

27. Dolphin drive hunts and the Socratic dictum: ‘Vice harms the doer’

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Discussion of ethical issues related to human-dolphin interaction typically concentrates on the question of whether or not *dolphins* are harmed by the practices in question. The deaths and injuries of dolphins connected with human fishing are defended with claims that the species of dolphins affected aren't ‘endangered’ by the practices used. Captivity of dolphins in the entertainment industry is defended with assertions that the dolphins are treated ‘humanely’ and that they even form strong relationships with their trainers. This chapter, however, shifts the focus of discussion and explores the negative impact of ethically questionable human/dolphin interaction on *humans*. Applying the Socratic dictum that ‘vice harms the doer’, this paper details the harm to humans that results from a particularly notorious example of human abuse of dolphins – the Japanese ‘drive hunts’. This chapter begins with a description of the drive hunts themselves, but my main concern is actually *the defenses offered* for the hunts. My central claim is that the unethical treatment of dolphins produces precisely the sort of harm in the personality that Socrates describes—a weakened intellect that simply serves some desire. Socrates contends that the consequence of vice is that a desire for something grows so strong that satisfying it is more important than perceiving reality accurately, dealing with uncomfortable truths about a situation and respecting the canons of logic. And this damage is evident in the individuals who defend the drive hunts.

‘Drive Hunts’

The Japanese ‘drive hunts’ take place annually from September through April.¹ Sanctioned by the government, the hunts occur mainly in the town of Taiji. Using noise or nets, fishermen drive hundreds of dolphins and other small cetaceans into shallow water. The cetaceans are killed in the water – slowly bleeding to death. Or, they are caught with a hook, hoisted out of the water by a rope tied around their flukes, and transported to a site where they can be killed out of public view. The hunts slaughter thousands of dolphins each year.

The dolphins were traditionally killed for their meat and blubber – although there is debate about how much meat is eaten by humans and how much goes to fertilizer and pet food. Recently, it has become apparent that the drive hunts have become a major source of captive dolphins for the aquarium industry.

The drive hunts have been roundly condemned by a variety of conservation and animal welfare groups.² The World Association of Zoos and Aquariums considers the hunts ‘inhumane’, has denounced the practice of collecting dolphins from the hunts for use in captivity, and has urged the Japanese government to stop the hunts.³ The Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission has opposed the hunts since 1992.⁴ Marine scientists, in particular, decry the practice. Diana Reiss, director of the marine

¹ This paper’s account of the drive hunts is based on: Courtney S. Vail and Denise Risch, *Driven by demand: Drive hunts in Japan and the involvement of the aquarium industry* (Chippenham, UK: Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society, 2006); Rick Weiss, ‘Intelligence of dolphins cited in fight against hunt: Others see equal weight in the value of tradition’, *Washington Post*, November 20, 2006, A1; Diana Reiss and Lori Marino, ‘Japan’s dolphin drive hunts from a scientific and animal welfare perspective’, <http://www.theoceanproject.org/actfordolphins/scivi.html>. I am particularly indebted to Professors Lori Marino and Diana Reiss for their generous assistance.

² This includes the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums, the Associations of Zoos and Aquariums in the United States, the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission, Earth Island Institute, the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society, the World Society for the Protection of Animals, and the Humane Society of the United States.

³ The WAZA is the world’s premier zoo and aquarium association and represents approximately 12,000 institutions.

⁴ ‘Report of the scientific committee’, *Report of the International Whaling Commission*, 43 (1993), p. 84.

mammal research programme at the New York Aquarium's Osborn Laboratories of Marine Science, characterizes the hunt as 'a brutal and inhumane practice that violates all standards for animal welfare.'⁵

For two years, a group of marine scientists met with Japanese government officials and presented findings about dolphin brain anatomy, intelligence, social behaviour, ecology, and physiology. When this failed to persuade the Japanese government to stop the hunts, a coalition of scientists launched a public campaign in November, 2006.⁶ The controversy will probably continue for years.

Why the Hunts are Wrong

From an ethical perspective, there is no question that the Japanese drive hunts are seriously wrong. I have argued elsewhere that the scientific evidence is now strong enough to support the claim that dolphins are, like humans, self-aware, intelligent beings with emotions, personalities, and the capacity to control their actions. Accordingly, dolphins should be regarded as 'non-human persons' and valued as *individuals*.⁷ Even if dolphins were to die swiftly and painlessly in the hunts, their deaths would still be the moral equivalent of the murder of a human being. However, not only do these dolphins typically die in a slow and agonizing way, they also witness the similar deaths of those around them. Even dolphins who survive are likely to be traumatized by the event. This is quite clearly abuse and brutality.

⁵ Rick Weiss, 'Intelligence of dolphins cited in fight against hunt', *The Washington Post*, 20 November 2006, A1.

⁶ 'Scientific statement against the Japanese dolphin drive hunts', <http://www.theoceanproject.org/actfordolphins/statement.html>.

⁷ Thomas I. White, *In defense of dolphins: The new moral frontier* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007).

Defenses

Defenses of two dimensions of the drive hunts are offered – the hunts themselves and <INSERT the> aquarium industry’s involvement in them.

The Hunts Themselves

Four justifications are put forth by defenders of the hunts: environmental, economic, cultural, and ethical.

- The fundamental position of the Japanese Fisheries Agency is that the practice is consistent with ‘the sustainable use of marine resources’. The Japanese government regards cetaceans simply as resources that can be used as humans see fit.⁸
- The economic defense surfaces in a couple of ways. Takumi Fukuda, the fisheries attaché at the Japanese Embassy in Washington, points out that the hunts are regulated by the Japanese government, and that they are limited to areas where fishermen are struggling to get by.⁹ Cetaceans are also seen as competitors with humans for fish and squid. Fewer dolphins mean more dependable and abundant catches.¹⁰
- The cultural defense is grounded in the fact that the hunts originated in the fifteenth century. Fukuda explains, ‘It is kind of our cultural activity. We think it is important.’¹¹ Defending the drive hunts in the context of whaling, the Fisheries Agency makes a similar claim, citing the importance of dietary culture:

*Clearly, the acceptance of other cultures’ dietary practices and the promotion of cultural diversity is as important as saving endangered species and the promotion of biological diversity. If the consumption of whale meat does not endanger whale species, those who find the practice unacceptable for themselves should not try to impose their view on others.*¹²

⁸ Fishing Agency, Center of the Sustainable Use of Marine Resources, Japan Whaling Section, ‘Philosophy’, <http://www.jfa.maff.go.jp/whale/assertion/assertion.htm>. The Japanese consider issues related to the drive hunts to be whaling issues.

⁹ Weiss, ‘Intelligence of dolphins’.

¹⁰ T. Tamura and S. Ohsumi, ‘Regional assessments of prey consumption by marine cetaceans in the world’, The Institute of Cetacean Research, 2000. SC/52/E6.

¹¹ Weiss, ‘Intelligence of dolphins’.

¹² Fishing Agency, Center of the Sustainable Use of Marine Resources, Japan Whaling Section, ‘Philosophy’.

- Ethical objections to the hunts are rejected as ‘irrelevant’ and ‘ethnocentric’, and the concept of ‘cruelty’ is dismissed as ‘solely subjective’.¹³ The Fisheries Agency defends the hunts as being ‘no more or less [cruel or barbaric] than hunting other wild animals.’¹⁴

The hunts as a source of captive dolphins

The defense offered for using the hunts as a source of captive dolphins is a humanitarian one. Timothy Desmond, CEO of Ocean Adventures, Phillipines, explained that

We went to Japan precisely because these were doomed animals. ... [C]ollection of our animals was a side-product. This was and is the lowest impact way to collect wild animals for public display. These are animals that have already been captured and who are literally minutes from death.¹⁵

In a similar statement in a BBC documentary on the hunts, Desmond states, ‘every animal we have here had a life expectancy of one day. . . . [T]hese animals were either going to be taken alive or die.’¹⁶

The harm resulting from the defenses

There are so many flaws with the defenses of the drive hunts, that it would be easy to dismiss them as disingenuous rationalizations for self-interested behaviour.¹⁷ Yet despite the weakness of these arguments, I think that supporters genuinely believe them. And I think it is this fact that reveals the main *human* harm that proceeds from the drive hunts. That is, I contend that these apparently sincere defenses of such obvious brutality against

¹³ Masayuki Komatsu and Shigeko Misaki, *The truth behind the whaling dispute*, <http://www.jfa.maff.go.jp/whale/document/whalebkc.pdf>, pp. 85, 92, 93.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Cited in Vail and Risch, *Driven by demand*, p. 24.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ See below for specific weaknesses in the defenses.

dolphins are the product of the kind of harm that Socrates believes is produced by vice – a weakened intellect.¹⁸

Socrates: Vice Harms the Doer

One of Socrates' most central – and most counter-intuitive – ideas is that 'vice harms the doer.'¹⁹ That is, when we treat someone unethically, we actually hurt ourselves more than we hurt our victim. The ultimate reason to act ethically, then, is self-interest.

While this idea surfaces in a variety of dialogues, the best description of exactly how vice harms the doer is found in the *Gorgias*.²⁰ This dialogue ultimately tackles the question of the value of moral virtue. For the purposes of this paper, the most important part is the exchange between Socrates and Callicles.

Callicles is an intelligent, ambitious, young Athenian who is hungry for wealth and power. He is talented, educated, refined – but quite immoral. He contends that people who are bright and cunning should rule the city because they are superior to the rest of the citizenry. He argues that the strong should take whatever they want as long as they can get away with it, and indulge themselves in every kind of pleasure. He rejects fairness, equality, and moderation as conventional ideas of morality which he dismisses as ways that inferior people make virtues out of their own weaknesses and hold superior people in check. In Socrates' reply to Callicles, the philosopher identifies how Callicles has been harmed by his lack of scruples. Socrates claims that Callicles' desires have

¹⁸ The individuals offering the defenses are not themselves killing dolphins in the drive hunts. But the defenders' actions help the hunts continue, which makes them partially responsible for the hunts' deaths. Such ethically problematic behaviour, then, is apparently sufficient to produce the harm that Socrates contends is connected with wrongdoing.

¹⁹ 'Socrates: Vice harms the doer', in Thomas I. White, *Discovering philosophy*, 2nd edn. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2007).

²⁰ This paper is based on the interpretation that Plato's *Gorgias* (unlike the later dialogues) represents genuinely Socratic ideas.

become so strong that they are not only the central, controlling element of his life, but they have also weakened his intellect.

Socrates points out that Callicles' mind is, in effect, in thrall to his desires. Socrates describes Callicles as someone enslaved by the idea of pleasing the two current loves of his life – one, a beautiful young man, the other, the Athenian public. And Callicles will say whatever he must to please them. Socrates remarks,

Now I have noticed that in each instance, whatever your favorite says, however his opinions may go, for all your cleverness you are unable to contradict him, but constantly shift back and forth at his whim. If you are making a speech in the Assembly and the Athenian public disagrees, you change and say what it desires; and in the presence of the beautiful young son of Pylampes your experience is precisely similar. You are unable to resist the plans or the assertions of your favorite; and the result of this is that if anyone were to express surprise at what you say on various occasions under the influence of your loves, you would tell him, if you wanted to speak true, that unless your favorites can be prevented from speaking as they do, neither can you.²¹

Note that Socrates makes a point of saying that what Callicles *says* is influenced by his desires. That Callicles' very words are now aligned with his search for pleasure and not with his reason and the search for truth is a major sign that his intellect has been affected by the way he is living – a life Socrates no doubt considers far from virtue.

It might first seem that Callicles is simply a clear-headed manipulator who is clever enough to tell people what they need to hear in order to get what he wants. However, Callicles' unwillingness to change his position to any degree throughout his subsequent, extended conversation with Socrates is the most powerful sign that vice has weakened his intellect. Even though Socrates reveals a number of contradictions in Callicles' position, for example, Callicles is convinced that he is right and that Socrates hasn't been able to show otherwise. Either Callicles' ability to think rationally has been

²¹ Plato, *Gorgias*, trans. W. C. Helmbold (Indianapolis: IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1952), pp. 49–50; 481d–482a.

weakened, or the pull to satisfy his desires has become so strong that his intellect has lost any independence. Callicles' intellect is no longer a faculty for perceiving reality and rational analysis. It now functions primarily to serve his desires.

Support for Socrates: Augustine and Maslow

While the idea that vice harms the doer is primarily associated with Socrates, it actually surfaces elsewhere in ways that provide support for Socrates' claim.

The most prominent parallel can probably be found in the medieval Christian thinker Saint Augustine, who seems to echo Socrates when he claims that the consequences of vice are 'ignorance' and 'difficulty'. In his *On Free Choice of the Will*, Augustine writes,

It is absolutely just punishment for sin that each man loses what he is unwilling to use rightly, when he could without any difficulty use it if he willed. Thus the man who does not act rightly although he knows what he ought to do, loses the power to know what is right; and whoever is unwilling to do right when he can, loses the power to do it when he wills to. In fact, two penalties—ignorance and difficulty—beset every sinful soul.²²

Describing an intellect enslaved by desire, Augustine paints a picture that Socrates would probably think applicable to Callicles – or anyone harmed by vice:

Desire dominates the mind, despoils it of the wealth of its virtue, and drags it, poor and needy, now this way and now that; now approving and even defending what is false as though it were true, now disapproving what it previously defended, and rushing on to other falsities; now refusing assent and fearing clear reasoning; now despairing of fully discovering the truth and clinging to the deep obscurities of stupidity; now struggling into the light of understanding and falling back again from weariness.²³

²² Augustine, *On free choice of the will*, trans. Anna S. Benjamin and L. H. Hackstaff (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1964), p. 128.

²³ Augustine, *On free choice of the will*, p. 22, translation altered.

Like Socrates, Augustine believes that one of the consequences of wrongdoing is a weakened intellect in a personality that is now dominated by want. Truth, consistency, and logic matter less than satisfying desire.

Another, more recent (and somewhat surprising) source of support for Socrates' ideas is the contemporary psychologist Abraham Maslow. Maslow doesn't directly claim that 'vice harms the doer', but his research on psychological health suggests something of a corollary. Maslow reports that the most emotionally healthy individuals demonstrate a strong allegiance to ethics that carries with it a superior ability to perceive reality.

Maslow observes that 'self-actualized' individuals tend to agree about matters of right and wrong. In fact, he suggests that because of this agreement, their 'value judgments' seem to be more objective than subjective. He writes that 'at least in the group I studied they tended to agree about what was right and wrong, as if they were perceiving something real and extrahuman rather than comparing tastes that might be relative to the individual person.'²⁴

Maslow suggests that this agreement on values actually proceeds from their superior ability to perceive reality. That is, because of what they know about the world (what *is* the case), they know what *ought* to be done. Maslow observes,

This is where knowledge brings certainty of decision, action, choice and what to do, and therefore, strength of arm. This is very much like the situation with a surgeon or dentist. The surgeon opening up the abdomen and finding an inflamed appendix knows that it had better be cut out because if it bursts it will kill the person. This is an example of truth dictating what must be done, of the *is* dictating the *ought*.²⁵

Elsewhere he puts it this way,

²⁴ A. H. Maslow, *The farther reaches of human nature* (New York: Penguin Books, 1971), p. 9.

²⁵ Maslow, *Farther reaches of human nature*, p. 117.

[This kind of] cognition can lead to moral sureness and decisiveness in just about the same sense that the high IQ can lead to a clear perception of a complicated set of facts, or in about the same sense that a constitutionally sensitive aesthetic perceiver tends to see very clearly what color-blind people cannot see or what other people do not see. It makes no difference that one million color-blind people cannot see that the rug is colored green. They may think it is colored gray, but this will make no difference to the person who clearly, vividly, and unmistakably perceives the truth of the matter. . . . I believe that the average person can then be described as is-perceptive but ought-blind. The healthy person is more ought-perceptive.²⁶

Maslow does not say that ‘vice harms the doer’. But his ideas imply that vice is a trait of the emotionally *unhealthy*, and that such individuals lack the superior cognitive abilities of the self-actualized. One of the traits of the ‘ought-blind’, then, is looking at the same facts as the ‘ought-perceptive’ and coming to a faulty conclusion about the ethical character of the actions in question.

How the Defenders of the Drive Hunts are Harmed

If I am right in thinking that we can apply the ideas of Socrates (and Augustine and Maslow) to the defenders of the Japanese drive hunts, we should be able to find evidence that suggests an intellect weakened and serving some desire. And, as I suggested earlier in this paper, I believe the evidence lies in the fact that defenders offer transparently weak arguments to support the drive hunts.

The arguments are weak on a number of fronts.

Factual issues

First, central factual claims advanced by the hunts’ defenders can be challenged.

- Claim: There is a ‘culinary culture’ of eating cetacean meat in Japan.

²⁶ Maslow, *Farther reaches of human nature*, p. 118.

- Challenge: Eating cetacean meat is actually in decline. Concerns about pollutant contamination – especially mercury contamination – have driven down the price of dolphin meat.²⁷ Market demand is so weak that the government has tried to stimulate demand by subsidizing the sale of whale meat to schools and hospitals.²⁸
- Claim: Cetaceans are competitors with humans for fish and squid. Fewer cetaceans mean more dependable and abundant catches.²⁹
 - Challenge: A Humane Society study argues that ‘even though marine mammals consume a large quantity of marine resources as a whole, there is likely relatively little actual competition between “them” and “us” . . .’³⁰ The study contends that the cause of the current global fisheries crisis is ‘a long history of mismanagement of fisheries’.³¹ There is also reason to believe that if there is a significant economic factor involved in stimulating the drive hunts, it has to do with a more recent demand for captive dolphins, not a more traditional demand for cetacean meat.³²
- Claim: Cultural diversity (especially as it relates to dietary practices) is as important as biological diversity.³³

²⁷ Duncan Robertson writes, ‘In the last few years the wholesale price of dolphin meat has dropped to just under £1 a kilo because pollution fears have turned Japanese consumers off tinned dolphins’ (‘Dolphin slaughter sparks embassy protest’, *Daily Mail* (London), 18 September 2006).

²⁸ Vail and Risch, *Driven by demand*, p. 13; Anthony Fiola, ‘Reviving a taste for whale: Japan introduces meat to children as it fights moratorium’, *The Washington Post*, 19 June 2005, A19.

²⁹ T. Tamura and S. Ohsumi, ‘Regional assessments of prey consumption by marine cetaceans in the world’, (The Institute of Cetacean Research, 2000, SC/52/E6).

³⁰ Kristin Kaschner and Daniel Pauly, *Competition between marine mammals and fisheries: Food for thought* (Washington, DC: The Humane Society of the United States/The Humane Society International, 2004), p. 22.

³¹ Kaschner and Pauly, *Competition*, p. 3.

³² Vail and Risch, *Driven by demand*, pp. 15–16.

³³ Fishing Agency, Center of the Sustainable Use of Marine Resources, Japan Whaling Section, ‘Philosophy’.

- Challenge: Even if we limit our perspective to what selfishly promotes the interest of humans, biological diversity is generally far more important than cultural diversity. Especially for an animal at the top of the food chain, a loss of biological diversity can be fatal to the life of the species.

The validity of ethics

A second significant weakness in the defenses of the drive hunts surfaces in their rejection of ethical objections as ‘irrelevant’ and ‘ethnocentric’, and in their dismissal of the concept of ‘cruelty’ as ‘solely subjective’.³⁴

In view of thousands of years of sophisticated ethical inquiry by thinkers from every culture, simply to dismiss ethics out of hand as worthless is hardly persuasive. There is abundant scientific research on dolphins that supports profound ethical objections against the drive hunts. It is the hunts’ defenders, not their critics, who advance ethnocentric and anthropocentric positions.

The relevance of scientific and ethical inquiry

Given such a failure to appreciate the nature and value of ethical inquiry, it should come as no surprise that another weakness in the arguments of the drive hunts’ defenders is that they ignore the ethical implications of the scientific research demonstrating that dolphins have sophisticated cognitive and affective abilities. Dolphins are self-aware beings with emotions, personalities, strong social bonds, and the ability to think abstractly, to solve complex problems, to choose and plan their actions, and to communicate in a way that

³⁴ Komatsu and Misaki, *The truth behind the whaling dispute*, pp. 85, 92, 93.

suggests thought. Dolphins qualify as ‘non-human persons’.³⁵ The ethical implications of the scientific research are that dolphins are a *some-one*, not a *some-thing*. That is, dolphins are entitled to moral standing as *individuals* and deserve to be treated with appropriate respect for their rights and interests. That is, dolphins are not, as the Japanese Fisheries Agency claims, merely a ‘marine resource’ to be used, even if in a ‘sustainable’ way. From an ethical perspective, to claim that dolphins are a ‘marine resource’ is no different from the position advanced by American slaveholders in the eighteenth century that slaves were ‘property’ not ‘persons’.

The scientific research on dolphins’ intellectual and emotional abilities suggests that the pain that dolphins in the drive hunts experience is likely equivalent to what humans would experience in a similar situation.

Consider this account of a typical drive hunt:

After being driven into shallow coves, the fishermen kill the dolphins with crude methods, cutting their throats or stabbing them with spears. Unconsciousness and death are not always immediate, and some dolphins take many minutes to die, thrashing about violently as blood pours from their wounds. Some of the dolphins suffocate during the round-up and slaughter; getting caught in the nets, weakened and unable to swim from the shock and stress of capture. Many dolphins panic and crash into nets, boats, pier walls and each other. As a result of this struggle, the water turns red with the blood of the dying dolphins. Sometimes the whole drive hunt process can take days, with the animals trapped and frightened, their fate unknown to them.³⁶

Being herded into the coves, hearing the sounds of other dolphins’ distress, witnessing the deaths of members of their community, and waiting for one’s own death would be terrifying enough. The main method of slaughter, however, means a dolphin slowly bleeds to death over about ten minutes, which is surely an agonizing way to die. Even

³⁵ White, *In defense of dolphins*.

³⁶ Vail and Risch, *Driven by demand*, p. 9.

escaping slaughter and being chosen for captivity doesn't mean a dolphin will survive. The stresses connected with transport and adaptation to a captive facility are so considerable that the risk of death remains. And while living in an aquarium is better than being slaughtered in a cove, life in captivity is likely less satisfying than life in the wild.³⁷

Even the most skeptical interpretation of the scientific research would have to conclude that there is a strong possibility that dolphins killed and captured in the drive hunts suffer greatly. And there is certainly no more fundamental imperative in ethics than that if our actions may harm someone, we have a duty to refrain from doing them. In an uncertain situation, our obligation is to be certain that we do no harm.

Nonetheless, defenders of the drive hunts simply ignore the scientific findings and their ethical implications – even when directly presented with them. For example, in response to a presentation by American scientists in which their objections to the drive hunts were based on dolphins' advanced cognitive abilities and complex social lives, Mr Fukuda's first response was reportedly to argue that since the Makah native Americans have engaged in a grey whale hunt, Americans have no right to ask the Japanese to stop the drive hunts.³⁸

Logical fallacies

It is difficult not to regard such a logically flawed response as more evidence of the sort of weakened intellect suggested by Socrates and Augustine. The fact that a small group

³⁷ The Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society, for example, maintains 'that it is impossible to accommodate [dolphins'] mental, physical and social needs in captivity and that it is cruel to confine them' (Vail and Risch, *Driven by demand*, p. 28). For my explanation of the unacceptability of captivity, see chapter 7 of *In defense of dolphins*.

³⁸ D. Reiss, private communication.

of Americans engages in the ethically indefensible (even if possibly legal) killing of grey whales is irrelevant to the scientific and ethical character of the drive hunts. Indeed, Mr. Fukuda's response is a classic example of the logical fallacies *irrelevant reason* (*non sequitur*) and *two wrongs make a right* (*tu quoque*).³⁹

Similar fallacies characterize other defenses offered:

- The defense of the hunts as 'cultural activity', the idea that eating cetacean meat is part of a 'culinary culture', and the claim that 'those who find the practice unacceptable for themselves should not try to impose their view on others' are examples of the fallacy of *appeal to traditional wisdom*.⁴⁰
- To cite the fact that the fishermen in the areas of the drive hunts are economically stressed is an *irrelevant reason* when the issue is as serious as justifying the killing of self-aware, intelligent beings.
- The Fisheries Agency defense of the hunts as being 'no more or less [cruel or barbaric] than hunting other wild animals' combines two fallacies: *questionable comparison* and *two wrongs*.⁴¹ There is a significant difference between the cognitive and affective abilities of dolphins and most other mammals, so lumping all 'wild animals' together is inaccurate. And even if other hunts produce the same amount of suffering in other animals that the drive hunts do in dolphins, this hardly justifies any of the suffering produced.
- The aquarium industry's ostensibly humanitarian argument that taking dolphins from the drive hunt saves the lives of dolphins who would otherwise

³⁹ Howard Kahane and Nancy Cavender, *Logic and contemporary rhetoric: The use of reason in everyday life*, 9th edn. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thompson Learning, 2002), pp. 75–79.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 77–78.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 96–98.

be slaughtered is an example of the fallacy of *questionable premise*. The defense is based on the assumption that the hunts would take place and dolphins would be killed whether representatives from the industry were there or not. The premise is faulty because it ignores the fact that there is reason to believe that the industry's demand for captive dolphins is, in fact, the main factor that perpetuates the hunts and that, without the considerable economic incentives connected with selling dolphins for captivity, the hunts would have ended by now.⁴²

Defenses taken as a whole evidence of 'vice harms the doer'

While each defense of the drive hunts is problematic on its own, when we look at all of the defenses together, they form a striking collection of illogical thinking and self-serving statements that could not hope to persuade an impartial audience. In addition, they are offered by highly educated individuals whom we would presume to be unusually intelligent. Masayuki Komatsu, for example, graduated from the elite Tohoku University, holds an MBA from Yale University, has had a distinguished career in the Japanese Fisheries Agency, and is one of Japan's most prominent international negotiators regarding whaling. Similarly, Takumi Fukuda is the fisheries attaché at the Japanese Embassy in Washington, and Timothy Desmond is CEO of Ocean Adventure theme park in the Philippines.

⁴² Ibid., p. 62. The Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society contends that 'as Japanese prefectures appeared to be on the verge of abandoning the hunts, the demand for live animals to supply a growing number of marine parks and aquaria is emerging as a primary motivating factor for the drive hunts to continue in Japan' (Vail and Risch, *Driven by demand*, p. 7; see also, pp. 15–16).

Why, then, do we have such intelligent individuals offering defenses of the drive hunts that an objective audience would find patently unpersuasive? I believe that the best explanation is that this is precisely the sort of harm that Socrates has in mind when he claims that vice harms the doer.

Socrates contends that the consequence of vice is that a desire for something grows so strong that satisfying it is more important than perceiving reality accurately, dealing with uncomfortable truths about a situation and respecting the canons of logic. With the drive hunts, different desires may motivate different individuals to defend the hunts (simply to do what one wants, to increase feelings of national pride, to make money, etc.). However, what the desires have in common is that they all have become so strong that they have weakened the force and role of the intellect in all of the defenders. Given the seriousness of the issue at hand – the life and death of self-aware beings – to ignore relevant scientific research and the ethical implications of such evidence, to advance plainly fallacious arguments and to believe that such weak reasoning is a legitimate and persuasive defense of the drive hunts must surely count as serious harm to one's intellect. As in the case of Callicles, either the defenders' ability to think rationally has been weakened, or the pull to satisfy their desires has become so strong that their intellect has lost any independence as a faculty for perceiving reality and rational analysis. And this is precisely the sort of harm Socrates would predict from unethical actions.

The Relationship to Human Violence

This chapter has described a significant example of harm to humans that stems from abuse to non-humans – the internal harm done to the defenders of the Japanese drive hunts of the sort predicted by Socrates’ idea that ‘vice harms the doer’. Unfortunately, the human harm that results from the drive hunts is not limited to the defenders. They only defend what others are doing in killing and capturing the dolphins involved. So it is fair to say that the principals also experience the same sort of harm

Moreover, the drive hunts are only one instance of the vast amount of ethically indefensible treatment of dolphins that daily takes place on the planet. Thousands of dolphins are killed or injured in connection with other human fishing practices, and hundreds of dolphins are kept in captive entertainment facilities. In each case, some individuals inflict the harm directly, some defend it and others are entertained by it. A strong desire of one sort or another either weakens or overpowers the intellect of the individuals involved so that they become blind to the ethically questionable nature of their own actions. Like the defenders of the drive hunts, they may rationalize their behaviour and truly believe that their actions produce more good than harm. Perhaps, as is true of many defenders of captivity, they even believe that their actions benefit dolphins. But it is fair to think that, if Socrates is right, each person has been harmed in a way that only increases the likelihood that he or she will become chronically calloused to a wider range of unethical behaviours among humans.

For example, much human violence is based on the belief that superficial differences – race, sex, sexual orientation, nationality, tribal membership, religious beliefs – signal that those who are ‘different’ are actually ‘inferior’. Such differences,

then, are regarded as justification for treating ‘different’ people however we choose to. The defenses of unethical behaviours towards dolphins surely only reinforce the sad belief that ‘different’ means ‘inferior’. There is little difference between dismissing as irrelevant the intellectual and emotional capacities of dolphins and killing them because they are members of an ‘inferior’ species and dismissing the intellectual and emotional capacities of a particular group of humans and killing or discriminating against them because they are members of an ‘inferior’ group.

Nonetheless, we humans have repeatedly demonstrated the capacity to recognize as equals beings whom we once saw as inferiors. I believe that humans currently stand in roughly the same relationship with dolphins as white Americans did to Black slaves two hundred years ago. During the last two centuries, science and culture were gradually able to transcend the racism that constrained them to see other people only as property. There is, then, reason to be hopeful that, eventually, our species will overcome the cultural, economic, and political forces that limit our perspective about other beings with whom we share the planet. It will take patience and persistence, but it is surely not too much to hope of a species that regards itself as ‘intelligent’.