

That Which We Call Abuse By Any Other Name Would Be As Cruel.

No matter what you want to call it, animal experimentation in any form, is cruelty. It's unnecessary abuse that supposed "professionals" inflict on animals for the purpose of observing their pain. There are far too many safe and equally-effective alternatives that it's no longer justifiable to experiment on animals. Vivisection, or the experimentation on animals, is based on the idea that animals can be used as "models" for humans. I don't know about you, but I'm no mouse. I just can't see how scientists can really rationalize that vivisection is an acceptable form of testing. How can they just sit there and watch the animals in pain and do nothing about it, much less subject them to scientific torture in the first place? It's not a matter of who's better or more important, but rather a matter of respect and dignity. Both humans and animals could live together without either having to be sacrificed for the other's benefit.

Who or what really *deserves* to be cut into pieces or pulled from limb to limb? How is it right that rabbits be used to test the effects of bleach in one's eye? How stupid can you be? If you get bleach in your eye, that's BAD; it burns. Anyone who has ever scrubbed the toilet could tell you that. Science, pfhhh!

Granted, some, and I stress only SOME scientific tests have been beneficial to humans. Take AIDS for example: the bone marrow from



The study of pain at the U of U: animal laboratories.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YSeS-nAJkv4>

baboons (which happen to be immune to AIDS) had

been injected into the bones of humans infected by the virus. This helped the human participant by boosting his immune system and allowing him to live just a little while longer. On the flip side, the baboon to which the marrow belonged was sacrificed to make this possible (Murray 1). Now, it wasn't exactly *good* that the baboon died, but at least the guy got to live a little while longer.

In a recent internal investigation done by the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) at the University of Utah, it was found that laboratory rats had been neglected and many starved to death (Mcentee). The university buys dogs from local animal shelters and uses them in deadly heart and respiratory experiments (PETA). One cat, Robert, was bought from a local shelter and the scientists at the University of Utah implanted electrodes into his skull and ran electric current into his brain (PETA). Many of these and other sick tests are performed unnecessarily on animals at the University of Utah and



around
the
globe. I
might
be more

understanding that these tests were being done if they were for some purpose, but to run electric current through a cat's head seems to me to be torturous and pointless.

If instead, we were to be doing skin irritant tests, respiratory inflammation tests, and other invasive and intrusive forms of experimentation on human children, the entire operation would be quickly shut down and all accomplices sent to prison for life. Yet, it's somehow acceptable to test on monkeys, who, in the past, have been shown to be very affectionate and bonding creatures. Both human children and monkeys are innocent and deserve to be equally protected from scientific testing of any sort.

Although some may debate this statement by suggesting that human children and monkeys are nothing alike, I happen to disagree. Both are sentient beings; each happens to be able to feel pain and emotions. Each has been shown to attach emotionally to a mother figure and thrive on social connections. Despite the fact that monkeys can't speak our language, in most other ways they are

similar and should be equally protected from the inhumane and torturous practice of animal experimentation.

Since both the animals that are being tested upon and humans have brains, central nervous systems, and pain receptors, we should be able to realize that each can sense pain and are affected by it. Why, then, would we humans assume that it be acceptable that animals be tested upon? Is it that we're better? If we were truly to consider the emotional effects that animal experimentation had on the animals I think we would take more ethical stands and choose to treat them more humanely.

The fact is that alternatives exist. Selective formulation, or choosing previously tested ingredients to create new products, eliminates the need for further testing. Others include human cultures, physiological chips, cellular tests and Micro-dosing (Barnard). If all of these effective alternative methods exist, I see no reason to continue to test on animals. As Neal Barnard, MD, also states, "Ultimately, the recognition that animal testing is cruel, inaccurate and unnecessary will win the day, and [will] benefit both the welfare of animals and scientific progress (Barnard)." Rowan, a Ph.D. in biochemistry, declared, "Technology cannot yet supplant all animal research for medical purposes. But, if the research community coordinates its efforts, he believes it can end all animal research sooner than later" (Spencer 4).

Carol Howard, communications coordinator at the Johns Hopkins Center for Alternatives to Animal Testing in Baltimore, Maryland, believes that alternative testing can replace animal experimentation. I agree. We should focus our attention on replacement of animal experimentation with other methods, reduction of the number of animals we have now in laboratories, and refine our processes in labs in order to make them more humane (Howard 1). I believe that if we are to use animals in testing we should test things that actually matter, not perfumes, lipsticks, and other toiletries. It's simply not justifiable to test these products on animals because they're not necessary for our survival.

I understand that although there are reliable alternatives to animal testing, we can't deny the priceless knowledge we've acquired from animal testing. I don't suspect, as James Randerson, reporter for The Guardian, concedes, that all of the alternatives currently exist. He quoted Jessica, who runs the secret marmoset research facility at a leading UK university, "Tissue cultures don't behave. Imaging can't get a cause and effect. Modeling can't work unless you understand what you are trying to model." Randerson also challenges that "No scientist would choose to work on animals unless there was no alternative" (Randerson 3).

It's certainly worth it to me to have my face wash tested on animals first that when I use it, it may not cause my skin to peel off or be chemically burned. I would rather that a few rats die for the sake of learning about cancerous tumors than my grandfather to die because such advancements in the cures for cancer were not found because scientists were more concerned about the rats. It's a good idea to test skin creams and other necessities; however, I do not support torturing animals for the sake of witnessing their pain.

In the end it all depends on whether we care enough about the suffering these animals go through enough to re-think our ways. My hope is that the University of Utah may consider very seriously the effects their testing has had on their lab animals. It's my opinion that animals deserve rights just as humans do. Just because they can't speak our language doesn't mean that they don't feel pain or feel emotional trauma from the testing they go through. Animal testing is neither all good nor all bad. Some animal tests have been helpful to humans, but to torture animals for the sake of documenting their pain is nothing but cruelty in its purest form.

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