Abstract - Hansen

Ethics, efficacy, and decision-making in animal research

Those whose ethics countenance harming animals simply because they taste yummy or because animal research (AR) advances scientific knowledge cannot be logically convinced into thinking otherwise. Some supporters of AR, however, are squeamish about it and condition their endorsement with a “the ends justify the means” morality, believing that vivisection is efficacious in improving human health care. Such conditional supporters of AR might be logically persuaded to oppose it if presented with data proving that most AR does not lead to medical advances. However, most vivisectors don’t care if AR lacks relevance to human health and they will continue harming animals until decisions about animal welfare are taken out of their hands.

All institutional “protections” for animals in research, inadequate as they are, have been forced upon vivisectors from outside the research-industrial complex. American Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees (IACUCs) were mandated by Congress in response to public outrage over animal abuses in AR, but were quickly neutered by stacking the IACUC membership deck with overwhelming majorities of animal researchers; wolves entrusted with guarding sheep. Laws protecting animals from those who profit by harming them have succeeded in the past, and more laws passed by those who care about animals are the only hope for the future.

Dr Lawrence Hansen
School of Medicine
Department of Pathology
Division of Neuropathology
University of California San Diego

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