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Lives in the Balance: The Ethics of Using Animals in Biomedical Research: The Report of a Working Party of the Institute of Medical Ethics

Jane A. Smith & Kenneth M. Boyd (eds.)

Oxford University Press (1991)

Abstract

This book is the result of a three-year study undertaken by a multidisciplinary working party of the Institute of Medical Ethics (UK). The group was chaired by a moral theologian, and its members included biological and ethological scientists, toxicologists, physicians, veterinary surgeons, an expert in alternatives to animal use, officers of animal welfare organizations, a Home Office Inspector, philosophers, and a lawyer. Coming from these different backgrounds, and holding a diversity of moral views, the members produced the agreed report as a result of detailed and rigorous discussions. The book sets out facts about animal experiments and about animal abilities to experience pain, distress and anxiety. There is a detailed examination of the moral claims related to the benefits likely to accrue from animal research, and of strategies for weighing these benefits against the harm caused to animals, in order to decide whether particular research projects ought or ought not to proceed. This leads to consideration of the statutory and non-statutory controls which safeguard standards in such research. The final section explores a variety of philosophical arguments about the use of animals in research, and offers a philosophical justification for the Working Party's more practical conclusions. Written in clear, nontechnical language, this book is accessible to lay people as well as to scientists. It is the first such document to emerge from a meeting of people with such widely differing views on this highly controversial subject, and represents a major

contribution towards informing and raising the quality of contemporary debate. The book is unique in drawing together material and ideas never before found in one volume. It will interest a broad spectrum of readers, from ethicists and animal rights advocates to scientific researchers and laboratory administrators, along with general readers concerned about this compelling issue.

Keywords

[Animal experimentation](#) [Moral and ethical aspects](#) [Animals, Laboratory](#) [Animal Welfare](#)
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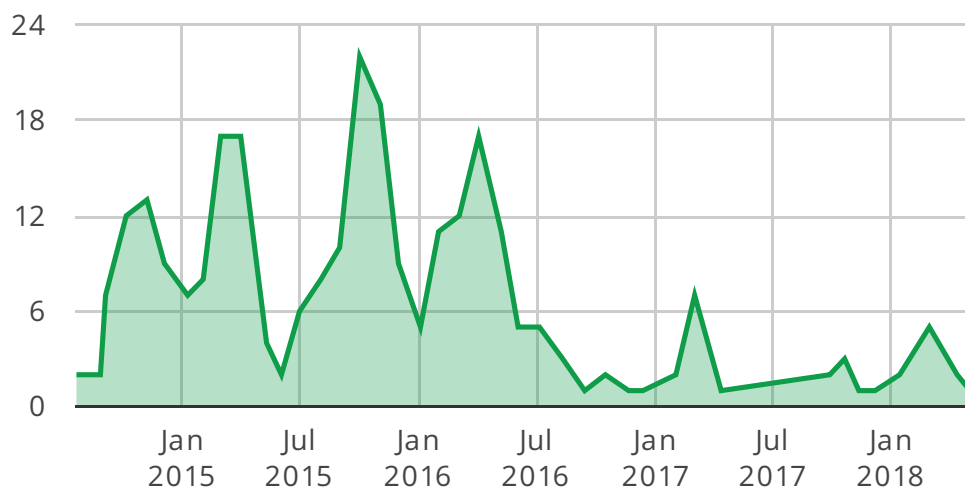
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