

NEWS

Differences between teaching and research clarified

by gary mantz

staff writer

Dr. Stanley Hillyard of the Biological Sciences department, interviewed two days after the *Yellin' Rebel* reported on an animal rights demonstration and the use of laboratory animals at UNLV, clarified the current situation by making an important distinction between teaching and research.

Hillyard had been quoted as saying, "In my 12 years at UNLV, we have never used dogs and cats in research."

By "we", he meant the entire department, which has not used live primates, either.

In the subsequent interview, Hillyard confirmed that statement, but noted the difference between basic research and teaching applications, wherein preserved bodies of cats are routinely dissected in Comparative Vertebrate Anatomy classes, as "a representative mammal."

"We buy cats that are dead and preserved by commercial companies," Hillyard said, adding that

the department recently invested \$4,000 in human anatomical models for use in Human Anatomy and Physiology classes, replacing preserved cats in that setting.

"We feel that the models are of a quality now and of a price that we can afford, and and they probably do a better job for a Human Anatomy and Physiology class," he said.

The key difference between research and teaching as terms is that the latter does not seek to generate new knowledge, whereas in research, contributions to various bodies of knowledge is essential. So, according to Hillyard, is some degree of animal experimentation in that regard.

"In our department, we do not have any faculty research activities that require the use of live dogs and cats," he said, and did not foresee their use in the future. But, in addition to the preserved cats for teaching purposes, the professor did recount a current research set of experiments undertaken with live diabetic rats.

"We're trying to unders-

tand how well they control their body temperature," he said, explaining that diabetes impairs the ability of sugars to get into cells, hence damaging the cell's ability to generate energy."

"Since the ability to make energy is linked to heat production, we are trying to study how well diabetics handle heat," Hillyard said, adding, "the ability to regulate body temperature under extremely hot conditions like we have in the desert can be important to understanding whether or not diabetics would have a problem with controlling body temperature."

The rats themselves are not exposed to lethal temperatures. As Hillyard put it, "They are exposed to temperatures that I suppose a sewer rat down on 4th Street would be exposed to" in the typical heat of Las Vegas.

Hillyard estimated the number of animals used, dead or alive, by the department was 30 rats for teaching uses, another 30 for research, and a dozen preserved cats shared by 24 anatomy students.

"Frankly, I don't know

the conditions under which cats are obtained by the supply houses," he acknowledged, but added, "I would like to think that these are cats that have unfortunately been killed as a result of not being wanted, being unclaimed in animal shelters. Rather than being thrown out in a garbage dump or incinerated, they are preserved and provide some educational value."

Federal regulations require that all such animals be killed with an approved chemical agent.

Referring to the study of comparative anatomy, Hillyard said it is necessary to utilize preserved mammals, "where you are trying to get the general position of mammalian muscle groups and internal organ juxtaposition...you need

to actually see the tissue itself." He stated that educating at the university level in such coursework requires more than what can be represented "on a computer screen" or on paper.

That assessment disappoints Students for Ethical Treatment of Animals spokesperson Nadine Prescia.

"I had hoped they could eliminate all use of animals," she said in a separate interview. We feel there are alternatives available, and we're hoping these alternatives can be used," perhaps with increased funding from the school for the purpose.

Animal rights groups like SETA propose computer simulation as an optional procedure. Prescia specified tissue and cell cultures as other alter-

natives. Hillyard had said earlier that computers, unable to generate new knowledge, have limited utility. He did not mention cultures.

In addition to live experimentation, Prescia said also condemned the use of dead animals for teaching purposes.

"By purchasing these animals, (scientists) are saying it is O-kay" to destroy them. She suggested a new academic policy for UNLV students who might not wish to engage in dissection or experimentation.

"A written policy that lets them do what they feel is best for them, without feeling uncomfortable or embarrassed, and without having their grades reduced," is what Prescia said SETA hopes to realize on campus.

ACLU monitoring libraries

by kim rutowski

staff writer

People are carrying books out of libraries to keep them off the shelves, Sari Aizley told students at the UNLV American Civil Liberties Union's annual recruitment meeting.

The ACLU is strongly opposed to any form of censorship, said Aizley, Southern Nevada chapter coordinator. Book banning is one of the censorship issues that the local ACLU chapter is working on.

Aizley is keeping track of the books that are checked out of libraries and never returned. She

said that certain controversial books have been reported lost by libraries nationwide. "Some people would rather pay the lost book charge than have the book on the shelf," she said.

The Color Purple has been replaced several times at the North Las Vegas library. According to Aizley, a black male organization wants the book banned from the library.

"A more obvious way that people are attempting to ban books, is throwing them in trash cans inside the library to avoid walking out with them," said

Aizley.

Trash cans are being checked for books at the UNLV library by custodians in cooperation with the ACLU.

Recently, parents at a local elementary school petitioned the Clard County School District to have *Nightmares* taken out of the school library. "The book is gruesome and gory; the kids love it," said Aizley. "The situation is resolved; the book is still in the shelf."

Our Bodies, Our Selves and *Where the Sidewalk Ends* are books that individuals have protested

See ACLU, page 5



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