

OPINION

PASADENA STAR-NEWS

pasadenastarnews.com
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2008

Hypocritical activists

Re "Scientific researchers targets of terrorism":

I couldn't agree more with Debra Saunders' editorial on the apparent apathy of the "world-at-large" to the recent alleged acts of intimidation and terrorism from animal activists against researchers at UCLA.

However, I think that the apparent apathy has more to do with the failure of the press to ask certain individuals the tough questions. For example, the press often quotes Dr. Vlasak, a trauma surgeon, who has become a de facto spokesperson for some of the more vociferous animal activist groups. Someone reading about Vlasak and realizing that he's a doctor and trauma surgeon may then think that such acts must be relatively benign. The press always seems to fail to ask Vlasak how he rationalizes continuing his life-saving work, and his usage of instruments, medications and techniques on patients that are derived in great part from humane scientific animal research.

Perhaps it's because he enjoys the prestige and money that comes with being a trauma surgeon? Or when celebrities such as Mary Tyler-Moore, Pam Anderson, etc., who are outspoken animal activists, including for PETA, pontificate to the public-at-large. Perhaps the press should ask them how they could continue to speak out against humane animal research when the drugs they use to stay healthy and to extend their lives were derived by the very method they want to quash.

Perhaps it's because they prefer to keep breathing?

And when my cats need to receive medication and even many orthopedic treatments, I realize that they have benefited from research that involved both animals and humans and that treatment in and of itself is not a bad thing.

Personally, I make a point of exposing such hypocrisy every chance I get, because if these activists and their celebrity spokespersons are so committed to stopping such research, then they should be willing to cease getting compensated for using skills and products derived from what they state they abhor. In short — no more Botox, no more false breasts, no more "happy pills" and many other procedures and pharmaceuticals they rely so heavily on!

Geneviève M. Clavreul, RN, Ph.D.

PASADENA