

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.

### The Boyd Group

The Boyd Group is a forum for open exchange of views on issues of concern related to the use of animals in science. Participants in the Group span a range of expertise and perspective. They include veterinarians, scientists using animals (from industry and academia), members of animal welfare organisations, anti-vivisectionists, members of government and charitable bodies funding or directly engaged in research, philosophers and others.

The Group's objectives are:

- (i) to promote dialogue between these diverse people and organisations;
- (ii) to clarify key issues of concern identified by participants, in order to reveal the basis of the various perspectives and positions on the issues, and to understand where the differences lie; and
- (iii) where possible, to identify points of consensus and make practical recommendations.

The Group was founded in 1992 following an exchange of correspondence and subsequent meetings between Colin Blakemore, Professor of Physiology at the University of Oxford, and anti-vivisectionist Les Ward, Director of Advocates for Animals. The Group takes its name from its Chairman, Professor Kenneth Boyd, who is a member of your Working Party.

As you'll appreciate, given the Group's membership, aims and method of working, a response to any of the particular questions raised in your consultation paper would require a lengthy discussion for each aspect, much like the process in which the Nuffield Council on Bioethics' Working Party is engaged.

However, the Group has published reports on a number of topics that are relevant to the Consultation and I have enclosed the most recent of these. The publications are:

#### **1 *Boyd Group Papers on the Use of Non-human Primates in Research and Testing***

These papers seem particularly relevant to Question 4 in the Consultation. They explore empirical evidence and philosophical arguments relating to the moral status of non-human primates, and also welfare and scientific considerations in the use of marmosets and macaques in research and testing. The report also includes a paper pertinent to Question 5 in the Consultation, on the use of non-human primates in regulatory toxicology.

#### **2 *The Use of Animals in Testing Household Products***

This paper could be regarded as a case study in cost (to animals)-benefit analysis in a contentious area of product testing. The discussion seems especially relevant to Question 1 (about the acceptability of animal use) and Question 5 in the Consultation.

#### **3 *A National Centre for Alternatives?***

In respect of Question 3 in the Consultation, this paper explores arguments for and against more targeted efforts to develop replacement alternatives in research (cf. testing), and in particular, whether there should be a National Centre for Alternatives.

I hope that the enclosed papers are of interest and useful for the Working Party's deliberations. Please let me know if you'd like any further copies. Alternatively, they can all be downloaded from the Boyd Group's web-site, at [www.boyd-group.demon.co.uk](http://www.boyd-group.demon.co.uk), where further information about the Group and other publications can be found, including the following reports:

- *Ethical review of research involving animals: a role for institutional ethics committees?*
- *Advancing refinement in laboratory animal use*
- *The use of animals for testing cosmetics*
- *Genetic engineering: animal welfare and ethics*

The Boyd Group is currently examining methods for assessing 'costs' to animals in scientific procedures, and, in particular, the severity classification scheme used under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act, and hopes to report early in the New Year. I should be pleased to send you any future publications when they are available.

The Boyd Group submitted to the Council the following papers:

**Summary of the Boyd Group's discussions and conclusions**

**Paper 1:**

**Background information, including three case examples of the use of non-human primates in research**

**Paper 2:**

**Empirical evidence on the moral status of non-human primates**

**Paper 3:**

**The moral status of primates: are apes persons?**

**Paper 4:**

**Welfare considerations in the use of macaques and marmosets in research and testing**

**Paper 5:**

**Use of non-human primates in regulatory toxicology**