

THE RELEVANCE OF SPECIESISM TO LIFE SCIENCES PRACTICES**ROGER WERTHEIMER**

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ABSTRACT

Animal protectionists condemn speciesism for motivating the common practices they condemn. This misconceives both speciesism and the morality condoning those practices. Actually, animal protectionists can be and generally are speciesists. The specifically speciesist aspects of people's beliefs are in principle compatible with all but the most radical animal protectionist proposals. Humanity's speciesism is an inclusivist ideal encompassing all human beings. It is not an exclusionary ethos opposed to moral concern for nonhumans. Anti-speciesist rhetoric is akin to anti-racist rhetoric that condemned racists for regarding people as moral inferiors just because of their skin color. Actually, racists never thought that skin color is itself a reason for discounting someone's interests, just as human beings have never thought that only a human being can be a proper object of moral concern. Some speciesists have great concern for animal suffering; some don't. Animal protectionists have yet to show that a lack of concern is due to some false assumptions.

Much human activity harms nonhuman animals. We routinely target them for foodstuff and apparel, as experimental subjects and objects of sport. They may suffer even more as collateral damage from our onslaught on the world we both occupy. The life sciences contribute to all the harm by their means of acquiring knowledge of the mechanisms of life and still more through the applications and other consequences of that knowledge.

Protests against human activities harming animals have become progressively more popular and influential. This essay is studiously noncommittal on specific proposed reforms of common practices. Its subject is the role and accuracy of one recurrent premise of the critiques of popular practices. Criticisms of any practice may come from very disparate reasoning, with specific directives derived from competing, incompatible conceptions of morality that deny the legitimacy of each other's inferences. Despite their conceptual incompatibilities, ethical theories may come to close convergence – or wide divergence – on concrete reforms of our practices regarding animals, as they can be brought to converge or diverge on practical specifics on most other matters.

Along the way from competing great abstract generalities of principle to concrete particulars of action, animal protectionists unite with a shared conception of their common enemy. They premise that the popular moral indifference about animal well being is a consequence or expression of a prevalent moral prejudice these critics call "speciesism": a favoritism of, by, and for members of a species. This premise of animal protectionist rhetoric is erroneous and irrelevant. Animal protectionists misconceive the structure and content of humanity's morality. The specifically speciesist aspects of common attitudes may be compatible with all but the most radical animal protectionist

ideals. The explanation of the practices they want reformed lies elsewhere, so they needn't consider our concern for our conspecifics objectionable and indefensible. They'd do better to understand and confront what they're really up against.

Much that animal protectionists say about speciesism is unexceptionable. Certainly, our culture seems dominated by an ideology of our all being bonded by our birth into a species whose members are obliged to care for one another. Looked at in the large, our species seems naturally disposed to evolve an ideal of the species as a single family, with all members brothers or sisters who are naturally predisposed (upon normal development) to care for each other in ways that work to perpetuate the species' flourishing. This seems to be our human nature partly because it makes sense that things be that way. It seems that nature would favor the development of a species that markedly increased its chances of perpetuation by its members' acquiring a native propensity to care for their kind. Nature should also favor the development of a species that acquired the capacity and propensity to protect and promote the species by prescribing and praising the protection and promotion of, for, and by its members. However we came to have this nature, it seems a neat bit of intelligent design. However accidental its origins, it seems like it should work to perpetuate itself, unlike many other persisting species traits that may once have been functional adaptations but are no longer advantageous. It may not be the optimal design (whatever that might mean), but it seems good enough for now for us to be satisfied with this aspect of our nature.¹

This bit of arm-chair potted natural history makes no pretense of being any more than a plausible story. Even if it is sufficiently accurate, it doesn't entail that the speciesist principle is objectively true. No matter. The aim of this essay is not to demonstrate the

objective truth of our speciesism but only to make good enough sense of what people are believing and explain why it is not something animal protectionists have reason to condemn.

The critics' neologism "speciesism" has helped to fix attention on this conspicuous, basic, pervasive species-centrism of humanity's evolving morality that has matured in modern times. Many friends of speciesism have betrayed it by continuing to deny the critics' accusation that it clashes with our high culture's theories that profess to make systematic sense of humanity's morality. Previously, ethical theorists had claimed close concordance with humanity's morality while actually they had not given or really taken any account of speciesism, but instead fobbed off one or another ersatz principle and derived mankind's moral equality from some psychological properties of normal adult humans, like sentience, self-consciousness or rationality. Plainly no such property is universal in our species and perhaps none is unique to it.²

Our speciesist concerns have often been rationalized as responses to some alleged extra-empirical attribute of all humans, like inherent worth, dignity, or natural moral rights. But unless those attributions are themselves predicated on possession of some psychological capacities, they are comparable to their religious translations in terms of sanctity, sacredness, ensoulment, God's image, His children or the like. Such talk serves to *express* the idea of the moral brotherhood of humankind. It does nothing to justify the idea or explain how to make good, rational sense of it.

We're naturally drawn to justify favoring humans by looking for some property essentially and inalienably possessed by each human being, for that's the basic structure of justifications elsewhere. Such reasoning does speciesism no favor, for it fails to

appreciate that speciesism is the primary, fundamental principle of humanity's morality, and that it couldn't be fundamental if it were derivable from our possession of some other property, mental, spiritual or whatever, even if there were such a defining property. How to justify a truly fundamental principle, in morals, math, logic or elsewhere has been an unsolved puzzle for a few millennia. Among the few certainties is that such truths cannot be proven like a theorem, corollary, or subordinate, derivative truth.

Ethical theories about persons (psychologically specified) cannot match humanity's morality because of the conceptual and metaphysical independence of biological categories from psychological categories. Our psychological abilities and processes are explained by our biology, but they aren't defined or identified by them, so any human psychological ability or process could be possible or normal for creatures of some other actual or conceivable species. Conversely, our psychological processes may affect and partly explain some organic events, but they don't define or identify biological categories. Any *homo sapiens* could have been, what some of us are, a congenitally insensate human being, and anyone with a mind could entirely lose it, as some do. No human life has any experience necessarily.

Ethical theories and principles formulated in psychological, non-biological, terms depart from humanity's morality in their sense, and sanction significantly different practices and attitudes. The clash is most evident at the beginning of a human life, and again at its end, and also in the kinship discriminations structuring human life. The rhetoric of intra-speciesist debates on matters like abortion has exhibited a stable consensus over paradigm instances of human being and considerable continuing dissension about "marginal" cases. What – if anything – are the essentials to qualify as a

human being remains controversial.³ What is clear is that the qualifications ethical theorists propose for moral equality do not capture or closely correlate with the popular speciesist notion of humanity as essentially a biological kind.⁴

Theorists now appreciate that 'person' and 'human being' are distinct terms despite being freely interchangeable in most everyday discourse. Our religions tell us of spiritual persons; our legal systems recognize institutional persons; and our fictions, awake and asleep, are filled with nonhuman persons of every imaginable variety, biological and otherwise. A creature can be a person just because of its psychological capacities. So, ethical theorists define the term by psychological properties. Their paradigm of a person is a morally accountable agent with the sophisticated cognitive and motivational capacities for the self-conscious, rational self-control essential for morally accountable agency. The population of persons is expandable by reducing the requirements. The conception can be broadened to encompass any creature with a subjective life able to experience some benefits or harms.

Philosophies present competing conceptions of personhood, but each conception strives to be unified. Meanwhile, in the language of our common culture and as formalized in our law courts, the term 'person' is disjunctive. An individual is a person, whatever its biology, just because of its psychology, and also, instead or in addition, just by being of our specific biological kind, whatever its own mental capacities. Our legal system allows withholding treatment of anencephalic infants – not by pretending that they are not human beings nor by deeming them non-persons – but only because of the futility of treatment. So too, for withholding or withdrawing treatment of those in a permanent vegetative state: the termination of their mental activity does not terminate their

membership in our biological species or their legal status as persons. (What some folks seem unwilling or unable to understand is that we may be obliged to terminate a human life out of respect for its being the life of a person in a permanent vegetative state.) And so also, many people recognize a zygote or embryo as a person without pretending it has some kind of mental life. Instead they suppose that a human life begins at conception (or implantation or the like), and *ipso facto* so does the life of a person. Whatever ethical theorists may say, no one in our judicial or legislative halls would seriously propose legally recognizing human embryos as human beings while denying that they are persons.

Humanity's morality, like the legal systems that evolved with it, is unequivocally disjunctive. It recognizes moral personhood on grounds of both minded agency and biological kinship. Human beings have never supposed that only human beings can be our moral equals. No society on record has lacked our current culture's propensity to imagine non-human persons – alter-specific characters like the crowd at a Star Wars cantina – whom we'd all recognize as our moral equals. (Such recognition is consistent with our triumphantly exterminating the congenitally homicidal, and shunning any persons, however harmless, incarnated in revolting globs of hermaphroditic pus.) Human beings everywhere, whatever their regard for the animals around them, seem to display a deep need to imagine – in fictions and fantasies, awake or asleep – our having moral relations with nonhuman agents. Our science fictions standardly assume, rightly I think, that our legal systems would readily recognize rationally self-controlled extra-terrestrials as persons.³

Such conceptions come easily because an agent competent to make contracts and commitments and thus be held accountable by us could properly hold us accountable.

Such competence for moral agency is a matter of psychological capacities other conceivable creatures might have. Moral agency and the moral standing it can demand cannot be monopolized by a biological species.

Humanity's speciesism is an insistently inclusivist ideal, not an exclusionary ethos. It is a concern for fellow human beings, not an innate or principled indifference or antipathy for nonhuman things.

When Richard Ryder coined the term 'speciesism' and declared that "[s]peciesism means hurting others because they are members of another species"⁵ he was free to play with words – if he was only playing games. He wasn't. (And if he were, we needn't play along.) He meant his term to be both pejorative and explanatory. He meant to be referring to the beliefs and attitudes actually motivating the common practices he condemned – and he meant it to refer to beliefs and attitudes that are vicious and indefensible. Ryder was wrong, and his error was not verbal. Rhetorically his verbal invention has been a boffo success.

Human beings (e.g., intro ethics students) can rather easily get befuddled into thinking that they've been doing something very wrong, and that there's something wrong with themselves. Taking advantage of that vulnerability might be justified by some consequent greater good. Still, getting people to wrongly accuse themselves is a nasty business, best to be avoided.

It might sometimes be justified. Animal protectionists condemn speciesism as akin to racism. Animal protectionist rhetoric models itself on anti-racist rhetoric. We've all heard (and perhaps ourselves uttered) the principle that discounting people's interests just because of their skin color is unjust and unreasonable. That principle is as true and

obvious and undeniable and thus rhetorically effective as it is irrelevant. It is irrelevant since racists have not been motivated by a moral absurdity about skin color. They have thought that (a) your belonging to another natural kind is a reason for not considering your interests the same, and (b) skin pigmentation is a prominent (albeit imperfect) indicia of human racial kind. Abolitionist and anti-racist rhetoric avoided attacking those two assumptions, for they are not obviously crazy like the ideas they foisted on racists. Anti-racist rhetoric has stayed far way from any suggestion that every biological kinship relation is in itself morally irrelevant. Ready acceptance of that premise is not to be expected from the great mass of mankind for whom the relationships of father, mother, brother, sister, son and daughter are the paradigm and strongest moral bonds.

Anti-racist rhetoric was sophistical but served a worthy cause. It helped motivate some people to cease their oppressive discrimination by inducing the misconception that they had been operating on an embarrassingly stupid, thoroughly senseless moral principle. They had actually gone wrong in their thinking, not by believing an absurd principle about skin color, but in thinking that the difference in kind was of a kind that really did and should matter. That idea is not so readily dispelled. It has taken a few millennia for educated people to rightly regard it as objective fact that race has little biological reality (we can and repeatedly do successfully interbreed) and even if it had more (e.g., if lineage lines were less entangled), we have no good reason to let it matter in our public world. Demonstrably, throughout our shared public world, whites and blacks and Asians can be equal partners in cooperative activities – political, commercial, religious, etc. – and their racial history is no reason not to. We all have compelling reasons for enforcing a race-blind society. It is more mutually beneficial, harmonious,

productive, efficient, just, and natural. Something is wrong with someone who can't get that. He's not just mistaken about some fact, and it may not be his fault, but there is something wrong with him as a human being.⁶

To have a role in political debate "speciesism" has to refer to some historically significant ideas or attitudes, so it can't be a belief that only a human being could be a proper object of our moral regard, or any idea like that. *Contra* Ryder, "speciesism" cannot refer to some principle or propensity to aim at harming things because of their not being human. On that definition speciesism is an aberrancy more anomalous than misanthropy. We meat-eaters generally have nothing against other animals. We hurt or subsidize the hurting of some animals because (e.g.) we relish the taste of their flesh. We needn't relish their gruesome slaughter. Actually, we mainly prefer not to think about that. Anyway, their being nonhuman is not what sets us going. It means only that we don't constrain our penchants as we would if their flesh were human. We may hate ants for their picnic intrusions and crows for attacking crops, but hurting cows because they aren't human is pathological, like helping Herefords because they are hooved. Accusing the Macdonald's crowd of being speciesists in Ryder's sense is demagogic bullshit, as nonsensical as it is and nasty.

Subsequent animal protectionists softened Ryder's language and accused our culture, not of malevolent sadism, but only some callous principled indifference. Actually, in the scholarly literature where speech is held to higher standards of precision, "speciesism" gets used and explicitly characterized in all sorts of inequivalent terms.⁷ Most commonly, critics include the concern for conspecifics I've described, but they add something more, some pernicious attitude toward animals. What's problematic then is

which of our attitudes are truly pernicious, which are truly directed at animals and which are truly speciesist.

Nature seems to favor our promoting concern for humans and treating the nonhuman world as a means to our individual and collective ends. Natural selection often favors a species preying on another species for food. It does not generally favor species sadism: there's rarely advantage for a species or its members to go out of the way "hurting others because they are not members of [their] species." Rather, nature would seem to favor us generally regarding the nonhuman things of our world with indifference except where and how it affects our interests. That's one tendency.

Nature also seems to have favored our being triggered to respond to conspecific distress by cues quite like those with comparable functions in other species. Like it or not, our normal healthy human sensibilities are prone to respond empathically to our sensing suffering and fully recognizing real pain in nonhumans as well as humans. We seem predisposed to condemn unmitigated cruelty and to suppose that something is wrong with human beings who sadistically delight in causing or observing another creature's suffering. Some capacity for cross-species sympathy appears in some other species. Perhaps our rationality and its essential capacities for abstraction, imagination and distantiation enable us – and make us liable – to experience a far more extensive, trans-species empathy. Evidently, among humans the propensity for such feelings varies widely.

Most often (more often than with humans) when we see a suffering animal and see that it is suffering, we don't see its suffering. We don't sense its pain or have any sense of its sensations. When we do sense it, we're liable to react with resonance and be

moved to ameliorate the suffering. Some of us are stimulated to make this a matter of policy calling for more than merely a random rescue of a stray kitty drowning in a swimming pool; they take up the cause of animal protectionism. Many of us prefer to avoid those sensations of vicarious distress. We'd rather not be bothered. Still, to be honest with ourselves and keep our integrity intact, we may prefer not to fool ourselves or allow ourselves blissful ignorance of the significance of our lives in the world, including the grisly facts of our food production. But we prefer not to dwell on all that. We're not interested in devoting greater attention and time and effort to being more sensitive to that sector of reality. Our sympathies may move us if we let them. But we see no need for that, no compelling reason to reschedule our priorities and restructure the economy of our consciousness.

Suffering can call out our compassion, not our respect. Enduring suffering with courage and dignity is worthy of respect, but the suffering itself is not something estimable or admirable. It confers no authority to command us to take more interest in the sufferer's interests. Of course a victim's injuries and death are evils for the victim. They needn't be bad for anything we care about. We may not have any interest in the victim's well being, and see no reason to take more interest. The victim needn't be human for us to have reason to take an interest, but whether and how the bare fact of its having interests is reason enough for all of us to take an interest has never been convincingly explained. (That is partly because the explanations offered compete and cancel each other out.)

Indiscriminate sympathy is not our only natural inclination regarding animals. Evidently, humans are prone to respond with affection and concern for "loyal" or "friendly" animals, and feel tugs to return their friendship and loyalty. When they provide

us some service, whether pulling a wagon, rescuing us from danger or providing comfort by their mere presence, a rush of gratitude may feel well-deserved and obligatory. The enforced dependency of pets understandably generates a sense of responsibility. And so on. Such responses to individual animals engender quasi-moral concerns, bonds, a sense of obligation. These relationships and responses are, however, as they are in inter-human affairs, individualized and personal, not generalizable reasons for concern for every animal of its kind.

Some human responses seem natural and appropriate regarding particular kinds of animals. We may be struck with awe at the sheer immensity of whales as we may with redwoods and mountains, and think them worth preserving for their awesomeness. With other animals it's their beauty, or intelligence or some other marvel whose value we recognize and whose wanton destruction seems a terrible waste.

None of these attitudes are inconsistent with a principled concern for human beings. Speciesism is not a principled opposition to caring for nonhuman things. There's nothing inhuman or unnatural in our being open to all kinds of concerns about nonhuman things, sentient and insensate, living and nonliving. Whether and to what extent we should concern ourselves with nonhuman interests (other than as a means to serving human interests) is not determined by our speciesism – at least not in any immediate or direct way.

Humanity's speciesism seems compatible with all but the most radical policy animal protectionists might advocate – and most every policy they oppose: it is logically consistent with all of them. Rabid animal liberationists can be, and doubtless some are, equally rabid fetal liberationists who condemn vivisection, factory farming, and the like

for the pain the animals endure and condemn abortion because they consider embryos human beings. If humanity's speciesism is as natural and generally beneficial as appears, vegetarians are likely to be speciesists at near the rate the rest of us are. After all, their rationale for solicitude toward animals almost always applies to humans as well, yet rarely does the quality and quantity of anyone's moral concern for animals (other than pets and the like) match their concern for humans with lesser mental capacities. Their speciesism explains their distinctive concern for their conspecifics with greater elegance and less strain than any philosophical invention, utilitarian, contractarian, or otherwise. As things are, animal protectionists drive themselves into deep denial about their own speciesist traits, and insist on implausibly interpreting their attitudes as motivated by some suppositious calculation that leaves them unembarrassed. Such self-distortion serves no one.

Most people reject the animal and fetal liberationist agendas, not *per se* because beasts and pre-babies aren't human (enough), but rather because they aren't like morally responsible ET's either, and their well-being has no other substantial enough basis for a claim on our concern, or so people suppose. We sense no ties that bind, no bonds of allegiance. Many of us are moved, some ways, to some degree, by squarely confronting the reality of the suffering we cause or contribute to by one means or another. Yet while our feelings may move us to make some minor adjustments, does cool reason compel us to coerce other people to endure (what they regard as) hardships for the sake of animals, or to allow others to coerce them to that end?

Perhaps some coercive measures may become clearly justified by our own individual or collective well being (e.g., due to the global resource inefficiencies of meat

diets.) As things are, animal protectionists cannot yet rely solely on that kind of derivative, incidental concern to make a compelling case for most of their reform agenda. More disinterested motivations are needed.

It may be that protectionist reforms would be less onerous for humans than is often imagined. We might all benefit from the nutritional advantages of a more vegetarian diet. Perhaps progress in the life sciences and product development need not be significantly impeded by further restricting animal experimentation. Perhaps the massive occupational dislocation due to animal protectionist reforms would be manageable. Perhaps the loss of certain pleasures is bound to be decreasingly onerous: much of taste is merely habit. Perhaps in a world ruled by animal protectionists, many people might grumble about various deprivations, but after suitable accommodations, few people could truthfully complain of severe hardship.

All that is arguable and relevant, yet even if correct those cost-benefit considerations aren't decisive. What may properly motivate compliance and eventual acceptance of a law needn't be enough reason to advocate and promote enactment of the law. People may properly protest imposition of a restriction when most of those to be bound by it don't want it and would reject it despite being well informed of its consequences. The fact (if it is a fact) that they would not resent the restriction if they had been raised under that regime does not warrant imposing it against their current well informed wishes. They may wish to remain as they are and may have no compelling reason to acquire a different constellation of concerns.

You may wish for the institution of the proposed animal protectionist reforms and sincerely advocate them without being energized to make significant sacrifices of time,

effort or assets. But could you cleanly hope for the reforms without caring about animals in something like the ways and degrees animal protectionists do? Animal protectionists frame their complaint as a moral indictment, that our harming animals is wronging them.⁸ For speciesists the issue is whether we should care about animals in the ways and degrees that animal protectionists do. Some speciesists do care; others don't. To fairly earn the current majority's support of the protectionist agenda they must be shown not just that the costs would be bearable but that people now have some compelling reason to acquire the concerns so they'd welcome the reforms. For many of us that would mean becoming someone else.

Many people have no wish to care more about animals, or to care about them as a matter of principle. They prefer not to linger over the bleak life and brutal death of the cow whose flesh they are savoring. They are vulnerable to reflexes of distressed compassion, horror and revulsion when an animal is writhing and wailing under their nose. They may acknowledge that their emotional life would be significantly blunted, blocked or twisted if they couldn't be touched by an animal's agony before their own eyes and ears. Still, they may ask: what's the evidence that we are missing something by not being much moved by a bare report of animal suffering, or that we should prefer living a life in a world of principled caring for animals in something approximating the way we care about human beings? It's a given that (barring our bungling) the animals we care for would be better off. Our question, however, is whether we should care about that. Would our own lives be better? Is there something wrong with us not much caring about other animals beyond those we are personally involved with?

Most of us live in a human world structured by speciesism, an environment objectively and experientially focused on inter-human relationships. What kinds and degrees of concern for animals would work out to be compatible with or promote the flourishing of our species seems a canyon-wide open question. Again, we may have reason to agree on some particulars, for example, to condemn sadistic intentions and to prohibit the conduct. Perhaps a deficiency below some minimal susceptibility to compassion for animal suffering is objectively deplorable, and a life devoted to relieving animal suffering may be admirable. Still, there might be nothing wrong with having only some minimal concern. Perhaps sometimes there is: some human lives are emotionally enriched by greater attention to animals. But is it likely that humans generally would be better human beings by acquiring a more generous concern for animals? At this point in the evolution of human knowledge, we seem far from really knowing any such thing.

Again, there need not be anything wrong with someone who wants a world where humans are more mindful of animal well-being. I agree that our world and we humans in it would be better off if we cared more about our world's well-being. The well being of my own world, however, is a richer condition than a reduction of sheer somatic pain. Somatic pain is the cost of the biological benefits of an organism's injury signal system, hardly the worst thing in the world. What matters fundamentally is the injury suffered, not the "experience" of the suffering expressing the injury. As things are, what actually most stimulates many people (animal protectionists and others) is all the wailing and writhing, the behavioral expressions, the perceptible signals of the occurrence of an experience that signals somatic injury. Here our natural sentimentality and lazy love of simplicity may get the best of us unless reined in by reason. Our real concerns can be

misdirected by fixing tightly on animal pains, the transient sensations, rather than the injuries or death sustained.⁹

So there may be some ways of going wrong about these matters. Yet much of it all seems undetermined and likely indeterminable. Consider: We do have reason to think something is wrong with racists who wish for a world where others felt as they do. But I'm not disposed to suppose that there must be something wrong with anyone dedicated to prohibiting abortion because she is gripped by a vivid sense of an embryo living a human life. I rather doubt that every fervent anti-abortionist is a defective human being, in some way a bad example of my kind. I see no prospect of real proof that she is flat out mistaken about some fact, empirical or moral or whatever. I know of no evidence that her horror of abortion must be abnormal, unhealthy, ill-informed, due to some corrupting prejudice or anything of the sort. Would our kind be better off by our all sharing (or being devoid of) a sense of an embryo as living a human life? Here it may be helpful to consider whether there has been any advantage in humans acquiring some predisposition on this matter. With the pre-technological limitations of our interactions with prenatal life there seems little room for any selectional pressures here. (Presumably the world of rational marsupials would differ in this.)

We don't have reason to think something is wrong with anti-abortionists or pro-abortionists who wish for a world where everyone else felt as they do. The abortion clinic vigils of anti-abortionists may merit some respect and sympathy and not just grudging tolerance – if the protesters can reciprocally sympathize with the resentment and indignation they stir when their protest turns retributive, insensitive, vicious. It's not just

their conduct but also their attitudes that get unreasonable and objectionable when they bethink themselves entitled to force themselves upon those who don't share their feelings.

Something like that may be true of animal protectionists. They may, quite understandably, feel that their deeply felt compassion is normative and those who lack it are somehow defective human beings. They may be right, but their literature hasn't yet identified and compellingly refuted any essential assumptions of the indifference and unconcern they condemn. In any case, all their railing against speciesism does nothing to advance their argument.

¹NOTES

Nature needn't be anthropomorphized or deified for it to favor some things over others. A reason why something happens is a fact favoring its happening, a factor contributing to its happening. The facts of nature, including the fact of the operation of principles of natural selection, may favor the development and perpetuation of biological species with certain traits.

² See my "Philosophy on Humanity" in R.L. Perkins, ed., *Abortion: Pro & Con* (Schenkman, 1974); reprinted in E. Manier, et. al., *Abortion* (Notre Dame, 1977.)

³ See my "Understanding the Abortion Argument," in *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 1971, Fall (I,1).

⁴ See my "Applying Ethical Theory: Caveats from a Case Study," in D. Rosenthal & F. Shehadi, eds., *Applied Ethics and Ethical Theory*, (Utah, 1988).

⁵ "Speciesism" in Rosalind Hursthouse, *Ethics, Humans and Other Animals*, Routledge, 2000.

⁶ I know no reason to suspect that something must be wrong with someone who is not race blind in his/her private life (e.g., in his/her sexual preferences and mate selection) or more broadly in those matters not properly regulated by political coercion (e.g., the beneficiaries of one's charity.)

⁷ I document this elsewhere with ample quotations. See my 2000, "Understanding Speciesism," presented at the 32nd Conference on Value Inquiry and Lund University.

⁸ This formulation is analytically problematic and may be morally misdirected. A conception of harming an animal as wronging it seems to call for talk of animal rights, a metaphor preferred by those devoted to making moral matters litigable. Talk of failure in one's duties to (and not just regarding) an animal is less worrisome but it needn't suggest that the animal is thereby wronged. Utilitarianism is challenged to capture the notion of being wronged as something more than being the biggest loser in the sea of an act's ill consequences.

⁹ Strict hedonists have a hard time making sense of a concern for animal death as the cessation of life and organic experience, and not itself another experience. We watch and feel an animal's agony and are

moved by those feelings to protest. What we feel at a creature's death is not a somatic replication of writhing or cringing or gritting or the like. We experience sheer loss, blank terror or horror or bewilderment: It's gone! That life is no longer there. It's the absence of the life that shocks and dismays, not the pleasures forgone.

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