

The evaluation stage of the process includes questions specifically related to animal welfare. For example, the frequencies of inspecting livestock and stocking density are examined. The program generates a report that comments on the reported husbandry practices. At this stage the comments are usually related to MAFF welfare codes.

The program considers the use of some medicinal treatments such as footbaths and sheep dips. In addition to environment-related advice on the disposal of such chemicals, it gives some advice on the use of these products. This advice, however, is not always accurate. For example, the recommended 2-min standing time for footbaths is not appropriate for all types of treatments.

The advisory section of the program contains the MAFF welfare codes and summaries of welfare legislation. The program, while giving some useful summaries, should not be considered comprehensive, as the welfare legislation in some areas (such as calf legislation) is very brief and does not include references to other advisory publications that are freely available from the MAFF website.

The program recognizes the importance of farm assurance standards in animal welfare and the current version of the program includes a summary of the Freedom Food standards and the new EUREP GAP Animal Production standards. However, it does not contain some important standards such as those produced by Assured British Meat. A registration system enables the information to be upgraded by downloads from a website, so future versions may include this information.

This program is a valiant attempt to incorporate welfare considerations into a self-assessment system. However, the deficiencies in some advisory aspects and the lack of comprehensive animal welfare-related information limit its ability to improve animal welfare in the current version. This program does, however, provide a useful model for technology transfer for animal welfare, as it encourages farmers to evaluate their own system and consider solutions that are appropriate for each unit.

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Strolling With Our Kin: Speaking for and Respecting Voiceless Animals

Marc Bekoff (2000). American Anti-Vivisection Society: Jenkintown. 128pp. Paperback. Obtainable from the distributors, Lantern Books, 1 Union Sq West, Suite 201, New York, NY 10003, USA (ISBN 1881699021). Price US\$9.95.

'Do not dissect animals'. I finally found this sentence on p 81 of Marc Bekoff's latest book, *Strolling With Our Kin*, although I had been expecting to find it earlier. Bekoff's injunction (one of many) to the school students at whom this book is aimed came at a timely, if awkward, moment for me. For the past few weeks, I have been discussing with my colleagues and undergraduate students the ethics of killing animals for the sole purpose of providing fresh specimens for dissection (prompted by the proposed introduction of a new zoology degree course at my university). By and large, opinions divided roughly by age. Most of those over the age of 35 argued that you cannot be a 'good' zoologist without the knowledge gained from dissecting at least some animals. Those under 30 (and particularly the current undergraduates) were almost unanimous in endorsing a 'Bekoffian' approach to this issue; nearly all were appalled at the idea of killing an animal 'just to cut it up'.

This book is, however, far wider in scope than simply a discussion of the ethics of dissection. Bekoff has attempted to present a primer for children on the ethics and welfare issues involved in all aspects of the human use of non-human animals (although, oddly, he does not state at the outset what he considers to be the scope or the aims of the book, nor is he explicit about the age group he is targeting). The foreword is written by Jane Goodall, who shares Bekoff's views both on the undesirability of dissection and on much else in our dealings with our 'non-human kin'.

Children under the age of 10 might find difficulties with some of the vocabulary in this book. A greater concern is that Bekoff does not always appear to give equal weight to both sides of the many and various arguments about our relationships with animals (this is perhaps understandable, given that this book is published by the American Anti-Vivisection Society). On zoos, for example, Bekoff writes, 'if the gates of zoos were left open, there would not be any animals in them after a very short while'. This seems to me to miss the point. If all the children at my daughter's school were free to come and go as they pleased, I think they would all very quickly find their way to the playground or sweet shop, but I do not seriously consider that my child's schooling compromises her welfare.

I also found myself becoming increasingly uneasy with the degree of anthropomorphism that appeared in parts of this book. Bekoff recounts details of his research into the behaviour of coyotes in Grand Teton National Park and includes the following passage: 'One day mom left the pack and never again returned. The pack waited impatiently for days and days...they travelled in the direction she had gone, sniffed in places she might have visited and howled as if calling her home. For more than a week some spark seemed to be gone. Her family missed her. I think the coyotes would have cried if they could. It was clear that coyotes, like many other animals, have deep and complicated feelings. Their behaviour told it all.' That last sentence, for me, struck particular warning bells. Bekoff is an undoubted expert on many aspects of animal behaviour and I have long been an admirer both of his research into the subject of animal play and of his writing abilities. He has a clear and succinct style and his books are eminently readable. But, and this is a big but, to what extent can we assume that an animal's behaviour 'tells it all'? As Celia Heyes, Daniel Povinelli and others have said, we cannot really know what is going on inside an animal's mind, no matter how much we might learn about their behaviour and indeed empathize with what appears to be their distress.

These concerns aside, there is much to commend in this book. It is wide in scope, covering reintroduction programmes, animals in zoos and in the wild, farm animals, laboratory animals and a brief overview of animal consciousness and perception of pain. Where Bekoff is particularly good is on the differences between animal 'rightists' and those with an interest in and concern for animal welfare. He summarizes the main differences between the two camps with great clarity and in a way that would be accessible to most 10–14 year olds. He also gives a good explanation of utilitarianism and the work of Singer and Regan.

The book ends with a useful list of references and suggested further reading, as well as *Twelve Millennial Mantras*. The latter are co-written with Jane Goodall and set out Goodall's and Bekoff's views on how we should approach our relationships with our 'non-human kin'.

On balance, would I buy this book to give to a child to read? Yes, for a bright and enquiring 10–14 year old with an interest in animal welfare, I probably would.

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