

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RESEARCH COUNCIL END OF AWARD REPORT



For awards ending on or after 1 November 2009

This End of Award Report should be completed and submitted using the **grant reference** as the email subject, to **reportsofficer@esrc.ac.uk** on or before the due date.

The final instalment of the grant will not be paid until an End of Award Report is completed in full and accepted by ESRC.

Grant holders whose End of Award Report is overdue or incomplete will not be eligible for further ESRC funding until the Report is accepted. ESRC reserves the right to recover a sum of the expenditure incurred on the grant if the End of Award Report is overdue. (Please see Section 5 of the ESRC Research Funding Guide for details.)

Please refer to the Guidance notes when completing this End of Award Report.

Grant Reference	RES-355-25-0015		
Grant Title	Understanding individual behaviour through human/animal relations		
Grant Start Date	1 July 2009	Total Amount Expended:	£ 80 205.62
Grant End Date	30 June 2010		
Grant holding Institution	University of Exeter		
Grant Holder	Professor Henry BULLER		
Grant Holder's Contact Details	Address	Email	
	Amory, Rennes Drive, University of Exeter, Exeter, EX4 4RJ	H.Buller@Exeter.ac.uk	
		Telephone 01392 263846	
Co-Investigators (as per project application):		Institution	
Prof Richard Bennett		University of Reading	
Dr Liz Paul		University of Bristol	
Dr John Bradshaw		University of Bristol	

1. NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Please provide below a project summary written in non-technical language. The summary may be used by ESRC to publicise your work and should explain the aims and findings of the project. *[Max 250 words]*

This 'Exploratory Network Initiative' investigated the varied impacts of human interaction with animals upon human behaviour and the ways in which we study such interactions. Recognising different traditions and starting points from biological, veterinary and ethological investigations of animal behaviour to social science (including psychological) studies of human behaviour, an extensive Network - involving a core of 30 or so individuals - brought together natural and social scientists to explore varied contexts for human/animal interaction and to draw lessons from these cross-disciplinary encounters for the understanding of individual human behaviour. Six workshops were organised on such themes as human/animal care and nurturance, companionship, empathy, knowledge, husbandry, wild animals and human environmental awareness. Each workshop yielded a co-authored Working Paper. A two-day international Conference was held at Bristol Zoo in June 2010. The workshops and the Conference examined arguments and evidence for the impacts of human/animal relations on human behaviour (including, for example, the impact of knowledge of animal behaviour on moral arguments for animal treatment and food choices and the health and welfare benefits to human individuals from companion relationships with animals). The Network explored different epistemological and methodological approaches to the investigation of human/animal relations and the manner in which knowledges so generated are used within society. A series of work-shadowing encounters were undertaken allowing inter-disciplinary conversations to take place during on-going experimental and field-based work. Finally, the Network facilitated the development of a series of innovative research questions to be developed and taken forward in forthcoming grant applications.

2. PROJECT OVERVIEW

a) Objectives

Please state the aims and objectives of your project as outlined in your proposal to the ESRC. *[Max 200 words]*

The overall aim of this Explorative Network Initiative was to bring together social and natural science researchers and practitioners to explore together, in an interdisciplinary setting, the influence of human-animal relations on individual human behaviour. Our objectives were:

To explore the development of an integrated approach to studying the influence of different forms and levels of human-animal interactions on individual human behaviour;

To explore that influence through three dimensions ('knowledge', 'nurturance' and empathy'), each being considered from a multidisciplinary perspective, drawing upon a range of disciplines, at a series of workshops and work-shadow sessions.

To chart the state of existing knowledge on the influence of human-animal relations on

individual behaviour with respect to a series of specific contexts including environmental behaviour, food choice and activities focused upon compassion/care.

To explore methodological innovation by investigating the creative possibilities for cross-disciplinary use of existing data sets on aspects of human-animal interaction and human behaviour.

To develop an interdisciplinary research agenda.

b) Project Changes

Please describe any changes made to the original aims and objectives, and confirm that these were agreed with the ESRC. Please also detail any changes to the grant holder's institutional affiliation, project staffing or funding. *[Max 200 words]*

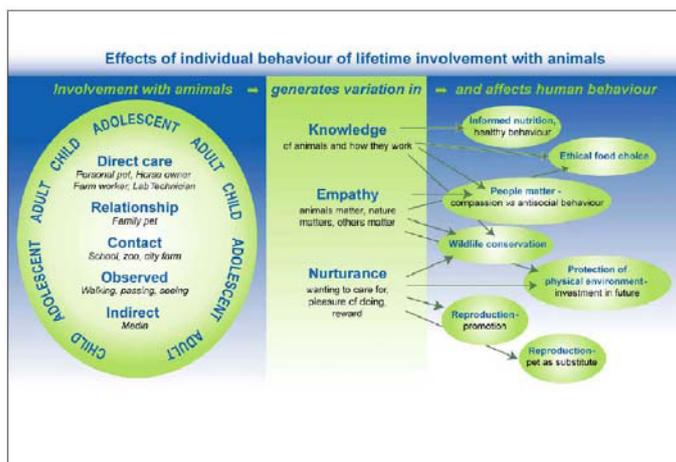
No changes were made to the original aims and objectives nor to the grant holder's institutional affiliation, project staffing or funding.

c) Methodology

Please describe the methodology that you employed in the project. Please also note any ethical issues that arose during the course of the work, the effects of this and any action taken. *[Max. 500 words]*

As an Explorative Network Project, the methodology employed revolved principally around the creation, development and operation of the Network established specifically for understanding the contribution of human/animal relations to individual human behaviour. This entailed: *first*, regular meetings of the core applicant group (5 people from psychology, geography, animal science and economics/social science); *second*, six Network workshops, attended on average by around 30 people drawn from the Network where presentations and discussions took place; *third* the preparation and circulation of Working Papers for each of the workshops; *fourth*, work shadowing exercises where researchers from one discipline spent time in a research context with those from other disciplines engaged in investigations of human/animal relations; *fifth*, the organisation of a major two-day international conference at Bristol zoo; *sixth*, the maintenance of a project blog site; and *seventh*, the investigation of existing social data sets (such as the ALSPAC data set) that might be used in future empirical research into human/animal relations and their impact on human behaviour. These various approaches were employed, first, to explore and confront different interdisciplinary knowledges on human/animal relations and consider how this informs the understanding of individual human behaviour and, second, to develop an interdisciplinary research agenda for the fuller investigation of the impact of such relations on human behaviour with a number of specific contexts. The Network was generated both through the development of existing contacts and by the active solicitation of researchers in cognate fields deemed relevant to the objectives of the project. The workshops combined presentations, from both empirical and theoretical perspectives, and discussion. A Working Paper, combining an inter-disciplinary literature review and a draft research agenda for workshop theme, was produced for each workshop. Practical research experiences were shared through work shadowing exercises. Although there were no

specific ethical issues that arose as a result of the work, ethics was a central pre-occupation in the project's examination of human/animal relations and the impact of these relations on human behaviour, particularly within the context of various forms of confinement (such as in the case of animal husbandry, display and experimentation). As part of the investigative methodology for the project, an initial framework was proposed at the outset. Although this was subsequently developed and amended as the project progressed, the focus on empathy, knowledge and nurturance provided a useful heuristic device for tracing the impact of human/animal relations across human life-times and across different disciplinary approaches, on individual human behaviour.



d) Project Findings

Please summarise the findings of the project, referring where appropriate to outputs recorded on *ESRC Society Today*. Any future research plans should also be identified. [Max 500 words]

As an Explorative Network Project, this project was not about primary data creation. The status of the 'human', human behaviour and human development can increasingly be understood as the continually emergent consequence of relations between humans and other animals. The rapidly growing field of human-animal studies is revealing ever-more profound and extensive connectivities between humans and human animals that extend from the metaphorical and symbolic, through the functional and utilitarian to the empathetic, inter-corporal and inter-subjective. This Network sought to generate a viable interdisciplinary research network and develop a forward-reaching research agenda for the investigation of the impacts of human/animal relations on individual human behaviour - that would enable us:

- to ask cross-disciplinary questions about human/animal relations, the conceptual frameworks underlying them and the mechanisms for investigating them;
- to explore the range of the impact of such relations on individual human behaviour in an innovative and holistic manner;
- to identify researchable sites or contexts for investigating the multiple social ecologies and social ethologies of human/animal interaction.

The Network demonstrated the considerable conceptual, practical and normative benefits to be derived from a more interdisciplinary approach to the study of human/animal

relations, their developmental consequences and their implications for human individuals and society. By combining hitherto separate 'natural' and 'social science approaches within a collective investigative agenda, we were able not only to explore in depth the role of empathy, care, welfare, embodied encounter, social interaction, knowledge systems and 'ways of knowing', ethical engagement, representations, distance and imitation (to name a few) in human/animal relations and their consequences for – and their relative value within - human behaviour but were also able to challenge some of the more traditional fault lines that demarcate human and animal worlds thus enabling a more co-relational understanding.

The Network showed that interactions with animals provide multiple opportunities for '*being human*' (of showing and demonstrating 'humanity', whether it be through empathy, ethical concern for animals, ecological sensibilities and so on). Interactions with animals, also, at another level, provide multiple opportunities for being '*more-than-human*', since from a relational perspective the capacity of humans is arguably enhanced in their interaction with animals. In many sites and situations this combination provides a potentially beneficial framework for human (and non-human) development. Finally, human/animal relations might also offer through everyday practice, opportunities for being what some might describe as '*less than human*' through the routinisation of certain acts of (almost unconscious) malevolence or cruelty towards many (smaller) animals.

A critical function of the Network has been to develop future research agendas. It has acted as a framework for a series of independent research proposals from Network members. Moreover, the original applicant team is working together on a number of possible research bids that emerge directly from the central preoccupations of the Network and the UIBEN programme. Finally, we are actively engaged in discussions with other UIBEN project partners over the possibility of joint submissions to the UIBEN programme.

e) Contributions to wider ESRC initiatives (eg Research Programmes or Networks)

If your project was part of a wider ESRC initiative, please describe your contributions to the initiative's objectives and activities and note any effect on your project resulting from participation. [Max. 200 words]

This project was part of the 'Understanding Individual Behaviour' Programme of the ESRC/MRC. That Programme stated: "Many of the major challenges facing UK society depend on improving understanding on why people behave as they do and how to maximise the effectiveness with which individuals can take control of their own lives" (ESRC, 2008). The key task of this Network has been to collectively explore ways in which investigations of human/animal interaction can help us understand (individual) human behaviour and to ask how such interactions and the practices emerging from them, can have a durable and positive benefit. We have set in place an investigative framework, a durable network and research agenda to pursue the Programme's aims through a series of empirical and evidence-focused research projects. The PI of the project has participated in the two UIBEN Programme meetings, held in London in November 2009 and September 2010 where the collective contribution of the network initiatives was discussed and assessed. In this manner, we have contributed input into the Research Council's thinking on the Programme and its development.

3. EARLY AND ANTICIPATED IMPACTS

a) Summary of Impacts to date

Please summarise any impacts of the project to date, referring where appropriate to associated outputs recorded on *ESRC Society Today*. This should include both scientific impacts (relevant to the academic community) and economic and societal impacts (relevant to broader society). The impact can be relevant to any organisation, community or individual. [Max. 400 words]

The Network has worked with both academics and practitioners through the workshops and final conference. Its scientific outputs include: the series of Working Papers, which have been distributed outside the Network and are currently being edited for publication; a number of scientific papers – both published and forthcoming – authored by Network members that acknowledge the role of the Network in generating contributory discussion and debate; a number of international conference papers (UK, Sweden, USA) that have drawn directly upon the Network debates and workshops; and a forthcoming edited book (currently in negotiation with an American university publisher). The Network has included representatives of professional organisations involved in such activities as companion animal therapy, farm and companion animal veterinary services, animal care and breeding programmes within zoos, human/pet obesity, farm animal welfare and others. These representatives have taken an active role within the Network, presenting material at workshops and the final conference and participating fully in the debates and discussions. Bringing such interests into the Network, alongside scientists and academics, has been an important goal and reinforces both awareness and the impact of the Network on the wider community involved both in human/animal interaction and the consequences of that interaction on individual human behaviour. Finally, the Network has contributed to what is a vigorous epistemological and methodological debate in an innovative field. The combination of ethno-methodological approaches to the investigation of embodied human/animal relations with scientific observational techniques provides original spaces for the investigation of how being-with animals affects human individuals.

b) Anticipated/Potential Future Impacts

Please outline any anticipated or potential impacts (scientific or economic and societal) that you believe your project might have in future. [Max. 200 words]

As an Exploratory Network Initiative, the Network's future impact will be realised through the joint research projects that it intends to pursue both under any future *Understanding Human Behaviour* programme and through other means. A number of research proposals are already being developed. The Network has established a unique and innovative grouping of animal and social scientists, psychologists, ethologists and so on, alongside practitioners and professional bodies, that seeks to continue as a Network and we shall endeavour to secure the means to achieve this. Further publications are envisaged and we are keen to explore the fuller use of data sets created largely for other purposes, to investigate possible correlations and associations between identifiable aspects of human animal relations (such as pet ownership) and human behaviour.

You will be asked to complete an ESRC Impact Report 12 months after the end date of your award. The Impact Report will ask for details of any impacts that have arisen since the completion of the End of Award Report.

4. DECLARATIONS

Please ensure that sections A, B and C below are completed and signed by the appropriate individuals. The End of Award Report will not be accepted unless all sections are signed.

Please note hard copies are NOT required; electronic signatures are accepted and should be used.

A: To be completed by Grant Holder

Please read the following statements. Tick ONE statement under ii) and iii), then sign with an electronic signature at the end of the section.

i) The Project

This Report is an accurate overview of the project, its findings and impacts. All co-investigators named in the proposal to ESRC or appointed subsequently have seen and approved the Report.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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ii) Submissions to *ESRC Society Today*

Output and impact information has been submitted to <i>ESRC Society Today</i> . Details of any future outputs and impacts will be submitted as soon as they become available.	<input type="checkbox"/>
OR	
This grant has not yet produced any outputs or impacts. Details of any future outputs and impacts will be submitted to <i>ESRC Society Today</i> as soon as they become available.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OR	
This grant is not listed on <i>ESRC Society Today</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/>

iii) Submission of Datasets

Datasets arising from this grant have been offered for deposit with the Economic and Social Data Service.	<input type="checkbox"/>
OR	
Datasets that were anticipated in the grant proposal have not been produced and the Economic and Social Data Service has been notified.	<input type="checkbox"/>
OR	
No datasets were proposed or produced from this grant.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>