

Laboratory animal bibliographies

The literature dealing with the welfare, care and use of animals for scientific purposes is immense and scattered throughout many books and journals. It has always been difficult for newcomers to the laboratory animal field to assess the scale and coverage of this literature and to locate the general background material which is so necessary for them to read if they are to understand the subject. Recently, however, two bibliographies of laboratory animal literature have been published. One has been prepared by the Scientists Center for Animal Welfare (SCAW) in the United States, and the other by the Australian Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching (ACCART).

The SCAW bibliography is annotated, has a greater number of pages but actually lists fewer publications than the ACCART document. The entries in the two volumes are classified somewhat differently — there are 10 subject headings in one volume and 17 in the other — but even so it is possible to make a comparison between the relative coverage of various subject areas. Animal welfare and ethics (including alternatives) for example has some 242 entries in the SCAW publication and only about 130 in the ACCART book; the subject of animal models earns only 15 entries in the American book but has 132 in the Australian publication.

There is some duplication between the two works, but in many ways they are complementary: one is strong on ethics and welfare, the other on the technical aspects of animal usage. Together they now make it easier to assess and locate the key books and papers in the laboratory animal usage and welfare field. It is to be hoped, that in due course, supplements and/or new editions will become available to keep us all up to date.

Annotated Bibliography on Laboratory Animal Welfare edited by R A Murphy, A N Rowan and R R Smeby (1991). 91 pp. Scientists Center for Animal Welfare: Bethesda MD. Available from SCAW, 4805 St Elmo Avenue, Bethesda, MD 20814, USA. Price US\$15, overseas US\$20 including postage.

The Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes: a selected bibliography by Margaret Rose (1991). 69 pp. Australian Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching: Canberra. Available from Australian Vice Chancellor's Committee, GPO Box 1142, Canberra, ACT 2601, Australia. ISBN 0 646 05678 6. ISSN 1 037 0013. Price \$A30 including postage.

Whaling

This short booklet produced and published by the RSPCA Wildlife Department attempts, most successfully, to give a realistic account of the killing methods currently used in whaling. It describes, for the general reader, the techniques that have been and are employed, ie the cold (non-explosive) harpoon and the now more commonly used explosive head harpoon. Methods which have been tried experimentally, ie electricity, carbon dioxide and systemic poisons are also covered. Considering the size of many of the cetaceans and the difficult conditions under which they are hunted, it is obviously not going to be easy to kill them humanely. The main conclusion of the booklet: 'There is