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# SVME NEWSLETTER

Newsletter of the Society for Veterinary Medical Ethics

Volume 8, Number 2

May 2002

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In the last 6 months, Dr. Mary McCauley and I have been communicating with a large number of veterinary schools concerning the establishment of student chapters of the SVME. We have had some interesting communications. Three schools have already met the requirements for establishment of student chapters:

Univ. of Missouri  
Prince Edward Island  
NC State  
Congratulations to these chapters.

I currently am communicating with the following schools: Tennessee, Iowa, Cornell, Ross, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Texas A&M, and Montreal

I believe within this next year, most of these colleges will establish student chapters. By the end of 2003 I believe we will have 10-15 student chapters of the SVME. In the near future we will be better able to recruit many more new members into the SVME, and I hope our membership reaches 1000 by 2005. I am very proud to have served as the current President. It is a rare honor and privilege. I will volunteer my time to continue recruiting student chapters in the next year if that is appropriate with the membership. Let's discuss that at the AVMA meeting. We are going to have another very interesting speaker line-up this year. I hope everyone can attend.

Until then I remain  
At Your Service,

*Bill*

**Bill Folger**

DVM, MS, ABVP (Feline)  
SVME President

## PRESIDENT-ELECT'S MESSAGE

I can't help but sense that somehow we are living in dizzying times. The ethical challenges facing the profession seem immense, yet they are both subtle and remarkably complex.

Clarity and defined choices between what is right and what is clearly wrong are scenarios that I would welcome.

I recently lost a friend that had the opportunity to participate in the Battle of the Bulge as a nineteen-year-old infantry soldier. Obviously from my vantage point the rightness of his duty in World War II was unassailable. The details in just what he did once he got to Europe are a whole different story. The horror of war aside, I often felt a sort of envy for the clarity of the original premise of his efforts.

Perhaps my intellectual anxiety is a product of rapid change and the relentless spiritual vacuum created by shifting paradigms. It seems as though the rules change on a daily basis.

Ethics provides us with some basic guidelines. Whenever I am most confused I try to re-examine the basic ethical context of our profession. We are fortunate to have a profession so intrinsically bound to altruism and empathy. When our motivations remain consistent to our Oath, we all have a sense of self that is remarkably empowered.

Being operative in the marketplace is another whole different ball game. There are times when I feel that we have all bought tickets to some New Age Amusement Park and all the rides are nuclear powered. I resent feeling like a participant in some dubious vet practice 2002 video game.

One of my portals to a more real world is this list serve of ours. I recognize my need for companions in the struggle to make sense out of our work. I can see a lot of challenges ahead, but at least we have a group that is interested in discussing things. In these days of isolation and politicization as primary driving forces, our status is refreshing.

Our value to each other is directly proportional to our individual participation. We should appreciate this fact. It should empower us. The phenomenon that is this Society for Veterinary Medical Ethics is based in our camaraderie and our mutual need for support and critical thought. I don't see any other sources for this type of reflection within our profession.

SVME is a tool with great potential. I hope we can all continue to examine our profession and how it fits in the modern world. I thank you all for your membership and enthusiasm.

*Brian*

**Brian Forsgren, DVM**  
SVME President-Elect

## TREASURER'S REPORT

The SVME checking account balance is \$1,086.53, and the savings account balance is \$24,090.55, as of May 7, 2002.

*Mary*

*Mary D. Kraeszig, DVM*  
SVME treasurer

### NOTICE:

Any member who has email access and did not provide it when sending the membership application is encouraged to send their current email address to the treasurer, Mary D. Kraeszig, at [kittydoc@prodigy.net](mailto:kittydoc@prodigy.net)

## —ANNOUNCEMENTS-PROGRAMS MEETINGS—

### ***American Veterinary Medical Association Meeting 13-17 July 2002***

The 139th Annual Convention of the American Veterinary Medical Association will be held in the famed Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee.

All information can be found at <http://www.avma.org/conv/cv2002/exhibitors/exhibdefault.asp>

### ***International Society for Applied Ethology meeting***

The 36th International Congress of the ISAE will be held from August 6-10, 2002, in Egmond aan Zee, The Netherlands.

All information can be found at <http://www.isae2002.org/>

### ***Assessment of Animal Welfare at Farm and Group Level 2<sup>nd</sup> International Workshop 4 - 6 September 2002 University of Bristol, U.K.***

This workshop will be of great interest to scientists and others working in animal

behaviour, health and welfare, in particular those concerned with the welfare of farm livestock and laboratory animals housed and managed in groups.

**The themes** include the development of scientific and **ethical principles** to address animal welfare at group level and the application and implementation of those principles to ensure and improve animal welfare in practice.

**The programme** will include plenary lectures by internationally recognised speakers (David Fraser, Harry Blokhuis, Marian Scott, Peter Sandoe, Alan Holland, Xavier Boivin, Joy Mench, John Webster.), communication of original material by oral presentations and poster sessions, and discussion of the main themes in small-group syndicates.

***For further information and registration form contact the Conference Office:***

Langford Continuing Education Unit  
School of Veterinary Science, Langford House, Langford  
North Somerset BS40 5DU, UK  
Tel: +44 (0)117 9289502 Fax: +44 (0)1934 852170  
e-mail: [Langford-CE@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:Langford-CE@bristol.ac.uk)

## ~ O•P•I•N•I•O•N ~

*The Washington State University College of Veterinary Medicine (WSU-CVM) has been the focus of considerable local media attention arising from the decision of the Spokane County Animal Control (SCAC) to stop sales of live animals to WSU-CVM. While the decision coincided with a statement of intent of the SCAC to operate their animal shelter as a “no-kill” shelter, SCAC also acknowledged that they had been subjected to a barrage of letters protesting the sales of live animals to WSU-CVM in response to a notice placed on the PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) website.*

*Recognizing this as another example of extremist animal rights activism being in conflict with the mission of the veterinary profession, I wrote the following Op-Ed piece, which was published (with minor editorial changes to reduce word length) in the Spokane Spokesman-Review on May 3, 2002.*

**T**he recent decision by Spokane County Animal Control to stop selling live animals to Washington State University’s College of Veterinary Medicine due to complaints of animal rightists makes it increasingly obvious that the animal rights movement is at odds with the Veterinary Profession.

From the outset, a fundamental tenet of the animal rights movement has been: ‘animals should not be subjected to interference with their lives by humans’. While they focus their efforts on various anti-meat, anti-research, anti-circus, etc. crusades, pet ownership is also viewed as criminal by animal rightists. The leader and co-founder of PETA (the organization leading the harassment campaign against Spokane County Shelter’s sale of live animals to WSU) quoted in Washingtonian Magazine said, “Pet ownership is an absolutely abysmal situation brought about by human manipulation.” She was later quoted in Harper’s Magazine saying, “We would no longer allow breeding.” “Eventually companion animals would be phased out.”

Since veterinarians are dedicated to caring for animals used for food, entertainment and companionship, there is a conflict between the goals of the veterinary profession and those of animal rightists. Recognizing this conflict, the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) guidelines state, “The AVMA wholeheartedly endorses and adopts promotion of animal welfare as official policy; however, the AVMA cannot endorse the philosophical views and personal values of animal rights advocates when they are incompatible with the responsible use of animals for human purposes, such as companionship, food, fiber and research conducted for the benefit of humans and animals.”

The animal rights movement claims to be moral, motivated only by ethical principles. But when scrutinized closely, animal rightism is shown to be neither moral nor ethical. They misrepresent animal research as an activity carried out by sadists who gratuitously torture animals for personal pleasure. They misrepresent advances in medicine arising from animal research. They take rare examples of animal abuse and present them as being the norm. Writing for *Audubon Magazine*, Richard Conniff characterized the animal rights movement thusly: “The movement has elevated ignorance about the natural world almost to the level of a philosophical principle.”

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*Robert C. Speth, Ph.D., the author of this editorial, is a Professor of Pharmacology and Neuroscience at the College of Veterinary Medicine, Washington State University, Pullman, WA 99164-6520.*

They laud terrorists who burn research labs and liberate animals (even when those animals are liberated into an environment in which they cannot survive). PETA spent about \$47,000 defending Rodney Coronado, a self-avowed terrorist in the name of animal rights, alleged to have committed the 1991 Animal Liberation Front (ALF) raid on WSU (charges against Coronado were dropped when he pleaded guilty to other ALF raids). Interestingly, it was illegal use of a FEDEX account, by which Coronado sent documents describing another ALF raid to PETA, that led to his criminal conviction. PETA has been linked to another terrorist group, the Environmental Liberation Front (ELF), and is under investigation for violations of tax law relating to their support of environmental and animal rights terrorism.

During a visit to the Palouse, a PETA representative bragged that the other co-founder of PETA committed the first animal liberation in America; stealing a carton of rats from a UPS truck. He later threatened the US government saying “NIH [National Institutes of Health], if you try to touch those animals, we’ll show you fireworks like you’ve never seen,” referring to other animals, stolen by PETA sympathizers. And, in what seems like an exhortation to violence, the present leader of PETA, referring to arsons committed against university research labs said, “If I had more guts, I’d light a match.”

If animal rights is correct, why then must animal rightists rely on terrorism and dishonesty to impose this belief on society? Could it be that animal rightism is wrong? Could it be that animals do not possess the human characteristics imposed upon them by animal rightists? Could it be that animals are better off for human intervention in their lives? I challenge readers to name any medical advancement made in veterinary medicine—FOR THE EXCLUSIVE SAKE OF ANIMALS—that hasn’t used animals in its development and quality assurance. Animal rightists would have this care and concern abolished tomorrow, too!

Several years ago some WSU students, inspired by PETA literature, formed a club “Students for the Ethical Treatment of Animals” (SETA) whose purpose was to educate others about animals. One student described how interactions with animals might be after pet ownership was abolished. “Well if I want to say ‘hi’ to a dog, I would just walk over to him put my hand out and pet him.” My response was, “Are you sure you will get your hand back?” At another meeting, the club’s President announced his plan for stopping the ‘tyranny’ of cattle farming: “We will sterilize all the cattle and set them free.” When I suggested that this would cause them to suffer and die painfully, he replied, “Well to be an animal rights supporter, you have to be a hypocrite.” The club disbanded shortly thereafter.

As for applied hypocrisy, PETA set the mark when they began killing animals sent to their Aspen Hill Animal Sanctuary, because they chose not to spend any of the millions of dollars they raised on their behalf to provide the care the animals needed.

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So, the question is: Do you support the veterinary profession with its proven record of caring for animals and improving their welfare? Or, do you support the animal rights movement, which uses animal welfare as a smokescreen to hide its true agenda of divorcing humans from the rest of the animal kingdom?

Robert C. Speth, Ph.D.

Author's Note: *For your information, I am a Past-President of the Society for Veterinary Medical Ethics and founding editor of the Society's Newsletter. I serve on the board of the National Animal Interest Alliance and have also served on the board of the Washington Association for Biomedical Research. The opinions contained in this article are mine alone and should not be construed as representing official positions of the organizations with which I am associated.*

The version of this essay published by the Spokesman-Review is at:  
<http://www.spokesmanreview.com/newsstory.asp?date=050302&ID=s1141565>

## 139<sup>TH</sup> AVMA ANNUAL CONVENTION 2002

### Personal and Professional Development Section Ethics Session

Date: Sunday, July 14, 2002

Where: Gaylord Opryland and Convention Center, Nashville, Tennessee

Moderator: Brian Forsgren DVM

#### Contemporary Issues in Veterinary Ethics

8:00 AM

*Part I: Ethics, Evidence and Medicine: The Ethical Challenge Inherent in the Emerging Phenomenon of Alternative Medicine.*

Speaker: **Bernard Rollin, PhD**

10:00 AM

*Part II: The Ethics of Critical Care.*

Speaker: **Bernard Rollin, PhD**

#### The role of Pharmacist and the Pharmacy in Veterinary Care

1:00 PM

*Part I: The Role of Mortar and Pestle versus Brick, Mortar or Ethers.*

Speaker: **Gigi Davidson**

3:00 PM

*Part II: Reflections by Industry and Internet Providers*

Speaker: **Gigi Davidson**

The annual meeting of the Society for Veterinary Medical Ethics will follow the presentations. All SVME members are invited to attend.

## —MEMBER NEWS—

Students at the Atlantic Veterinary College (AVC) in Prince Edward Island (PEI), Canada formed the first or the second student chapter of the Society for Veterinary Medical Ethics this past year. Locally, they call themselves the AVC Humane Ethics Club.

The group was started when an outspoken first year student invited AVC students to meet and discuss the formation of a student group based on a common interest in animal welfare and/or rights. There was considerable interest in the group, as well as considerable controversy over the term “animal rights”! After much deliberation, the group decided that rather than adhering to a certain ethical position (such as animal rights) they would instead work to encourage understanding of and dialogue about the ethics of animal treatment within the veterinary profession. In order to be an official student club, our student government required that we affiliate ourselves with a professional parent organization, and SVME fit the bill perfectly! Other goals of the club include: to promote the ethical treatment of animals, to sponsor presentations on topics related to animal welfare, to provide opportunities for students to engage in cross-disciplinary discussion of

ethical issues in human-animal relationships, and to initiate service projects that improve the welfare of animals. Since its inception in January 2001, the club has sponsored several events, including a discussion led by animal welfare scientist and author Mike Appleby, debates on the ethics of feline onychectomy and of tail docking and ear cropping in dogs, a presentation on animal welfare issues in the Canadian seal hunt, and a guest lecture on Animal Ethics from a member of the University philosophy department. Events planned for the future include an overview of animal use and alternatives in the DVM curriculum at AVC, and an educational video about the role of early-age sterilization in controlling pet overpopulation. In addition, the Humane Ethics club has worked on animal welfare service projects, such as promoting socialization for AVC’s resident blood donor cats and researching and proposing an alternative feline blood donor program.

To find out more about the AVC student chapter of the SVME, (or to volunteer as a speaker for our group!) please contact founder and past president Barb Jones at [bejones@upei.ca](mailto:bejones@upei.ca).

## —EDITOR’S NOTES—

### **SVME WEB SITE AND NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS**

Once again, I urge all SVME members to consider contributing to the Newsletter whether it is a book review, an opinion piece or simply information about professional activities. The next Newsletter will be out in September 2002. If you consider contributing to the Newsletter, please send your text before August 10, 2002. All members who are considering contributing to the Newsletter can contact me at [scloutie@vetmed.wsu.edu](mailto:scloutie@vetmed.wsu.edu) or c/o department of VCAPP, College of Veterinary Medicine, Washington State University, PO Box 646520, Pullman, WA, 99164-6520.

## SVME DUES NOTICE

**William Folger, DVM, President**  
**Brian Forsgren, DVM, President-Elect**  
**Donald D. Draper, DVM, Ph.D., Past-President**  
**Sylvie Cloutier, PhD, Secretary**  
**Mary D. Kraeszig, JD, DVM., Treasurer**  
**Robert Speth, PhD, Parliamentarian**

**July 2002**

### DUES NOTICE

Dues for 2002-2003 are now payable. We appreciate your past support and look forward to a new and even better year for the Society. The dues payment of \$20.00 (\$5.00 for students) is payable to: ***Society for Veterinary Medical Ethics or SVME.*** Membership will be in force from July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003.

Send checks to: SVME c/o Mary D. Kraeszig  
541 Quail Valley Drive  
Zionsville, IN 46077

Payment Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Check Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this section of the form with your dues payment (see amounts above) to help us keep our records up to date.

NAME and ADDRESS CORRECTION IF NECESSARY:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE NUMBER: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

FAX NUMBER: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

ELECTRONIC MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

Check this box  if you are not on VETETHIC and would like to be.

(Email address is required)

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Book Title:  
*Why Animal Experimentation Matters:  
The Use of Animals in Medical Research  
(New Studies in Social Policy, 2)*

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**BOOK REVIEW: READER'S OPINION**

by Robert C. Speth

“**W**hy Animal Experimentation Matters” is a scholarly treatise on the use of animals for scientific and biomedical purposes. Blended from authors with expertise in such diverse fields as History, Philosophy, and Medicine, the essays in this book comprehensively address the arguments for as well as against biomedical research.

Starting with the Introduction by Ellen Frankel Paul, the book notes the historical use of animals that provided us with knowledge often taken for granted today, e.g., the development of antibiotics, tissue transplants and understanding of nervous system function. She addresses the philosophical basis for animal rightism and the emergence of animal rights activism.

In the first chapter, historians Kiple and Ornelas provide a comprehensive history of medical research with animals dating back to Aristotle's observations of motion in animals; one of the earliest examples of the study of animal physiology. They provide several detailed examples of the use of animals, e.g., the discovery of cures for vitamin deficiency diseases by nutritionists. They also look to the future, noting the need for continued animal research to find cures for viral diseases such as ebola and other emerging viral diseases. Also included is a description of the history of animal rightism, tracing it back to its 19<sup>th</sup> century roots of British Anti-vivisectionism.

*About this book:*  
*Editors—Ellen Frankel Paul,*  
*Jeffrey Paul &*  
*Fred Dycus Miller*  
Social Policy & Philosophy  
Foundation  
Transaction Publishers  
New Jersey, July 2000  
ISBN: 0-7658-06851  
ISBN: 0-7658-0025-X  
Hardcover \$49.95  
Paperback \$24.95

The next chapter by Veterinarian and animal researcher Adrian Morrison provides a personal perspective on animal research. As one of the earliest targets of the criminal acts of the Animal Liberation Front, Morrison has devoted considerable effort to evaluating the moral and ethical issues arising from animal research. He provides us with solid factual information that soundly contradicts the garbled misinformation promoted by so-called animal rightist oriented health professionals.

**S**tuart Zola's chapter provides a contemporary example of the application of animal research to the problem of amnesia. Veterinary ethicist Jerrold Tannenbaum provides a thought-provoking essay on the paradigm shift towards the expectation that

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## BOOK REVIEW (CONTINUED)

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animals should be ‘happy’ and how it could impact biomedical research. Medical Ethicist Baruch Brody provides a contrast between American and International attitudes towards animal research which also addresses the continuum of social interactions ranging from familial to Kingdom-wide.

Nicoll and Russell’s chapter explores the continuum introduced by Brody in a Darwinian framework. The chapter evolves towards the issues of animal protectionism and rightism, finishing with an expose of the misanthropic anti-humanistic and anti-scientific fundamentalism of the animal rights philosophy.

In a provocatively titled chapter “Animals: their right to be used” medical ethicist Tristram Engelhardt Jr. discusses animals as moral agents relative to humans, and the implications

of humans being the authors of moral codes. The book concludes with an essay by philosopher R. G. Frey who addresses the justification of animal experimentation from an “argument from benefit” viewpoint. Touching upon concepts such as Judeo-Christian ethics and relative values of human and animal life, he reaches an unequivocal conclusion in favor of animal research.

This book serves an important function as a compelling scientific argument in support of animal research. Indeed, reading the book one wonders why there is such a raging debate on this issue. Is it because the public’s understanding of science has become so deficient that they fall victim to the pseudoscientific arguments of the animal rightists?

This book has the potential to serve as an antibiotic to cure the infection of misunderstanding about animal research that has been insidiously imposed upon society and a maturing generation of children by the animal rights movement.

*Robert C. Speth*

*Blended from authors with expertise in such diverse fields as History, Philosophy, and Medicine, the essays in this book comprehensively address the arguments for as well as against biomedical research.*

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## OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

<i>President:</i>	William R. Folger, DVM, MS, ABVP (Feline)
<i>President Elect:</i>	Brian Forsgren, DVM
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Mary D. Kraeszig, JD, DVM
<i>Secretary:</i>	Sylvie Cloutier, PhD
<i>Parliamentarian:</i>	Robert C. Speth, PhD
<i>Historian:</i>	To-Be-Named
<i>Immediate Past-President:</i>	Don D. Draper, DVM, PhD, MBA
<i>Past-Presidents:</i>	Ronald L. McLaughlin, DVM Robert Shomer, VMD Albert Dorn, DVM, MS Jerry Tannenbaum, MA, JD John R. Boyce, DVM, PhD Robert C. Speth, PhD