



VIP TRANSCRIPT SERIES

INTERVIEW WITH DR. MARC BEKOFF



Dr. Marc Bekoff, professor emeritus of ecology and evolutionary biology at the University of Colorado and a former Guggenheim Fellow, is a renowned authority on animals and has published more than 500 scientific and popular essays and 23 books. Books include *Minding Animals*, *The Ten Trusts* (with Jane Goodall), *The Emotional Lives of Animals*, and many more.

THE EMOTIONAL AND MORAL LIVES OF ANIMALS

DR. WILL TUTTLE: Greetings, everyone. Welcome to Veganpalooza 2013. We are delighted to have with us for this next session Dr. Marc Bekoff with us on Veganpalooza. He is a former professor of ecology and evolutionary biology. He's the Professor Emeritus on these subjects at the University of Colorado, Boulder, and he's a former Guggenheim Fellow. In 2000 he was awarded the Exemplar Award from the Animal Behavior Society for major long term contributions of the field of animal behavior. And in 2009 he was presented with the St. Francis of Assisi Award by the Auckland SPCA. He has published more than 800 scientific and popular essays and 25 books. Some of the books he's written are *Minding Animals*, *The Ten Trusts*, which he did with Jane Goodall, *The Emotional Lives of Animals*, *Animals Matter*, *Animals at Play*, *Wild Justice*, and *The Animal Manifesto: Six Reasons for Expanding our Compassion Footprint*. Also *Ignoring Nature No More: The Case for Compassionate Conservation*, and *Jasper's Story: Saving Moon Bears*, as well as two editions of the *Encyclopedia of Animal Rights and Animal Welfare*, and the *Encyclopedia of Human-Animal Relationships*. In 2005 he was presented with the Bank One Faculty Community Service Award for the work he's done with children, senior citizens, and prisoners as part of the Roots and Shoots program with Jane Goodall. So Marc Bekoff is someone who has really devoted his entire life to studying and understanding animals at a deep level and has taught this subject and written about it extensively, and he's highly respected. I know you also write a column regularly for *Psychology Today* as well, which we didn't even mention, but I'm sure there's a lot more we didn't mention either. So it's great to have you with us, Dr. Bekoff, and I'd like to go ahead and start out. The title of our session is "The Emotional and Moral Lives of Animals." And I think a lot of us know that animals have some kind of an inner life, and I was wondering if you could share with all of us what you have learned, sort of some of the main parameters of what you have learned about the emotional lives of animals and why that should matter to us as human beings, and maybe a little later get into this idea of the moral lives of animals because I think that's also very interesting and could shed a lot of light, I think, perhaps for us. So please just let us know. I'm so curious to find out more.

DR. MARC BEKOFF: Sure. Number one, I'm really thrilled to be part of your wonderful program. I think that we need to spread the word as much as we can about compassion and loving other animals unconditionally. I've been interested in the emotional lives of animals forever. My parents tell me that I began minding animals as soon as I could almost talk. That became the title for a book I wrote called *Minding Animals*. I was always asking them what other animals are feeling and what other animals are thinking, and I didn't remember this incident, but my father recalled that when I was about three, I yelled at a man who was abusing his dog, and the guy came after my father.

DR. TUTTLE: You got your father in trouble.

DR. BEKOFF: That was my early activism. But I've always been interested in it, and I'm astounded, actually, I was just reading, just literally before we got on the phone, an issue of *New Scientist Magazine*. I've written for them a lot, and I really like the magazine. There was a really phenomenal little section in there on the sensory lives of birds. I'm reading it, and I'm going, "Wow, this is fantastic." We know birds are amazing beings, and of course, people forget that when they're eating chicken, they're eating a bird. I've actually heard people almost say, "Oh, yeah, I really love birds." And I'll say, "Well, if you love birds, how can you eat chicken? I'm glad you don't love me." And that turns into some conversation.

But at the end of the article, the guy who wrote it, who's a very well-known ornithologist, said, "I think the next great area of study should be the emotional lives of birds. We don't really know much about the emotional lives of birds, and of course emotions require consciousness, and consciousness is a complex topic," etc. I was astounded that somebody would make that comment wondering whether birds felt

emotions. We know that they feel grief; we know that chickens display empathy, for example. So we still have a long way to go. Be that as it may, at least among the mammals, most of the animals with whom I'm the most familiar, there's almost nobody today who would ever deny emotions to non-human mammals, if you will.

DR. TUTTLE: Like in Descartes' time.

DR. BEKOFF: Exactly. It just bothers me sometimes when people go, "Well, we don't really know this." Yeah, we do know it. We know it based on really solid behavioral studies, and one of the principles I always try to put forth to people who have not studied biology is the idea of evolutionary continuity. That's an idea that Charles Darwin put forth that actually has just a lot of force. It basically says that the differences among animals are differences in degree rather than differences in kind, which means that the differences are shades of gray, not black and white. I always think of the bumper sticker, "If we have something, they have it too." So we have hearts, we have brains, we have kidneys, and we have emotions. So do they, they being other animals. So one of the arguments I've been making for a really long time, and I'm hitting it harder now even, is that solid biology and solid evolutionary theory really would argue against robbing other animals of their emotional lives.

Then we have all this wonderful research showing that mammals, and I'm going to say animals because I'm sure that birds and other animals as well display these emotions, but they feel joy, they feel happiness, they feel grief, they can get angry, they can be jealous, they can be envious, they can show embarrassment, resentment. So what's really interesting is the more we study, the more we learn. Whenever I'm writing I sort of keep a little checklist, and I go, "What do we think we know about these animals, and what does new scientific research show?" There's nowhere where new research, if you will, contraindicates what we know common sense-wise.

DR. TUTTLE: Right, it always actually seems to reinforce it, what people know if they have a companion animal, for example. They have a unique personality and emotional needs and all that stuff.

DR. BEKOFF: Exactly. Since this is about, I like to say, *who* we eat, not *what* we eat, in people's meal plans, we're learning amazing things about animals that people call farm animals, like cows and pigs and sheep, for example.

DR. TUTTLE: Do we know that these animals dream? Do you know anything about that?

DR. BEKOFF: I do, and there's wonderful evidence that they do dream. One very formal study came from looking at rats running a maze. It was moderately invasive, and I don't like it, but the results are intriguing. Of course, whenever I read about invasive work, I almost always caution people that we have the information, can we use it to the animals' behalf and also argue against doing any more of that research. It's already been done. I hate to say it that way. But there was a study done at MIT, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and these rats were training to run a maze. At different parts of the maze, researchers were recording electrical activity in the brain, and then when the rats were sleeping at night, the researchers looked at their EEG, the electroencephalogram, and it showed that the rats when they were sleeping were actually running the maze. There's a process called memory consolidation, and that seems to be when the animals are sort of consolidating their memories from the day before.

The reason I think it's an extremely important study is you can always argue if rats and other rodents do something, then so do other mammals. If we learned, and I'm sure chimpanzees and elephants and dogs and cats dream, but if we learned they did, there would still be the skeptics who go, "Well, yeah, maybe some mammals do it, but surely rats and mice don't." They do play that hierarchy game. And that's another thing that I've really been arguing a lot about the emotional lives and the sentience of animals is

that there's no such thing as higher and lower animals. People talk about lower animals as the rodents, or birds compared to mammals, but as a biologist, that's just a meaningless kind of designation. The danger of it is not only is it bad biology, but then lower gets translated into less valuable, less worth protecting, higher translates into more valuable. Of course, when humans do these kinds of hierarchies, who winds up on top? Humans.

DR. TUTTLE: Exactly. Can you talk a little bit about that perhaps? The basic ways in which we create a hierarchy and then we put ourselves on top, that other animals have ways of knowing that we certainly don't have. Can you talk maybe a little bit about some of what you've learned about the intelligence of animals as well?

DR. BEKOFF: Sure. This all falls sometimes under the sort of rubric called speciesism, where people look at different species and they'll go, "All and only humans are self-conscious." These are real examples from the past. We know that that's not true anymore. Then what they'll do is they'll pick different traits. So it used to be Man, the toolmaker, *Homo faber*. Then of course Jane Goodall saw David Greybeard making a tool using a blade of grass, inserting the grass in a hole, basically coming out with insects on it, and then licking the insects off the blade of grass. So traditionally what people have done is they've looked at characteristics that they think are uniquely human, basically say that no other animals have been observed performing a particular task, and aren't we special. But now we know that New Caledonian crows are really smart and adaptable birds make and use more sophisticated tools than do chimpanzees.

DR. TUTTLE: Right, and I've even heard some researchers say that they've observed fish using tools.

DR. BEKOFF: Yeah, and in fact, fish have been observed making and using tools, and a couple of months ago, there was an article on fish using what we biologists call gestural communication. Fish were observed using their head to point to potential prey to other fish in their group. It's analogous where you and I are walking down the street, and I'll say, "Hey, Will, look over there." I point my head or I point my finger. So we're learning more and more about fish as well in terms of their cognitive and emotional ability. There's been some wonderful work done on pain and consciousness in fish. So we're just learning more. Like I said before, every time somebody studies something, it only supports the great breadth of sentience throughout the animal kingdom.

DR. TUTTLE: Right. So basically, would you agree that in the last maybe two or so decades, we've seen a major shift just in the basic mainstream scientific community about its understanding of animals?

DR. BEKOFF: I think it's a bit more recent, but certainly within say the last five or ten years. Up until the turn of the century – that's an ominous thought, that we go from 1999 to 2000 – there were still the skeptics. I always call it the "as if" disclaimer. So they'd say, "Sure, mice re acting as if they're sad," or, "Chickens are acting as if they're in pain." They carried a lot of weight for a really long time. But in the year 2000, I published a book called *The Smile of a Dolphin*. What it was was a collection of 56 stories by very well-known scientists who in a sense were invited to come out of the closet and write frankly about the animals who they studied. So we got really, really well-known scientists to talk about the emotional lives of fish and snakes and birds and a whole variety of mammals. Stephen Jay Gould, who is a very famous evolutionary biologist, maybe the most famous of our time, wrote the foreword for it, and he argued using a lot of Darwinian ideas that isn't it just ridiculous that we've been for so long resisting what's staring us in the face, and that is basically the emotional lives of other animals. In the last couple of years, I'd say the last two or three years, it's almost impossible to find a skeptic on whether animals feel emotions. I always say it's a matter of not *if* animals feel emotions but why they have evolved, what they are good for.

DR. TUTTLE: That's an interesting idea, an interesting question. I would love to get a little bit into the idea, and you wrote a whole book on this too, on the moral lives of animals, the idea that animals themselves actually have moral codes, a moral sense perhaps, and that we're not the only animals to have this kind of morality. I've seen that written that man or humans are the only ones to have a moral sense. Can you tell us a little bit about that?

DR. BEKOFF: Yeah. I hear people say humans are the only animals to have a moral sense, I always say, "Have you looked at a recent news program or magazine or newspaper?" It actually gets people thinking. So I wrote a book called *Wild Justice* with my colleague Jessica Pierce. The basic argument of that book was really looking at what we know about moral sentiments in other animals, non-human animals. Do they know right from wrong? Do they display compassion and empathy for animals in need? Once again, the amount of information that supports the fact that they do is really overwhelming. There are wonderful examples of animals coming to the aid of animals in need. When the animals in need really can't do anything for the animals who are helping them. In classical biological theory, people would always say, "Marc helps Will because Marc gets something out of it from Will." But it's not true.

When I was in Kenya with Iain Douglas-Hamilton, who's really one of the world's most famous elephant researchers, I met an elephant named Babel. As a teenager, she had a mangled right rear foot. For at least, they say, 15 or so years, the other animals in the elephant herd waited for her, and the matriarch even fed her. If Babel were left alone, she would surely die. She'd get attacked by a predator. When I related this story – it's just one of many – some people would say, "Yeah, but Babel is helping them too. It's like one more body in the herd." The fact of the matter is that's not true at all. There's nothing Babel could do for them. She could hardly walk. She could hardly feed herself. So that would be an example of an animal doing what we would call "the right thing," having a moral sentiment. The right thing to do, of course, would be to help an individual in need.

I've also studied it a lot in animal play behavior, and across the board people are discovering that animals play fairly. If I invite you to play, I'm inviting you to play, not beat you up or eat you or mate with you. There are many, many different signals that animals have evolved and use to maintain fair and cooperate play. So once again, if I invite you to play, the right thing to do would be to play with you, not try to beat you up. My goodness, I get stories every day in email that are so obvious in terms of showing that other animals have these moral sentiments. Then there's also been some research done on it, so it's just not merely stories that are supporting these ideas.

DR. TUTTLE: Right, exactly. It's like you said, again, a continuum. Do you think in relationship to this, because when you talk about this I think perhaps the internet has helped the general public understand this more because, to me anyway, there's just so many little videos and stories of animals helping each other and even cross-species barriers, and they go viral on the internet, on YouTube and other places, and I think people just intuitively know that this is true. So how can academics, that may be part of the reason, how can they sit there with a straight face and accuse us of anthropomorphism when we see all these things on the internet happening? Do you think that's part of it?

DR. BEKOFF: I have two lines for that. The first is the plural of anecdote is data. So if you see 50 or 100 YouTube videos showing the same phenomenon, you better believe it, and you better go out and study it. And the other thing gets back to anthropomorphism because students especially suffer at the hands of arrogant professors who will say, "You think dogs feel joy, you think cows feel pain, or pigs feel pain and grieve the loss of other pigs. You're just being anthropomorphic." Once again, if you go back to Darwin and this idea of continuity, I always say we're not inserting something human into non-human animals that they don't really have. Once again, there have been classical studies. Once again, I don't support these, and I want to be really clear that I don't support the invasive research, but there has been research

showing that rats like to be tickled and rats display joy, and there's also been some studies done that show that rats display empathy. They will help a rat in need rather than eat chocolate, which is something rats like. So given the choice of having a really good food or freeing a rat from a cage who's obviously in distress, the rats will choose to free another rat.

The one thing that's really important, I think, to our listeners is that these papers that are published are published in the most prestigious scientific journals, so somebody can't say, "I read about that in *Reader's Digest* or *Life* or *Look* magazine." Really, Will, that's a really important point that the studies on empathy in mice and rats were published in a journal called *Science*, which is one of the most prestigious scientific journals in the world. Most of my colleagues would like to publish one paper in that journal during the course of their career. Also, the study done on joy and laughter and tickling in rats was published in *Science*. So for people who are already converted but who are looking for material to educate others, you can just say that it's solid scientific research published in the best journals that are really demonstrating, once again, the emotional lives of animals. And getting back to "farm animals" or "food animals," we know amazing things about the learning capacities of cows and pigs and chickens. Chickens can recognize about 100 different faces in a group. Again, they all display empathy.

DR. TUTTLE: To me it seems, and I think maybe this is more of a philosophical point, but it seems like if you just look back 150 years in the American South, you see people said the same things about black slaves, that they couldn't really feel the way we white people can. They don't really care when we take their babies because they're not like us. They don't really have the feeling. And we do the same thing today with enemies in war and so forth. We think that they're less worthy of our compassion because they're really below us. They're beneath us, they're less than us because we're going to harm them, so we have to desensitize not only our feelings but we have to really, I think, disconnect from our natural intelligence that actually really does know that these animals feel or these people feel just like we do. And that science has actually been, in a sense, very unscientific in the sense that it is a product of its culture, but nevertheless the scientists are raised in the same environment, and so they're eating meat, they're wearing leather, they probably see themselves as the top of the food chain. So they don't want to admit, it's been hard, I think, for the whole institution of science to make as much progress as it obviously should have, just because people are engaging in behavior that actually sort of dumbs them down a little bit in terms of understanding. So we're talking about research that you're doing and other people are doing that are challenging the paradigm that's actually making, I guess, scientists could be making them uncomfortable in their daily lives, which is the whole point.

DR. BEKOFF: Yes, it is. I think that's a really prescient observation. What I'm seeing more and more now are some scientists who are doing this work who are beginning to see the moral implications of what they're doing. Donald Griffin, who's kind of the father of what we call cognitive ethology, who really got the ball rolling on scientific studies of consciousness in the mid-70s, was an award-winning scientist. He never really wrote much about the moral implications of what he was doing. Then finally, in the second edition of this book he wrote on animal minds and animal thinking – and when I say I take credit for it, I don't mean it in an egocentric way – but after long discussions with him both in Boulder and in other meetings, he finally noted that what he was writing about did in fact have moral implications on how we treat other animals.

I don't mean that as a criticism of Don. Early on he was a hardcore empirical scientist, and he just did not venture into that sort of the ethical arena. But I have to say that some of my last conversations with him really heartened me when he saw that, hey, if you're going to talk about consciousness in animals and sentience in animals, it mandates – I can't think of another way to put it – that we treat them better. There's no more BS, if you will. If you know based on solid data or solid evolutionary theory or solid inference, if you will, that these animals are feeling pain and have these very rich emotional lives, you

have to treat them better. I get into discussions now with some of my colleagues when they will not take that step. I'm not asking them to be card-carrying vegans or animal activists. What I'm asking them to do is to show that they have responsibility for how the information that they gather is disseminated. I just, I know some of my colleagues get really upset, but we as scientists can't just sit in the ivory tower pumping out these data without any kind of responsibility to, say, non-scientists.

DR. TUTTLE: Right, exactly. That's the thing. I think if scientists were required to be vegans – that would be obviously a miracle – I think we would have whole different major breakthroughs in our understanding of animals because some of the things that I've just picked up lately, like prairie dogs having incredibly complex language, for example, you've probably heard about that, and other things, and it seems like the more we learn, the more we see that other animals have capacities that we can only in some ways just stand in awe of, that they can do things that we can't even imagine doing, being able to migrate vast distances, to know things we still haven't figured out, I don't think, right? Am I right about this, how animals know a lot of things that they know? We have no idea.

DR. BEKOFF: Mexican jays and other jays can remember the locations of hundreds of caches of food over months and not go back to a cache that they've exploited, from which they've taken the food. I always laugh thinking how many times do I go to an empty cupboard. I'm looking for my potato chips, I'm looking for pretzels, I'm looking for some candy, and there's none there. I actually years ago saw one of those experiments in progress, and it blew my mind. That's another point, that just because we can't explain today how these animals have or why they display these amazing cognitive abilities or these emotional capacities, it doesn't mean they don't have them, and it doesn't mean they're not real. That's another ploy that scientists use is they'll go, "We see this" – and this is that "as if" thing – they'll go, "They're acting as if they remember if food was taken," or, "These prairie dogs are acting as if they have sophisticated language" – which in fact they do – "but we really don't understand it." What I've learned over the years is that we do understand a lot more than we give ourselves credit for. Once again, I think now that the moral side of the coin is more out on the table – when I say "we," I guess I'm a scientist – but researchers can't get away with not going into that arena of, I always say, "What are we going to do with what we know?"

DR. TUTTLE: Can you say a few words about, because I know people have questions about this, and I think we all do probably as vegans – I feel, for example, as a vegan I do not want to eat any products that come from any animals, including insects, for example, like honey from bees or silk from silkworms, and so forth. I think it's very clear, obviously, that there's enormous suffering in wool and leather and meat and flesh and dairy and eggs and so forth. Could you just say something about, for example, maybe insects or other animals and our violence towards them as well?

DR. BEKOFF: Actually, we've known for years, when I say "we," not only scientists, but we've known for years that insects can feel pain. It was research done way long ago that showed very clearly that insects have what are called nociceptors, and nociceptors are basically the primitive pain receptors, the primitive form of the pain receptors that we have. Honeybees are amazing. I have a new book coming out in November with the auspicious title *Why Dogs Hump and Bees Get Depressed*. We know now that bees can get depressed just the same way that other mammals, including human beings, get depressed, and they show the same neural changes, neurochemical changes, in their brain. We know that bees can find food and communicate the amount of food, the amount and the type of food, and where it is, in a hive, for example.

So bees – I guess it's mostly with honeybees – have really kind of blown our mind, if you will, because they've got small brains with not a lot of neurons, maybe a million neurons, but that's not a lot. And what I've been writing a lot about is that brain size really doesn't say much at all about, say, cognitive or

emotional capacities. So can honeybees suffer? Well, I think the data on pessimism that shows that they can become depressed when they're trained to do something and fail a task, or when they're subjected to experiments where they basically become down and blue, if you will, show very, very clearly that they do have emotional lives. If they've got emotional lives, then my null hypothesis would be of course they suffer.

They're far removed from us. Do honeybees suffer as much as cows on a factory farm? I don't know. But once again, in some ways it's a moot question. If I don't suffer as much as you do in certain situations, it doesn't mean I'm not suffering. And that gets me into another topic, if you will, about the work that Temple Grandin does. She's a scientist, and I've had many debates with her. To be fair, has she made the lives of other animals better? She's maybe made the life of a fraction of a fraction of a fraction of a percent of, say, cows on a factory farm "better." But I always say the better life that they have is still a horrific life. I'm surprised, and I'm frankly surprised – and I'm not saying anything I haven't said in front of her – that she is not, at the same time that she's working to make the lives of these animals better on what she calls her "stairway to heaven," which I think is just an abusive term, she should also be working to basically working for vegetarian/vegan diets. She doesn't do that. There are lots of reasons. She gets paid by the food companies, hello.

DR. TUTTLE: I think it's the money, probably.

DR. BEKOFF: She says it's not, and I'm not going to even argue with her about that. But I think she plays the same role, and I've actually been writing something this week about it and haven't quite gotten there, but I think that once again, for our listeners and the people they want to educate, it's just a no-brainer that we know that these food animals as well as laboratory animals have the capacity for very deep and enduring suffering. That's why I don't like the research that was done that showed that rats feel joy and like to laugh or that mice show empathy. I don't support that research. But we know this, and once again, getting back to food animals, we know that pigs and cows and sheep and lambs and other food animals suffer very deeply by the way they're treated. That's why we should all be working to stop that suffering. At the same time that we're working to make the suffering less because the stopping of it is not going to happen overnight, as far as my goal is, it's to end the suffering. It's like Tom Regan said: we don't want smaller cages, we want empty cages. In the end, we want less suffering, and no suffering. Once again, getting back to the science of it, you have to be locked in a cave not to appreciate what we're learning in terms of the, once again, the emotional and cognitive lives of other animals.

DR. TUTTLE: What do you say to people when they say, "Animals suffer, okay, but if they're in the wild, they suffer a lot. We have them here, we protect them, we feed them, we use them, sure we kill them in the end or we use them for experimentation, but we try to minimize their suffering. But they actually have a better life, a safer life, a better life with us than they would in the wild."

DR. BEKOFF: I find that to be the most ridiculous argument I've ever heard when people make it because, number one, they're not wild animals, and number two, yes, they're suffering in the wild, but unfortunately – and I really mean that as a biologist – that's just the way life evolved. There are predators and prey, for example. If I could design an evolutionary system, if I could have, say, I would have had one where there was less suffering. But the fact of the matter is, once again, I've written a lot about these happy cows. You bring them into the world, you treat them really well, and then you double-cross them by killing them.

DR. TUTTLE: It's a betrayal, right.

DR. BEKOFF: So some people say, "At least they had a life." My response is whoop-de-doo. If they didn't have that life, they wouldn't have known they didn't have that life. So it becomes, once again, I

think, a very self-serving argument, this happy cow, I don't even know, say "the happy cow argument." So I just think the argument for what animals experience in the wild is really a bad one because wild animals, too, experience an incredible amount of freedom of choice. Right? These farm animals, and even the happy cow animals, do not. There are a lot of other biological arguments against the validity of that analogy, but the fact of the matter is these cows, looking at cows and pigs on factory farms, they are not wild animals, and we as human beings have, and we should be expressing, very highly evolved moral systems.

DR. TUTTLE: Right, because when you think about, the worst punishment, one of the worst punishments for a human being is to just be locked up. Not only are so-called food animals locked up, but think of all the elephants and the animals in zoos and circuses and aquaria and research facilities also, many kinds of primates. It's interesting because we just put in a garden, and we put a deer fence around it. It's a very flimsy fence, but it's too high and it's thin, but they would never try to break through it. They're not aggressive like that. They just stay out. But twice, actually, inadvertently we left a gate open, and a deer got in, and she just ruined that fence. She just tore out of it. I realized these animals, absolutely the most terrible thing you can do to an animal is take away their freedom, grab their body, trap them, hold their leg, that's the absolute worst thing, short of killing them. But animals that are caught in traps will literally bite their own feet off to get free.

And somehow we can sit there and say, "They don't care about their freedom." I think only slave humans could actually even think such thoughts. We must have lost our freedom to not value it to the degree that we don't see how much animals love to be free, and that they... and to me, I don't know if it's the same with you, but when I look in nature, I see a lot of celebration, really. Animals are doing, to me, a lot of running around, playing, and things that we can't really imagine all of it, but it seems like they have a purpose and that they're celebrating their lives to a tremendous degree.

DR. BEKOFF: Oh, yeah, that's really a great observation because the fact of the matter is they do. If you look at prey animals, yes, they do get eaten. Not every prey animal gets eaten. But also, in the way evolution works, they've evolved highly sophisticated anti-predatory strategies in response to the predatory tactics that their predators use. There's a lot of freedom there. I think the notion of freedom is, it's a really crucial one in the sense that, once again, these food animals are born into horrific conditions. People go, "Well, they've never had that freedom. They don't miss it." I just think that's one of the lamest arguments I've ever heard. If you open the gates to these places, these animals would be out of there in a heartbeat because really what they have is this incredible, deeply instinctive drive to live in peace and safety and to make choices that affect how peaceful and how safe they feel. So when people start saying, "These animals get veterinary care, we feed them, they don't get preyed upon," I'm thinking, my goodness, how would you like to live that way?

DR. TUTTLE: It's like living in jail.

DR. BEKOFF: I teach in the jail, and I've taught in the jail for the last 14 years, and I can tell you right now that it's an amazing loss of freedom when you basically lose the ability to make choices that affect your life. It is. Once again, I'm astounded by it. I'm certainly astounded that very bright people make those stupid comments. But once again, I'm hoping that over time, it's going to change. These changes are going to take a while, and it's going to take a lot of hard work by the people who are advocates for them.

DR. TUTTLE: We're getting a little bit long on our time here. I just had this one last little comment or question. For me, I'm thinking of you as devoting your life to biology and the study of animals, and I can't help but think that it must be heart-wrenching for you, not only as a scientist but as a human being

with an interest and love in animals, to realize and just to look out and see how animal agriculture not only devastates the animals that we're eating, but how it's devastating so-called wildlife. Wild animals, free-living animals, we have the USDA's Department of Wildlife Services that's killing millions of animals because they're interfering supposedly with cattle and sheep, prairie dogs and coyotes and so forth. Then we have the mass deforestation that's happening where animals are being, their habitats are being destroyed and they're going extinct. We have what's happening in Africa, where animals that were never really used for food but are now being killed and eaten for food, like elephants and gorillas and other monkeys.

To me, it seems like the human species has ramped up an unbelievably terrifying and effective war against animals, and I haven't even mentioned the even worse killing machine that's going on in the oceans where we're overfishing and completely devastating virtually all of the ocean life. To me, it looks like we're insane, in a sense, that we would devastate other animals to such a degree and not feel anything about it. I just wonder how it is for you when you understand the complexity and the beauty and the intelligence and the morality and the feelings of these animals to realize these aren't just statistics. These aren't just species that are disappearing. This is the whole web of life that is being attacked and destroyed, and science is not really standing up against it very strongly, I don't think. It must be frustrating, I guess. That probably explains why you're writing articles literally every single day, I guess.

DR. BEKOFF: I appreciate that. It is hard. I think part of it is just my own personal genetic makeup, that I'm really a hardcore, deeply rooted optimist. I grew up in a very positive home, and I'm not saying that in a self-serving way. It's just my dad, through thick and thin and then through some really, really difficult times, just could always look in the mirror and laugh at himself or maintain the hope. And I think I inherited that somehow. But it is frustrating. The Wildlife Services, I call them Murder Incorporated, and that's what they are. They are Murder Incorporated. But you know, slowly but surely, we're getting – when I say citizens, I mean non-researchers, non-scientists, people who really care – the public to really begin to bring to light, if you will, what's happening. Gretchen Wyler, who founded the Ark Trust, which became the Humane Society, the West Coast office or something like that, always used to say, "Cruelty can't stand the spotlight." I love that. But I always tell activists – we're all activists. People say, "I'm not an activist." You know what? If you're acting on behalf of another animal or not, you are an activist.

Scientists will often say, in terms of what you were just saying about how scientists don't speak out, people will say, "Science has to be objective." And then they'll say, "Marc, you're not objective. You're an advocate, say, for food animals or an advocate for lab animals." And I always say, "If you're not an advocate, then you're an advocate against them." I go to Australia quite a bit, and I had somebody say that to me, a very bright man, and I was astounded. I said, "So because I'm using the information that I collect or my colleagues collect to protect animals, I'm an advocate. You decided not to use that information, so you're also an advocate. I'm an advocate for the animals, and you're an advocate against the animals."

I'm serious, Will, it just blows my mind how anybody today thinks that science is or can be an objective enterprise. It does break my heart. I just can't even tell you how many times a day either I see something happen, or thank goodness my inbox seems to be filled more with lovely, compassionate stories, but really sometimes I get up early in the morning and I open my email inbox, and I just say, "I can't look at this right now," because it's got to do with the egregious murder of wildlife by Wildlife Services or the horrific treatment of animals in factory farms or I'm writing now because it just really irritates me where Temple Grandin says that basically non-human animals behave as autistics, and because she suffers from autism she understands them better. I always go, my god, if you understand them better and you attribute emotional life to them, you should be working 24/7 to close these factory farms, not to make them "more humane" because more humane just means there's still incredible, deep, and egregious suffering. Am I going off the deep end here?

DR. TUTTLE: Oh, no, you're not. I don't think so.

DR. BEKOFF: Seriously, I'm writing this article right now. I'm just saying, my god, you're telling people – in my book *The Animal Manifesto*, I've got a section called "I know they suffer, but I love my hamburger." And that comes from a very close friend of mine who's a wonderful human being, he's a peacenik, he's a great father. And I go, my god, please – I'm not kidding you, I love this guy, he's a close friend – I hope I never get to the point where I go, "I know they suffer, but I love basically being part of the cycle of abuse." Oh my. You're probably hearing more than you need.

DR. TUTTLE: I really feel for what you're saying. Actually, we really are at the time when we should wrap it up and still I have more I'd like to talk about. Maybe we can just close with one last final, just tell us, for the listeners, everyone who's listening, maybe just in one minute or so, two at the most, what can people do? What do you think the best thing people can do to help honor what you've been talking about, the emotional lives of animals?

DR. BEKOFF: I can say it in ten seconds. Just imagine the suffering of these animals, and make your own contribution to relieving it and be a model for others. Don't get involved in pissing matches with people who just want to derail you. I've learned over time that you've just got to pick your battles. I tell young activists and students that if somebody says to you, "I don't think a dog feels," or, "I don't think cows feel," I always say, "Okay, good. I need to talk to more people." Because I think part of the strategy of stopping the good work, the proactive and the positive and the passionate work, is to get people to waste time arguing against stupid arguments.

DR. TUTTLE: Right, don't waste our time.

DR. BEKOFF: Don't waste your time. We've got limited time and energy and person power. Just be passionate, be proactive, and I really mean it. Just don't let people derail you. Just don't let it happen. The other thing that I have to say is don't attack people. You can attack the position, but don't attack the person. One of the most effective ways of derailing another person is really to just be very nice. It just uncouples them. Don't get in yelling matches. You know all this, Will. Just be nice. You can never be too kind. That's the way I like to look at it.

DR. TUTTLE: That's the essence of veganism, really, is compassion for all animals, including humans.

DR. BEKOFF: Exactly. Well said.

DR. TUTTLE: Thank you so much. This has been Dr. Marc Bekoff. I know we could go on, there's a lot more I wanted to say and hear about from Dr. Bekoff, but it's been wonderful. Thank you so much for joining us on Veganpalooza 2013, Dr. Bekoff. It's been really eye-opening. I appreciate it.

DR. BEKOFF: My pleasure, Will. Thank you to your audience for working to make the world a more compassionate place for all beings.