

## Book Reviews

### **Understanding Animal Welfare: An Integrated Approach**

EN Eadie (2012). Published by Springer, Haberstraße 7, 69126 Heidelberg, Germany. 128 pages Hardback (ISBN 978-3-642-30576-4). Price £90.00, €99.95, US\$139.00.

This is really a book review of book reviews, since *Understanding Animal Welfare: An Integrated Approach* is itself a review of influential books in the recent history of the animal protection movement. The late Dr Edward Eadie was a geophysicist by training and became involved in animal welfare during the last ten years of his life. He has previously written *Education in Animal Welfare* (2011), also part of the same Animal Welfare series.

In *Understanding Animal Welfare*, Eadie selects eight influential books in the animal protection movement, and discusses their influence under a standard format. Aside from a short introductory and concluding section, each of the chapters is dedicated to a book in chronological order of publication. In addition, the relevant chapters briefly discuss other influential books in that discipline. The eight central chapters are entitled ‘Experimentation on animals’, ‘Intensive farming industry’, ‘Immorality of the treatment of animals by humans’, ‘History of challenges to speciesism’, ‘Science of animal behaviour and welfare’, ‘Practical ethics in achievement of direct reform’, ‘Politics of animal protection’ and ‘Legislative enactment for animal protection’. Respectively, the books discussed in each of these chapters are *The Principles of Humane Experimental Technique* (Russell and Burch 1959), *Animal Machines: The New Factory Farming Industry* (Harrison 1964), *Animal Liberation: Towards an End of Man’s Inhumanity to Animals* (Singer 1975), *Animal Revolution: Changing Attitudes Towards Speciesism* (Ryder 1989), *Animal Welfare: A Cool Eye Towards Eden* (Webster 1995), *Ethics into Action: Henry Spira and the Animal Rights Movement* (Singer 1998), *Political Animals: Animal Protection Politics in Britain and the United States* (Garner 1998) and *Animal Welfare Law in Britain: Regulation and Responsibility* (Radford 2001). The first three of these books are selected as early seminal work in animal welfare. The last three are selected to exemplify specific subject disciplines (history, science, ethics, politics and law). After a short abstract, each of these books is discussed under the common subtitles of ‘Introduction’, ‘Contents of the book’, ‘Influence of the book’, ‘Potential for the book’, ‘Some other books’ and ‘Overview’.

Writing the chapters in chronological order is illuminating, as it reveals the influences and interactions between the texts. For example, Harrison’s *Animal Machines* (1964) spurred Singer to write *Animal Liberation* (1975), which influenced Spira’s campaigning work (Singer 1998). Similarly, *Animal Machines* led to the Brambell Committee in the UK (in 1965), which produced the ‘Brambell Freedoms’, later developed into the Five Freedoms of the Farm Animal Welfare Council (Webster 1995). The five freedoms then formed the basis of much legislation and policy (Radford 2001).

Throughout the book, Eadie is passionate about improving the lives of animals, which he claims (in common with the works he has selected) are treated inhumanely by humans on a massive scale. His primary motivation for writing *Understanding Animal Welfare* appears to be a normative one. A central argument of Eadie’s work is that animal welfare (which he uses as short-hand for the broader animal protection reform movement) is a multidisciplinary endeavour. It is only by an appreciation of these multiple disciplines that animal welfare (the movement) can maximise the potential to improve the lives of animals:

The aim of the present work is to provide a broad understanding in a historical context of the diverse issues and disciplines involved in improving the welfare of animals whose quality of life is controlled or affected by the actions of humans. It is hoped the study will encourage further reading, particularly of the book selected or referred to in the book. More importantly, it would be good if the study influences, directly or indirectly, the actions or choices of individuals in ways that improve the lives of animals.

The moral imperative to reform is in the face of powerful organised industrial interests, for example the intensive agricultural lobby in the United States, where Eadie maintains reform has been minimal. One such way that reformers can benefit from reading the books he discusses is by learning from the successes and setbacks of the movement thus far. A second lesson is that a dose of realism is needed because reform requires co-ordinated and concerted effort and favourable circumstances. Despite this, legislative reform is not always necessary. Eadie illustrates this by discussing the direct action of Henry Spira, a campaigner inspired by Peter Singer. Spira has achieved huge reforms for animals using the following strategy: first, he chooses campaign targets, then he communicates, at first co-operatively but — if the co-operation is not reciprocated — he confronts the organisation with exposure and publicity. Successes include changing the corporate policy of organisations such as Revlon (abandoning animal testing) and McDonald’s (minimum standards for suppliers).

As the title of the book suggests, Eadie’s central claim is that an integrated approach to animal welfare is the optimal one for reform. Throughout the book, Eadie’s zeal for reform is refreshing. He follows Webster (1995) in arguing that simply understanding how animals suffer is not sufficient to reduce that suffering. Eadie claims that this lesson should be accepted as truth, now some 50 years since the work of Burch and Russell (1959) and Harrison (1964). The campaigning work of Spira (Singer 1998) the political work of Garner (1998) and the legal work of Radford (2001) all demonstrate that reforms must be fought for in the social, political and legal arenas. In the author’s words:

It is not sufficient to just have the evidence. It is necessary as described by Robert Garner ... to understand how public policy decisions are made and, for a sufficiently large constituency to develop, to exert pressure on and get the attention of politicians.

Each chapter gives a useful overview of the book being discussed and theme it represents. Despite this, at times I felt that the discussion was not deep enough. Admittedly, whether this is a fair criticism depends on who the book is aimed at. The academic, or indeed well-read activist, may have read most of these books and, owing to the relative shortness of the chapters, there may be little new. Of course, if written for a wider readership — perhaps the aim given the author's reformist motivations — then more detailed discussion might be excessive. Further, the consistent format of each chapter means that some repetition was difficult to avoid. For instance, the 'potential' of a book is often very similar to its 'influence' to date, and in some chapters the same information is again repeated in the 'Introduction' and 'Overview'. A third criticism that flows from the format is that, at least in the electronic version of the book, there is a lack of information in the contents. As might be expected, the books selected for discussion are not listed in the contents, nor in the titles of each chapter. Rather, it is in the 'Introduction' that the reader first learns of the particular texts that Eadie has selected for discussion.

To aid his study, Eadie used WorldCat, a global catalogue of university and government library collections, to see the number of copies that UK, US and Australian libraries hold of the various titles. In addition, he records the number of Google hits for each book. In absolute terms, the numbers of books held appears quite small. For instance, Ruth Harrison's *Animal Machines* (soon to be re-published by CABI) scores only 32 copies in the UK, 104 in the USA, and 12 books in Australia (148 total). Unsurprisingly, Singer's *Animal Liberation* scores the highest number of library books at 1,786 in total. Perhaps surprisingly, Garner's *Political Animals* scores the highest number of Google hits with 27.5 million, with *Animal Machines*, for instance, at 1.41 million.

Despite this analysis, Eadie points out that his selection of books is a personal one. This brings us to the issue of whether the eight books he selected were indeed reasonable for his purposes. The stand-out omission for me was a book concerned with animal minds and consciousness, being such a vital issue and bloody battleground of debate in the past. An obvious book here would be *Through Our Eyes Only: The Search for Animal Consciousness* (Marian Stamp Dawkins 1993). Alternatively, something earlier on the subject by Donald Griffin, or DeGrazia's *Taking Animals Seriously: Mental Life and Moral Status* (1996). The more general problem, though, is that when one starts to think about alternatives, there are lots of them: Regan's *A Case for Animal Rights* (1983), Rollin's *Animal Rights and Human Morality* (1981), Mary Midgley, Gary Francione... something more literary (eg Coetzee's *The Lives of Animals* 1999). And this is just a selection of more philosophical texts! To be fair to Eadie, many of these authors are mentioned in the 'some other books' section of each chapter. Indeed, in many of the disciplines (but perhaps not political science and law) there are a significant and growing number of influential publications. This reminds me of something I have read in the history of philosophy: if

asked who the greatest six thinkers in western philosophy are, most scholars choose the same four (Plato, Aristotle, Descartes and Kant). However, there is no consensus about the remaining two, with a long list of names being offered. I think the same situation applies to animal welfare and Eadie has done a good job in selecting the books he has.

A final point to make about *Understanding Animal Welfare* is its emphasis on the maltreatment of animals as a universal problem. Eadie constantly reminds us of this simple, but perhaps overlooked, truism. To illustrate this here he suggests that much can be learned from Radford's *Animal Welfare Law in Britain*:

the need for proper animal protection is universal, and law reform to improve the lives of animals adopted in one jurisdiction can be used as a guide for reform in other jurisdictions.

To end, I recommend *Understanding Animal Welfare: An Integrated Approach*, and praise it for its holism and ambitious aim of weaving disparate fields and themes together. I will leave you with Dr Eadie's words, which display his compassionate attitude and aspirations for his final work:

It is hoped the present study based on a selection of modern books provides an increased appreciation of how we have reached the stage we are at today in relation to animal welfare as well as of the complex, difficult, and often interrelated issues involved in providing improved protection for our fellow creatures.

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### **Blue Juice: Euthanasia in Veterinary Medicine**

P Morris (2012). Published by Temple University Press, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19122, USA. 244 pages Paperback (ISBN 978-1-4399-0706-1). Price £18.99, US\$28.95.

*Blue Juice: Euthanasia in Veterinary Medicine* is a social scientist's take on the issues surrounding companion animal euthanasia and the perspectives of the three main groups affected: the animals; the owner; and the veterinarians. The book discusses the complex ethical and moral decision process, paying special attention to the perspective of the veterinarians who are involved. After all, veterinarians are in charge of the administration of the 'blue juice', a euphemistic way to refer to the euthanasia solution, as one of its most common presentations is as a liquid of that colour. The book is US-centric, as it describes the research that Dr Morris conducted following veterinary practitioners for a couple of years in several hospitals in the United States. During that time she interviewed them while they managed different situations related to decisions to end a life and the interactions that occurred with the animals and their owners. Euthanasia can be a useful tool to end animal suffering and as such is a blessing that allows veterinarians to terminate conditions that negatively affect the animal's well-being, as it happens in the case of patients that cannot be cured or even comforted. In spite of this, the research findings