

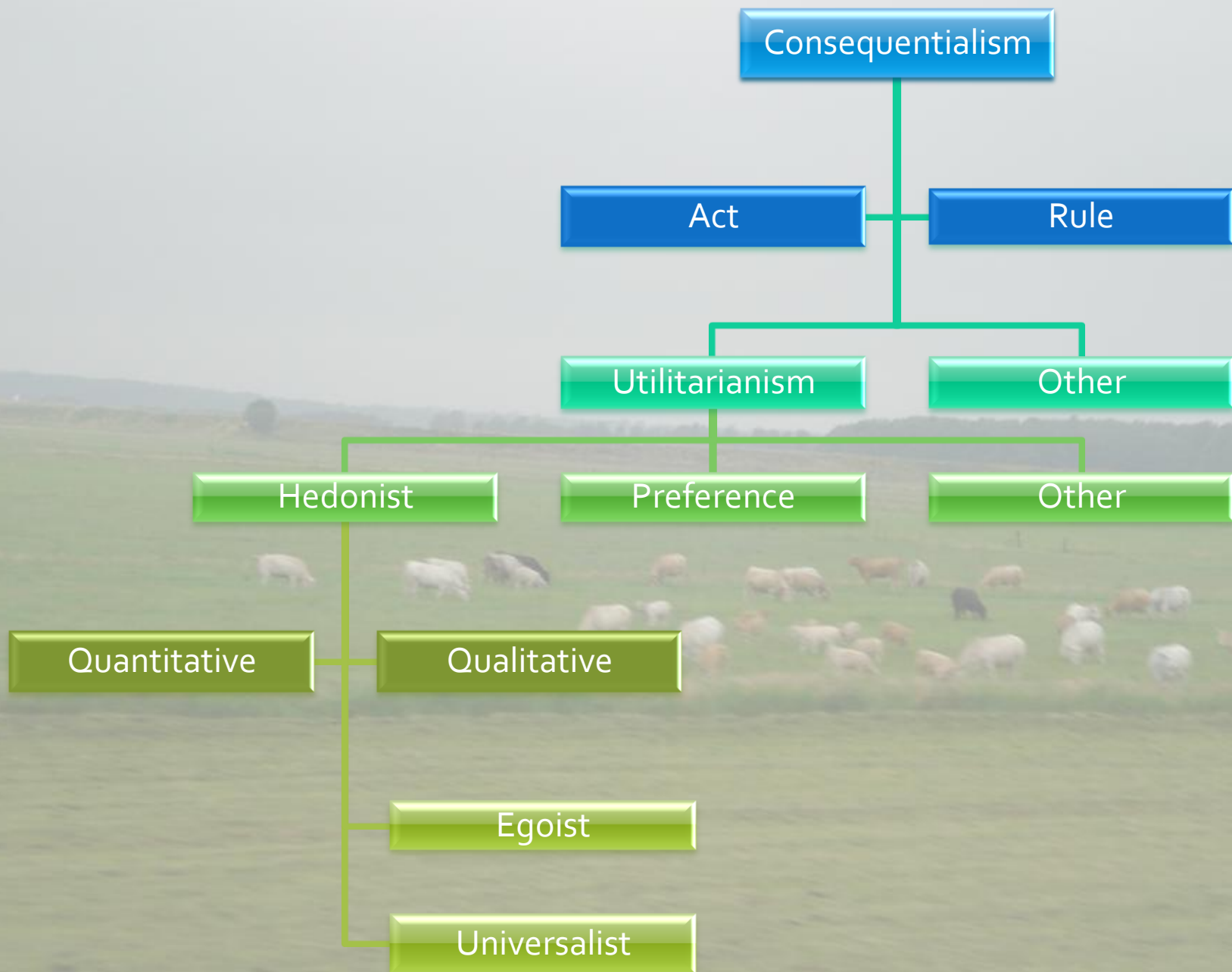


Animal Interests, Animal Rights

Ethics: The Environment
Summer 2012, Laura Guidry-Grimes

Overlapping Concerns

- ◉ Need to overthrow oppressive systems
- ◉ Need to expand moral concern for non-human animals
- ◉ Formal moral equality
 - Same interests/rights given equal moral consideration—regardless of *whose* interests/rights are at stake



Hedonist Utilitarian Commitments

- ◉ “...the question is not, Can they reason? nor, Can they talk? but, Can they suffer?” (Bentham)
- ◉ ‘Happiness’: more net pleasure than net pain
- ◉ No value in world without entities capable of experience
 - Empirical questions re: experience
- ◉ **Sentience:** capacity for pleasure/pain
 - How should these states be defined?
 - Bentham: single state, quantifiable
 - Mill: higher and lower pleasures, *quality*
- ◉ Singer: hedonist calculus most appropriate for animals that a) have capacity for pleasure/pain but b) do not have capacity for self-consciousness (preferences)

Preference Utilitarian Commitments

- ◉ 'Happiness': satisfaction of preferences (desires, plans, projects)
- ◉ Singer: preference calculus most appropriate for self-conscious animals—i.e., those capable of projects/goals/desires (most mammals?)
 - Animals *without* preferences are *replaceable*— permissible to replace unhappy, non-self-conscious animal with happy animal
 - Self-conscious animals are *irreplaceable*— “When a being with future-oriented desires dies, those desires remain unsatisfied even if another being is brought into existence and has similar desires satisfied” (explained in Varner, pg. 101)

Deontological Commitments

- ◉ Moral constraints on what can be justified for the sake of good consequences
- ◉ Rights theories
 - Trumps? (Dworkin)
 - Special normative force, but defeasible?
- ◉ Kant, Regan, Rawls
- ◉ Regan: worse off principle + miniride principle

Forms of Animal Advocacy

- Anti-cruelty

- Pro-welfare

- Liberation

Regan's assessment:
Reformist (inadequate)

How Regan and Singer
identify themselves;
Revolutionary



Questions



- What are the appeals and costs of consequentialism? Rights-based views?
- Can one of these views handle test cases—e.g., medical testing on animals—more adequately?
- Do you agree with Regan that anti-cruelty and pro-welfare movements cannot properly advocate for animals?
- Do you agree with how Singer delineates animals of moral concern?

Questions? Comments?

