

Submission  
No 211

**INQUIRY INTO EXHIBITION OF EXOTIC ANIMALS IN  
CIRCUSES AND EXHIBITION OF CETACEANS IN NEW  
SOUTH WALES**

**Name:** Name suppressed  
**Date Received:** 24 November 2019

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Partially  
Confidential

**Inquiry:** Exhibition of Exotic Animals in Circuses and Exhibition of Cetaceans in New South Wales

**Submission to the Inquiry**

**From: Psychologist & Managing Director**

**My Background:**

I am both an organisational and counselling psychologist, have written numerous books on human behavior and regularly advise organisations on ethical conduct and social change. I was awarded Fellowship of the Australian Human Resources Institute and advise on policy and practice in the Australian workplace.

Having practiced for over 20 years and previously held an academic position in a British university, I am well informed of the relationship between how we treat animals and how we treat each other. I am also clear on the empirical evidence that psychopaths and dysfunctional adults who enact violence on others have often begun their cruel acts on animals.

**My Professional Concern**

Over the last ten years, I have noticed a dramatic rise in clients seeking psychological counselling for the trauma they report experiencing after becoming aware of the exploitation and use of animals in society. The typical animal exploitation they've become aware of includes industrial factory farming, testing laboratories, zoos, rodeos, horse, greyhound and camel racing, duck-shooting, kangaroo culling, circuses etc. Typical symptoms I have observed include post-traumatic stress disorder (Inc. nightmares, flashbacks), depression, social adjustment issues, self-harm, misanthropy, anger, grief, anger and suicidality. The anguish they report experiencing is knowing that not only these animals suffer unimaginably in these animal-use industries but also that human beings are capable of perpetuating such violence against other non-human species. Whilst this is a minority of the population that report experiencing this, it is a growing minority as reflected in behaviors such as vegetarianism and veganism.

I believe the reason the majority of the population do not see this behavior towards animals is morally wrong, is because we are continually being conditioned and educated via events such as circuses, zoos and other forms of animal-based entertainment that these are normal environments within which the animals are happy, content and living normal lives and that humans know what is best for them. Sadly, the reality couldn't be further from the truth as we witness how humans treat animals labelled as stock, animals in factory farms and animal-entertainment industries, as recently publicized in the documentary Dominion.

(<https://watchdominion.com>)

Some of my clients report that their anguish is further intensified because the government has legislated to silence individuals trying to expose the plight of animal use in society. My clients say to me that they are totally disillusioned with the government because they see a conflict of interest where on the one hand, they are meant to be providing protection for people, the environment and some animals (domesticated) yet this is in stark contrast to the government making large taxation gains from industries who exploit animals for profit. Fundamentally, where there is a profit motive linked to animal use, the outcome and welfare of these animals will never be acceptable.

### **Overall**

It is my professional opinion that the Exhibition of Exotic Animals in Circuses and Exhibition of Cetaceans in New South Wales should not be phased out but stopped totally. To continue this reflects a lack of moral integrity and leads us further down the line of a country without any conscience or decency towards other living beings, including fellow humans.