

Book Reviews

Horse Behaviour and Welfare: EAAP Publication No 112

Edited by M Hausberger, E Sondergaard and W Martin-Rosset (2007). Published by Wageningen Academic Publishers, PO Box 200, NL-6700 AE Wageningen, The Netherlands. 152 pp Paperback (ISBN 0071-2477). Price €47, US\$63.

It is interesting to see that the European Association for Animal Production has what is described by the editors as a 'horse commission'. There is debate about whether the horse should be considered a production animal. While many horse breeders would support this, in the hope of receiving government subsidies, others might see it as a step in the wrong direction, since it smacks of objectifying the horse. The key roles of the horse in human activity changed tremendously during the 20th century but, because of the variety of uses horses are now put to, their position is rather ambivalent. While in some countries horse-meat production retains importance, the overarching fields in which horses are now used include recreational and social purposes, breeding, sport and competition. Because they are not commonly regarded as production animals, horses are more often these days described as a 'companion animal species'. Unfortunately, they do not fit terribly well into this category either, since they do not share living space with humans as do true companion animals such as cats, dogs and caged birds. In effect, their contact with humans is largely restricted to being groomed, fed and ridden.

The special issue that emerged from the EAAP 57th annual meeting focuses on temperament, early experience, social management and 'equine behaviour welfare'. A total of 13 papers appear in this publication and, while some are reviews, others are original research reports and still others offer conceptual plans. The emphasis is on stable management, horse husbandry and behavioural genetics, rather than the ridden horse.

Unfortunately, the standards of English and editorial input are variable. For example, one editor's name is misspelled on the cover and one of the papers bears the somewhat obscure title: 'Three-dimensional design of a horse stud like better toll for technical choices of housing and welfare'.

The appeal of the publication will be chiefly to academicians rather than practitioners. In the short-term at least, its animal welfare implications are likely to be minimal because it will take years for the information it contains to filter through to end-users. It would be good to see special issues of this sort follow the precedent set by *Animal Welfare* which requires authors to stipulate the welfare implications of their work. This would broaden the appeal of the publication and help to ensure that more copies are read by owners, riding coaches and equine veterinarians. This would, in turn, help owners to see how inappropriate management may compromise not just the horse's welfare but its ability to be productive as breeder, companion, performer and athlete.

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In Defense of Dolphins: The New Moral Frontier

TI White (2007). Published by Blackwell Publishing, 9600 Garsington Road, Oxford OX4 2DQ, UK. 229 pp Paperback (ISBN 978-1-4051-5779-7). Price £12.99.

This thought-provoking book has been published as part of a series on public philosophy. The author, TI White, is actually a philosophy professor specialising in business ethics, but became interested in dolphins when trying to find a way to convey the idea of 'personhood' to students two decades ago. In this book, White discusses the philosophy of personhood rather than being human. He outlines a list of the elements that defines a 'person' (eg a being who is aware, has a sense of self, has emotions etc), and puts forward a series of arguments to suggest that dolphins could be classified as non-human 'persons'.

The first chapter introduces the philosophical arguments the author aims to address regarding the nature of dolphins and whether or not the current treatment of dolphins is ethically justifiable. The following chapters cover the basic anatomy and physiology of dolphins, evidence for dolphin consciousness and awareness, studies on dolphin problem-solving abilities and language use, and the social structure of dolphin groups. White concludes the book by contending that dolphins are intelligent, self-aware and highly social beings that could be considered as 'persons'. Consequently, he asserts that individual dolphins are potentially deserving of basic 'person' rights, and that present practices of fishing and dolphin keeping could be in contravention of these.

As part of a public series, the book is aimed at a general readership, and thus does not go into great scientific detail but, as such, is very readable and well laid out. White is not a dolphin specialist, but has acquired a great deal of knowledge and experience in the subject during his twenty-year fascination with it. However, many of the examples he uses to support his conclusions are anecdotal, and, although interesting, sometimes it seems too much is inferred from them. Evidence for emotions in dolphins, for example, is provided largely by anecdote, and an account which discusses instances of dolphins displaying grief is open to alternative interpretation. However, it is impossible to conduct large scale experiments on dolphins and White has obtained all his information from dolphin scientists and those who work closely with dolphins.

The author explains in his preface that he is limited to the discussion of dolphins, and therefore other non-humans are not examined. Although this is understandable, in some instances examples of the behaviour and abilities of other animals would possibly shed a different light on those of dolphins. For instance, dolphins demonstrate co-operative fishing and use different fishing tactics in different circumstances and White uses this to indicate problem-solving abilities and the ability of dolphins to choose their actions. Evidence that dolphins assume specific roles whilst fishing co-operatively is suggested to show communica-