

Ethics in Research on Animal Behaviour

Association for the Study of Animal Behaviour and the Animal Behaviour Society, edited by Marian Stamp Dawkins and Morris Gosling (1992). Academic Press: London. 64pp. Paperback. Obtainable from Dr L M Gosling, Secretary, ASAB Ethical Committee, Central Science Laboratory, MAFF, London Road, Slough SL3 7HJ, UK (ISBN 0 12 207150 6) Price £10.

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It is ten years since ASAB first published its excellent guidelines for the use of animals in research in response to growing pressures from within as well as outside the scientific community. This new volume contains the latest version of the guidelines together with seven recent papers published in *Animal Behaviour* that address some of the points raised by them. The guidelines provide advice on only two of the three Rs of Russell and Burch - Reduction and Refinement - but then Replacement is in all but a few cases not an option for those studying animal behaviour. Some of the papers are philosophical, for example, Driscoll and Bateson's justification of the use of animals in research, but most address practical issues of everyday concern to experimenters. The fact that all the papers are reprints previously published in *Animal Behaviour* leads to some curious omissions. For example, the evidence that animals feel pain is discussed in detail but the use of anaesthesia and analgesics is omitted because such papers are usually published in other journals. Similarly, none of the papers discuss the housing or enrichment of laboratory animals. Having said that, numerous issues are raised in this collection. Two papers assess the progress of ethologists in understanding statistics, so that by appropriate design the number of animals used in experiments can be reduced. It seems that ethologists are not quite as bad as toxicologists at statistics (see Festing

1992), but this is clearly an area where better training could work wonders. Ethical issues arising out of studies on predation, aggression and infanticide are also discussed, and the authors are to be credited for discussing alternative methods which can help to reduce the severity of procedures. The lesson here is that creative thinking can alleviate suffering. The last paper addresses ethical problems arising from various manipulations in the field and should be required reading for all scientists planning such studies. It is all too easy to assume that because a study takes place in the field, ethical decisions are avoided; but more and more studies take the form of field experiments and, because the subjects are not totally in the experimenter's control, it may be difficult to alleviate suffering resulting from a procedure.

The publication of these papers as a book will increase access to the material, but I am sceptical of the publisher's hope that the volume will stimulate discussion in schools. In this country it is very unlikely that much research takes place in schools, and in any case the language of most of the papers is probably too technical for those in secondary education. Nonetheless, this collection of papers will undoubtedly be of value for students of animal behaviour, particularly those new to the field. Scientists who have worked in the area for some time will, no doubt, have read the original papers, but it does no harm and can do much good to remind people of the ethical consequences of the work they undertake. Most importantly, several papers make the point that an understanding of animals gained from science in general, and ethology in particular, can help us to improve animal and human welfare.

Reference:

Festing M F W 1992 The scope for improving the design of laboratory animal experiments. *Laboratory Animals* 26: 256-267

* Original paper reviewed in *Animal Welfare* 1992, 1: 66

R Hubrecht

UFAW

Potters Bar

Animal Pain: Ethical and Scientific Perspectives

Edited by T R Kuchel, M Rose and J Burrell (1992). Australian Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching: Adelaide. 94pp. Paperback. Obtainable from UFAW or the publishers, ANZCCART, PO Box 19, Glen Osmond, SA 5064, Australia (ISBN 0 643 05383 2) Price \$A28 including postage.

The sixth World Congress on Pain held in Adelaide in 1990 provided an opportunity for a special symposium on ethical and scientific aspects of animal pain. This book publishes a report of the individual papers of the three main themes of the symposium: 1) The basis for scientific considerations and ethical decisions, 2) Animal pain - models and assessment and 3) The ontogeny of pain perception and the concept of speciesism. Each section is completed by an edited summary of the discussions that followed individual papers.

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