How animal welfare standards create and justify realities

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Abstract

Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot tell us that we live in a plural world in which actions are justified in multiple ways. Moreover, Anne Marie Mol argues that things, certainly including animals, are always multiple, their very existence dependent on the particular practices in which they are implicated. Thus, animal welfare policies must be understood in light of both the ways in which animals are 'practiced' and the particular justifications provided for these practices. Such policies make claims based on the practices involved in animal-human interactions and are justified based on appeals to the scientific (industrial), civic, market, and domestic worlds, among others. Thus, animal welfare policies must necessarily involve compromises among both the multiple ways in which animals are 'practiced' and the multiple ways in which those policies may be justified.