



Learning Theory Applied to the Welfare of Animals

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Message from the Guest Editors

Dear Colleagues,

The modern zoo has brought about two major advances in the behavioral welfare of their exhibited animals: (1) the use of environmental/behavioral enrichment to promote naturalistic behaviors and (2) the use of training to improve voluntary husbandry care. Both these fields have their roots in behavior analysis and learning theory. However, few studies have examined the learning effects observed in the application of these practices. Likewise, enrichment, while originally proposed as a form of behavioral engineering to modify learned behavior, is almost exclusively measured in terms of the pre- vs. post-enrichment effect. Both modern practices thus miss a significant result of their implementation: how behavior is shaped by these environmental manipulations.

This Special Issue looks to address how learning theory has been applied and measured to address the welfare of zoo animals. Original manuscripts that examine any aspect of how learning theory has been applied in zoos, from studies of husbandry training procedures to the modification of behavior as a result of some environmental change, are welcome submissions.





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Message from the Editor-in-Chief

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