Would we be more successful in making a case for nonhuman rights if we redefined 'speciesism' along the lines Steve proposes and then attacked it? I do not think so. Steve's version of speciesism, which entails that the interests of those who don't belong to the "right" species may simply be disregarded to satisfy members of the favored species, is much easier to counter than the view which I have been attacking. The limitations of this "straw speciesism" are well-illustrated in Thomas Young's article on the killing of animals. He too defines speciesism in terms of disregarding interests merely on species grounds. That is why he refuses to call himself a speciesist, holding as he does that it would be wrong to inflict gratuitous pain on nonhumans.³ Yet, as I discussed, he proceeds to defend a view, clearly speciesist in my (and Singer's) sense, which "justifies" the routine painless killing of healthy nonhumans (but not human nonpersons). I have a difficult time thinking of such a view as a triumph for "nonspeciesist thinking!" No, we should continue to battle the strongest position our opponents have to offer us.

I agree with Steve that it would be ghastly if the goal of refuting speciesist arguments were to induce moral consistency merely for its own sake. Those of us who reject the exploitation of nonhumans have no wish to see sentient marginal humans in laboratory cages or feedlots. The goal is to make speciesists realize that something is dreadfully wrong with their initial assumptions about the treatment of nonhumans, and in my experience that is the usual result. The few who, like Frey, conclude instead that vivisection of sentient marginal humans must be permissible, must be confronted in additional ways. The argument from marginal cases is insufficient to carry the whole burden of the case for nonhuman rights, as I have argued elsewhere.⁴ However, this does not alter the fact that dismantling the speciesists' case for continuing to treat nonhuman and human nonpersons in radically different ways removes a major excuse for continued exploitation of

nonhumans. The other side of this coin is that failure to answer their arguments contributes to that exploitation.

We are all opposed to unjustified suffering and death. That is why it is imperative to determine whether speciesism is justified. Showing that it isn't is deadly serious business, not "an abstract intellectual game." If we are ever to get anywhere in securing nonhuman animals their due, it can only be by having justification on our side.

NOTES

1 See my "Moral Agents and Moral Patients," *BETWEEN THE SPECIES* 4(1), 1988, pp.32-45.

2 Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation* (New York: Avon Books, 1975), Chapter 1, p. 20.

3 Thomas Young, "The Morality of Killing Animals: Four Arguments," *ETHICS AND ANIMALS* V (4), 1984, pp. 88-101. See my footnote 33 in "Speciesism: A Form of Bigotry or a Justified View?"

4 "The Personhood View and the Argument from Marginal Cases," *PHILOSOPHICA* 39, 1987 (1), pp. 23-28.

LABORATORY RABBIT

A SOLILOQUY

Oh mourn for me when I am dead;
When having heard the executioner's bell
Give toxin to the lab, that I am fled
From your vile cage, with vilest worms to dwell.
Nay think upon your foul and evil blow,
How soon my grace and swiftness are decayed;
Stabbed once with antigen and bending low
I raised the titre high to give you aid.
What theory robbed me of my rightful place?
What paradigm supplied you with excuse?
How can your scientist-henchmen so disgrace
The best reactor to the protein's muse?
No other Lagomorph can do the same,
To match the pentapeptide at its game!

Leo Kartman