



Veterinarians in animal disease control and added value of a One Health framework?

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SGBE-Seminar für biomedizinische Ethik

18. January 2024, Bigorio (TI)

One Health und Ethik

“... as a general rule, veterinarians are ill-prepared to confront ethical debates. [...] Veterinarians may be frustrated by philosophical questions which are not amenable to empiric resolution.”

Arkow (1998) Application of ethics to animal welfare. Applied Animal Behaviour Science 59; 193-200

Added values

Claim 1: Vets to gain access to ethical reasoning in their professional life.

Claim 2: Existing ethical conflicts can be discussed in a transdisciplinary way.

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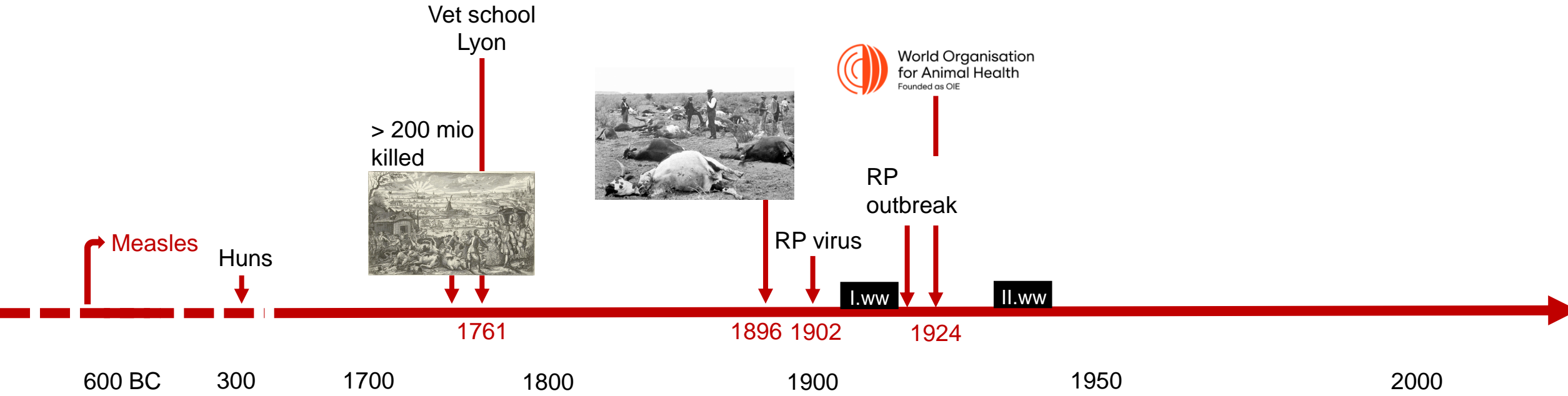
God's Punishment on the Netherlands through the Cattle Plague, 1745 by Jan Smit



Rinderpest in South Africa 1896



- 1888, rinderpest was introduced into Abyssinia by the Italian army
- 80-90 % of cattle died
- Bush → Tse-tse flies → sleeping sickness →
- Famine: 1/3 of Ethiopians, 2/3 Massai died



Vet school
Lyon

> 200 mio
killed



World Organisation
for Animal Health
Founded as OIE

RP
outbreak

Measles

Huns

RP virus

I.ww

II.ww

600 BC

300

1700

1800

1900

1950

2000

1761

1896

1902

1924

Mass culling in animal disease control

- FMD
- Classical Swine Fever
- Avian influenza
- African Swine fever
- ...



"I haven't got the heart to go back into farming"

Philip Board,
Clarence Farm near Axminster
in Devon, UK, after the
foot-and-mouth outbreak (2001)

Foot-and-mouth disease, Classical Swine Fever and Avian Influenza

FMD	(1954-1967)	180 outbreaks
FMD	(2001)	4.5 Mio culled infected/suspected, 2.5 Mio culled welfare
CSF	(1997-98)	pre-emptive culling 1.9 Mio animals, > 2000 farms, only 425 infected, culling due to welfare 8.5 Mio animals
CSF	(2006)	culling 94.000 animals, only 3/188 farms positive
AI	(1959-89)	23 Mio
AI	(1999-2004)	> 200 Mio
AI	(2021-22)	22 Mio in France

Four pillars of animal disease control

detection
and
notification

transport
restriction

culling
and
disposal

compen-
sation

- successful strategy

“It is time to close the book on infectious diseases, and declare the war against pestilence won.”
Long attributed to the United States Surgeon General, Dr. William H. Stewart (1965-1969).

Spellberg B, Taylor-Blake B.

On the exoneration of Dr. William H. Stewart: debunking an urban legend.

Infect Dis Poverty. 2013 doi: 10.1186/2049-9957-2-3

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“The striking successes achieved with antibiotics, together with widespread application of vaccines...made many physicians and the public believe that infectious diseases were retreating and would in time be fully conquered... it had become commonplace to suggest that infectious diseases were about to become a thing of the past and that chronic, noninfectious diseases should be our major priorities”.

Morse S. In: AIDS: The Making of a Chronic Disease. Fee F, editor. Berkeley: University of California Press; 1992. AIDS and Beyond: Defining the Rules for Viral Traffic; p. 41.

Four pillars of animal disease control

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Ruth Harrison, 1964

Four pillars of animal disease control

detection
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sation

- «successful» strategy
- prohibition of vaccination 1990s (FMD, AI, CSF)
- WTO-SPS agreement (1995), freedom of disease
- FMD 2001
- changes in societal attitude towards animals

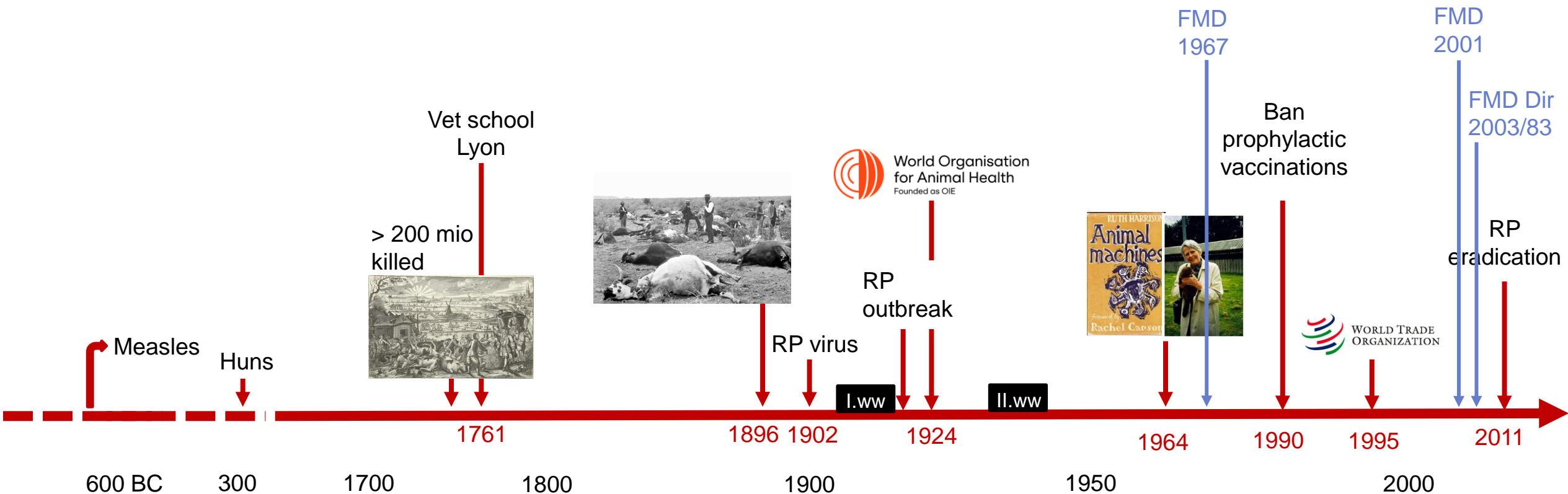
FMD crisis 2001 in NL „the ignorance of the societal function of animals was the cause of the crisis“ van der Zijpp et al. 2004

ABIGAIL WOODS

WHY SLAUGHTER? THE CULTURAL DIMENSIONS
OF BRITAIN'S FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE
CONTROL POLICY, 1892–2001

Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics 17: 341–362, 2004.

To its supporters, slaughter was far more than a method of disease control; it acted also as a moralizing and civilizing force, an indicator of veterinary ability and a “virility symbol” of British international leadership. This “cultural” rationale for FMD control by slaughter declined during the late 20th century and was wholly undermined by the 2001 epidemic, when extensive culling failed to convey the intended image of an organized, enlightened Britain.



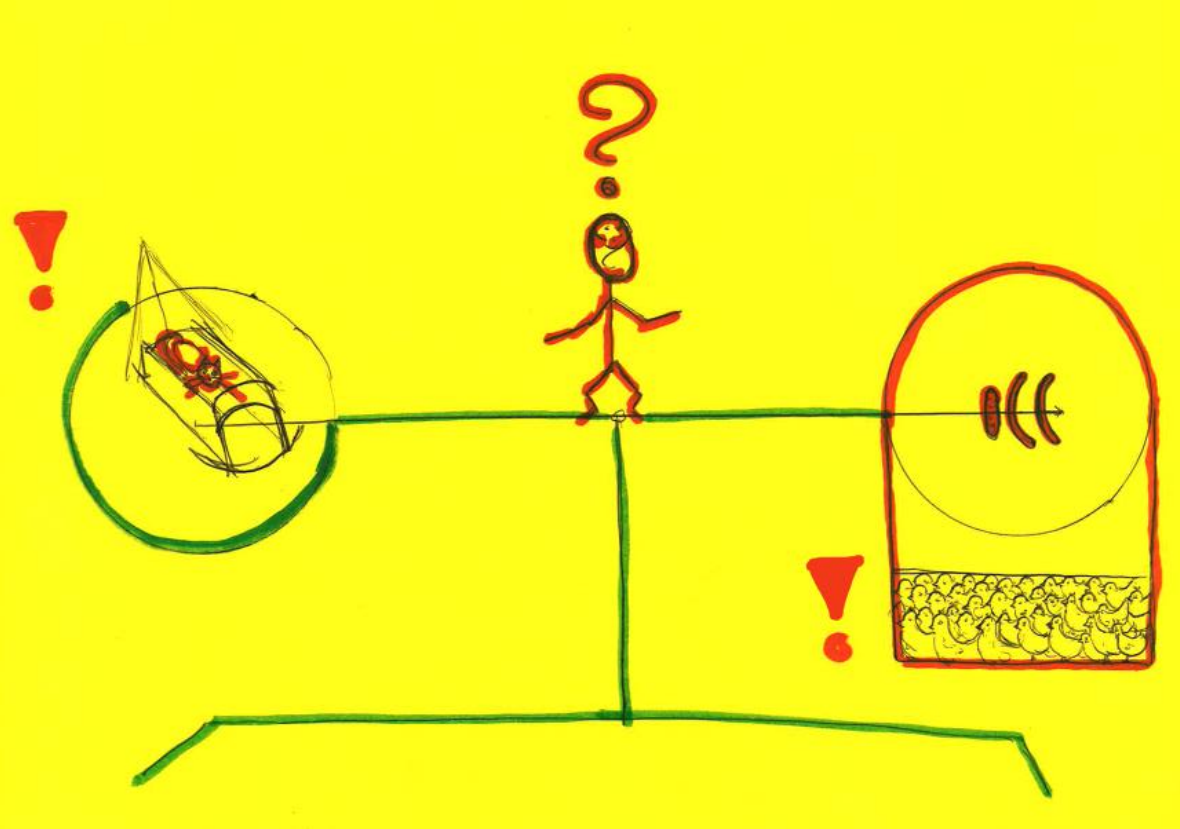
FMD directive 2003/85/EC

- (1) One of the Community's tasks in the veterinary field is to improve the state of health of livestock, thereby increasing the profitability of livestock farming and facilitating trade in animals and animal products. At the same time the Community is also a Community of values, and its policies to combat animal diseases must not be based purely on commercial interests but must also take genuine account of ethical principles.

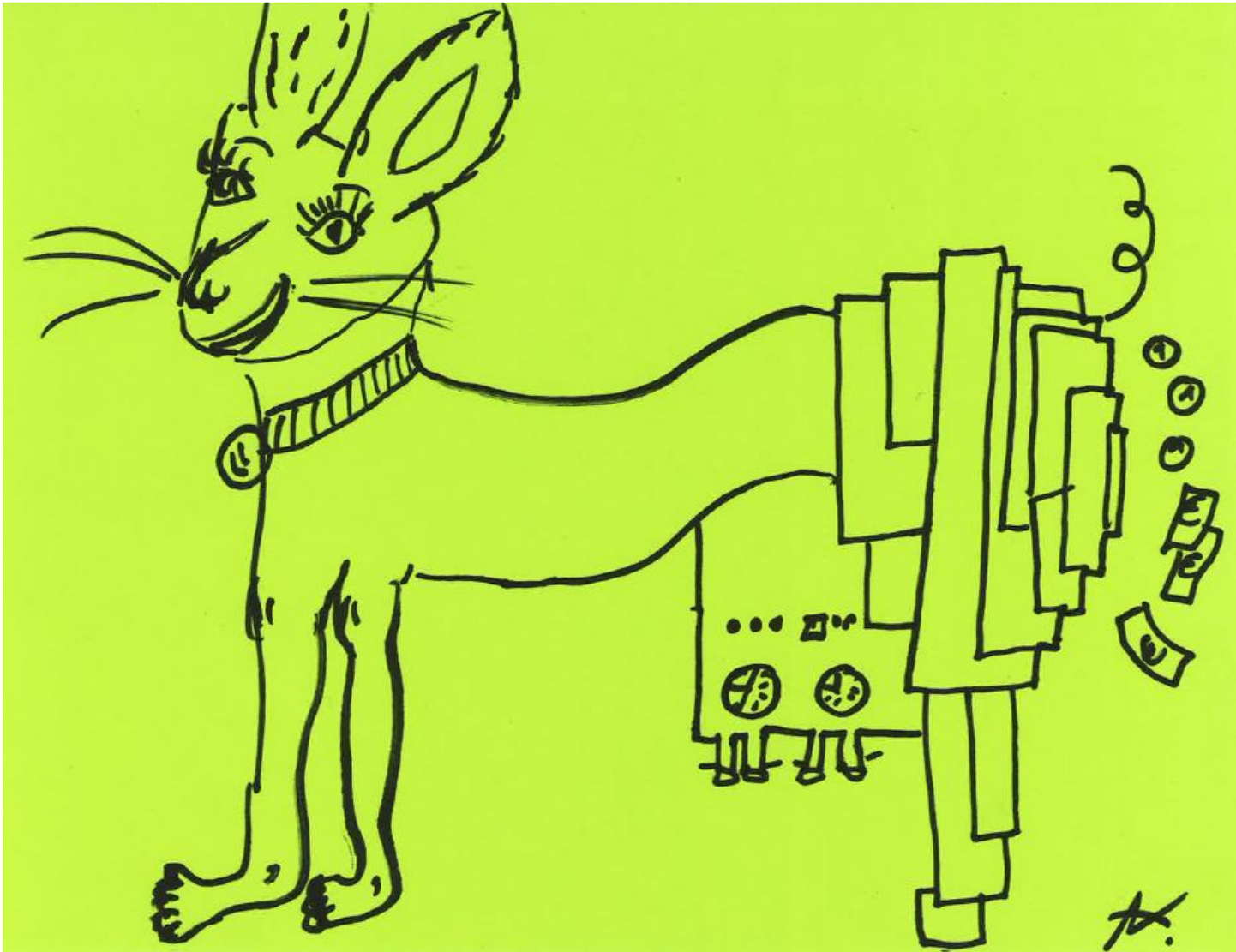
Conflicting aims: Veterinarian's Oath

*“Being admitted to the profession of veterinary medicine, I solemnly swear to use my scientific knowledge and skills for the benefit of society through the **protection of animal health and welfare**, the **prevention and relief of animal suffering**, the **conservation of animal resources**, the **promotion of public health**, and the **advancement of medical knowledge...**” (AVMA, www.avma.org)*

Perspectives of official veterinarians



How do you think society looks at animals?



Official veterinarians in animal disease control

Similarities and patterns

- Culling personnel in protective suits
- Mass killing
- Criticism focused on the killing of healthy, uninfected animals
- Logistical problems due to time pressure

Relevant for official veterinarians

- Decisions have to be made under time pressure
- Official veterinarians must implement/accompany ordered mass culls
- Unclear data or data and opinions are later revised
- Pressure and resistance from the population
- Complexity and lack of knowledge about current animal husbandry
- Existing problems are exacerbated

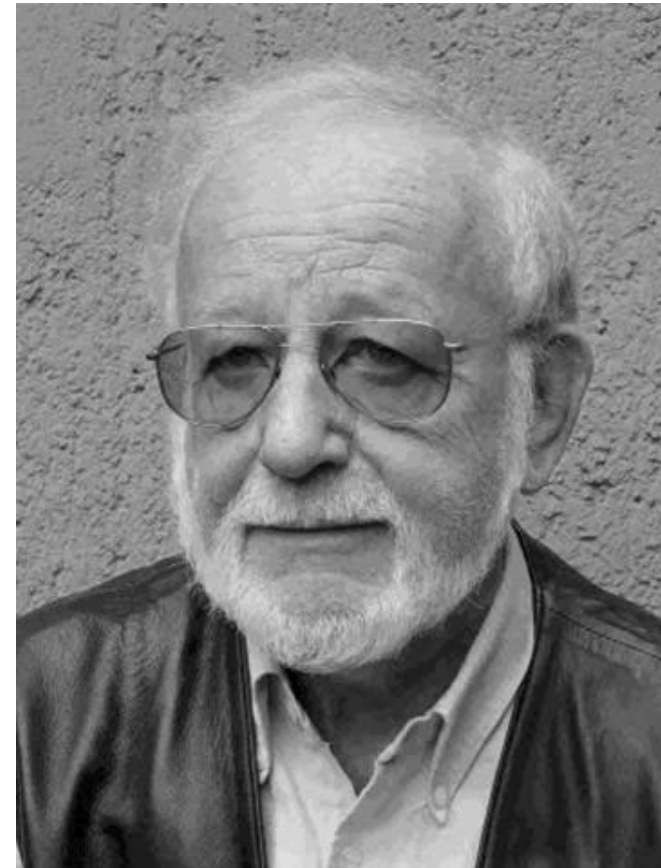
Responsibility

- Responsibility has become a central and guiding principle in the evaluation of actions and their consequences.
- Responsibility is a key concept in both the ethical and legal debate.
- By determining who is responsible for what and why, it is very easy to determine to which obligation the respective actors are subject - or not.
- Responsibility only exists before a value horizon. This leads directly to the question which values and types of values guide our actions.

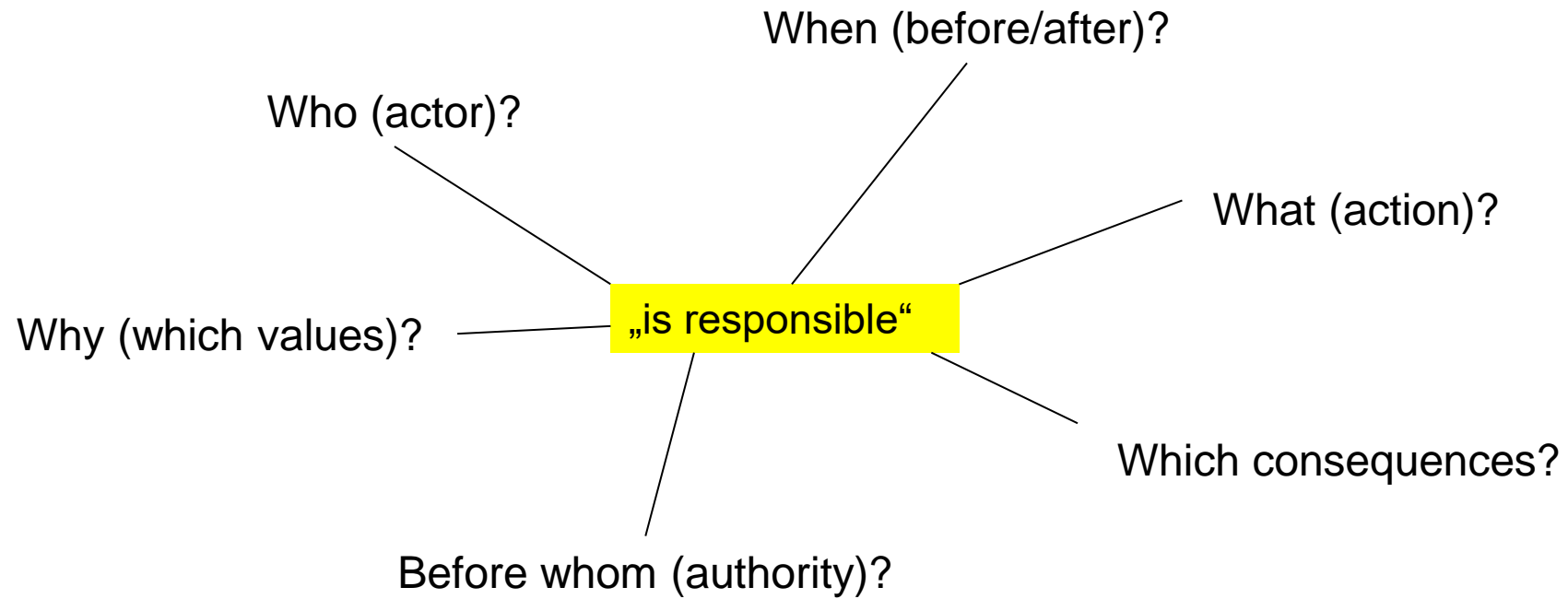
Responsibility

Günther Ropohl (1939-2017)

- Studied mechanical engineering and philosophy
- Writings on the concepts of *Technik* and *Technologie*, the ethics of technology, technology assessment, professional ethics for engineers and on the societal need for educating towards technology literacy.



Ropohl's dimensions of responsibility



Ropohl applied



BERLINER UND MÜNCHENER TIERÄRZTLICHE WOCHENSCHRIFT ■ 28. Mai 2020

Culling dogs to control rabies in Uganda – an example of moral distress for a veterinary officer

Introduction

In 2015, the WHO, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and the Global Alliance for Rabies Control (GARC) established a goal of “zero human deaths due to canine rabies by 2030” (WHO 2015). The major burden of human rabies is attributable to dog-mediated transmission (WHO 2013). Approximately 60 000 deaths occur annually, mostly in Africa and Asia (Hampson et al. 2015). This is a conservative estimate, as underreporting due to poor surveillance of rabies cases is likely.

G Alobo, A Kahunde, V Luyckx, S Okech, J Semakula, D Agaba, S Hartnack

DOI: 10.2376/0005-9366-19052

<https://www.vetline.de/bibcite/contributor/7213>

Verantwortung in der Tiermedizin

Sonja Hartnack

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24445/conexus.2022.04.007>

Abstract

Ziel dieses Beitrags ist es, aus der Perspektive der Amtstierärztinnen und -ärzte im Seuchengeschehen die Frage nach Fremd- und Selbstbestimmung anhand der Bestimmung der eigenen Verantwortung zu betrachten. Als Fallbeispiel dient die Tötung von 17 Millionen Zuchtnerzen im Zuge der Covid-19

conexus 4/2 2022

Fremdbestimmung
und Selbstbestimmung

Zweiter Teil

Herausgegeben von Wolfgang Rother

Publikationen der fortgeschrittenen
Forschenden und Lehrenden
der Universität Zürich

Ethical tool

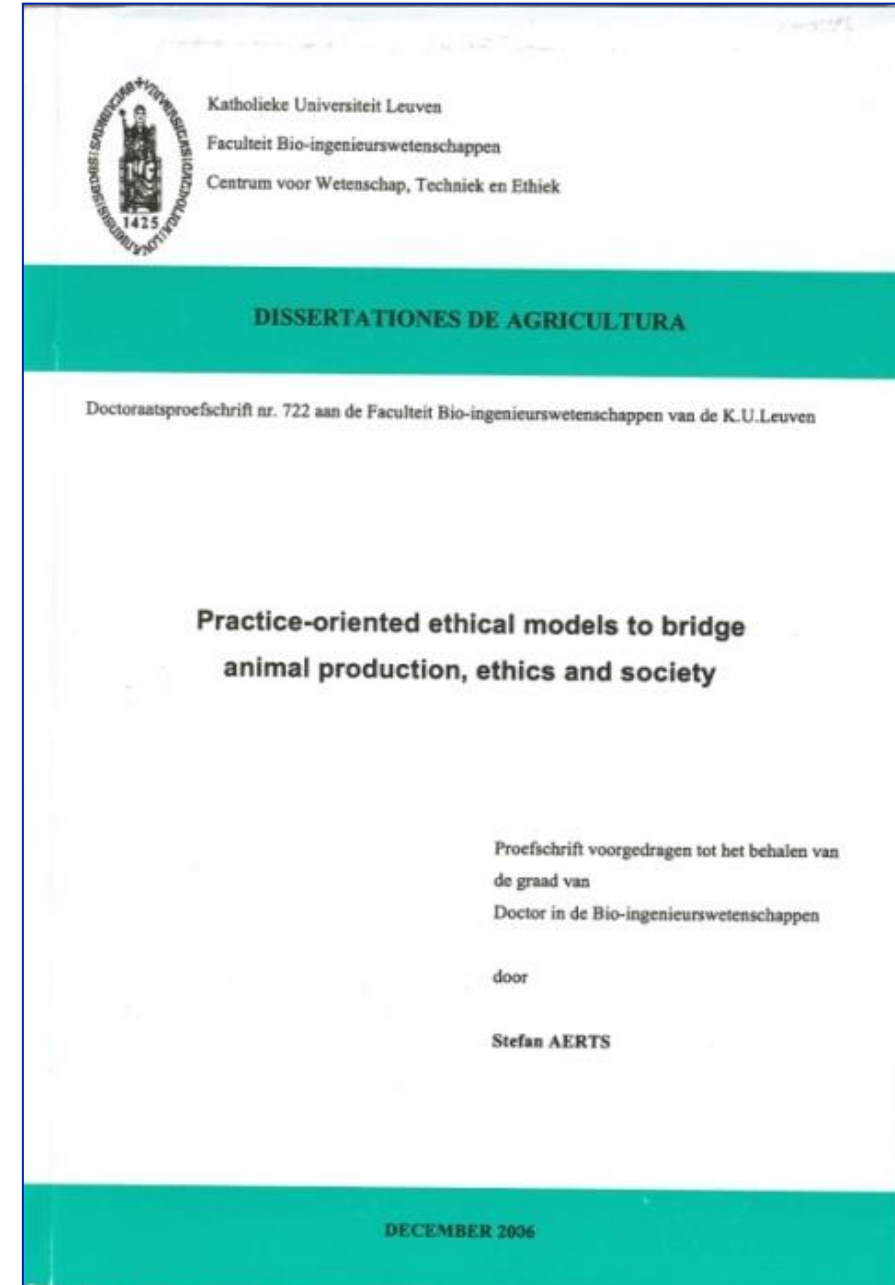
Animal disease intervention matrix (ADIM)

KATHOLIEKE UNIVERSITEIT
LEUVEN

ADIM - The goal



- To integrate ethical and societal concerns in animal disease control
 - How to balance different (legitimate) concerns?
- To develop a system that informs about merits of intervention strategies
- Commissioned by the Belgian Food Agency
 - Working group chaired by CEO





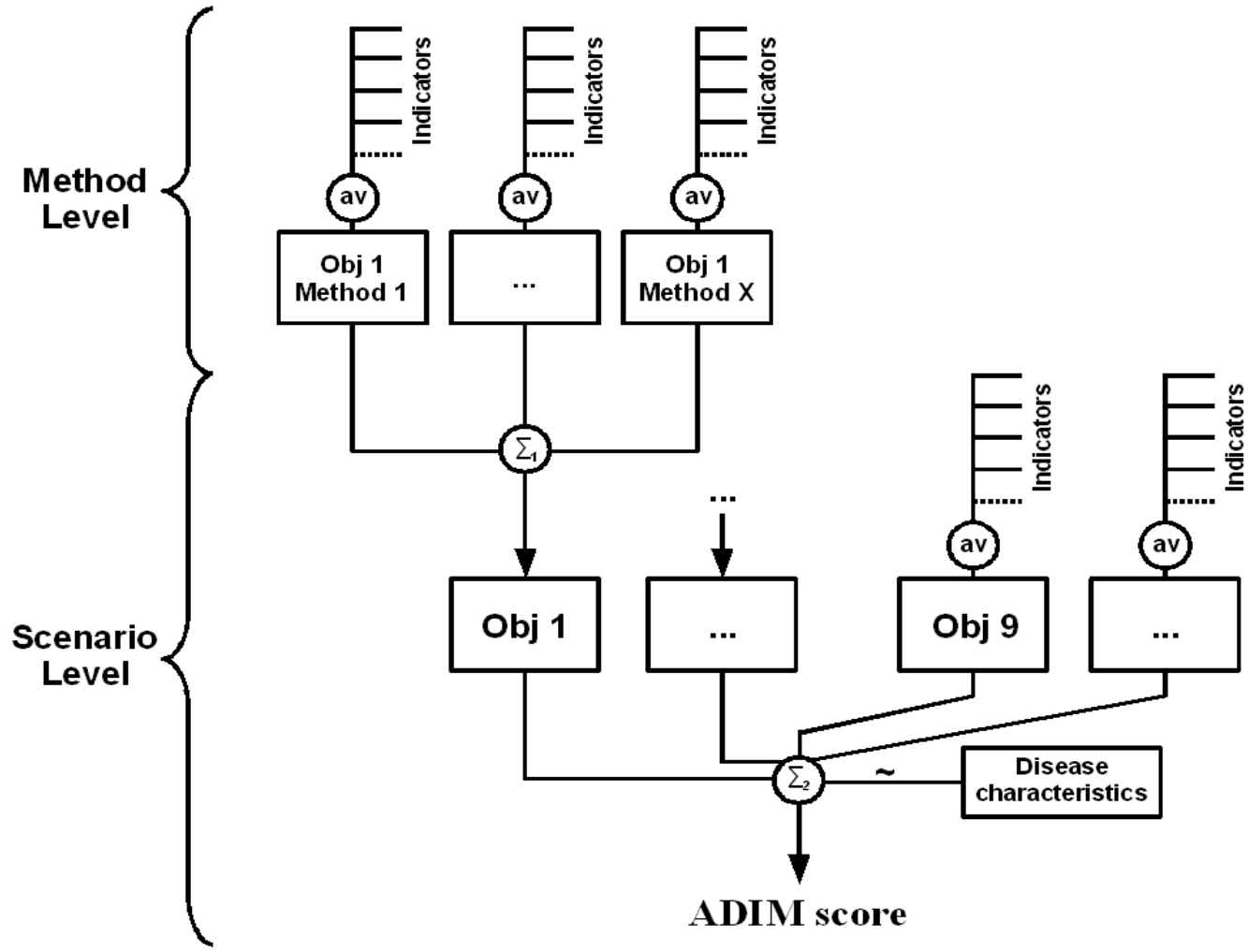
1. Protecting the health of control personnel and farmers
2. Protecting public health
3. Protecting animal health
4. Ensuring animal welfare
5. Respecting the human-animal bond
6. Limiting environmental damage
7. Limiting the psychological impact on the farmer
8. Limiting the psychological impact on the control personnel
9. Respecting food
10. Limiting disturbance of social life
11. Limiting economic losses in agriculture
12. Limiting economic losses in non-agricultural sectors
13. Ensuring practicality
14. Ensuring food security
15. Protecting valuable animals

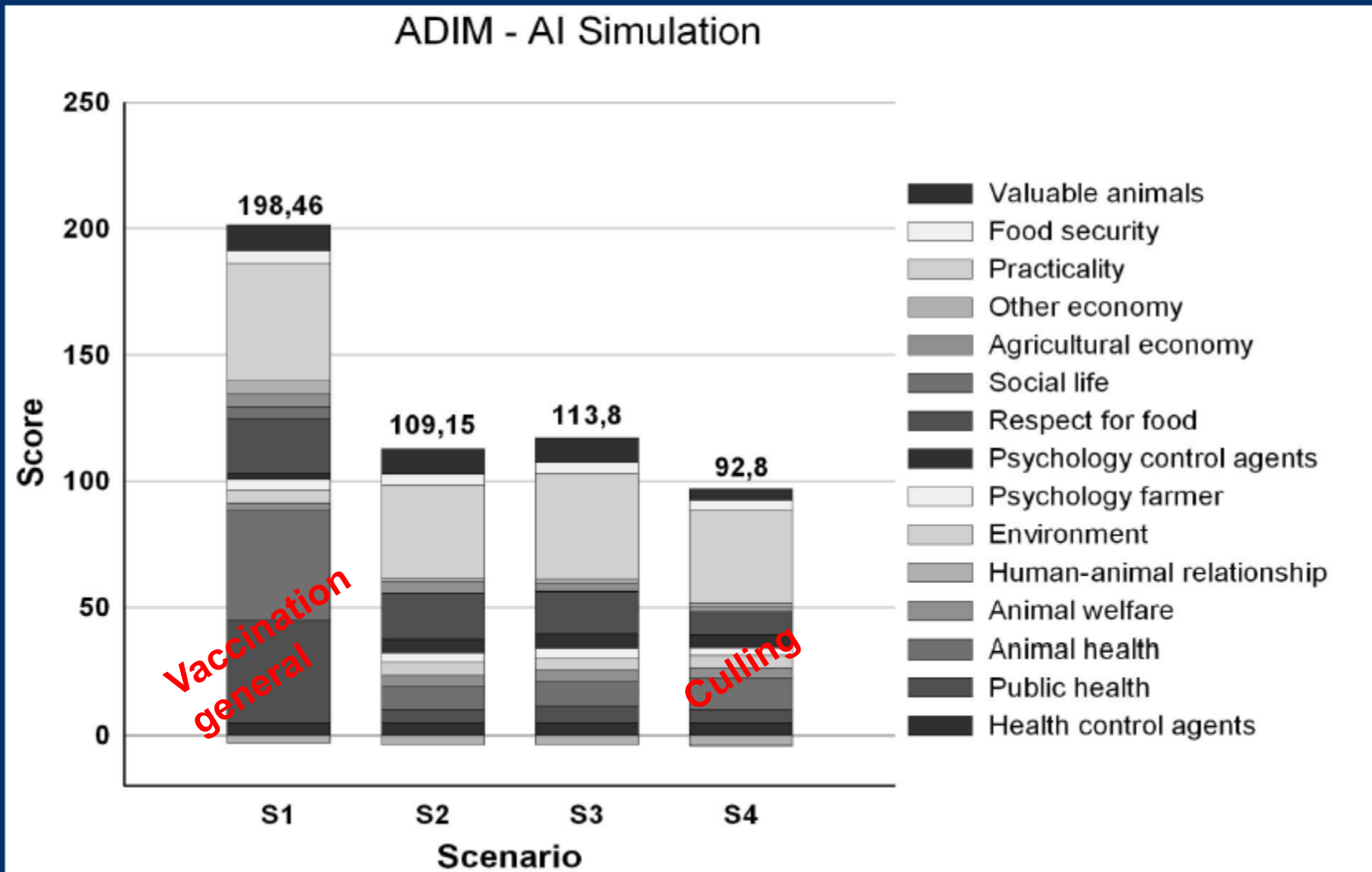
Additional objective in CH?

16. Respecting the autonomy of the farmer

ADIM: Scenarios

- Simulation for H5N1 Avian Influenza:
 - Scenario 1: general vaccination
 - Scenario 2: vaccination non-utility animals, stamping-out
 - Scenario 3: vaccination high-risk animals, stamping-out
 - Scenario 4: stamping-out (the “classic” scenario)





Conclusion

Added values & challenges in applying a One Health framework

Added values:

Claim 1: Vets to gain access to ethical reasoning in their professional life.

Claim 2: Existing ethical conflicts can be discussed in a transdisciplinary way.



In diesem Dokument werden die verschiedenen ärztlichen und nichtärztlichen Professionen im Gesundheitswesen (wie Pflege, Hebammenkunde, Physio- und Ergotherapie, Ernährungsberatung, Operationstechnik etc.) als «Gesundheitsberufe» bzw. die Angehörigen dieser Berufsfelder als «Gesundheitsfachpersonen» zusammengefasst.

Tab. 6. Domäne Reflexionsfähigkeit

REFLEXIONSFÄHIGKEIT	
THEMENGRUPPE	INHALTE
Reflexionsmethoden	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Kritisches Denken– Perspektivenwechsel und Multiperspektivität
Moralische Sensitivität	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Identifizieren und Beschreiben von Wertkonflikten und ethischen Herausforderungen– Rechtliche und ethische Diskrepanzen erkennen
Sensitivität für moralische Wertekonflikte (<i>Moral Distress</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Unterscheiden können<ul style="list-style-type: none">– zwischen genuinen ethischen Fragestellungen und Unbehagen– zwischen genuinen ethischen Fragen und fehlendem Fachwissen

Conclusion

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Claim 1: Vets to gain access to ethical reasoning in their professional life.

Claim 2: Existing ethical conflicts can be discussed in a transdisciplinary way.

Challenges:

1. Speaking a common language and understanding each other.
2. Dispute over sovereignty of interpretation (Deutungshoheit)
3. Respecting disciplines and their methodology, not poaching in other disciplines. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sokal_affair
4. Imbalance in proportions of human, animal and environmental health experts.





**University of
Zurich**^{UZH}

Section of Epidemiology, Vetsuisse

Thank you