Classroom Dissections

The Issue: Classroom Dissections

The Argument

Dissecting animals is unnecessary when we have so many alternatives to dissection including: computer programs and synthetic, anatomically correct animal and human models.

The Other Side

"The animals arrive already dead and die of natural causes"

Tens of millions of animals are bred each year in the US to be used in dissections. There are entire industries that only breed animals for dissection. Perhaps the most famous example of one of these breeding facilities is Martial Bio Resources, a breeding facility that breeds beagles for experimentation[6]. These animals are often killed by gassing, drowning, or suffocation so as to not physically damage their anatomical structures. Their deaths are painful, extended, and unnecessary. Their corpses are viewed as nothing more than dollar signs to their distributors.

Classroom dissections incorporate other industries of animal exploitation. Pregnant animals (most commonly pigs) have their stomachs ripped open and their unborn fetuses removed to be used in classroom dissections [3]. Homeless animals are stolen from the streets and taken from animal shelters to be used for dissection [3].

"It's educational so it makes it okay"

Humans have successfully mapped out anatomical structures of nearly every animal species known. We know what the inside of their bodies look like. It is redundant and unnecessary to condemn millions of animals to death each year purely for morbid curiosity. Even so, there are plenty of digital and synthetic models available to us.

Learning and education do not make horrific practices acceptable. In the course of Human history we have exploited less fortunate populations to advance medical science. Namely, the Tuskegee Syphilis experiments where scientists refused to inform impoverished black men of their positive syphilis status. This was so they could monitor the progression of the syphilis virus in black men. The Nazis perform experiments on Holocaust victims, in the name of "education" and "scientific advancement." We collectively agree that exploiting vulnerable populations in the pursuit of medical advancement is abhorrent. Why are non-human animals viewed differently?

The Facts

Where Do They Come From?

Each year in the U.S., an estimated 20 million animals are abused for cruel, archaic teaching exercises, despite the existence of superior non-animal teaching tools. Roughly 10 million are killed for classroom dissection[3]. Biological supply houses breed small animals such as mice, rats, and rabbits **specifically** to kill for classroom dissection. These supply houses also obtain fetal pigs from slaughterhouses that cut them from their mothers' bodies after their mothers are killed.

Roughly 10 million animals annually , are captured in their natural habitats, taken from factory farms, or bred for the purpose of classroom dissection [3]. The U.S. Department of the Interior has stated that amphibian population declines are due in part to the use of these animals in dissection [4]

Other animals, such as the cats commonly dissected in biology courses, are obtained from animal shelters, pet stores, backyards, and the streets of the U.S. and Mexico. [4]

Consequences:

Not only do these classroom dissections have fatal consequences for the animals. They can also cause psychological distress for students who feel forced into participation. Many serial killers began mutilating animals before they killed their first human victim[1]. Teaching impressionable young students that non-human life is simply here for our use, is a stepping stone for them to start to view *all* lives that look different from their own as less than.

Your Right NOT To Dissect:

If you are a student, you have the right to ask for an alternative assignment in place of live animal dissection[2]. Use this as an "in" to discuss with your teachers and school board officials why digital or synthetic dissection tools are better[5] Check out the resources below to see the wide range of educationally superior dissection alternatives.

The Lingo

- **Dissection-** Dissection is referred to the cutting open and examination of a dead animal for educational purposes.
- **Wet Specimen-** This is a dead animal who is preserved in fluid. Often for the purpose of medical examination but people also use dead animals suspended in liquid for decoration.

The Champions

- PETA TeachKind-
- [PETA SOS](#)- Students, join PETA SOS to end dissection a your school

The Resources

1. https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/-tracking-animal-cruelty
2. https://aavs.org/animals-science/laws/student-choice-laws/
3. https://www.peta.org/issues/animals-used-for-experimentation/classroom-dissection/
4. https://www.protegofoundation.org/blog/ethical-animal-use-dissection#:~:text=About%2020%20million%20animals%20are,mice%2C%20rats%2C%20and%20more
5. [PDF By HSUS Detailing How To Say No To Classroom Dissections](#)
6. https://www.thecampbeagle.co.uk/
7. [PETA TeachKind](#) (share this link with your teachers to encourage them to end classroom dissection)

List of Dissection Alternatives:

1. [eMind Software](#) -
2. [Merge Labs, inc - Merge Cube](#) - The Merge Cube from Merge labs is a cube teachers can purchase for their classroom that, when paired with VR software, lets students "hold" and manipulate a host of biological organisms and interact with them hands on.
3. [Digital Frog](#)- Digital Frog is a downloadable program that integrates comparative anatomy, frog dissection, and ecology. Incorporating high-quality animations and digital dissections, students can review anatomical systems and body systems for a digital

dissection!

4. [SynFrog](#)- A product of PETA, this is a hyper-realistic, synthetic model of a frog that can actually be dissected! You get the hands on experience without the murder.

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