

Local

Embryo transfers successful but costly



Photo by Linda Warinner

By WAYNE COOK  
Battalion Reporter  
A procedure involving superovulation and embryo transfer has revolutionized animal reproduction, and it is the basis for a growing industry, a Texas A&M University animal researcher says.

Dr. Duane C. Kraemer, a professor of veterinary physiology and animal science at Texas A&M, and colleagues performed the world's first embryo transfers on baboons, dogs and cats.

The technique begins by treating a donor female with hormones to cause expulsion from the ovary of numerous ova instead of the usual one ovum. The donor is then inseminated, most often artificially, to fertilize the eggs. And within a week, the resulting embryos are removed nonsurgically by flushing the uterus with a special fluid. The embryos are then transferred to the uterus of the host female the same way they were recovered.

This technique is used primarily to increase the reproductive rate of valuable animals, Kraemer said. Genetic progress is slowed by the low reproductive rate of most animals.

"I don't know of any species in which embryo transfers have not worked if attempted with determination," Kraemer said.

Embryo transfer has been successful in 15 or 16 different species of animals including baboons. The first embryo transfer occurred with rabbits 90 years ago in England.

The success rate of the transfers varies from one species to another, Kraemer said. Embryo transfers are done most often with cattle, where 60 percent of the embryos implanted result in calves. When hormones are given to the donor, three to four calves result per collection of the embryos.

In North America alone, about 17,000 pregnancies were produced in cows by superovulation and embryo transfer in 1979.

But the expense of conducting

embryo transfers is a major drawback. Transfer units currently charge approximately \$2,000 for each calf produced. Some believe the offspring should be worth at least \$4,000 to be profitable, Kraemer said.

"The price makes it (embryo transfer) impractical for common animals," Kraemer said. "But that's OK, we shouldn't be reproducing anything but the best."

The technique of transferring embryos may soon be applied to humans, Kraemer said. Although he is not involved with this area, he has discussed it with Chicago surgeon Dr. Randolph W. Seed, who plans to transfer the first human embryo by 1982.

The results of embryo transferring may be great, including replenishing species that were once endangered and, eventually, a healthier animal population.

Future regents approved

Fund should stay same?

United Press International  
AUSTIN — A Senate subcommittee today approved Gov. Bill Clements' appointment of three Texas A&M graduates to the Board of Regents of their alma mater.

The appointments now go the Senate for confirmation.

The three prospective new regents are businessman Harvey Roberts Bright of Dallas, attorney William A. McKenzie of Dallas, and oil and gas operator Joe C. Richardson Jr., of Amarillo.

Sen. Chet Brooks, D-Pasadena, asked the three appointees how they feel about spreading the endowment of the Permanent University Fund among other institutions in the Texas A&M and University of Texas systems.

"I favor spreading the PUF funds

through the system requirements," Bright said.

McKenzie said he agreed with Bright and said that "PUF should be left for the purpose of excellence in education at the University of Texas and Texas A&M."

"How about excellence in education at some 23 other other institutions such as Stephen F. Austin and Sam Houston State College," asked Sen. Roy Blake, D-Nacogdoches.

"The Legislature should bring forth a plan to bring forth funds to make those institutions excellent," McKenzie said. "I don't think you should steal from one to give to the other."

Richardson told the subcommittee, "I don't know all I need to know about that yet."

The subcommittee also approved

the re-appointment of Alton Bowen as state commissioner of education.

Bowen said the teaching of the fundamentals of education — reading, writing and arithmetic — is the most important problem facing Texas schools. He also said he favors competency tests for teachers, before they begin their teacher education and again before they are certified to teach.

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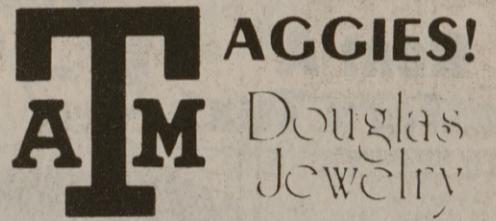
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Workshop for photography set for Feb. 7

The MSC Camera Committee will sponsor "Zanibar," a photo competition workshop, on Feb. 7, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. in Room 321 of the Physics Building. The workshop will have three sessions with four speakers discussing various aspects of photography.

Clifford Leabo, from the communications department, will talk about how to present prints and what to look for; Ron Ennis, photojournalist at the Fort Worth Star Telegram, will discuss how to convey a message with photographs; Cass Vechner, from the Department of Art, will speak on photography for the sake of art; and Bud Shannon, from the Department of Graphics in San Antonio, will discuss black and white photography.

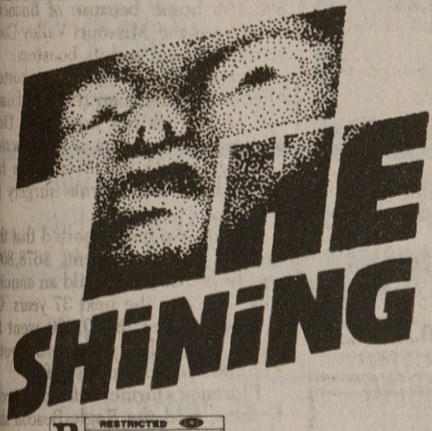
Participants are encouraged to bring black and white prints for critique.

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