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Question 1 (Kant)

The reading “Duties towards Animals” by Immanuel Kant goes into detail about animals, how humans should treat animals, and how our actions towards these beings can determine our moral character. His reading states, “If a man shoots his dog because the animal is no longer capable of service, he does not fail in his duty to the dog, for the dog cannot judge, but his act is inhuman and damages in himself that humanity which it is his duty to show towards mankind. If he is not to stifle his human feelings, he must practice kindness towards animals, for he who is cruel to animals becomes hard also in his dealings with men. We can judge the heart of a man by his treatment of animals” (Kant, 527). This quote is important because it underscores the point Kant makes regarding how the immoral acts, we do to animals do not directly affect them, because they do not have any moral status, and states that even though there might not be any repercussions for harming non-human animals the moral, or right thing to do would be to not harm non-human animals for no apparent reason. Also, Kant believes that what we do to animals does not directly affect them, because they do not have any moral status and cannot judge, but rather it affects the human's morals instead which leads to the development of one's character for the better, or the worse. For example, one instance of this development being negative is when Kant describes the pattern of effect from the engravings which starts from a child pinching the tail of a dog or a cat, and then transitions to a grown man in his cart running over a child, and then murder. If animals were to obtain moral status would this ideal change or are there any instances where this can't work like warfare.