

Text 60: Animal testing: a “necessary evil”?

Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen,

(Excerpt of speech given to Spencer Well-Being Society on Death and Progress)

Close your eyes. Think back to when you were 12 years old. You have found yourself with unusual symptoms such as numbness, fever and heavy breathing. You consult your doctor, who tells you, yes, “son I’m sorry you have are rare form of cancer” and your life changes in the blink of an eye. You undergo chemotherapy, in order to overcome the cancerous battle. You lose your hair, and weight — a lot of it. At 14, you become a wizened old man. And then suddenly, one bright, sunny day, your doctor tells you that thanks to the latest research on mice, they have found a glimmer of hope.

If you were this child who had become a sick old man, you would no doubt wish for the cure — sooner rather than later.

Professor James McCluskey at the University of Melbourne stated that testing on animals is “absolutely crucial to huge areas of biomedicine”, without which significant cures for diseases such as Parkinsons or many cancers would be impossible. Similarly, organisations such as the Foundation for Biomedical Research say that without experimentation, vaccines against polio, diphtheria, mumps, rubella and hepatitis would not exist.

Also, be assured that there are strict guidelines to protect the welfare of the animals. In Australia, scientific researchers must abide by strict codes and regulations. Monash University researchers say that they follow the Victorian Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and the NHRMC’s ethical guidelines. For example, apes can only be used for scientific purposes where there are potential benefits for mankind and where these benefits clearly “outweigh harm to the animal”. Also, according to this code, any potential distress is relieved by anaesthetic.

Opponents of animal testing state that there is no excuse for making animals suffer. They state that in conducting animal research we lose our humanity.

Well just ask our cancer sufferer who has almost lost his humanity, whose needs are greater — his or the apes?

And before you become too self-righteous (those of you who have not yet experienced a disease-riddled life sentence), remember that humans are, after all, the superior species. Since when did the plight of animals become more important than ours?



We’ve been here an hour. Just pick a deodorant and let’s go.

I’m just checking it wasn’t tested on anyone I know.

Spencer Hill

We have always treated animals as a second-class sub-system. After all, we eat meat. Up to half a million animals are killed for research purposes, but what about the millions killed for human consumption daily?

At the end of the day, some suffering, however unintended it may be, might be necessary to guarantee a cure to millions of people who are suffering from potentially fatal illnesses.

So, remember, when you see a person suffering from cancer or Parkinsons, there may eventually be hope because of animal testing. And remember, too, you may one day have one of these diseases. Without testing, it will be impossible to find a cure for many diseases.

Thank you: Jeremy Adams

(Committee Member) (12th March 2020)

Time for alternatives

THE post-war expansion of the pharmaceutical and chemical industries has given rise to an enormous increase in the use of animals in research.

Animals in labs are subjected to pain and stress. Many are burned, poisoned, blinded and starved. Sometimes they are given electric shocks and diseases. Some tests of chemical products such as shampoos and cleaners are particularly disgraceful and involve poisoning animals. An extreme example is the Draize rabbit eye test, where a substance is put into the rabbit’s eyes, often leading to horrendous damage and pain. Animals that do not die are used for other tests until they are finally killed. Enough is enough.

Jan, 9:10, iblogdaily.com 15/3/020

Essay model 1: Animal testing: a “necessary evil”? (Texts 60)

Animal testing is a contentious issue that divides people in passionate ways and tests our moral compass. In his speech, “Animal Testing: A necessary evil”, delivered to the Spencer Well-being Society on Death and Progress, Mr Adams appeals specifically to families and more generally to members of the community, to support animal testing on the grounds that it is vital for medical research and therefore the harm to animals is outweighed by the benefits. Contrastingly, Jan’s accusatory blog, “Time for alternatives” and Spencer Hill’s whimsical cartoon invite citizens, especially consumers, and researchers to imagine the suffering of the animals, which Jan believes is intolerable and indefensible.

Adopting an impassioned tone, Mr Adams ardently defends the rights of medical researchers to conduct tests on animals because, he opines, it is the best chance for a cure. Beginning with a hypothetical scenario, he emotionally challenges the audience to identify with the young 12-year-old cancer sufferer. The fact that there is a “glimmer of hope” for this “wizened old man” (at 14 years of age) makes it difficult for most parents to resist the chance of a cure. Also, as Mr Adams, reminds us, “you may one day have one of these diseases” and suffer a similar fate with the cancer or Parkinsons’ sufferer. Emotion aside, Adams draws upon scientific testimonies, and logically expects ordinary citizens to realise that, as Professor James McCluskey peremptorily declares, animal testing is “absolutely crucial to huge areas of biomedicine” without which the community would be exposed to contagious diseases. Mr Adams thereby prevails upon all members of the community to support the tests. Contrastingly, he shames citizens and activists who stand in the way of potential cures that may be available to cancer sufferers.

Contrastingly, in her blog, “Time for Alternatives” Jan decries the practice of testing on animals because she believes it is cruel and inhumane. Like Mr Adams, she too, seeks to engage our emotions but in ways that prioritise the animals. Accordingly, she draws our attention to the range of tortuous experiments that are conducted on “animals in labs” and specifically, refers to the Draize rabbit’s eye test. In this case, Jan seeks to unnerve unsuspecting members of the community with the galling reference to the “substance” that “is put into the rabbit’s eyes” and which leads to “horrendous damage and pain”. She reproachfully concludes with a confronting reminder that all animals “are finally killed”. Unlike Mr Adams, she thereby challenges members of the public to think about the moral consequences of these experiments from an animals’ perspective — one that is designed to provoke considerable guilt.

Introduction:

- *introduce the context surrounding animal testing;*
- *introduce the three text types/ visuals/cartoons;*
- *briefly state the main contentions of each author and the audience and a comment about their persuasive impact/ purpose.*

Text 1: *Viewpoint 1: Mr Adam’s first reason and the basis for his argument (combination of evidence)*

- *Zoom in on the persuasive words relating to the hypothetical scenario and those relating to the scientific evidence*
- *Purpose: appeals to common good/sympathy*

- *Call to action and purpose*

Text 2: Comparative paragraph:

Views: Jan opposes Mr Adams and supports animals’ rights.

Argument basis: rabbit case study

Words: emotive language

Purpose: elicit sympathy for the animals; and to shame consumers.

Sum up with reference to difference in positioning strategies.

Essay model 1: Animal testing: a “necessary evil”? (Texts 60)

To overcome such misgivings among sceptics and animal-lovers like Jan, Mr Adams defends the exemplary record of animal-testing institutions. Couched as a rebuttal, he provides several reasons why animal-testing can be justified, despite the moral problems and the potential suffering to animals such as Draize rabbits. For example, the fact that the universities “must abide by strict codes and regulations” as well as “ethical guidelines” and that apes can only be used if the “benefits outweigh the harm”, are reassuring rules to all those concerned about the potential of animals to suffer. He further challenges our moral compass through the comparative reference to the millions of animals that are killed “for human consumption daily”. Accordingly, he unapologetically categorises animals as an “inferior species” to further allay any remaining compunctions and to isolate those who, he believes, have a tendency towards hypocrisy when it comes to animals.

Spencer Hill graphically reinforces Jan’s view that animal testing harms animals and questions Adam’s certainty — that it is strictly monitored and restricted to medical purposes. Hill’s graphic depictions personalise the rabbits through the captions and reinforce Jan’s views about particular tests. The quotes of one rabbit — “I’m just checking it wasn’t tested on anyone I know” — suggests that the more personally consumers are acquainted with the effects of testing the less likely they are to support them. The personified rabbits suggest that they do suffer from the brutal deodorant experiments, which is contrary to Mr Adams’ view that the suffering is strictly minimised. Whilst the cartoonist, like Jan, seeks to shock and shame consumers, he also undermines the view that their suffering may lead to a greater cause — cures for rare cancers. Unlike Mr Adams he refuses to condone the suffering and hopes to encourage greater public agitation against the testing on all animals.

The conducting of scientific tests on animals is a subject that polarises opinions in the community, with many stridently defending its importance and those just as resolutely opposing it. The anecdotal accounts used by both sides to personalise the tests evoke both sympathy and shame, depending upon one’s stance. This is no doubt an issue that will continue to elicit a wide range of emotions which depends upon one’s personal and professional and lived experiences.

Some graphic techniques used by Spencer Hill:

- A cartoon often features a conversation or a comment between key stakeholders. The verbal exchange may consist of a direct quote, a pun or a cliché. Note the speaker’s tone and their gestures, their use of dialogue, emotive and inclusive language.
- If animals are used, note the symbolism and techniques such as personification and anthropomorphism (*the attribution of human traits, emotions, or intentions to non-human entities*).

Text 1: Viewpoint 2 and the basis for Mr Adams’ argument; the reasons and comparisons he uses to justify support for animal tests.

- Zoom in on 3-4 persuasive word choices relating to the “rebuttal” and those relating to the comparison.
- Purpose: to appeal to duty of care and to reassure the sceptics.

Text 3: Comparative paragraph: Views: Mr Hill reinforces Jan’s defence of animals. Technique: The graphic depictions personalise the suffering; shame consumers. Focus on a key point of difference.

Call to action: comparison with Mr Adams and Jan.

Conclusion: sum up each author’s argument in relation to their views and persuasive tactics. Conclude with a comment about the controversy surrounding animal testing and possible future directions.

