

Foreword

“Extremism in defense of liberty is no vice.”
Presidential Candidate Barry Goldwater, 1964

“Extremism as a substitute for rational discussion is no virtue.”
Non-Presidential Candidate Pete Kissinger, 2000

I have been disturbed lately by the number of issues on which people take extreme positions to the point where they don't even welcome rational discussion to find reasonable compromises. Few issues seem black and white to me. Most seem fuzzy and gray. Several that come to mind are gun control, abortion, environmental policy, genetically modified organisms and the use of animals in research. The last topic is of special interest to many readers of *Current Separations*.

The fact that we use animals in research does not mean we *want* to do so, or that we take pleasure in doing so. The reality is very much to the contrary. BAS people have a very strong affinity for animals. We manufacture instrumentation widely used in companion animal healthcare, and thousands of dogs and cats are living better lives, having derived considerable benefit from our products. Likewise, we have developed instrumentation that makes it possible to obtain far more information from fewer research animals in a painless, or more painless fashion, while maintaining a better quality of life for these animals. Our microdialysis and Culex products both fit this category very well.

BAS and our customers follow strict guidelines for animal research that help ensure experiments are carefully designed to optimize the quality of the data and the comfort of the animals, while minimizing the number of animals used. While *in vitro* approaches are slowly advancing, they are a very long way from being able to establish that new drugs will be both safe and effective in humans.

It is quite disturbing to note that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) apparently has caved in to an extremist position that will require a new bureaucracy to monitor experiments with rodents. There are consequences here which will substantially raise the cost of such experiments and slow progress, bogging down scientists in additional layers of paperwork which will do nothing either to comfort the animals, or to reduce their use.

I hope our readers will participate in lobbying their Congressional representatives to point out the consequences of this step to both animal and human healthcare. In the recent U.S. presidential election, the subject of high drug prices came up repeatedly. While not the only cause, such regulations as proposed by the USDA will only exacerbate the pricing situation.



pete@bioanalytical.com