

OPINION/EDITORIAL

# Animal rights movement hampers cancer cure?

by Dr. Herbert Pardes

Over the last 10 years, I have witnessed the increasing growth of the animal rights movement and its effect upon scientific research. With so much research conducted in college laboratories, the campus has become a focal point of anti-animal research protests. But the campus is also the home of rational debate and the free inquiry after the truth. What of the cost to human welfare if responsible animal research is ended?

I am convinced that the animal rights movement poses a greater hazard to human health than cancer, heart disease, or AIDS. For without the use of animals in medical research, scientists have little hope of finding a cure for these and other diseases. Computers and cell cultures are useful tools, and their growing use by scientists should be encouraged. But they simply cannot replace the knowledge to be gained from the study of living animals. We cannot determine the effect of a new drug in a child by testing it on a few cells in a dish.

Scientists who enter research

to learn how to alleviate suffering must care for the animals involved as humanely as possible. In most research the animals experience no pain or receive anesthesia or painkillers. Each university receiving federal funds has an Animal Care and Use Committee responsible for stringent review of proposals involving animals and facilities for animal care. According to some studies, the use of laboratory animals has dropped by as much as 50 percent in the last 20 years.

Nonetheless, the goal of the animal rights movement is the complete elimination of animal research, even where it is absolutely essential to our search for cures for serious human diseases. To that end, animal rights protesters harass professors with bomb threats and obscene telephone calls. They picket buildings, break into laboratories, destroy data, and release test animals. At Stanford University, mice and rats used for research on a vaccine for the AIDS virus must be guarded 24 hours a day. Many researchers from other campuses

report similar disruptions to their work.

Vital studies have been ended or curtailed, researchers discouraged from using important models, and institutions across the country are currently grappling with amendments to the Animal Welfare Act that promise to increase the cost of animal research by at least \$1.5 billion. At a recent pro-research press conference at New York University, a panel of researchers, administrators, and NIH officials stated that researchers are being forced to spend 30 percent of their research funds to improve security and meet new federal regulations for animal housing and care.

There has been no estimate of the lost productivity or emotional cost to researchers and administrators subjected to harassment, groundless attacks, stolen animals, or destroyed data. Each time a new medical breakthrough is announced that was based on animal research, the scientists involved can expect to be targeted by animal rights supporters.

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# UNLV administration must respond to rapid growth

At the campus level...

Many in our student body are dependent upon financial aid. Without this aid, many would undoubtedly withdraw, although not due to their own accord. Our Student Financial Aid Office is overwhelmed. Additional staff must be hired immediately. The current staff does an admirable job but is simply deluged due to the acute increase of student body enrollment. The administration realizes this but has, apparently, responded inadequately. If you want to improve this situation, complain to the administration and demand improvements.

In stark contrast, there exists a program on campus called Job Location and Development (JLD). It provides students with possible employment opportunities off campus. The program is free and sponsors job fairs, arranges workshops and writes a monthly newsletter.

However, this program needs a minimal funding increase, support from the educational community and more visibility.

Would it not be in the better interests of the students if admissions standards were increased (e.g. prestige, earning potential, et cetera)? Classrooms are sparse, faculty are overburdened and sometimes unqualified; in general, things are bursting at the seams and support services are inadequate as it stands.

Future plans by administrative personnel for new projects often overshadow some subjects, i.e. the aforementioned. Quality leads to better education and therefore generally, better profession, quantity leads to status quo. There is something to be said in favor of limited growth, but there is more to be said for quality.

At the local level...

This city severely lacks qual-

ity museums. There exist several low-profile, privately run facilities that inadequately relate a museum's function in society. The city should seek funding both private and public to fund several state-of-the-art museums, in order that this community's history is well-preserved as well as exhibits other preserved items. Museums are a definitive long-term asset to the communities that they serve, both socially and educationally.

At the state level...

The Nevada State Legislature meets every two years. The state of Nevada is growing too rapidly to expect its populous to wait every second year to legislate because, unfortunately, issues arise constantly, not every other year. Governing is a full-time profession that deserves full-time attention, by concerned professionals as well as fair remuneration. This subject matter is important and deserves a higher priority than most subject matter. The state legislature should meet every month of the year.

**Cannon Fodder**  
by **Martin Dupalo**

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