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Chemotherapy for dogs, hens in cages, mink fur coats, castration of piglets, elephants in circuses, indoor cats, genetically modified animals – there are numerous issues in the public debate about how humans keep and use animals. What is a good animal life? And what obligations do humans have towards animals? Animal ethics can help discussions on where and how to draw the line.

My interest in animals encouraged me to become a vet. However, during my veterinary studies I became increasingly aware of animal welfare and ethical issues. Why were so many cattle diseases related to the pressures of milk production? And how could I justify putting down a young healthy dog just because it was unwanted?

I graduated in 1993 from the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University in Copenhagen (now University of Copenhagen), with a feeling that my veterinary career was unlikely to follow the usual path. After a year of mainstream veterinary work I went to Edinburgh University to pursue my interest in animal welfare. In 1995 I graduated as MSc in "Applied Animal Behaviour and Animal Welfare" and for a couple of years I worked with animal protection organisations and rehabilitation of wildlife, in Denmark and abroad.

It became clear to me, that disagreements regarding animal welfare were often value based, which furthered my interest in animal ethics. In 1998 I got the job as scientific secretary of the Danish Animal Ethics Council (DAEC). The DAEC is set up by our Ministry of Justice to advise the minister on animal welfare and ethical topics relating to all kinds of animal use.

Since then I have, alongside the job for the DAEC, also worked in animal ethics at the University of Copenhagen, resulting in several articles and conference presentations. I have been involved in the development of teaching material for animal ethics and courses on ethics and on keeping of companion animals. Currently I am finishing up my PhD. In the context of veterinary treatment of companion animals this project concerns the quality of life of animal owners, the welfare of the animals and the potential ethical aspects.

Finally, I am a board member of the International Society for Anthrozoology (ISAZ), member of the editorial board of ISAZ' journal *Anthroöos*, member of council for the International Society for Applied Ethology (ISAE), and chair of ISAE's Ethics Committee.

Selected publications:

Christiansen, S.B., Kristensen, A.T., Sandøe, P. & Lassen, J. 2009. Looking after chronically ill dogs: the carer's quality of life. Proceedings from the 18th Annual conference of the International Society for Anthrozoology (ISAZ), Oct. 20-23, Kansas City, USA, p. 57.

Christiansen, S.B., Kristensen, A.T., Lassen, J. & Sandøe, P. 2009. Owner autonomy and shared responsibility for the decision to euthanize a companion animal. Proceedings from the 18th Annual conference of the International Society for Anthrozoology (ISAZ), Oct. 20-23, Kansas City, USA, p. 58.

Sandøe, P. & Christiansen, S.B. 2008. *Ethics of Animal Use*. Blackwell Publishing.

Christiansen, S.B. & Forkman, B. 2007. Assessment of animal welfare in a veterinary context – a call for ethologists. *Appl. Anim. Behav. Sci.*, vol. 106, issue 4, pp. 203-220.

Sandøe, P. & Christiansen, S.B. 2007. The value of animal life – how should we balance quality versus quantity. *Animal Welfare*, vol. 16 (S), pp. 109-115.