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## **Understanding the multiple conceptions of animal welfare**

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### **Abstract**

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*Academics working on animal welfare typically consider the animal's affective state (eg the experience of pain), biological functioning (eg the presence of injuries), and sometimes naturalness (eg access to pasture), but it is unclear how these different factors are weighed in different cases. We argue that progress can be informed by systematically observing how ordinary people respond to scenarios designed to elicit varying, and potentially conflicting, types of concern. The evidence we review illustrates that people vary in how much weight they place on each of these three factors in their assessments of welfare in different cases; in some cases, concerns about the animal's affective state are predominant, and in other cases other concerns are more important. This evidence also suggests that people's assessments can also include factors (like the animal's relationship with its caregiver) that do not fit neatly within the dominant three-circles framework of affect, functioning and naturalness. We conclude that a more complete understanding of the multiple conceptions of animal welfare can be advanced by systematically exploring the views of non-specialists, including their responses to scenarios designed to elicit conflicting concerns.*

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