

Thuggery Defeats Science

Cambridge University has **cancelled** the construction of a research laboratory that would have used monkeys for neurological testing because they couldn't afford the security cost of keeping out anti-vivisectionist groups.

One of the animal rights protesters offered the following excuse for thuggery:

"We are absolutely delighted," said a spokeswoman for Animal Aid. In a joint statement with the National Anti-Vivisection Society, the group said the decision signalled that the university *failed to show the proposed experiments would be of any use to people*. [Our italics]

That is false. Here is what the lab was going to be used for:

The university and the publicly funded Medical Research Council (MRC), said the decision was a great disappointment as the laboratory would have attracted scientists from around the world to work on diseases such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's.

These terrible diseases are blighting and destroying hundreds of millions of lives at this moment. Making progress in understanding them is the very epitome of what is "of use to people", and Animal Aid's excuse that animal testing **doesn't help** with curing human diseases is just a sham. They oppose it on principle and most of their factual arguments are pseudo-scientific claptrap. Yes, animals are not perfect models of human biology, but they are better than anything else short of experimenting on living human beings.

It is a shameful indication of the state of our society that this bunch of thugs is empowered to stamp on scientific innovation to the detriment of the entire human race.

Fri, 01/30/2004 - 23:37 | [digg](#) | [del.icio.us](#) | [permlink](#)

Isn't Animal Aid's position a conspiracy theory?

At the risk of seeming to see **conspiracy theories** everywhere...

When Animal Aid says that the normal processes of scientific peer

review and financial oversight are systematically delivering the wrong answer to a factual question ("are animal experiments useful to medical science?") – isn't that a conspiracy theory?

I mean, what are they alleging? That all the scientists in the Establishment get such a huge kick out of cutting up animals that they have agreed to falsify their research reports and reviews, impede their own research, and defraud the public just so they can carry on doing it? Could anything less explain the difference between the MRC's stated opinion and Animal Aid's FAQ?

by **David Deutsch** on Sat, 01/31/2004 - 00:46 | [reply](#)

A Modest Proposal

If the protesters really want to save the monkeys, as well as to address the issue of the animals not modelling human biology perfectly, then I think they should each volunteer to replace a monkey in the experiments.

Their brains are like new (rarely used).

Gil

by **Gil** on Sat, 01/31/2004 - 00:52 | [reply](#)

i bet they're commie vegan ludites too

gil: rofl

dd: i didn't think so from what's quoted here. but i went to their site and OMG. not only do i agree but i have to point out they say:

Animals as 'models' to predict human reactions to drugs or chemicals are worse than useless, with a prediction rate (for harmful side-effects) of only 5-25% - and this is according to a former Director of Huntingdon Life Sciences, the notorious animal testing company! We would actually be better off tossing a coin than relying on animals in risk assessments

which is just interminably stupid

and

Animal experiments are in the industry's interests because they can be used to market their products more quickly

one wonders how useless animals tests *speed up* development times as opposed to skipping them.

-- Elliot Temple

<http://www.curi.us/>

by **Elliot Temple** on Sat, 01/31/2004 - 01:12 | [reply](#)

re A Modest proposal

I think they should each volunteer to replace a monkey in the experiments. Their brains are like new (rarely used).

Is there any reason to believe that animal-rights protestors' brains would provide a good analog for human biology?

by a reader on Sat, 01/31/2004 - 01:19 | [reply](#)

Who says monkeys are like humans?

Surely the animal rights protestors are dealing in flawed arguments and hollow victories. However, the essence of the question is an entirely different one. What is good science?

Part of the answer is found in robust replicability, the speed at which experiments can yield results. This points to why white rats are ubiquitous in human/science studies. Their brains are similar to human brains and their life cycles are short; and they breed really easily; and they live well in crowded conditions of laboratories with few side effects.

Whereas, on the other hand, monkeys appear to be a lot like humans in more ways than brain tissue studies might at first confer. They freak in lab conditions. Catatonia, dystonia, melancholia, feces throwing, screeching, bar chewing. Perfect for studying prison conditions perhaps, but Alzheimers?

There is the essence of the lab study question, what are the best laboratory mediums for particular studies? And, are they crude or finely crafted? Humans are in many cases the best subjects to study humans. It all depends. Ask the right questions, first.

by a reader on Sat, 01/31/2004 - 21:38 | [reply](#)