Animal Testing 2 Essay, Research Paper

Animal Testing

Using animals for testing is wrong and should be banned. They have rights just as we do. Twenty-four hours a day humans are using defenseless animals for cruel and most often useless tests. The animals have no way of fighting back. This is why there should be new laws to protect them. These legislations also need to be enforced more regularly. Too many criminals get away with murder.

Although most labs are run by private companies, often experiments are conducted by public organizations. The US government, Army and Air force in particular, has designed and carried out many animal experiments. The purposed experiments were engineered so that many animals would suffer and die without any certainty that this suffering and death would save a single life, or benefit humans in anyway at all; but the same can be said for tens of thousands of other experiments performed in the US each year. Limiting it to just experiments done on beagles, the following might sock most people: For instance, at the Lovelace Foundation, Albuquerque, New Mexico, experimenters forced sixty-four beagles to inhale radioactive Strontium 90 as part of a larger ^Fission Product Inhalation Program^ which began in 1961 and has been paid for by the US Atomic Energy Commission. In this experiment Twenty-five of the dogs eventually died. One of the deaths occurred during an epileptic seizure; another from a brain hemorrhage. Other dogs, before death, became feverish and anemic, lost their appetites, and had hemorrhages. The experimenters in their published report, compared their results with that of other experiments conducted at the University of Utah and the Argonne National Laboratory in which beagles were injected with Strontium 90. They concluded that the dose needed to produce ^early death^ in fifty percent of the sample group differed from test to test because the dogs injected with Strontium 90 retain more of the radioactive substance than dogs forced to inhale it. Also, at the University of Rochester School Of Medicine a group of experimenters put fifty beagles in wooden boxes and irradiated them with different levels of radiation by x-rays. Twenty-one of the dogs died within the first two weeks. The experimenters determined the dose at which fifty percent of the animals will die with ninety-five percent confidence. The irritated dogs vomited, had diarrhea, and lost their appetites. Later, they hemorrhaged from the mouth, nose, and eyes. In their report, the experimenters compared their experiment to others of the same nature that each used around seven hundred dogs. The experimenters said that the injuries produced in their own experiment were ^Typical of those described for the dog^ (Singer 30). Similarly, experimenters for the US Food and Drug Administration gave thirty beagles and thirty pigs large amounts of Methoxychlor (a pesticide) in their food, seven days a week for six months, ^In order to insure tissue damage^ (30). Within eight weeks, eleven dogs exhibited signs of ^abnormal behavior^ including nervousness, salivation, muscle spasms, and convolutions. Dogs in convultions breathed as rapidly as two hundred times a minute before they passed out from lack of oxygen. Upon recovery from an episode of convulsions and collapse, the dogs were uncoordinated, apparently blind, and any stimulus such as dropping a feeding pan, squirting water, or touching the animals initiated another convulsion. After further experimentation on an additional twenty beagles, the experimenters concluded that massive daily doses of Methoxychlor produce different effects in dogs from those produced in pigs. These three examples should be enough to show that the Air force beagle experiments were in no way exceptional. Note that all of these experiments, according to the experimenters^ own reports, obviously caused the animals to suffer considerably before dying. No steps were taken to prevent this suffering, even when it was clear that the radiation or poison had made the animals extremely sick. Also, these experiments are parts of series of similar experiments, repeated with only minor variations, that are being carried out all over the country. These experiments Do Not save human lives or improve them in any way. It was already known that Strontium 90 is unhealthy before the beagles died; and the experimenters who poisoned dogs and pigs with Methoxychlor knew beforehand that the large amounts they were feeding the animals (amounts no human could ever consume) would cause damage. In any case, as the differing results they obtained on pigs and dogs make it clear, it is not possible to reach any firm conclusion about the effects of a substance on humans from tests on other species. The practice of experimenting on non-human animals as it exists today throughout the world reveals the brutal consequences of speciesism (Singer 29).

In this country everyone is supposed to be equal, but apparently some people just don^t have to obey the law. That is, in New York and some other states, licensed laboratories are immune from ordinary anticruelty laws, and these places are often owned by state universities, city hospitals, or even The United States Public Health Service. It seems suspicious that some government run facilities could be ^immune^ from their own laws (Morse 19). In relation, ^No law requires that cosmetics or household products be tested on animals. Nevertheless, by six^o clock this evening, hundreds of animals will have their eyes, skin, or gastrointestinal systems unnecessarily burned or destroyed. Many animals will suffer and die this year to produce ^new^ versions of deodorant, hair spray, lipstick, nail polish, and lots of other products^ (Sequoia 27). Some of the largest cosmetics companies use animals to test their products. These are just a couple of the horrifying tests they use, namely, the Drazie Test. The Drazie test is performed almost exclusively on albino rabbits. They are preferred because they are docile, cheap, and their eyes do not shed tears (so chemicals placed in them do not wash out). They are also the test subject of choice because their eyes are clear, making it easier to observe destruction of eye tissue; their corneal membranes are extremely susceptible to injury. During each test the rabbits are immobilized (usually in a ^stock^, with only their heads protruding) and a solid or liquid is placed in the lower lid of one eye of each rabbit. These substances can range from mascara to aftershave to oven cleaner. The rabbits^ eyes remain clipped open. Anesthesia is almost never administered. After that, the rabbits are examined at intervals of one, twenty-four, forty-eight, seventy-two, and one hundred an sixty-eight hours. Reactions, which may range from severe inflammation, to clouding of the cornea, to ulceration and rupture of the eyeball, are recorded by technicians. Some studies continue for a period of weeks. No other attempt is made to treat the rabbits or to seek any antidotes. The rabbits who survive the Drazie test may then be used as subjects for skin-inflammation tests (27). Another widely used procedure is the LD-50. This is the abbreviation of the Lethal Dose 50 test. LD-50 is the lethal dose of something that will kill fifty percent of all animals in a group of forty to two hundred. Most commonly, animals are force-feed substances (which may be toothpaste, shaving cream, drain cleaner, pesticides, or anything else they want to test) through a stomach tube and observed for two weeks or until death. Non-oral methods of administering the test include injection, forced inhalation, or application to animals skin. Symptoms routinely include tremors, convultions, vomiting, diarrhea, paralysis, or bleeding from the eyes, nose, mouth. Animals that survive are destroyed (29). Additionally, when one laboratory^s research on animals establishes something significant, scores of other labs repeat the experiment, and more thousands of animals are needlessly tortured and killed (Morse 8).

Few labs buy their animal test subjects from legitimate pet stores and the majority use illegal pet dealers. There are many stolen animal dealers that house the animals before, during , and after testing. These ^farms^ most frequently hold animals between tests while the animals recuperate, before facing another research ordeal. These so called farms in question are mainly old barn-like buildings used as hospitals and convalescent (recovery) wards are filthy, overcrowded pens. At one farm in particular dogs with open chest wounds and badly infected incisions, so weak that many could not stand, were the order of the day. These dogs were ^recuperating^ from open-heart and kidney surgery. Secondly, a litter of two-day-old pups were found in a basket, with no food provisions in sight (Morse 19). In every pen there were dogs suffering from highly contagious diseases. An animal^s road to a lab is seldom a direct one. Whether he^s stolen picked up as a stray, or purchased, there^s a de tour first to the animal dealer^s farm; There he waits- never under satisfactory conditions- until his ride, and often life, comes to an end at the laboratory (23).

Every day of the year, hundreds of thousands of fully conscious animals are scalded, or beaten, or crushed to death, and more are subjected to exotic surgery and then allowed to die slowly and in agony. There is no reason for this suffering to continue (Morse 8). In conclusion, animal testing is inhumane and no animal should be forced to endure such torture. Waste in government is one thing; it seems to be an accepted liability of democracy. But the wasting of lives is something else. How did it ever get this way?