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### Animal Subjects in Experiments

Animal testing in research is a complex issue that has a variety of viewpoints. The process itself involves administering drugs and other medical treatments, such as experimental surgeries, to animal subjects to test their safety and practicality for human applications. In some cases medications and surgeries are tested on healthy animals to determine how they react. In other cases, animals are intentionally harmed to facilitate determining the effectiveness of the treatment. In those instances the harm to the animal can be physical, such as dislocating joints, or it can be biological, such as injecting an animal with a disease for which a potential treatment will eventually be administered.

The concept of animal testing is based on the assumption that humans are superior to other animals and therefore are less expendable for laboratory research. There are several arguments against animal testing; the primary argument is on the basis of ethics. The other major argument against animal testing is that it does not adequately simulate a human's reactions to the treatment and therefore endangers humans. Some researchers who use animal testing do so because it is a legal requirement, while others do it because they feel that it is the best way to test the treatment for both safety and effectiveness.

Those who are opposed to animal testing believe that there are better methods for testing treatments, such as testing on vitro cultures. The belief is that these cultures, which are human cells, tissues and organs, are a closer simulation for the reaction of a human organism than testing on animal species which have less in common with human anatomy/biology. Those who support animal testing make many claims about the marvels of medical research that animals have contributed to being created. The supporters of animal testing also believe that testing on animals is the most effective and inexpensive method for testing new treatments available. Supporters of animal testing believe the results of animal studies to be reliable, whereas the opponents of animal testing believe that it is not a reliable way to test a medication or procedure for use on humans.

From the available information I believe that animal testing is impractical and potentially unethical. My opinion is based on the information presented in the two articles supplied. The arguments of those opposing animal testing are more compelling to me than those presented by the supporters. This is mostly because the article for the supporters seems to back itself entirely on claims of the many things that animal research has accomplished. The contributions cited are not very specific and only claim that animal testing was a key part of the research. There is very little information given to refute the article of the opponents of animal testing. There is no response to the moral and ethical concerns, or to the accusation of animal testing being less effective than other forms of testing. The position of the opponents is backed by citing specific things that have gone wrong in animal testing when it comes to the human application, as well as court testimony from animal researchers stating that they know that testing on animals does not always translate into a predictable human reaction to a treatment. The stronger argument seems to belong to the opponents of animal testing. I do however; feel that neither article is particularly good at making its point. There are very few numbers to back up each claim, so it is therefore difficult to gauge the magnitude of the impact of either side of the argument. The articles come across as being poorly researched.

To support the ethics concerns of the opponents of animal research, the concepts of the course that relate to the similarities between the behaviors of animals and of humans can be used to defend animal rights and to make an argument for the intelligence of animals. Elements of the course which provide theories relating to animal behavior stemming from instinct more than intellectual thought on the other hand provides an argument to the supporters of animal research for why testing on animals is preferable to testing on humans.

The only aspect of the course which I feel I can adequately apply to my argument is the understanding that there are a great number of genetic differences between all types of animals, making them all incompatible with each other for the purposes of testing. The differences can be further highlighted by the different ways in which different species will mate, care for their offspring, make a habitat and forage for food. All animals have unique behavioral patterns because of differences in physiology, and as a result of these differences in behavior

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there is a difference in the food sources and other key environmental interactions that may play a part in how a particular species may react to treatments being tested.

The key difference between opinion and a scientific argument is the amount it is supported. Opinions may be supported by instinct or emotions, but that does not make it a compelling argument. A scientific argument will have a clearly defined position, backed by facts that can be verified. Scientific arguments are often accompanied by a hypothesis that can be tested in relation to the argument. A good scientific argument should be able to respond to any questions asked of it. Whenever ethical considerations are brought into an argument there is very little room for a scientific argument, but a lot of room for opinion. In the context of the present debate, I believe that anything related to ethics to be opinion, but scientific argument to be possible when it comes to the effectiveness or non-effectiveness of animal testing in protecting humans and making more feasible medications. Neither article supplied uses adequate research or statistics to back up its claims. In addition, the opponents of animal research go as far as to attempt to dismiss the usefulness of medications in general in their argument. The use of such a statement would indicate that there are insufficient facts about the topic itself supplied to provide a convincing argument. The supporters of animal research make general statements about it, but then attempt to back it up with numerous examples of the benefits of animal testing, without responding to the actual topic, and providing no numerical or even specific case examples of why animal testing is beneficial and not harmful. I feel that both articles present opinion, and as such do not provide enough information for me to construct my argument as anything but opinion as well.