

## EDITORIAL

This is the last issue of *Animal Welfare* to be produced from start to finish by the present editorial team. The Assistant Editor is leaving us to return to Australia and I retire this autumn from both the Editorship of the Journal and the Directorship of UFAW.

Volume 6 onwards will then be in the capable hands of Dr James Kirkwood – lately Chief Veterinary Officer of The Zoological Society of London – who is replacing me as UFAW's Scientific Director and as Editor-in-Chief.

In the first editorial of the journal in January 1992 it was stated, amongst other things, that 'The intention is to publish the results of high quality scientific research and technical studies that will have direct benefit on the welfare of animals kept on farms, in laboratories, in zoos, as companions or as managed by man in the wild. The journal will act as a focus for the advancement of the science and technology of animal welfare and help ensure that relevant technical knowledge becomes more readily available to those who need it.'

The contents of the present issue show that this intent, at least, has been largely fulfilled. There is firstly a review-type paper by Caroline Manser on the effects of light on the welfare of domestic poultry. Tentative recommendations are given, pending the result of future research, as to appropriate light intensity, photoperiod and light sources. This paper is followed by a critical assessment by Reinhardt, Liss and Stevens on the space requirements stipulated in the United States for caged non-human primates. The case is made that not only should the cages be larger – especially in the vertical dimension – but they should also be equipped with properly installed, elevated structures appropriate to each species and age category so that the animals can make use of the arboreal 'safe' dimension to which they are biologically adapted.

There is then a contribution by Galhardo, Appleby, Waran and dos Santos on the spontaneous activities of captive performing bottlenose dolphins. Variability of behaviour patterns and spontaneous variations in the daily activities and frequency of playing and exploration may, it seems, constitute good welfare indicators. It is agreed that social diversity of the captive group, appropriate physical characteristics of the pool, easy access to visual contact with people, and frequency and unscheduled contact with the trainers may be important ways of improving environmental stimulation for these animals.

The study by Sonderegger and Turner on the introduction of dogs into large, mixed-sex groups in a dog shelter, shows how the stress of entry for a first-visit dog into these established social groups can be reduced.

The paper by Barnard and Hurst entitled 'Welfare by design: the natural selection of welfare criteria' discusses the difficulties associated with any attempt to assess welfare improvement. The authors contend that welfare can only be interpreted in terms of what natural selection has designed an organism to do and how the circumstances under which it is kept impinge on its ability to fulfil its functional design. It is suggested that attempts to measure suffering-like states directly are likely to be unsuccessful, at least for the foreseeable future, because such states are largely private and subjective. Measuring the impact of the keeping-method on the expression of the animal's functional design behaviours is possibly a more practicable means of detecting when suffering, or a comparable subjective state, is likely to be occurring.

The final article by Anil, Preston, McKinstry and Brown is on the assessment of stress caused in sheep by watching slaughter of other sheep. The study failed to produce any evidence, above the stress levels shown as a result of human contact and handling, that sheep are distressed by witnessing the slaughter act.

In the first editorial in January 1992 it was also stated that 'There is also the hope that we will encourage field workers in animal welfare to write up their practical experiences and to submit them for publication. There is much useful and unique material lost through the lack of a place for it to appear in written form.'

The journal has been less successful in this enterprise. This is a pity – important practical results are not being reported and thus are not available for other field workers to consider and possibly implement. It may be one of the things which the new editorial team will want to further encourage.

It only remains for me to thank the Section Editors, the Assistant Editor/Editorial Assistant(s), the Development Officer and the Typesetter, the Editorial Board and the numerous referees and reviewers for all the work they have put into the journal over the last five years, and to wish the new editorial team every success with the future of the journal.

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Roger Ewbank  
Editor-in-Chief