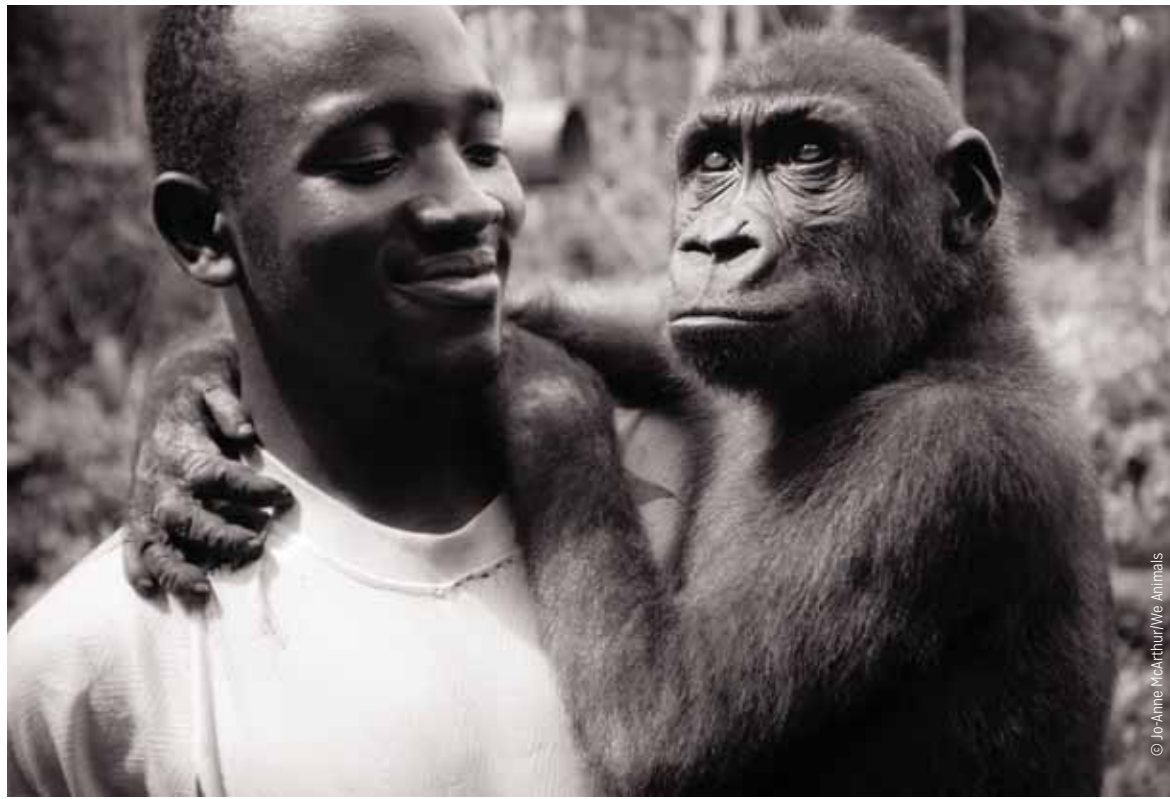
## People

*I am you, only different.*

Human beings create temporary and arbitrary boundaries to exclude other beings who are "different". Human beings have justified slavery, sexual violence, wars and child abuse by believing, in error, that those who are "different" do not experience suffering and are not worthy of moral consideration.



These boundaries change throughout history, and we are horrified now to look back on the abuse inflicted on those once classified as “outsiders” by a dominant group – the oppression of Indians by the British, the extermination of Jews by the Nazis, the enslavement of Africans by American plantation owners, the slaughter of Christians for entertainment by Roman centurions and more. Laws in many countries now rightly forbid discrimination based on gender, race, religion, disability, age and sexual orientation. Yet not so long ago, human beings classified as “different” by those in power often faced torture, exploitation and death – and some still do.



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Sometimes those in power claimed that juvenile or dark-skinned human beings couldn't feel pain. Sometimes the powerful claimed superiority granted by God. Most members of our society no longer believe that any human being has the right to enslave, rape or torture another human being for any reason. We accept that all human beings share fundamental rights, and we celebrate our differences.



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# Ethical

*Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.*



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We are taught the Golden Rule as young children, and all major religions teach principles of non-violence and kindness. American civil rights leader the Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere". Ethical treatment – the Golden Rule – must be extended to *all* living beings: mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles, fish, crustaceans – even insects.



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Would we imprison children in cages? Would we violate women and steal their babies? Would we deliberately infect people with diseases and leave them untreated? Of course not. So then, why would we do the same to any other sentient being? We must abandon the outdated and misguided boundary of "human", which we use to justify the ongoing massacre of billions of living beings.

Charles Darwin showed over a century ago that all beings stem from the same common ancestor. All beings share the desire to *live*. We all feel pain, joy, grief, pleasure and fear. We all have worth.



## Treatment

*Animals are not ours to eat, wear, experiment on, use for entertainment or abuse in any other way.*





All beings desire the freedom to live a natural life according to their inherent desires and instincts. While no one can avoid experiencing a certain amount of suffering in life, human beings must stop *deliberately* inflicting suffering on others for our own selfish desires. We sacrifice nothing when we replace a chicken sandwich with a veggie burger or a leather purse with a fabric one. But when we choose the chicken sandwich or the leather purse, the beings we are exploiting lose their lives just for our selfish pleasures.



We are taught from a young age to discriminate among beings. We are fooled into eating the flesh of some beings, ignoring the cries of hunted beings and cuddling up with and petting other beings. We grow up confused. As adults, most human beings are sickened and saddened when they see beings tortured and killed, yet they purchase and eat animal flesh and wear animal skins without hesitation. We work hard to deceive ourselves and each other in order to maintain the illusion of a meaningful boundary around "human beings".

The threat of economic collapse, the defiant claim of inherent rights and the stubborn refusal to change behaviour – these tired arguments against rights for other beings have all been heard and overcome before. Every time a boundary shifts, the suffragists or the abolitionists or the emancipators are at first ridiculed for their stance on equal consideration. But eventually, the lies are exposed and rights are won – for Indians, women, children, blacks, gays, etc. Let freedom now ring for *all* beings.



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## Animals

*We are all animals.*

Human beings have few unique capabilities – many other beings can learn a language, enjoy complex social bonds, sacrifice pleasure for the good of others, recall information, make tools, use their imagination and dream. Many other beings play with their friends, seek intimacy, gossip and mourn their dead. Some beings have enormous capabilities beyond ours – such as in navigation, endurance, communication and detection of natural phenomena. We don't yet fully understand how all beings think, or what they think, but dismissing their mental world as less developed, rational, moral or intelligent than our own would clearly be erroneous.



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But regardless of their capabilities, no living being deserves abuse. We all believe that it's wrong to abuse infants and mentally and physically challenged human beings. In the same way, *all* beings, human or otherwise, deserve liberty and respect *not* because they share the characteristics that we admire in humans but rather because they are *living beings*. We share the same evolutionary origins. We inhabit the same Earth. We are ruled by the same laws of Nature. When it comes to the things that matter, we are all the same.