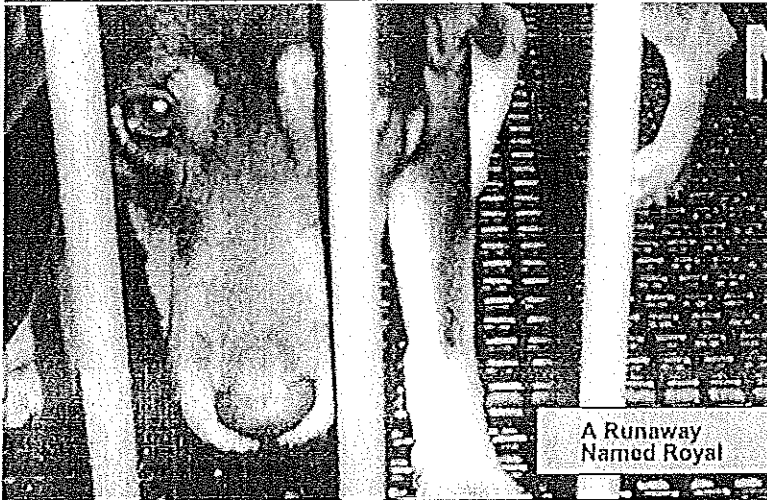


THIS WEEK

COMING UP



# No Safe Place

People love their pets, sometimes even more than members of their own family. Which is why they know that when they stray off, as they sometimes do, there is a safe haven for them at the pound.

At least that's what most of us like to think. But we've found that some pounds are making money off their pets to a very different, even deadly fate.

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**A Runaway Named Royal**

Royal had been part of the Bishop family for 13 years, a fixture in the family's home videos and photos. How could a dog that was obviously well cared for -with a collar and a tag- end up dead after running loose in a small town?

**The Dog Pound**

Few people know that public pounds are a cheap source of dogs for research labs. In Ontario, pounds have to hold the dogs for three days, and then they can sell the stray pets to labs that use them for experiments.

**Inside a Laboratory**

At the labs, the animals are used for scientific and commercial experiments and to train veterinarians. They'll put hip replacements in healthy dogs, for example, and use others for genetic research.

**The Regulators**

Unlike other countries, Canada doesn't have a federal law governing animal research. The Senate is currently studying an anti-cruelty bill that could be extended to include lab animals. And guess whose fighting it? The industry's own watchdog.

**Resources**

Links to research, organizations, media coverage and documents *Disclosure* uncovered while researching this story.

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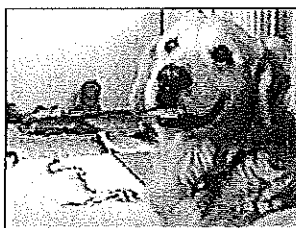
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Broadcast: March 4, 2003

*Royal had been part of the Bishop family for 13 years, a fixture in the family's home videos and photos. How could a dog that was obviously well cared for -with a collar and a tag- end up dead after running loose in a small town?*

Laurie Bishop remembers the day he went missing like it was yesterday: "We went all over the place looking for him, looked around the farm immediately first and then headed down the road."



Royal had been part of the Bishop family for 13 years, a fixture in the family's home videos photos.

And that's how it all began, the search for a lost dog. Laurie's husband led that search for their dog, Royal.

[:: more photos of Royal ::](#)

"He called several different places. He tried the fire department, the police, and they all just basically didn't know," Laurie recalls.

The golden retriever had been part of the family for 13 years, a fixture in the Bishop's home videos and family photos.

Laurie's husband finally tracked Royal down. The local dogcatcher had picked him up. He called Laurie to break the news. Royal wasn't safe. He was dead. The dogcatcher said he'd been put down.



Royal and Laurie in 1996.

"I had dropped the phone actually," Laurie says. "I think I was just screaming, you know, 'No!' ... I couldn't believe it; I didn't want to believe it."

But how could a dog that was obviously well cared for -with a collar and a tag- end up dead after running loose in a small town?

"That's the beginning of my ... you know, wait a minute, there's something wrong here," says Laurie. "How could this happen?"

After weeks of frantic phone calls, Laurie finally learned her local

pound sold her dog to an animal lab at the University of Guelph. But Royal was too old to endure any experiments, so he was euthanized.

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Broadcast: March 4, 2003

*Few people know that public pounds are a cheap source of dogs for research labs. In Ontario, pounds have to hold the dogs for three days, and then they can sell the stray pets to labs that use them for experiments.*



The pounds have to hold the dogs for three days. After that, they can sell the stray pets to labs, which use them for experiments.

Few people know that public pounds are a cheap source of dogs for research labs. The pounds have to hold the dogs for three days. After that, they can sell the stray pets to labs, which use them for experiments. It's done right across the country. Here in Ontario, like it or not, it's the law.

**Note:** Although the selling of pound animals to research can be found across Canada, some municipalities have stopped the practice. Some local municipalities have

also extended the holding period (in which they keep animals before offering them to research) beyond three days.

Shelters don't like talking about this. *Disclosure* called about 20 shelters - most deny selling dogs for fear of a public backlash.

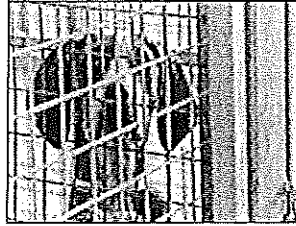
But it does help them cut costs. They don't have to board the animals, or pay to euthanize them.

"I think a lot of people, I find when they come into the shelter that they're not even aware that the province requires them to sell to research," says Sheila Elkington.

Elkington is an animal control officer for a shelter in Bowmanville, Ontario, which was once one of the biggest suppliers of animals for research labs in the province. Elkington hated handing the animals over, so the town stopped it. They now find homes for 99% of the stray dogs.

But Elkington still remembers what she calls "the bad old days": "If we had an order there and we had no way to get the animal home, we had to fill the order before we were permitted to euthanize it..."

"We had research requests, they came in on a regular basis. They specified what weight in kilograms the animals were to be. They had to be friendly; they had to be in good health... They had to have something that was handle-able, to do whatever the tests were. So they didn't want anything that was going to be aggressive with them."



*Disclosure* called about 20 shelters - most deny selling dogs for fear of a public backlash.

In other words - a friendly dog, like someone's pet. Like Laurie Bishop's dog, Royal [see: [A Runaway Named Royal](#)].

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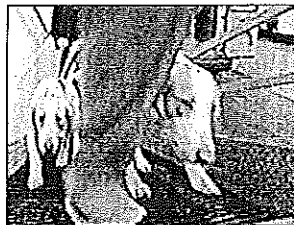
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Broadcast: March 4, 2003

*At the labs, the animals are used for scientific and commercial experiments and to train veterinarians. They'll put hip replacements in healthy dogs, for example, and use others for genetic research.*

Every week, dogs are delivered to an animal lab at the University of Guelph. It's one of the biggest of Canada's 200 or so labs that do experiments on animals.



Dogs arriving at the Guelph facility.

The dogs are used for scientific and commercial experiments, and to train veterinarians. They'll put hip replacements in healthy dogs, for example, and use others for genetic research.

The dogs are weighed and prepared –they call it “conditioning”– before they undergo experiments. About 700 dogs are conditioned at the Guelph facility every year.

Dr. Denna Benn is the Director of Animal Care Services at the University of Guelph. She led *Disclosure* on a tour, showing us the sunny side of animal experimentation.

Dr. Benn insists the dogs are well cared for –most every dog we saw had a brand new chew toy and the floor was still wet from being washed. In fact, Dr. Benn's animal facility has won an award from CCAC for its quality of animal care.



“Purpose bred” dogs, like this beagle, are born and bred for experiments.

“At least 30 per cent of the animals that go through shelters and humane societies are being euthanized,” says Dr. Benn, “and so rather than kill those dogs and then go ahead raise more dog for purpose bred for research, they felt that rather than have two animals die potentially we would end up using the one dog.”

“And again, we want to make sure we're only using pound dogs where we need them to.”

So it's all about saving lives? Well not exactly. Laboratories also save money –lots of it– by using dogs from your local pound. Pound dogs are sold for a flat rate: \$6 a head.

Now consider the alternative: what's called a "purpose bred dog." They're born and bred for experiments. A purpose bred dog can cost as much as \$500 US, plus shipping and handling.

"Those animals have to come from out of Canada," says Dr. Benn. "We don't have a supplier in Canada, so they're making long journeys, they're coming from either New York State or Indiana."

But they're not all doomed dogs. And just to prove her point, Dr. Benn showed us the lab's "Feel-Good Board."



Dogs are adopted out of the Guelph facility "whenever possible". Photos of the lucky dogs get posted on the facility's "Feel-Good Board".

"Wherever possible," she says, "if the animal doesn't have to be euthanized because they have to collect tissues or something that would be life threatening, then the animals will be adopted out."

But at best, 20 per cent of the dogs that come for research will make it out alive. The rest will eventually die in the name of science.

**MARK KELLEY:** We're in a research facility and yet we're not seeing any research, why is that?

**DR. BENN:** Because in actual fact there's very little research that's done here in the holding facility. Most of the research is done in the laboratories, in the research laboratories.

**MARK KELLEY:** And can we see those?

**DR. BENN:** For privacy and I guess liability issues it would be probably inappropriate for us to sort of bomb over there with our cameras.

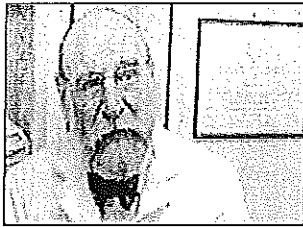
**MARK KELLEY:** But if our cameras were able to bomb over there, what would we actually see?

**DR. BENN:** They might be seeing an injection, they may see physical examinations, they may see temperatures taken on animals.

**MARK KELLEY:** But that's not the extent of the research that is going on in this facility – I mean you're doing much more than that.

**DR. BENN:** No, not really.

Actually they are. For our tour of the lab, *Disclosure* brought a list of animal experiments posted on Guelph's own website. The list doesn't give much detail on what's being done to the animals, but it does show there were dozens of tests being conducted that weren't part of Dr. Benn's tour.



Dr. David Neil is the head veterinarian at the University of Alberta in Edmonton.

"What are they trying to hide?" says Dr. David Neil, the head veterinarian at the University of Alberta in Edmonton and a former inspector with the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC), which oversees the labs [see: [The Regulators](#)]. "There should be nothing in animal research that you're ashamed of and you want to hide."

The University of Alberta posts its CCAC inspections reports online for anyone to see. It's one of the few labs to do that. "There should be transparency," says Dr. Neil. "People are ready for that transparency, this is the time for public accountability."

**see:** [Alberta Universities Act: Animal Welfare Regulation](#), [University of Alberta Animal Policy and Welfare Committee](#), and [University of Alberta CCAC Assesment Report 1999 \[PDF\]](#) (note: the 1999 report is from the most recent Alberta CCAC inspection. The University of Alberta is due for an inspection in May 2003.)

The University of Alberta has stopped using pound dogs for experiments. They've shown they can continue their research only using purpose bred dogs. "We use very few dogs now," says Dr. Neil. "When I first came in 1986 we used over 800 dogs a year. In the last two years we've used 53 and 54 respectively." [For more on the University's decision, see: [University contemplates scrapping experiments on stray dogs](#) - article from the Canadian Press, May 16, 2000.]

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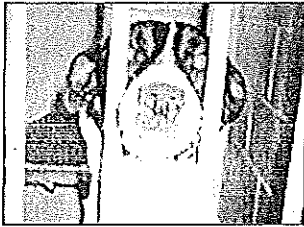
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Broadcast: March 4, 2003

*Unlike other countries, Canada doesn't have a federal law governing animal research. The Senate is currently studying an anti-cruelty bill that could be extended to include lab animals. And guess whose fighting it? The industry's own watchdog.*



What happens to those dogs remains a secret. The research is confidential.

Some people might think the animal rights movement all but ended the practice of using animals for experiments – but far from it. The latest statistics show the number of dogs being used in labs is going up; with more and more of them plucked from your neighbourhood pound.

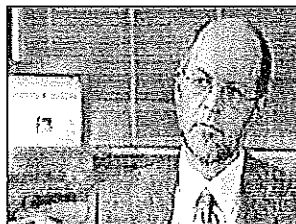
What happens to those dogs remains a secret. The research is confidential, and the only national group that oversees the labs is actually set up and run by the research organizations themselves.

The people who inspect the labs are members of the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC). They set and enforce the guidelines for animal testing. The CCAC only inspects labs every three to five years, and they give them plenty of warning.

*Disclosure* reporter Mark Kelley spoke with Dr. Clement Gauthier, executive director of the Canadian Council on Animal Care:

**MARK KELLEY:** There seems to be a feeling as far as the CCAC's concerned that you are run by your clients, who have a vested interest in using animals. So when it comes time for inspections you're not going to get tough with the people who are paying your bills.

**DR. GAUTHIER:** The Canadian Council on Animal Care basically operates on the peer review base. Which means that you really have to have those who are impacted on board so they participate in the programs, since it's a



Dr. Clement Gauthier,  
executive director of the  
Canadian Council on Animal  
Care.

volunteer system. Basically you must have them aboard. You must have all the users and the non-users as well.

**MARK KELLEY:** But how tough are the users going to be in cracking down on themselves?

**DR. GAUTHIER:** Oh, it's pretty tough I can tell you.

**MARK KELLEY:** In all this time then, in 34 years that you've been in operation, you've never had to shut anyone down? Everyone plays by the rules?

**DR. GAUTHIER:** Yes they do, definitively, the answer is yes.



Reporter Mark Kelley interviewing Dr. David Neil, head vet at the University of Alberta.

"It's not an inspection where you're trying to catch people out," says Dr. David Neil, the head vet at the University of Alberta, and a former CCAC inspector. Dr. Neil says the CCAC is a paper tiger that needs teeth:

**MARK KELLEY:** Who in their right mind, knowing that the CCAC inspectors are coming are going to have any problems? I

mean, you're going to wash the floors; the animals are going to have their teeth brushed and they're going to be putting on their Sunday best for the inspectors.

**DR. NEIL:** Absolutely.

**MARK KELLEY:** Why do we need to know what's going on behind closed doors?

**DR. NEIL:** The reason for that is that we're using animals in research and we all want to know, to feel comfortable with it: that wherever we're using them and whenever we're using them, that they're getting the best treatment possible.

**MARK KELLEY:** Have you seen cases where they're not?

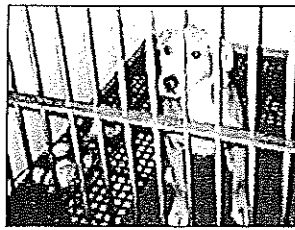
**DR. NEIL:** Oh yes all the time... People who are using very poor methods of anaesthesia and inadequate methods of anaesthesia, not using analgesics properly, not allowing animals to live too long before they are put to sleep. So that we know "end-points" has become a very big issue.

The University of Alberta posts its CCAC inspections reports online for anyone to see. It's one of the few labs to do that. "There should be transparency," says Dr. Neil. "People are ready for that transparency, this is the time for public accountability."

[see: Alberta Universities Act: Animal Welfare Regulation, University of Alberta Animal Policy and Welfare Committee, and University of Alberta CCAC Assesment Report 1999 \[PDF\]](#) (note: the 1999 report is from the most recent Alberta CCAC inspection. The

University of Alberta is due for an inspection in May 2003.)

But there is little transparency now. While CCAC members see what's going on behind the labs' closed doors, they are gagged by confidentiality agreements. One of the few things we do know, according to the CCAC's latest report, is that more animals are being subjected to higher levels of pain in lab experiments.



According to the CCAC's latest report, more animals are being subjected to higher levels of pain in lab experiments.

But what exactly is going on in these labs? Dr. Gauthier says that's confidential.

**MARK KELLEY:** But a lot of this is publicly funded research. Why shouldn't it be disclosed, why shouldn't it be made public?

**DR. GAUTHIER:** If you don't know the whole environment, where the assessment was done, and probably the previous assessment, then you could misjudge the situation. And that is done also to avoid, as I mentioned, in other cases the animal extremist groups to target these institutions.

Laurie Bishop lost her dog, Royal, to pound seizure [see: [A Runaway Named Royal](#)]. Bishop felt the public should know what was going on in the labs, so she started a public campaign crusading for an end to the use of pound dogs.

"I was touched by what happened," says Dr. Gauthier, "I'm a pet owner as well."



Royal vanished in September 2001. For his story, see: [A Runaway Named Royal](#)

Dr. Gauthier felt sorry for Laurie's loss, but not sorry enough to recommend that labs stop using pound dogs.

**MARK KELLEY:** Why not say- let's stop using pound animals let's stop using pound dogs - that's a sure fire way to get around this?

**DR. GAUTHIER:** People probably as well are mindful as well that their own pets are suffering from the same disease that we do suffer from. And they will require the same sort of medications to treat them as well - so research is needed to find those things for their benefits as well as ours.

**MARK KELLEY:** You've got a pet - would you want your pet used?

**DR. GAUTHIER:** No, but I would make sure that my pet doesn't run free without his badge and properly identified. That's my responsibility and my duty and that's what I do.

Unlike other countries, Canada doesn't have a federal law governing animal research and there is concern. Canada will become a haven for animal experimentation. The Senate is currently studying an anti-cruelty bill that could be extended to include lab animals. And guess whose fighting it? The industry's own watchdog, the CCAC.




Reporter Mark Kelley interviewing Dr. Gauthier.

**MARK KELLEY:** Why then have you taken a position against the federal legislation against cruelty to animals? Why are you lobbying against that?

**DR. GAUTHIER:** We are not lobbying against it --I don't know where you took your information-- but we have stated publicly that we are for it.

**MARK KELLEY:** You support it as long as it doesn't apply to animals being used in research?

**DR. GAUTHIER:** No, no, no. We are for it, but we just want to be sure that actually through the various wording changes that are being made that there is no potential negative impact that would result on the socially acceptable use of animals in science.

- **DOCUMENTS:**  [Canadian Council on Animal Care: Proposed amendments to Bill C-15 \[PDF\]](#) - submitted to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights. See also: [CCAC position statement on Bill C-15B \[PDF\]](#).

Some communities are passing by-laws to stop the use of pound animals. It's a small step, but big enough to worry Dr. Denna Benn at the University of Guelph's animal laboratory [see: [Inside a Laboratory](#)].



Dr. Denna Benn at the

**MARK KELLEY:** Could we get a list of which pounds that you get these from?

**DR. BENN:** No, in actual fact we've got an arrangement with the pounds that we won't release that information. And the reason that we

University of Guelph's animal laboratory. don't do that is because animal activists in the past have mounted campaigns of harassment, etcetera, and are motivated to try to convince people not to release these pound dogs.

**MARK KELLEY:** That object to the fact to the use of these pound dogs specifically?

**DR. BENN:** Well, it can be that, right through as soon as you get rid of the pound dogs the next thing is the purpose bred dogs. And then once we've got rid of the purpose bred dogs, then it's the cats, the goats. It's the whole thing. So of course, once it's released to the public, you don't know where it's going to go.

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