



Ethics of Animal Use

Kelly Arthur

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REVIEW SECTION

Ethics and Philosophy in Animal Welfare

Ethics of Animal Use, by Peter Sandøe and Stine B. Christiansen (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 2008, 194 pp., ISBN: 978-1-4051-5120-7)

Ethics of Animal Use is a broad overview of the topic of nonhuman animal ethics, and it fulfills this mission well, barring what I see as a few minor shortcomings. Despite the fact it was published 8 years ago, the book still has relevance and could be especially useful as a training resource for students in animal welfare-related fields. It brings together animal welfare, ethics, and philosophy to present a strong overview of different perspectives related to the treatment of animals. The book's 10 chapters cover broad animal ethical perspectives in addition to discussing specific segments of the animal industry, including the ethics surrounding the use of animals in food production, breeding, research, the management of wildlife, and infectious disease control.

Ethics of Animal Use presents scenarios that are relevant to people interested in animal welfare. This book approaches the material using theories and views to outline complex perspectives that are a good starting point for teaching such diverse subjects in a very readable manner.

As a former student in Bernard Rollin's graduate Science and Ethics class, I have previously been exposed to many of the theories covered in *Ethics of Animal Use*. Nevertheless, the book is a good introduction to animal welfare discussions and the difficulty of making blanket judgments that apply to all scenarios.

Just as Rollin described in the Foreword the influence animal welfare had on his youth, it is fitting to start off with the preconceived notions on animal welfare I brought to reading *Ethics of Animal Use*. My interest in animal welfare dates back to fourth grade when my puppy was poisoned by a neighbor to quiet his barking. Because of his death, I was exposed to animal cruelty, and this experience shaped my interest in animal welfare and ethics.

As a current veterinary student, I was encouraged by Sandøe and Christiansen's positive outlook on the role of veterinarians in animal welfare debates, as they dedicated an entire chapter to its discussion. It is very important to begin the debate early and expose students to ethical situations they may encounter in their careers, such as the complexities surrounding control of zoonotic diseases. I would recommend that veterinary and other animal science students read this book to engage in animal ethics discussions, whether or not it is included in their education as a required text.

One perspective the authors briefly discuss in the book is the increased fracturing of veterinary medicine. With continued specialization in fields or species of animals, veterinarians are often not communicating with peers who are outside their specialization. In the authors' opinion, a solution is to have separate ethics dialogues to match veterinarians' specialized interests. I would also argue that veterinarians should be discussing the issues and coming up with well-rounded solutions together, rather than just having debates related to specialties. These debates harken back to some of Hal Herzog's (2010) points made in his book *Some We Love, Some We Hate, Some We Eat*. Educating students interested in animal welfare on viewpoints related to use of different types of animals would be beneficial to increase sensitivity and understanding among segments of the animal industry.

One major criticism of the book is that there is virtually no conclusion. The book ends abruptly with a discussion of ethical issues surrounding wildlife. Multiple authors provided advice on the manuscript, and it is appreciated that recurring themes remained throughout the book. However, a concluding chapter of these repeated themes would have left the reader with more questions and a desire for continued education.

Despite the lack of a conclusion, the book initiates a useful discussion on animal ethics and overall presented varied perspectives with little bias. I look forward to this book being used in a veterinarian teaching capacity, as it is a helpful resource for new students. It is imperative that veterinary students and others interested in animal welfare learn as much as possible about ethical issues early in their training. This would help to improve the use and care of animals for future generations.

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Kelly Arthur
Colorado State University
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Reference

Herzog, H. (2010). *Some we love, some we hate, some we eat: Why it's so hard to think straight about animals*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.