



## **The Humane Society of the United States' Animal Research News & Analysis February 27, 2004**

### **In this Issue...**

- 1. University of Cambridge Abandons Plans for Primate Research Lab**
- 2. Contract Testing Laboratory in the Spotlight in Germany**
- 3. Wisconsin Primate Research Center to Improve Reporting of Pain & Distress**
- 4. Film about Lab Rats Takes Home Honors**
- 5. ARDF Announces Grant Funding**

---

### **1. University of Cambridge Abandons Plans for Primate Research Lab**

The University of Cambridge has decided to drop its controversial plan to build a primate research center. British animal protection advocates had campaigned against government approval of the center and hailed the University's announcement as a victory. For its part, the University downplayed the impact of the campaign on its decision, citing a variety of contributing factors such as rising costs, a limited budget, frequent delays, and existing animal welfare laws, in addition to increased security measures to handle anticipated animal rights militancy. The Center's estimated cost of £24 million rose to over £32 million.

Late last year, the University had received the green light to build the neuroscience laboratory when the United Kingdom Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, approved the facility, declaring it to be of national interest. Prescott's decision came after a public inquiry and the local planning commission's rejection of the University's proposal, which cited zoning issues, among others. The government's intervention triggered Animal Aid and the National Anti-Vivisection Society to issue a legal challenge in early January to reverse Prescott's ruling. The challenge became moot with the University's January 26<sup>th</sup> announcement that it was abandoning its plans for the primate facility.

The pro-animal research lobby was, understandably, not happy with the University of Cambridge's decision. A representative of the Britain-based Research Defence Society predicted that the anticipated primate research would be exported to the United States. A representative of the USA-based Foundation for Biomedical Research opined that the University's decision "sent a chill down the backs of US research" and that the US "has underestimated the tenacity of the animal rights lobby."

Sources: University of Cambridge press release, January 27, 2004 ([www.admin.cam.ac.uk/news/dp/2004012601](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/news/dp/2004012601)); BBC News, January 27, 2004 (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/3432531.stm>); The Guardian, January 27, 2004 (<http://education.guardian.co.uk/higher/research/story/0,9865,1132241,00.html>); The Scientist, January 30, 2004 ([www.biomedcentral.com/news/20040130/03](http://www.biomedcentral.com/news/20040130/03))

---

## **2. Contract Testing Laboratory in the Spotlight in Germany**

A contract testing laboratory in Munster, Germany is at the center of controversy following the release of undercover video by the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV). The BUAV had sent a journalist undercover into the facilities of Covance to document the treatment of monkeys and any potential violations of German animal welfare laws. As a result of its 15-week investigation, begun earlier in 2003, the BUAV has accused Covance of, among other things, poor animal handling and inadequate housing; the BUAV has also challenged the scientific basis of the toxicity tests being carried out. The video depicts some particularly disturbing scenes, such as monkeys who apparently were being taunted by staff or forced to “dance” to loud disco music. According to the Britain-based Research Defence Society, Covance officials are claiming that some segments in the video were edited from disparate scenes and give the erroneous impression that the events happened in sequence.

German authorities have ordered Covance to install surveillance cameras in its animal rooms to monitor the treatment of macaques. Covance has initiated legal action to block the directive, stating that the cameras will be too expensive to install and that they run the risk of disclosing proprietary information. Covance, which is headquartered in England and the USA, has also obtained an injunction preventing the undercover investigator from continuing to distribute the video footage. The BUAV has at least temporarily taken the footage off its website, citing pressure by Covance against the organization’s internet service provider. According to the BUAV, German authorities have begun an effort to withdraw Covance’s license to operate.

Sources: BUAV, January 22, 2004 (<http://www.buav.org/home/latestnews.html>); Animal News Center, January 17, 2004 ([www.buzzle.com/editorials/text1-17-2004-49549.asp](http://www.buzzle.com/editorials/text1-17-2004-49549.asp)); The Covance Campaign, January 22, 2004 ([www.covancecampaign.com/news/01224buav.htm](http://www.covancecampaign.com/news/01224buav.htm)); RDS Email News Service, December 2003

---

## **3. Wisconsin Primate Research Center to Improve Reporting of Pain & Distress**

Following complaints from animal protection organizations, the Wisconsin National Primate Research Center (WNPRC) has announced that it will be more precise in reporting animal pain and distress to the federal government, as its researchers adhere to a more rigid clarification of distress. Both The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and Stop Animal Exploitation Now! (SAEN!) have been critical of the annual statistics on pain and distress that the WNPRC has filed with the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) under the Animal Welfare Act, claiming that the reported figures are implausible and inconsistent with published descriptions of WNPRC’s research.

WNPRC personnel noted special challenges posed by reporting distress. “Distress is quite subjective,” noted Joseph Kemnitz, director of the Madison, Wisconsin-based facility. “You

have to look at the animals to make a judgment and we are requiring every investigator who uses animals to do that.” Chris Coe, a WNPRC graduate professor, believes that “Most [nationwide] researchers underreport distress categories because there is no good definition of distress.”

*“The HSUS welcomes the WNPRC’s decision to improve its reporting of pain and distress and to pay special attention to distress,” says The HSUS’ Kathleen Conlee. “We hope the entire University of Wisconsin-Madison adopts this approach, not just the Primate Center. The USDA should adopt an appropriate definition of distress so that research facilities nationwide receive uniform guidance on this component of animal suffering.”*

Source: *The University of Wisconsin-Madison Daily Cardinal*, November 12, 2003  
([www.dailycardinal.com](http://www.dailycardinal.com))

---

#### **4. Film about Lab Rats Takes Home Honors**

A short film depicting how quickly lab rats return to their wild ways once given the opportunity, despite 200 generations of domestication, has been the surprise winner of two recent awards. *The Laboratory Rat: A Natural History* was written and produced by Dr. Manuel Berdoy, a zoologist in University of Oxford’s department of veterinary services. The film was produced as a teaching tool for researchers, to give insight into the complex nature of one of the most common lab animals. Berdoy released 75 lab rats into a large outdoor enclosure and followed their lives for six months. He discovered that the rats promptly formed hierarchical social groups and found food and water, despite being fed a laboratory diet for their entire lives. Other behavior caught on film includes anti-predation, mate and habitat selection, birth, and infanticide. Despite Berdoy’s shoe-string budget and lack of previous experience as a filmmaker, the documentary recently won awards at the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival (USA) and the Living Europe film festival (Sweden). According to Berdoy, *Lab Rat* reviews “the range of behaviours and needs which, despite generations of domestication, remain innate and ready to be expressed when given the opportunity.”

*The HSUS believes the film has obvious relevance to arguments about what constitutes appropriate housing for rats and other domesticated animals used in research. Domestication, per se, may not be as potent a neutralizer of species-typical behavior as some might have guessed.*

Source: *Living Europe Press Release; Nature*, February 3, 2004  
([www.nature.com/nsu/040202/040202-2.html](http://www.nature.com/nsu/040202/040202-2.html)); [www.ratlife.org](http://www.ratlife.org)

---

#### **5. ARDF Announces Grant Funding**

The Alternatives Research & Development Foundation (ARDF) is soliciting research proposals from scientists who have expertise in research and development of alternative methods. Up to \$40,000 in funding is available to support individual projects, with preference given to U.S. universities and research institutions. Preferential consideration is given to proposals that use human, rather than non-human, vertebrate tissue; do not involve the use of intact, non-human vertebrate or invertebrate animals; do not utilize serum or medium supplements obtained from non-human vertebrates; and can be completed in one year. The deadline for applications is 30

April 2004, with recipients announced on 15 July 2004. Guidelines and application form are now available online at: [www.ardf-online.org](http://www.ardf-online.org). The Philadelphia-based ARDF funds and promotes alternatives to the use of laboratory animals in research, testing, and education.

*Source: ARDF Press Release*

~~~~~

**Animal Research News & Analysis** is an electronic newsletter that provides up-to-date news stories and interpretive analyses concerning the use of animals in research, testing, and education. The newsletter is produced by The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and is distributed periodically. It serves as a source for information and is not a discussion list, so please do not reply to this message. Any questions, comments or email address changes should be directed to [ari@hsus.org](mailto:ari@hsus.org). To unsubscribe, please send an e-mail request to [ari@hsus.org](mailto:ari@hsus.org) with the words, "unsubscribe – Animal Research News" in the subject line; please specify your first and last name. The HSUS's collection of web-based animal research-related news stories can be viewed at: [www.hsus.org/ace/712](http://www.hsus.org/ace/712).

*Animal Research Issues, The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)*  
(301) 258-3041, <http://www.hsus.org/ace/11348>

**THE HUMANE SOCIETY  
OF THE UNITED STATES**

**~~Please feel free to forward this newsletter to a colleague or friend whom you think may be interested in receiving it.~~**