

# The Palgrave Macmillan Animal Ethics Series

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- provide a range of key introductory and advanced texts that map out ethical positions on animals;
- publish pioneering work written by new, as well as accomplished, scholars;
- produce texts from a variety of disciplines that are multidisciplinary in character or have multidisciplinary relevance.

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A.W.H. Bates

# Anti-Vivisection and the Profession of Medicine in Britain

A Social History

palgrave  
macmillan

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*To Lucky,  
A spark divine*

*The original version of the book was revised: The new section  
“Series Editors’ preface” was included.*

## Series Editors' Preface

This is a new book series for a new field of inquiry: Animal Ethics.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the ethics of our treatment of animals. Philosophers have led the way, and now a range of other scholars have followed from historians to social scientists. From being a marginal issue, animals have become an emerging issue in ethics and in multidisciplinary inquiry.

In addition, a rethink of the status of animals has been fuelled by a range of scientific investigations which have revealed the complexity of animal sentience, cognition and awareness. The ethical implications of this new knowledge have yet to be properly evaluated, but it is becoming clear that the old view that animals are mere things, tools, machines or commodities cannot be sustained ethically.

But it is not only philosophy and science that are putting animals on the agenda. Increasingly, in Europe and the United States, animals are becoming a political issue as political parties vie for the “green” and “animal” vote. In turn, political scientists are beginning to look again at the history of political thought in relation to animals, and historians are beginning to revisit the political history of animal protection.

As animals grow as an issue of importance, so there have been more collaborative academic ventures leading to conference volumes, special journal issues, indeed new academic animal journals as well. Moreover, we have witnessed the growth of academic courses, as well as university posts, in Animal Ethics, Animal Welfare, Animal Rights, Animal Law, Animals and Philosophy, Human–Animal Studies, Critical Animal Studies, Animals and Society, Animals in Literature, Animals and Religion—tangible signs that a new academic discipline is emerging.

“Animal Ethics” is the new term for the academic exploration of the moral status of the non-human—an exploration that explicitly involves a focus on what we owe animals morally, and which also helps us to understand the influences—social, legal, cultural, religious and political—that legitimate animal abuse. This series explores the challenges that Animal Ethics poses, both conceptually and practically, to traditional understandings of human–animal relations.

The series is needed for three reasons: (i) to provide the texts that will service the new university courses on animals; (ii) to support the increasing number of students studying and academics researching in animal related fields, and (iii) because there is currently no book series that is a focus for multidisciplinary research in the field.

Specifically, the series will

- provide a range of key introductory and advanced texts that map out ethical positions on animals;
- publish pioneering work written by new, as well as accomplished, scholars, and
- produce texts from a variety of disciplines that are multidisciplinary in character or have multidisciplinary relevance.

The new Palgrave Macmillan Series on Animal Ethics is the result of a unique partnership between Palgrave Macmillan and the Ferrater Mora Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics. The series is an integral part of the mission of the Centre to put animals on the intellectual agenda by facilitating academic research and publication. The series is also a natural complement to one of the Centre's other major projects, the

*Journal of Animal Ethics*. The Centre is an independent “think tank” for the advancement of progressive thought about animals, and is the first Centre of its kind in the world. It aims to demonstrate rigorous intellectual enquiry and the highest standards of scholarship. It strives to be a world-class centre of academic excellence in its field.

We invite academics to visit the Centre’s website [www.oxfordanimal-ethics.com](http://www.oxfordanimal-ethics.com) and to contact us with new book proposals for the series.

Andrew Linzey  
Priscilla N. Cohn  
General Editors

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The Reverend Professor Andrew Linzey has been an inspiration to me, and many other, students of animal ethics, and was kind enough to nominate me as a Fellow of the Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics, whose meetings have provided a wonderful forum for the exchange of ideas, and from which I have learned a great deal.

This project was made possible through the generous encouragement of the managing director of Convit House Pathology Ltd, and my wife, An (they are one and the same person), who kindly overlooked the fact that my duties both as a director, and husband, were not performed even to my usual low standard.

In recent years, the National Health Service has mandated my attendance at an ever-increasing number of superfluous meetings, on the way to and from, and sometimes during, which, much of this book was written.

Two chapters are reworked versions of articles written for the *Journal of Animal Ethics*: Chap. 1 is based on ‘Vivisection, virtue ethics, and the law in nineteenth-century Britain’, *J. Anim. Ethics*, 4;2 (2014), 30–44, and Chap. 4 on ‘Boycotted Hospital: The National Anti-Vivisection Hospital, London, 1903–1935’, *J. Anim. Ethics*, 6;2, 177–187.

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## About the Author

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# Abbreviations

AAMR	Association for the Advancement of Medical Research
ADAVS	Animal Defence and Anti-Vivisection Society
AFS	Animals Friend Society
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BMA	British Medical Association
BMJ	British Medical Journal
BUAV	British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection
COS	Charities Organization Society
FRS	Fellow of the Royal Society
ICRF	Imperial Cancer Research Fund
LDAVS	London and District Anti-Vivisection Society
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives
LRCP	Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians
MP	Member of Parliament
MRC	Medical Research Council
MRCs	Member of the Royal College of Surgeons
NCDL	National Canine Defence League
OGA	Order of the Golden Age
RDS	Research Defence Society
(R)SPCA	(Royal) Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
UCL	University College London

**xx      Abbreviations**

UFAW	Universities Federation for Animal Welfare
ULAWS	University of London Animal Welfare Society
VSS	Victoria Street Society
Well	Wellcome Library, London

# Abstract

This book provides an introduction to the social history of the anti-vivisection movement in Britain from its nineteenth-century beginnings until the 1960s. Its focus is on the ethical principles that inspired the movement and the sociopolitical background that explains its rise and fall. Opposition to vivisection began when medical practitioners complained it was contrary to the compassionate ethos of their profession. Christian anti-cruelty organizations took up the cause out of concern that callousness among the professional classes would have a demoralizing effect on the rest of society. As the nineteenth century drew to a close, the influence of transcendentalism, Eastern religions and the spiritual revival led new age social reformers to champion a more holistic approach to science, and dismiss reliance on vivisection as a materialistic oversimplification. In response, scientists claimed it was necessary to remain objective and unemotional in order to perform the experiments necessary for medical progress.