

quality of the research work” and is “bad for science” (pp 176-177). This point is made at five additional places in the chapter (pp 161, 166, 167, 168, 173), and there is in addition mention made of the importance to maintain good health because “these dogs are valuable.” And while I disagree with none of this (and the author does make one mention that good welfare is important “for the dog’s sake” [p 161]), I regard this, as a welfare issue, as being conceptually equivalent to a concern about improving veal calf welfare because it results in tastier meat, or improving zoo animal welfare because happier looking animals increase attendance and revenue for the zoo. In other words, the improvement in animal welfare as a means to another end is irrelevant, and even potentially harmful in that the same reasoning would justify *lowering* welfare if it better served that same end.

Despite the book’s shortcomings I find this a very impressive, important, and valuable book. Its encyclopedic scope attests to the author’s skills of thorough research and deep understanding of his subject. This book should be on the shelves of any person – scientist or nonscientist – who seeks knowledge of the vast array of things that can affect a dog’s enjoyment of life, whether you want to call that enjoyment welfare, well-being, quality of life, or happiness.

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F McMillan,

Melrose Avenue, Los Angeles, USA

Psychoactive Herbs in Veterinary Behavior Medicine

S Schwartz (2005). Published by Blackwell Publishing, Oxford OX4 2DQ, UK. 432 pp Hardback (ISBN 0813822998) Price £29.50.

Veterinary behavioural medicine seems often to fall into the fringes of veterinary care, which is itself a cause for concern. There is a lack of full integration of the subject into practice and at times a complete disinterest by practitioners, so it is not surprising that the field in the UK has been embraced and promoted in a large part by non-veterinarians. There are a number of licensed drugs of proven efficacy for many problems, but still many clients are often resistant to their use, preferring ‘natural’ remedies. Many lay practitioners also use this as an opportunity to promote alternative or complementary therapies due to legislative restrictions on the use of medicines by non-veterinarians. There is often a false perception that such alternatives are safer, but if they

are effective, then they will have side-effects and the lack of information and research concerning their activity may in fact make them more risky. Herbalism is an area with a sound scientific basis and of growing interest both within and outside of the profession, so I was very excited by this new text by Stefanie Schwartz. Dr Schwartz is a well-respected veterinary behaviourist who is board certified in the discipline in the USA, she therefore writes with an authority which is almost unique within the profession, given her dual interest. The foreword, written by another respected herbalist, Dr Susan Wynn, makes it clear from the outset that “psychoactive herbal medicines are not, in fact, substitutes or alternatives to conventional psychoactive drugs” (p xix). I only wish this part were written in bold or larger print as I think this message will be overlooked to the possible detriment of both patients and the discipline.

The text is divided into five broad sections relating to different geographic/cultural areas of development of herbalist philosophy: Western, native American, Ayurvedic, Oriental and Miscellaneous (including Bach Flower remedies and the cannabis). The sections on Ayurvedic and Oriental herbalism are prefaced by an introduction to the philosophy underpinning these practices, which is useful but which some traditional practitioners might find off-putting as it stretches into unfamiliar territory, but as Dr Schwartz points out (p 220), the aim is to present “the central beliefs... (to) help the reader appreciate the impressive knowledge that is necessary for the practice of... (this form of) healing”. These sections are followed by a section on suggested application of psychoactive herbs and advice on the broad approaches used in dealing with behavioural problems in cats and dogs. There are also 3 appendices: One listing psychopharmaceutical preparations, one examining traditional Jewish medicine and one listing online resources.

Each of the five substantive herbology sections describes a range of herbs in a similar way, reviewing the botany and history of the species, sub-species or genus, its recognised or putative active constituents, their effects and adverse effects, availability and its potential application in veterinary behavioural medicine, together with a reference list. This makes the text very easy to delve into for reference purposes and while there are pictures of some of the plants, the book is not aimed at being a field guide, but rather an aid to the practitioner. It allows a quick education of the potential implications of the use of different plants, which, in my own experience, may often have been initiated by a client. It is essential that all working in the field of veterinary behaviour medicine, recognise this and establish whether owners are using such self-help remedies, as they will often not volunteer such information until the potency of some of these preparations is explained and the potential for catastrophic interactions if such information is not to hand. This caution and line of enquiry will be increasingly necessary in general practice and especially when considering surgery as behaviour problems are common and many herbal interventions freely available to the public. For this

reason alone, I believe this book should be on the shelves of every practice, behavioural or otherwise.

The clinical applications section is useful, but obviously the concern with tables listing herbs for different indications is that the reckless reader will try to become an instant herbal practitioner, without the necessary underpinning knowledge. This is clearly something which the author is at pains to discourage with numerous warnings concerning the need for an associated behaviour modification plan. Similar concerns could apply to the flow charts which deal with common behaviour problems, but I believe these charts may actually help many general practitioners develop more of an interest in veterinary behavioural medicine and would like to see them reproduced in more general texts. Only when mainstream practice recognises that the diagnostic skills used here are transferable, will they perhaps see behavioural medicine as a development opportunity for their practice, rather than something best left to 'specialists' or 'outsiders'. Only then will clients and their pets perhaps also get the care they desire and deserve for good welfare.

In conclusion I think this is an excellent reference text, which I would have no hesitation in recommending to every small animal practitioner and I think it will go a long way towards placing this discipline in a more mainstream scientific context where it deserves to be.

Daniel S Mills,

University of Lincoln, Lincoln, UK

Livestock Production and Society

Edited by R Geers and F Madec (2006). Published by Wageningen Academic Publishers, The Netherlands. 310 pp Hardback (ISBN 9076998892) Price €65.

With such an ambitious title, this book promises much but what does it offer to the readers of *Animal Welfare*? The book attempts to show how an old-fashioned scientific society that had lost its way in the modern biotechnological world can be renewed and light a new path that will appeal to many who are hesitant about some of the trends taken by modern livestock farming.

This book is the (edited) proceedings of part of the 2004 Conference of the International Society of Animal Hygiene, a peculiarly European scientific society that has belatedly reminded us that there is more to sustainable livestock farming than the latest fashion in molecular biology.

Hygiene – such a useful and long-forgotten Victorian word that the dictionary defines as the science dealing with the preservation of health – lies at the heart of the reinvigorated Society and is exemplified by its new logo, “promoting animal health, animal welfare, biosecurity, environmental protection and the sustainability of animal husbandry”. Although a mouthful, these worthy subjects together encompass many of the new goals of policy-makers in Europe, especially with the emphasis on the environment. In re-establishing the Society, its Executive Board has shaken up the old order, agreed a new constitution, appointed new officers, and sent a strong message that adherence to the principles of good, old-fashioned animal husbandry can provide a way forward for livestock farming in the 21st Century. I'm sure we wish the Board well in its ambitious desire to bring together the myriad of disciplines needed to understand and develop the farming systems of the future.

Although this book has been 'edited', most of the chapters make poor reading and the editors should have been much stricter with their authors. Some of the chapters on EU regulations and environmental protection will be of little interest to the welfare specialist while those that cover our subject are, in the main, pedestrian. Six (out of twenty) chapters cover common-or-garden topics in farm animal welfare, such as ethics, welfare evaluation and “animal welfare aspects of pigs, poultry and dairy cows”, the latter essentially comprising brief reviews of housing, transport and slaughter. Whole books are devoted to these subjects nowadays and will be much more informative than these somewhat simplistic texts that lack authority. However, I did enjoy the most readable chapter by Guy and Edwards on alternative production systems, which analyses the various attempts that have been made to develop novel systems of husbandry for pigs, cows and poultry.

In short, while this book fails to live up to the title's promise, you may be sufficiently intrigued by the new-look ISAH to acquire it for your library. However, I, for one, would advise you to wait awhile until the ISAH has established itself in its new niche, which I hope it will occupy with success.

Christopher Wathes,

The Royal Veterinary College,

London, UK