

# Vegetarianism

Post by “Don” of January 7, 2025 at 12:58 PM

Here's an excerpt from Alan Watts' essay "Murder in the Kitchen"

Vegetarianism, for example, is no solution. Years ago the Indian botanist Sir Jagadis Bose measured the pain reactions of plants to cutting and pulling. To say that plants don't really *know* that they are in pain is only to say that they can't put it into words. When I pointed this out to a strictly vegetarian Buddhist, the famous Reginald H. Blyth, who wrote *Zen in English Literature*, he said, "Yes, I know that. But when we kill vegetables they don't scream so loud." In other words, he was just being easy on his *own* feelings. Buddhist and Hindu monks have carried the attitude of *ahimsa*, or harmlessness, to the extreme of keeping their eyes on the ground when walking—not to avoid the temptations of lovely women, but to avoid trampling on beetles, snails, or worms that might lie in the path. Yet this is at root an evasion, a ritual gesture of reverence for life which in no way alters the fact that we live by killing.