

# Author Makes Distinction

(Continued from Page A1)

unpredictability.

"Conventional wisdom is that we made animals that way. But the trouble with that argument is that many of these traits are almost prerequisites for domestication. These traits had to be there first.

"One striking fact about domesticated animals is that they retain into adulthood many characteristics that are traits of juvenile animals in the wild, playfulness, curiosity, submissiveness and dependence. Many of these behaviors are designed to seek attention or approval, and they are built into their genes. Domesticated animals clearly lack a fearful, aggressive and defensive behavior of their wild counterparts."

In his book, "The Covenant of the Wild: Why Animals Chose Domestication," Budiansky challenges theories that man exploits and abuses animals solely for his benefit. He argues, with evidence to support his views, that today's domestic animals chose to live with man, striking a bargain that trades a steady supply of food and shelter from humans for the benefits humans ultimately receive from them.

The book was written because of Budiansky's work as a science writer for US News on the original domestication of animals. His information came from archaeological studies as well as the scientific study of animal behavior and evolution. This information suggests that domestication was not so much a human invention as it was a natural product of evolution. Animals and people adapted to one another and gained advantage.

"Those of us who know life in the wild know that it is no bargain, Budiansky said. "But the less we

know about nature the more we think an animal would rather be out there."

The remarkable relationship between animals and humans that nature has produced is something that Budiansky finds awe inspiring. "To think that with all the competition in the natural world, all the suffering, this (domestic) relationship is an exception to the rule," Budiansky said. "This example of cooperation that nature has crafted gives me a sense of something more profound than any philosophizing about animal rights.

After he grew up in the suburbs of Boston and graduated from Yale, Budiansky said he always thought that farmers were and needed to be tough, and calloused, maybe even brutal, to survive. But after raising sheep as an avocation, he became involved with all the lambing and other problems associated with animal husbandry. And he found from his experience as an "imposter farmer" that he became emotionally involved with the animals.

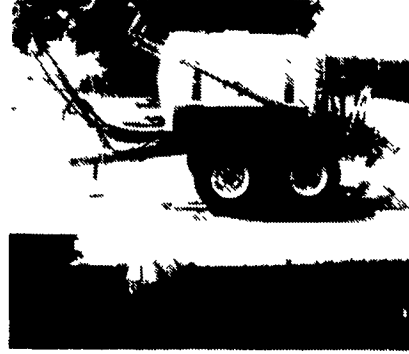
"From experience, I found that real farmers also care about these things just as much," Budiansky said. "And the way they deal with these experiences is to have a sense that they are part of something larger than themselves. They understand something about the natural world that many have lost today".

"It's within this context that farmers can truly separate an economic interest in animals from their welfare. That's why farmers can have an economic interest in their animals and also have their welfare at heart. They have something within that is deeper than what their job is," Budiansky said.



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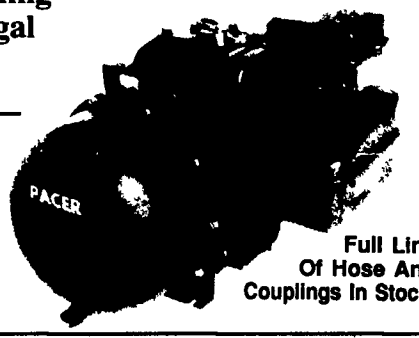
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