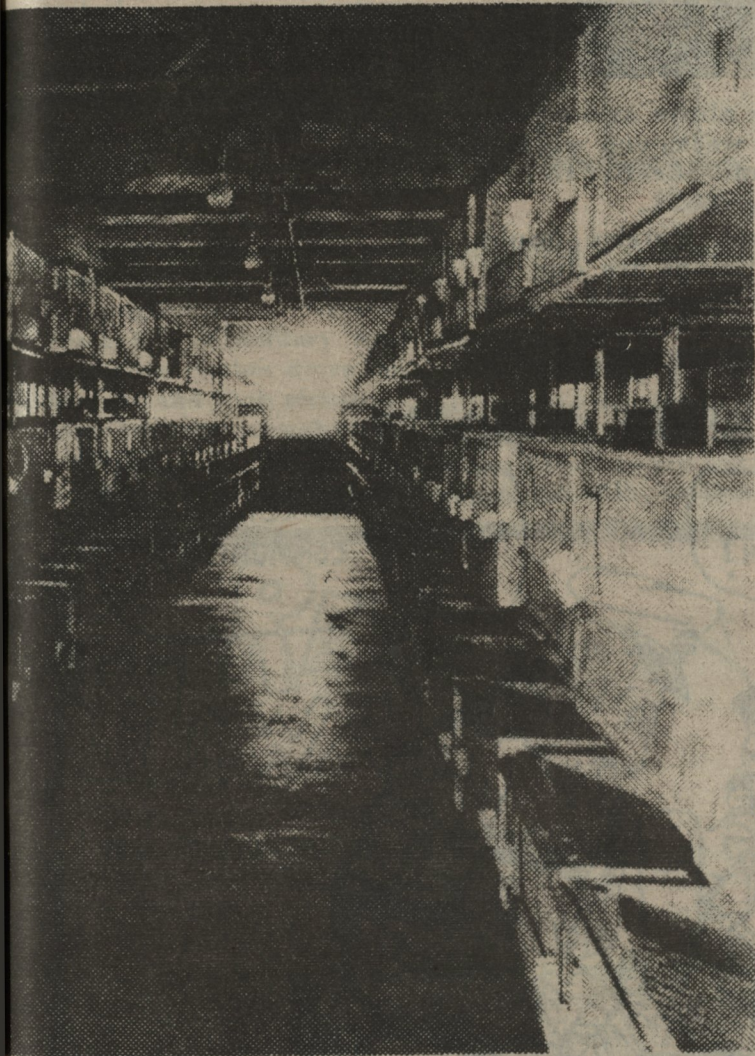


TION IN CANADA



“Without research it is very hard to do anything to protect habitats and species, the politicians will never listen unless we can document things in a clear cut manner”

body is concerned with animal care, Rapley argued but was saddened because “A university should be as free and open a place as possible”, yet many institutions have been forced into expensive and cumbersome security.

Rapley also presented some curious information on the animal rights phenomenon where a survey done by Animals Agenda found that women are the primary driving force. Membership is overwhelmingly caucasian; 80% live in cities or suburbs; 84% are college graduates; 25% hold a Mas-

ters or PhD degree; and 80% earn between \$25,000 and \$50,000 U.S. per year.

The “most prestigious” researchers must and are starting to speak out, Rapley said. “Without research it is very hard to do anything to protect habitats and species, the politicians will never listen unless we can document things in a clear cut manner”, Rapley said. Tasker said “The key is to act on this issue rather than to simply react.”

Rapley described how scientific knowledge derived from basic animal research was essential to nesting Bald Eagles

along lake Erie for the first time in twenty years, and in reintroducing Marmosets, a very commonly used laboratory animal, back into the wilds. “A lot of research is undertaken just for animals” Rapley said.

In biomedical research, animal experiments are used to increase knowledge, and to test possible cures for cancer, arteriosclerosis, alzheimers disease, cystic fibrosis, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis and AIDS. “I care about animals”, Rapley said “but I care about people too. There are people suffering out there and there are cures we need to look for”

A research project involving animals “must show evidence that there is scientific merit before it is approved” Rapley said.

Dr. Sarah McLaughlin gave an excellent seminar on “Education for technical service in laboratory animal care”. The majority of Laboratory animal-Human contact is with laboratory animal technicians. “Five to ten years ago I wouldn’t have been on the agenda” but animal care has “suddenly become a very hot issue”, McLaughlin said.

“The public wants to be reassured that those working on Laboratory animals are well qualified” McLaughlin said. A point of contention raised in the audience was that the major granting agencies often do not provide researchers with enough money to hire personnel with the top quality of training in animal care.

Most of the participants at the symposium agreed that it was part of their responsibility to continue to lobby the granting institutions of Canada to support a high level of animal care by supplying researchers with the funds necessary to hire highly trained technicians.

Education for Animal Technicians is necessary because of moral and ethical obligations, documentation for assessment, legal obliga-

tions, and increased public concern McLaughlin said

There has been a tremendous increase in the number of jobs for graduates of laboratory animal courses in community colleges, McLaughlin said. The socio-dynamics of the enrollment in these courses is changing; whereas women used to make up 90% of the students, men, graduate and mature students are now enrolling in greater numbers. A new program in Truro is being started this year.

Dr. Don McKay, executive secretary of the Canadian Association of Laboratory Animals, closed out the talks. “Laboratory animals need us as stewards” McKay said. He noted they have “never had a high level of support from the Maritime provinces” but is looking for that to be changing.

C.A.L.A.S. is active in assessing registration for animal technicians and technologists. Trained people are necessary so that animal needs can be recognized, research can be improved, and preventative medicine used for maintaining disease free colonies of animals, McKay said.

“The whole laboratory animal field in Canada is continuously changing” McKay said but he felt that C.A.L.A.S. “can be very active in setting the standard for the future”. As part of its mandate C.A.L.A.S. provides a forum for the exchange and dissemination of knowledge in animal care. Increased public relations is necessary. McLaughlin said the public is often surprised to find out “there are people working in animal research that actually care about the animals”.