



MEDIA RELEASE

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Planet of the Apes – a cruel reminder of the unethical and unscientific way we treat our fellow earthlings

As ***Dawn of the Planet of the Apes*** hits cinemas across Australia this week, patrons are to be reminded of the indiscriminate experimental procedures that we subject our closest relatives to – even in Australia.

The message behind the prequel *“Rise of the Planet of the Apes”* is that drugs react differently in humans than they do in other animals – despite the genetic similarity, (hence the pandemic that results in the Apes taking over the world in the movie), yet primates are STILL used for research into human ailments.

Chief Executive, Helen Marston: *“The genetic, sentient and cognitive similarities between primates and humans which supposedly make primates ‘good’ candidates for scientific testing is exactly what makes it unethical to experiment on them.”*

Despite these concerns, baboons are used in heart research, marmosets in brain and vision experiments, and macaques are infected with HIV and AIDS – regardless of primates’ inability to develop HIV. Research experiments are often invasive, with the primate often killed once the test is completed.

- According to the latest statistics (y/e 2012), 235 primates were used in experiments in Victoria.
- In the last five years, a total of \$37.5 million dollars has been provided by Australia’s leading funder of medical research, the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), to 46 grants for primate based medical and scientific research.*
- Data from public opinion polls show an increasing number of Australians are concerned about the use of primates in scientific research. A 2013 survey commissioned by HRA and conducted by Nexus Research showed that 60% of Australians are opposed to their use in medical research, with a further 17% undecided.

For more information about the use of primates in research, see our [case studies](#).

Dawn of the Planet of the Apes opens in cinemas Thursday 10th July.

Humane Research Australia is holding a movie and brunch fundraiser this Sunday. For details, please visit [Events Page](#).

*“Answers to Estimates Questions on Notice. Health and Ageing Portfolio” Budget Estimates 2013-14, 5/6 & 7 June 2013. Question:E13-104.