

# Andrew Knight

Subjects: [Veterinary Sciences](#)

Contributor: Andrew Knight

animal welfare

vegan

humane education

animal experiments

## Basic Information



**Name:**

Andrew Knight

**Born:**

May, 1970

**Birth Location:** unknown

**Title:** Professor of Animal Welfare and Ethics

**Affiliation:** University of Winchester

**Honor:** unknown

## 1. Brief Introduction

Whilst a Western Australian veterinary student in 2000, Andrew Knight caused controversy by refusing to kill animals during his surgical and preclinical training. Instead, he helped establish a humane surgical training program, based partly on neutering homeless animals from animal shelters.

Andrew then worked in small animal veterinary practice. He is now Professor of Animal Welfare and Ethics, and Founding Director of the Centre for Animal Welfare, at England's University of Winchester, and Adjunct Professor in the School of Environment and Science at Griffith University, Queensland. Additionally, he is a European, British, American and New Zealand Veterinary Specialist in Animal Welfare; a Fellow of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, and a Principal Fellow of Advance HE.

Andrew Knight has been an active animal advocate ever since helping launch Australia's campaign against the live sheep trade to the Middle East, in the early 1990s. His home city of Perth was, and remains, the world's foremost port of departure for live sheep carriers. At that time around 5,000,000 sheep were shipped annually from Australia to Middle Eastern destinations, mostly from Perth. This comprised a sea voyage of around 2.5 weeks, during which 100,000 - 150,000 would typically die, with similar numbers dying in feedlots on arrival, mostly from inanition caused by dietary change and stress. Andrew effectively worked on this campaign full-time for a year, in an unpaid capacity.

## 2. Humane Education Campaigns

In 2007 Andrew entered Western Australia's Murdoch University veterinary school primarily to gain specialised knowledge and qualifications to aid animal protection campaigns. By the time he

graduated in 2002 Murdoch had become one of the few foreign veterinary schools to be accredited by the prestigious American Veterinary Medical Association. He completed the US national and Californian state examinations in 2005, thereby gaining a Californian veterinary licence.

Whilst a veterinary student from 1997 – 2001, Andrew ran a high-profile campaign for the introduction of humane alternatives to harmful animal use in education, using a combination of published educational studies and other evidence, and political pressure. As a result, in 1998 Murdoch became the first Australian university to formally allow conscientious objection by students to animal experimentation or other areas of their coursework. At least two other major Australian, and one major US university, have since followed suit. Andrew worked with local student colleagues during each of these campaigns.

In 1999 Andrew's detailed alternatives submission resulted in the cancellation of almost all of Murdoch's terminal physiology teaching laboratories, in which large numbers of sheep, toads and other animals were killed annually, and in 2000 Andrew and a classmate pioneered Western Australia's first humane veterinary surgical course. Despite strong faculty opposition the program they created was highly successful. They gained around five times the surgical experience of their conventionally trained peers — who learned by killing pigs and sheep — and jointly neutered 45 dogs and cats from animal shelters and private veterinary clinics.

Andrew's detailed submission *Ethically-Sourced Cadaver Surgery* resulted in the establishment of a client donation program similar to human body donation programs, for the ethical sourcing of cadavers from animals euthanized for medical reasons, for anatomical, clinical skills and surgical training. And in 2006, Murdoch trialled an animal shelter sterilisation program for all veterinary students, based on this successful model. The program was fully integrated into the curriculum in 2007.

Before and after graduating Andrew continued to actively support conscientiously objecting students and faculty similarly campaigning for the introduction of humane teaching methods within Australia and overseas. Following successful student campaigns, the first veterinary students had graduated from every established Australian veterinary school without harming animals during their surgical training by 2005, and harmful animal use has now been replaced by humane teaching methods at several US, and one New Zealand, veterinary schools. The University of Sydney Faculty of Veterinary Science completely eliminated terminal surgical laboratories, and established a pound dog sterilisation program and an ethically-sourced cadaver program, in 2000.

Andrew's website [www.HumaneLearning.info](http://www.HumaneLearning.info) and book *Learning Without Killing: A Guide to Conscientious Objection* (since translated into Spanish and Polish) were created to provide students and faculty with the scientific, economic, legal and other resources needed to win these campaigns. Additionally, between 1999 and 2001 Andrew successfully implemented a campaign to acquire and donate nine key published resources on humane alternatives and conscientious objection to 79 Australian and 10 New Zealand campus libraries, including all campuses considered likely to use animals in their teaching. He also included libraries of all of the main humane education and animal protection organisations in these countries, so that students and others would have the scientific and other resources needed to wage successful campaigns readily available.

In recognition of their work in this field, in 2000 Andrew and University of Sydney veterinary student Lucy Fish were honoured with the Inaugural World League for the Protection of Animals 'Award for the Promotion of Compassion for Animals.'

### **| 3. Animal Experimentation Campaigns**

Andrew's expansion into animal experimentation began in 2003 when he was commissioned by a US animal protection organisation to critically review the human toxicological utility of animal carcinogenicity tests. Four primary and several secondary scientific publications resulted, including an article included within a *BMJ USA* debate. Two of his scientific posters based on this work received animal welfare awards at international scientific conferences in 2005 – 2006 (the 5<sup>th</sup> World Congress on Alternatives and Animal Use in the Life Sciences, Berlin, 2005 — the leading international conference in the field, and the 13<sup>th</sup> Congress on Alternatives to Animal Testing, Linz, Austria, 2006 — the leading European conference in the field).

In 2005 Andrew was requested by a US animal protection organisation to critically review the human clinical utility of invasive chimpanzee experimentation. His two primary resultant scientific papers were published in 2007 and 2008. One of these papers reviewed the animal welfare impacts and ethical implications of invasive chimpanzee research, and existing regulations and regulatory trends pertaining to this research internationally. Two of his scientific posters based on this work received animal welfare awards at an international scientific conference in 2006 (the Conservation and Animal Welfare Conference in Lisbon).

In 2010 Andrew was awarded a PhD by Publication from Australia's Griffith University for a set of 16 publications relating to animal research. My thesis was entitled: *Animal Experimentation: Human Utility, Attitudinal Impacts, and Alternative Strategies*. It received a perfect examination result. Griffith is Australia's ninth largest higher education provider and ranks within Australia's top 10 research universities, and the top 5% of universities worldwide.

Based on his PhD thesis, Andrew's book *The Costs and Benefits of Animal Experiments* was published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2011 (hardback) and 2013 (paperback). It includes a detailed analysis of the animal welfare impacts experienced by laboratory animals, a detailed utilitarian analysis of the ethics of invasive animal research, and an overview of existing and developing policy and regulation pertaining to laboratory animal use in key regions of the world. Further information about my book, including an extensive list of endorsements from experts in the field, is at [www.AndrewKnight.info](http://www.AndrewKnight.info).

In 2011 Andrew created [www.AnimalExperiments.info](http://www.AnimalExperiments.info), to provide accurate scientific information about the human benefits accruing from animal research, the impacts experienced by laboratory animals, and alternative research, testing and educational methodologies.

Andrew has continued to publish and present on invasive animal use and alternatives within research and education ever since. He created [www.HumaneLearning.info](http://www.HumaneLearning.info) to help disseminate key information on this issue.

## **| 4. Further Activities and Campaigns**

In the years subsequent to 2005 Andrew expanded his interests beyond laboratory animals to include animal cognition and related abilities, and resultant moral implications, the animal welfare standards of veterinarians, the contributions of the livestock sector to climate change, and vegan companion animal diets. He continued to research, publish and present on all of these issues, and presently has a large number of academic and popular publications, available via [www.AndrewKnight.info](http://www.AndrewKnight.info). By 2022 he had presented his work at around 200 external conferences and universities.

In 2005 Andrew created [www.sustainablepetfood.info](http://www.sustainablepetfood.info) to provide assist all who wish to gain a sounder understanding of the health and nutritional issues associated with vegan companion animal diets. The site includes detailed summaries of the health and nutritional implications of feeding both meat-based and vegan animal diets, advice on smoothly transitioning cats and dogs onto vegan diets, advice on safeguarding health, and links to suppliers.

From 2007 – 2012 Andrew was a Spokesperson for the Animal Welfare Party (then Animals Count), a British political party for people and animals. Based on the highly successful Dutch Party for the Animals, the party aims to raise the status of animal issues within UK politics and legislation, and has inspired and assisted the establishment of political parties for animals in other countries. Andrew was an electoral candidate for the Party in the 2014 EU parliamentary election, and in the UK general elections of 2015 (Kensington), 2017 (Maidenhead) and 2019 (New Forest East). In 2017 Andrew stood against the Prime Minister Theresa May, in her home constituency of Maidenhead. He did not manage to unseat her, but received more votes than any of the other minor parties, emphasizing the importance of animal welfare, and helping to ensure her party thereafter dropped its plans to reintroduce fox-hunting.

From 2017 – 2018 Andrew spent almost a year with SAFE – a leading animal advocacy organisation in New Zealand – as Director of Research and Education.

In 2018 Andrew published a series of expert reports on sow farrowing crates (with a New Zealand focus), greyhound racing (with a UK focus), and dairy cow farming (with a New Zealand focus). In all cases welfare problems were reviewed and recommendations for reform and/or abolition were provided. These and his other expert reports are available at [www.AndrewKnight.info](http://www.AndrewKnight.info) > reports.

Andrew has since continued to support animal advocacy campaigns internationally, regularly providing expert statements and media interviews re animal welfare violations in intensive farms and elsewhere. Andrew is normally interviewed weekly by the media. A recent example involved provision of an expert report and legal statement to a campaign in Israel, which helped achieve a ban on the use of cages for meat chickens – saving 200 million chickens annually from confinement within these small cages.

In 2021 Andrew was commissioned by Routledge to produce a new textbook on animal welfare, within its definitive ‘Handbook’ series of textbooks (<https://www.routledge.com/Routledge-Handbook-of-Animal-Welfare/Knight-Phillips-Sparks/p/book/9781032022062>). This was published in 2022. Within 36 chapters, its 50 expert authors cover virtually all animal welfare issues, including key recent and emerging issues, such as the contributions of the livestock sector to climate change, biodiversity loss, and public health concerns/pandemics. It is heavily science/evidence based, but also makes strong calls for change. It is expected to become a leading textbook within the animal welfare field, and the key animal welfare textbook for the animal advocacy movement globally.

Since 2020 Andrew has also been working on a multiyear research and outreach project, to produce much of the scientific evidence base required to support the emerging, vegan petfood industry. Andrew created [www.SustainablePetFood.info](http://www.SustainablePetFood.info) to disseminate this information, including a series of short summary videos for social media.

## **| 5. Notable Contributions**

Andrew's books include *The Costs and Benefits of Animal Experiments*, and the *Routledge Handbook of Animal Welfare*.

## **| 6. Publications/Works**

Andrew has a large number of academic and popular publications, several websites, and an extensive series of social media videos, on animal welfare issues. Further details: [www.AndrewKnight.info](http://www.AndrewKnight.info).

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