CFAAR supports lab research

By Devon Wiel

An editorial appearing in the *Emerald*, Sept. 26, discussed several issues raised by an animal rights protest that took place on Monday, Sept. 24.

Animal rights activists claim many experiments that use animals duplicate previous experiments, yet they don't cite the original studies. The experiments on monkeys here at the University will *not* duplicate prior experiments and will address questions that cannot be answered any other way.

Commentary

Tissue cultures comes from animal tissue. Computer modeling data comes from past experimental data using animals. Both are a subject of animal research. Use of tissue culture and computer modeling are a vital part of the scientific process, but they cannot replace animal experimentation.

If you are concerned that current University studies duplicate existing research, please talk to the people involved in these experiments.

Equating cosmetic testing and biomedical research is inaccurate. No cosmetic testing occurs here at the University, and many people who do research on animals do not support cosmetic testing.

Attacking scientists will not get to the root of testing cosmetics and households products on animals — to do that you need to get cosmetic and household product companies to forgo profits and stop making new products. The testing came about because of the desire of consumers for safe products, and the testing is driven by the American public's demand for more products.

If cosmetics and household products weren't tested on animals, who would foot the doctors' bills for all the damaged eyes, lungs and skin?

Living creatures have a right to share the planet. We (humans) also have a right to try and cure our illnesses and improve our survival.

Animal research has yielded most antibiotics, insulin for diabetics, organ transplants, a screen for AIDS, and vaccines for polio, hepatitis B, whooping cough, diphtheria feline leukemia, canine parvo, animal distemper and many other things taken for granted.

Many lives have been saved and enhanced by these medicines and many people would die if they were not available. Stopping animal research would in essence grant a death sentence to all people who have, or will have, currently incurable diseases.

Three questions were raised in the article. Two are easy to answer.

The federal department that is in charge of regulating and distributing the most research money (which they provide) is the National Institute of Health. The money is used for personnel, equipment, chemicals, general lab maintenance and other supplies.

In addition, animal experimentation is governed by the Animal Welfare Act, which sets standards for the care and treatment of lab animals. U.S. Public Health Service's Animal Welfare policy regulations are set forth in the book "Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals."

Who should be the judge on which experiments are worthy and which are not? Scientists must be involved to determine whether experiments are scientifically sound, but the values of our society, and the goals and directions of research, must be determined by all members of society. Think about what the costs have been. Each individual must decide whether the costs outweigh the benefits.

The Coalition for Animals and Animal Research is an organization that supports people making *informed* decisions about these issues. CFAAR's objectives are to *educate* the public about the true nature of animal research and animal researchers, to *support* the responsible and humane use of animals in biomedical research and to *promote* the development and use of alternatives to animals in research.

CFAAR meets regularly on campus.

(Devon Wiel is Secretary/Treasurer of CFAAR)

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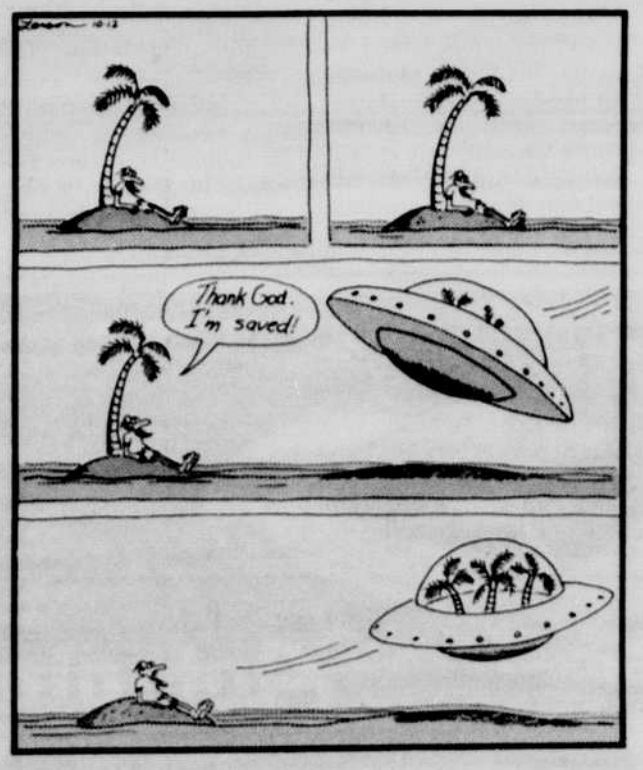

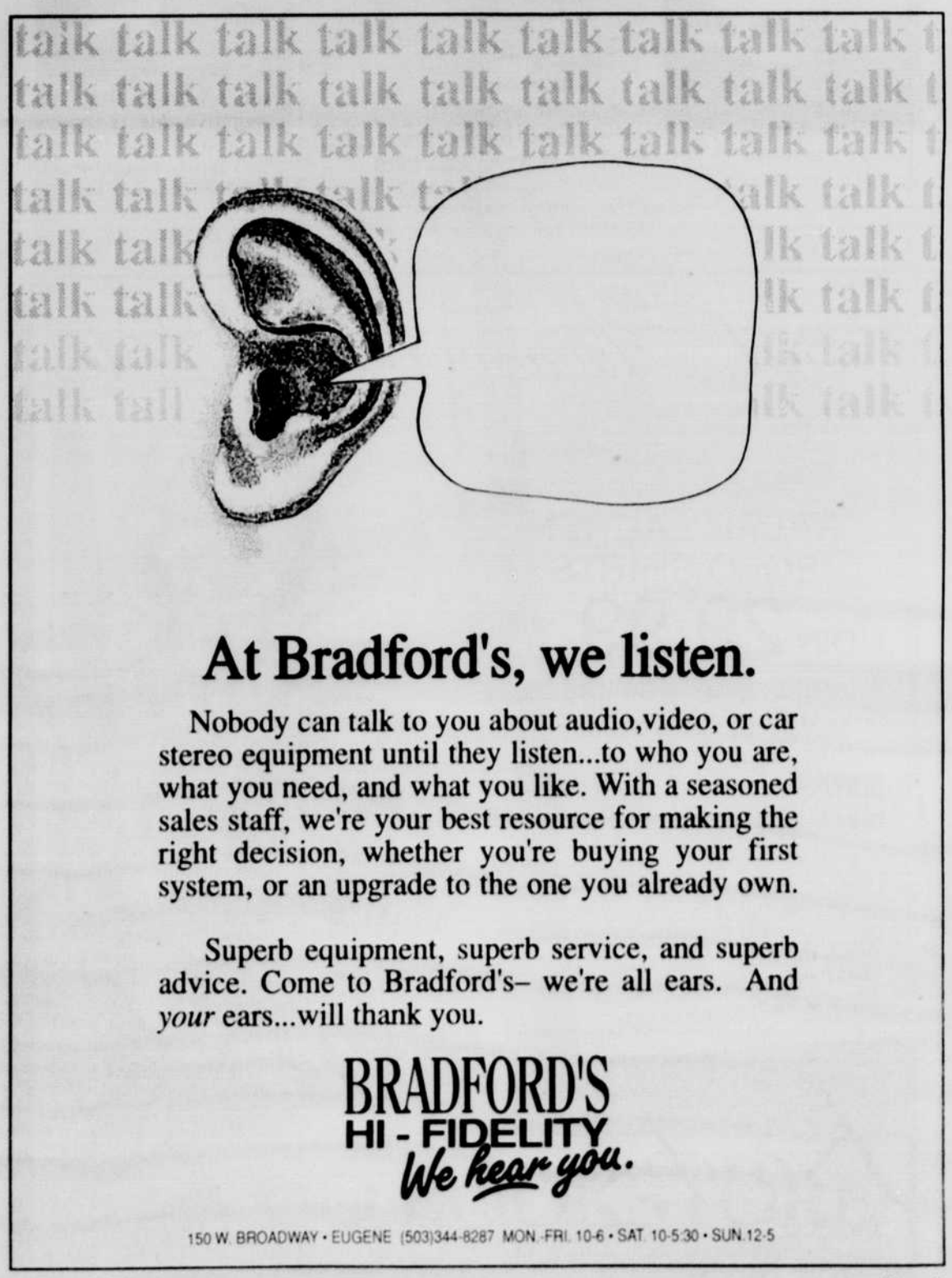

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