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# Is the Use of Animals in Scientific and Commercial Testing Justified?

This comes as a result of the need to test cosmetics, new drugs and the effects of chemicals on living organisms before they reach the public mass market. It comes as no surprise however, that this has caused massive uproar with animal activists and pet owners globally, arguing that there are many other alternatives to animal testing that could be used instead of harming and wasting the lives of animals. Companies such as Lush, The Body Shop and NYX are cruelty free and don't support animal testing [2] (PETA, 2015). These companies often target consumers who are very concerned with the lives of animals, and hence market themselves as cruelty free. Yet, some countries around the world like China require that cosmetic products go through extensive animal testing before they reach the mass market [3] (elephant, 2018). Animals are subject to pain and agony as a result of these experiments and raise many ethical issues.

The first source is the Annual Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals Great Britain 2017 released by the Home Office. In the UK, the Animals (Scientific Procedure) Act, 1986 monitors the use of living animals in scientific procedures and records statistics concerning all procedures carried out [4] (Office, 2017). Figure 11 of the source states that 27% of the 322,000 procedures for applied research were used for human cancer [4] (Office, 2017, p. 19). This suggests that the use of animals in scientific testing is justified as it benefits humans and animal research and is essential for making progress against cancer when no other alternatives are available to provide the information required. In addition, the source explains that animal testing can be used for the conservation of endangered species. Whilst four species of endangered wild birds were used in research, the results helped scientists in their efforts to conserve them [4] (Office, 2017, p. 28), thus supporting the argument that animal testing is in fact justified within the scientific community.

The Home Office is a government department, so the credibility is instantly enhanced as they are an official organisation. They have a good reputation to uphold as they are linked to the government which make them more likely to tell the truth and they have the means available to compile accurate and reliable information. Furthermore, the purpose of the source is exclusively to report the statistics of scientific procedures in Great Britain so therefore has a vested interest to tell the truth in order to accurately inform the parliament of these procedures. Although the Home Office has a highly well-regarded reputation, there is no specific author listed so we do not know if the author has any expertise in the field or a personal vested interest to lie. This may perhaps slightly weaken the credibility of the source, however the thorough fact checking process required by the Home Office and its generally very credible reputation perhaps offsets this and leads to this source displaying accurate and neutral information.

The second source under consideration is embodied within an article from Bloomberg [5] (Bloomberg, 2018), a privately held media company based in Midtown Manhattan, New York City, that delivers news from all over the world. Written with assistance from Corinne Gretler and Rachel Chang, who are currently journalists for Bloomberg, the article attempts to bring to light details of animal testing in China. Many labs resort to animal testing because they do not have the capacity to execute alternative methods due to lack of training. Perhaps this may justify the

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use of animals in commercial testing as some countries do not have the technology nor training needed for alternative methods. The European Union and other countries have laws in place to ban all animal testing for cosmetic uses, putting China as one of the last countries in the world to require animal testing, by law, on cosmetics imported and sold to China. This shows that the majority of countries have successfully become cruelty free and confirms that commercial testing on animals is not a necessity to prove the safety of such products.

Corinne Gretler has been a reporter at Bloomberg for the past seven years, her work includes numerous articles regarding overseas affairs, so she may be better qualified to comment upon the situation from a professional viewpoint as she may have more expertise than other journalists; this in turn increases the credibility of the article. Both reporters and Bloomberg News have a credible reputation to uphold and publishing fabricated news to persuade readers in any certain way brings no merit. Furthermore, since this article is for the purpose of informing the community about this particular matter in China, it is likely to be free of bias and considered neutral. As Bloomberg News is neither affiliated nor paid by the Chinese government, they are not likely to have any vested interest to lie. Many media companies, however, are funded or directly affiliated to their country's government and are not able to publish anything detrimental or critical to the authorities. In China, for example, specific websites such as YouTube and Facebook are deemed harmful by the government and are therefore blocked [6] (Xu & Albert, 2017). This censorship in China greatly restricts the freedom of media which in turn makes it difficult to disclose any controversial articles. Journalists in countries like China may be bribed or threatened by government officials and could therefore greatly reduce their credibility. In comparison, Bloomberg's credibility is highly elevated as they are able to remain neutral, unbiased and provide independent news coverage free from government intervention.

The third source to take under consideration in an article by Peta [7] (PETA, 2018); it states that the 'majority of animal experiments do not contribute to improving human health, and the value of the role that animal experimentation plays in most medical advances is questionable.' This supports the statement that animal testing is not justified in scientific research as it causes more damage to the animals' wellbeing than its benefits for humans. According to the US Food and Drug Administration, 'Currently, nine out of ten experimental drugs fail in clinical studies. Many statistics point towards the fact that animal testing does not yield the desired results and benefits in humans as each distinctive species differ substantially at a biological level and is incredibly difficult to replicate how a human will react through animals. A prime example in the article by PETA [7] (PETA, 2018) is HIV and AIDS . In the article, the data shows that although 85 HIV and AIDS vaccines work on other animals, it has failed to prevent HIV and AIDS in humans themselves. This therefore supports the idea that animal testing is not a reliable method of treating dangerous diseases and overall does more harm than good. Furthermore, the article also states the disgusting and horrible conditions animals have to face when they are tested for our use – 'they are confined to barren cages, socially isolated and psychologically traumatised. This causes unnecessary pain for the animals used in research that many deem to be unethical. Overall, this shows that PETA has a very harsh agenda against animal testing, showing plenty of evidence suggesting the link that animal testing does not benefit humans.

PETA is a well-established animal rights organisation and is the largest animal rights organisation in the world. It has more than 6.5 million members and supporters around the world. This shows that PETA is a well-supported organisation as well and therefore this greatly increases the credibility of PETA and the data it produces and puts out. Furthermore, the information from the source [7] (PETA, 2018) is well referenced showing that the information is

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likely to be true and credible. Due to PETA being the largest animal rights organisation, they have a good reputation of standing up for animal rights. Therefore, this shows that PETA has a vested interest to tell the truth as lying will cause their reputation to be greatly damaged. However due to the agenda PETA has against animal testing, this may introduce bias into their data. This reduces the credibility of PETA as their data is not likely to be reliable if bias is there. Furthermore, PETA focuses its attention on four areas of where animals suffer the most: in laboratories, the food industry, the clothing trade and in the entertainment industry. These areas are very controversial and therefore this may show that PETA could have a vested interest to lie in order to get people on their side about these particular topics.

In conclusion, all three sources have a different opinion about the justification of animal testing. The first source from the Home Office supports the idea of animal testing and provides quantitative data that shows that animal testing has had a beneficial effect on human medicine and health. The first source also states that animal testing has helped with animal conservation which is a very hot topic nowadays due to habitat loss from global warming and human activities. The second source also has a positive agenda towards the idea of animal testing, suggesting that some countries should be allowed to test animals if their country is less economically developed or if other alternative methods do not seem to work. The third source from PETA, however, has a completely different view to the other two sources, stating that animal testing is an unethical method of testing new medicines and cosmetics. It also counteracts the Home Office's claims, as PETA states that animal testing does not benefit human health. Overall however, all three sources are published by organisations with a good reputation and are likely to be credible sources with reliable and accurate data.

In my opinion, I do believe that animal testing is unethical, and laws should be enforced to restrict certain types of animal testing, however it should not be banned completely as animal testing has been incredibly useful for medical research and we still need to rely on animals to go forward in the medical industry. However, I do believe that animal testing should be stopped for cosmetics as this is very unnecessary as cosmetics are used for enjoyment and therefore not as serious as medicine and drugs.