

Original Article

**Special Relations, Special Obligations, and Speciesism**

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**Abstract:** This paper develops a general account of special relations and special obligations, and uses it as a framework to argue for a modest form of speciesism – mitigated speciesism – based on an understanding of species co-membership as a thick concept. Mitigated speciesism steers a middle ground between anti-speciesism and crude speciesism. Unlike anti-speciesists, I maintain that species co-membership is a morally relevant special relation, which indeed grounds special obligations among the members of the same species. But unlike crude speciesists, I argue that our special obligations to our fellow human beings do not warrant that we should always count their interests more than comparable interests of non-human animals. Instead, special obligations based on species co-membership are subject to three constraints.

**Keywords:** special relations, special obligations, speciesism, animal ethics

**Introduction:** In the ethics of marginal cases literature, special relations and special obligations often occupy an important place. Two types of special relations figure in the debate most prominently: family relations and species relations. Few scholars deny that family relations warrant special obligations to our family members, but they are divided on whether species co-membership should also ground special obligations which would give greater moral considerations to the interests of its members. One group, by understanding species co-membership in a certain way, gives an affirmative answer to that question; and the other group answers it negatively. The second group often accuses of the position of the first group as speciesism. According to Peter Singer, speciesism “refers to discrimination on the basis of species, not to discrimination on the basis of cognitive capacities”<sup>1</sup>. If x and y are members of the same species, that would count as a special relation between them and ground a special obligation to one another. That is, x has special obligations to y *simply because* Y is a member of X’s species.

This paper attempts to shed new light on the debate about speciesism by taking a close look at the propositions that each group is committed to. I distinguish between two forms of speciesism– crude speciesism and mitigated speciesism, and argue for mitigated speciesism and against both crude speciesism and anti-speciesism. My arguments build on the general account of special relations and special obligations that I will develop in the first two sections, in which I claim that one’s special obligations to others who share a group membership with him or her are subject to three constraints. Crude speciesism is wrong in neglecting the three constraints, and anti-speciesism is unacceptable in its overly narrow

interpretation of species co-membership and its denial that group co-membership can count as a special relation which ground special obligations. Mitigated speciesism, on the other hand, avoids the problems facing crude speciesism and anti-speciesism, and steers a middle path between them.

**Special Relations:** How we should define special relations turns out to be surprisingly complicated. We stand in a relation with almost everything. For example, everyone stands in a biological relation with his parents and siblings; every school child has schoolmates. When we go to work, we have colleagues. When we live in a place, we have neighbors. We also make friends with others. We share membership of the species *Homo sapiens* with other people. We share the same planet with all things on earth. After we have purchased a thing, we stand in an owner-property relation with it.

But what makes a relation special in the moral sense? There are at least two components of such kinds of relations: the specialty component and the moral relevance component. On the first component, we need to know what makes a relation special. One necessary condition for a relation to be special is that X stands in a relation with Y but not with Z. A special relation is a three-place relation: X stands in a special relation with Y only in comparison to Z. The comparative part grounds the “special” part of the special relation. X and Y have a relation, and X and Z could also have a relation. But what makes the X-Y relation special is that there is something in the X-Y relation that is not shared in the X-Z relation. In this case, we would say that X bears a special relation with Y relative to Z.

The other necessary condition for a relation to be special is the hierarchical structure of it. An adult man stands in a father-son relation with his son, which is not shared in his relation with his colleagues, so the father-son relation is a special relation for him. But his relation with his colleagues is not shared in his relation to his son either, meaning that his colleague relation is a special relation for him, too. But which one is more special when it comes to moral obligations? It seems that relations as characterized by group membership are different in intimacy and emotional attachment. Family relations are relations among family members, and family membership is more important than friend membership. Similarly, friendship seems to be a closer and more intimate relation than colleague relations, which are closer than relations with strangers.

Some types of special relation warrant special moral obligations, other types do not. If they do, they are morally relevant – they are special relations in the moral sense. Family relations may be the most typical examples of morally relevant special relations, as most of us agree that one has special obligation to one’s family members just in virtue of the fact that they are members of one’s family. More generally, if X stands in a morally relevant special relation with Y compared to Z, i.e., X stands in a closer relation with Y than she does with Z, then X has special obligations to Y compared to Z. If X has a morally relevant special relation with Z relative to W, then X has special obligations to Z compared to W. Like special relation, special obligation is also a comparative concept.

**Special Obligations:** There is little controversy that special relations warrant special obligations, but it is crucial for our purposes to understand what the scope and content are of special obligations that special relations warrant. If X has special obligations to Y compared to Z, does it mean that X should give priority to Y's interests over Z's, as commonly believed?

I believe the unrestricted version of special obligations cannot be justified. If an evil person chose to murder his neighbor's wife over his own wife, for instance, his wrongdoing is equally blameworthy as it would be had he chosen to murder his own wife instead, even though technically he was favoring the interest of his wife as a member of his family. He has equal obligation not to murder his wife as he does to his neighbor's wife, and his special relation with his wife does not make a difference in this case. So special relations warrant some kinds of special obligations, but not all kinds, and we need to impose some constraints on the scope and content of special obligations that special relations legitimately justify.

The first constraint concerns the scope of interests of relevant parties. If X has special obligation to Y relative to Z, X may have reason to give priority to X's comparative interests over Y's *comparative* interests, but it is not the case that *any* interest of Y counts more to X than any of Z's interests. For instance, when my child and a stranger's child have equal cravings for a piece of chocolate cake, my special relation with my child gives me a reason to prioritize his interest in getting the chocolate cake over the stranger's child's if the piece of chocolate cake could satisfy only one child's. However, at least in some situations, if the piece of chocolate cake could only satisfy my well-nourished child's cravings but can save the life of a starving stranger's child, morality seems to require the chocolate cake be given to the stranger's child<sup>2</sup>. This constraint shows that special relations do not give lexical priority to *all* interests of the person to whom we have special obligations. Some of his less important interests can be outweighed by more significant interests of others who do not stand in special relations with us, as in the cravings-starvation case. Lexical priority applies to comparative interests, but may not apply to cases where the interests of relevant parties are so different that morality requires special obligations be overridden. I will call it the comparable interest constraint.

The second constraint on special obligations is that special obligations are legitimate only in the private domain, but not in the public domain. By public domain I mean cases where public decisions are being made that involve or have an impact on public resources. Private domain refers to cases where decisions are only private, i.e., involve resources that are privately owned by the decision maker. The most typical type of public domain is public offices. Officeholders are morally (and legally) forbidden to distribute public resources in favor of those who stand in special relations with them compared to others. For instance, it is morally wrong to offer a job to one's adult child who is less qualified than other job candidates. Only privately owned resources could be subject to special obligations. I have reason to spend my own money on my child rather than others', but there is no moral reason for me to distribute public resources in my child's favor if I manage public resources. Special obligations are subject to the constraint of public justice.

The third constraint is the positive obligation constraint. Special obligations are positive obligations, as opposed to negative obligations. Positive obligations are obligations to do what is morally praiseworthy, and negative obligations are obligations to refrain from doing what is morally forbidden. For instance, our special obligations to our beloved ones should not be met at the cost of unjustly frustrating others' comparable interests. If a father could only save his starving child's life by robbing an equally starving stranger's child of her food, which will cause the latter to die of starvation, he would do the morally wrong thing if he robs her. This is different from the drowning case. When the two children are drowning and the father could only save one, his special obligations to his child warrant that he saves his own child rather than the stranger's child. His positive obligation to the stranger's child is overridden by his special positive obligation to his own child since both cannot be met.

The private domain constraint is relatively uncontroversial. When one in charge of public resources uses them in favor of those who stand in special relations with him, he is acting against public justice. No special relations could ever justify misusing public resources for the interests of those with whom he has special relations. The widespread policy on conflict of interests gives voice to this constraint.

The comparable interest constraint may be controversial. Some may deny that morality requires us to forgo insignificant interests of ours and our beloved ones for the sake of more significant interests of others to whom we do not have special obligations. If the comparable interest constraint is legitimate, then we would not even be permitted to spend 20 dollars on a movie to entertain ourselves or our children, which would otherwise save a life of a starving child somewhere in the world. This is a familiar objection that morality delivered by this constraint is too demanding. In response, I would say that morality does not require us to sacrifice all of our own insignificant interests (and those of our family members) for the sake of charity under all circumstances. When one is in a position that his benevolent action will have singly decisive and direct effect on a stranger's significant interests, as in the craving-starvation case, morality does require him to forgo his special obligation to the insignificant interests of those who have special relations with him. Imagine a child has a toy that could only be used by her father to save a stranger's child from drowning to death. Nobody else is around to help, and if the father does not act, the stranger's child would surely die. Despite his child's resistance to having his father take her toy, the father should act against her interest in keeping her toy and use it to save the stranger's child. Similarly, let's revise the 20-dollar movie case this way. Suppose you are on your way to buy a movie ticket for your child and run into a dying stranger who needs food and water to survive. Should you use your 20 dollars to buy food and water to save his life instead of moving on to get a ticket? There is little controversy that you should. If so, then the comparative interest constraint is indeed justified.

The negative obligation constraint seems also controversial. Isn't the case that we have more special obligations to those with whom we have close relations even in the negative sense? The answer is no. It seems equally forbidden for a person to harm those to whom he has

special obligations and those to whom he does not. If a man considers whether to murder his wife or his neighbor's wife and decides to murder the latter, the moral wrongness of his action will not be lowered by his choice. His neighbor's wife's interests are not less (and no more) protected than his wife's. Every morally capable agent has an equal obligation not to violate anyone's interests. When it comes to negative obligations, special relations do not seem to matter.

A more complicated case regarding special obligations involves the mix of positive and negative obligations. Since our positive special obligations to those who are closer to us can be overridden by our positive obligations to others, can our negative obligations to others be overridden by our positive special obligations to those closer to us? This is an issue that deeply divides traditional deontologists and classical consequentialists. Traditional deontologists insist that our negative obligations can never be overridden even if this would bring about better outcome. The trolley problem, organ transplant case, and similar thought experiments are all designed to reject classical consequentialism. It is not my intention to settle the dispute here. Rather, I merely want to point out that traditional deontological approaches face similar problems as classical consequentialism, because it does not seem right to say that our negative obligations to others should *never* be overridden by desirable consequences. In cases of moral catastrophe, it seems right to violate our negative obligations to others for the greater good. For example, if an individual has a highly contagious deadly disease and there is nothing we can do about it except quarantining him (and hence violating his rights to freedom of movement), we would be justified in doing that<sup>3</sup>.

However, even we accept the consequentialist principle that our negative obligations can be overridden, it does not mean that they can be overridden by our special obligations to those who are closer to us. Special relations and positive special obligations do not play a role in overriding our negative obligations to others. That is, our negative obligations to others can be overridden not because it will produce greater good to those who stand in special relations with us, but because it will produce greater good for anyone who will be potentially affected. Again, this is an issue related to public justice. If the basis for violating our negative obligations to others is built on our special relations with those who will benefit from that violation, morality would have a shaky foundation. This is actually the requirement of the private domain constraint on special obligations. We have no moral reason to violate our negative obligations to others *merely because* that will bring about greater good to those to whom we have special obligations. What matters are the interests of all those who will potentially be affected: whether they have special relations with us or not is not a morally relevant factor.

We have seen that our negative obligations and some of our positive obligations to others are not grounded in our special relations with them. And in the public domain, special obligations should not even be allowed a space. If there are moral obligations that are not grounded in special relations, where are they grounded? This is a contested issue, and I am not committal on any specific theory. However, I do think that there is at least one necessary condition for the grounds of non-special obligations – the capacity to suffer. I am using the word “suffer”

in a broad sense. Sufferings include pain, frustration, and other kinds of negative attitudinal states. As long as an entity possesses this capacity, there will be a reason not to impose avoidable sufferings on it, whether it bears a special relation to morally capable agents or not. Our positive special obligations to our beloved ones can be overridden by our positive obligations to prevent avoidable sufferings from happening to those with whom we do not bear special relations. The basis for our overriding positive obligations to them also lies in their capacities to suffer. The reason that every morally capable agent has for respecting an entity's interest in avoiding unnecessary sufferings is agent-neutral.

**Mitigated Speciesism:** The above account of special relations and special obligations provides a useful framework to think about the issue of speciesism. There are at least three propositions that are relevant to the speciesism debate:

- (P1) Species co-membership is understood as saying nothing more than being members of the same species;
- (P2) Species co-membership is a morally relevant special relation, which grounds our special obligations to our fellow human beings;
- (P3) Our special obligations to our fellow human beings justify us always giving greater moral weight to the interests of our fellow human beings than to the similar interests of other animals.

Anti-speciesists accept (P1) and reject (P2) and (P3). (P1) represents the anti-speciesist interpretation of species co-membership in the context of animal ethics. It seems to understand species membership in a minimalist way; that is, say, a being is a member of human species if and only if it possesses the biological features that are characteristic of a human being. This minimalist interpretation of species co-membership leads to the anti-speciesist rejection of both (P2) and (P3). For them, X's merely being a member of the human species in virtue of its biological features does not constitute a morally relevant special relation and entitle it to greater moral considerations of its interests. We do not give greater moral consideration to its interest *simply because* it is a member of human species. Speciesism in this sense is analogous to racism and sexism, which base the strength of moral considerations merely on one's skin color and gender, respectively.

Crude speciesists reject (P1) and accept (P2) and (P3). They reject the minimalist interpretation of species co-membership and read it as a thicker concept instead. Usually, they do not think that we give greater moral considerations to human interests *simply because* they are co-members of the same species in the minimalist sense. Rather, co-membership in the human species in the context of animal ethics can be understood as a misleading label for a thick notion such as personhood, human dignity, or communal relationship<sup>4</sup>. If human interests count more, that is only because of their personhood, dignity, or communal relationship that lower animals do not possess. Once they adopt a different conception of species co-membership, their arguments are no longer vulnerable to the charge of speciesism in the minimalist sense that anti-speciesists use<sup>5</sup>.

I believe both anti-speciesists and crude speciesists get things wrong. Anti-speciesists get it wrong when they reject (P2) and the thick concept of species co-membership. If they were right, our giving more considerations to the interests of our family members would hardly ever be justified. But crude speciesists are wrong to accept (P3). Even if we do have special obligations to our fellow human beings in virtue of their unique qualities or their special relations with us, this does not entail that we should always count their interests more in all circumstances.

Mitigated speciesists reject (P3) as well as (P1), and accept (P2). Like crude speciesists, mitigated speciesists view species co-membership as a thick concept: it means the sharing of qualities such as rational autonomy and self-consciousness, and some common values, commitments, emotional attachments, and social bonds, actual or potential. However, the main strength of mitigated speciesism lies in its rejection of (P3) by subjecting special obligations to the three constraints introduced in the second section. By rejecting (P3), it retains the plausible part of anti-speciesism; but unlike anti-speciesism, it does not reject (P2), which leaves it space to accommodate familism. I will spell out what mitigated speciesism is like by discussing each constraint in turn.

Firstly, our special obligations to our fellow human beings are legitimate only in the private domain. That is, only when it comes to the distribution of resources that are 'privately' owned by individual human beings, one is entitled to give priority to the interests of his or her fellow human beings over the interests of animals. In the public domain, on the other hand, there is no reason for us to distribute public resources in favor of our fellow beings to which we have special obligations. For example, it would be immoral if we destroyed all natural habitats of animals for the benefit of humans. The natural habitats and environment are 'public resources' for all species on earth.

Even in the private domain, our special obligations to our fellow beings are not unrestricted; they can be overridden by greater interests of non-human animals. Not all human interests are more significant than animal interests. Our interest in not getting wet may be outweighed by a cat's interest in surviving the drowning in a river. Sometimes it can be a difficult issue to compare the relevant importance of interests between human beings and other animals. For instance, it is hard to know whether we should forgo our special obligations of feeding a slightly hungry human child over our obligations of giving the food to a dog that would otherwise die from hunger, as the two interests are not easily comparable. However, this issue need not worry us too much. As a principle, our positive special obligations to fellow beings can be overridden by our positive obligations to animals.

We have negative obligations to both human beings and other animals. But the positive obligation constraint shows that our species co-membership does not give a boost to our negative obligations to our fellow humans. Our negative obligations and some positive obligations to humans and other animals are grounded in the fact that they have the capacity to suffer. This capacity gives us agent-neutral reason not to impose avoidable sufferings upon them.

These constraints show that our species co-membership only justifies the priority of our interests over animal interests when (1) our interests are comparable to animal interests, (2) the resources we are distributing are ‘private’, and (3) our species-bounded special obligations are positive. Under these conditions, if both a non-human animal and a human being are starving to death, our special relation with the human being gives priority to his interest. This is even true for cognitively severely impaired human beings. Since they possess the capacity to suffer, their interests of, say, being well nourished should be given priority over the comparable interests of animals, even if their cognitive levels are only comparable to those of animals.

Mitigated speciesism steers a middle path between anti-speciesism and crude speciesism. Unlike anti-speciesism, it maintains that under the three conditions, species co-membership understood as a thick concept warrants the priority of human interests over animal interests. This captures our intuition that a human being, whether he or she is cognitively severely impaired or even in vegetative state, has dignity that should be respected. They have certain interests that require to be given priority over comparable animal interests in the positive obligation sense. This intuition is what Bernard Williams calls “the human prejudice”<sup>6</sup>.

Unlike crude speciesism, however, mitigated speciesism holds that beyond the three conditions species co-membership does not matter; the human prejudice is not justified in all circumstances. When it comes to negative obligations, for example, species co-membership as a special relation plays no role in deciding whether human interests or animal interests should be given greater moral consideration. Rather, all that matters is how human interests are compared to animal interests. For instance, we have negative obligations to not impose pain on a person with the intention of doing harm to her; we also have similar obligations to a non-human animal. But isn’t it more morally forbidden to harm her than to harm the animal? The answer is yes, but that’s not because she bears special relations to us, but because her relevant interest is greater than the animal interest. Given the fact that a person’s mental life is richer than an animal’s, the harm intentionally caused to her is greater than the harm intentionally caused to the animal. The aggregate amount of the physical and mental pain and the post-trauma stress on her may well exceed those on the animal<sup>7</sup>. Therefore, the reason for us to favor her interest over the animal interest is independent of her species co-membership with us.

In mixed cases of positive and negative obligations, species co-membership does not matter either. In those cases, we often find ourselves in a situation where animal interests will have to be sacrificed for human interests. If the *only* way to advance our medical knowledge is by performing animal experiments, sacrificing animal interests while causing minimalist sufferings seems to be justified<sup>8</sup>. It is justified not because animal experiments promote greater benefits for human beings as members of a special species, but simply because they promote greater benefits no matter whoever the beneficiaries would be. Imagine that many animal species come down to an unknown disease and are dying, and suppose that the *only* way to save them is by doing animal research. Most of us would agree that it is morally permissible to sacrifice some animals in order to save much more of them. If this is the case,

then what matters is the greater good, not species co-membership in the minimalist sense. It makes no difference whether the beneficiaries are human beings or animals.

It should be noted that while the utilitarian principle plays an important role in overriding cases involving negative obligations, it is not the only decisive factor. We do not want to say that whenever violating an animal's or a person's interests produces greater benefits, it will be morally permissible to do so. There must be more requirements of moral permissibility besides the greater utilitarian gains. For instance, one additional requirement could be that if entity x has more interests than y, which are contextually equally available for the unavoidable violation of their interests produces the same amount of benefits, it would be morally wrong to violate x's interests for greater benefits. Yet another additional requirement could be that the unavoidable violation of y's interests must be kept at the minimum; it would be morally wrong to impose more sufferings on y than necessary.

A possible anti-speciesist objection to mitigated speciesism is this: if species co-membership grounds special obligations, as mitigate speciesism maintains, then wouldn't race co-membership or sex co-membership also ground special obligations? If so, then we would have mitigated racism and mitigated sexism, which do not seem to be justified<sup>9</sup>. I do not want to say that mitigated racism or mitigated sexism is a correct or defensible view; rather, I would like to point out that *within the scope of the three constraints*, mitigated racism/sexism might not be so bad. In the domain of purely *private* resources which one has *positive* obligations to allocate to others on a voluntary basis, it does not seem so objectionable for an individual person to allocate them based on race or sex membership understood as a thick concept. For instance, an adult woman might choose to save a drowning girl's life and let the drowning boy die, if she can save only one. In this scenario, her "sexist" choice does not seem so blameworthy. I think our strong intuitions against racism and sexism are based on issues that go beyond the scope of the three constraints. But once we understand race co-membership and sex co-membership as thick concepts and restrict them to those constraints, racism and sexism in mitigated form no longer seem so objectionable.

**Conclusion:** Special relations occupy a legitimate place in ethics, but their scope is limited to the private domain, positive obligation, and comparable interests. Both family relations and species relations are subject to these constraints. Crude speciesists mistakenly neglect one or more of the constraints when they defend the priority of human interests, and anti-speciesists unacceptably reject the plausible thesis that we have special obligation to our fellow beings within the scope of the three constraints. Mitigated speciesism, by understanding species co-membership as a thick concept, maintains that species co-membership warrants special obligation to our fellow human beings by giving priority to their interests over equal interests of other animals when it comes to private decisions on how to distribute 'private' resources. But our special obligation to respect the interests of our fellow human beings could be overridden by our obligation to respect the interests of other animals if the latter are far greater than the former. If some non-human animals' interests have to be sacrificed for far greater benefits of human beings or animals, that's not because species co-membership matters, but because of the greater good this will produce<sup>10</sup>.

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### References:

<sup>1</sup> Peter Singer, quoted in Rosamund Raha, Animal Liberation: An Interview with Professor Peter Singer, *The Vegan* 2006, 18-19.

<sup>2</sup> It might be debatable whether we should donate a substantial amount of money to famine-affected children in a poor country: Peter Singer (1971) argues that we should and some deny that (e.g., Kekes, J., On the Supposed Obligation to Relieve Famine, *Philosophy* 2002, 77 (4):503-517). I will address this issue shortly. Before that, I am just adding the qualification “in some situations” here. I will specify what those situations amount to shortly after.

<sup>3</sup> In response to the challenge of moral catastrophes, some deontologists (Moore, M., *Placing Blame: A General Theory of the Criminal Law*, Oxford University Press, 1997, ch. 17; Alexander, L., Deontology at the Threshold, *San Diego Law Review* 2000, 37(4): 893–912; Ellis, A., Deontology, Incommensurability and the Arbitrary, *Philosophical and Phenomenological Research* 1992, 52(4): 855–875) endorse threshold deontology, according to which deontological principles apply below the threshold but they may be overridden by consequentialist considerations above the threshold. I am neutral regarding the plausibility of threshold deontology. What I am trying to do here is merely pointing out that traditional deontological absolutism is untenable due to moral catastrophes. For a good brief review of the threshold deontology literature, see Alexander, Larry and Moore, Michael, "Deontological Ethics", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2016 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/ethics-deontological/>, section 4. Thanks to the anonymous referee for suggesting to me the threshold deontology literature.

<sup>4</sup> See Kagan, S., What's Wrong with Speciesism? *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 2016, 33 (1):1-21; Kittay, E. F., At the Margins of Moral Personhood, *Ethics* 2005, 116 (1):100-131.

<sup>5</sup> Since such a move rejects the minimalist reading of speciesism in favor of an alternative reading, writers who make the move are not really crude speciesists in the standard (i.e., minimalist) sense. Singer (Why Speciesism is Wrong: A Response to Kagan, *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 2016, 33 (1):31-35) points this out explicitly in his response to Kagan's criticism of his arguments. Therefore, the label of crude speciesists might be not a good choice. However, readers should bear in mind that this not-so-good label should not mislead

them into thinking that those writers support speciesism in the standard minimalist sense. Rather, they are not against speciesism only in the alternative sense that they stipulate.

<sup>6</sup> Williams, B., The Human Prejudice, in A. W. Moore (ed.), *Philosophy as a Humanistic Discipline*, Princeton University Press, 2006.

<sup>7</sup> There is a complication here. Many philosophers (Singer, P., *Practical Ethics*, Cambridge University Press, 2011, 52; Rollin, B. E., *Animal Rights & Human Morality*, Prometheus Books, 2006, 89; Linzy 2009, 17; Scully, M., *Dominion: The Power of Man, the Suffering of Animals, and the Call to Mercy*, St. Martin's Press, 2002, 7) point out that a lack of rationality often makes suffering worse, as animals without rational capacities cannot anticipate an end of suffering, and pain without understanding is even more blunt. In response, I'd like to point out that understanding what is going on may add mental stress to the upcoming physical pain. Even if understanding could reduce the intensity of pain by anticipating it in some cases, the prolonged psychological stress based on understanding might outweigh the benefit of anticipated pain, which makes suffering overall worse. For instance, when one knows that one's illness is incurable and one will die in 10 days, the feeling of desperation could be tremendous. Also, it does not seem to be the case that anticipated pain will always have lower intensity than unanticipated pain. For example, the bodily pain caused by a surgery with knowledge of it does not seem to be less intense than without knowing it. Thanks to the anonymous reviewer for pointing out this issue and referring me to the relevant literature that I have cited in this footnote.

<sup>8</sup> It is controversial whether using animals in medical research is the necessary means to advance medical knowledge. I remain neutral on this issue. I am just using the hypothetical sentence here to make my argument.

<sup>9</sup> Thanks to the anonymous reviewer for raising this objection.

<sup>10</sup> In addition to the literature mentioned earlier, I also consulted the following three publications during the preparation of this article: Brody, B., Defending Animal Research: An International Perspective, in Jeremy R. Garrett (ed.), *The Ethics of Animal Research: Exploring the Controversy*, The MIT Press, 2012; Linzey, A., *Why Animal Suffering Matters: Philosophy, Theology, and Practical Ethics*. Oxford University Press, 2009; and McMahan, J., Our Fellow Creatures, *Journal of Ethics* 2005, 9 (3-4):353-380.