



Tagungsberichte

InterNICHE Alternatives Training

Erfurt, 6th-13th June 2004

InterNICHE, the International Network for Humane Education, organised a 3-day "Alternatives Training" at Burg Lohra near Erfurt in Germany during the week of 6th-13th June 2004. It involved 18 participants from 17 countries, all of whom are National Contacts for InterNICHE, or other key individuals from the growing movement for alternatives in education.

The training aimed to provide the participants with the experience and understanding of a range of specific alternatives to dissections and animal experiments in education, with a view to empowering them to more effectively demonstrate and promote them as potential tools for replacement.

A number of participants self-trained in specific popular and important alternatives before the meeting, and then presented them to the group and answered questions. The alternatives included:

- Various veterinary mannekins and surgery training models, e.g. "Critical Care Fluffy" and "K-9 Intubation Trainer" (Rescue Critters), "Canine Foreleg" (UC Davis), "Suture Trainers" (Ohio State University)
- "Vertebrate Dissection Guides" and "Functional Anatomy of the Rat" CDs (Media Development Centre), "Catworks Dissection" CD (Science Works), "Equine Osteology" CD and "Canine Osteology" CD (UC Davis), various horse anatomy CDs
- "SimNerv", "SimMuscle" and "cLabs-Neuron" CDs (demonstrated by author and guest Dr Hans Braun),

"Physiology Simulators" CD (Dr Gabriel Cotor)

- The "Biopac self-experimentation apparatus" (Biopac)
- "CAL Pharmacology Compilation" CD (Dr R. Raveendran)

Various other alternatives from the InterNICHE Alternatives Loan System were brought to the event and were available to be trialed. A large number of alternatives, including freeware, were borrowed by participants and taken from the meeting for further exploration and for demonstration or donations to teachers in their home countries.

Other important skills that support effective campaigning for alternatives were also shared and learned. These included:

- Exploration of the InterNICHE "Policy on the Use of Animals and Alternatives in Education", and of the ethical, pedagogical, economic and scientific arguments for replacement
- Successful campaigning strategies
- Life science concepts and terminology
- Various computer skills
- Media and interview skills, self-confidence and giving speeches
- Fundraising
- A more developed internationalist perspective, and practice in the English language

The participants worked for over 12 hours a day and also held a Committee Meeting and an Open Day during the

week in order to make optimal use of the opportunities available from being together. Students from several towns in Germany came to the Open Day, and some now plan to get more involved in alternatives work in the country.

Feedback from participants was in general extremely positive, and the aims of the event were successfully met. A large number of alternatives were demonstrated by and for an international and multicultural group of campaigners, with new skills having been taken back to their countries. All participants are more familiar with the alternatives in the InterNICHE Alternatives Loan System, and some alternatives were assessed. Many other skills were learned, and the InterNICHE community was supported.

The one negative comment was that more time dedicated to alternatives training was needed. The obvious limitation is on the time that participants have available, and funds. Nevertheless, it was decided that all future InterNICHE events should have some degree of alternatives training integrated into the schedule – demonstrating the importance of such training for campaigners and others who promote alternatives.

Nick Jukes
InterNICHE Co-ordinator
19 Brookhouse Avenue
UK-Leicester LE2 0JE
Tel./Fax: +44-116-210 96 52
e-mail: coordinator@interniche.org