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**Are Humans the only Rational Animals?**

**Abstract**: While many philosophers endorse the claim that the capacity for rational thought is what sets apart humans from other animals, cognitive ethologists and other empirical scientists show little hesitation in describing animal behaviour as rational. There is thus a tension between the conceptions of rationality and rational agency commonly endorsed by philosophers and empirical scientists. Understanding the source of this tension requires, in the first instance, clarity on what is meant by the term ‘rational’. I distinguish between different notions of rationality, and I individuate the one that matters for assessing the suggestion that humans are the only rational species in one that links rational agency with the capacity for reflection. Under this characterization, only agents who are able to assess and evaluate their reasons for belief or action count as rational. Focusing on epistemic thinking, I outline a characterization of the distinction between reflective and unreflective agency which allows the testing of some basic form of reflective thinking in non-linguistic subjects. I conclude with some considerations on the relation between the rationality of human and non-human animals.