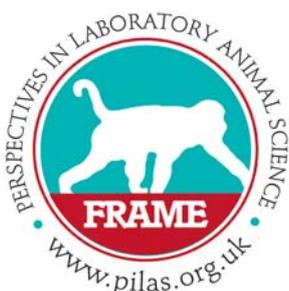


PiLAS

Renewed Concern about the Welfare of Laboratory Primates



CONTENTS

CURRENT DILEMMAS

Single housing of primates in US laboratories: A growing problem with shrinking transparency

DISCUSSION

In vitro models to mimic the endothelial barrier

THE WISDOM OF RUSSELL AND BURCH

One of the key points about the Three Rs is that, as Russell and Burch emphasised in *The Principles of Humane Experimental Technique*,¹ “the humanest treatment of animals, far from being an obstacle, is actually a prerequisite for successful animal experiments”. Indeed, they said, the “wages of inhumanity” are “paid in ambiguous or otherwise unsatisfactory experimental results”.

The article by Chandra *et al.* in this issue of PiLAS, on the commonplace single housing of primates in US laboratories,² is therefore a matter of great concern, for both scientific and humanitarian reasons. It even appears that, far from trying to solve the problem, the US Government may be trying to cover it up.

In the UK, the NC3Rs is putting a great deal of effort into improving the welfare of the non-human primates used for research,³ but one has to wonder what fundamental and significant changes have taken place since the Home Secretary of the time, Douglas Hurd, accepted all but one of 17 proposals put to him by FRAME and CRAE (Committee for the Reform of Animal Experimentation) on the day that the *Animals Scientific Procedures Act 1986* came into force.^{4,5} One of the points reported⁶ was that: “The very nature of a primate is such that you cannot institutionalise it in the laboratory and have a healthy animal. A primate is such that isolating in itself is deleterious.”

The current initiatives of the NC3Rs deserve to be applauded, but why do non-human primates continue to be used in research and testing at all, and how relevant and reliable are the data obtained to the understanding and treatment of diseases?

Commenting on a recent report that the cynomolgus macaque is resistant to doses of paracetamol that would be fatal in humans,⁷ FRAME’s Scientific Director, Gerry Kenna, is reported to have said that “This new research raises significant concern about the scientific validity to humans of drug safety studies undertaken in primates. The use of non-human primates in non-clinical safety testing is ethically undesirable and, in view of the substantial cost of such studies, can be expected to increase, markedly, the cost of drug development. Such studies should be considered only if they can be shown to be scientifically justifiable and there are no valid alternatives.” The *FRAME News* item concluded by saying that “More time and money should be invested in cell-based and computer models that would be more reliable.”

¹ Russell, W.M.S. & Burch, R.L. (1959). *The Principles of Humane Experimental Technique*, 238pp. London, UK: Methuen.

² Chandna, A., Niebo, M., Lopresti-Goodman, S. & Goodman, J. (2015). Single housing of primates in US laboratories: A growing problem with shrinking transparency. *ATLA* 43, 30-33.

³ Anon. (2015). *The Welfare of Non-human Primates*, 16pp. London, UK: NC3Rs. Available at: <https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/welfare-non-human-primates> (Accessed 16.07.15)

⁴ Anon. (1987). *The Use of Non-Human Primates as Laboratory Animals in Great Britain*, 16pp. Nottingham, UK, and Edinburgh, UK: FRAME and CRAE.

⁵ Anon. (1987/88). Response of the Home Secretary to the FRAME/CRAE primates report. *FRAME News* 17, 6-9.

⁶ Chivers, D. (1984). Comment in discussion session on *Laboratory Primates*. In *Standards in Laboratory Animal Management*, p. 272. Potters Bar, UK: UFAW.

⁷ Anon. (2015). Non-human primates and drug testing. *FRAME News* 74, 3.

PiLAS has been made possible by a grant from the Phoebe Wortley Talbot Charitable Trust

Published by: Fund for the Replacement of Animals in Medical Experiments
Russell & Burch House, 96-98 North Sherwood Street, Nottingham NG1 4EE, UK