

# The Congressional Educator

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**Congress cannot act responsibly without the information needed to do so.** Boondoggles are the result of ignorance and gullibility. **Taxpayers are being cheated with the claims that the money taken from them to fund basic biomedical research will lead to improvements in healthcare.** We are told that researchers are honorable, honest, and that all the research is important and carefully monitored.

## Christopher L. Coe and The Harlow Primate Psychology Lab

The Wisconsin National Primate Research Center at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, has received considerable attention from the news media. This attention has been the result of reporters learning that lab officials have been lying to the public in official documents and during public meetings, that monkeys in the labs have not received appropriate veterinary care, or have been killed through negligence. These scandals have been well documented in the local press.

Hemmed in on two sides by the Primate Center is the Harlow Primate Psychology Lab. Overlooked by media, and usually discussed by critics of monkey research in conjunction with the primate center, the Harlow Lab staff have often felt immune from public attention.

*The Congressional Educator* is mailed quarterly to members of Congress.

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Persons are encouraged to send a copy of this document to their representatives.

## Smug Superiority

Among the staff is a smug sense of superiority over the people working next door at the primate center. The director of the Harlow Lab is Christopher L. Coe.



### Prenatal Stress And Immune Responsiveness (3)

2004	R01AI046521-18	\$360,000
2003	R01AI046521-17	\$360,000
2002	5R01AI046521-16	\$360,000
2001	5R01AI046521-15	\$360,000
2000	2 R01AI046521-14A1	\$360,000
1999	none listed	
1998	5R01MH041659-13	\$377,314
1997	5R01MH041659-12	\$326,548
1996	5R01MH041659-11	\$348,850
1995	5R01MH041659-10	\$301,913
1994	2R01MH041659-09A3	\$295,291
1993	none listed	
1992	5R01MH041659-08	\$200,398

His research is a good indicator of the type of research the public is required to underwrite at the lab.

For the past eighteen years, Chris Coe has been receiving grants from the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease for his study: ***Prenatal Stress And Immune Responsiveness***.

## Coe explains his research:

"Infant monkeys with different cellular immune and proinflammatory cytokine responses will be created by experimentally manipulating pregnancy

conditions and used to determine the significance of individual variation in immune competence for infectious disease. This nonhuman primate model will further investigate how two types of prenatal conditions affect infant development, alter cellular immunity, and result in differential risk for and response to viral infection. The present manipulations involve maternal stress and endocrine activation shown previously to affect postnatal immunity." (1)

**How does one go about creating such infant monkeys?** Here is Chris Coe's description:

"The pregnant female was disturbed daily by being relocated to a darkened test room between 1430 and 1600. While located there in a small transport cage, the female was aroused by an acoustical startle protocol for 10 min (three 1-sec broadcasts of a car horn at 1-5 min intervals, 110 decibels). Both before and after the 6-wk manipulations, the females remained undisturbed in their home cages until the natural birth of their infants. Prior research using the same stress paradigm had confirmed that it significantly elevates cortisol above the normal levels of pregnant monkeys." (2)

## And his results?

"These findings indicate that maternal conditions during pregnancy can continue to exert a lingering influence on the proinflammatory cytokine response of monkeys up to 2 yr after birth."

**In simple terms**, Coe takes pregnant monkeys and frightens them at various times during their pregnancy. Once the babies are born, he injects them with flu virus and records which babies get sick more easily. He has discovered that babies from mothers who have been frightened periodically get sick more easily.

He makes no claim about why or how this information might be applied to humans, and other than keeping

pregnant women sequestered, how could we ever guarantee that they will not be startled or frightened during their pregnancy? It's just meaningless basic research.

#### **How much has Coe's research cost the taxpayer?**

Federal databases with NIH award amount data go back only to 1992, but since 1992, as the table demonstrates, Coe has received \$3,650,314 in support of this research. In the world of federal budgets, it's a pittance. But has the result been worth the 18 years of research, the \$3.6 million, the suffering of countless monkeys?

#### **It's time for Congress to put an end to such utter and cruel nonsense.**

##### Notes:

(1) Coe, CL Prenatal Stress And Immune Responsiveness. Grant no. 5R01AI046521-18. Computer Retrieval of Information on Scientific Projects (CRISP) database. <http://crisp.cit.nih.gov/> Web-retrieved 12.22.04.

(2) Coe CL, Kramer M, Kirschbaum C, Netter P, Fuchs E. Prenatal stress diminishes the cytokine response of leukocytes to endotoxin stimulation in juvenile rhesus monkeys. J Clin Endocrinol Metab. 2002 Feb;87(2):675-81.

(3) NIH Extramural Awards By State and Foreign Site. Office of Extramural research. National Institutes of Health . <http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/award/state/state.htm>. Web-retrieved 12.22.04.

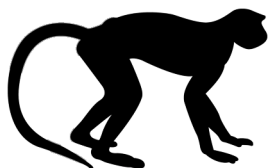
#### **Little to show but pain and suffering.**

Publicly funded primate laboratories have produced nothing of value. Upon close inspection, their claims about discoveries they have contributed to turn out to be little more than self-aggrandizing propaganda. They have contributed pitifully little to human health care and have consumed public resources that should have been reserved for meaningful scientific studies of humans and human disease.

Congress owes the American public the assurance that public funds are not being spent in ways that cause routine severe suffering.

Currently, Congress is not meeting this responsibility.

**Congress should move to close this cruel and wasteful system with all due haste. Urgency is called for.**



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