

above all with the inappropriate nature of much imported biotechnology. It is essential, he claims, that any productivity benefits from animal biotechnologies are used to benefit the most needy sections of society first, to reduce the disparities between rich and poor.

This is an important book, which constitutes a salutary comment on the Eurocentric view that dominates much thinking on animal welfare. The ethical imperative for respect for animals in our care is unquestionable. But it is also important to recognize the extent to which animals are embedded in human culture. While this is less obvious in the West, where the origins of animal products tend to be obscured by bland assurances and plastic wrappers, it is an inescapable reality for many in the Third World. However much we may wish to protect the rights and welfare of animals, we also need to be sensitive to the part they play globally in sustaining an acceptable quality of life for humans. The real ethical challenge lies in balancing the two with justice and humanity.

B Mepham

*University of Nottingham
Nottingham, UK*

Animal Biology and Care

S Dallas (2000). Blackwell Science Ltd: Oxford. 320pp. Paperback. Obtainable from the publishers, Osney Mead, Oxford OX2 OEL, UK (ISBN 0632050543). Price £14.99.

The field of animal welfare and care is a rapidly growing discipline, most noticeably within the further education sector. Over the past decade, courses have mushroomed and diversified and students choosing to follow this vocation post-GCSE now number in their thousands each year. In spite of this situation, very few books address the general needs of the beginner although there are a bewildering variety of specialist texts from which to choose. This book is launched into a relative void.

The enormous scope of animal care makes preparation of any textbook a daunting task when it comes to deciding what to include and what to leave out. The author has tackled her objective with clarity and simplicity – which will endear her to both teachers and students of the subject area alike. I can visualize many harried overhead transparency makers who will have occasion to bless the bullet-point format of the text!

As a text for Pre-veterinary Nursing courses, the book hits its mark well and there is much of value for First Certificate and Diploma courses in Animal Care, mostly at just the right level. The sections on body systems and functions, welfare legislation, companion animal disease and first aid are well written and presented and have wide application. Law, first aid and grooming information relate well to NVQ syllabuses too. The sections on nutrition and small animal husbandry are on the other hand rather *too* basic and generalized, offering little in the way of guidance on making an informed choice of available foodstuffs or how these should be varied to suit circumstance. Information on the correct presentation and amount of food for a wider variety of species would have been a helpful addition, particularly in view of the much more extensive range of companion animals nurses are likely to encounter and be asked to advise upon nowadays.

While it does not break any new ground in the promotion of animal welfare, the book does present the basic knowledge and techniques crucial to many aspects of the practical welfare of companion animals in an easily comprehensible manner. The listing of key points will provide an invaluable revision aid and, in some cases, an excellent step-by-step checklist for proper completion of routine tasks. Only those who have experienced the frustration of trying to explain that disinfectants are *not* detergents to a wall of popular assumption will properly

appreciate statements of the apparently obvious! It is in fact the patent understanding of what needs to be drilled into students, and how, that really makes me warm to the author.

This book has much to recommend it and, used in conjunction with others providing a more thorough grounding in day-to-day husbandry, represents a valuable contribution to a developing field where there is a significant lack of introductory material. It will be well received and used and I can only recommend more of the same. Should the author decide to turn her attention to the next level of instruction, at National Certificate and Diploma level, she will encounter a similar void to be filled with appropriate, targeted texts.

P Bryant
Merrist Wood College
Worplesdon, UK

Animal Geographies

Edited by J Wolch and J Emel (1998). Verso: London and New York. 314pp. Hardback and paperback. Obtainable from Marston Book Services, PO Box 269, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4YN, UK (ISBN 1859848311 hardback or 1859841376). Price £40.00 hardback or £14.00.

This publication is subtitled 'Place, Politics, and Identity in the Nature-Culture Borderlands' which gives a little more indication of its orientation and purpose. The preface provides a clearer view where it states: '*Animal Geographies* seeks to contribute to this fundamental rethinking of animals and to suggest how, by looking through geographical lenses, we may be able to bring animals into clearer focus and back into our understanding of social life'. Essentially the authors are advocating 'geographical approaches' to animals and human-animal relations and arguing that this will not only help to resolve some dilemmas but might also generate new and provocative ideas.

There are 13 chapters to the book, in four parts – 'Animal Subjects/Human Identities' (Part I), 'Negotiating the Human-Animal Borderlines' (Part II), 'The Political Economy of Animal Bodies' (Part III) and 'Animals and the Moral Landscape' (Part IV). These rather daunting titles often disguise eminently practical and down-to-earth contributions. Thus, for example, the three chapters in Part III cover the (North American) spotted owl, the role of animals in contemporary North India and pig production in the United States!

There is no doubt that the contents of this book are an interesting and important contribution to the debate on the relationship between *Homo sapiens* and other members of the Animal Kingdom. Unfortunately, however, the collected papers are shrouded in preoccupation with political correctness, jargon and cliché. As a result, this book might be ignored by those who do not identify fully with the editors' views on (for example) sexism. Others may not have the patience to wade through reams of philosophy in order to learn about such important and often overlooked subjects as the Islamic approach to animal welfare – or the diverse factors that influence the survival of golden eagles and other threatened species.

A glance at the index gives some indication of the orientation of the book in so far as the editors are concerned. In an attempt to assess the immediate relevance of this publication to readers of *Animal Welfare*, the reviewer searched the index for the words 'welfare', 'pain', 'slaughter' and 'veterinary'. None of these are listed but, instead, under 'W' one can find 'women and feminism', under 'P', 'politics', under 'S', 'slavery' and under 'V' 'vegetarianism'.