

From Éclat to Consensus (1979–2000)

Part V examines the maturation of British farm animal welfare politics, activism, and science from 1979 to Harrison's death in 2000. In 1979, the polarisation of British farm animal welfare debates peaked. The Thatcher government ended a decade of relative neglect of farm animal welfare in Downing Street by replacing FAWAC with a new Farm Animal Welfare Committee (FAWC). The move was an acknowledgement of the growing political importance of animal welfare and a blow to post-war corporatist decision-making in British agriculture. In contrast to its predecessor, FAWC was no longer directly controlled by MAFF, comprised more academics, and explicitly acknowledged the Brambell Committee's five freedoms. The new committee was, however, viewed with suspicion by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA). Having just dissolved its own Farm Livestock Advisory Committee, the Society refused to send representatives to FAWC. The protest was short-lived and triggered a membership revolt against Richard Ryder. With anti-FAWC protest failing and British agriculture experiencing a prolonged economic crisis, the 1980s and 1990s instead saw the fulfilment of key demands from *Animal Machines*. Now in her 60s, the book's author achieved recognition as a publicly esteemed welfare campaigner. Animal welfare science also matured. Following its rapid expansion in the 1970s, the discipline gained chairs at major British universities. New assurance schemes by major retailers and welfare charities created additional revenue

streams and increasingly displaced traditional government regulation with private standard setting. However, the growth of prestige, standards, and resources did not lead to a synthesis of welfare definitions. Although Harrison's views had become part of mainstream politics by the time of her death in 2000, what animal welfare was, how it could be measured, and where the discipline should go next remained open questions.