



Module 28

Human Conflict and Animal Welfare

Student Activities

Questions

1. There are four conditions that need to be satisfied in order to classify a situation as a conflict. Identify and describe these.

(4 marks)

- There is disagreement between at least two parties
- The demands of each side cannot be met by the same resources at the same time
- The parties use armed force to solve the disagreement
- At least 25 battle-related human deaths occur within one year

2. What are the necessary criteria in terms of human fatalities for a conflict situation to be defined as a war?

(1 mark)

When the number of human deaths resulting from a conflict situation exceeds 1,000 in one year, a conflict is called a war.

3. There are different categories of human conflict, each of which can affect the welfare of animals. Identify and describe two different categories of human conflict.

(4 marks)

- State conflict – involves the state itself (the official army and military police)
- Non-state conflict – involves armed groups that are not part of the formal state apparatus

4. The general effects of conflict can be wide-ranging and may impact upon society in a variety of ways. Identify and describe four general effects of conflict.

(4 marks)

- **Destruction**, damage and breakdown of the social and economic infrastructure and destruction of the environment.
- **Injury, disability and death** sustained by both humans and animals.
- **Displacement**, where people leave the area with their animals, moving elsewhere within their country or entering other countries as refugees.
- **Insecurity**, whereby the predictability and availability of the normal features of peaceful life deteriorate, whilst risks of psychological and physiological injury and death increase.

5. In rural and urban communities, livestock and working animals have direct and indirect value to humans, making them central to people's health and the local economy. Identify two means through which animals provide for their owners.

(2 marks)

- The animals provide food for their owners
- The animal provide manure for use as fuel for cooking
- The animals provide income for their owners through the sale of animal products
- The animals provide income for their owners through their use as draught power in agriculture

6. Amidst human conflict, people may become increasingly unable to care and provide for their animals. Describe the cycle of how malnutrition may become a persistent problem.

(6 marks)

Amidst human conflict, there will be reduced availability and access to food for both people and animals. Malnutrition may follow, resulting in weakened and less productive animals. This reduces a person's capacity to earn a living and provide the necessary extra care (e.g. food and veterinary care) for their malnourished animals. Due to conflict and associated lack of transport and increased violence, it will be less safe and practical for people to go out to buy food for their animals. The reduced ability of people to make money means owners continue to be unable to provide for their animals.

7. How does conflict affect veterinary infrastructure and therefore animal welfare? (2 marks)

Conflict can result in a loss of normal veterinary infrastructure and service. This means that sick animals, already experiencing compromised welfare, cannot be treated and therefore their impoverished welfare state will endure and most likely worsen.

8. Working animals may become even more essential to humans during human conflict situations. Explain why. (3 marks)

- Working animals are more likely to be used for transport and draught power when increased insecurity and lost infrastructure associated with the conflict cause fuel supplies to become limited
- People who are either attempting to escape or being coerced into leaving a region will increasingly depend on working animals as a form of transport
- Draught animals may also be used to move ammunition between locations

9. Humans may keep animals for a variety of different uses and hence in different contexts (e.g. zoos, farms) or animals may remain free to live in the wild. The degree to which humans are able to safeguard the animal's needs in these different contexts during conflict situations may vary. Identify and explain how (a) captive and (b) wild animals may be affected by conflict. (a = 2 marks, b = 4 marks)

- a) Animals in zoos – captive animals in zoos cannot be released because they may not be able to adapt to the local environment, and releasing them may present a hazard to the safety of humans. They may therefore be exposed directly to conflict that may take place within or around the zoo.
- b) Wild animals – as other sources of meat may become scarcer, this can increase the need to kill wild animals for food. Greater availability of weapons and ammunition may make it easier for people to kill wild animals. Additionally, there may be a breakdown in social and legislative infrastructures that would normally better protect certain wild species from being killed. In particular, endangered species, being as valuable as they are on the black market, may be particularly exploited during times of hardship associated with conflict.

10. Identify five uses of animals in war.**(5 marks)**

- Transport and pack animals to move munitions and people, particularly when fuel is scarce (e.g. working animals)
- For food, often killed locally as bushmeat (e.g. wild animals)
- Tracking, guard and explosives search and detection (e.g. dogs)
- For clearing mines and unexploded munitions (e.g. rats)
- As marine 'agents' – cetaceans and sea lions have been trained by the USA for munitions recovery, and, potentially against divers (e.g. dolphins)
- Use of animals in research on injuries and weapons
- For the testing of weapons and chemical agents

11. 'Military' animals such as working horses and dogs may be subject to an elevated level of risk during war. Briefly outline four of the potential hazards they may face.**(4 marks)**

- Longevity – are these working animals offered a 'normal' lifespan?
- Training regimes – some training regimes are difficult and harsh, and there is 'wastage' (usually destruction) of animals who do not successfully complete training
- Housing conditions – particularly when in combat – may not provide for basic animal needs
- Injury – where bombs, shells and machinery are a hazard, injury to animals in combat (and in training) is likely

In-class activities

Discussion

Allow 45 minutes for this activity.

This discussion will focus on exploring the welfare implications of mines to a variety of different animals. This activity can be carried out as a whole-class discussion, or in small groups.

As a class/small group, identify the different groups of animals that might be affected by mines:

- farmed livestock
- stray animals
- companion animals
- wild animals
- working animals
- military animals

Explore the risks of mines to each group of animals identified. Pay particular attention to the implications to their welfare in the long term, as well as their likelihood of being affected by mines in the first place.

Which animal stakeholder group faces the most risk to their welfare?

Which animal stakeholder group is most valuable to humans in the conflict situation?

Are landmines the biggest welfare concern for animals during conflict?

If the class has been divided into smaller groups, each group should report back to the rest of the class after 30 minutes of discussion time and use the remaining 15 minutes to share their thoughts.

Additional notes:

There are believed to be about 70 million untraced landmines throughout the world, in places such as Afghanistan, Cambodia, Angola, Iran and Iraq. It is estimated that 600,000 animals and 25,000 people are killed or injured by mines each year.

Certain animals may be trained and used to detect mines. For example, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the US Department of State formed the K-9 Demining Corps which uses dogs to sniff out mines. The use of mine detection dogs helps to improve the safety and work of people directly involved in conflict or peace-keeping, and also the safety of other people and their animals.

African giant pouched rats are trained by a Belgian non-governmental organisation (NGO) called APOPO (Anti-Personnel Landmines Detection Product Development when translated) and used in the minefields of Mozambique. They are trained to sniff out TNT in the same way as dogs, but their low body mass means that they are less likely to set off the mine once discovered.

Presentation

In groups, prepare a presentation to give an overview of the welfare issues related to animals in a recent conflict chosen by each group. Across the class the conflicts chosen should represent a wide geographical spread.

Students should include:

- statistics on animal use and fatalities where available,
- findings concerning the reciprocal bond between humans and their animals.
- where possible, discuss the availability and provision of veterinary care.

If research specific to conflict situations is hard to find, it is acceptable to extrapolate findings concerning the welfare of animal species in related circumstances, e.g. following man-made or natural disasters (housing conditions, health, noise, handling methods and training techniques).

Lecturers are advised to use their discretion in the awarding of marks and in the feedback given to students regarding their presentation skills. A good presentation contains typical sections such as:

- Introduction (describing the purpose of the research or task)
- Main content (the outputs from the research described above)
- Summary/Conclusion (rounding up all the findings and making concluding statements, linking back to the purpose outlined in the introduction).

A good presenter speaks clearly and slowly, and doesn't engage in distracting habits such as clicking a pen while speaking, jangling change in his or her pockets. They should remain relatively still and not move about too much which can also be distracting to the audience.

PowerPoint slides should also contain the minimum amount of text and the presenter should know the subject well enough (or read from additional notes) so that the slide works as a prompt rather than the presenter simply reading the entire slide to the audience and adding nothing extra.

Reflective exercise

Consider the use of animals in the military. What are the pros and cons, and how does the subject make you feel?

Notes to lecturer:

Reflective exercises encourage students to spend time considering the subject, and question their own morals and ethics. Personal reflection is a valuable tool for personal and professional development, but it cannot be judged or assessed. You may wish to see evidence of thoughts in a notebook, in which case you should encourage students to keep a welfare diary. You should be sure to clarify that you will want to see evidence that the reflective exercises have been completed without reading any contents which the student may wish to keep private