

## IACUC needs a new meetings policy

This is not a commentary on the use of animals in laboratory research, nor is it a discussion of the validity of Dr. Richard Marrocco's proposed experiment. Rather, it is a criticism of the way the University's Institute of Animal Care and Use Commission approved Marrocco's protocol.

When it was formed, the IACUC was supposed to measure the necessity for animal research projects. Every experiment goes in front of the commission, supposedly for a strong review of what will actually take place during the course of the lab work.

Whatever the IACUC was supposed to be, it isn't. Now, commission members give only cursory glances at proposed experiments. It goes without saying that animal experiments will be approved. IACUC hearings, for the most part, are anti-climactic.

An example is the recent decision to let Marrocco proceed with his neurological experiment. The case received much notoriety, mostly because it would involve the use of macaque monkeys. Not since the infamous "Martha" case last year have monkeys been used in University experiments.

Students for the Ethical Treatment of Animals opposes the experiment. In the various discussions since the protocol was announced, SETA has questioned the necessity of using monkeys in the project, and raised concerns over whether Marrocco is medically qualified to work with the animals.

The IACUC held a hearing on Marrocco's case while the University was closed for spring break. At the meeting, the commission went into an executive session, despite protests from SETA members, who attended the hearing in hopes of airing their concerns.

SETA claims the executive session violated Oregon Public Meeting laws. The IACUC contends the private meeting was used to discuss information that was not for public consumption.

Whatever the reason, the IACUC did not live up to its responsibilities. The commission is obligated to hear both sides of a controversial issue and then make a rational decision on whether to approve the project. Even if IACUC did not break Oregon statutes, they were still negligent in not giving opposing viewpoints a chance to speak.

Marrocco's case is far from over. It is possible the IACUC could be forced to hold another public hearing on Marrocco's protocol. Such a meeting would give SETA and other animal research opponents the opportunity to present their objections.

In the future, IACUC should realize the best way to make a decision is to collect the widest range of information.



## Hubble telescope worthy of our attention

Barring a mechanical or weather delay, the shuttle Discovery will have carried the Hubble Space Telescope into earth orbit today, where it will spend the next 15 years uncovering some of the universe's secrets.

Seven years late because of technical problems and the Challenger disaster, the telescope will orbit the earth for at least 15 years, sending back pictures of mysterious celestial objects essential to our understanding the universe.

Hubble's total price tag is a hefty \$2 billion, with an added \$200 million a year needed for maintenance and operating costs. Of course, there are always people critical of putting precious dollars into earth orbit. In addition, there are those who are apathetic about space research, with its far-out theories and seemingly intangible benefits. But several facts about the telescope, and the space program itself, should be considered.

Simply put, the Hubble observatory represents possibly the greatest advance in astronomy since Galileo first started looking at the sky with his telescope in the 17th century. Above the distortion of the earth's atmosphere, Hubble will detect objects 50 times dimmer than those visible from the ground. The faint light from some of these

objects has been traveling toward us for billions of years, and the telescope will view them as they are formed. In this way, astronomers will be able to see the beginnings of the universe.

The telescope will also be used to detect planets around other stars, an essential first step if humans are to one day visit other solar systems.

In an age of mechanized warfare and "Star Wars" missile systems, Hubble is a refreshing change in the way humans use their technological knowledge and in the way they use outer space itself. Several other projects are on the NASA drawing board, including probes of the sun and planets. Surely, funding could be found for these projects from the bloated defense budget.

When one considers that the costs involved will bring humanity knowledge about the creation of the universe itself — and that the money spent on the entire space program represents a miniscule fraction of the total U.S. budget — the telescope is more than a wise investment. The Hubble telescope and projects like it deserve not only our attention, but our support as well.

## Letters

### Steelheads

Sitting in a cafe recently, I overheard someone argue that sea lions should be slaughtered and skinned for their hides. His justification for this was that these creatures eat and destroy steelhead populations, and should therefore be eliminated.

To you steelhead fishermen who think sea lions are the source of your problems, why don't you consider other factors; such as man-made dams and pollutants. If you have to blame non-human creatures for your woes, you have a pathetically desperate argument. Sea lions are not the problem, you are.

Every day in the news there is more controversy about eliminating the logging of old growth. There is tremendous concern that jobs will be lost if this happens.

Trees are more important than people! If some loggers lose their jobs, so be it. Theirs is a dying breed anyway, and their demise is long overdue. This should be viewed as natu-

ral selections. There are far too many humans on this planet, and not enough old growth.

I am what most people would consider a radical because I believe that humans are not the most important living creatures on this planet. I think that the lives of sea lions, trees, spotted owls, etc. are much more important and dignified than the lives of most humans; especially those whose livelihoods are dependent on the destruction and exploitation of other creatures.

In my travels, I have seen many sick, ugly, violent, destructive creatures. Every one of them was human.

Tim Webber  
TCF

### Extreme

On April 3, I had the extreme honor of watching a Eugene police officer apprehend a vicious criminal bicycle rider. Unfortunately, I didn't see the reasons for his apprehension, but I did see his bicycle stopped and

watched in fascination as his body was folded over the frame of his bike.

The biker was wearing Lycra shorts and a T-shirt, the easier to see his slim frame. The policeman was wearing a helmet and mirrored sunglasses, the harder to see his face.

The officer forcefully removed the bicyclist from his means of escape (the bike) and rolled him over and tried to get him in some sort of body lock. I could hear the rider saying, "Stop, please. I wasn't doing anything."

Was this extreme? I thought so — I thought there was much more force than necessary, especially following on the heels of the infamous "tear gas party" last weekend. To see a burly "officer of the law" repeatedly slam a young man into the asphalt was surprising. I thought that it only happened in the movies. True, it is possible the biker had a weapon of some sort, but I couldn't see one.

I had thought that the police-student argument would not affect me. I now know that I was

wrong. Of course, the biker may have been breaking the law, but that is not what I am concerned about. I believe that there was too much force used in this apprehension of a dangerous criminal.

Russell Gilman  
Philosophy

### Barbaric

As a former journalism major, I was shocked to learn that the school of journalism was sponsoring the pro-vivisection speaker, Jon Franklin, to talk on campus April 11.

In the past, I have attended many journalism lectures on the importance of careful research in order to provide accurate information to the public. Imagine then my amazement in learning that the department fell so far from its self-proclaimed guidelines by funding such a misinformed speaker.

According to Franklin, the animal rights movement wants to take us back into the dark ages by eliminating the use of

animals for research. An obvious scare tactic, this mistakenly projects animal rights activists as anti-research rather than anti-animal research, for they are very much in favor of advancements — but with alternative measures.

Computers and tissue cultures are now able to provide information that was previously unattainable through procedures using live animals, so unless there were computers and genetic technology in the dark ages, it is clear that the animal activists are not looking to push research back, but to encourage it as far forward from the barbaric, medieval methods as possible.

Careful research by the School of Journalism would have made it clear that sponsoring Franklin to speak on campus means funding propaganda.

Misha Dunlap  
English