



Animal Experiments: Essential & Lifesaving Research?

HAVE YOUR CONCERNS ABOUT ANIMAL EXPERIMENTS BEEN DISMISSED BY OTHERS? AMAZINGLY, ONLY 62% OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC ARE EVEN AWARE THAT ANIMALS ARE USED IN EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH IN AUSTRALIA THESE DAYS. AND THE GENERAL CONSENSUS IS THAT WITH ANIMALS 'PROTECTED' BY LEGISLATION, CODES OF PRACTICE AND ETHICS COMMITTEES, ONLY ESSENTIAL AND LIFE SAVING RESEARCH IS BEING CONDUCTED, AND IT'S ALL VERY HUMANE, WITH LABORATORY ANIMALS KEPT IN LUXURY HOUSING WITH LOTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL ENRICHMENT.

Surely, the graphic images and tales throughout history no longer occur today..?

From the Archives...

In the mid nineteenth century, French physiologist Claude Bernard convinced the scientific community that if a disease could not be replicated in animals it could not exist. It became understood amongst scientists that animal experimentation could provide both money and reputation.

He is quoted as saying: *"The physiologist is not an ordinary man: He is a scientist, possessed and absorbed by the scientific idea that he pursues. He does not hear the cries of animals, he does not see their flowing blood, he sees nothing but his idea, and is aware of nothing but an organism that conceals from him the problem he is seeking to solve."*

Bernard did not consider his work to be immoral and was renowned for purloining the family pet. So callous and graphic was his work that his own wife, disturbed by the tortuous activities in her own home, founded one of the world's first anti-vivisection organisations.

In the 1950's and 1960's Harry Harlow was renowned for his work on maternal deprivation and social isolation of baby monkeys.

His 'Pit of Despair' experiments involved baby monkeys left alone in darkness for up to one year from birth, or repetitively separated from their peers and isolated in a chamber. These procedures quickly produced monkeys that were severely psychologically disturbed and served as models for human depression.

Many people are familiar with the story of Britches – a stump-tail macaque monkey who was born into a breeding colony at the University of California 1985. He was removed from his mother at birth as part of a psychology experiment into maternal deprivation, and had his eyelids sewn shut as part of a three-year sight-deprivation study.

Britches (pictured in title) was removed from the laboratory, along with 700 other animals, when he was five weeks old during a raid by the Animal Liberation Front. The activists say they found Britches alone in a

cage with bandages around his eyes and a sonar device attached to his head that emitted a high-pitched screech every few minutes. He was clinging to a device, covered in towelling, apparently intended to serve as a surrogate mother.

By looking at these old examples we can see how unscrupulous we have been to animals in the past, often just to satisfy our curiosity - but things are supposedly different today. Question any company that conducts animal testing and they will always assure you that animals are only used when absolutely essential and there is no other alternative. Researchers follow a legally enforceable code of practice and all research is scrutinized and approved by an ethics committee. It could be easy to conclude that the types of research just mentioned don't happen any more. **Unfortunately however, they do!**

Recently published Australian research

HRA's reviews of Australian research have concluded that much experimentation is spurious with no ostensible benefits to human health and that the existence of ethics committees has not helped to weed out such spurious experimentation.

The following experiments have been conducted by **Australian** universities and published in medical journals over the **past few years**:

- Marmoset monkeys underwent tracheotomies and were then paralysed and secured in a stereotaxic frame to measure eye movements during visual stimuli.
- Kittens aged between one and four days old were placed in a chamber containing a much higher than normal percentage of oxygen for four days to observe changes to the cells and blood vessels in their eyes.
- MDMA (ecstasy) and metamphetamine (speed) were administered to rats in a high temperature enclosure to replicate the effects of drugs in dance parties. [Considering the existence of evidence of the deleterious effect of such drugs on humans we question why such cruelty is required].



Harry Harlow's "Pit of Despair"
Small, metal inverted pyramids
designed to induce depression.
After a couple of days, the 3mth old
monkeys gave up and hardly moved.

- Pregnant sheep were infused intravenously with ethanol to investigate the effect of alcohol on the unborn fetus. [Similarly, evidence of the effects of alcohol in pregnant humans is already known which questions the justification of this research]

- Rats were placed in small chambers, given electric shocks and exposed to cat odour (to increase anxiety) then given cannabis to observe the difference in their behaviour. [What possible lessons can be learnt from this experiment?]

- Six-week old mice were fed a high fat diet for four weeks. A compound was then extracted from their ovaries to determine whether the diet had any effect on their fertility.



- Merino ewes were isolated in an enclosed shed and confined to pens while their diets were manipulated to varying degrees of energy requirements. Their reproductive cycles were synchronised before they were artificially inseminated. The pregnant ewes and their newborn lambs (before being killed) were used for blood sampling to investigate the effects of obesity on pregnancy and birth. [Surely there is enough human evidence that can be harvested and more validly extrapolated?]

- Pigs were given silicone breast implants in an attempt to discover the reason for capsular contraction (hardening of the capsule surrounding the implant).

These 'case studies' demonstrate that experiments which occur behind lab doors are not some exaggerated claims from yesteryear. They are happening right here and now.

These experiments are not only highly unethical; they are unscientific. Data cannot be extrapolated from one species to another with sufficient certainty of success.

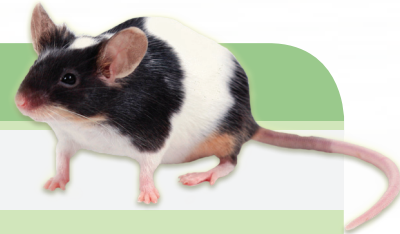
<References available upon request>

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

We need to challenge researchers and funding bodies, and encourage them to embrace new technologies: non-animal methodologies that are both more humane and scientifically-valid as they relate specifically to human conditions.

This is the critical role of HRA and drives all that we do. It's imperative that the community, and HRA supporters particularly, are aware of what is happening and what they can do to help stop it.

Take Action!



What you can do...

- **Subscribe to our email list** (via our website). Keep up to date with our 'case studies' and then write to both NHMRC and the ethics committees that approve this wasteful use of life and taxpayers' money.
- **Become a member.** For a small annual fee of \$25 you can add your voice to ours in lobbying for effective change.
- **Become a monthly donor.** For a nominal amount deducted from your credit card on the first day of each month, you can help us continue our important work.
- **Make a donation.** HRA does not receive any government funding and our work is therefore entirely dependent on the generosity of our members and supporters.

MY DETAILS:

Name: _____
 Postal address: _____
 _____ Post code: _____
 Phone: (m) _____ (w/h) _____
 Email: _____

PAYMENT DETAILS:

I am paying by:
 Cheque/Money Order Mastercard Visa
 Card number: _____
 Expiry: _____/_____
 Name on card: _____
 Signature: _____

I'D LIKE TO MAKE A REGULAR MONTHLY DONATION OF:

\$100 \$50 \$25 \$.....Other
 per month, until further notice. I understand that this payment can be stopped by me at any time.

HERE IS MY ONCE OFF DONATION OF:

\$100 \$50 \$25 \$.....Other

PLEASE SIGN ME UP TO BECOME A MEMBER:

\$25

Write: Suite 205, 19 Milton Pde
 Malvern VIC 3144

Phone: 03 8823 5704

Fax: 03 8823 5755

Email: info@humanereseach.org.au

Web: www.humanereseach.org.au