

'Parallels between fetuses and cancers'

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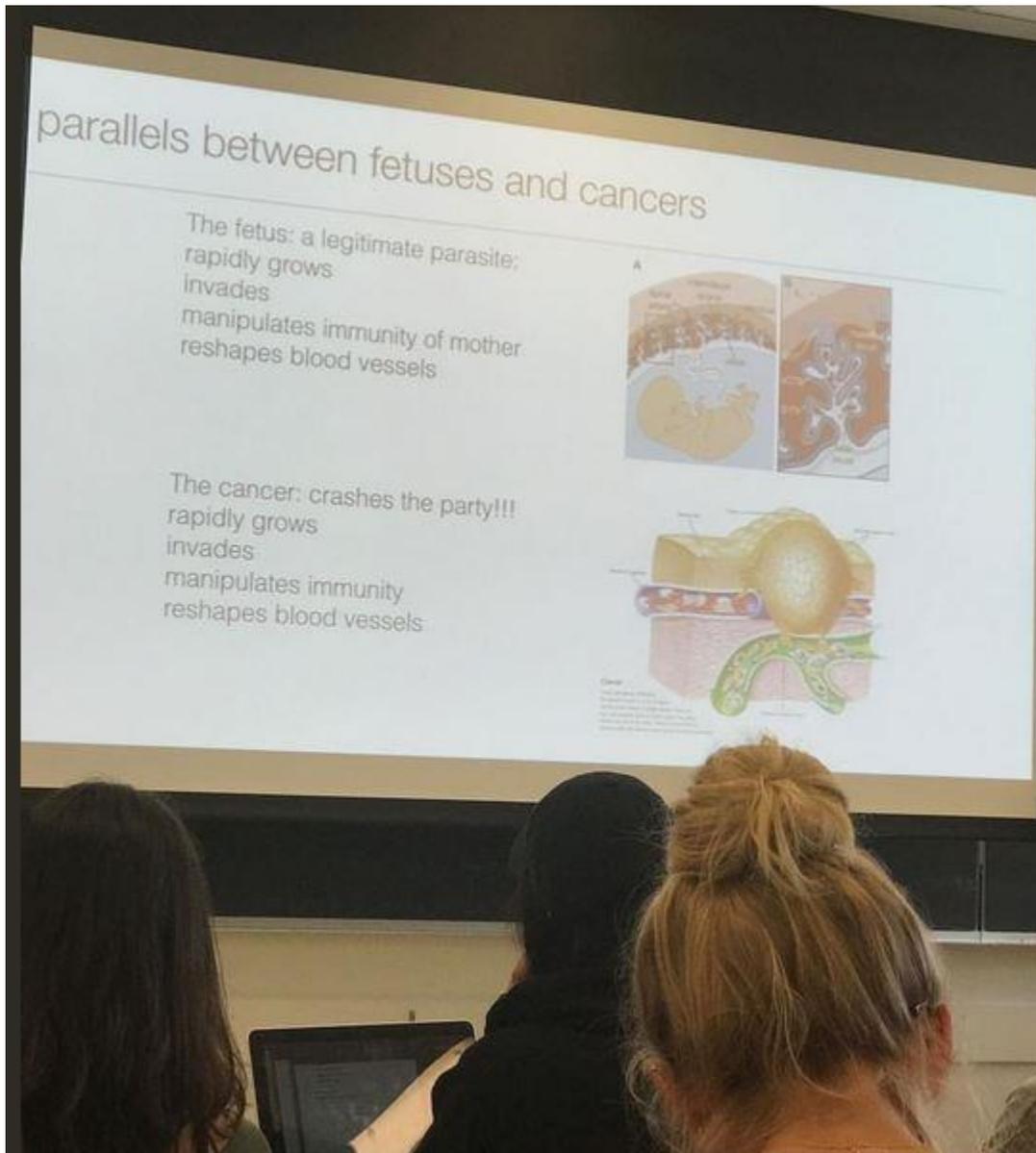
A slide in a university biology class headlined "parallels between fetuses and cancers" has sparked a Twitter storm and a promise from the school to investigate.

[The College Fix reported](#) a friend of a student of Professor Pascal Gagneux at **University of California-San Diego School of Medicine** posted an image of the slide, which appeared to equate an unborn child with cancerous cells.

The slide said:

"The fetus: a legitimate parasite rapidly grows invades manipulates immunity of mother reshapes blood vessels."

It said cancer "crashes the party!!! Rapidly grows invades manipulates immunity reshapes blood vessels."



Dylan Griswold said he posted the slide on Twitter after receiving it from friend in an upper-level biology course.

"I'm speechless. Create your own caption," he wrote.

No joke, a friend just sent me this slide from her upper-level biology course.

I'm speechless.

"How should you greet an expectant mother at the University of California-San Diego School of Medicine? Tell her how sorry you are that a parasite is invading her body," the College Fix commented.

The report said Griswold identified **the course as "biology of disease."**

A spokeswoman for the School of Medicine told The Fix Friday night it could not confirm the photo came from UCSD.

"We're looking into where the image may have originated," she said in an email..

The professor, Gagneux, told students in an email forwarded to The Fix: "Most of you probably realize that my point was to show that mammals are especially prone to invasive cancers because mammals evolved invasive placentation. My point was not to indoctrinate you with the notion that fetuses are cancers, as insinuated in the article."

He told his students they are "welcome to take pictures of the slides in class, but please consider how some of these can be misunderstood out of context before posting them."

"Should you disagree with something you see and hear, I would kindly ask that you please come and talk to me before you post material on social networks."

On Twitter, Griswold faced a blowtorch of criticism.

Twitter user Billy Monkeypants, who claimed to be a biologist, wrote: "I can see where he's coming from. Technically, fetuses DO perform like parasites in the sense that they use the 'host.' That's how they live and reproduce!"

N wrote: "You jumped to conclusions. You're in the wrong."

Laggan said, "Fetuses have many similarities to parasites and understanding those similarities helps you understand both reproduction and parasitic organisms."

And Dr BJ wrote, "If you can't handle science, medicine isn't the right profession for you."

But Griswold also received support.

Twitter user Habitual Linestepper said, "Claiming a baby is a parasite isn't science."

And C.M. Bermudez, M.A., wrote: "Dylan you absolutely did the right thing by shining the flashlight on the dehumanization of babies in the womb. This professor knew exactly what he was doing: a subtle parallel drawn that normalizes the notion that babies are parasites..."

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