

The response reproduced below was submitted to the consultation held by the Nuffield Council on Bioethics on the ethics of research involving animals during October-December 2003. The views expressed are solely those of the respondent(s) and not those of the Council.

International Primate Protection League, UK

Your courtesy in inviting us to comment upon the arguments in your consultation paper is appreciated. Our experience and expertise is in the field of primates and we have largely confined our remarks to that Order.

There will always be conflict between those whose interest is in the animal *per se* and those entrenched in the Cartesian philosophy of animals as machines. To the latter it is entirely justifiable to utilise any resource in the cause of the advancement of knowledge. Their definition of ethical research is confined to potential benefit to humans.

In answer to your 6 Questions:

1. Use of Animals

It is not proved that animal research is a superior route to information.
Transference of results can, and has, proved misleading.
Acceptability of using animals does NOT depend upon purpose.
Physiological and psychological impositions cannot be ethically justified except in the animal's own interest.

2. G.M.: Genetic modification for the benefit of other species is NOT ethical.

3. Alternatives

Research should be adequately funded by MRC into modern procedures that do not rely upon animal models.

4. Ethical issues

Each conceptually aware animal values its own life in equal terms.

5. Regulation

The licencing system is not effective. True Responsibility and Accountability is non-existent. Past rulings indicate that the Home Office is not suited to the role of final arbiter on welfare.

6. Public information

Official sources of information to the public are biased in favour of the research lobby.
Secrecy is the enemy of truth. Undercover exposure and 'whistleblowing' presently provide the only real insights for the public.

[The International Primate Protection League also submitted to the Council a document entitled, *The Ethics of Research Involving Primates*]