Friday, November 8  
3:00pm  
BEH 113  

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Utilitarianism for Animals, Kantianism for People.  

We owe the slogan, “Utilitarianism for animals, Kantianism for people,” to Robert Nozick. This phrase is shorthand for view that we should “(1) maximize the total happiness of all living beings; (2) place stringent side constraints on what one may do to human beings.” Call this a “hybrid view.” There are many possible hybrid views, both because there are many moral theories that you might pair up (e.g., “ecocentrism for animals, pluralistic consequentialism for people”), and at least as many ways in which you might have the moral theories interact (the people-oriented principle might get lexical priority, or you could have a threshold approach, etc.). These options leave us with two questions. First, what should we make of the most famous hybrid view, “Utilitarianism for animals, Kantianism for people”? I’ll suggest that it’s most plausible if it captures our intuitions particularly well, but that, in fact, the fit isn’t great. Second, if we’re ultimately critical of “Utilitarianism for animals, Kantianism for people,” might any alternative fare better? I won’t try to answer this question directly. Instead, I want to stand back and consider the sort of moral methodology that might give hybrid views a fighting chance.