Andrew Chignell

DANNY LENNON: Andrew, thank you so much for taking the time to join me on the podcast.

ANDREW CHIGNELL: Thanks for having me on. I'm happy to be here.

DANNY LENNON: Maybe just to clarify for people and give them some context for the rest of what we discuss. How would you introduce the work that you do, the areas you're involved with and a bit of generally who you are?

ANDREW CHIGNELL: Well, I am a Professor of Philosophy and Religion at the University Center for Human Values at Princeton. I taught at Cornell University for 12 years or so before I came here. I was, for a long time, interested mostly in the history of philosophy, relatively technical debates and ethics and epistemology in the 18th century. But when I got tenure as often happens to academics, you start to wonder whether there are other things you want to do than write papers and books that a very small group of people will read. And so that feeling of the kind of post tenure relevance crisis, along with some encouragement from some friends who had recently become vegans, and are sort of activists now, activists scholars, led me to think that I would try to teach some issues in the philosophy of food, both ethical issues and then related aesthetic and lifestyle

issues. So started a course with a colleague at Cornell called the Ethics of Eating. And it because Cornell has a large nutrition science program and an agriculture school and even a hotel and restaurant college it drew all of these students from across the university in ways that a philosophy class typically doesn't. And so it kind of caught on and I got more enthusiastic about it and interviewed people at the university and elsewhere and learned about as much of the empirical stuff as a philosopher plausibly could. And then finally, we put it up online as a massive open online course a few years ago, and had students from all over the world taking the course and interacting and then that finally led me into some actual research. So instead of just teaching, I'm now writing the occasional paper and editing, I have just co-edited a book with some colleagues called Philosophy Comes to Dinner.

DANNY LENNON: Maybe a good starting point, as is the case with a lot of these types of discussions is getting clear on some key terms and definitions and I think in this area where we're hoping to explore whether that's the ethics of eating, the morality question around veganism and so on, there are probably two terms that are often used interchangeably, I think colloquially by a lot of people. But are there important distinguishing definitions we should have between ethics and morals? And how should we view those terms in the context of this conversation?

ANDREW CHIGNELL: Yeah, that's a funny question, because George Will the columnist who is actually a Princeton grad, but when I was teaching this class at Cornell, I guess he sometimes looks around at what courses various universities are teaching and then kind of makes fun of the ones that he thinks are a bit frivolous or ridiculous. And he actually wrote a column partly making fun of the fact that there was an ethics of eating course at Cornell and I think that must be because he thought ethics means something like manners or politeness or something like that like where should you put the fork before eating dessert, that kind of thing. So that's not what the ethics of eating is about. Ethics I think is really has its origin in a Greek term. It's used synonymously in most contexts with morality, which is a Latin origin term, to mean something like rules of conduct that are right or wrong or point us towards what is good or bad. And so I tend to use ethics and morality more or less synonymously.

DANNY LENNON: One of the things that I think is interesting about this conversation, and I think you might have alluded to in your introduction, is that a lot of the time in the area of morality, we can certainly think of certain conversations and debates we could have purely from a theoretical or intellectual level, and they're certainly really interesting, but one of the things that gets introduced when we start talking about this in the context of food is that leads directly to very practical things that and choices and decisions we make on a daily basis. How do you think that changes if at all some of these conversations or implications over?

ANDREW CHIGNELL: Well, it has a much more sort of hands on feel to it. It's true that it's important to think about the ethics of war, or the ethics of abortion, or the ethics of killing those sorts of things. But these are not issues that we are forced to consider on a daily basis, whereas three plus times a day we consider what to eat. And so I think it's a particularly acute existential sort of connection when you start thinking of those choices as having ethical ramification.

DANNY LENNON: One of the real interesting aspects that I was particularly wanted to ask you about, Andrew, was one of the terms I think is used a lot in the conversation about the morality of producing food from animals is that one of the issues is the term unnecessary suffering. And I think that this is obviously a very important aspect to this. And when I started hearing different perspectives on this, there seems to be on one side, it was very popular and maybe one of the most popular areas is what may be kind of Peter Singer's perspective, at least of that if something has the capacity to suffer, it has moral rights, and I might be butchering that and maybe misrepresenting it, but that's, that's maybe like a bite size of that. But there's also another side and I think that there the whole conversation around on top of that capacity to suffer, there also needs to be autonomy or self awareness. And I think this I actually saw in some of the work that you've put out and particularly related to Kantian ethics, and I know that's a specific area of your work in the public and in an area of expertise for you. Can you may be out lie or outline those two separate different lenses we can look at this issue around suffering and the requirements for something to have moral rights?

ANDREW CHIGNELL: Sure, yeah. So you got it pretty much right about the utilitarian Peter Singer style position. So the thought is suffering is, or pain is really the only bad ultimately, and things that can suffer, therefore have a kind of moral standing. We shouldn't produce suffering without a morally sufficient reason. It looks to Singer and many other utilitarians like certainly our industrial farming practices with respect to animals do cause extensive suffering. It looks like we don't have a morally sufficient reason. I mean, pleasure and nutrition that we do get from eating animal products can be gotten elsewhere, and maybe the pleasure can't be fully acquired elsewhere. But it might be worth giving up, insofar as it's a great deal of suffering that it's causing. So the idea is just that little argument gives you the claim that at least participating in factory farming of animal products and consuming those products is wrong. But you're right that there is another big tradition in the history of Western ethics that's often associated with the Immanuel Kant, which doesn't look just at suffering as kind of the ground of moral standing or moral rights. So Kant is going to say that something like three ability to determine one's self in the world which you just called autonomy, rightly, is the basis of moral standing and so non-human animals, according to him, don't seem to have that kind of self-determining free rational capacity. And so insofar as they have rights, they're merely indirect rights. If they belong to somebody else, then you can't kill them or if killing or torturing animals would ultimately perhaps lead you to feel free to do the same to a human, then you shouldn't do it. So indirect rights for animals but not direct rights. And so there's a big debate right now among Kantian of which I am one as to whether there are other ways we can think of generating a kind of Kantian argument against killing and eating animals in a more direct way; a way that doesn't require ascribing to them implausibly the kinds of autonomy and reason that humans have.

DANNY LENNON: So based on that, where do you, where's your current position I suppose if you are saying you do identify on in a lot of ways with that Kantian side of things, but there are some aspects you think could also be that are useful to consider outside of that original framework? What are some of those that you've been thinking about our way your kind of current position based on that?

ANDREW CHIGNELL: So I said that the Kantians are looking for this kind of argument. But in fact I'm and that I work a lot on a Immanuel Kant but in fact, my ethical position is more broadly kind of utilitarian or consequentialist. So I do think that suffering is a sort of intrinsic bad, not that we always should seek to avoid it. I mean, when we have tooth problems, we go and allow ourselves to suffer in order to get a greater good. So there are all kinds of arguments about when suffering is justified. But I tend to agree more with the utilitarians that suffering on its own, if not justified in a morally sufficient way, is a bad that we should try to prevent.

DANNY LENNON: Which is presumably why that phrase, unnecessary suffering, is the key part of that discussion that it's not suffering that's for a greater good of something. It's something that could be outright avoided.

ANDREW CHIGNELL: Right. So it's hard to see what the greater good of the suffering that the industrial animal agriculture complex produces would be. Obviously, we do get some nutrition and we get some pleasure from eating animal products. But increasingly, technology is making it such that we can get almost identical pleasures, eating fake meat products. And I think the nutrition you'll know more about this than I do. But my sense is that the nutrition science community has more or less conceded that a purely vegan diet is across the entire lifespan is completely fine and sufficient, if done properly. So there's just no clear argument for what would justify causing or allowing or participating in all of that sentience suffering.

DANNY LENNON: I'm sure we'll talk about various different types of approaches in terms of production of animal products, and there's probably a spectrum of them. And we'll definitely get to that. But one claim I've heard on that side of, let's say, kind of ethical omnivore type claim that would be in response to the suffering pieces, something to the effect of, well, if we have an animal that lives let's say a happy life, or whatever that means for the animal a happy life out in pasture. They're living normally. They're not suffering day to day with any cruelty, anything like that. And then at the end of or what we determined is going to be the end of their life when they're going to go to let's say, a slaughterhouse, yes, there's going to be some degree of suffering. But there's the suffering that occurs at that acute time period. Is that going to be necessarily more than let's say

if that animal was living to a point of natural death and they they're going to die by disease or old age or injury or animals that are hunted by other animals in the wild and so on that how do we weigh out that suffering that there's a claim or a conversation around that. What is being your typical response to those types of arguments?

ANDREW CHIGNELL: Yeah, so there are all of these efforts to defend happy meat or happy animals in just the way you're suggesting someone like Joel Salatin, for instance, very prominently. And there, I mean, so let's suppose we're sticking with the utilitarian picture according to which suffering is really the only bad thing. There you might think there's not that much suffering going on. But we have to remember that, for one thing, these animals are having their lives cut off extremely early. So if not being able to live out your normal lifespan counts as a kind of loss or harm, then certainly these animals which are killed effectively when they're adolescence are suffering in that way. And then as you say, there's going to be in the various kinds of processing, especially towards the end of their life, certain kinds of suffering that are just unavoidable, and measuring that against the kind of suffering that they might incur if they were allowed to live out their natural lifespan and then die is maybe a bit misleading because, in fact, these animals just wouldn't exist if there wasn't the market for meat and animal products. So there wouldn't be any suffering at all. They wouldn't come into existence. And so there wouldn't be all of the resources being used to husband them, as well as the various sufferings that they do incur at the end of their life. And so I think on the whole, it still looks as though from the point of view of even just the suffering considerations. When you look at the environmental effects, the health effects in human beings eating too many animal products, and then the suffering that even so called happy meat still undergoes. The cumulative conclusion has to be that it's better not to participate in that.

DANNY LENNON: One of the aspects that I mentioned to you before we started recording was with my own internal dialogue of trying to think through some of these questions that I had previously avoided doing and saw that maybe I was being inconsistent with what I said, I believed or things I do think I believe, but in terms of my behaviors in relation to diet, for example, and as someone who would hopefully classify themselves as a rational person, or at least

I'm a fan of rationality, that kind of strikes me as again, quite a big contradiction when we think about what rationality actually is and having consistency across our thinking just for maybe, again, for clarification purposes for people, how would you encourage people to think about what it is to make rational choices and obviously, within the kind of context we're talking about here of our diet, but just in general, what rational thinking even is?

ANDREW CHIGNELL: That's a big question for me. I mean, there's a whole sub-field on the nature of rationality, obviously. But I mean, I think the very straightforward answer is just an effort to be consistent to follow evidence in the manner that you often do on this program evidence based discussions of health impacts, and nutrition and so forth. So I think insofar as we have a lot of evidence that there is all sorts of harm being caused by a certain industry, and we have evidence, pretty clear evidence that even top level athletes don't need the products from this industry and extremely good evidence that the environmental externalities caused by this industry are profound and dangerous. Rationality should just lead us to try to at least cut down. That's one thing I want to emphasize I myself, I think of myself as sort of vegan flexible. So I'm not militant. I do sometimes participate in activist contexts and various actions. But if my grandmother is going to make her meatloaf on a Sunday afternoon for all of us, I then sort of weighed up a little bit and I think rationality points maybe in the direction of going ahead and enjoying it because she's made it and that the harm caused to her by with insult might be worse than any harm that would be prevented making a big point in. So I think we have to be reasonable. I also think rationality might indicate to some people that the thing to do is just to reduce. So if it looks like stopping altogether is going to be impossible, and it is very hard. I mean, cheese is wondering And then the rational thing to do might be to just sort of reduce one day a week try to eat vegan or eat vegan before 5pm and then have a carnivorous evening meal or something like that. So I think rationality can also be a gradualistic sort of recommendation instead of just an all or nothing one.

DANNY LENNON: I think that's incredibly useful perspective for people to hear, because I find that so often something that's been communicated to me by other people is certainly things I've seen that people that are

well meaning within the vegan activism community, and this is, I would say, a small proportion, but still a meaningful one is that there's a sense from some of the messaging that there's never a point that's good enough unless it is completely vegan all the time. And so for example, if we're talking about if you are doing some or making some of these choices for ethical reasons around how animals are treated and suffering and so on. If someone does come back, and let's say they're mainly vegetarian most of the time, then there will be this claim, well, that's just as irrational as being eating whatever you want, because there's still suffering that goes into it. So the fact that you're vegetarian is not consistent with what you're saying or doing. So there's never this point of any congratulations unless it's either all in or nothing. And again, I must say that is probably a minority position, but it's something that some people do you feel and so then the obvious thing for a lot of people to conclude is, well, if I have to be do that all the time perfectly, then what's the point doing it at all. And so sometimes that messaging can do more harm than good, right?

ANDREW CHIGNELL: Yeah, I think you're exactly right. I mean, the studies suggest that most people when confronted with that sort of absolute picture will tend to despair in the way you're just suggesting. And some people will even be so irritated because it produces a kind of cognitive dissonance that they go out and like, intentionally eat a bunch of meat just to sort of make a point. So I think a wise vegan who's concerned about the consequences of their activism would also be sensitive to the fact that that kind of absolutist militant talk can sometimes backfire. So yeah, I think look like there might be some sort of an ideal and there might be some people who are called to that ideal. I think there are different things we can do in our lives to promote different sorts of moral ends. And some people feel particularly strongly about this one, but surely, for others who are sort of focused on other things. There might be a gradualistic approach that could also be ethically impressive. So I think we just have for both pragmatic reasons and I think from the point of view moral rationality, something like let's do our best but not be too hard on ourselves if we don't go all the way is an appropriate approach.

DANNY LENNON: Yeah, I think that's, again, going back to what we had said earlier about there's probably the lens of looking at this pragmatically. And there's also the lens of a theoretical discussion around the morality of this, which actually might be a bit more clean caught than what we can actually do as flawed beings that we we all inherently are.

ANDREW CHIGNELL: That it's actually, sorry to interrupt that is just one that is one place where sometimes people will make a distinction between ethics and morality. So morality would give you the kind of universal rules that you ought in some ideal sense to follow, whereas ethics is a little bit more situational. It's about character. It's about sort of local development of virtues, that kind of thing.

DANNY LENNON: So if the suffering and the pain is at the center of the moral issue here then is there other cases that we could consider that the killing or death of animals is actually not a problem? It's not an immoral thing even for someone who would be, let's say, a vegan or eating for animal purposes. I think the most obvious example people give us something like roadkill where where the animal is already going to be dead. So there's maybe not the same moral issue there. It's not the eating of the animal. That's necessarily the problem. It's any inherent suffering that was caused. And I'm wondering about other issues, like, there's the killing of animals for pest control reasons, for example. There's the hunting of wild animals for conservation, etc. Where do these kind of fall along that spectrum of trying to consider this from an ethical and moral issue perspective?

ANDREW CHIGNELL: Yeah, those are good questions. I mean, I think if you're going to do a sort of evidence based approach and you're thinking about overall harm or suffering, then there will be different answers in different cases. So sometimes in self-defense we think it's okay to inflict suffering. So if an animal is attacking you, or if a bunch of animals are somehow threatening a group of humans then you might think that justifies producing suffering in them. You might think that calling a deer herd like in suburban New Jersey right now there seem to be deer literally taking over to the point where it's dangerous for motorcyclists. I drive a motorcycle and I'm constantly terrified of deer. So you might think if we can humanely hunt them in ways that reduce the suffering as much as possible, then that seems acceptable and I would myself actually eat such

venison if it were able to be provided. If there were “Roadkill ‘R Us” stores you know where people pick up roadkill and make it palatable, I would certainly eat that kind of thing too. So I think it's usually the big industrial sorts of operations that are the real problems. And that's still where we get 99% of our animal products. And so I think effective altruists, people who are really looking at the data and wanting to make as big a difference as possible would focus most of their efforts on that sort of thing.

DANNY LENNON: Right. And I totally accept that question is more just out of interest rather than having any implications, for example, how I would eat or most people that are in the process of making decisions around this, that that's not where the center of the bullseye is. As you say, we know where most food products is going to be produced. And I think the the big issue is, of course, I think there's going to be a large degree of acceptance and agreement even with people who eat omnivorous diet. If you ask them what do you think about factory farming at a large scale nearly all the time, people's initial kind of response is always oh, yeah, that's terrible. I would never want to support that. But the kind of problem becomes in how much of those actions get backed up by that and trying to eat, let's say, even if we were to accept some of the ethical animal husbandry practices or sustainable farming, that that is better if we were to accept that. Still trying to do that practically, is not an easy thing to do and it's probably maybe in many ways can be even more difficult than adopting a vegan diet, let's say if you're going to restaurants or so on. So I think there's a few kind of interesting nuances to that whole area.

ANDREW CHIGNELL: Yeah. It's very hard to be to find a transparent supply system. I mean you can go to various supermarkets and they'll tell you that this is humane or this is local. But it's not always clear that those things are right and it doesn't, it's not clear what humane means to different people. And so I suppose if you know the farmer and you go to a farmers market and you're aware of the whole process that might be one way of making sure. But a lot of times it's just very difficult to tell and so sometimes going vegan is just sort of erring on the safe side.

DANNY LENNON: One of the big topics in this area tends to be around the concept of speciesism. Maybe before I asked about that, could you just clarify again for people, what that term essentially means?

ANDREW CHIGNELL: Yeah. speciesism is a term that's now used among ethicists to mean something like it's basically the counterpart of racism or sexism. So it's the thought that a particular species has moral standing and rights and deserves advantages that other species don't. So whereas I think most people would say they are not racist or sexist, or at least they're trying not to be, I think most people would say they are speciesist.

DANNY LENNON: And so where this kind of fits into this conversation? There's probably two areas I'd like to ask about one, I think is on the side of people who would say that they are speciesist or at least they would say that they hold human beings as something completely separate to all non-human animals, and therefore we can try and put any of the moral rights we have on to animals, and we shouldn't need to view it in those terms. Typically, some of the arguments for that position would be around that, well, we are the only species that have these faculties of higher cognitive executive function. We have emotional reasoning. And so just because we have those, does that number one put some sort of duty of care on us to the rest of the animal kingdom? If so, why is is that the case? And then I think as a natural extension from there knowing that we know there is interspecies killing in the natural world going on all the time. The only reason that we're saying it's unacceptable for us to do so would be the fact that we have those cognitive functions to understand that in the first place. So I know there's a lot going on there. But where would you typically think about some of those arguments?

ANDREW CHIGNELL: Yeah, good. So it seems like maybe there are three points to make there. The first would just be that the anti-speciesist is not claiming that we're the same as all of the other animals. I mean, obviously, we're not. What they're saying is that our suffering is no worse or better than theirs or no more important, I guess, than their. So insofar as it looks like they are sentient, and they're capable of at least certain kinds of suffering, then that's something we should take morally seriously just as we would if we were suffering exactly those things. Of course, we can suffer more, because we're aware of

it. And we're sort of reflective, and we can be degraded and be aware of our being reduced to our mere biology. Those kinds of suffering are sophisticated. And so that's the kind of thing that we can undergo, and they can't and so we need to take that kind of suffering seriously as well. But we don't ignore the fact that they can suffer on some sort of an arbitrary speciesist grounds. So that's one thing. The thing about the duty of care. Yeah, I think that look, I mean, in religious traditions, there will be explicit commands coming from the authorities from the scriptures, from God, about how we are on the one hand, God's vice regents can have a certain kind of standing over and against the rest of creation, but the standing involves that kind of stewardship obligation as well. And so we're supposed to take care of creation rather than just manipulated and exploited. But even outside of religious traditions, you might think, insofar as we're the animals that have evolved these amazing brains and language and reason and technology, and so forth, that comes with all kinds of amazing benefits, but also certain kinds of responsibilities. And so it's up to us in some way that it's not up to the other animals to take care of the broader sort of ecosystem and think about things from a larger perspective. And then the last thing about the carnivores out in nature. So that's actually an interesting debate, a rather tendentious debate among philosophers working on animal issues. So there are some people one person named Jeff McMahan, who has a New York Times piece and then a piece in a book that I edited Philosophy Comes to Dinner, arguing that if we could and that is really important, because we can't right now, and it's not clear we ever will be able to. But if, theoretically, we could sort of change the genetic makeup of the carnivores such that they transition in the way that panda bears did to becoming herbivores, then we should, because the suffering that they're causing, is probably worse than the suffering that we're causing in our industrial farms. I mean, it's horrible the way that some of the animals in the wild die. So some utilitarian philosophers or others will be very consistent and say, we should try to prevent suffering where we can. So if we can do this, and be sure it's not going to cause a huge amount of other harm by like destroying the trophic cascade or something, then we ought to do it. Other people will say, that's a science fiction scenario that isn't really worth thinking too hard about and at the moment, we simply

shouldn't mess with it what's going on out in the wild and take care of what we can control namely our own behaviors.

DANNY LENNON: So one of the areas that also if we just focused on non-human animals is a very actually rational position to hold and that often will get talked about in activism settings would be, we typically, at least in the Western world, in for a lot of, let's say rights or how we treat certain animals, mainly domestic pets like dogs and cats, we treat them a certain way and think of the cruelty or suffering of those as absolutely abhorrent but we don't apply those same moral rights and privileges to something we don't think of a pig in that way. We don't think of a trout that we're fishing or any other type of animal that we produce food from. And so with those types of conversations, I think that's an absolutely clear point to make purely on rational grounds, and the reason why we obviously most of us don't tend to think that way why we do think, or why we're more disgusted by seeing mistreatment of a dog, let's say then maybe fish is because of these emotional responses that we've been conditioned to, mainly through our culture and what we've been associated by. So when it comes to a moral discussion, do these kind of conditioned cultural responses play any role or is the goal for a moral discussion to make that purely on a rational basis and take out our emotional, cultural natural response has been conditioned upon us?

ANDREW CHIGNELL: Yeah, that's good. I mean, I think sentimental education is really more important in moral change than rational argumentation. So I think if you look at the history of the expansion, really of our sense of who is morally important a lot of times what changes is, we see that people of this race or this gender or this nationality or whatever, also suffer in certain ways. We see in their eyes the same kind of concerns that we have. So I think you can have a bunch of rational arguments, but sometimes seeing and understanding and empathizing in a sentiment based way with the suffering of other creatures is what really changes people. And so the analogy to pets is a great one. I mean, we all know that pigs are probably smarter than dogs. And although fish are very different from us, and so in that sense, maybe we're more able to treat them inhumanely. There's a decent amount of ethology about fish pain and the lives of fish that suggests that they have relatively sophisticated capacities

to feel pain and to suffer. So I think you're right that it's the changing of our empathy based concern that is ultimately going to make a difference for animals. That can be motivated by rational argumentation. But I think philosophers would be foolish to think that it's just a bunch of arguments that's going to make the change.

DANNY LENNON: I'll bring it back to the overarching question that all this conversation is couched in and from a personal perspective, I'm just interested in what would your kind of current response be if I were to ask you that for me, someone that has, let's say, the sufficient amount of nutritional knowledge that I could eat a vegan diet and avoid nutrient deficiencies, I could be perfectly healthy on that type of diet. I'm also someone living in the Western world in a relatively wealthy country and have the resources to be free to make choices about food. I'm not worried about food security and other things. Given that I have those two conditions, is it immoral of me to continue to eat an omnivorous diet?

ANDREW CHIGNELL: You really want me to condemn you?

DANNY LENNON: Please do.

ANDREW CHIGNELL: I think that those to whom much has been given more is required. Yeah. So I think that you have the sort of education and ability and resources that a lot of other people don't. And so you should think about these things in a serious way. And I think ultimately should reduce your consumption of animal products. I think it's important what you said though about the nutrition, a lot of people will be like, especially some of your athletes who listen to this podcast will immediately start talking about protein, but it's now very clear, the American Dietetic Association itself has come out with a statement over 10 years ago now saying it is our position that appropriately planned vegan diets can be nutritionally adequate across the lifecycle. So I think for health reasons, for environmental reasons for animal sorts of reasons, someone in your position and my position should morally be trying to reduce. Yes.

DANNY LENNON: And so the final question to come from that because I know there's probably many people listening that either are in a similar position to myself, or maybe this conversation will start them thinking about some of this stuff. Given that you mentioned how some of your

journey into this area was through friends introducing you to certain ideas. Then you start teaching this and started looking at this from some of a philosophical perspective. What were some of the maybe some of the questions that you grappled with early on that you found particularly useful to reflect on when either making decisions in this area personally? Were there any particular things that were either that you thought were useful or that were lightbulb moments or really things that, in other words, if you were to suggest some questions for people to personally reflect on, what would be a couple that might be particularly useful?

ANDREW CHIGNELL: Well the one we were just discussing to what extent do you have the sort of resources and background and ability to try to act on some of these considerations. I think a lot of people will engage in what about-ism, where it's like, well, what about this or what about the fact that there are a lot of poor people who can't do this or what about the fact that there are nomads, somewhere who need to hunt, something like that. Those are good philosophical impulses to think about. Can these recommendations be universalized for everybody those kinds of considerations, but ultimate for most of us in the relatively affluent Western context, those what abouts are distractions and I think we should own up to the fact that, especially now that there's beyond meat and impossible burgers and an amazing array of vegan cheeses that are increasingly difficult to distinguish from the real thing, we just don't have a good excuse not to at least try to reduce. I think that's something that I slowly came to after I did a lot of “what-abouting”.

DANNY LENNON: And with that, Andrew, let me say thank you so much for this discussion. I've really-really enjoyed talking to you and I do really appreciate your time. So thank you so much for doing this.

ANDREW CHIGNELL: Thanks. It's an honor for me as well. I really appreciate you having me on.