

## Yuen, “The Bloody Connection Between Vampires and Vegetarians”

- Aim:** (A) Discover why it is morally wrong for vampires to drink human blood.  
(B) Demonstrate that for these same reasons, it is morally wrong for humans to eat animals

Q: Are vampires moral agents?

Moral agency has two requirements:

- Rationality
- Free will (because ought implies can)

Vamps have rationality: “The ability to deliberate well is difficult to obtain, but vampires can clearly envision a goal...and produce fairly intricate plans to achieve the goal.” (130)

Vamps have free will: “Free will is capacity to act in a way of our own choosing, without being forced by something external to ourselves.” (131)

-This definition of free will is contentious, at best

“If the blood of humans was the *only* thing that could sustain them, then we couldn’t say that vampires should not drink human blood.” (131)—but they do have alternatives, like animal blood.

Q: Yuen thinks that free will can only be compromised by ‘external forces’ like limited food choices and bad guys with guns to our head. How else could free will be threatened?

What about the strong *craving* for blood?

Yuen compares this to the addict’s compulsion to seek and use more heroin. Doesn’t this kind of compulsion threaten vampire freedom?

A: Maybe not.

1. Our intuitions might not let an addict ‘off the hook’ for doing bad things in order to obtain heroin—so they should let the vampire off the hook, either.
2. There are important differences between addicted compulsion and vampire craving—in the literature, vampires seem at least *capable* of restraint in crowded populations, whereas true compulsions cannot be resisted

Q: What are some possible moral justifications for vampires drinking human blood?

- 1) Preference/taste: Human blood is the most delicious among possible options
  - a. But saying that they *taste* better doesn’t guarantee that killing them is any less *evil*.
    - i. This response presupposes that human life is more valuable than the lives of ‘lower animals’ like rats. Why should we think this?
      1. The intrinsic value of human souls

## 2. Rationality

- a. Even if other animals can be said to be rational, humans possess the characteristic to a greater degree

2) Vampire thriving: A vamp cannot lead the best kind of life available to him w/o human blood

- a. It's far from obvious that peak *physical* potential amounts to peak *personal* potential. Steven Hawking serves as an example here.
- b. Multiple "maximal potentials" might be available
- c. Even if we're talking about some kind of 'spiritual potential', it seems intuitively false to say that this could justify killing innocents. It's unfair, arbitrary, etc.

SO: Vamps are moral agents, and they can't justify drinking human blood on the basis of taste, a fulfillment of max potential, or spiritual fulfillment.

Q: So what about humans eating meat?

-“Consistency also means that we should apply rules and justifications in a consistent manner. If I use an argument in one case, I must apply that same argument in every similar case, unless there are relevant differences.” (137)

It's wrong for vamps to eat us because “more unnecessary suffering is caused” than would be caused by alternatives.

Principle: It is wrong to anything that causes unnecessary suffering (esp. when there are alternatives available that cause less suffering)

-“It's not absolutely necessary for us to eat meat to survive” (138)

-“The efficiency of the factory farm keeps prices low, but the cost savings is at the expense of the quality of animals' lives” (139)

-“We are faced with yet another problem: the world-class vegetarian athlete” (139)

We have no excuse—or do we?

“Usually insanity is the result of a lack of blood for a vampire. When a vampire is insane, he or she cannot reason, and would be free of moral responsibilities not to drink human blood.” (140)

-They lose agency without some kind of blood. *Maybe* if we needed some minimal amount of meat to avoid this kind of insanity it could be justified. But do we, really?