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The Elephant in the Room: The Often Neglected Relevance of Speciesism in Bias Towards Ethnic Minorities and Immigrants

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Abstract

The area of intergroup bias and, specifically attitudes towards ethnic minorities and/or immigrants, has received a great amount of investigation by (cross-cultural) psychologists, spanning many theories and perspectives (Hewstone et al., 2002). However, one perspective rarely taken in mainstream psychology is one that acknowledges the inter-linkage of bias towards ethnic minorities and/or immigrants and that towards non-human animals (NHAs), despite relatively substantial literature outside of psychology emphasizing it (Singer, 2002). In the present paper, we draw from relevant literature outside and inside of psychology that speaks to the connectivity between attitudes towards marginalized human outgroups and NHAs, focusing on the mechanism of dehumanization in intergroup bias. We also shed light on more recent psychological research, specifically the Interspecies Model of Prejudice (IMP; Costello & Hodson, 2010; Costello & Hodson, 2014a; 2014b) as an example on how psychological research could incorporate speciesism into the discussion of intergroup bias. It is hoped that highlighting the existing rare, yet valuable, research endeavours within psychology inspires further engagement from psychologists interested in cross-cultural, intersectional, and diversity research in order to help better the lives of both marginalized human outgroups and NHAs.

Keywords: speciesism, intergroup bias, dehumanization, non-human animals, immigrants, ethnic minorities

The Elephant in the Room: The Often Neglected Relevance of Speciesism in Bias Towards Ethnic Minorities and Immigrants

If you have men who will exclude any of God's creatures from the shelter of compassion and pity, you will have men who will deal likewise with their fellow men (St. Francis of Assisi).

The area of intergroup bias has received a great amount of investigation by psychologists (Hewstone et al., 2002). Research on dehumanization, i.e. the derogative likening of marginalized human outgroups to non-human animals (NHAs; Haslam, 2006; Leyens et al., 2000), has elucidated some of the mechanisms through which bias towards marginalized human outgroups occurs and is justified (Opatow, 2005). Dehumanization is often directed at ethnic minorities and/or immigrants by assigning to them animalistic characteristics, e.g. describing them as beastly and uncivilized (Adams, 2007; Deckha, 2008; Esses & Lawson, 2008, October).

Even though much of what lies at the heart of dehumanization is how humans as a group view NHAs in society (Costello & Hodson, 2010), the intergroup bias literature, and psychology in general, tends to neglect incorporating speciesism (Caviola et al., 2019), which is a preference for our own species over NHAs at the cost of NHAs (Singer, 2002). The existence of speciesism in our society is prevalent, as evidenced by the vast amount of NHA lives taken by questionable farming, testing, breeding, and other ill practices. More than 150 billion NHAs are killed per year worldwide for the meat, dairy, egg, and fish industry alone ([The Vegan Calculator, n.d.](#)). Parallels in speciesism and oppression of human outgroups have long been highlighted throughout history (Spiegel, 1996), e.g. the cruel acts directed towards NHAs at factory farms compared to humans in the context of slavery (acts like branding, restraining, beating, auctioning, and separating offspring from parents; York, 2013).

In the present paper, we acknowledge the insight of critical thinkers and philosophers from multiple disciplines (e.g. animal rights studies, eco-feminism, sociology, anthropology etc.) that have informed our understanding of the nature of speciesism and the experiences of oppression shared between ethnic minorities and/or immigrants and NHAs throughout history. We will, subsequently, review empirical research that is valuable in offering psychologists unique perspectives and insights to speak to the interrelatedness of speciesism and bias towards human outgroups. While we briefly review a variety of empirical literature, we will focus on dehumanization, a mechanism contingent upon societal views towards NHAs, often directed at marginalized humans. Next, we shed light on how the concepts of speciesism and dehumanization can both be incorporated into a discussion of intergroup bias with regards to ethnic minorities and/or immigrants, by focusing on the Interspecies Model of Prejudice (IMP) as an example (Costello & Hodson, 2010; Costello & Hodson, 2014a, 2014b). Lastly, we conclude that, in order to properly understand and combat dehumanization of marginalized

humans, we are in need of psychological frameworks that are less homocentric (i.e. human-centred), as well as more research that addresses human perceptions of NHAs. We also offer suggestions for future research endeavours that psychologists interested in cross-cultural and/or intersectional research could embark upon to contribute to the valuable efforts initiated by other researchers in the field.

Historical Parallels Between Human and NHA Oppression and the Role of Speciesism

Critical scholars and thinkers from different schools of thought, such as critical animal studies, sociology, and ecofeminism amongst others consider speciesism to play an important role in the wider pattern of dominance and exploitation in society (Irvine, 2008). Although the majority of humans view NHAs as worthy of moral consideration, our actions as a society, overall, contrast this view (Wyckoff, 2015). Despite generally positive attitudes towards NHAs (Anderson 2008; Beatson & Halloran, 2007), there is a collective cultural belief that humans are inherently superior to NHAs. NHAs, as a group, are often denigrated in our culture by being portrayed as lacking value, emotional perspective, self-determination, morality, intelligence and other similar traits when compared to humans (Weitzenfeld & Joy, 2014). Such belief in a stark dissimilarity or a human-NHA divide (Roothaan, 2017) has reinforced NHAs' subordinate status throughout our history (Kalof, 2007), and is currently evident in the systemic institutional mistreatment of them (Mason & Finelli, 2006).

While each culture holds its own nuanced societal perception of NHAs (Foer, 2009), generally, within Western culture, the concept and cultural meaning of animality is incorporated in our daily discourse and influences our concepts of ethnicity, skin colour, immigrant status, etc. (Deckha, 2008). According to the Species Grid proposed by Wolfe and Elmer (1995), societal status is determined by the extent of animality assigned to a certain group. While "animalized animals" are positioned at the lowest rank and are exploited the most for our own pleasure (e.g. farm NHAs), higher in rank are the "humanized animals" who are our pets and companion animals. "Animalized humans" or marginalized human outgroups (i.e., the dehumanized humans, such as ethnic minorities and/or immigrants) are associated with a more primitive existence than the "humanized humans," whose humaneness is not questioned and who occupy a safe space at the top from which others are measured in value.

Often, images or characterizations used for the animalized animals are deployed to minimize the human status of marginalized humans, i.e. the animalized humans. For example, immigrants are often likened to NHAs who are perceived to be trespassing or quickly multiplying (e.g. ferrets), filthy and unwanted and disease carrying (e.g. insects), or in need of being hunted or attacked like prey animals (Adams, 2007). This act belittles both animalized groups and further reinforces their low ranking. A historical catalogue (Jahoda, 1999) revealed that ethnic minorities and immigrants have been represented as barbarians lacking culture, self-restraint, morality and intelligence in both popular culture and scholarship. The discourse around people of African descent has had imagery of apes associated with it (Goff et al., 2004;

York, 2013), and tendencies to make this association still remain in society. Ethnic minorities have been depicted as vermin, demons, and monsters throughout history (Bar-Tal & Teichman, 2005), and are often constructed as uncivilized, irrational, or beastly (Adams, 2007; Deckha, 2008; Esses & Lawson, 2008, October).

Animalized humans and animalized animals have shared experiences of exploitation, confinement, and displacement. Parallels have been drawn between exploited and confined human and NHA slaves (e.g. farm NHAs), associated with holding a property status within society for labour and breeding purposes (Irvine, 2008; Nibert, 2002; Torres, 2007; York, 2013). Spiegel (1996) asserts that cruel acts, such as branding, restraining, beating, auctioning, and separating offspring from parents and forced voyages that human slaves were subjected to are (still) directed at NHAs today. For example, female slaves were raped and separated from their children, forced to breastfeed their captors' children. The average dairy farm cow is also forcibly impregnated, only to have her calf taken away; she is forced to provide milk for humans rather than being able to feed her own offspring (York, 2013). Dr. A. Breeze Harper, founder of the Sistah Vegan Project, which is a series of narratives and reflections by African American vegan women, reveals the following about her revelation about this parallel;

The transition awakened me to many things that I was ignorant about and was keeping me in a state of suffering. I began realizing that the Standard American Diet seemed to parallel a colonial and imperialistic mentality. I was consuming colonialistic ideologies and it was killing my health physically and spiritually. (York, 2013, p.113)

Similar to how NHAs are exploited for medical experiments, so have been African Americans (and other minority groups) when testing humans as subjects. Many were tested without consent throughout history (e.g. Tuskegee studies; Jones, 1981). Nowadays big pharmaceutical companies offer new immigrants who often lack the language skills or educational background to easily find employment, monetary compensation for participation in medical tests without full comprehension of risks involved (Veracity, 2006).

In addition, many migrants also share the plight of displacement with NHAs. Refugees often lose their homes and communities and take refuge in a new land, often experiencing some psychosocial trauma (Kirmayer et al., 2011). Similarly, wildlife and endangered species are displaced from their natural habitats due to new infrastructure and experience loss and dispersion (Bradshaw & Watkins, 2006). The modes of transportation for refugees and detention centres evoke images of factory farms and slaughterhouses (Perry, 2014).

In addition to such critical arguments drawing historical parallels between the subordination of humans and NHAs, psychological empirical research also provides links between the maltreatment of humans and NHAs, which we will turn to next. We will first review some general psychological research that indicates a role of speciesism in bias towards humans, before turning to the dehumanization literature.

Empirical Research on the Connection of Speciesism and Bias Towards Human Outgroups

As mentioned previously, there is relatively little psychological empirical research that has explored the links between speciesism and bias towards human outgroups. Traditionally, many studies in (social) psychology have consistently found that individuals who are biased against one group are likely to be biased towards other groups as well (Akrami et al., 2011; Bergh et al., 2012; Duckitt & Sibley, 2007). It has been found that speciesism shares psychological characteristics with other forms of bias and is motivated by similar psychological mechanisms and ideologies (Caviola et al., 2019; Dhont et al., 2014; Dhont et al., 2016).

The literature has so far established a few relatively robust linkages that deserve our attention before we review the dehumanization literature. These findings relate to the cognitive (i.e. views), affective (i.e. emotions), and behavioural aspects (i.e. acts) of intergroup bias (Dovidio et al., 2010) and include, but are not limited to the following:

- (1) Research has identified that people who hold views that are more anthropocentric (i.e. of the belief that human species is superior to NHAs) also tend to be more ethnocentric (i.e. devaluing certain cultures in comparison to their own (Bizumic & Duckitt, 2007; Chandler & Dreger, 1993). Furthermore, connections between speciesism and racism have been found (Caviola et al., 2019; Spiegel, 1996) in addition to links to other forms of human to human biases (e.g. sexism and homophobia). For example, in a Canadian study, attitudes towards NHAs correlated significantly and positively with attitudes towards outgroups, i.e. participants who had positive attitudes towards NHAs also liked human outgroups more (Dhont et al., 2014). Both the belief in a human- NHA divide and the tendency to perceive human outgroups as inferior are forms of ideologies that encourage hierarchical and unequal relationships (Milfont et al., 2013; Pratto et al., 1994). Studies have linked Social Dominance Orientation (SDO), a preference for social inequalities (Pratto et al., 1994) with a tendency to exploit the environment in unsustainable ways (Jackson, 2011; Milfont et al., 2013), a belief in a sharper human and NHA distinction, a tendency to endorse utilization of NHAs as ethically justifiable (Hyers, 2006), and a belief in human superiority (Costello & Hodson, 2010). Researchers have found that participants' SDO was related to a tendency to dehumanize immigrants (Costello & Hodson, 2010, 2014). In addition, Dhont et al.(2016) conducted three studies (in Belgium, UK, and USA) demonstrating that SDO is a key factor connecting ethnic prejudice and speciesist attitudes.
- (2) People in the animal protection community tend to hold higher levels of emotions, such as empathy, towards humans than those in the general community; furthermore, people who report more empathy for NHAs also extend more empathy toward humans than those who show less empathy for NHAs do (Taylor & Signal, 2005). Similarly, vegetarians score higher on empathy for humans than do omnivores (Dixon & Arikawa, 2008).
- (3) A theoretical, as well as empirical, continuity between violent acts towards NHAs and towards humans has been established, namely with bullying (Henry & Sanders, 2007). Abundant evidence has shown that abuse of NHAs often coexists with abuse of vulnerable

people (e.g., children and abused women; Ascione, 2008; Ascione & Shapiro, 2009). Desensitization to acts of violence (e.g. through media) has been found to have an affective and physiological effect on sensitivity towards NHA violence (Fielding et al., 2011). Moreover, research shows that adolescents who witness NHA abuse in the home are more likely than others to engage in bullying outside the home (Gullone & Robertson, 2008). Links between NHA abuse and spousal abuse (Arkow, 2014), parental abuse and NHA abuse (Currie, 2006), and bestiality and crimes against people (Hensley et al., 2006) amongst other things have been found (also see Linzey, 2009 for a more comprehensive review). On the other hand, those who express advocating behaviour, e.g. fight for animal rights, often also have been the ones advocating for women rights, civil rights, and child protection (Petersen, 2012; Selby 2000).

In addition to these empirical links in the literature, the dehumanization literature within social psychology offers us valuable insight into the psychological processes underlying these parallels between bias towards marginalized humans and NHAs. As mentioned previously, dehumanization is defined as a psychological process through which others are derogatively likened to NHAs and perceived as less human (Haslam, 2006; Leyens et al., 2000). Although explicit dehumanization has often occurred in relation to intergroup aggression (e.g. genocide), relatively more recent research has shown that, nowadays, more subtle forms of it are a common aspect of intergroup attitudes and relations (Jackson, 2011; Leyens et al., 2003). Intergroup attitudes are often characterized by this more subtle *infrahumanization*, which is the tendency to view outgroup members as less human than ingroup members by attributing fewer distinctly human qualities to the former.

Research has shown that when people are seen as lacking in civility, refinement, and socialized attributes (UH traits, i.e. “uniquely human” traits), they are regarded as coarse, uncultured, and amoral, and this kind of dehumanization is consistent with likening humans to NHAs (“animalistic dehumanization”; Haslam, 2006). In addition to traits, certain emotions are also seen as more human than others (Petersen, 2012). Primary emotions such as excitement, pleasure, anger, pain, and fear are seen as basic and not unique to humans (Petersen, 2012). However, secondary emotions, such as serenity, compassion, hope, guilt, remorse, and shame are believed to be unique human emotions and often less associated with marginalized human outgroups likened to NHAs (Leyens et al. 2000, 2003, 2007).

The literature provides solid evidence for the dehumanization of racial and ethnic minority groups and immigrants. For example, in Cuddy et al. (2007), participants rated African American victims of hurricane Katrina as experiencing less uniquely human emotions than White victims, which affected their intention to help. In addition, research has found that individuals attributed traits that were seen as uniquely human less to immigrants than to native-born individuals (Hodson & Costello, 2007). Other studies have found that refugees were associated with enemy or barbarian images, and dehumanization led to specific emotional reactions, such as contempt and lack of admiration (Esses et al., 2008).

Furthermore, it appears that more blatant dehumanization (in addition to the more subtle *infrahumanization*) is still alive and well. Fairly recent research (Kteily et al., 2015) has shown that across seven studies, participants generally assigned the highest level of physiological

and cultural evolving to Americans and Europeans and the lowest to Arabs. This blatant dehumanization predicted support for minimizing immigration of Arabs, less compassionate responses to injustice experienced by an Arab, and less money donated to an Arab versus American cause.

Although the outcomes of dehumanization (e.g. lower prosocial or more antisocial behaviour towards the person dehumanized; Haslam & Loughnan, 2014) have been studied, discussions around what causes dehumanization and strategies to reduce it have been quite limited in the psychological literature. The Interspecies Model of Prejudice (IMP) which will be discussed in the next section proposes a pathway that addresses this gap and illustrates the important role that speciesism is likely to play in bias towards marginalized humans.

The Interspecies Model of Prejudice- an Example of Incorporating Speciesism into Psychological Research on Intergroup Bias

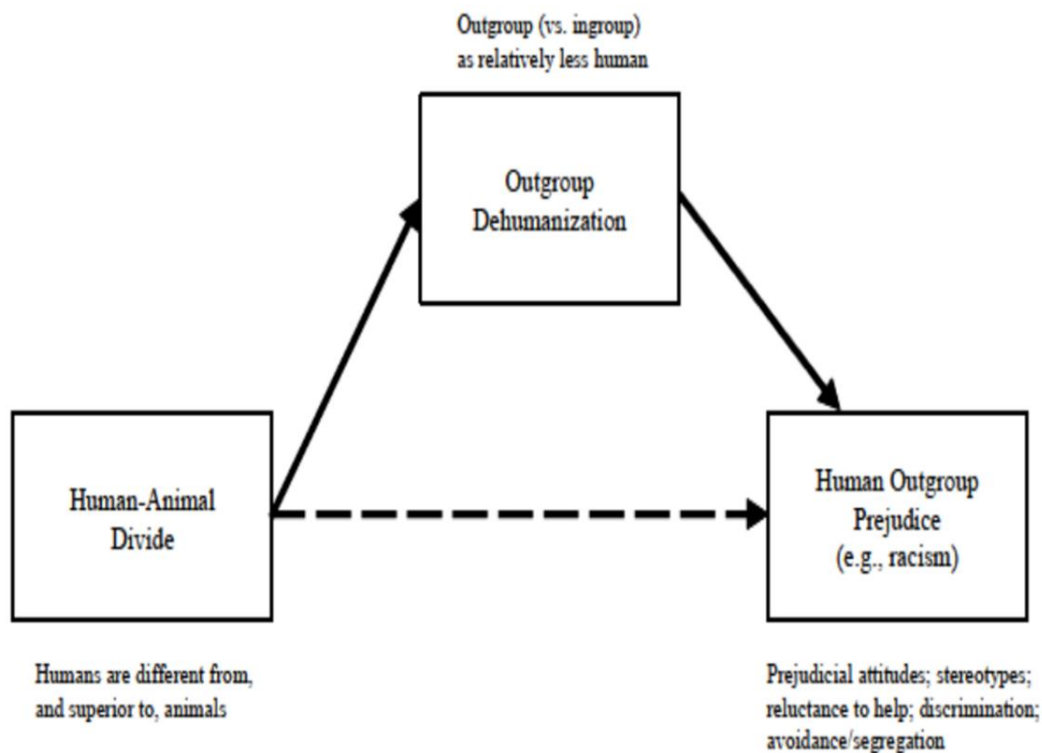
In an innovative social psychological model by Canadian psychologists, it is proposed that the concepts discussed so far, namely human-NHA divide, dehumanization, and intergroup bias are interlinked (Costello & Hodson, 2010). The Interspecies Model of Prejudice (IMP; see Figure 1) postulates that dehumanization arises out of the belief in a human-NHA divide (i.e. a speciesist attitude) and mediates the relationship between this belief and intergroup bias towards human outgroups (Costello & Hodson, 2010). Support for this model has been observed in correlational and experimental data among young children, as well as young and middle-aged adults, measuring attitudes towards racial minorities and immigrants (Costello, 2008; Costello & Hodson, 2010; Costello & Hodson, 2014a; 2014b).

In a series of studies conducted by Costello and Hodson (2010), participants who believed in a greater human-NHA divide engaged in higher levels of dehumanization, which, consequently, predicted higher anti-immigrant attitudes. The IMP was also expanded to consider dehumanization processes among children (Costello & Hodson, 2014a). Both the child participants and their parents showed a tendency to dehumanize children of African descent by denying uniquely human traits and secondary emotions to them. For the children, as well as their parents, greater perceived human-NHA divide predicted greater bias towards the racial outgroup, and this was mediated by greater tendency to liken the outgroup to NHAs (i.e. dehumanization).

Going beyond understanding the connection between belief in a human-NHA divide and intergroup bias, attempts were made to understand how to reduce this tendency. Previous research had shown that emphasizing human-NHA similarity has positive effects on attitudes towards NHAs (Plous, 1991, Wuensch et al. 1991, June). The proponents of the IMP proposed that emphasizing this similarity could also minimize dehumanization, which in turn was predicted to lead to more favourable attitudes towards human outgroups (Costello, 2008). Costello and Hodson (2010) implemented an experimental manipulation by exposing groups to editorials that either emphasized differences or similarities between humans and NHAs.

Figure 1.

The Interspecies Model of Prejudice (Costello & Hodson, 2010)



Ratings of human-NHA divide, dehumanization, and bias towards immigrants were compared between the participants of these different conditions, as well as with a control group. Participants who were exposed to a manipulation that emphasized “animals are like humans” had a lower belief in a human-NHA divide and lower biases towards the immigrant group than those of the control group or other experimental conditions (Costello & Hodson, 2010). In addition, after a video manipulation highlighting human-NHA similarity, children’s pre- and post-video measures indicated a minimized belief in human-NHA divide (Costello & Hodson, 2014 a). Furthermore, Bastian et al. (2012) found that participants who were asked to write an essay on how NHAs are similar to humans also showed more moral concern for marginalized human outgroups (Africans, Asians, Muslims, Aborigines, immigrants) than the control group. Essentially, the manipulation of stressing similarities was thought to “rehumanize” human outgroups through a broader and more flexible group categorization (Costello & Hodson, 2014b).

Costello and Hodson (2010, 2014a) employed what is named recategorization, i.e. a form of rearranging the representation of the ingroup in such a way that includes the outgroup (Paluck & Green, 2009). Numerous studies have found recategorization to be one of the prejudice reduction methods that has been repeatedly shown to be effective across a variety of situations (Paluck & Green, 2009). According to the Common Ingroup Identity Model

(Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000), which highlights the process of recategorization, finding a more encompassing identity that includes both the ingroup and outgroup, based on similarities, will reduce intergroup bias. Endorsement of a more inclusive superordinate intergroup representation can result in the decrease of intergroup bias in many contexts, including ethnic context (Esses et al., 2001).

The experimental manipulation utilized by Hodson and Costello (2010, 2014a) follows this model, however, it encourages a broader and more inclusive superordinate identity than the usual manipulations that employ this method for immigrants do, as it encourages a superordinate group of animal kind (including humans and NHAs). In essence, Costello and Hodson (2010, 2014a, 2014b) assert that their studies show that bias towards NHAs relate to beliefs about human outgroups, and that by incorporating NHAs into our moral consideration and research, as psychologists, we could improve conditions for both.

Towards a Psychology that Addresses Speciesism in Inter-Group Bias Research

While the explicit expression of human to human forms of bias is, generally, not socially acceptable in our current society, speciesism is, overall, still an accepted social norm within Western society (Caviola et al., 2019). Yet, as reviewed in this paper, a speciesist ideology, if not addressed, can propel and shape biases directed towards marginalized humans, such as ethnic minorities and/or immigrants. Therefore, we argue that psychologists, who are interested in intergroup bias research could benefit from understanding speciesism, especially when exploring dehumanization.

Psychology possesses the theoretical, experimental, and statistical tools to explore the connection between speciesism and bias towards human outgroups. However, mainstream psychology, as it currently stands, may benefit from a shift in philosophical perspective before it can enter into a discourse that is less homocentric (i.e. human centred; Bradshaw & Watkins, 2006; Joy, 2005). Psychology has so far mostly restricted psyche to human subjectivity and experience (Bradshaw & Watkins, 2006), assuming human superiority over other species (Metzner, 1999). As mentioned, the effectiveness of dehumanization of marginalized humans is contingent on the subordinate status of NHAs in society. Therefore, we believe this homocentric stance not only limits psychology's ability to properly understand bias at a scope that it could otherwise grasp but could also reinforce the kind of bias motivated by dehumanization, by fostering a perception of an exaggerated human-NHA divide.

New psychological frameworks and theoretical propositions that could help to offer an alternative viewpoint are emerging and strengthening. For example, proponents of trans-species psychology (Bradshaw & Watkins, 2006) illustrate that cognitions, emotions, and experiences are shared by humans and other animals, a perspective from which a more conventional psychology that insists on the existence of unique human traits and emotions could benefit. Specifically, the field of cross-cultural psychology has been stated to benefit from integrating a cross-species approach, in order, e.g., to account for how culture affects

the behaviour of humans and NHAs alike (Liebal & Haun, 2018). We suggest that such a perspective could also enrich the sub-field's understanding of behaviour shown *towards* humans and NHAs. For example, a shared group membership, such as foreigner status, can result in a shared experience of marginalization for humans and NHAs. "Invasive species" (i.e. those that cross the border from another nation) are often unwelcome, as their name implies, and are perceived to be damaging to the host society (Davis et al., 2011). Such discourse and labeling has also been utilized to decrease support for prospective immigrants (Coates, 2006). In those cases, it is the societal perception associated with foreigner status, regardless of species status, that encourages a climate of discriminatory behaviour towards immigrants. Addressing the stigma associated with invasive NHAs (in addition to those with immigrants) is likely to, eventually, contribute to a more positive climate for humans with foreigner status. A broader scope that includes cross-species analyses could offer cross-cultural psychologists new and more effective methods for combating bias towards immigrants, especially if a result from dehumanization.

Such more flexible and intersectional approaches in psychology will, hopefully, motivate more psychologists to research dehumanization and bias towards immigrants and ethnic minorities from a different angle than often taken. Innovative research in intergroup bias and psychological models, such as the Interspecies Model of Prejudice (IMP), have valuable practical implications. We find such methods of bias reduction beneficial, as they address bias indirectly and could minimize defensive reactions that highly prejudiced people show when exposed to more direct methods (Esses et al., 2001). A superordinate identity, such as e.g., animal kind or living being, can lay the groundwork for other subsequent approaches that connect groups in an effort to minimize intergroup bias (Dovidio et al., 2009). Perhaps, the editorial or video method used for rehumanization can be combined with positive contact with NHAs to build a more solid manipulation. Previous researchers have combined the common ingroup identity approach and contact into more integrative approaches (Dovidio et al., 2008). We hope that, in the future, this and other models and efforts will be explored further in order to test pathways between speciesism and attitudes towards human outgroups, and that this will be done with a variety of different participants and within different sociocultural contexts.

In addition, hopefully, future studies conducted in the area will inform us more about the long-term effects of such methods on biases towards marginalized outgroups. We believe such contributions by psychologists can inform and be informed by efforts in humane education, which is a curriculum designed to emphasize the inter-connectedness of humans and other animals and the environment in order to foster a healthy inter-connected society (Unti & DeRosa, 2003). Rehumanization efforts such as those implemented by Hodson and Costello (2010, 2014a) and humane education initiatives share many characteristics and goals and could be extended to reach adult populations.

It is also crucial for psychologists to examine the origins of the human-NHA divide in the first place. As reviewed, social dominance orientation appears to play a role in speciesism, and further research is needed to explore this link in order to build a more interconnected body of knowledge with regards to bias and oppression towards all living beings. Furthermore, the cognitive mechanisms that allow speciesist attitudes to be upheld (e.g. moral justification, euphemism, disregard, distancing etc.; Caviola et al, 2019; Plous, 2003) also need to be

further studied by psychologists who are interested in dehumanization of marginalized humans.

In conclusion, psychology, as much as it perhaps has contributed to the human-NHA divide over time, also possesses the power to address this crucial, but often overlooked, component of dehumanization. We are hopeful that the psychological literature on the topic will grow and that the research devoted to the Interspecies Model of Prejudice (IMP), one day, will be one of many initiatives within the area, rather than a rarity as it is now.

Conclusion

This paper explored intergroup bias towards human outgroups in a rare manner, namely by exploring how it can be connected to our biases towards NHAs. As shown by research within and outside of psychology, the interlinkage between human and NHA oppression is far from illusionary and warrants further solid empirical research. As evidenced, despite the limited literature, there is certainly good reason to believe that by improving human attitudes towards NHAs, we can also improve attitudes towards marginalized humans. The main purpose of this paper was to emphasize the importance of human bias towards NHAs in the dehumanization of others and to inspire future engagement with the topic, so we can move towards a psychology that honours diversity.

Although this paper focuses on highlighting the importance of studying our attitudes towards NHAs in order to assist us in reducing dehumanization of human outgroups, we like to conclude by emphasizing that researching speciesism is an important act in its own right. As emphasized by Bradshaw and Watkins (2006), “psychology, by maintaining an agenda of speciesism, violates one of its central projects: individual development of moral consciousness” (p.3). We, as psychologists, share a moral responsibility with others in positions of power to join forces to respond to the NHA cries that often do not reach the academic or community settings we venture in to. We argue that NHA subordination is a human issue, as it is humans (as a group), who exploit and mistreat NHAs. As it was outlined in the paper, history has shown us that humans and NHAs have shared the plight of exploitation and mistreatment, with detrimental consequences to humans (particularly to minorities and migrants) and NHAs. Perhaps the future can be one of joined empowerment.

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