

Why Do Pharmaceutical Drugs injure & kill so many people?

Are WE the real guinea-pigs?

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According to the United States' Food and Drug Administration, 1.5 million Americans were hospitalised in 1978 alone, as a consequence of pharmaceutical drugs administered to "cure" them. It was also found that some 30% of all hospitalised people suffered further damage from the therapy prescribed them.(1) **In the 1990s, studies show that 180,000 medically-induced deaths occur each year in the USA.**(2) Most of these are prescription drug related. These astronomical figures are in spite of the fact that a large number of pharmaceutical drug damages go unreported.

Since 1961, the total number of "safety-tested" medical preparations marketed worldwide has risen to over 205,000. Approximately 15,000 new preparations are marketed each year, while some 12,000 are withdrawn.(3) The United States has the greatest annual sickness-care expenditure of any nation; \$912 billion in 1993 alone.(4) If money and medical treatment equals health then one would expect the United States to be the healthiest of nations. However, it only ranks 16th in the world in female life expectancy, 17th in the world in male life expectancy and only 21st in the world in infant mortality.(5)

Of course, a percentage of drug damages are due to the incorrect administration of drugs by physicians and patients. But how are harmful pharmaceutical drugs allowed onto the market in the first place, and why do we have so much faith in them? Pharmaceutical transnationals defy the intent of laws regulating safety of drugs by bribery, false advertising, unsafe manufacturing processes, smuggling and international law evasion strategies. But most of all they make dangerous drugs appear safe through the use of fraudulent and flexible 'safety-tests', the subject of this article...

FRAUD IN CLINICAL TRIALS - Human Tests.

Drug companies can easily arrange appropriate clinical trials by paying a researcher to produce the desired results that will assist the intended application of the drug. The incentive for researchers to fabricate data is enormous. As much as \$1000 per subject is paid by American companies which enables some researchers to earn up to \$1 million a year from drug research.(6) And they know all too well that if they don't produce the desired data, the loss of future work is inevitable. Unfortunately, because of secrecy, most fraud in clinical trials is unlikely to be detected.

However, cases of data-fabrication in clinical trials have been uncovered where, for example, "patients who died while on the trial were not reported to the sponsor....Dead people were listed as subjects of testing... People reported as subjects of testing were not in the hospital at the time of tests..." and where "Patient consent forms bore dates indicating they were signed by the subjects after the subjects had died."(7) Even if data from clinical trials is not falsified, it is often of little worth, because they are not performed appropriately. **Trials involve relatively small numbers of people and the subjects taking part usually do not represent those who will use the drug after its approval;** so many harmful effects of a new drug appear only when it has been marketed.

FRAUD IN VIVISECTION - Animal Tests.

This problem of inappropriate and flexible testing of drugs and chemicals is even more pronounced with the use of so-called animal ‘models’; a practice termed vivisection. For instance, the fact that the animal is relatively healthy before the experiment means that disease and or trauma has to be induced by violent and artificial means. **This bears no relation to the spontaneous ways in which humans develop illness, often through a faulty lifestyle and diet.** For example, consider the case of osteoarthritis, a human degenerative disease resulting in grotesque and painful deformities of the joints. How do researchers attempt to mimic human lameness in dogs, cats, sheep and pigs? Joints are beaten with hammer blows, injected with irritating liquids, subjected to ionising radiation and/or dislocated. It is obvious that the resulting fractures, haemorrhages, thromboses, contusions and inflammation bear no relation to human osteoarthritis, “which is a local manifestation of a generalised illness of the collagen.”(8) Drugs tested on such artificially diseased non-human animals cannot possibly yield results relevant to a spontaneous, naturally occurring human disease.

Moreover, **there is no true correlation between different species.** For example, arsenic kills humans but is harmless to guinea-pigs, chickens and monkeys; Digitalis which is used to lower blood pressure in humans dangerously raises the blood pressure of dogs; Penicillin kills guinea-pigs; Chloramphenicol damages the blood-producing bone marrow in humans, but in no other animal: Many common laboratory animals such as dogs, cats, rats, hamsters and mice, do not require dietary intake of vitamin C. This is because their bodies produce it of their own accord. However, if you deprive humans, guinea-pigs and some primates of dietary vitamin C they will die of scurvy. There are enough of these species differences to fill a book.(9) In the words of former animal researcher Professor Pietro Croce, **“No substance is toxic in itself, but only according to the species.”**(10)

Not only are there differences between species, **but even individuals of the same species react differently to a substance.** For example, research carried out at the University of Bremen, published in a paper titled “Problems of activity threshold in pharmacology and toxicology” found:

1. In ionising radiation -- young animals react differently from older ones.
2. In reactions to Tranquillisers -- again, young and old animals react differently.
3. In the common method of testing pharmaceuticals and chemicals, the Lethal Dose 50% test, it was found that in the experiments carried out in the evening almost all the rats died: in those carried out in the morning all of them survived. In the tests carried out in winter, survival rates were doubled in contrast to those carried out in summer. In tests carried out on mice overcrowded together in cages, nearly all of them died, while those carried out on mice in normal conditions, all the mice survived.

The authors of this research, themselves vivisectors, concluded: **“If such trifling environmental conditions bring about such widely differing and unforeseeable results, this means that animal experimentation cannot be relied upon in assessing a chemical substance and it is all the more absurd to extrapolate to problems of human health results which are intrinsically wrong.”**(11) Numerous medical historians such as Hans Ruesch and Dr. Robert Sharpe, have documented that the true medical progress of the past was achieved through scientific study of the real world of natural human disease, and not from the artificial world of the experimental animal laboratory.(12)

HOW MANY PHARMACEUTICAL DRUGS DO WE NEED?

Why do drug companies rely on such unreliable and dubious methods for testing drugs? The answer is simple. If drugs were tested properly using true scientific methods, such as *in vitro* cultures of human cells and properly carried out human clinical trials, the vast majority of them would not be approved for marketing because their harmfulness and ineffectiveness would be all too apparent. For instance, in 1981 the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) in collaboration with the World Health Organisation (WHO), published a list of a mere 26 drugs, from the 205,000 marketed drugs, that were considered “indispensable”, with 9 being

more indispensable than the others.(13) Other medical commissions in Chile 1972, and Sri Lanka 1978, came to similar findings, that there are not more than a few dozen drugs worth keeping. However, both existing governments were ousted shortly there-after by US backed forces. They were replaced with administrations open to American trade and the products of the chemical-pharmaceutical industry.(14) This should cause anyone who thinks that we need more drugs to reconsider their opinion. It is plain to see that inconsequential and ambiguous methods of drug-testing are essential to protect the astronomical profits of the pharmaceutical industry.

DRUG COMPANIES MAKE THESE ADMISSIONS!

If you have difficulty accepting this explanation then consider the following statement from Eli Lilly's August 1993 *Prozac 20 Consumer Product Information* pamphlet: **“There can be no such thing as absolute safety with prescription medicines. Individual patients sometimes react differently to the same dose of the same medicine and it is possible that some unwanted side effects will not be known until a medicine has been widely prescribed for a number of years.”**

If they admit that even individuals of the same species react differently to an identical product, then why test on other species? Dr Herbert Gundersheimer, one of many doctors against vivisection, explains: **“Results from animal tests are not transferable between species and therefore cannot guarantee product safety for humans...In reality these tests do not provide protection for consumers from unsafe products, but rather are used to protect corporations from legal liability.”**(15) When people are damaged by unsafe products (such as pharmaceutical drugs, industrial and household chemicals, cosmetics ...etc.) and attempt to take legal action, manufacturers can claim to have adhered to “safety” tests and are thus absolved of having consciously marketed a harmful product .

THALIDOMIDE: A CASE EXAMPLE

This is what happened in the case of Thalidomide, a drug which after years of extensive animal tests was marketed as a perfectly safe tranquilliser for pregnant mothers. The end result: more than 10,000 grossly deformed babies. During the lengthy trial of the manufacturers in 1970, numerous court witnesses, all animal experimenters, stated under oath that the results of animal experiments are never valid for human beings.(16)

One of these experts was the Nobel Prize winner Ernst Boris Chain who co-discovered the anti-bacterial effects of penicillin. According to the court records on 2 February 1970 he stated:

“No animal experiment with a medicament, even if it is tested on several animal species, including primates, under all conceivable conditions, can give any guarantee that the medicament tested in this way will behave the same in humans: because in many respects the human is not the same as the animal.”(17)

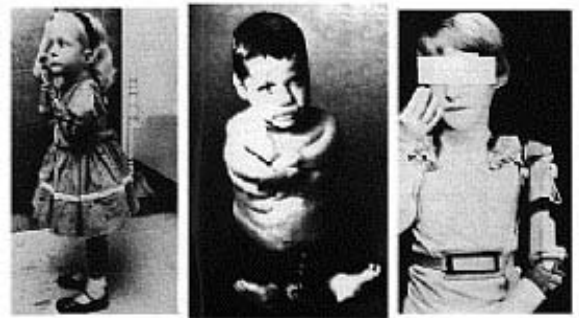


Figure 1. Children of Thalidomide with artificial limbs.

Because they had performed the required animal safety-tests, and because these did not show evidence of any danger, the manufacturers of Thalidomide were found not guilty by the court of consciously marketing a harmful drug.

This is the real value of animal experiments.

Firstly, they can be manipulated, whether consciously or unconsciously, to produce results favourable to a financial backer. Secondly, they serve as a legal alibi for corporations when their products kill and injure people. It is worthy of note that Professor S.T.Aygun, a virologist at the University of Ankara, who uses only the so-called 'alternative' non-animal research methods, discovered the danger of Thalidomide to humans and Turkey was spared the tragedy.(18)

BIRTH DEFECTS SKYROCKET

The incredible reaction to the Thalidomide tragedy by the pharmaceutical lobby was that it was a 'rare exception' and that it 'emphasises a need for more rigorous animal testing, not less.' This explanation was accepted by most people. So animal testing increased, along with the output of 'safety-tested' drugs. The consequences of this? In the 1950s in the Federal Republic of Germany, 3 out of every 100,000 babies were born malformed. By the 1980s, 500 out of every 100,000 were born malformed.(19) This is more than a 100-fold increase. In the United States birth defects have increased more than 350% in the last 25 years. In the late 1950s, 70,000 American babies were born with birth defects every year. In the 1980s this toll reached 250,000 a year.(20)

The reason for this increase in human birth defects is known. A survey by doctors in West Germany revealed that 61% of malformations in new-born children and 88% of all stillbirths are attributable to the damage caused by drugs taken by the mother during pregnancy.(21) *Remember*, all these drugs were found to be "safe" through extensive animal testing! Why do people believe so firmly in vivisection? The answer to this lies in their education.

DRUG LOBBY INFLUENCE ON EDUCATION & THE MEDIA

With many of the world's major drug companies under its control, the Rockefeller organisation has, since the early part of this century, been the largest single private source of funding for medical science and education in the United States and Britain. It is a major contributor of funding in many other countries. The aim of this lavish funding for our education is to produce a curriculum designed to indoctrinate students with beliefs favourable to the profits of the pharmaceutical-chemical industry. Only colleges and medical facilities that advocate the massive consumption of chemical drugs, "safety-tested" on animals, as the secret to health, are recipients of drug company finance. Drug companies also exercise a dictatorial influence over the mass-media, through ownership and advertising revenue, as well as upon party politicians through 'donations'. Meanwhile, doctors who heal by inexpensive natural means, thereby threatening pharmaceutical profits, are decried as quacks, driven out of the country or into jail.(22)

Perhaps the most revealing point, however, is that the founder of the Rockefeller dynasty, John D Rockefeller, lived in excellent health to the age of 98 as did his son John D Jr., who died aged 86. What was *their* secret to a long healthy life? Both attributed this to a frugal diet of natural food, the advice of a homeopathic doctor only, *and the complete avoidance of synthetic drugs!* (23)

In summary, the most powerful corporations in the world do not want us to know the truth about pharmaceutical drugs and drug-testing even if our lives depend on it. And of course, they do. As the drug companies acknowledge, it means that every time we take a drug or are exposed to chemicals in our food and environment, *we are the real guinea-pigs.*

RECOMMENDED ORGANISATIONS:

- **Doctors and Lawyers for Responsible Medicine:** British based group with over 500 professional members. Their objective is the immediate and unconditional abolition of all animal experiments, on medical and scientific grounds. <http://www.dlrm.org/>
- **Campaign Against Fraudulent Medical Research (CAFMR):** Lots of great information that the pharmaceutical-chemical-vivisection industry and their mass media do not want us to know. <http://www.pnc.com.au/~cafmr> (Australia).

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