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attempting to identify when, during development, these differences arise.

"We have unpublished evidence that shows the brain is already sexually dimorphic in the third trimester of gestation in fetal sheep," Roselli said.

While OHSU was basking in the excitement of linking brain chemistry and sexual behavior in sheep, critics cried foul, objecting to the researchers' methods and findings.

"These are terminal studies," said Mongiello. "After they identify the sheep that are male-oriented, the first step for Roselli is to kill them and take their brains out and study the different parts of the brains. The next thing that he does is he injects different hormones into the pregnant sheep to see if he can alter the different areas of the brain. To measure that, he has to kill the next generation of sheep, so generation after generation are being bred, manipulated and killed so he can play God with their orientations and attractions."

The OSU newsletter states the researchers' intention to make gay sheep straight with the use of an estrogen implant.

According to the 1997 newsletter: "Stormshak and his colleagues are following up the study with another project that will analyze the possibility of altering the male-oriented behavior of rams by placing an estrogen implant in the body of the animal. 'Because it is the estrogen level in the hypothalamus region of the brain that may determine the sexual behavior of the ram, it may be possible to restore tissue levels of estrogen comparable to those of heterosexual rams and affect sexual behavior accordingly,' said Stormshak."

Yet Roselli claims this is not the intention of his research. He said, "This research is aimed at understanding the biological causes of sexual preferences and the timing of these biological events—not influencing them."

SHEER WASTE

The sexual minorities community and its allies have been particularly vocal in expressing concern about the implications of Roselli's and Stormshak's findings. Some have said this publicly funded study is the government's way of funding homophobic studies meant to "cure" future generations of queer people.

"To me, this experiment is based in homophobia, not homosexuality," said Todd Brown, an animal rights activist and gay Oregon native. "It's sexual eugenics."

Brown sees the study as a thinly veiled investigation into changing the sexual orientation of gay

people. He is particularly troubled that Roselli's research is funded by the NIH. According to the agency's Web site, the NIH's mission is to fund research that cures human disease. It states, "Helping to lead the way toward important medical discoveries that improve people's health and save lives, NIH scientists investigate ways to prevent disease as well as the causes, treatments and even cures for common and rare diseases."

Brown said: "I think it's another very troubling example of nonacceptance of gay people. The government is still looking at it as a disease. It's another attack on us because it's still OK, socially, to attack us as a minority."

Medical experts say the study sends the wrong message to society: that homosexuality can be biologically explained and altered.

"I don't like the fact that a government organization that theoretically studies diseases is giving money to someone to study homosexual behavior. I don't see anything in this study that would cure any diseases. I don't know of anyone who practices medicine today that considers homosexuality a disease," said Ray Greek, a physician and president the California-based nonprofit organization Americans for Medical Advancements, which advocates for alternatives to animal testing.

Malgosia Cegielski, a Portland-based clinical psychologist, calls this research "frivolous" and "frightening." She said, "I don't see any clinical utility or human benefit with what he's doing."

Greek and Cegielski reference a sophistication in technology that they say makes animal research both ineffective and obsolete.

"The gene expression and biological differences at a cellular level between animals and humans is so huge," said Cegielski. "To draw conclusions between animal behavior to humans is a joke."

Roselli disagrees. He says "mountains of evidence" show how animal research translates to humans. "In reality, nearly every medical advancement we have today relied on animal testing at one point. Suggesting that this is not the case would be rewriting history."

Greek, whose organization runs the Web site www.curedisease.com, said advancements in technology, such as functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging and Positron Emission Tomography scans, allow experts to look at not only the structure but the physiology of the brain, without the need to gather data in animals.

"This study actually tries to replicate something that has already been done in humans using these scans, and that's another reason this is a waste of time

and money. If you only want to learn about sexual behavior in sheep, God bless you, but you cannot look at something that is happening in an animal and find out why that is happening in a human," said Greek. "Just because he's found some portion of the brain that is different in sheep that exhibit homosexual behavior doesn't mean it has any correlation to human behavior."

For that reason, Greek, too, has a problem with the experiment's source of funding.

According to the database Computer Retrieval of Information on Scientific Projects, Roselli's study will receive between \$2.9 million and \$3 million in total. Since 2000, NIH has awarded his study grants totaling \$2,495,021. PETA researchers speculate that Roselli will likely apply for another five-year grant for the 2008-2013 cycle.

"Not only does [Roselli] get to repeat redundant, useless research, but OHSU gets a lot of money to keep the lights on. But why do they need to engage in this frivolous research when there are serious human health issues to deal with?" asked Cigielski.

Activists and professionals believe they could put Roselli's \$3 million in grant money to better use.

Activist Alyssa Collins, who is queer, has been protesting OHSU's alleged mistreatment of animals for five years. The 20-year-old said: "Since 2001, we've been making cuts in health care and education, and now [Roselli] is doing research for something I don't think is a public problem. The gay sheep epidemic is not something the taxpayers need help to solve, and the fact that he wants to move that over to humans—human queers aren't asking for a cure. Most people I know that are gay don't feel they need to be cured. They feel that it's part of us as individuals. The only reason it's harder for gay people is because of things like discrimination. The funding needs to go to teaching society to accept queer people."

Greek sees funding Roselli's research as a missed opportunity. "This is research that could have gone to funding breast cancer, and it didn't," he said. **10**



In Defense of Animals' Matt Rosell leaflets outside the Benson Hotel last summer during the American Society of Primatologists Conference, which was sponsored by OHSU.

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