

The chapters on bomb blasts, chemical injury and radiological events are aimed strongly at military working animals in war zones. The chapter on biological agents as weapons of mass destruction seems to be rather theoretical and unlikely to be of use to anyone in a field setting. The chapter on selected pathogens concentrates mostly on pathogens listed as foreign animal diseases (FADs) by the US government, and therefore require precautions to avoid their introduction into the USA. This is obviously of concern if working animals are to be brought back into the USA after working on disasters elsewhere in the world. However, this rather exhaustive list, in alphabetical order and with no systematic approach to clinical signs or differential diagnosis, does not seem to be particularly useful in a field guide.

In summary, the first-aid, triage and euthanasia sections in this book are a useful field guide for anyone who may have to render first aid for working horses and dogs in a disaster setting. The rest of the book has a more specialised appeal to those involved with working animals in a military setting.

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Technical Large Animal Emergency Rescue

R Gimenez, T Gimenez and KA May (2008). Published by Wiley-Blackwell, 2121 State Avenue, Ames, Iowa 50014-8300, USA. 432 pp Hardback (ISBN-13-978-0-8138-1988-3). Price \$US124.99.

Natural and man-made disasters can affect domesticated animals in many ways. The scale of the problems can vary from the small: the road accident involving a single horse, dog, cat or sizeable wild mammal, the cow bogged-down in marshy ground — through the smallish: the lorry load of animals in a road smash, vehicle and farm fires — to the large: the effects of hurricanes, widespread flooding, forest fires, lengthy droughts, extensive outbreaks of highly infectious disease, bioterrorism, industrial and nuclear accidents etc.

There have been moves in many countries, especially in the USA since the 1970s, by national and local governmental and voluntary organisations, including veterinary and humane (animal welfare) groups, to work out strategic policies and practical means for coping with these various small and large disasters.

One of the concerns that has surfaced, is that the first responders to an incident, ie fire and rescue services, police, animal welfare society personnel and concerned members of the general public are sometimes (some would say often) inexperienced in the restraint and handling of injured/frightened and potentially dangerous (to humans and others) large domesticated animals. A number of training courses have been started and a number of instructional booklets have been produced — often very useful and usually associated with training initiatives but generally rather limited in coverage and circulated in a somewhat restricted manner.

The text under review, *Technical Large Animal Emergency Rescue* which is largely written by and, presumably, edited

by Rebecca and Tomas Gimenez (a father and daughter veterinarian team) and by Kimberly May (Assistant Director of Professional and Public Affairs, American Veterinary Medical Association) has, seemingly, been produced to help overcome the problem of the naïve and frequently untrained first-responders arriving at the scene of a disaster and initially making things worse.

It is not a training manual, but a substantial textbook which contains masses of background and practical information upon which training courses can be based. The volume arrives at an opportune time for the UK where, over the last few years, an increasing interest has been taken in the subject of animal rescue. It seems that the national fire and rescue service — the group, after perhaps the police, most likely to be initially contacted and often inevitably involved — were the first to realise that there was a problem. It has been suggested that the UK fire service rescues some 10,000 animals a year (approximately 10% of which are large animal incidents). In October 2008, the Chief Fire Officers' Association, in loose co-operation with the British Equine Veterinary Association which, in itself, has been interested in horse rescues for some time and believes that there may be some 4,000 to 5,000 incidents a year, with the RSPCA with its so-called 'rope rescue teams' in each of its 10 regions and now with the British Cattle Veterinary Association, has formed the Animal Rescue Practitioners' Forum to establish a standard set of techniques in animal rescue.* This initiative will inevitably affect the training courses set up by some county fire and rescue services and now by one or two university veterinary schools. The textbook will be most useful to all concerned with the improvement of animal rescue services and especially those involved in developing and running training courses.

The book itself contains 22 chapters — 13 of which are written by Rebecca Gimenez alone, two by Tomas Gimenez and two jointly between them. The remaining five are the responsibility of the other nine members of the writing team. The subjects of the chapters include (amongst other things): a historical overview of the development of the subject; large animal behaviour in disaster situations; animal restraint and handling; the catching of loose animals; fires; the rescue of animals from water and unstable ground; rope and lifting techniques; the role of the veterinary surgeon; the value of sedation and anaesthesia; field euthanasia; the place of local and regional planning; the importance of rescue scene management. There are four short technical appendices, a four-page glossary, a references section containing some 280 items and a substantial and most useful 29-page (three columns to a page) index. One helpful feature, included at the end of most of the chapters, is a list of the acronyms and abbreviations used in that chapter — this feature should, perhaps, have been fully, ie not selectively, incorporated into the glossary.

There is some mention of handling wild animals and of transported zoo animals escaping and having to be rounded-up but, somewhat surprisingly, little or no coverage of how to deal with stranded marine mammals.

There is a massive (almost overwhelming) amount of relevant and interesting information contained within this important book. It is perhaps best initially approached by reading the Gimenez's seven-page preface where an outline is given of the thoughts behind the need for the book, what it is trying to do and some of the background factors which have to be considered when dealing with this relatively new subject of large animal rescue techniques.

The volume is largely based on US experience. This is no disadvantage, as the modern approach to large animal emergency rescue as a component of disaster management seems to have first surfaced in the US and has certainly been actively developed there. There is sometimes confusion over the differing national use of some technical terms — this occasionally leads to difficulties, as can be seen in some of the sections dealing with ropes, webbing, knots and lifting devices. There may be minor problems, at times, in the chapters on organisation and communications, in coping with the seemingly endless number of differing US organisations with cryptic or otherwise complex acronyms or abbreviations.

However the overall message from the book is clear:

- There is a need for serious forward planning on a local and regional basis;
- A local communications network, with 24-hour coverage, should be set up so that each participating organisation and individual knows who is capable and willing to do whatever task is required to help contain and remedy the emergency;
- A thorough understanding of the behaviour of animals in disaster situations and their likely response to restraint and handling is essential;
- First responders, ie police, fire service personnel and back-up responders, ie veterinary surgeons, animal welfare society employees should be formally trained in animal rescue techniques and in rescue scene management. The care of any human victims and the safety of the rescue personnel and the inevitable human bystanders should have the highest priority. Over-enthusiastic helpers and the interfering style of some of the media often have to be controlled.

An interesting if somewhat controversial point is made in the preface. The senior authors, ie the Gimenezs, believe that instruction in large animal rescue techniques can only really be given by simulating rescue situations using live (trained?) animals. This, of course, may result in the demonstration animals being stressed/distressed. Local and national animal welfare rules and legislation may, in effect, directly or indirectly forbid such animal use.

This important and substantial, well-written, well-illustrated and fully indexed book should be on the library shelves of all animal husbandry and veterinary teaching establishments and in the hands of all involved in the development and giving of training courses on technical large animal emergency rescue. The main authors, in the last part of their preface, state that they welcome feedback from readers with suggestions etc which might be incorpo-

rated in future editions. I have suggested that this book is important now, and I believe that it will remain so in its inevitable further editions.

* In the UK, nearly all local so-called animal rescue/welfare groups and societies deal largely and often solely with the control, care and adoption (homing) of lost, stray and unwanted dogs, cats and small domestic pets.

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Animal Subjects: An Ethical Reader in a Posthuman World

Edited by J Castricano (2008). Published by Wilfried Laurier University Press, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. 312 pp Paperback (ISBN 978-0-88920-512-3). Price £22.99.

This book has been sitting in various locations in my office for months before I actually got down to reading it. It wasn't the (slightly suspicious but beautiful) tiger face on the cover that scared me, it was the subtitle. Anything post- from the humanities makes for challenging but difficult and confusing reading in my world of a life scientist pretending to have an open mind. As I now sit down to write the review, I'm no less troubled. Should I really write a review of a book in which there are long sections I struggle to understand, admit failure and eventually in despair start transcribing phrases which alternate between accumulating abstractions I've never heard with bringing together everyday words into expressions the meaning of which I fail to decipher? But I realise that even the titles of my own recent papers ('Ethical perspectives on germline transgenesis in marmosets' and 'The spatial learning phenotype of heterozygous leaner mice is robust to systematic variation of the housing environment') must be as impenetrable to Castricano and colleagues as some of their writing is to me. Interdisciplinarity is a tough challenge in our days of highly specialised academic activity.

There are, in my view, two ways of overcoming the interdisciplinary gap: the reader needs to get used to terms, expressions and ways of reasoning in other fields and the writer needs to think about how to express themselves to get the message across outside a very restricted circle. I do have a fair amount of interdisciplinary academic experience and some of the texts in the book are quite accessible, but unavoidably some of the content is lost in the gap between my effort to understand and the writers' effort to be understood. The result is that for at least some of the essays, what might be strong points for the cultural theorist are lost to me, while I'm overly critical of what from my animal welfare science perspective seems like banalities. I'm writing this review nevertheless, based on the assumption that the way I read and understand this book won't be too different from the way that most other readers of the *Animal Welfare* journal would read it.

The book is a collection of essays of mostly Canadian authors writing from the perspective of cultural studies, calling "into question the boundaries that divide humans