is the threat of coercion undermining the free giving of consent; to overcome this objection to the use of prisoners, scientists would have to show that certain rights of prisoners outside the experimental situation are not violated. Analogously, to make the case for conscription of animals, scientists would have to work to protect their rights in nonscientific contexts.

Exemplary research is research which is most defensible ethically. Thus attention to the conditions under which research might be exemplary is a promising route to pursue, though, as I have argued, the specification of those conditions is more difficult than appears at first. Once the moral status of animals as beings with independent value is recognized, the position of animals in exemplary research is nonetheless, as Nelson has argued, ethically questionable, especially if we appeal to communal goods or obligations to the community to justify conscription.

Letters to the Editors

Dear Editors:
The identification of my name under my article “What A Jew Should Do,” in BTS, Summer, 1989, with the organization Jews for Jesus, struck me with the same hilarity Mark Twain felt reading his obituary in a newspaper. His response became memorable: “Reports of my death have been wildly exaggerated.” I wish I could match that. My response will have to remain standard, though it has an historical resonance:

I am not now, nor have I ever been, a member of or associated with Jews for Jesus. My organization is Jews for Animal Rights. Our goals and methods are traditional and available to all Jews.

— Roberta Kalechofsky
Jews for Animal Rights

The Editors sincerely regret the foregoing error.

A Reply To My Critics

The nastiness of Professor Schwartz and a serious misunderstanding on the part of Ms. Kalechofsky do not inspire one to want to reply. I fear, however, that if I say nothing, readers will be left with the impression that I am unable to defend myself. Reluctantly, I begin.

It is true that I thought Schwartz was a “reform” Jew but my article was not, as Ms. Kalechofsky claims, based on the premise that Schwartz is “reform” and Rabbi Bleich “orthodox.” Much of my piece sketches a history of the development of doctrine and it is during that sketch that I try to make clear my basic premises, which are as follows. Devout Jews need nothing more than the Torah if they are intelligent as well as devout. I painted a picture of the growth of the Mishnah and Talmudic scholarship as the effort of certain Jews to usurp the right of “lay” Jews to think for themselves. I drew an analogy with certain Catholic prohibitions upon “laymen,” circa 1000 C.E., not to read the Bible. Implicit in my paper is the idea that there is no injunction in the Torah itself to take the Mishnah and Talmud as more holy or about as holy as Torah itself. I presented excerpts from classical “sages” that strike the unprejudiced Jew who has no axe to grind as absurdities on their face. Example: that we may torture a dead king’s horse as a way of paying respect to him. As a philosopher, I am committed to the idea that people are only free when they stop slavishly accepting the opinions of “greater persons” and think every important issue through for themselves.

— Kathleen Malley

“Pastoral”

Chickens don’t scratch in the yard; their world is a crowded cell.
No need to peck at anything, they haven’t any beaks.
Sow is immobilized for life; she’s a living breakfast machine.
The horses stand like statues of bone, with icicles on their hooves.
Cow is full of penicillin; her baby’s in a small, dark crate.
There is no Old MacDonald, just a corporate plan for Hell.

— Kathleen Malley
and God’s response to Job:

Does the hawk soar by your wisdom
And stretch her wings towards the south
Does the eagle mount at your command?

If not now, very certainly in the near future, the answer to that question will be “Yes.” Will the morning stars sing at this creation? Or do we look forward to it with dread, knowing — to paraphrase Camus — that he who knows everything can destroy everything.

Buber commented that in the Bible the natural world is created with a blessing, but the historical world is created with a curse. It is from the historical world of injustice that Job cries out for vindication. It is with arguments from the natural world that God justifies Himself against Job’s attacks, but it is against nature that we make our prolonged war; our work is cut out for a long time to come, and our siege-works are prepared, while the historical world still remains cursed. The most radical texts for our time may be the Book of Job and that quirky, inchoate fable, “The Tower of Babel.”

Letters to the Editors (Continued from page 210)

These constitute the background and the premises I used to argue that David Bleich never even once tries to give us reasons why we may eat animals and experiment upon them. Throughout his essay, he is content merely to quote “sages” and “authorities” (as he routinely refers to them) who believe abuses of animals to be justified. I began my essay by pointing out that I am troubled by words like “authority” and “official” and claimed they were disguises to lend weight to otherwise lightweight ideas. If I am snide, as Schwartz claims, it is not so much directed at the sages but at Bleich. I hold passionate opinions about animals and I am not apologetic for adopting a tone of disrespect towards a man who thinks it is necessary to eat animals and “proves” his point by saying that that is what Maimonides believed. I explained why Maimonides’ view was foolish even at the time he was writing. I am irritated at a person (Bleich) who thinks he can show the principle of tz’ar ba’alei hayyim (cause no pain to living creatures) is not violated when animals are made to suffer for financial benefit because a “majority of rabbinic authorities” cite financial benefit as a legitimate exception.

Schwartz is so upset by my mistaking him for a “reform” Jew that he cares not a whit about the fact that my review of his book was mainly positive although entirely negative with respect to Bleich’s article. (Is he in black mood because I gave his entire book only two and a half columns while devoting four columns to the much shorter article by Bleich?) I am deeply disappointed to learn, but no longer surprised now that I know he is “orthodox,” that Schwartz thinks I should show more respect for Jewish scholarship — entirely ignoring the thrust of my article, instead of rebutting it. Nowhere in his mean spirited letter does Professor Schwartz try to grapple with my arguments. Instead, he smugly takes the moral high ground, rapping me on my knuckles and taking me to task for my failure to be submissively reverent towards the “greats.” Swelling his chest up with pride, he announces we should not write off people like Bleich but strive to make them aware of a better worldview. He finishes off his heap of abuse upon me and his non sequiturs by asking “Well then, what should a Jew do?” and answering his own question with “Certainly not write articles with the negative assumptions and implications of Gendin.” After such a tiring display of self-righteousness at my stylistic infelicities, little wonder that Schwartz has no energy left to deal with the substance of my claims.

Schwartz seems to think I should be keeping up with all the writings he and his opponent, Bleich, are producing. He says Bleich now claims that it isn’t evil to be a vegetarian. Thanks, David, I wish I had known you have undergone a change of heart because up until now I had been having trouble sleeping. Schwartz thinks I should have reviewed the 1988, not 1982, edition of his book. I reviewed the 1982 edition because that is what the editors of this journal forwarded to me for review. What have you added, Professor? What have you withdrawn? Nobody is perfect; please tell us what mistakes you corrected. Or is the “expansion” you boast of merely a matter of adding more recipes? Is my criticism of your appeal to the Talmud, together with my supporting reason, no longer applicable? If so, you could have spared us your grouchiness and pointed to the improvements in the latest edition.

—Sidney Gendin
Eastern Michigan University
Dear Editors:

One would have thought that, since 1982 when Carol Gilligan published her work on the differences between male and female moral development, we would have been done forever with gross gender-neutral statements about human ethical behavior and development. Julie Dunlap’s article on “The Adolescent as Environmental Ethicist” (Spring, 1989) shows, however, that the problem still persists, merely assuming an unfortunate new twist. Although Dunlap cannot but acknowledge that boys and girls demonstrate different moral attitudes, her solution is simply to omit studying girls!

Dunlap does note in passing that the results of her study should not be generalized to the moral thinking of females, adding that such research is “essential to develop a comprehensive understanding of adolescents’ moral reasoning about animals.” However, despite this token caveat, she goes on to conclude her piece with claims about the “normal process of childhood development” and the struggles of children to define their moral obligations’ (emphasis added).

Dunlap, moreover, apparently sees no problem in assigning a gender-neutral title to her boys-only research — i.e. “The Adolescent as Environmental Ethicist.” Had Dunlap accurately entitled her article “The Male Adolescent as Environmental Ethicist” one would still be disturbed that girls have been excluded from ethical investigation yet one more time. But at least this title would not have claimed more for her study than it really is — namely, just another study about only boys.

— Marti Kheel
Feminists for Animal Rights

Dear Editors:

Having reviewed Daniel Dombrowski’s Hartshorne and the Metaphysics of Animal Rights for The Animals’ Agenda (June 1989), I was doubly interested in what Judith Barad had to say about the book (BTS, Summer 1989). Our responses differ at points, but I would like to call attention to a rather wide divergence on a particular issue. While Barad finds Hartshorne/Dombrowski’s distinction between plant sentience and animal sentience ontologically convincing, I find it mystifying. Hartshorne maintains that there is more cosmic and spiritual value in animal life because whereas animals can feel as whole individuals, plants, together with rocks and other “inanimate” landscape features, can feel only in their microscopic parts, or “cells.” Hartshorne ascribes sentient individuality to cells and other microscopic entities, based on empirical science’s observation that these things show signs of sensitivity to the environment. At the same time he denies sentient individuality to whole plants, based on empirical science’s failure to locate a nervous system in them. Barad summarizes Hartshorne/Dombrowski: “Plants, like rocks, are multicellular organisms, and so are sentient in their parts. But as a whole individual, a plant is not sentient, since it lacks a nervous system” (p. 162, column 1).

This argument is confusing. For one thing, not only do cells and other microscopic entities show signs of sensitivity to the environment; so do whole plants, as any lay observer can note. Secondly, if the case for sentience rests upon the observation of a nervous system, what evidence is there that individual cells or other microscopic entities have one? I don’t understand how Hartshorne can logically ascribe sentience to cells, based on the argument that they show signs of sensitivity to the environment even though they do not indicate the presence of a nervous system, yet deny sentience to whole plants using the nervous system criterion while ignoring the fact that they, too, can be seen responding to the environment as whole individuals. Why should plants, which display all the major signs of organic similitude to animals (the principles of centrality and growth, vital cellular behavior, DNA structure and activity, nutritional needs, etc.) be identified in Hartshorne’s, or anyone’s, metaphysics more closely with rocks than with other, unquestionable, life forms?

To repeat, on this point I differ from Barad in finding Hartshorne to be neither logically nor empirically persuasive; and am left wondering, once again, why academic philosophy, even when it is ethically oriented towards the natural environment, as in the case of Hartshorne/Dombrowski, is so petrified when it comes to the plant world. It is very irksome as I noted in my review in The Animals’ Agenda, to find Hartshorne and Dombrowski both patronizing Wordsworth, whom they admire for many of his other gifted insights, for having intuitively imagined that twigs can somehow enjoy a breeze.

— Karen Davis
University of Maryland