

# Letters

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## The Limits of Science

I have a new subscription to your *Journal* and was interested in the report on readers' opinions of your editorial philosophy and practices (*Int J Stud Anim Prob* 3(4):265-266, 1982). I have always loved animals and lately have become concerned about animal welfare. After becoming enlightened about the use of animals in scientific training and research, my opinion of scientists has dropped to zero. I trust you will not be too concerned about their criticism - that you are biased in favor of animals. Apparently most scientists are not competent to judge matters concerning humaneness. Decisions regarding the use of animals in research should not be left to scientists. We know that scientists in Germany and Japan have used people as laboratory animals. I suspect that there are American scientists who would do the same. Obviously, a person who would spend his or her life coldbloodedly subjecting helpless creatures to what can only be described as torture cannot be viewed as normal. They seem to have rather warped personalities, albeit clever in some respects. Scientific research brings some benefits, but is certainly not the answer to all of mankind's problems. Research should not be allowed to proceed on the basis that the end justifies the means.

As to the assertion that the *Journal* has a vegetarian slant, I have been led to the conclusion that if the animal welfare philosophy is carried to a logical conclusion, it can only lead to vegetarianism. As a wise man put it, if we love our fellow creatures we cannot in good conscience dine on them. For those interested in hard data on farm and lab animal issues, I recommend Peter Singer's book, *Animal Liberation*. It is chock-full of hard data. It was published, I believe, in 1978, but I bet that it is still right up to date.

Rosemary DeBlois  
3208 Curtis Lane  
Knoxville, TN 37918