



## Words Are Weapons

The old refrain goes “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never harm me.” Contrary to this belief words are used to harm all the time, and the harm they do can be long lasting and irreversible. Words and phrases oft repeated tend to become accepted as truths and are not easy to refute. That is the danger. Some examples:

**Puppy mill:** A substandard kennel, at one time used mostly to refer to a commercial kennel though now used to refer to any person who owns several intact dogs

**Overpopulation:** Previously meant too many pets being reproduced with the result that homeless young puppies were filling facilities and being euthanized because of lack of space and people to home them. Now refers to all dogs and cats of any age temporarily housed within a facility

**Pet parent:** Used to denote someone who cares for and provides sustenance to pets. Term often interchanged with guardian. Supplants the term “owner” and has detrimental legal implications

**Potentially dangerous dog:** Because a dog may belong to a certain breed or perhaps be a crossbreed that resembles that breed he is discriminated against from birth, and perceived to be criminal even though he himself has always been well behaved

**Hoarder:** Someone who harbors more pets than they can care for. This is a subjective term that is usually no more than the opinion of the observer rather than having any validity. Being used more and more often as the reason to stage raids

**Abusive breeder:** Anyone who breeds animals

**Rescue:** A pet that is harbored temporarily before being sold/ adopted for a fee. Often a small fluffy dog that is acquired by a raid on an “abusive breeder” who operated a “puppy mill” Currently all pets get a certain status by being called rescue, no matter their origin

These are some of the terms that are being used with more and more frequency by those whose goal is to end all interaction between animals and man. Because they’ve been publicized so often by proponents of the animal rights agenda they are also being repeated more and more frequently by the press, legislators, and the general public. Who would believe members of any organization with the words humane or ethical in their title is a proponent for domestic animal eradication? Animal rights organizations portray themselves as kind to animals. Anyone who does not subscribe to their beliefs and methodology is portrayed as criminal. Gentle readers, when we also use these same words to complain about one another the danger to all of us who actually are proponents of animal welfare becomes much greater. Be more circumspect before you carelessly decide to throw a verbal weapon at a fellow owner because he did not agree with you. It often becomes a petty “my breeding is better than his breeding,” “my grooming is better than his grooming,” or “my kennel set-up is better than his kennel.” Though these words often used might be very detrimental to the reputation of your fellow in the short run, in the long run your words may be used to deliver a death knell to all of us. *By Barbara Axel*

# Animal Genetics Help Scientists Understand Diseases

Not only have great strides been made in human genetics but also in animal genetics. This is important because such genetic information is not only helpful to the animal, but it frequently can also be applied to humans. A recent article in the New England Journal of Medicine discussed how genetic research from one type of animal, the dog, has been helpful in better understanding the genetics of certain inherited disorders that are present in both dogs and humans.

It is generally easier to do genetic research on dogs than on people. Dogs reproduce many litters, therefore, more animals are available to study. Compared with dogs who are bred much closer, purebreds, there is more genetic heterogeneity present in humans. This results in a greater number of uncontrolled variables being present in people than in dogs. Such genetic heterogeneity or variables can make it more difficult to interpret the results of genetic studies.

There are many genetic disorders that affect the bones of dogs. Hip dysplasia is frequently found in larger dogs. Another condition that affects the bones and is also present in both humans and dogs is chondrodysplasia. About 20 breeds of dogs have this condition and as a result they have disproportionately short legs. Examples are dachshunds, corgis and basset hounds.

By studying dogs that are affected with chondrodysplasia, researchers were able to uncover the gene that is responsible for this skeletal abnormality and also the chromosome where it is located.

This information is now being applied to patients with this condition by the geneticists who care for them. Genetic studies are now underway on dogs that have other human conditions such as cancer, epilepsy, lupus erythematosus and narcolepsy, to name just a few.

But as gene research on humans has been helpful in understanding genetic diseases in people, the same is true of gene research involving animals.

Determining the genetic cause of a disease, be it a human or an animal, brings researchers one big step closer to finding ways to treat and prevent the disorder. From a genetic point of view, we have come a long way from just studying the fruit fly. *Source: Norwich Bulletin* <http://tinyurl.com/9u5gybt>

*Dr. Murray Feingold is the physician in chief of The Feingold Center for Children, medical editor of WBZ-TV and WBZ radio, and president of the Genesis Fund. The Genesis Fund is a nonprofit organization that funds the care of children born with birth defects, mental retardation and genetic diseases.*

## NC Conservationists Sue to Protect Red Wolves

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) - Some conservation groups are trying to block new rules from the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission that allow expanding hunting of coyotes at night, saying they are worried that red wolves will be mistakenly killed. The Charlotte Observer reported (<http://bit.ly/S7bTg9>) the Red Wolf Coalition and others have sued in Wake Superior Court to try to stop night hunting of coyotes with artificial lights. The groups worry that red wolves in eastern North Carolina counties will be shot. The groups say young red wolves resemble coyotes, and are hard to tell apart even during the day. The lawsuit says the commission improperly approved the temporary rule allowing night hunting that took effect Aug. 1. The rule will be in effect about nine months while the commission considers a permanent rule.

## A New Perspective

This summer, animal rights activists traveled to D.C. for two annual conferences – the Humane Society of the United States' Taking Action for Animals (TAFA) and the 2012 National Animal Rights Conference (AR2012). The Alliance provides reports from these events to provide insight into the campaigns of extreme activist organizations.

While always enlightening, this year's conference was especially informing. If you would like a copy of the full reports, please contact [info@animalagalliance.org](mailto:info@animalagalliance.org).

Animal rights activists have one mission; they will not be satisfied until all meat, milk, and egg production is eliminated. However, their beliefs differ wildly on how to best achieve this goal. At this year's conferences, some discussed the power of language and ways to make the public feel guilty about eating meat. Speakers also provided tips to help new activists go "undercover" to target farms with video. Other, more radical speakers encouraged illegal activities and going to jail for "the cause."

It has become apparent that the activist movement is not truly united. Large organizations like HSUS promote incremental, legislative-focused campaigns targeting farmers and ranchers, while smaller animal rights groups favor the direct-action approach and tactics such as animal liberation. Which presents the greatest threat? Agriculture must defend itself on both fronts.

The vegan agenda is not quite as unified as it may appear. It's essential that agriculture stakeholders realize this and that those involved in food production continue to stand strong.

This inside look at the activist agenda is important for all of agriculture to understand. All segments of the food chain should be aware of the realities of extreme activism and the devastating impact it could have on our food supply. ■ *Kay Johnson Smith, President & CEO, Animal Ag Alliance*

## Massachusetts Strikes Down BSL



Gov. Deval Patrick signed into law a bill that amends the Animal Control Act. The new bill covers multiple animal issues, but it also strikes down any breed-specific legislation that cities or towns may have in place.

Section 31 of the bill states: No order shall be issued directing that a dog deemed dangerous be removed from the town or city in which the owner of such dog resides. No city or town shall regulate dogs in a manner that is specific to breed.

The new state law nullifies Boston's Pit Bull Ownership Ordinance enacted in 2004.

# Veterinary Health and Wellness Center Offers Exotic Animal Medicine Service

Owners whose pets fly, slither, hop, scamper, swim or fit the description of “exotic pet” now have access to the expertise and facilities available at North Carolina State University's College of Veterinary Medicine as the Exotic Animal Medicine Service in the Veterinary Health and Wellness Center is accepting patients and consulting with referring veterinarians.

The EAMS faculty and staff, known nationally and internationally for clinical expertise and veterinary education, sees both primary care and referral cases, with an emphasis on birds, small mammals, non-venomous reptiles, fishes, and amphibians. The service provides routine and specialized medical and surgical care for both healthy and sick animals. The service does not see wildlife, venomous reptiles, non-human primates, or large carnivores.

Through the collective expertise of EAMS faculty as well as collegial support and collaboration with other specialists within the Veterinary Health Complex (VHC), EAMS offers referring veterinarians and clients access to state-of-the-science medicine in a number of specialty services. These services include anesthesiology, behavior, dentistry, cardiology, critical care, dermatology, emergency medicine, nutrition, ophthalmology, neurology, oncology, orthopedic and soft tissue surgery, radiology/ imaging (contrast fluoroscopy, CT, MRI, ultrasound), and internal medicine.

After-hours emergency services are available for all EAMS clients. Weekday emergencies will be accommodated for existing clients and efforts will be made to accommodate new clients whenever possible. The EAMS also provides an opportunity for DVM students and house officers to develop basic and advanced clinical skills with a range of animal species not seen in other specialty services within the Veterinary Health Complex.

EAMS faculty also contribute to the veterinary care in many partner institutions, including the North Carolina Zoo, the Karen Beasley Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation Center on Topsail Island, the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, the Sylvan Heights Waterfowl Park in Scotland Neck, and the North Carolina Aquariums at Roanoke Island, Pine Knoll Shores, and Fort Fisher.

**Birds:** The EAMS treats multiple types of birds including parrots, finches, doves, pigeons, raptors used for falconry, waterfowl, and poultry kept as pets.

**Small Mammals:** Rabbits, ferrets, guinea pigs, chinchillas, rats, hedgehogs, sugar gliders, hamsters, gerbils, and other small mammal species can be wonderful companions and the EAMS team can discuss appropriate care and preventative treatments with owners to help the pet live many healthy years.

**Reptiles and Amphibians:** Pet turtles, snakes, lizards, geckos, frogs, toads, and salamanders are among the variety of species seen by EAMS clinicians (exceptions are venomous reptiles and large lizards, except by special arrangement).

**Fish and Invertebrates:** The EAMS team provides medical and surgical treatment for a variety of fish species. Invertebrates, including tarantulas and coral, can develop infections, parasite infestations, and other problems that require veterinary care.



## Exotic Animal Medicine Service Faculty

Dr. Laurel Degernes, Associate Professor of Avian Medicine  
Dr. Keven Flammer, Professor of Avian Medicine  
Dr. Vanessa Grunkemeyer, Avian and Exotic Clinician Medicine  
Dr. Gregory Lewbart, Professor of Aquatic Animal Medicine

### Staff

Kate Pritchett, Clinical Technician

For more information on the Exotic Animal Medical Service, please call the Veterinary Health and Wellness Center at 919. 513.6500 or e-mail [yhcxoticmedicine@ncsu.edu](mailto:yhcexoticmedicine@ncsu.edu).

## PETA Meets 2 Judges, Loses 2 Cases

Opinion. September 12, 2012. One of the goals of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is to grant animals the same legal rights as people, but this foolish quest suffered double setbacks this week. PETA is no stranger to losing in the courtroom—like its frivolous case claiming that Sea World’s performing whales were slaves or a not-at-all-frivolous case involving a breach of confidentiality that a jury found cost a police officer his job—but it added two new defeats to its list, one in California and one in Kansas.

In California, a judge ruled against PETA’s lawsuit attacking California’s “Happy Cows Come from California” dairy marketing campaign. The judge found that “experience and knowledge substantiate that dairy farmers ... adhere to some of the highest animal welfare standards in the U.S.”

PETA’s record on animal welfare is killing more than 90 percent of the pets in the group’s care in each of the past six years, so it’s understandable that the group might not recognize high welfare standards. (After all, animal welfare, a science, is not at all like animal rights ideology.)

In a U.S. District Court in Kansas, a judge found that PETA cannot force Kansas State Fair organizers to let the group publicly display a profane and graphic anti-meat propaganda video. PETA won’t be denied a booth, but people who want to see the video will have to seek it out. Even so, an anti-agriculture group will still have more access to an agriculture fair than any pro-agriculture group would probably have at an animal rights event. PETA’s “press sluts” tactics might get it in the news, but thus far the group has little to show for it. And now courts are joining pop idols like Lady Gaga in telling PETA to get lost.

*Source: Consumer Freedom*

## Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center Research in the News

### *Scientists Use Prosthetic Device to Restore and Improve Impaired Decision-Making Ability in Animals*

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. – Sept. 13, 2012 -- Imagine a prosthetic device capable of restoring decision-making in people who have reduced capacity due to brain disease or injury. While this may sound like science fiction, researchers at [Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center](http://www.wakehealth.edu) have proven for the first time that it is possible in non-human primates, and believe that one day it will be possible in people.

In essence, the scientists used an electronic prosthetic system to tap into existing circuitry in the brain at the cellular level and record the firing patterns of multiple neurons in the prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain

involved in decision-making. They then “played” that recording back to the same brain area to electrically stimulate decision-based neural activity. Not only did it restore function, in some cases, it also improved it.

“The prosthetic device is like ‘flipping a switch’ to turn on a decision in real time,” said Sam Deadwyler, Ph.D., professor of physiology and pharmacology at Wake Forest Baptist, and senior author of the study, which is published in the Sept. 14 issue of the Journal of Neural Engineering.

In the study, the scientists trained five monkeys to match multiple images on a computer screen until they were correct 70 to 75 percent of the time. First, an image appeared on the screen, which the animals were trained to select using a hand-controlled cursor. The screen then went blank for up to two minutes, followed by the reappearance of two to eight images, including the initial one, on the same screen.

When the monkeys correctly chose the image they were shown first, the electronic prosthetic device recorded the pattern of neural pulses associated with their decision by employing a multi-input multi-output nonlinear (MIMO) mathematical model, developed by researchers at the University of Southern California.

In the next phase of the study, a drug known to disrupt cognitive activity, cocaine, was administered to the animals to simulate brain injury. When the animals repeated the image-selection task, their decision-making ability decreased 13 percent from normal. However, during these “drug sessions,” the MIMO prosthesis detected when the animals were likely to choose the wrong image and played back the previously recorded “correct” neural patterns for the task.

According to the study findings, the MIMO device was exceedingly effective in restoring the cocaine-impaired decision-making ability to an improved level of 10 percent above normal, even when the drug was still present and active.

“The basis for why the MIMO prosthesis was effective in improving performance was because we specifically programmed the model to recognize neural patterns that occurred when the animals correctly performed the behavioral task in real time, which is a unique feature of this particular device,” said Robert E. Hampson, Ph.D., associate professor of physiology and pharmacology at Wake Forest Baptist, and lead author of the study.

“Based on the findings of this study, we hope in the future to develop an implantable neuroprosthesis that could help people recover from cognitive deficiencies due to brain injuries,” Hampson said.

Co-authors of the study are: Ioan Opris, Ph.D., and Lucas Santos, Ph.D., Wake Forest Baptist; Greg A. Gerhardt, Ph.D., University of Kentucky; and Dong Song, Ph.D., Vasilis Marmarelis, Ph.D., and Theodore W. Berger, Ph.D., University of Southern California.

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Source: Wake Forest Baptist News & Media <http://tinyurl.com/9lsf6ly>

*North Carolina Responsible Animal Owners Alliance, Inc. (NCRAOA) is a statewide organization of animal owners and professionals dedicated to animal welfare, responsible animal ownership, and maintaining the rights of responsible citizens to breed and own animals. NCRAOA, a 501(c)3 organization, provides education and information to the public and supports reasonable and humane animal welfare laws. Permission granted to copy and distribute NCRAOA News and Views in its entirety as is.*

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