

Editorial

New animal rules should end protest

"Torture," and "slaughter" are among the battle cries of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. "Necessary" and "understanding" are the weapons of the University's researchers who use animals in experiments.

The current battle between animal rights activists and University researchers began last spring when PETA protested outside University research laboratories. The campus has since seen another PETA protest and a volley of accusations and denials on the editorial pages of the Emerald.

But in light of new rules regarding animal research, PETA has little reason to continue the controversy. Regulations for animal research at the University were implemented Friday by the University's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, and they appear to strike the delicate balance between humane treatment of animals and continuation of animal experimentation.

PETA members insist they will be satisfied with nothing less than a total ban on animal research. But this is an unrealistic, narrow-minded demand. It undermines PETA's credibility as a group.

Animal research will and should continue. It has contributed tremendously to the understanding of the human body and has led to successful treatment of several devastating diseases. Without it, humans would still be helpless against polio, diabetes, even bubonic plague. Virtually every vaccine and antibiotic is based on animal research.

Veterinary science and treatments such as rabies and distemper vaccinations for pets and other animals are based on animal research. In addition, a promising new cancer treatment reported Wednesday is based on experimentation with animals.

PETA can be credited with expanding public awareness of animal research abuses. The practice as a whole has suffered from needless repetition of experiments, unnecessary experiments, experiments that could have been conducted without animals and inhumane use of animals.

The rules take both sides into account. Researchers will be able to continue animal research, and if though animal research will not end, animal rights activists can at least be confident the animals will be used as humanely as possible and only when necessary.

Under the guidelines, the health, comfort and well-being of the animals are the top priorities. Cost and convenience to the researcher are secondary in all cases. Researchers are to use animals only when no other method is feasible, and they are to use the fewest animals possible. Needless repetition of experiments is prohibited.

The committee also set up a system to mandate adherence to the rules. To receive funds, a researcher must complete a detailed form explaining why the research is necessary and why animals are specifically needed.

The reports are ultimately accepted or rejected by Greg Stickrod, University director of animal laboratory services, or Richard Marrocco, the committee chairman. The committee also can be asked to convene to review applications.

In addition, animal research may be conducted only in approved areas of campus, all of which are inspected once a month by a veterinarian and routinely by Stickrod to ensure the animals are being treated according to approved specifications. Failure to treat animals according to approved specifications is grounds for immediate suspension of the project.

Researchers assert they have always been dedicated to humane treatment of animals. But the rules should increase awareness of exactly what humane treatment entails and should ensure research at the University is free of abuse.



Letters

Nuke letters

Do you know what I'm sick of? I'm sick of letters to the editor. Each day I glance at the letters, trying to find a letter with something new and informative to say. But No!

The majority of these letters are responses to letters written God knows how long ago; usually regarding the judgmental topic of sex. Don't you people have anything better to do with your time? I know the valuable Emerald space could be used for a more educational purpose. I vote to NUKE THE LETTERS TO THE EMERALD.

Dean Sidwell
Pre-major PPPM

Little help

While commending the state Health Division's school policy on AIDS (ODE, Nov. 27), the Emerald editorial staff accomplished precisely what the Health Division was trying to avoid. Policy decisions were based upon current factual knowledge and are being implemented to avoid unnecessary public panic. According to what is presently known, there is no reason to deny public school access to most healthy

children carrying the AIDS virus. In applauding the policy guidelines, the Emerald inaccurately stated that AIDS is contracted through saliva when there is no evidence to suggest that it is transmitted in this way. If AIDS was known to be contracted through saliva, it is likely that this would have been reflected in the guidelines for school policy (kids share saliva through chewed pencils, spit balls, etc.)

Any hysteria attributed to AIDS is more often a consequence of media attention than knowledge of scientific facts. In terms of public health education, the Emerald can assist in defusing public hysteria by reporting factual information. The school policy guidelines exemplify that AIDS is not an easily transmitted disease and this is what people need to know. Careless journalism does little to help those working to educate the public.

Ernie Randolfi
Graduate student
Dept. of School and
Community Health

reveal the subliminal messages hidden in some vulgar words scrawled across Tingle dormitory: "Wendy is a tease. Wendy needs an enema at hourly intervals." This graffiti, declares Straton, is a "rape sign." It teaches us this. It teaches us that. It teaches us a lesson, writes Straton, of which neither the author nor reader are consciously aware. (But which Straton apparently had the inside scoop on.)

While I can sympathize with Straton's desire to expose what, in his opinion, are rape attitudes, that still does not absolve him from the burden of providing hard evidence for the assertions he makes.

I'll concede that this graffiti may mean everything Straton says it means. But then again, it may not. In any case, there is not enough evidence available to either convict or absolve the anonymous author. Case dismissed.

Tom Visoky
Journalism

Lacks evidence

Jack Straton's penchant for trashing logic never ceases to amaze me. Last summer in our exchange of views about the meaning of the First Amendment's "establishment of religion" clause (see ODE, July 18, 30, Aug. 1, 6), Straton asserted it was "absurd" to believe "one person could 'prove' what another intended or thought..."

Now along comes Straton with his latest commentary, "Dorm 'rape sign' perpetuates cruel myths..." (ODE Dec. 3), in which it appears he has somehow divined the subconscious thoughts and intentions of an anonymous graffiti nut.

Employing his obviously prodigious psychic powers — and a little pop psychology — Straton treats us to an extended graffiti analysis in which he purports to

Apology

My use of the subject's first name and my identification of the dorm on which the author chalked a statement that I quoted in my commentary (ODE, Dec. 3) has allowed some abusive people to identify these two people. I am sorry for the pain this has caused. In support of these two, I would like to reinforce two main elements of my letter. A woman has the absolute right to stop being sexual at any time, for any reason of her choosing. Labeling a woman with the mythical word "tease" is purely an attempt to subvert the will of a human being. Also, one primary reason for rape supporting attitudes being so widespread is that they are unconsciously passed on by men who are not rapists.

Jack Straton
Graduate student, Physics
Men Against Rape
Thursday, December 5, 1985

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