

Part II

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Early arguments against animal research were based on the obvious pain and suffering of animals in response to laboratory procedures. Research groups counter these arguments by claiming that scientific advancement is not possible without continued animal experimentation and that anesthesia is used whenever possible in order to minimize pain.

For the sake of "argument," let us assume that you must make a decision regarding the future of animal research. The question you must answer is this;

Do the benefits produced by animal research outweigh the pain and distress animals endure, or is it absolutely wrong to conduct any animal research whatsoever?

Animal Pharm

What makes us human? There are dozens of different answers to this question. Some argue that it is our high-functioning brains and self-awareness; others insist it is religion; and there are others who claim it is our dominion over the rest of the animal kingdom. I, for one, think that it is empathy, sympathy, and our capacity for moral reasoning that makes us human. However, there is nothing human about using live animals as test subjects. As the 'higher-functioning' life-forms on this planet, it is our duty to protect and conserve, not exploit and destroy.

Contrary to what many human beings believe, animals are not inferior or superior to humans. They have feelings, instincts, and basic reasoning skills, although not to the same extent that humans do. According to PETA's website, "[m]ore than 100 million animals every year suffer and die in cruel chemical, drug, food and cosmetic tests, biology lessons, medical training exercises, and curiosity-driven medical experiments" ("Animals Used"). This kind of testing can cause cancers, neuroses, and other ailments to these animals, in addition to the pain and suffering they endure. To me, this is unthinkable and sickening. While to others, it is acceptable and even encouraged in the name of medical progress.

Moreover, those who approve of animal testing usually defend it by arguing that it is medically necessary to use animals to test pharmaceuticals, insomuch as using human test subjects is considered inhumane. However, "the results of testing on animals are different from the results of testing on humans because we have different physiologies and metabolisms" (Callanan 19). While humans and animals are similar in many ways, an animal's reaction to pharmaceuticals does not mirror a human's reaction to the same drug. In spite of there being some exceptions to this phenomenon, there is not enough sufficient medical progress to warrant the continuation of animal testing.

Furthermore, many uses of animals in animal testing are unnecessarily cruel. "A goat is deliberately shot and then treated by military personnel, a healthy dog is operated on and killed by veterinary students—inhumane procedures exactly like these are routinely carried out in the name of medical training" (Humane Society). This sort of behavior is not only egregious, it is inhumane. There are many other different ways to train medical personnel that do not involve

making an animal suffer. More importantly, there is no reason for that kind of animal cruelty to occur. Purposeful exploitation of an animal is not necessary for training or other situations.

Interestingly enough, some people argue that using animals as test subjects is "the most noble thing we do to animals" (Byrnes 28). This kind of thought pattern not only asserts the idea of human superiority over animals, it perpetuates the idea that animals are disposable. Although there are plenty of people who think that way, I believe that is inhumane and wrong to insist upon the idea that animals are inferior creatures with no intellect or feelings of their own. Animals have been known to have the capacity to mourn, cry, and express other complex emotions. In spite of this, it is seemingly not taken into consideration within the animal testing world.

Above all, animals have their own thoughts and feelings and suffer in a similar way that humans do. Even if they did not suffer in the same way that humans do, there is no justifiable reason to perpetuate that sort of abuse. There is not enough sufficient medical progress, nor is there enough genetic similarities between test animals and humans to justify their use as test subjects. In addition, it is not necessary to use animals in the name of medical training either. It is our job as humans to protect and conserve the life-forms around us, not to exploit and destroy them. The benefits of animal testing do not confer the suffering and harm that animal testing brings.