

Should society  
recognize animal  
rights, even to the  
extent of disallowing  
the use...



Animals used in scientific experiments The article written by David Weatherall, d “ Animal research: The Debate continues” deals with the use of monkeys in medical research. These animals are being used to develop vaccines for AIDS, malaria and other disorders. The article discusses a report sponsored by the UK Royal Society Medical research Council, which discusses the benefits of using animals for medical purposes versus the avoiding of animals in research. Therefore this article is relevant to the issue of using animals in medical research because it deals exhaustively with the issue of animal research, also discussing subsequent write-ups that appeared as reactions to the Council’s report. The comment on this report concludes that to some extent there may be grounds to support the argument for the use of monkeys in medical research, however no blanket decisions can be made because each case must be evaluated individually to assess the beneficial effect of the medicine as opposed to the harm caused to the animals.

Evidence that is provided in this article includes figures on number of animals used in medical experiments, as well as the percentages of animals used in toxicology studies. It also provides information on the development of vaccines, as well as providing evidence of other methods that may be used for the same purpose that does not involve the use of animals. The article also provides evidence on cell and molecular biology, in-silico technology, computer modeling, microdosing and the use of transgenic mice.

The author of this report is David Weatherall. Although this author has commented on and explained the contents of a report that was sponsored by

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the Medical Council, he is himself the Chairman of the working group which actually produced and prepared the report on the use of non human primates in research, which was sponsored by the Medical Council. The author has clarified that the comments he has made are not necessarily those that reflect the view of the report's sponsors.

The Report which is the subject of this article was published by the Wellcome Trust and the Academy of Medical Sciences, however this particular report on the article was published in the Lancet, a reputed newspaper. Therefore, this is a report published by a reputed publisher and sponsored by a reputed body.

This report is very timely in the context of the controversies that have been raging over the use of animals for purposes of scientific and medical research. The report has also undertaken a comprehensive analysis of the various methods and purposes for which non human primates are used. It also assess several recent techniques that are being used in developing alternatives for the use of animals in medical and scientific research although it does conclude that it is too early to evaluate the efficacy of these studies. However, the report has been critiqued by other articles that appeared subsequently which allege that there may be bias in the research design. However, on an overall basis, the article offers a comprehensive amount of research information in relation to the use of animals in medical research and specifically in relation to the use of monkeys.

I feel this article will be very useful to me because it provides an argument about the merits of medical benefits from research as against the use of non human primates. It also provides valuable information on alternative

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methods that can be used instead of using animals. It also deals in some detail with the procedures that are followed in the preparation of vaccines, etc and is therefore a source of useful information about the use of animals in medical research.

References:

- \* Haack, Susan M, 2007. " Why animal experimentation matters: the use of animals in medical research." *Ethics and Medicine*, 23(2): 124
- \* Weatherall, David, 2007. " Animal Research: The debate continues" *The Lancet*, 369 (9568) : 1147-9