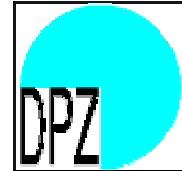




# Vortragsankündigung



## **Training of non-human primates using operant conditioning**

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**Deutsches Primatenzentrum (Hörsaal), Kellnerweg 4, Göttingen**  
**Mittwoch, 21. Januar 2004, 15 Uhr c.t.**

This seminar is intended to show the benefits of using operant conditioning techniques in training laboratory animals to perform desirable behaviours. The behaviours trained with these techniques range from voluntary cooperation in laboratory procedures, such as blood sampling, to reducing intra-group aggression around feeding time in species demonstrating dominance hierarchies and food monopolization.

Using examples from non-human primates, I will discuss the ethical and scientific merits of using operant conditioning techniques in the laboratory environment. Using "traditional" techniques for laboratory procedures, such as crush-cages or other types of forced restraint, triggers stress reactions in the animals that may influence data and compromise scientific results. On the contrary, trained animals show markedly reduced stress reactions, which are also detectable in a range of physiological variables.

I will discuss the reason why punishment does not work as a learning technique, and show some examples of how to apply operant conditioning techniques, using e.g. target training. The difference between positive and negative reinforcement will be explained, as well as how to loose undesirable behaviours.

Training animals need not be time consuming. In the long run, it may even save time. It fosters a human-animal relationship based on trust rather than fear, and may be considered as an environmental enrichment for the animal, providing variation, novelty and challenge.

Prof. Dr. Eberhard Fuchs