

## **“We Build a Better Beagle”: Fantastic Creatures in Lab Animal Ads**

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*The lab animal's significance and meaning are at the heart of the experimental method in modern biomedical research. Sociologists, however, have been remiss in studying how these animals are socially constructed within the scientific community as well as by industries, such as animal breeders, that support such research. Inspection of the advertisements used by breeding companies reveals three images of lab animals—the classy chemical, the consumer good, and the team player. The possible appeal of such images to readers of these ads is explored.*

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While it is obvious that animals are “real” physical entities, their meaning to humans is socially constructed, reflecting the cultural concerns of those who think about them. From this perspective, the “same” animal in one context may be construed quite differently in another context. Much like zoo animals that come to be regarded as almost a separate class of animals different from the same species “in the wild” (Mullen and Marvin, 1987), laboratory animals in the scientific community are no doubt thought of differently than their domestic or wild counterparts. Although lab animals play a central role in science—some would say they are the hallmark of bench research—it is surprising that until recently sociologists have failed to study their meaning (Clarke and Gerson, 1990).

Next to the scientific community itself, the most formal, deliberate, and explicit constructors of the meaning of these animals are the manufacturing companies that breed and sell animals to laboratories.<sup>1</sup> These companies seek to produce standardized animals that are “pathogen free”

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(clean and healthy) and "genetically equivalent" (biologically interchangeable). But in their pursuit of this standardization, breeding companies give cultural form to the reconstituted "conventional" animal. As one breeding company president maintains, the clean animal "is more truly representative of a normal animal than its predecessor, the conventional animal" (Foster, 1963:137).

Animal breeders market this "norm" in scientific periodicals where they advertise their animals. In these ads, companies try to convince researchers that their animals are somehow superior to those of other breeders. Since all companies can claim that their animals are pathogen free and genetically equivalent, ads must rely on other appeals to capture readers' attention and persuade them that one breeder's animals are somehow preferable to another's.

Unlike scientists who must purge from their official accounts of data any references to animals as sentient, holistic beings (Verhoog, 1988), breeding companies can make these appeals by using metaphors from everyday life and anthropomorphic images in their ads. Without any restriction in their portrayal of lab animals, the formation of "nature" in these ads can "cook" or reinterpret the "raw," undifferentiated "conventional" animal (Williamson, 1990).

To examine how lab animals are portrayed by breeding companies, all advertisements for animals were studied between 1979 and 1989 in *Laboratory Animal Science* and *Lab Animal*, the two largest circulation periodicals received by biomedical research laboratories. In the 90 different ads, 10 species of animals were represented. Mice and rats appeared most commonly, accounting for 42% of the species. If ferrets, guinea pigs and rabbits are added, then 66% of the species are accounted for. Dogs and cats made up 20% of the species, primates 9%, and farm animals 5%.

Far from being merely "test tubes with legs" (Jasper and Nelkin, 1992), lab animals in ads are portrayed as classy chemicals, consumer goods, or team players. The result is a fantastic animal that is simultaneously object-like and human-like, a thing of science and of everyday life.

### THE CLASSY CHEMICAL

Breeders' ads must convey that their animals are pathogen free and genetically equivalent since these qualities are essential for valid and reliable data to be obtained in experiments. However, the lab animal that is suggested in the ads is much more than an animal that is microbiologically clean and genetically defined. Its purity is seen as capturing an essential biology of the true animal that cannot be found in nature. Indeed, it be-

comes a "very superior animal" that can be "compared with the pure chemical demanded by research scientists" (Festing, 1978:261).

One way that breeders conjure such an image of purity comes from what is not in the ads. For example, most lab animal ads do not use human models, although humans are frequently used in ads for laboratory equipment or animal food. The absence of people in ads creates a sense that the animals are pristine, untouched by human hands. Only 9% of the ads show people with animals, despite the fact that these animals will be used by research personnel, in many cases being handled frequently. Separate from the main picture of the animals, a few ads have small photo inserts of laboratory workers who are typically doing things such as emptying blood from an eye dropper into a test-tube. Further contributing to this pristine presentation is that if people are shown with animals, they are never being used experimentally, despite the fact that this is the animals' sole purpose.

Seventy-seven percent of the ads have a photograph or drawing of animals in blank space, without lab benches or cages to give the picture a context. One typical ad has a white rat spot-lighted on an entirely black background. In this context, animals appear as purposeless objects. Other ads have animals in sterile, peopleless contexts, often coupled with scientific equipment. For instance, one ad shows rats crawling around inside a glass sphere (cum beaker holding chemicals) suspended thousands of miles above the earth, with the caption reading "As Viral Free as Space Itself." Only one ad shows an animal in an everyday, outdoor environment, and that ad is a cartoon.

While lab animals and humans are rarely together in the ads, purity is also suggested by anthropomorphizing animals. Some ads humorously attribute human attitudes to lab animals to promote their pathogen free quality. For example, one breeder claims that its mice are "real health nuts." Human attributes are also given to animals to advertise their genetic equivalence. For instance, some ads depict animals as upper class or blue-blooded, claiming that they have "superb" or "great ancestry," or are "royalty" (see Figure 1).<sup>2</sup> In one ad, a mouse is seated between a beaker and a flask as it composes the poem: "I'm not a common house mouse! I'm a toute a fait (entirely) research mouse . . . really upper class, I don't wear a dirty coat, nor talk to dirty people, I live in a unbreakable barrier, I'm all for quality control, because I'm caesarean-delivered, barrier sustained and truly SPF (specific pathogen free)." Other ads note that their animals are "All-American" or "Born and Bred in the USA." Not relying on anthropomorphisms, other ads get at this same "upper class" image by metaphorically linking lab animals to blue-blooded or champion animals in non-scientific contexts. Referring to the world of horse racing, one ad has the caption "Thorough bred" above a mouse posed in a standing position.

**Royalty.**



We treat our animals like royalty. Our fine, vigorous, healthy and uniformly dependable research animals are the result of generations of breeding the choicest animals under the most exacting environmental controls.

The royal red carpet is out for you too. Whenever you need that extra personal touch and instant response to your needs... you can count on us, because we care... and we've been caring for 25 years.

**Taconic Farms**

Laboratory Animals for Research  
Germantown, New York 12526  
518 537 6208

**\*Sprague Dawley Rat**  
TAC: SD/N IBR Rat  
Sprague Dawley descended 1945/N

**\*Swiss Mouse**  
TAC: (SW) IBR Mouse

**Spontaneously Hypertensive Rat**  
TAC: SHR/N BR

**Normotensive Rat (control)**  
TAC: WKY/N BR

\*Caesarean Originated, Barrier Maintained

Figure 1

Anthropomorphic suggestions of purity are occasionally made in less royal ways by drawing on everyday references to questionable pasts or dirtiness. One ad reads “genetic integrity” and notes that their mice are “born with records.” As an interesting and humorous play on words, this ad has a face frontal and profile photos of a mouse, as though a criminal in a line-up mug shot, with the identification number “C57BL/6NCrIBr” (a type of mouse) across his chest. This company’s mice, the ad says, are “the most wanted mice of their kind in the world.” In another case the ad depicts a mouse’s shadow in a hole in the wall of someone’s home and the reader is asked: “Do you really know where your lab animals are born and bred?” And another ad shows mice scampering through a pile of decaying leaves and warns that data will be “compromised by genetic contamination!”

Some ads construct an image of purity by featuring animals that are so biologically similar they may as well be the same animal. To convey this, sometimes different animals are actually lined up in the identical pose. One ad dares readers to see any variation in its animals: “Will the real CF-1 please stand up?” is asked above three identically posed and identically

# VIRUS ANTIBODY-FREE

## *Time After Time After Time*

Excellence in research demands excellence in research animals. Hazleton's VIRUS ANTIBODY-FREE Hra/Dunkin Hartley guinea pig delivers the outstanding quality you need—every time you need it.

Our commitment to excellence began with a program of caesarean derivation, providing animals free of pathogenic organisms. The guinea pigs are bred and maintained in an environmentally controlled barrier facility. An extensive testing program performed by our veterinary and technical staffs ensures the health of the colony. Serology profiles have shown the animals to be VIRUS ANTIBODY-FREE to:

- ☐ Sendai ☐ Reo-3 ☐ LCM ☐ PVM ☐ SV-5
- ☐ Influenza A&B
- ☐ Parainfluenza I, II, & III
- ☐ Adenovirus ☐ Herpes virus
- ☐ Guinea pig herpes virus
- ☐ Guinea pig herpes-like virus
- ☐ Cytomegalovirus ☐ Mumps
- ☐ Measles

When your research requires the best, turn to us. VIRUS ANTIBODY-FREE excellence, time after time after time.

**HAZLETON**  
RESEARCH ANIMALS

A Division of  
HAZLETON RESEARCH  
PRODUCTS, INC.

P.O. Box 7200, Denver, PA 17517  
Phone: (215) 267-4921  
(800) 345-4114  
(In PA) (800) 334-4114  
Cable: HAZPRODUCT  
Telex: 901027 HRA RSTN

For more information circle #048 on the inquiry card.



Figure 2

sized white mice. In another ad, “Uniformity” is written in bold letters above five white guinea pigs tightly lined up in a row.

Some ads do more than show similar animals in identical poses to convey this image; they show several images of the same animal. For example, genetic purity and reproducibility are conveyed in a dog ad, “Paws to Reflect,” by showing a beagle and its reflection, as if to say that this company’s dogs are true mirror images of each other. One breeder’s ad stresses the consistency of its guinea pigs by placing the caption “Time after time after time. . .” above a dozen identical photographs of the same guinea pig (see Figure 2). Another ad has twelve photos of the same mouse

as it reminds readers: "For the same results . . . today, tomorrow . . . next year . . ." all of its rats "are created equal."

The only image that possibly stirs a greater sense of purity is the use in some ads of identical plastic models of animals, obviously created from the same mold. According to these ads, lab animals are as uniform in their make-up and as interchangeable in their use as any chemical or artificial substance, such as plastic. Indeed, lamenting the "wide range of variables . . . which life unfortunately has" one ad admits that "a mold would be ideal—perfect beagles every time, exactly constant in every detail." The ad shows two beagles looking in the same direction, but one is living and the other is a statue. The caption over them reads: "The Ideal." Another ad manages to accomplish this by using plastic models of pigs and sheep in perfectly straight rows.


### THE CONSUMER GOOD

Breeders suggest in ads that their animals are customized or crafted, just as any manufactured item, to meet the specific consumptive needs of scientists. This is most obvious when companies extol the benefits of using animals whose size is minimized for "ease" of handling and "convenience" of housing. For these purposes, one company claims that its beagles will be half the size of other beagles. Breeding smaller animals also means they will eat less, require less medication, and permit a larger sample size which in turn yields more data. Ferrets, in one ad, are marketed as a good alternative to dogs for this reason.

But companies suggest that they control more than the size of their animals, offering to "design" or "tailor" animals to "fit your unique needs." They become inanimate objects, often from everyday life, that bear little resemblance to the animals they might have been. While photographs of real animals are used in these ads, the captions and text suggest otherwise. For example, one breeder's ad claims that its pigs are everything you do not think of as pigs. The text reads: "Go on. Admit it. You can't find one nice thing to say about the pig. You think it's big. It's messy. It eats too much and it's ugly. Well, we might agree with ugly." Instead, this company's newly developed pig "eats like a bird. It's clean as a whistle. And is as light as a feather." Even more to the point is an ad that compares its mice to automobiles, with the bold print reading: "Now available in standard and stripped down model." The ad's text goes on to note "You can now opt for our standard model that comes complete with hair. Or try our new 1988 stripped down, hairless model for speed and efficiency" (see Figure

Now available  
in standard.


And stripped  
down model.



When it comes to guinea pigs, now you have a choice. You can opt for our standard model that comes complete with hair. Or try our new 1988 stripped down, hairless model for speed and efficiency.

Our euthymic, hairless guinea pigs are the product of years of breeding. They can be used for dermatologic studies for hair producing agents. Skin sensitization. Transdermal therapy. Ultraviolet studies. And more.

Charles River hairless guinea pigs are another example of our ability to anticipate the ever-changing needs of researchers. To order call 1-800-LAB-RATS, or write Charles River Laboratories, Inc., 251 Ballardvale Street, Wilmington, MA 01887. Tel: (508) 658-6000. FAX Phone: (508) 658-7132. To receive free technical literature on husbandry and research use, call, write, or circle the reader response number.

**Charles River**  
THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD 


© Charles River Laboratories, Inc., 1988 Circle No. 158 on Reader Service Card

Figure 3

3).<sup>3</sup> A similar automobile image is used in an ad for rats, with the caption reading: "Body by Fisher. Breeding by Charles River."

Ads suggest that animals are being created and manufactured so they can be consumed, much like any inanimate product would be used in everyday life. To accomplish this effect, ads do not use photographs of real animals, but rather drawings of them that transform their appearance into ordinary items.<sup>4</sup> At most a caricature of their ancestors, lab animals become

# Building a Better Beagle.



"Building a Better Beagle" has always been an obsession of the Marshall "Team".

Unfortunately, it's not as simple as choosing the right wood and nails and cutting pieces to exacting sizes. It takes a combined "Team" effort and years of dedicated attention to detail, to make a lasting and repeatable improvement.


The entire Marshall staff is dedicated to just that; improving the Marshall Beagle and keeping it the best available for laboratory use.

The Marshall Team works together to keep track of all important characteristics and then weeds out any undesirable stock. As a result, you are guaranteed a genetically consistent beagle with an excellent temperament.

All Marshall Beagles are raised in elevated, indoor pens to simulate the laboratory environment, and receive attention from birth to insure their gentle disposition.

With over 45 years experience raising research animals, don't you owe it to yourself and your staff to find out what makes the Marshall Beagle Better?

For additional information, call or write today.



## **MARSHALL FARMS**

R.D. 1, Box 91, North Rose, New York 14516 (U.S.A.)  
 Phone (315) 587-2295 FAX: (315) 587-2109  
For more information circle #017 on the inquiry card.

Your  
**RELIABLE  
 SOURCE**

Figure 4

unnatural and machine-like. Indeed, in one ad, the company reminds its readers that it "produces" animals rather than merely "reproducing" them. "Putting it all together—for you!" is the caption over a drawing of a guinea pig that is made up of twenty jigsaw puzzle pieces. Half of these pieces are unassembled in the ad, leaving an impression that the breeding company is in the process of putting together a completed animal for lab use. "Building a Better Beagle," written in a child's printing, shows a young boy with a ham-

mer and nails assembling a toy wooden dog (see Figure 4). In small print the ad tells the reader that this farm is constantly at work trying to improve its beagle so that it can market the most "genetically consistent" animal.

By sometimes characterizing lab animals as food, ads convey that they are literally to be consumed. Instead of merely being compared to a puzzle or toy, animals may be compared, for example, to fine liquor, as in the following ad that equates this breeder's animals with aged Canadian Club whiskey:

For vintage research, why not try some of our Canadian club! The choice of more Canadians than ever before. The distillation between sophisticated instrumentation, technology, and the special efforts of concerned scientific personnel. Our Canadian club consists of five rat strains. Four inbred and two outbred mouse strains. Plus hamsters, guinea pigs, and rabbits.

Not surprisingly when pigs are being advertised, the text commonly plays with the image of lab animals as things to be eaten. As one company humorously puts it: ". . .you've been huffing and puffing, trying to devour our little pigs (guinea pigs) faster than we can breed them." In another ad for guinea pigs, the caption reads: "This Little Pig's On the Market." And in an ad for "minipigs" and "micropigs," the advertising claims that they are "Barely bigger than a bread box." Carrying through the image of the pigs as bread, the text proclaims "Any way you slice it," these pigs are a great idea.

## THE TEAM PLAYER

Breeders also convey in ads that their animals will not be aggressive or difficult to handle. Readers are reminded that animals, particularly dogs, will be "docile." Advertisements for beagles often stress this quality; ads tell readers that their "friendly temperament makes them a pleasure to work with and they quickly adapt to laboratory conditions," that they will have "gentle dispositions," "excellent temperaments" or simply be "quiet." Other animals also have their docility promoted, such as ferrets that are "easy-to-handle," "friendly," and act like "pets," or cats that are the "most tractable."

One way to convey docility and cooperation is to show animals co-existing peacefully with each other. Although this could happen with animals of the same species, ads also show the unlikely scenario of different species of animals getting along together; in actuality, if placed together it is likely that these animals would become antagonistic. For example, this can be seen in ads that have animals touching company logos, assuming a gesture that appears as though they are approving or representing the company. In one case, there is a plaque reading "Camm Bred" in the middle

# First and Four-Most!

As a leading supplier of quality animals for research, we have long been known for our **Purebred beagles**, as well as our **domestic-bred and conditioned primates**. And now with our recent expansions, we are able to supply the research community with **SPF New Zealand White rabbits**, **SPF HRA/Hartley guinea pigs**, **conditioned woodchucks**, and **Purpose-bred mongrels**.

Our experienced personnel and newly expanded facilities provide us with advanced technology to supply you with the highest quality animals in increased quantities. In addition, our health status and screening programs provide you with an assurance of quality.

We provide prompt delivery wherever you are—delivery that falls within USDA regulations.

Whatever your research needs, turn to us.

**Quality is our Priority.**



**HAZLETON**  
RESEARCH ANIMALS, INC.  
1946 Isaac Newton Square, West  
Reston, VA 22090  
Telex: 901977 HRA RSTN

Animal inquiries and client services—  
(800) 368-3608  
Orders for Rabbits, Guinea Pigs—  
(800) 345-4114  
Canines, Primates—(800) 368-3608



**Figure 5**

of the ad. On one side of it there is a guinea pig looking at the reader as it rests a paw on the plaque. Also looking at the reader are a rabbit and mouse whose tail is curled over the plaque. Another ad has a drawing of a snake, rat, mouse, bird, rabbit and dog. This “gang of laboratory animals” are all either leaning against each other or have their arms interlocked in

# THE UNSUNG HERO

## OF BRONCHIAL RESEARCH

When a team of doctors and scientists at the University of British Columbia's Pulmonary Research Laboratory developed a new technique for stabilization of the mucous layers in the upper respiratory tree, they chose adult Camm Hartley Guinea Pigs as their tools. The reason? Camm consistently breeds animals of the highest quality and uniformity in a pathogen-free environment.

W.C. Hulbert, Ph.D.  
Formerly with The University of British Columbia Pulmonary Research Laboratory at St. Paul's Hospital, Currently, Department of Medicine, Pulmonary Division, University of Alberta.

In fact, Camm Bred means Controlled Animal Management & Marketing for Biomedical Research Excellence & Dependability. And you can stake your reputation on it.

## Camm

### RESEARCH LAB ANIMALS

414 Black Oak Ridge Road, Wayne, N.J. 07470 • (201) 694-0703

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CAMM RESEARCH LAB ANIMALS  
414 Black Oak Ridge Rd., Wayne, N.J. 07470

Please send me latest periodic health reports on:

☐ Guinea Pigs      ☐ SPF Rats

☐ Rabbits

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Figure 6

unity. “First and Four-Most” is the caption above a photograph of a guinea pig, beagle, rabbit and baby rhesus monkey, all of whom are lying contentedly against each other (see Figure 5). Leaving nothing to the imagination, an ad of a guinea pig and a rabbit calls them “Your SPF Team.”

Ads construe docility to mean more than sheer manageability by suggesting that lab animals are “on the side” of researchers, supporting or

facilitating their work, much like colleagues or other employees. Fourteen percent of the ads show animals with inanimate objects such as cages. In these ads, animals appear to like laboratory equipment or at least show interest in it by touching and exploring it. In different ads, one can see a beagle standing proudly next to a large, empty laboratory flask, half a dozen white mice sniffing jars of chemicals, a mouse pawing an osmotic pump, and three assorted rodents sitting in front of graph paper charting an upward pattern of an unnamed phenomenon. One ad, in fact, has two rabbits discussing their "need" for good colony housing.

Docility and cooperation are carried to anthropomorphic extremes in some cartoon renderings of laboratory animals. Far from resisting the actions of researchers, lab animals in some ads appear to be happy in their role as experimental subjects. Drawn in sex-role stereotypical poses and clothing, female animals are shown as subordinate and desiring to please. "Real anxious to please you" reads the text of an ad that has a drawing of a pregnant hamster in a maternity dress. Beaming with joy, her long-lashed eyes are closed, and her hands are behind her back. To help researchers, other animals are portrayed as custodial workers. In one ad, a mouse, clad in an apron, maid's hat, and shoes, is sweeping the lab's floor with a broom.

Another way ads suggest that animals will be cooperative is to portray them as research collaborators. Rats from one breeder "help arthritis sufferers perform amazing tasks," as shown in the superimposed picture of human hands tying a knot. Another company's mice are shown "stalking cancer," while a framed photo of a guinea pig is proclaimed "The Unsung Hero of Bronchial Research" (see Figure 6). In some of these ads, male animals assume stereotypical dominant roles vis à vis female animals. "We're the Harlan Bunch" has the rodent investigators clothed in male attire while the mouse secretary wears a dress. The text claims that these animals have been "brought up to serve you better." Whether they are smiling females or commanding males, all these animals seem very willing to be part of the lab team.

Some ads anthropomorphically show lab animals actually carrying out research. One company's logo, for example, is a drawing of a rat happily carrying a syringe as large as its body. Another shows a rat, dressed in a pin-stripped suit, opening the door of a toxicology lab so that a mouse and a rat, both dressed in patient-johnnies, can enter for testing. And yet another ad has a rat wearing physician's whites with a stethoscope draped around his neck as he carries a tray of test-tubes and flasks.

Indeed, while it is done wryly, some companies merge corporate identity with animal nature by animalizing the image of the breeding industry. One breeder's ad shows human hands gently holding a mouse in its palms

with the caption "Of Mice and Men" in bold letters. In smaller text the reader is told: "This may come as a surprise, but we don't think of ourselves as just an animal business. More importantly, we are a people business." One company has as its toll-free number 800-LAB-RATS, and calls its latest building the "new breed of breeding facility." Another ad, showing large rabbit ears, claims that the "industry is all ears." The same company also has an ad of a mouse sitting up with the caption over it reading, "the industry sits up and takes notice." To accomplish this merger, sometimes animals are anthropomorphized. In one ad, for instance, a breeder announces the move of its laboratory, saying: "MR Rat has just moved. MR Rat is getting settled in his new home. . ." It shows a drawing of a rat, dressed in a top coat and jacket, who is carrying a lamp and various packages. Cage racks are described as "mouse/rat condos" and individual cages provide rodents "a room with a view."

Corporate identity is also merged with animals by anthropomorphically treating them as though they were company executives or representatives. One breeder advertises its company by having a standing, human-posed hamster pointing to a billboard reading: "Welcome to Farmersburg, Ind. Home of Engle Laboratory Animals." Similarly, one guinea pig breeder has an ad that shows a drawing of a guinea pig dressed in tails, top hat, and cane, with the caption, "Hats Off to Elm Hill." And in another ad, the merger of two breeders is announced by having one rat, dressed in a scientist's white lab coat with a "Sprague Dawley" name tag being "introduced" to "our new colleague," a rat in a pinstriped business suit who represents the other company.

## THE FANTASTIC LAB ANIMAL

Why would advertisers use a fantastic animal to gain the attention of readers? One reason is that scientists and research personnel are probably thought to be susceptible to the same kinds of advertising appeals used to influence other professionals. For example, studies of the appeals of prescription drug ads indicate that physicians who read them are thought to be subject to rational concerns involved in selecting particular drugs while also being subject to the same emotional influences that effect laymen (Smith, 1977). The fantastic animal in ads also appears to be built on these two general appeals, mixing images that may allow researchers to relate to the ads as both scientists and laypeople.

But use of the fantastic animal may speak to deeper concerns shared by researchers who experiment on and kill animals. From a psychological perspective (Bakan, 1968), those who sacrifice life are involved simultaneously in an act of righteousness and wrongdoing that requires them to dis-

tance and identify with the sacrificed. On the one hand, Bakan contends that the killing must be seen as an external necessity for a higher being or institution. From this stance, the killing is the result of bureaucratic obedience and order. That which is killed is symbolized as an inanimate object—something without life which can be fully dominated. But on the other hand, Bakan maintains that in order for sacrifice to work, the sacrificed must also be part of the self of the sacrificer. By humanizing the victim it becomes a surrogate self that can be identified with and seen as similar to the killer. That which is killed, then, is also symbolized as the living—something with a will that cannot be fully controlled.

Recent sociological work offers support for Bakan's argument; in the context of the research laboratory, sacrificers seem to both distance and identify with the animals that are killed. As reflections of the contemporary ideology of science and laboratory culture, these animals have been found to symbolize impersonal scientific objects that can be transformed into data (Arluke 1990a; Lederer, 1992; Lynch, 1988). But other studies indicate that in addition to viewing lab animals as impersonal objects or commodities, researchers also acknowledge them as sentient beings, sometimes treating and speaking about them as though they were pets (Arluke, 1988). Indeed, personalized relationships with lab animals are extremely important for some researchers to maintain even if they cause uneasiness (Arluke, 1990b).

Consistent with Bakan's notion of sacrifice, images of lab animals in advertisements may allow readers both to distance and identify with them. They can be distanced from by being portrayed as pure chemicals, manufactured goods, or perfectly obedient and completely dominated workers. In such portrayals they become the quintessential scientific commodity or object that can be transformed into abstract, interchangeable units or data, which can in turn transform local experimental skills into public knowledge.<sup>5</sup> While animals can be distanced from in all three images, they can be identified with by being anthropomorphized or portrayed as part of everyday life. Readers might make an emotional or non-scientific connection with lab animals that have "class," are fine liquor, or behave "like one of the boys (or girls)." Rather than being alienated from the products of their labor and the commoditization of animals (Levins and Lowentin, 1985), such identification may connect researchers to lab animals, at least at a symbolic level.

In short, when lab animal ads are viewed in their totality rather than as individual ads, the presentation of the fantastic animal may both reflect and reinforce one of the "ideological castles" of science (Levi-Strauss, 1966:21); namely, that lab animals can be seen and treated simultaneously as more object-like and more human-like than they in fact are. Only a paradoxical construction such as this could directly speak to how the sci-

entific community conceives of the killing of animals and how they manage to do this as part of what is taken for granted in their world.

## ENDNOTES

1. As an example of the economic scale of this industry, Charles River Laboratories, the world's largest breeder, grossed \$30 million in 1979 by selling 18 million animals (Witt, 1980).
2. In recent years, a number of companies have moved away from ads, such as these, that are light or humorous and instead have tried to provide more technical information believing that the latter would have greater appeal to scientists.
3. The term "model" is used ironically in this ad since it can refer in everyday language to automobiles and in scientific language to animals best suited for particular experiments.
4. Increasing use of drawings rather than photos of lab animals can be seen during the 1980's. According to one breeding company marketing executive, this shift was a response to animal rights activists who complained about the wasteful killing of animals after they were photographed for ads. All companies, however, have not gone in this direction. For example, one executive explained that his company has chosen to use more photographs rather than drawings of animals because in his opinion the former can more effectively convey an image of a "healthy animal."
5. Such a transformation suggests that scientific objectivity may be more a matter of establishing impersonality than it is a matter of achieving realism (Porter, 1992).

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