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Redefining Social Welfare: Connections across Species

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Redefining Social Welfare: Connections across Species

CHRISTINA RISLEY-CURTISS

Special Editor

A growing body of research supports the notion that human well-being is inextricably connected to the welfare of other animals. Social scientists are exploring these connections in research in social work and various subfields of sociology, including those focusing on the environment, deviance, the family, health, social inequality, and religion, as well as the emerging field of animals and society. This special issue taps researchers and theorists from several countries in a wide range of subfields in order to capture the breadth of the connections among species that affect all aspects of human well-being. This is a double issue, as we received such a large number of submissions that covered a variety of issues. The Humane Society University graciously helped subsidize the expansion of the issue to include the additional content. In addition, I need to thank the wide range of people all over the world who helped review manuscripts, despite their busy schedules.

The articles in this special issue cover a wide range of areas of interest, including:

- 1) socio-emotional connections between species, e.g., the role of companion animals across the life course and other related topics;
- 2) the connection of animal agriculture to climate change and environmental destruction, which is inextricably connected to human welfare;
- 3) health issues—the impact of consumption of animal products on health such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, etc.—directly plus the impact of antibiotics and hormones fed to animals, as well as the impact of

pesticides and poisons and contaminants;

5) connections between animal abuse and interpersonal violence;

6) contributions of companion animals across the life course from childhood to older adulthood;

7) animals in sports and entertainment (hunting, zoos, circuses).

All of these issues are inextricably linked to human well-being. This is an opportunity to articulate the idea that animal welfare is inextricably connected to human welfare through all the ways that human and animal lives intersect.