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Breaking News

NEWS: Two UC Santa Cruz scientists targeted by firebombers

By *Natalie Goode*

Published: August 4, 2008

Animal rights activists are believed to be responsible for the attacks.



The car destroyed by one of the firebombs in a researcher's driveway. Source: *Los Angeles Times*.

Santa Cruz, CA, Aug. 4—The police and FBI are investigating firebombings at the homes of two researchers from the University of California, Santa Cruz.

According to the [The New York Times](#), around 5:30 a.m. Saturday, two small bombs ignited, nearly concurrently, outside the scientists' homes. One of the firebombs destroyed a car that was parked in a yet unnamed faculty

member's driveway. In the second attack, molecular biologist David Feldheim and his family had to escape from a second-story window after a firebomb was lit on their front porch and burnt down his front door.

"That device had a real potential to put that family in jeopardy," Santa Cruz police Captain Steve Clark told the [Los Angeles Times](#). He characterized the bomb as a "Molotov cocktail on steroids."

The fires were extinguished quickly, and a minor injury was reported. Investigators are treating these attacks as acts of attempted homicide and domestic terrorism.

The attacks, which the University of California president Mark G. Yudof described as acts of "violence and intimidation" come on the heels of police discovering pamphlets in a coffee shop warning of assaults against "animal abusers everywhere." The pamphlets had the names and addresses of several researchers at the university. Feldheim's name was on the list.

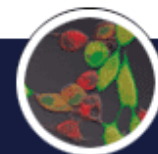
According to the Center for Biomolecular Science & Engineering (CBSE), Feldheim's lab uses mice to research the growth of brain functions. The *Los Angeles Times* reports that authorities wouldn't release the name of the other researcher; however, his name wasn't listed in the pamphlet.

These attacks have provoked Yudof to coordinate with local government officials to get legislation passed that will protect academic researchers from being threatened and intimidated. The legislation, titled AB 2296, will try to pass a "misdemeanor

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trespass law" that will make it an infringement if a person enters an academic researcher's residential property with the intent to interfere with that scientist's "academic freedom."

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