

Psychologist Studies Intelligence of Cats

By NANCY BRADNEY

It was a bright sunny day in July. Two feline mothers slinked down a shady avenue in State College, and argued heatedly about the comparative intelligence of their "children."

"Just because your kittens are pedigreed Siamese doesn't mean that we alley cats are dumber, you know," said the first.

The Siamese cat looked at the alley cat, her cold blue eyes snapping and said: "We can trace our ancestry all the way back to Siam! Where can you trace yours to?"

"That make no difference, whatsoever. My kittens are still smarter than yours are!"

IF SUCH AN ARGUMENT does not really take place among cats themselves, it certainly is a fierce one in the world of humans. There has long been animosity between Siamese cat fanciers and the rest of the world of cat lovers.

Last December it looked like the Siamese proponents had won, but now their position has been shaken.

Tentative findings of Dr. J. M. Warren, associate professor of psychology at the University, last year showed that the Siamese seemed to learn to solve certain problems much faster than other cats, and that their behavior was more predictable.

Data on three more learning experiences since then have shown that the Siamese were definitely inferior to "mongrels" on one and that there was no difference in ability on the other two.

DR. WARREN SAID yesterday that he hopes to correlate the maturation of cats learning abilities with changes in that electrical activity of the brain which is associated with body sense experiments.

The 45-day-old kitten who begins his training with Dr. Warren does not show the same pattern of brain activity as does the adult cat. From this, Warren says he is assuming that there is a relationship between learning and maturation.

The Siamese cat, Warren says, does better than the alley cat where he is required to move different shaped boxes to find tasty morsels of beef kidney and liver. The alley cats do better when they have to find their way around barriers to get food.

These results conceivably could be explained, Warren said, by the fact that the first task requires closer vision which the Siamese have, and the second requires farsightedness which the alley cats have.

Cutler Given \$17,990 Grant For Research

Dr. Paul H. Cutler, assistant professor of physics, has received a \$17,990 grant from the Office of Scientific Research of the U.S. Air Force. The grant is for a 27-month period of research.

THE MONEY will support a research project in solid state physics dealing with metal surface phenomena. "The project will involve theoretical analysis," Cutler said.

The project is entitled "The Use of a New Model for the Surface Potential Barrier in Treating Electron Reflection, Inelastic Scattering and Electron Emission from Metal Surfaces."

USING A NEW MODEL for the surface potential barrier, the project will attempt to explain certain discrepancies that have arisen between the theories of electron emission and some experimental results.

It has been suggested that these discrepancies may be caused by an over-simplified and inadequate model of metal surfaces used in previous theories, Cutler said.

He explained that electrons are confined inside a metal surface by an electrical barrier known as a surface potential barrier. The research being conducted is an attempt to establish a more correct physical description of the metal surface barrier.

Farm Youth Participate In Program

Farm youth throughout the nation are learning more about business and management practices from the Town and Country Business Program which was developed by the University Agricultural Extension Service in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

THE PURPOSE of the program, according to Robert B. Donaldson, project leader and chairman of the Agricultural Economics Extension Service, is to prepare farm youth for the future in their understanding of economics and marketing in relation to all aspects of agriculture.

Many of these youth will be earning their living as adults in some area of farm production which will require a knowledge of the marketing system. Donaldson said. This program is designed to improve their understanding in this area.

Specifically, the program is to provide an understanding of business as it operates in the marketing field, explore employment opportunities in business which are related to agriculture.

IT SHOULD ALSO provide an understanding and appreciation of the problems and structure of agricultural marketing for the youth entering the field of farming and to teach some basic economy facts, Donaldson said.

The program consists of meetings where the youths, usually junior and seniors in high school, discuss a particular industry. This is followed by a "behind the scenes" tour in the factory or plant, where the students are told how the company is managed, how it handles its finances and how it markets its goods.

Donaldson started the program two and a half years ago "to explore the possibilities of developing a program for older youth which would be associated with agricultural marketing concerns."

After one and a half years of research work, a demonstrational program was initiated in five counties in Pennsylvania. At present 22 counties are associated with the program and more will be started this year. Also, it has spread to 38 states.

Chemistry Prof Studies Harmful Smog Compounds

Some dangerous, perhaps cancer-causing compounds which are found in smog are being studied in a research project by Dr. I. Clarence Hisatsune, assistant professor of chemistry.

Hisatsune said that certain oxides of nitrogen are known to be damaging to the human body and he is attempting to determine the physical and chemical properties of these compounds. "The results of this study will provide a basis for research on their physiological effects," he said.

THE COMPOUNDS are thought to be carcinogenic (cancer-producing), though little is known about their basic structure, despite their apparent simplicity, Hisatsune said.

"Since these compounds are formed in air," he said, "the results of this research will have a direct effect on us."

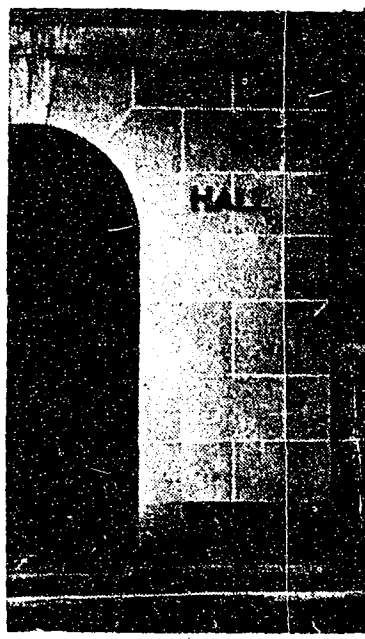
HISATSUNE BECAME interested in these compounds when he studied the chemical kinetics of one of them in 1954. Since then he has determined the physical properties of three nitrogen oxide compounds which have two or more atoms.

He recently received a grant of \$15,500 from the Public Health Service of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. This grant is an extension of government support for his research over the past four years at Kansas State University.

Hisatsune joined the faculty last September.

In 1895, faculty and students met in the chapel at 8 o'clock each weekday morning, except Saturday, for religious exercises.

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(Continued from page one) lish is not the official national language.

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