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Editorial

It is a singular honor for me to be associated with a journal that recognizes the increasing prominence of animal welfare concerns in societal ethics internationally. While virtually everyone involved with animals can recognize significant issues occasioned by animal use in their own areas, lack of familiarity with other areas can serve to blunt awareness of additional problems. Our purpose in this journal is to awaken such awareness in our readers, regardless of their particular area of expertise.

It speaks very well of this enterprise that virtually everyone we have approached to delineate an overview of animal welfare issues in their unique area has willingly agreed to do so. As Plato long ago pointed out, presuppositional to creating a good society in all dimensions is proper education of citizens. This principle is equally valid across all societal concerns, and is particularly relevant in the area of animal treatment, where there has been more ethical change over the last half-century than in the previous 500 years.

Whereas traditional animal ethical concern was directed towards deliberate, intentional, sadistic, egregious cruelty, society has come to realize that far more animal suffering is created by perfectly reasonable motivations such as producing cheap and plentiful food, assuring product safety, advancing scientific knowledge, than by the sum total of sadistic behavior. Our intention is to shed light on all areas where the use of animals can impair animal welfare.

Bernard Rollin

It is a pleasure to introduce the first issue of the *Journal of Applied Animal Ethics Research* (JAAER). To 'shed light on all areas where the use of animals can impair animal welfare, this journal seeks to explore the *applied* ethical issues that arise in the gray area falling between theoretical research and the practical experience of people working with animals. The gap between this 'two sides' of the coin regarding animal treatment and welfare is characterized by little if any sharing and dialogue and by very different conceptions and approaches. This is the result, among other things, of the fact that science for a

long time disavowed any concern with ethics and that 'Scientific ideology' has tended to be agnostic regarding animal mind and feelings.

Our journal is built around this gap. On the *theoretical* side, the ethics pertaining to the different uses we make of animals in our life have been investigated during the last five decades, resulting in increased concern for animals. This notwithstanding, there is still a lack of concern for professional interaction with animals: professionals working with animals are very often neglected or not considered sufficiently by theoretical research regarding the difficulties they are confronted with on a daily basis and their critical role in assuring a good life to all the animals we interact with.

Conversely, on the side of *professionals* working with animals, from veterinarians to biologists to animal scientists and so on, they usually do not reflect sufficiently on the ethical reasoning behind their actions and decisions, sometimes letting 'bad become normal' and falling victim to a psychological phenomenon called 'ethical fading' in that they do not see any moral problem at all in many of their daily actions and decisions regarding animals.

By promoting dialogue and collaboration among the parties, therefore, the idea of this journal is to counteract the bad consequences generated by the lack of interaction regarding the welfare of entities which are very often sentient beings, capable of suffering, but also of pleasurable experiences, and to whom we have the responsibility of assuring a 'life worth living'.

Although animal welfare is the primary object of concern, other important objects of interest and investigation are issues about companion animals, wildlife conservation and in general the human/animal relationship; the identity of professionals and issues like moral stress and burnout; the ethical approaches and frameworks for decision making and for confrontation with the difficulties brought about by the demands of the new social ethics for animals; or, again, the persistence of various forms of scientific ideology in the field of laboratory animals or wildlife conservation, and so on.

The aim is to bring the debate on these issues outside the boundaries of the academy and scientific debate, to a wider audience made of professionals and all the experts who are directly involved with animals. Through a collaboration between Europe and the USA, we hope to be able to give voice to different perspectives and different people working with animals in very challenging environments.

This first issue acknowledges the contribution of experts in different fields of academic and professional expertise regarding the general theme of the journal. It does not revolve around a specific topic, so as to give an idea of the range of topics to deal with when discussing animal treatment and welfare. From the second issue onward, the journal will each time dedicate

the first section to a specific topic, with a guest Editor specially selected for the purpose. The second issue will be devoted to pet overpopulation and shelter medicine and management; the third one to Laboratory animals and the varying issues elicited by the use of animals in the field of experimentation; the following ones to farm animals, wildlife conservation and so on.

The first issue opens with the contribution of the renowned **David Fraser** of the University of British Columbia, a pioneer in the academic world regarding the scientific research on animal welfare and the link between animal welfare science and animal ethics. With a degree in psychology and a Ph.D. in zoology, Fraser embodies the interdisciplinary nature of applied animal ethics research. Here he presents his idea of a new ethic for animals, in which one must take into consideration not only direct harm to animals, but also indirect and very often unintended harms. As he states “we have entered a new phase in the history of human-animal relations when [...] the dominant concepts of animal ethics are not adequate for the task at hand.”

If Fraser's contribution is coming from the theoretical side, the contribution of **Thomas Edling** is from the side of professional experience. A veterinarian who was the Vice President of Veterinary Medicine for Petco Animal Supplies, Inc., USA, he has been directly involved in improving the health and welfare of animals in the pet industry for over 20 years. His contribution, devoted precisely to the ethics of animal use from the veterinary perspective, strongly supports the idea that veterinarians are uniquely qualified, positioned, and ethically bound to use their abilities “to bring animals back to the equal moral footing they deserve.” As he writes, “in modern times [...] differences in protection are based solely on societal norms, not on any difference in the morality involved in the use of the different animal species.” His unique position inside Petco was created because the leadership of the company recognized that, as a pet company, they needed to be the leaders in animal welfare.

Temple Grandin needs no introduction: her entire professional life's purpose is devoted to mediate between the use of animals and their welfare. She is an academic professor in Animal Science at Colorado State University, an author of animal welfare books, advocate for autism and consultant for animal welfare in the field of agriculture, zoo and companion animals. In her paper, she focuses on the new ethical issues generated by progress in science and new technologies, pointing out that genetic manipulation of animals and plants raises ethical questions beyond just raising animals (particularly livestock) as we are accustomed.

George Seidel, emeritus professor of Physiology from Colorado State University and owner of agricultural animals since about age eight, stresses in his paper that despite prejudices to the contrary, most people who own and work

with farm animals *do* consider animal welfare, both for moral and economic reasons. Many examples of gray, rather than black or white, ethical and welfare issues are provided in order to understand the topic. His paper is meant to represent the perspective of those who make their living in production animal agriculture; in that sense, it is a perfect example of the importance of promoting the dialogue between theoretical research and practical experience.

Changing perspective back to the theoretical side, one must not forget that dealing with ethical issues in animal treatment means also to consider values other than ethical ones. As **David Lamb** argues in his paper, aesthetic appreciation of animals is a fundamental feature of an ethical approach to them. Lamb is a philosopher and ethicist, currently Honorary Reader in Bioethics at the University of Birmingham and Visiting Lecturer in Animal Welfare Ethics at the University of Southampton. He states that it is the aesthetic appeal of natural beauty that serves as a major justification for environmental protectionism, and the concept of beauty sustains a theory of well-being. For this reason, it is very important to him to consider the relationship between ethics and aesthetics and whether ethics should influence aesthetic appreciation.

Again from the theoretical side, but with the goal of examining the dynamics of professional life, **Denise Remy's** and **Ruud ter Meulen's** paper is a perfect example of measuring the effectiveness of ethics in the professional practice of veterinary medicine. Remy is a faculty member in the veterinary school at the University of Lyon, France, while Meulen works at the Centre for Ethics in Medicine, Population Health Sciences, Bristol University. They discuss the changes that have occurred in veterinary medicine relative to ethics and focus on a specific topic, such as the ethical role of the veterinarian in antibiotic residues. They examined professional veterinary literature, which demonstrated a primary concern for ethics, and pharmaceutical professional literature, which primarily focused on marketing. It shows that we need to constantly monitor the ethics of professions for every issue involving animals, directly or indirectly.

Finally, this first issue concludes with the contribution of the other general editor, **Bernard Rollin**, who has devoted his entire professional life to the goal of opening a dialogue between science and ethics, and between theoretical thinking and professional life. He is the author of numerous books and papers in the area of animal ethics, and has lectured on the subject worldwide over more than 40 years. In this paper he examines the history of western thought on the welfare of animals, and considers other cultures' attitudes and mores. He concludes that the picture of animal welfare around the world is not a rosy one, and that theoretical frameworks are very often not embedded in practice.

The range of topics is very wide and the link between welfare and ethics is absolutely evident. As already stated, it is our strong conviction that the key move on these topics is to promote dialogue and education. We really hope JAEER will contribute to promoting both.

Barbara de Mori