

HEALTH AND MEDICINE

Harvard Medical School Neurobiology Professor Ed Kravitz Indicted on Fly-Fighting Charges

BOSTON, MA - In a turn of events that has sent shockwaves through the Harvard Medical School community, eminent neurobiologist Ed Kravitz has been indicted by a federal grand jury on charges that he operated an alleged fruit fly fighting ring based inside of his laboratory in the HMS Department of Neurobiology.

"I am in utter disbelief. What kind of example does this set for the millions of school children who look up to Professor Kravitz and dream of being just like him?" asked department head Carla Shatz.

Federal prosecutors allege that flies that did not fight aggressively enough were executed by smashing, by drowning in ethanol, by gassing with carbon dioxide, and even by dissection. "Our hearts break for all of the individual flies who were so horribly abused," read a statement from PETA.

Federal officials were tipped off by a series of high profile articles published on fruit fly aggression by the Kravitz lab in Science, Nature, and PNAS. Federal sources, who agreed to speak only on the condition of anonymity, have pointed to incriminating references to "Bad Newz Flyz" throughout the group's lab notebooks over the past six years.



Hey, Meatloaf. Put Me Down For 50 Bucks on the Ugly Dude!



Photographic Evidence of Fly-Fighting Ring Leaked to HSP by Anonymous Sources in the Harvard Medical School Neurobiology Department

Meanwhile, the conditions in which the flies were kept have made front-page news around the world. FBI agents have seized what appear to be fruit-fly breeding pens, in which flies were fed a measly diet of yeast paste and corn-meal, and made to live in the confines of tiny plastic vials.

In a statement to the Atlanta-Journal Constitution, Kravitz said, "I'm never in the lab anyway. I don't think it's fair that I should have to take the heat for this." In an interview with the New York Times, Kravitz denied having profited from the fly fighting ring. A call to Professor Kravitz's residence was not immediately returned.

In a new development, the future for the abused flies appears to be looking up. A group of Harvard undergraduate students interested in promoting fruit fly welfare has set up a fly adoption agency at the Longwood Campus. "Every fruit fly deserves a loving home," said third-year student

Jessica Wang. "That such wonderful creatures could be so brutally treated is simply beyond belief."



Neurobiology professor Marge Livingstone has already adopted seven of the flies. "In my opinion, it's the very least I could do," said Livingstone. "It's such a shame about Ed, but I feel even worse for the

flies. It leaves me speechless. My God, what was he thinking?"

Not since 2003, when a fruit fly prostitution scandal rocked Welcome Bender's lab in the Department of Biological Chemistry and Molecular Pharmacology, has fly treatment stirred so much controversy at HMS. "If you ask me, 99% of fly geneticists out there are honest men," said HMS geneticist Spyros Artavanis-Tsakonas. "But there is always that 1% that tries to push the boundary too far. We must be ever vigilant and on the look out for that 1%. Ed Kravitz is a perfect example - he cheated us on every one of our fly-fighting bets."

