

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

TO THE EDITOR:

It is with regret that I must point out certain errors and omissions occurring in the review of the conference on "Medicine, Animals, and Man" which you recently published. (Report by Michael A. Fox, Ethics and Animals, Vol. 1,2, p. 18.)

The program, held at University of Illinois Medical Center on May 21, 1980, attracted not 75 persons but close to twice that number. Dr. Michael McCulloch's paper did not consider pet-facilitated therapy for the terminally ill or for mentally disturbed children, but for adults depressed as a result of chronic illness. Dr. Jules Cass did not deal with the same topics as Dr. McCulloch and Dr. Katcher; his workshop was on practical problems in running a pet-therapy program. The review also failed to mention reports by Dr. Harold Feinberg, National Chairman, American Association for Laboratory Animal Care, and Dr. Harry Rowsell, Canadian Council on Animal Welfare, who spoke on the self-policing efforts of experimental scientists in their respective countries.

Most unfortunate was the reviewer's handling of the final session of the conference, in which half of the papers were not discussed at all. Far from being a group of papers "covering very diverse topics," these presentations were carefully arranged to illustrate aspects of the profound ambivalence which surrounds our attitude toward animals. Their role as objects of love, fear, and hate was shown to vary with our perception of them as akin to or different from ourselves. Key examples from history and literature were produced to demonstrate the depth of this ambivalence in modern culture.

Readers interested in the conference may obtain copies of the paper summaries by writing to the undersigned, c/o Humanistic Studies Program, University of Illinois Medical Center, P.O. Box 6998, Chicago, Illinois, 60680.

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