

ANTHROPOLOGY

Human Behavior Unique

Since man's intelligence and relationship to his environment are unique in the animal world, parallels between animal and human behavior should not be overdrawn.

► **OBSERVING ANIMALS** to find out about man can be overdone, the president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science warned members.

Speaking at Southampton at the opening session of the Association's yearly meeting, Lord Brain said it is important to remember that man is different from other animals and that scientists should not think of animal behavior in human terms.

"At present, at any rate, we cannot imagine what an animal perceives," he said, "but we can avoid thinking that this is like our own ideas or experiences."

Lord Brain pointed out that man's relationship to his fellows and to the universe is uniquely different from that of any other animal. He faces different problems and solves them in different ways.

Man's superiority is due to his intelligence, Lord Brain said, and his ability to manipulate the objects in the universe around him. These manipulations help him to increase his perception—by use of a microscope, for instance—and increased perception in turn aids his manipulations.

Most important of these manipulations

is the use of verbal and printed symbols which we call language.

Of all known life-forms, only man is self-conscious, Lord Brain added. Only man is aware of himself as a part of the greater world, and only man has ideas of right and wrong and theories concerning his feelings. These ideas are a reflection of the society in which he lives.

Lord Brain said the most important problem facing us today is the immensely rapid growth of the world's population and of the complexity of our environment. Increasing automation and need for trained people are causing the twin problems of too little work for the many and too much work for the few.

There is also a need today to relate the sciences to each other, and we lack the "specialists in generalization" to do this, he said.

Lord Brain compared society to the nervous system, composed of many individual "cells" which must work together in order to be effective.

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ZOOLOGY

Wrong Animals Protected

► **A BRITISH LAW** intended to protect rare animals by prohibiting their importation actually protects more common animals than rare ones.

Originally intended to protect a few rare beasts, the law was submitted to Parliament in a form that designated exactly which members of certain animal families were to be restricted from import. The idea was that if they could not be imported, the animals would be left in their native habitat.

But Government lawyers argued that Customs officials could not be expected to distinguish between the different members of an animal family and so whole species would have to be banned.

The law restricts importation of such families as land tortoises, monkeys, wombats, iguanas, Australian marsupials and rhinoceroses.

That is where the trouble is expected to start. For example, there are only two sorts of iguana that need protection, one of them the Galapagos iguana, out of several hundred.

On the other hand, the very rare Oryx, which might be brought in from Arabia, is not on the list because it belongs technically to the cow and horse family. Nor is the panda banned, probably because the Chinese have said they will not let any more out of the country.

One of the principal arguments used to promote the law was the growing popularity of exotic animals as pets. Tourists have brought home a wide variety of incautious purchases made abroad, only to find that it is practically impossible to keep the animals in private homes.

Dr. Desmond Morris, curator of mammals at the London Zoo, was offered 529 such animals by their disenchanted owners last year.

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BIOCHEMISTRY

Aspirin Used Up Fast By Pregnant Animals

► **ASPIRIN** is used up, or metabolized, more quickly by pregnant animals than by non-pregnant female rabbits and rats, two scientists reported in *Nature*, 203:304, 1964.

The possibility that the drug is accumulated by the fetus is suggested by Drs. B. Lessel and E. E. Cliffe of the research department, Boots Pure Drug Co., Ltd., Nottingham, England.

Some steroid hormones affect the rate of drug metabolism, however, the investigators point out. Changes in maternal hormones during pregnancy could explain the rapid metabolism of aspirin by the animals.

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CRYOBIOLOGY

Deepfreeze Surgery Fights Nervous Diseases

► **CRYOGENIC SURGERY** has been successfully given to victims of such serious nervous disorders as parkinsonism and dystonia.

Only one percent of the patients undergoing this surgery died, Dr. Irving S. Cooper, department of neurologic surgery, St. Barnabas Hospital, New York, told a meeting of the Society for Cryobiology in Washington, D. C. This represents a considerable improvement over conventional surgical methods.

Dr. Cooper said this type of surgery also is simple, rapid and "flexible."

Parkinsonism affects the central nervous system, making the body rigid and causing it to shake uncontrollably. It usually begins in persons in their 50's and 60's.

Cryogenic surgery on parkinsonism cases entails inserting a pencil-like probe, which has a non-insulated bulb tip, through the top of the brain and into the thalamus.

Liquid nitrogen is forced into the probe, freezing cells around the tip.

Dr. Cooper said that when the cells are cooled to between 41 to 59 degrees Fahrenheit, a small, usually circular, lesion appears. At this time a test is made to see if tremors have stopped, and to determine if injury has resulted.

If this test is successful, the temperature of the bulb is dropped to 94 degrees below zero, completing the surgery.

Dr. Cooper said this "deepfreeze" method is being investigated for the destruction of tumors within the brain as well as malignancies in other parts of the body.

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Corning Glass Works

DEEP SEA GLASS—The deeper glass spheres like these go into the ocean depths, the stronger they become. U.S. Navy tests of spheres made by Corning Glass Works, Corning, New York, may lead to use of glassy materials for hulls of underwater vehicles.