

Fate of 'retired' research chimps

Your News story on the return of a colony of elderly research chimpanzees to the lab (*Nature* **467**, 507–508; 2010) inadvertently misrepresents my position on an important and sensitive issue.

Like many others on the sidelines of this acrimonious debate, I see a middle path that seems reasonable. Given that chimpanzees in captivity cannot be returned to the wild, these individuals should be studied with care. This means following similar conditions and principles to those used for research on human subjects who are incapable of giving informed consent. Such studies would be of great benefit to chimpanzees and to humans.

I do not understand the call for a complete ban on all research on captive chimpanzees. Would anyone support a complete ban on all research on humans? Such a ban would be bad for both species.

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