

Is it moral for corporations to test cosmetics on animals?

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Is it moral for corporations to test cosmetics on animals or to use animals for medical experimentation? Pain is pain, and the importance of preventing unnecessary pain and suffering does not diminish because the being that suffers is not a member of our own species. (Peter Singer, *Animal Liberation*)

Human beings..... who are we? Are we Gods or we are just the top of the food chain on Earth? Do we have rights to harm other nonhuman species? These and many other questions I have in my head when I see how cruel we are sometimes to each other and even harsher toward the other nonhuman beings.

Personally, I treat animals with respect because I consider them to be reasonable creatures that are in many perspectives similar to us, human beings. I am confident that animals have emotions; they can feel pain and happiness like we do. As we can see this is not enough for us to consider them our "little brothers." From ancient times, many animals are being used for satisfying human's different needs, such as food, transportation, and materials. Nowadays, human beings use animals not only for above-mentioned purposes, but also for cosmetics and medical experiments.

All these experiments definitely cause harm to animals. Majority of human population believes that all these experiments are the required attribute for all pharmaceutical and cosmetics companies. They believe that these practices can prevent many people from suffering by testing all new medicine and cosmetic products on animals first. According to this I can say that animals' sufferings caused by people became moral issue for our last

generations. In my essay I will use the work of Peter Singer "All animals are Equal," because his work covers most of the aspects that I agree with.

The main purpose of this essay is to emphasize that nonhuman beings have many similarities with human beings and they need to have basic rights for life without pain. It means that human beings must understand that all species are equal and it is immoral to make them suffer. There are similarities between human beings and animals that can be taken into account. In this case, I consider that main feelings that are possessed both by human and by nonhuman beings are pain and happiness. It is obvious that animals that surround us can experience pain. Just imagine if you kick a dog with your leg, the dog will moan and probably will run away with its tail between its legs. If this dog would not suffer from that kick it would not try to prevent that pain from occurring. On the other hand, imagine the same dog running towards her master, spinning her tail and running around him, licking his hands, jumping and sending many other positive signals that represent happiness. By visualizing these two images you can easily understand that animals have basic feelings like we do. For some people this might sound like nonsense if I say that people are equal to other species that are inhabiting our planet. I will not take into consideration some biological features of the beings.

I want to look at this problem from the moral perspective. Today it is acceptable by many developed countries around the world for women have equal rights with men. We consider that this is a right thing, but think for a moment that essentially males and females are not the same. I mean they

have equal rights but not all rights applied for both men and women, due to physiological differences or other factors. For example, P. Singer mentioned in his work that women have right to abortion so in order to make them equal to men, males also must have the same right to abortion (P.

Singer, p. 172). However, men do not need this right since those instances never occur. According to this example, equality does not particularly mean that men and women have all the same equal rights. It means that they have the same rights in regards with to what they have in common. Concerning cosmetics and medical experiments on animals I can definitely say that it makes animals suffer. Let's take medical experiments of new drugs. Nobody knows what is going to happen when any external substance is implemented on an animal.

There are certain medications tested on animals and that caused the death of the animals. For example, one of the scandal cases is the sheep Dolly that died because of the cloning experiment. Obviously there is a big chance for the animals to die after certain tests are performed on them. Nevertheless, human beings still accept the fact that some species other than humans can justifiably suffer in order to possibly save some human being's lives. However, animals that are involved in those experiments will receive nothing in return but suffering because the only purpose of those experiments is to help people.

So, regarding cosmetic experiments, those animals suffer not for the sake of saving some human's life, but for the sake of helping a number of people to look more beautiful. For instance, before introducing a new cosmetic product

such as shampoo to the market a product should go through the series of tests, the part of which is animal testing. Even this single product can harm a large number of animals. Looking more attractive, in my mind, is not worth causing pain to other species. I want to say, that the number of animals' suffering is greater than the pleasure that human beings receive.

In other words the degree of harm is higher than the degree of happiness. Some people might say let's think about the morality that animals have. The main principal of their lives is to survive. Most of them survive by killing and eating other animals. Let's take lions as an example; they kill other animals to feed their prides. In other words, they hurt other species to make their own lives flourish. If we can call this their "morality", then medical experiments are the right thing to do, because human beings are the part of the same biosphere as lions and other animals are.

As a result of these experiments many lives of the human beings were saved. Without the experiments on animals it would be impossible to reach the constant improvements and developments in medicine. If we talk about equality with animals in this perspective then we are equal to them, since we act according to their "morality." All these arguments are related to utilitarianism. Utilitarian theories are dealing with selection of the action that will result in the maximum good for the greatest amount of individuals (Encyclopedia Britannica).

Regarding animal testing from utilitarian point of view I can say that this is not right thing to do. Since it can be moral only if it delivers the greatest good to greatest number of individuals I can calculate how many individuals

are better off in this case. For example only in France in 2005, 12, 117, 583 animals were used for medical experiments (Andrew Knight, p. 651). Taking in account that this number represents the quantity of animals that were used by only a single country, I can definitely say that the total number of animals used for experiments in the whole world is much greater than human population.

Moreover, not all people received benefits from those medical experiments, but all animals tested suffered or died. Talking about the previous example of analyses of lions' morality I want to mention that in that case lions kill not more than two zebras to feed more than ten lions. On basis of this, greater good delivered to greater number of individuals. The professor of Oxford and Warwick universities and also the former head of Medical Research Council Colin Blakemore states that many irredeemable human diseases like Alzheimer's multiple sclerosis would never be possible to vaccinate without using all possible tools.

In this case, experimental animals are one of the tools that are needed for the research of those diseases (Colin Blakemore). This claim proves that animal testing is one of the main research attributes. Therefore, in order to provide seriously ill people with quality medications, pharmaceutical companies have to test new drugs on animals. It is obvious, that fifty years ago it was normal for researchers to use animals for medical and cosmetics experiments, because they did not have any alternatives. It is known, that today's technologies have features that can substitute usage of animals.

If it is possible to use other means than animals why people do not do that? It seems to me that until animal tests are regarded as moral by human beings this practice will continue. Moreover, there will be a lot of different arguments that will support the idea of animal experiments. Yet, the fact that we can do medical experiments in 21st century without torturing animals is obvious. It is immoral to cause pain to a human by another one. The main reason for that is that human can suffer. Everyone in his or her life experienced pain and know what it is.

So, it became immoral thing to harm other people. Moreover, every person has a right to not experience pain from other individuals. In other words people are bounded by their rights and morality from making other people suffer. We are protected by rights and by laws not to be harmed, but animals are not protected by those rights and human morality. Nevertheless, they can suffer like we do. In this case both human and nonhuman beings experience relatively the same feeling of pain. Since the pain is the one factor that makes us similar to animals, why other species do not have rights to not suffer?

One of the reasons why animals do not have some equal rights with people is probably because all those concepts of equal rights were created by human beings. It becomes obvious that human beings are selfish in this perspective. If you are the man it does not mean for me that you can decide for others what to do with their lives. What about the fact that human beings are the part of the biosphere of our planet. I think this is immoral to not take

into account that animals can suffer like we do. In these circumstances I agree with P. Singer as he introduced an example about an orphaned infant.

He said that “ would be experimenter ready to make his experiments on orphaned infant if it would be the only option to save many lives. If experimenter would be against using orphaned infant for experiments, then his readiness to use animal is simple discrimination. ” But many adult animals are more receptive to pain than human infants. (P. Singer, p. 176). This is not good and people must understand why they have to do something about it. I agree that this practice is hard to change. Still, looking back in the history there were many practices that were accepted to be moral.

For instance, I want to mention slavery and discrimination of African American or women. All of these cases were perceived to be normal at those times, but now moral values have changed. It means that there is a chance that people will comprehend the pain that we cause to nonhuman beings. People cannot decide for animals what to do with their lives. It is not moral to benefit one by harming another one. In this case all experiments on animals must be reformed. However, it is rooted deeply in our moral values system, so this values need to be changed as they were changed in other cases similar to this one.

Human moral issues are changing all the time. Just recall the time when all people were classified by skin color or other signs. It was normal to discriminate black people only because they have a different skin color. Going back we can see that white people at those times would never accept that they are born equal to black people. It took a lot of time to change those

beliefs. Now Barak Obama is the president of USA while a century ago this fact would appear implausible. It means that it is possible to change moral beliefs of human beings by giving them enough arguments for that.

According to this I can definitely say that there are enough arguments that can be used to prove that animal experiments can be reformed. I want to conclude that the problem of animal experiments is related to each individual. According to utilitarian theory the animal experiments are not a right thing to do, because harm of these experiments is greater than the positive outcome. Number of ruined animals' lives, is much greater than the number of saved human beings' lives. The only way to prevent animal usage is to persuade people that this is inapplicable in our modern community.

As I mentioned there are many ways, including technological improvements, to not use animals for medical experiments. The technology of 21 century allows constructing virtual models of live organisms that are able to predict a reaction of a tested medicine. This argument can cause the change in human beings' morality, and animals will get equal rights with humans, by taking into consideration their abilities to experience pain and happiness like we do. Moreover, our morality is the subject that can be changed, as we can observe by looking back in the history.

We need to start doing it, because we are the most intelligent creatures on the Earth and the future of many animals is in our hands. Work cited 1) Blakemore, Colin. "Should We Experiment on Animals? Yes." The Telegraph. Telegraph Media Group, 29 Nov. 2008. Web. 22 Feb. 2012. . (I trust this web site, because the author seems to me very intelligent, since he is the

professor of Oxford and Warwick universities and also the former head of Medical Research Council Colin Blakemore) 2) Knight, Andrew. Systematic Reviews of Animal Experiments Demonstrate Poor Human Clinical and Toxicological Utility. " ATLA -NOTTINGHAM- 35 (2007): 641-60. Print. 3) Peter Singer, " Chapter 14: All Animals are Equal" in Hugh LaFollette (ed.), Ethics in Practice. 171-180 4) Singer, Peter. Animal Liberation. New York, NY: New York Review of, 1990. Print. 5) " utilitarianism. " Encyclop? dia Britannica. Encyclop? dia Britannica OnlineAcademicEdition. Encyclop? dia Britannica Inc. , 2012. Web. 22 Feb. 2012. .