

# Searching for the Animal of Animal Ethics

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## Animals as “models”: scientific value and limitations

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### Abstract

A key issue in the ethics of animal experimentation concerns the scientific value of such experimentation. To what extent are results from experiments on animals possible to extrapolate to humans? If it is not possible whatsoever to extrapolate to humans, ethical arguments in favour of animal experimentation for human benefit would be undermined. Moreover, it would make ethical arguments against animal experimentation for human benefit redundant. However, if extrapolation to humans is possible, but only to some extent, then the issue gets a different character: each animal experiment would have to be assessed on its own merit, depending on precisely which animal species is used and for precisely which objective. In this paper, I analyse various arguments for and against the scientific value of animal experimentation. The conclusion is that it seems possible – at least to some extent – to extrapolate from animals to humans, however animal experimentation is probably more useful for generating hypotheses in basic research than for testing in applied research.