THE

Latham Letter

VOLUME XXI, NUMBER 2 SPRING 2000

PROMOTING RESPECT FOR ALL LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION

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Special Issue

Using Positive Reinforcement to Shape Behavior

Featuring Karen Pryor (pictured above) and Morgan Spector

GUEST EDITOR: LYNN LOAR, PH.D.

Inside

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The Latham Letter

Vol. XXI, No. 2, Spring 2000

Balanced perspectives on humane issues and activities

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Contents

Edith Latham's Mandate

"To promote, foster, encourage and further the principles of humaneness, kindness and benevolence to all living creatures."

Editorial

Expectations

Hugh H. Tebault, III, President

Latham strives to present news that offers new and better ways to promote humane education and kindness to animals and others. In the Winter issue of the *Latham Letter* I commented on society's need to recognize common values and our dependence on each other to make a difference. In this issue we highlight how Karen Pryor and others make a difference by their positive approach to training and helping others with animals.

This week I helped a friend who no longer drives get to a medical appointment. It wasn't much in the scheme of life but it helped a friend. I was able to visit with her and her dogs after returning from the appointment. The dogs have been with her for many years and have always been very much a part of the family. The support of the dogs continues to help her during the week — an example of the strength in the human-companion animal bond.

Latham has continued to work quietly teaching kindness, knowing that this simple message provides the population with a strong foundation. By working with kindness as a core belief, decisions made are better, and more thought is given to helping others. The strength of our society comes from each person contributing and helping each other. Too much of the media focus is on how different we are, and not enough on how many things we have in common. Karen Pryor gives a wonderful example of how we can learn from our experiences and enrich ourselves and others.

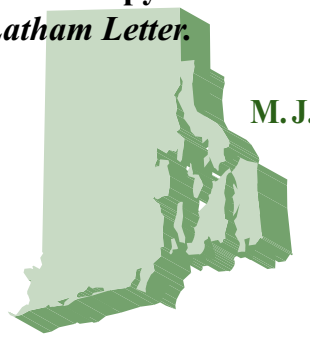
Latham's new film, "Mona's Ark," presents another current program of people and animals teamed together to work for others. Mona Sams works with llamas, dogs and other animals, traveling from site to site bringing the warmth of animal-facilitated therapy to hundreds of children. It is an inspirational story. I hope this new film will help you to develop similar programs in your area.

When I helped someone, it took only my time. The payback was immediate, providing the enjoyment of fellowship. What more could we ask from the time we spend each day?

Letter to the Editor

Dear Latham,

I was saddened by the omission of the Rhode Island Pet Therapy classes in the latest *Latham Letter*.



M. J. Munroe

We Apologize.

Here is a description of the three classes in pet-assisted therapy (PAT) that have been offered at the Community College of Rhode Island since 1993. The initial semester course involves the history and awareness of the PAT profession, guest speakers, assigned readings, essays, and observations. Usually offered in the fall, this year an additional class was offered in the spring 2000 semester. There are 20-25 enrollees in each session.

The second class is Pet Training. It involves sessions with certified animal trainers for 20-25 pet owners and their therapy animals. Both a spring and a summer class are being offered this year, putting the number of therapists in training at more than 50. The third class is an internship of 100 hours. This results in a total of 148 training hours for professional pet-assisted therapists in Rhode Island .

For information on any Rhode Island program, contact Pearl Salotto at 401-463-5809 or fax 401-463-3639.

Latham's New Video

Mona's Ark:
An animal-assisted therapy program featuring llamas

Animal-assisted therapy (AAT), or pet-assisted therapy as it is sometimes known, is receiving increased attention and acceptance in a variety of educational and rehabilitative settings. There are many excellent programs throughout the United States and abroad, benefiting persons with a variety of physical and emotional challenges.

Latham chose to highlight this particular occupational therapy program, which is delivered through Rehab Services of Roanoke (Virginia) and serves children with autism, hearing impairments, and physical challenges, for several reasons: its consistency, its attention to administrative and veterinary concerns, and its menagerie of animals – most notably, the unique and extremely appealing llamas.

Guest Editor: Lynn Loar, Ph.D.

Shaping Behavior with Positive Reinforcement & Joy

Ten years ago, a seemingly benign invitation to participate in a panel discussion at a conference – something I routinely do – changed my outlook and professional direction. Last year another invitation to speak at another conference, this time extended by me to Karen Pryor, showed me a new way to work with families, both to facilitate growth and to reduce the risk of recurring abuse.

It is a pleasure and a privilege for me to introduce Karen Pryor and Morgan Spector to the readers of the *Latham Letter*. Both are parents, animal trainers, and teachers. Both use positive reinforcement exclusively to shape behaviors. Cruelty and coercion have no place in their training or in their families. We can join them in making learning enjoyable for people and animals and in making the world a more humane place for all living creatures by applying these principles to our daily lives.

Pryor's *Don't Shoot the Dog!* was first published in 1984, the year I began working with abusive families. I loved the clear, practical and witty writing, the illustrations of problematic behaviors in children, spouses, pets and other animals, and the kindness Pryor brought to the task of reshaping behavior. I learned much that I could use with troubled families. I also learned that the families responded more readily to the stories about animals than to the anecdotes about people – that didn't seem so much like taking advice.

I worked for Child Protective Services in the mid-1980s. Several of my cases contained horrifying stories of animal abuse as well as child abuse. Case records narrated the incidents of animal abuse but failed to describe any intervention. When I checked with more experienced colleagues, they all said they had a few cases like that as well, were dismayed, but could do nothing about it.

Although we did not know it, our office was a mere six miles from the local humane society which had a staff of humane officers devoted to investigating animal cruelty and monitoring risky situations involving animals. Unlike us, they were well aware that cruelty to animals was a problem of dangerous human behavior, not something that should be set apart from investigations of child and elder abuse, or domestic violence.

In 1990, I was invited to join Randy Lockwood, a vice president with the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), and Ken White, then deputy director of the San Francisco Department of Animal Care and Control, in a panel discussion on child and animal abuse at HSUS' annual conference. Things clicked for me: the problem was human violence, not the number of legs of the victim. Notions of disposability ("it's only an animal"), or rationalization ("it was only a little swat on the bottom") might influence which vulnerable creature became the target, but the infliction of harm was the issue, not the category of the victim. Indeed, professional overspecialization by type of victim obscures the widespread problem of abusive human behavior and our society's high tolerance of violence.

Following the conference, Ken and I began to compare cases. We discovered the same behaviors and family dynamics whether the victim was a child or an animal. I had, by then, been working with abusive families for a number of years and had developed some understanding for and ability to tolerate them. Without approving of their behavior, I do understand why some people harm their children. Children demand enormous amounts of time and energy whether their parents feel up to it or not. Children talk back, defy, find fault, cry, whine and complain. They spill and break things, make noise and, when small, leak at both ends.

I contrasted the lives of the overburdened and depleted families I met at work with the cushy life I was enjoying giving my dog. I thought most people would treat their pets better than my clients treated their children. My clients had not really chosen to become parents and could not readily get out of it when the task became burdensome. People can choose to acquire a pet,

or not, and can find it another home if things do not work out as hoped. Moreover, housebreaking takes weeks or months rather than years, and the other demands pets make are comparatively few.

Ken, for his part, was operating under opposite but equally incorrect assumptions. He thought people treated animals worse than children because people thought of pets as property rather than as kindred living creatures. Surely people would not do to their own flesh and blood what they did to the animals they owned.

> "The problem was human violence, not the number of legs of the victim."

When we put our two halves together, two things happened. First we got depressed. We discovered the world was a much worse place than we had imagined, potentially endangering any vulnerable creature. Second, we got energized to do something about the problem of violence as it affected all living beings. So we established the Humane Coalition Against Violence to provide training and advocacy on the link between cruelty to animals and human violence (see the *Latham Letter*, Summer, 1992).

Carol Rathmann, the shelter manager of the Humane Society of Sonoma County, attended one of my workshops in 1992 about the connection between child and animal abuse. She too became depressed and energized, leading her to create Forget Me Not Farms, an innovative therapeutic program which uses gardens, animals and empathic volunteers to teach gentleness and nurturance to children from violent homes and communities (see the *Latham Letter*, Spring, 1994, and Spring, 1996).

The number of programs using animals to reach abused children has grown exponentially in recent years as has the literature in the field. Debra Duel described 29 programs in HSUS' *Violence Prevention and Intervention: A Directory of Animal-Related Programs* (2000). In 1999, the Latham Foundation published *Teaching Compassion: A Guide for Humane Educators, Teachers, and Parents*, written by Pamela Raphael, Libby Colman and me, and sponsored *Child Abuse, Domestic Violence, and Animal Abuse: Linking the Circles of Compassion for Prevention and Intervention*, edited by Phil Arkow and Frank Ascione and published by Purdue University Press.

While enthusiastically helping humane societies and municipal animal control agencies design therapeutic programs for abused children, I was troubled by the feeling that, despite their promise and success, the programs were not enough to resolve aggressive impulses and rebuild devastated relationships. The families were simply too damaged and had too few skills that they could marshal under stress. Would gentleness learned with plants and animals at Carol's bucolic farm really transfer in a crisis to prevent escalating tension at home from turning into child, animal, spousal or elder abuse?

Abuse prevention programs need to teach parents as well as children alternatives to violence. It does no good, and may increase risk, to give a child values and behaviors that only antagonize the parent. Intervention programs must offer the entire family, all of them likely bad learners and teachers, not only skills of care-giving, but also the ability to cope with frustration, incomprehension and lack of compliance. And, since it is human nature to resent and resist advice, the programs have to accomplish all this without directly telling people what to do.

Karen Pryor can elicit all sorts of positive behaviors from all sorts of creatures without using force or coercion, without yelling or criticizing, without even talking for that matter. She does this so playfully that both she and her students enjoy the learning and the collaboration. She simply and elegantly builds a diverse repertoire of positive behaviors and a relationship in which abuse has no place. In the past year, she and I have begun examining the use of her methods with abusive families. Her approach does give families tangible skills they can draw on when stressed to avoid abuse. By teaching me these principles

> "Abuse prevention programs need to teach parents as well as children alternatives to violence."

she has replenished my energy and replaced my depression with optimism – another measure of her ability to create a world view in which negatives have no part. By reading her article and learning how to shape behavior with positive reinforcement and joy, you can join us on this exciting path to a more humane world.

Lynn Loar, Ph.D., LCSW, is an expert in child abuse assessment and treatment and a member of the California State Humane Academy faculty, where she teaches about the interrelationship of child abuse, elder abuse, domestic violence, and cruelty to animals. She lives on the California coast with her husband and dog.

A Transformation Devoutly to be Wished:

What we are beginning to discover from the clicker training revolution

By Karen Pryor

Traditions in animal training

In the late 1950s and early '60s, a revolution began in animal training. It started with the dolphins. It spread to birds and zoo animals, and then to household pets. Now we are just beginning to see the results – in old traditions, in communication between animals and people, perhaps even in society itself – of the process that began half a century ago.

Animal training has been much the same, across most of the planet, for thousands of years. Throughout history, animal training has been largely an artisanal activity, like blacksmithing or carpentry. It was learned by apprenticeship and practice. As in any craft, attaining real mastery took natural talent and years of dedication. For everyday purposes, most people didn't bother with more than the rudiments.

The model for traditional animal training is, in my opinion, a social model. Trainers, farmers, pet owners, and in fact most humans, tend to treat animals as if they were subordinate human individuals. We humans control the behavior, and especially misbehavior, of lesser beings by social dominance – and, if that doesn't work, by physical force. Whether we are dealing with cows or yaks, sled dogs or elephants, if we want the animal to move, we pull on the front end, or hit, spur, push or prod the back end. If we want the animal to stop moving around freely, we use physical restraint: the leash, rope, fence, bridle, barn walls. From the animal's standpoint, compliance produces good results: the pressure eases when the animal gives in.

Animals soon learn to recognize the signs of coercion, and to respond to the hints. A lift of the hand is enough to move the herd or stop the dog from approaching; you no longer need to actually wave sticks, thump rumps, or yell. Thus the trainer is reinforced for diminishing effort, a natural shaping contingency. Another natural contingency, however, is that when an animal fails to respond to, say, a raised hand, the trainer's natural response, as a dominant individual, is to escalate the threat, and if that doesn't work, to apply physical punishment.

This has two consequences. If the animal finally does comply, the trainer is instantly reinforced for using the punishment. Furthermore the longer it takes, the more reinforcing the final escalation. Hey, it worked, didn't it! The fact that punishment did NOT work at first, or quickly, is masked entirely. Eventual success reinforces the trainer's punishing behavior. This is one reason why traditional training almost always includes escalating levels of punishment. These punishing techniques (and tools) are never recognized as something that trainers have unknowingly been conditioned to use. They are, instead, justified, and sometimes passionately defended, as being necessary for the safety of the human, and a prerequisite to any complex or demanding work.

The new training: Operant conditioning

Then along came what we dolphin trainers were taught to call operant conditioning (positive operant conditioning, or free-operant conditioning, may now be more accurate technical terms). The basic research that kicked it off happened in the laboratories of B. F. Skinner, at Harvard, before and during World War II. Skinner and his

associates identified and named some of the mechanical processes by which animal behavior could be modified. The field of behaviorism, or behavior analysis as it is presently called, was spawned by the discovery that the acquisition of behavior follows basic laws.

Meanwhile, in the 1950s and '60s one little part of behaviorism – free-operant conditioning, or the shaping of uncoerced and voluntary behavior – became the basis for a new area of animal work: the training of dolphins. After World War II oceanariums, or aquariums with huge pools capable of holding large animals such as dolphins and small whales, became popular tourist attractions. At first no one realized the dolphins could be trained. They were just exhibit animals, like the fish. Then various students of B. F. Skinner began getting hired as trainers or training coaches. From Skinner's rats and pigeons the laws of learning moved to the dolphins.

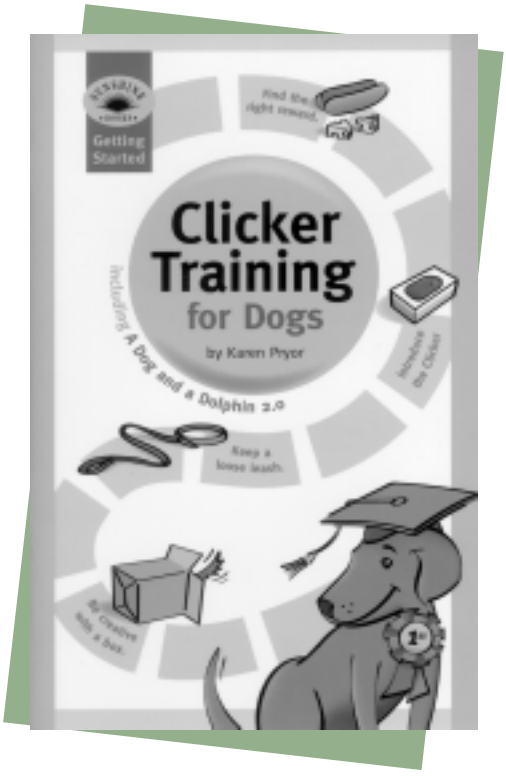
I first learned my operant conditioning as a dolphin trainer in 1960 in Hawaii. We early dolphin trainers were utterly free to discover what we could do with these new tools. We were free, I think, because we had an animal for which no training tradition existed. There was no one to tell us "You have to do this," or "You mustn't do that" or "That'll never work." So dolphin trainers could explore a new kind of training, one in which force was not an issue, dominance did not arise (how are you going to dominate an animal that just swims away?) and punishment, deprivation, and threats were not needed.

Differences between traditional and operant training

Traditional training begins with a command. You tell the animal what to do, and then you enforce the action. Sit. Down. Whoa. Scat! We operant trainers do everything backwards. We start with the reinforcer. Here: here's a treat. Then we establish a marker signal or conditioned reinforcer – a sound, a light, a gesture – that means "Treat's coming." Then we let the animal discover that it can cause that marker signal to happen by its own actions. The dolphin jumps – and *makes* the trainer blow the whistle. The dog sits – and *makes* the person click a clicker.

> "Throughout history, animal training has been largely an artisanal activity, like blacksmithing or carpentry."

The training really begins when the animal discovers that it can make the trainer give signals and thus treats. That discovery is tremendously exciting for the learner. Dogs bark, dolphins leap and splash, and elephants, I am told, run around in circles chirping. It is, after all, real communication, and initiated by the learner, the trainee.



This discovery, this "light bulb" moment, can happen in the first few minutes of the first training session. It leads to the development of deliberately offered behaviors, which trainers can change or increase without any physical interference, guidance, or restraint at all, simply by choosing when to say "Yes!"

Not until the animal is confidently giving us a fully formed behavior do we add the signal – the raised hand, the spoken word – that will come to be the cue or discriminative stimulus. Traditional trainers have trouble believing that we operant trainers really can build reliable behavior without punishment. But they seem to find this absence of an initial 'command' even more baffling. "How does the animal know what to do?" "He doesn't," we say. "He's finding out for himself."

It's certainly a new concept. The cue doesn't order the animal to do something. Instead, it identifies exactly which already-learned behavior will earn a "Yes!" at this particular moment. It's an opportunity, not a threat; and because of the history of positive reinforcement, the animal trained in this way is constantly alert to those opportunities. A so-called "clicker trained" dog focuses on the

Karen and her granddaughter

trainer, hopes for cues, recognizes TONS of cues (100 or more is not unusual) and responds to cues with alacrity.

Going to the dogs

When I learned my dolphin training in the '60s, it was quite apparent to me, and indeed to most marine mammal trainers, that our technology could be applied to any animal. At Sea Life Park in Hawaii we trained Hawaiian pigs and chickens, seals, free-flying sea birds, our own dogs, cats, and horses, and, for fun and practice, each other. In the words of scientist/trainer Keller Breland, we could train any animal to do anything it was physically and mentally capable of doing. However, for the next thirty years, to my mystification, our kind of training did not spread beyond the oceanariums. Our fancy applications aroused no interest or curiosity among scientists and academics. They, like the general public, seemed to attribute our astonishing results to the dolphins, not to the training; and in fact we ourselves often made the same assumption. We had nifty animals, so we could do this nifty training.

I described our cooperative, non-punitive training in a book about my dolphin training experiences, *Lads Before the Wind*, which was published by Harper's in 1975. I thought people would read about the training and start using it. Except for the rare individual, most people, however, could not read about dolphin training and see the general applicability of free-operant training. So in the early 1980s I wrote a second book about training without punishment, titled (by the publishers, not by me) *Don't Shoot the Dog!* This time I pointed out very specific human applications for each underlying principle. The book came out in paperback. Sales increased steadily over the next decade. Somebody was reading the book, but who? It turned out to be dog trainers. Positive reinforcement was making huge inroads into traditional dog training, among pet owners especially, who often don't want to use the choke chains and dominating tones of traditional training on their beloved dogs. And these people were not only buying my book, they were coming to me for more information.

Though I didn't consider myself a dog trainer *per se*, I gradually began accepting speaking invitations to dog clubs and associations, to talk about the dolphin trainers' version of operant conditioning and how it might be applied to dog training. The dog trainers found it interesting. I found them, and their questions and problems, very interesting too. I was then living in the mountains outside Seattle. A few serious local trainers began coming out to my place to discuss training applications – for show dogs, for police patrol dogs, even for horses. So I had an audience; but except for these few local aficionados, no real converts.

The large-scale conversions began, in my opinion, on May 16, 1992. I was going to San Francisco to give a scientific lecture, and I had also been invited to give an all-day public workshop on dog training. I asked marine mammal trainer Ingrid Shallenberger and one of my Seattle visitors, animal control officer Gary Wilkes, to join me.

The clickers click

Until then, in dog training lectures and demonstrations, I had used a whistle to shape behavior. Dog trainers however already use whistles, as

> "We dolphin trainers had an animal for which no training tradition existed. There was no one to tell us 'You have to do this,' or 'You mustn't do that' or 'That'll never work.' So dolphin trainers could explore a new kind of training, one in which force was not an issue, dominance did not arise (how are you going to dominate an animal that just swims away?) and punishment, deprivation, and threats were not needed."

commands or reprimands, not as conditioned reinforcers, in long-distance activities such as herding, tracking, and hunting. They use a lot of words, too, so they don't want to have something in their mouths. Gary Wilkes had found a source for well-made plastic and metal clickers. They were sturdier than the tin crickets children play with. He suggested we use those for conditioned reinforcers in our demonstrations, and give them away to the audience as well.

The clickers, I think, did for the dog trainers what the dolphins did for marine mammal trainers. They precipitated the change. There was no tradition of training dogs, or anything else, with a clicking device (although Skinner himself suggested in an early article that a toy cricket or clicker might be a good tool for training dogs). Since no one had preconceived ideas about the clicker, people were able to accept the idea of using it to train in ways they'd never heard of.

Wilkes and I shortly found ourselves invited to give clicker seminars in other parts of the country. We each made videos, and people bought them. The demand for information grew and grew. Gary moved to Phoenix and opened a business as a behavior specialist. In Seattle I started a publishing and mail order company to produce and sell books and videos on what was now being called "clicker training."

It's been said that in order to catch on, a new technology must have immediately obvious benefits. People could watch us teaching dogs from the audience all kinds of things in just a few minutes. It must be easy to learn in small increments. Well, people could take their clickers home, cut up a hotdog, start clicking, and instantly teach their own dog to lift a paw, or sit, or turn in circles. Finally, to spread rapidly, a new technology must be easily communicated. Thanks to the rise of the Internet and the phenomenon of e-mail, new clicker trainers could spread the technology instantly, all over the planet. Within a few years tens of thousands of people were clicker training dogs and horses world-wide. Zoo keepers were using clickers to tend wild animals, teaching everything from giraffes to lions to rhinos to stand still for foot care and blood sampling. People who first learned their clicker training with dogs or horses were beginning to use it with children and other human learners, in such areas as gymnastics, physical therapy, developmental disabilities, speech therapy, and, in one exciting program, flight training.

Clicker training the trainer

This was gratifying to me of course. It was wonderful to see these benevolent methods finally catching on in a widespread way. However in all these arenas the talisman, the clicker, was proving useful in a way I had not foreseen at all.

I now think the click and the giving of the treat not only reinforce behavior in the animal: they reinforce the behavior of the trainer. It is a thrill to pull off a well-timed click; you have to be ready and watching for the instant you like, and you have to think fast.

The burgeoning interest in clicker training led Karen Pryor to found a research and educational organization devoted to the diverse applications of shaping behavior with a marker signal. Currently incorporating in Massachussetts as the ***Pryor Foundation****, the fledgling organization will encourage innovations in marker-based shaping of behaviors in people and animals, and serve as a clearing house. Karen Pryor, Myrna Libby and Lynn Loar are the Foundation's first officers. A web site should be ready by the end of the year. In the meantime,* ***www.clickertraining.com*** *will keep people current on the latest developments. All of Karen Pryor's books and tapes and Morgan Spector's* Clicker Training for Obedience *can be ordered from that web site or by phoning:*

1-800-47-CLICK.

If you successfully "capture" the behavior you want, all your own simultaneous behaviors – attentiveness, timing, creative thinking – are reinforced by the same click that tells the animal what's right. And then you have to pay, to shell out a peanut or a fish or a cube of cheese, for what you just got from the animal. It's fundamental societal behavior, but quite different from dominance and submission. This kind of training involves two-way communication. It's a bargain, a shared endeavor, a business agreement. A sport, even. And the click makes that uniquely clear to both participants.

Blowing a whistle or speaking a word, both of which we humans have a long history of doing, are not unique experiences at all. People don't learn the new training nearly as easily and fast if they stick with the old tools. The arbitrary strangeness of the click is one of its most important characteristics, for animal and trainer both.

Following the activities of this vast and burgeoning population of clicker trainers, I have gotten yet another big surprise. This kind of training actually changes the trainer, as well as the learner, in some fundamental ways. While I was still throwing fish at dolphins, people often used to ask me what I was learning from being a dolphin trainer. They were hoping for some mystical animal experience, I suppose. I always answered, flippantly but truly, that I had learned to stop yelling at my kids. Now, however, with a lot of people "crossing over" from traditional to operant training, we can see that this observation is not trivial. Learning clicker training sometimes does transform the way the trainer interacts, not just with the learner, but in other parts of life.

Author and clicker trainer Morgan Spector describes it as a change in your world view. As one man poignantly put it on the Internet, "I stopped jerking my dogs around and then I noticed what I was still doing with my kids." A high school teacher who spent a summer clicker training her competition dogs wrote, "Every year I start out with a few serious problem kids who end up being removed from the class. This fall I didn't have any. What happened?" She came back to school looking for good behavior and reinforcing it, instead of looking at bad behavior and trying to stop it. And the kids caught on right away.

Indeed one's personal life can change, as well as one's interactions. As an example I offer these comments by professional dog trainer Brenda Aloff. "This does wonderful things for me. Since I am in the state of being non-judgmental toward my animal, I am kinder to myself and can make errors of my own without passing judgment on myself. This was something that I did not expect from merely a training technique, this change in myself that I enjoy so much.

"One of my students and I were discussing this recently. She noted that she generalized this behavior of 'concentrating on correct behaviors instead of blaming and finding fault' from her dog training into how she looks at life. 'I am no longer afraid to be wrong, or embarrassed by it. I figure if I just keep working on it, I will get it right. By looking to the things I get right, I don't dwell on what I got wrong, and I get a lot more done!'

"So the end result, one I certainly didn't anticipate, was the same phenomenon my friend noticed – better interactions with my pets, my friends, my family, and my students – and more confidence in myself."

New York Times photo by Rick Friedman

Karen Pryor with clicker trained computer dog, Twitchett (Editor's Note: Twitchett appears to be pondering Microsoft's future.)

> "I now think the click and the giving of the treat not only reinforce behavior in the animal: they reinforce the behavior of the trainer."

Click!

Clicker Training with At-Risk Families

By Lynn Loar, Ph.D., LCSW

Three months ago, I began introducing clicker training to at-risk families. Marcia Mayeda with the Humane Society of Santa Clara Valley and her three large dogs joined me. I rounded up several families stagnating on a colleague's case load, mired in negative exchanges and unduly harsh with their children. All the children, ranging in age from seven to thirteen, did badly in school due to poor behavior and assorted learning and emotional disabilities. The participants yelled at each other and at the dogs throughout the first session. I could readily see why their therapist had been glad to refer them to me.

I began the second session by saying it was not necessary to yell or even talk to get desired behavior from the dogs. I took out a clicker and some chopped tofu hot dogs and began to teach one of Marcia's dogs to touch a target stick. The room fell silent; people watched in astonishment as the dog quickly and happily learned to touch his nose to the stick. On their own initiative, they then picked up clickers and began to try to teach the same skill to the other dogs. No yelling, no criticizing, just quiet work and gentle praise as people and dogs figured the clicking business out.

Half way through the hour, we gave the dogs a break and began to play the training game ourselves. People learned the basics almost immediately as I clicked them to do various tasks like washing their hands, moving something on the counter or turning off the light.

The third week was lots of fun and people became fascinated by the training game. Over time, they focused more on it than on the dogs because it taught them how to learn and how to teach. It also taught them empathy through the necessary concentration the teacher has on the learner. The group was quiet and diligent, enthusiastic and democratic, with parents clicking children and children clicking parents. Encouragement and praise were offered spontaneously and accepted readily. Within a month we had built a new repertoire of positive behaviors and speech and never again saw the old patterns that had dominated the first session. Confidence and self-esteem grew along with skill. As one child said, "It's so much fun, you don't realize how much you are learning." Unlike traditional therapy, attendance was not only excellent but presented a novel problem: people on occasion brought extended family to the sessions because they were so enjoyable.

Clicker training lets people build the skills they need to choose gentle competence over punishment or force when the going gets rough. It makes people happier, more relaxed and more effective, behaviors incompatible with abuse and neglect. And it's not just for people in trouble. Clicker training will make you a better student, teacher, friend, colleague, and parent as Morgan Spector shows in the touching and inspiring article that follows.

How Clicker Training Has Helped Me Be A Better Parent

By Morgan Spector

I am a dog trainer. I use operant conditioning to shape behavior, which primarily involves use of positive reinforcement. In learning operant conditioning I developed some rules, which I found apply pretty directly to my relationship with our son. I'm sure that age has something to do with it as well. I'm not sure I could have done what I'm doing now 10 or 20 years ago, but maybe that's just me. After all, I do come from a family of late bloomers (my mother graduated from law school when she was sixty). But my experience using operant conditioning as a dog trainer has changed my outlook on interactions generally and has positively affected the way I deal with not only dogs but also my family.

By way of background, my wife and I decided fairly early in our marriage that we were not going to have children. And we lived contentedly enough for several years. But in 1997, through a combination of circumstances that make for an interesting story to be told another time, we decided to foster a child with the specific intention of adopting him. He was nine years old and had a very problematic history, but my wife knew him and wanted him in our home, and I supported her choice. By the time anyone reads this, we will have completed the adoption.

Behavior is what matters

In operant training you work with behavior: what you have and what you want to get. While it can be helpful to understand the reasons a dog does what it does, it is often not all that important. The important thing is to affect the behavior. I may encounter a dog that has been abused by a prior owner. There is nothing I can do to eliminate the fact of that past abuse. However, using operant conditioning I can show the dog that he has nothing to fear from me, and that if he behaves in certain ways he will get things he wants from me.

Our son has attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). We can't change this condition. However, we can help him learn ways to manage or cope with his impulses, and we can let him know what behaviors we expect from him. We also decide what we will tolerate. For example, when he is on a "high" he talks to himself in a high, happy voice, usually semi-gibberish. You have to choose your battles, so even if it hurts my ears sometimes, I let that go. But he doesn't get to jump on the furniture.

Communication is everything

Training is about communication: letting the animal know when it has done what you want, and from there developing the tools to tell the animal what you want, when you want it, and getting that behavior. It's the same with kids. You reward the child for things you want, and gradually you'll get those things because it will be worth it to the child to do them.

No force allowed

When I started to work with operant conditioning, the first decision I had to make was to eliminate my ability to force my dogs to do anything. So I stopped using a leash and choke collar and made myself learn to recognize what the dogs had to begin with, and build from there.

The number one rule in our house is: nobody hits anybody else for any reason. Of course, this was always a given between me and my wife, but with kids there is the ever-present belief that a little fanny whack now and again is salutary. I have lots of reasons for doubting this. In a nutshell, I don't think we humans understand or use physical punishments well, and we all too easily go over the top. Most importantly, I don't want force, the threat of force and the fear of force to be a part of my interaction with our son. We have established instead a relationship where our son does not see me as someone to fear, but rather as The Keeper Of The Goodies, the one who decides when he gets rewards. And he knows that he can cause me to deliver

rewards by his own behavior, because I have been consistent in responding with rewards in the past.

In the animal world, parents deliver physical punishments to rambunctious cubs and babies regularly and without compunction. The bitch knows when to bite the puppy's muzzle and when to let go; the mare knows when to isolate the colt from the herd and when to let it return. Animals also have well-conditioned regulators. It is almost unheard of for a mother in the wild to go overboard with her punishments (fathers sometimes do, which is a major reason that in many species the infants and fathers are kept apart until the babies reach a certain age). No doubt, this is the product of countless generations of socialization. Animals have an innate sense of how much is appropriate to stop the behaviors they want to stop. We humans do not.

With us humans, physical punishments are typically outlets for the parent's anger at the child. We use physical punishment not so much to stop an undesired behavior as to effect reprisals, usually well after the behavior has already disappeared (the old "wait 'til your father gets home" cliché reflects this fact).

Because the behavior is already done, the only reason for punishment is to make the child think it undesirable to repeat the behavior in the future. Therefore, it becomes important that the child "feel it" when the parent effects a physical punishment, so the child will "remember it" the next time temptation arises. This of course leads to an escalating cycle. The child remembers the spanking, but decides that he can tolerate it. The next time the punishment must be harsher, and the next time harsher still.

The corollary to this is that the parent becomes increasingly angry at the child's recalcitrance, and along with an escalating level of punishment comes an escalating anger toward the child. Soon, the two are indistinguishable and the anger becomes a part of the everyday interactions between parent and child. The parent becomes focused exclusively on how best to get rid of misbehavior, and the child becomes focused exclusively on combating or avoiding the parent. This is hardly a recipe for positive family relationships.

> "Animals have an innate sense of how much is appropriate to stop the behaviors they want to stop. We humans do not."

At some point, this dynamic of escalating force combined with anger becomes abuse. If abuse were an effective tool for managing behavior, then abused children would be compliant children. As a rule, they are not. Instead, abused children tend to be defiant and to "act out" in violent or abusive ways themselves. So abuse is not only an escalating cycle itself, it causes new escalating cycles as victims of abuse become abusers themselves.

So in our house the rule is and always has been: nobody hits. Now, this doesn't mean that there are no consequences for misbehavior. There are. It is just that the consequences are of a certain type, and there are lines that we do not cross. Our son gets timeouts, loss of TV privileges, loss of video games or Gameboy, etc. We have found things that are important to him, and put them at stake if he does not do the things he is supposed to do. And once he learned that we would follow through, we have had very few occasions to use even these.

You have to mean what you say

We had a recent example of setting and maintaining limits. Our son had asked for something for lunch, then would not eat. My wife told him that he was going to sit at the table until he ate it. He sat at the table for two hours, and finally ate. After that, he knew that if he was slow eating he would sit at the table until he was done. In other words, the consequence was certain.

Accentuate the positive

It is far more productive to reward desired behavior than it is to punish undesired behavior. In working with my dogs, if I want to end some behavior I don't want (such as the dog jumping up on a person) I can either try to eliminate the behavior with force (example: kneeing the dog in the chest as it jumps up) or I can identify a behavior I *do* want (example: the dog sits in order to greet someone) and train that behavior. The dog cannot sit and jump up at the same time, so establishing a desired behavior is typically a great way to eliminate an undesired behavior. This allows me to reinforce instead of punish, to get something good instead of simply trying to eliminate something bad.

The same is true with children. Our tendency is to relate to them as though the "good stuff" should be assumed, and the "bad stuff" punished. So we don't put a lot of effort into rewarding good behavior. Big mistake. If you regularly and consistently reward the child for giving you what you want, that is what the child will tend to do. And inevitably, the things you don't want will tend to disappear.

The child determines what is reinforcing

In training, we find that most dogs like food, but some don't. Some like hot dogs but not cheese, and some the

other way around. Some prefer to be petted instead. Some like to hear a soothing tone of voice. The trainer soon learns that a reward is not reinforcement unless it is actually reinforcing to the dog, and the dog tells you what is really reinforcing to it.

The same is true with our son. There are things he likes, and things he doesn't care about. For example, he is not really big on sweets, so giving him candy as a reinforcer wouldn't carry much weight. On the other hand, he really likes Playstation, so giving him extra Playstation time is very powerful. He also likes to skateboard, so a trip to the skate park is also a biggie.

Reward early and often

When I do demonstrations of my dog training, one of the things people comment on most is how generous I am with the treats. It is very important to be generous so that the dog learns immediately that the reward is there if he produces the correct behavior. The rewards come a bit more slowly as the work gets a bit harder, but still, when the job is done the rewards are there.

We humans tend to be stingy about rewarding one another. I sometimes hear someone say, "Why should he get rewarded for that? It's what he's supposed to do anyway." True enough. But responses are essential to a child. If you don't respond in a positive way when the child does something good, then the child will seek response by doing something bad. A lot of self-destructive behavior is a matter of the child trying to find some way to get responses from a parent.

With our son I am conscious of rewarding him for good work even if I had to struggle with him to get it. The positive response not only reaffirms what I want, it tends to undercut whatever bad residue there might be from the contention. And so, he knows that if he does the right thing he'll get rewarded for it, even if I hollered at him a bit along the way. Bit by bit, the contention decreases because the rewards are worth it.

"...responses are essential to a child. If you don't respond in a positive way when the child does something good, then the child will seek response by doing something bad."

Reinforcement and consequences are neutral

This might seem odd in context, but it is important. The clicker makes a sound ("click") that is neutral. It has no emotional content. It simply signals to the dog that reinforcement is coming. Because of the clear, unambiguous meaning of the sound, it takes on tremendous power.

I have sometimes clicked our son, usually as a joke. As a rule I have other reinforcement markers for him ("good job" is a common one). This marker is also neutral in that it tells him that something good is coming, and that is all it means. I don't confound the message.

What do I mean by "confound the message"? It is very common to mix praise with negativity. For example, I hear parents say, "That was really good; why can't you do that all the time?" The "really good" part gets lost in the criticism. Over time the child learns that there is no pleasing the parent; nothing the child does is ever good enough.

Here's an example. Our son is very bright, and in the four trimesters he's been with us he's made Honor Roll every time. As his parents, that is our academic goal for him. He could make High Honor Roll if he got straight As, but that is hard for him because he struggles with reading comprehension. He wants to make High Honor Roll and we are working with him, but as long as he makes Honor Roll, he gets tons of reinforcement for his accomplishment. We don't say "well, you almost got straight As" or "too bad about the one B+." We leave that for him to say to himself.

The other side to this is that consequences are also neutral. We use "1, 2, 3 Magic" if he starts acting up. If we count to "3," it's a time out. If he loses Playstation privileges, we simply state it. Until he completes his homework for the week he can't play Gameboy. We don't have to yell, get angry, be sarcastic or try to shame the child in some way. It's just the way it is.

Verbal reinforcements can be enough

In dog training, there are times when the "click" is more powerful than the reinforcement that follows it. Many clicker trainers have the experience of clicking, giving a treat, and seeing the dog spit the treat out. Even so, the "click" has had its full desired effect. And on these occasions, positive social interaction (petting, ear rubs, and the like) are stronger reinforcers than the food.

The same is true with our son. Not everything good that happens triggers some major reinforcer. Sometimes, all he needs is affirmation. Responses like "good job," "I like it," "nice work," "thank you," and so on can go a long way a lot of the time. These responses tell him that we recognize that he has done something that we like and appreciate, and the response is satisfying in and of itself. Usually at these times we also hug him or give him a quick kiss on the head. These things are all reinforcing, too.

Love is not conditional

The other side to reinforcement being neutral is that love is not conditional. Love and reinforcement are not the same things. Our son may lose Playstation privileges, but he can still curl up with me on the couch while we watch TV. He knows absolutely that regardless of short-term consequences, he is always loved. Nothing he does ever puts that at issue.

This is why neutrality in both reinforcement and consequences is so important. Our son earns reinforcements, but he never has to "earn" our love; I think our children always have to know that they are loved, even when they have done something we don't want. If reinforcement equates with love, then consequences equate with losing love. And that should never happen. Love we give freely, always, regardless of anything else that is going on.

Jackpots are good

When training, if the dog gives me a really good performance I'll give him a surprise by delivering either an extra quantity of treats or an especially good treat. This helps to confirm that I really liked what he just did. But the surprise element is critical: if I always delivered large quantities or some special favorite, I would undercut the power of the jackpot. It would no longer be a jackpot, and I'd have to keep going farther to get that effect.

Recently my wife had to go out of town for seven days. I had been alone with our son before, but this trip involved family problems for my wife and we all felt the stress. I told our son that it was going to be a difficult week and I needed him to cooperate. And a moment or two here and there aside, he did. The day after my wife got back I went to Toys Я Us and got him a new Pokemon cartridge for his Gameboy. I didn't tell him I was going to do it, nor did I say to him during the week that I'd give him any special surprise "if he was good." It just came out of the blue. He was ecstatic.

Don't be afraid to laugh

It's axiomatic among dog trainers that you shouldn't be in the game unless you are willing to be embarrassed in public. Dogs will do the goofiest things sometimes, and if you take it too seriously you won't last long. And sometimes in training, if you let the dog find its own solution to a problem you've presented you will be amazed at its ingenuity and (dare I say it) wit.

Kids are great creators. They have vivid imaginations and love to play. It can be very easy to get overwhelmed by their energy and inventiveness. I try very hard not to take it all the wrong way. Our son has a great sense of humor, and I've learned to let him make me laugh at the silly things that make him laugh. Why not?

You teach through what you do

There's an old saying that "as the twig is bent, so grows the tree." This means that the way we shape the child will form the adult. Everything we do teaches the child something, somehow. In training animals, verbiage has little or nothing to do with it. We are responding to behavior with behavior; the animal knows us by what we do, and that's all the animal really knows.

What we do with our children is not about us, it's about the children and how what we do affects them. And it's not about what we say about what should be done, but what we actually do that matters.

You can say that rules are important, but if you are inconsistent with rules, the child learns that rules don't count, regardless of how many lectures you give on the subject. If you are consistent with rules, the child learns boundaries and limits.

Similarly, if you make a mistake and apologize, the child learns respect. If you make a mistake and don't apologize, the child learns that there is no real accountability. If you do what you say, the child learns honesty. If you say one thing and do another, the child learns hypocrisy. If you make a promise and keep it, the child learns integrity. If you make a promise and fail to keep it, the child learns not to trust.

As a parent, I'm a work in progress

All that said, I'm not yet the parent I want to be. Eleven-year-old boys can push your buttons in a thousand ways, and I don't always respond with a gentle word and saintly patience. I get angry even when I know better. But I try. And when I mess up, I let my son know that I know it. Through all of that we are learning to communicate with each other. My greatest hope is that he will learn to hear and respect others as well as expect to be heard and respected himself. If he knows that much as he approaches adulthood, I'll be happy. Everything else will follow.

Photo by: Phil Arkow

Latham's Link Message Goes to South Africa

By Phil Arkow

In the United States, we have simultaneously become desensitized to the violence all around us while we continually decry the lack of civility among our fellow human beings. It becomes easy to assume that things could not possibly get any worse, and that America — with its penchants for handguns, drive-by shootings, and violence on TV, movies and video games — must lead the world in these dubious categories.

Imagine my surprise, then, to be invited to describe America's innovations in humane education and the links between animal abuse and family violence in South Africa, a country whose rates of violence make the U.S. look like a playground. South Africa is emerging from the tragedy of apartheid as the economic powerhouse on the African continent, a beautiful nation of entrepreneurial and friendly people besieged by community violence on a scale that we Americans can barely comprehend.

Thus it was that I was invited by the Humane Education Trust and Animal Voice magazine in Cape Town to conduct an extensive national lecture tour to describe the Latham Foundation's twin initiatives to curb community violence: introducing humane education into schools, and sensitizing the public and professionals to the links among animal abuse, child abuse, elder abuse, and domestic violence. Our message was received with warm gratitude and overwhelming positive response every step of the way.

I began my lectures with comparisons between our two similar countries, explaining how unimaginable I found it as an American that South Africa's rape rate is three times that of America's, and that South Africa now leads the world in homicides with a rate five times that of the U.S. — only to be told by Mark Welman of the MTN Centre for Crime Prevention Studies that those were old figures. More current estimates show South Africa's levels of violence to be even more extreme.

In a beautiful country where gracious people's gregariousness is compromised by paranoia and where fear is driving thousands into overseas emigration, people are seeking compassionate solutions. Latham's ideas that kindness toward animals is the first step toward compassion toward humans, and that cruelty toward animals is often the harbinger of interpersonal violence, resonated like beacons of hope.

Latham's message was presented to overwhelming support in nineteen different venues in one week. These meetings included:

- Officials and staff from the Woolworth's department store charitable giving programs focusing on child protection and environmental issues. These leaders were inspired to consider directing their corporate contributions toward charitable organizations that link child and animal protection in South Africa.
- Representatives of the MTN Centre for Crime Prevention Studies, who are now exploring ways that animal-based programs teaching compassion and positive reinforcement can divert juvenile offenders from future acts of societal violence.
- The Safer Schools and EduMedia programs, which may introduce humane education initiatives in South African schools. Latham's diversity-conscious and outcome-based materials will be especially relevant in the unique context of this multi-racial population in which there are 11 official languages, and where the school systems are undergoing rapid transformations.
- SPCA leaders who are now exploring ways to cross-train the staffs of their 110 branches to work with child protection and domestic violence professionals nationwide to recognize and report other forms of family violence.
- Public presentations at the University of Cape Town and Rhodes University.
- Radio interviews on Radio 786 (a Muslim station), Cape Talk, Women Today (SABC national broadcast), Radio Algoa, Punt Radio (English/Afrikaans broadcast), Radio 702, and the nationally-broadcast Jani Allen show.
- Print interviews with the *Argus, Sunday Times, Sunday Tribune,* and *Citizen* newspapers, and *Fair Lady* and *Odyssey* magazines.

Photo by: Phil Arkow

It was incredible to see how broadly this concept was accepted and how quickly networks have been started. From the Born Free lion rehabilitation program at Shamwari Game Reserve to the veterinary graduate students in Pretoria, from the environmental educator with the Deved Trust to the editor from the *London Mail*, everyone I talked to outside the formal contacts was equally fascinated by the concept of our message and eager to be part of the network.

The effects of this tour will evolve and grow for a long time to come. The Latham Foundation is profoundly grateful to all of the sponsors who made it possible. Since 1918, Latham has believed that kindness to animals is the first step in building kindness to other people and international understanding; the 2000 lecture tour of South Africa was our most recent example of putting this principle into action.

Latham Letter BACK ISSUES containing "Links" Articles

The following back issues containing articles on the connections between child and animal abuse and other forms of domestic violence are available from the Foundation for $2.50 each, plus $3.00 Priority Mail Postage and Handling for up to 10 issues (U.S. and Canada). Foreign orders please add $10.00. California residents please add 8.25% sales tax. MasterCard and VISA accepted.

__ Latham sponsors "Creating a Legacy of Hope" at British Columbia Conference — Winter 2000
__ New England Animal Control/Humane Task Force — Spring/Summer 99
__ Confronting Abuse (A veterinarian and a social worker confront abuse) — Summer 98
__ The Human/Animal Abuse Connection — Spring 98
__ The Relationship Between Animal Abuse And Other Forms Of Family Violence — Winter 97
__ Domestic Violence Assistance Program Protects Women, Children, and Their Pets in Oregon — Summer 97
__ University of Penn. Veterinary Hospital Initiates Abuse Reporting Policy — Fall 97
__ Domestic Violence and Cruelty to Animals — Winter 96
__ Animal Cruelty IS Domestic Violence — Winter 96
__ Gentleness Programs (I Like the Policeman Who Arrested That Dog!) — Spring 96
__ Loudoun County Virginia Develops Cooperative Response to Domestic Violence — Spring 96
__ And Kindness for ALL (Guest Editorial) — Summer 96
__ Should Veterinarians Report Suspected Animal Abuse? — Fall 96
__ Windwalker Humane Coalition's Web of Hope Grows Stronger — Fall 96
__ Update on the Link Between Child and Animal Abuse — Fall 96
__ Report on Tacoma, Washington's Humane Coalition Against Violence — Winter 95
__ Animal Cruelty & the Link to Other Violent Crimes — Winter 95
__ Univ. of Southern California Conference Addresses Violence Against Children — Spring 95
__ Working to Break the Cycle of Violence — Spring 95
__ The Tangled Web: Report on LaCrosse, Wisconsin's Coalition Against Violence — Spring 95
__ Hawaii's "Healthy Start" - a Successful Approach to the Prevention of Child Abuse & Neglect — Summer 95
__ San Diego, Calif. Child Protection Workers Required to Report Animal Abuse — Summer 95
__ Animals Over Children? (An Editorial by Michael Mountain, Editor, Best Friends Magazine) — Summer 95
__ Summaries of Child and Animal Abuse Prevention Conferences — Summer 95
__ Abuse an Animal - Go To Jail! (Animal Legal Defense Fund's Zero Tolerance for Cruelty) — Summer 95
__ Report on Rhode Island Conference: Weaving a Silver Web of Hope from the Tangled Threads of Violence — Summer 95
__ Part 2: Hawaii's Healthy Start Child Abuse Program — Fall 95
__ Milwaukee Humane Society's "PAL" Program: At-Risk Kids Learn Respect through Dog Obedience Training — Winter 94
__ Latham Confronts Child and Animal Abuse — Spring 94
__ A Humane Garden of Children, Plants, and Animals Grows in Sonoma County — Spring 94
__ Education and Violence: Where Are We Going? A Guest Editorial — Spring 94
__ Bedwetting, Fire Setting, and Animal Cruelty as Indicators of Violent Behavior — Spring 94
__ Animal Abuse and Domestic Violence: Intake Statistics Tell a Sad Story — Spring 94
__ The Veterinarian's Role in the Prevention of Violence — Summer 94
__ Results of Latham's National Survey on Child and Animal Abuse — Summer 94
__ Israel Conference Puts the Link Between Animal and Child Abuse on the Public Agenda — Summer 94
__ Wisconsin Coalition Organizes Anti-Abuse Conference — Summer 94
__ A Shared Cry: Animal and Child Abuse Connections — Fall 94
__ A Report on Latham's October 1992 Conference on Child and Animal Abuse — Winter 93
__ Child Abuse Reporting Hotline Falls Short — Winter 93
__ I Befriended a Child Molester — Spring 93
__ A Test for Determining Why Children are Cruel to Animals — Summer 93
__ Animal Advocates Looking Out for Children (A description of the Toledo Humane Society's child and animal abuse prevention program) — Fall 93
__ Correlations Drawn Between Child and Animal Victims of Violence — Summer 92
__ Upsetting Comparisons (between child and animal cruelty investigations) — Summer 92
__ Watching Ralph Smile (An animal welfare professional's reminiscence) — Summer 92
__ The Shape of Cruelty (A child protection professional's perspective) — Summer 92
__ Link Between Animal Cruelty and Child Abuse Described — Summer 92
__ Putting the Abuse of Animals and Children in Historical Perspective — Summer 92
__ The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child — Winter 90
__ Dangerous Dogs: A Symptom of Dangerous People — Fall 89

The Latham Foundation

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Upcoming Conferences and Workshops

June

June 3 & 4 — The Farm Sanctuary's Country Hoe Down, Orland, California. Learn about "food animal" issues and campaigns. 530-865-4617 or write P.O. Box 1065, Orland, CA 95963.

June 5-9 — Equal Justice: Investigation and Prosecution of Child Abuse. Presented by the American Prosecutors Research Institute's National Center for Prosecution of Child Abuse. DoubleTree Hotel, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. For information phone 703-739-0321 or fax 703-836-3195.

June 9-10 — American Humane Association's Shelter Operations School, Marin Humane Society, Novato, CA. Information: Roxanne Ayala at AHA 800-227-4645 or Carma Cervantes at Marin Humane Society 415-883-4621 X 250.

June 16 — Introductory Euthanasia Training presented by Penny Cistaro, The Marin Humane Society, Novato, California, 415-883-3522.

June 25-27 — The Second International Conference on Character Education, "Four Pillars of Democracy: Home, School, Church, Community." Sponsored by the International Center for Character Education. University of San Diego, Division of Continuing Education, Douglas F. Manchester Executive Conference Center, 5998 Alcala Park, San Diego, CA 92110-2492.

June 27-29 — Character Education Academy (a 3-day immersion in curriculum and teaching for character education) Sponsored by the International Center for Character Education. University of San Diego, Division of Continuing Education, Douglas F. Manchester Executive Conference Center, 5998 Alcala Park, San Diego, CA 92110-2492

July

July 8-10 — Kinship with All Life, A conference exploring the sacred relationship with animals and nature. Sponsored by the San Francisco SPCA. Renaissance Park 55 Hotel, San Francisco, CA. For information and registration, call 1-800-799-1277.

July 12-15 — 8th Annual APSAC Colloquium (American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children), Chicago, Illinois. 312-554-0166 or APSACEduc@aol.com

August

August 14-18 — Equal Justice: Investigation and Prosecution of Child Abuse. Presented by the American Prosecutors Research Institute's National Center for Prosecution of Child Abuse. The Westin LaPaloma Resort, Tucson, Arizona. For information phone 703-739-0321 or fax 703-836-3195.

September

September 9-12 — Healthy Families America: Sharing Our Strengths, Atlanta, Georgia. A national conference presented by Prevent Child Abuse America, 200 S. Michigan Ave., 17th floor, Chicago, Illinois 60604.

September 14-17 — Sixth Annual No-Kill Conference, Sponsored by Doing Things for Animals, Tucson, Arizona. Phone: 516-883-7767.

September 23-27 — 5th International Conference on Family Violence, Town & Country Hotel and Convention Center, San Diego, CA. Conference Coordinator: Jae Marciano 858-623-2777; e-mail jmarciano@mail.cspp.edu

September 26, 28, 29 — Strategies for Mandated Assessment and Treatment of Perpetrators of Animal Cruelty, Sponsored by Mental Research Institute and the Humane Society of the United States. Taught by Lynn Loar, Ph.D., LCSW and Randall Lockwood, Ph.D. 9/26 Level I, Los Angeles; 9/28 Level I, San Diego; 9/29 Level II, San Diego. For more information, contact MRI, 555 Middlefield Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94301, 650-321-3055; Fax 650-321-3785.

September 29 — Introductory Euthanasia Training presented by Penny Cistaro, The Marin Humane Society, Novato, California, 415-883-3522. *To be repeated November 30.*

October

October 1-5 — 10th Annual National Conference on Domestic Violence, sponsored by the National College of District Attorneys, Anaheim, California. For information contact Candace M. Mosely 803-544-5005.

October 10-13 — Tufts Animal Expo, an outreach event for vet erinarians, technicians, and other animal care professionals. The DELTA Society annual conference will be held as part of the Expo and will include a workshop by Karen Pryor. Hynes convention Center and Back Bay Hilton, Boston, Massachusetts. For information, phone: 978-371-2200 or http://www.tuftsanimalexpo.com

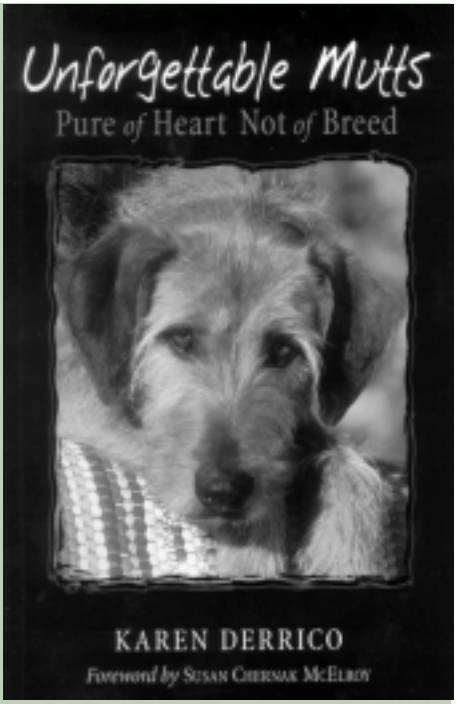
October 15-18 — American Humane Association's Annual Conference, Atlanta, Georgia. Latham's *Teaching Compassion* authors will hold a workshop Wednesday, October 18. Information: 800-227-4645.

October 27-28 — The Healing Power of the Human-Animal Bond: Lessons Learned from the AIDS Epidemic. SF SPCA, San Francisco, California. For information: KCGorczyca@aol.com or www.lgvma.org

October 27-29 — Sowing Seeds, Humane Education Workshop, Asilomar Conference Center, Pacific Grove, California. Sponsored by the Center for Compassionate Living Contact P.O. Box 260, Surry, ME 04684. Phone/Fax 207-667-1025, e-mail ccl@acadia.net, www.compassionateliving.org

EDITOR'S NOTE: *We are glad to publicize relevant conferences and workshops when space and publication schedules allow. Send information to: The Latham Foundation, Attn: Calendar, 1826 Clement Ave., Alameda, CA 94501. Phone 510-521-0920, Fax 510-521-9861, E-mail* **orders@Latham.org**

media reviews



UNFORGETTABLE MUTTS: Pure of Heart Not of Breed

Reviewed by Mary Tebault

A Puerto Rican sato? A Royal Hawaiian Poi? Where does that human preference for a purebred as opposed to a mutt come from?

Author Karen Derrico has done a wonderful job not only of explaining the origins of canine discrimination but also of gathering together a wide variety of stories of mutts that will make you both laugh and cry. Most of these family pets were rescued from local animal shelters. Many had great physical needs. Some belonged to famous people. Others were working mutts. But all of them had one common denominator – an enormous amount of unconditional love to give.

With insight and compassion rare for one so young, eight-year-old Kelli rescued a sixteen-year-old dog from a shelter. In her words, "Rusty is such a wise old fellow. He reminds me of my grandfather who is gentle and kind to me. When I'm talking to Rusty and he is looking at me with his big brown eyes, I think I can see all the way down deep into his heart where he keeps all of his feelings and love. Sometimes he seems sad, but I think that's because he knows he'll never be young again, or maybe he's just tired. Spending time with Rusty makes me feel safe and happy, just like when I sit in my grandfather's lap. Old dogs like Rusty just want to be close to the people they love" (p. 153).

This book challenges readers to reassess their preferences for "the perfect dog." It will also lift your spirits as you read about famous and historic mutts, mutts of war, presidential mutts, mutt celebrities, mutts who lend a helping paw, hero mutts and magnificent mutts across America. At the end, you will find resources for adoption organizations, mutt clubs and Internet sites as well as a list of suggested reading.

Oh, by the way, a sato or a poi by any other name would still be a mutt!

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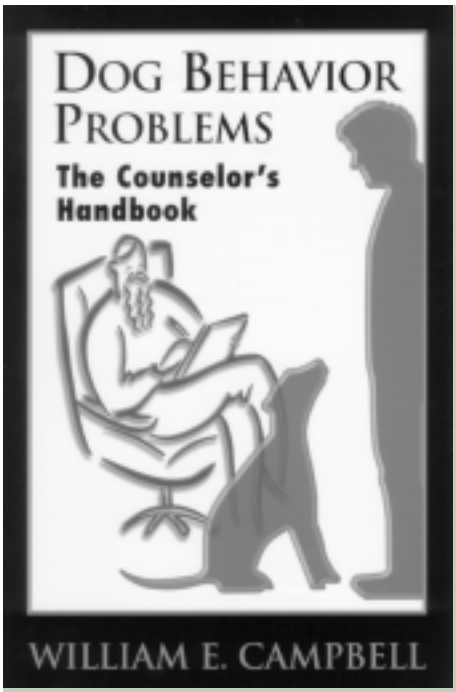
Dog Behavior Problems: The Counselor's Handbook

Today there are hundreds of books devoted to solving behavior problems in pet dogs. However, it takes only one hand to count the available resources on practicing effective dog behavior counseling methods and standards. One authority, with more than thirty-three years experience, Bill Campbell, has published his philosophy, principles, and techniques. This new handbook offers valuable insight and guidance for counselors and veterinarians. Additionally, it establishes what really qualifies pet professionals to consult with owners of problem dogs and



helps the new or established consultant understand ethical marketing, developing successful key human qualities, client expectations and realistic goals, effective interviewing and fact gathering, dealing with euthanasia, and career planning.

Dog Behavior Problems: The Counselor's Handbook
William E. Campbell
ISBN 0-9668705-1-4
Paperback, 105 pages, $19.95
Dogwise
P.O. Box 2778/701 B. Poplar
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Pamela Raphael: Humane Educator, Humane Society of Sonoma County (1991-97) where she implemented classes on responsible and compassionate treatment of animals in elementary, secondary, and special education schools. Pamela is presently expanding this program to additional schools in Northern California. Published poet and Poet Teacher for California Poets in the Schools (1978-93).

Libby Colman, Ph.D.: Program Director of San Francisco Court Appointed Special Advocates and co-author of seven books on the psychology of parenting.

Lynn Loar, Ph.D., LCSW: Expert in child abuse assessment and treatment, and a member of the California State Humane Academy faculty, teaching about the interrelationship of child abuse, elder abuse, domestic violence, and cruelty to animals.

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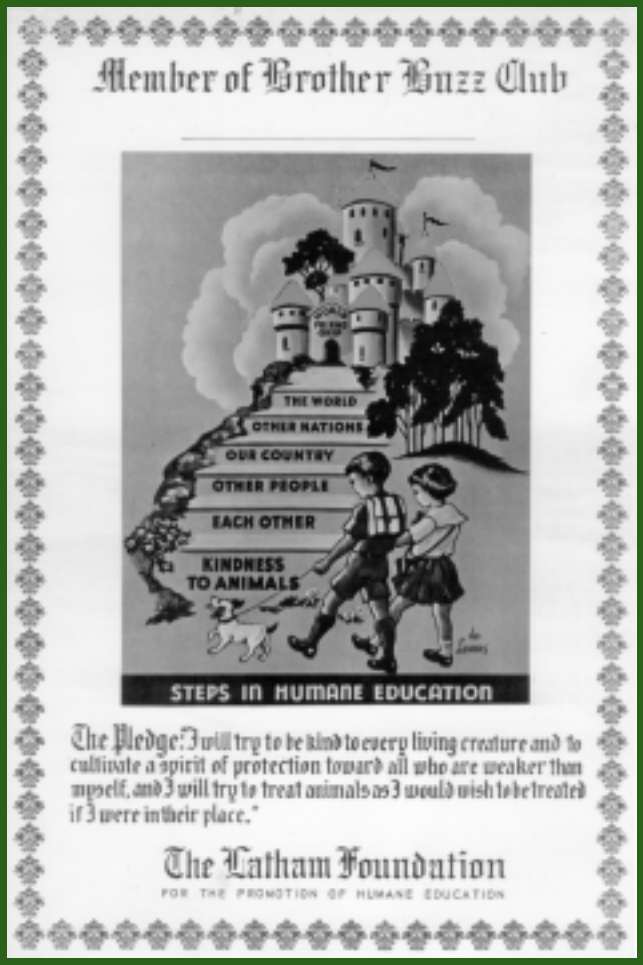

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