

our dogs as to our cats?' These questions are all pertinent. They do, however, highlight a sense of growing unease which I developed while reading this book and which must be set against my admiration for its clarity and wit. The problems addressed are of critical importance, the concepts and the scholarship are excellent, *but there are absolutely no answers!*

I can understand the reasons for this. Colin Spedding makes it plain at the outset that he believes most opinions on agriculture and the citizen are glib because they are based on incomplete premises. The aim of the book is to provide blueprints and building blocks from which rational citizens can build informed opinions. However, we are given (almost) no conclusions, or even opinions, as a consequence of all this elegant thought. This is presumably from a desire to avoid preaching. However, it tends to leave the taste that all topics are so complex that every decision is probably a mistake. They may be so, but surely it is also a mistake for as informed and understanding a citizen as Colin Spedding not to offer the rest of us some of the conclusions of his lifetime study of these problems: at least some positive suggestions as to how we should proceed. In the real world of agriculture and the citizen, politicians, farmers and buyers have to take decisions which they know to be imperfect and they will not be helped by academics who tell them it is all too difficult. This is particularly pertinent in the emotion-charged arena of animal welfare which is overloaded with those who are full of a passionate intensity: in these circumstances the best can ill afford to lack conviction.

A J F Webster
School of Veterinary Science
University of Bristol, UK

Animal Experimentation: A Student Guide to Balancing the Issues

Vaughan Monamy (1996). ANZCCART: Glen Osmond. 56pp. Paperback. Obtainable from UFAW, 8 Hamilton Close, South Mimms, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 3QD, UK (ISBN 0 9586821 00). Price £5.00.

This book is a treasure, a stroke of genius, a must! It is a stroke of genius because it could still have been an excellent book at 10 times the length. The cool professionalism of the judgement of how little to say while avoiding superficiality is also close to genius. The ability to engage the readers narrative interest, to conduct a challenging but confidence-building dialogue and yet remain free of that last nudge towards the authors viewpoint also takes genius, humility and commitment to purpose. The purpose, quite simply, is neither to attack nor defend but teach how to think about the complex and contradictory issues associated with animal welfare and also to invoke, in a most fascinating way, a feeling for the way others have wrestled with the same problems over the centuries. Again, the confident and judicious use of quotations solely to enable the reader to glimpse an angle rather than impress reviewers with the length of scholarship is admirable. It takes real depth of scholarship to accomplish this – it is actually the greatest tennis players who have had the least need to show off. There are seven chapters covering general issues: history, opposition to animal experiments, moral status of animals, animal use and its regulation, alternatives and conclusions – which are not prescriptive but cement confidence in knowing how to address the subtleties and uncertainties. All that in 45 pages of text. There is also an excellent bibliography.

Hemingway, who could be monstrously overblown (and was scarcely a champion of animal welfare), showed his true genius in the perfect economy with which he evoked such huge horizons in the *Old Man and the Sea*. As scientific writing goes, this book shares much of that quality. I doubt that the author will get his Nobel Prize but the book deserves a vast audience – far beyond the intended audience of young scientists: it is a must for every veterinary or medical student. It should be read by everyone who is awakening to the complex and important issues surrounding the experimental use of animals. And it should be read before they form clear entrenched views, let alone don their balaclavas or assert that in sciences, all is for the best. Vaughan Monamy, please do it again – for the agricultural use of animals, and not a page longer. Brilliant.

A R Michell
The Royal Veterinary College
University of London, UK

International Legal Protection of Wild Fauna and Flora

P van Heijnsbergen (1997). IOS Press: Amsterdam. 261pp. Hardback. Obtainable from the publishers, Van Diemenstraat 94, 1013 CN Amsterdam, The Netherlands; for UK and Ireland, 73 Limewalk, Headington, Oxford OX3 7AD, UK; or for the USA and Canada, PO Box 10558, Burke, VA 22009-0558, USA (ISBN 90 5199 313 7). Price £47 or US\$73.

The book *International Legal Protection of Wild Fauna and Flora* is a study of the international legislation, past and present, that relates to wildlife. It covers the full range of conservation and allied laws that have been made on an international basis. While it does not deal with the content of individual items of legislation in detail, it provides an excellent overview of this field and includes not only the major treaties but also many minor or historical agreements. There are copious footnotes and a generous bibliography which make it a valuable reference text.

The book has 12 chapters, taking the development of international wildlife law from its origins to the present day and looking at the prospects for future development. In part one, chapters one to four cover the origins in national laws, conservation bodies (with reference mainly to continental Europe), as well as policy documents (called by some 'soft law') such as the World Conservation Strategy. The author also looks at the nature of the laws and at some key definitions such as conservation, preservation and protection and examines the development of the issue of the value to be attributed to wildlife.

The second part of the book (chapters five to nine) describes and discusses the existing laws, with brief summaries of their purpose and content and some history of their development. The legislation is grouped according to the major forms of protection, such as species and habitat, the more recent concepts of ecosystems and biodiversity. These are placed in the context of current thinking on conservation strategy.

Finally, in part three, Professor Heijnsbergen examines how effectively the laws are implemented and the mechanisms (such as meetings, finance and executive facilities) involved (chapter 11). Enforcement of the requirements of the treaties is an important factor in their effectiveness but it is only mentioned in passing, being a matter left to national legislation.