

# *Little Piggy Market Controversy*



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# *Let Us Consider...*



Imagine these scenarios:

For each scenario...

- A**
  - Low chance of extending life a few months
  - High uncertainty re: public health risks
- B**
  - High chance of extending life for a few months
  - High uncertainty re: public health risks
- C**
  - Low chance of extending life for a year
  - Moderate uncertainty re: public health risks

- **If you were the potential recipient of the organ/tissue, would you consent?**
- **If your child were the potential recipient, would you consent?**
- **If you are a law maker, would you recommend a moratorium?**

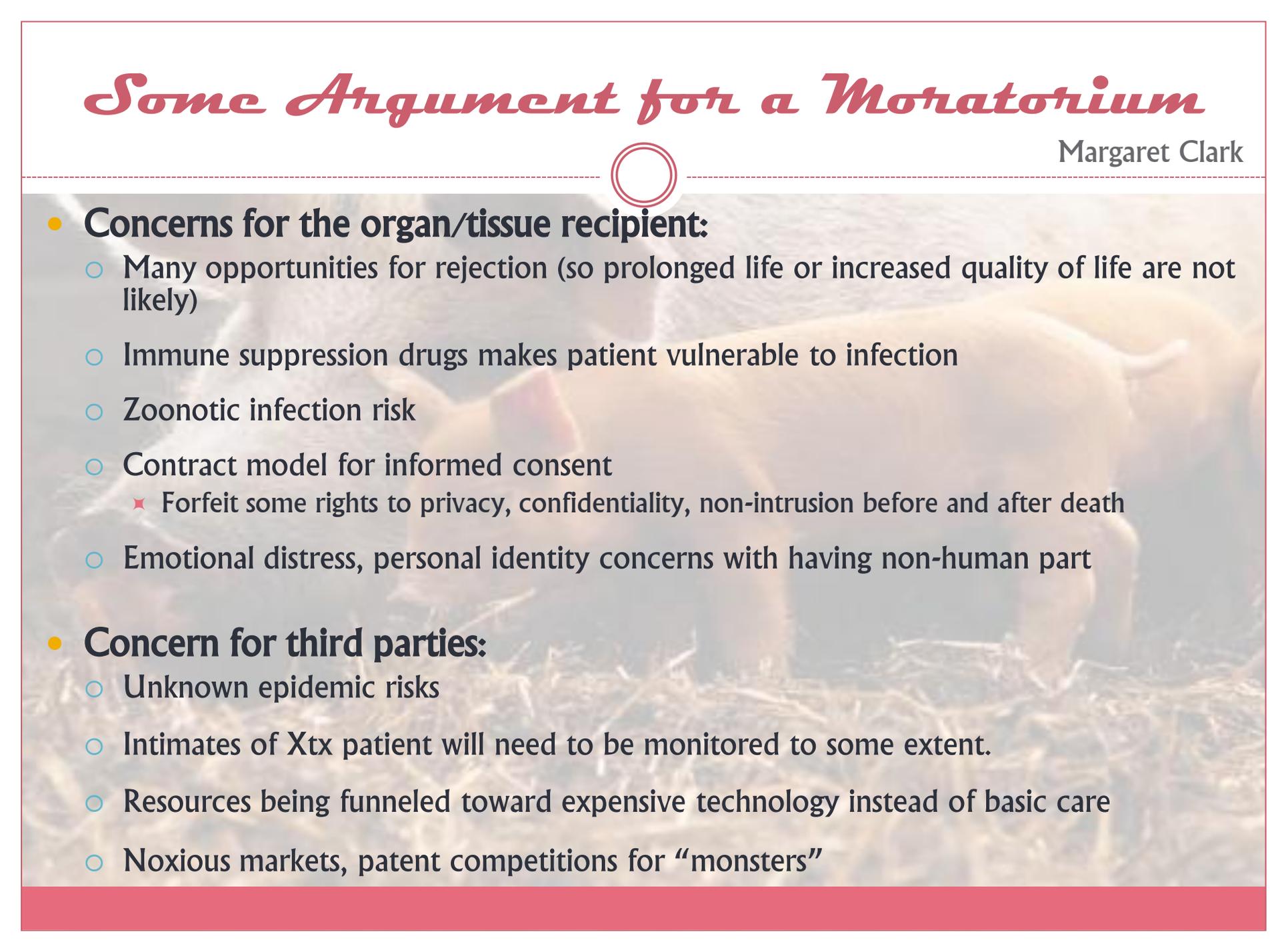
# *Empirical Questions & Unknowns*



- Whether immune barriers can be managed, reducing risk of rejection, incompatibility
- What infectious diseases could arise and whether we will have the ability to respond quickly to those that do
- What non-human animals will provide the best organ candidates (probably pigs, but there may be better options out there...)
- Whether our regulatory systems and enforcement mechanisms can keep up with this technology
  - Including life-time monitoring, organ recipient compliance, data collection
- To what extent international cooperation is feasible

# *Some Argument for a Moratorium*

Margaret Clark

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- A background image of a pig in a field, partially obscured by a semi-transparent grey box containing the text.
- **Concerns for the organ/tissue recipient:**
    - Many opportunities for rejection (so prolonged life or increased quality of life are not likely)
    - Immune suppression drugs makes patient vulnerable to infection
    - Zoonotic infection risk
    - Contract model for informed consent
      - ✦ Forfeit some rights to privacy, confidentiality, non-intrusion before and after death
    - Emotional distress, personal identity concerns with having non-human part
  - **Concern for third parties:**
    - Unknown epidemic risks
    - Intimates of Xtx patient will need to be monitored to some extent.
    - Resources being funneled toward expensive technology instead of basic care
    - Noxious markets, patent competitions for “monsters”

# Informed Consent & Privacy



- ✦ Duty to protect privacy and confidentiality *unless* respecting privacy will cause significant harm to the patient or to others:

## Magnitude of Harm

Probability  
of Harm

	Major	Minor
High	More permissible to override right to privacy	
Low		Less permissible to override right to privacy

See Beauchamp & Childress, pg. 307

# Human and Non-Human Interests



- **Lifeboat problem**

- Is the decision whether to pursue Xtx comparable?
- Would we be *wronging* humans in need of organs by *not* pursuing this technology?

Which do  
you save?



- **Gift ethic**

- Concern with human organ markets: devaluing gift if “donors” are incentivized monetarily
- Could creating a “piggy market” for Xtx cause a similar problem, where we devalue the pig’s sacrifice and perhaps human organs as well?
  - ✦ Slippery slope worry?

# Argument against a Moratorium

Harold Vanderpool



- Confident we can reduce organ/tissue rejection
- Capable of developing sensitive tests for zoonotic diseases and monitoring risks
  - Current regulatory bodies (e.g., FDA) are sufficiently capable of managing public health risks
- Moratorium makes a blanket judgment, ignoring the case-by-case benefit/risk analysis that is morally appropriate.
  - “morally defensible thresholds [...] must reflect a balance between risks and benefits for *discrete groups of prospective subjects*” (154, emphasis added)
- Should not turn away from patients with morally urgent needs who are vulnerable and desperate for help (**duty to rescue**)

# *The Stakes*



- **If we proceed too quickly...**

- Might cause AIDS-like epidemic (that could go undetected for years)
- Could lead to massive exploitation of poorer populations
- Non-humans who are close to us phylogenetically could be subjected to suffering, early death for tests that yield inaccurate, unreliable data.
- Early Xtx markets could devalue allotransplantation

- **If we proceed too slowly...**

- Thousands of people will die waiting for allotransplants without viable alternatives.
- Thousands more will die because they are ineligible for current transplant waiting list (criteria stringent due to scarcity of organs).
- Postpone finding organ supply that is potentially superior to human organs (through genetic manipulation)
- Some non-human primates might be more likely to stay endangered if they are not being bred for organ purposes.

# *What Should Be Done?*



- Given the **high stakes** in moving too quickly or too slowly, how do you think law makers, scientists, and health care providers should proceed?
  - What are the most morally urgent issues?
- Has Clark or Vanderpool offered the more compelling argument when it comes to calling for a moratorium on Xtx?

*Questions? Comments?*

