

Submission
No 257

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

Name: Kelly Maynard

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My name is Kelly Maynard and I am a 7th generation member of the Australian circus community.

I write to you in support of the continued use, display and breeding of exotic animals in mobile exhibitions and cetaceans in zoological facilities.

Firstly to answer the inquiry questions :

- Should Exotics Still Be Used in Marine Parks and Circuses?

Yes, there is insufficient scientific evidence that welfare is negatively impacted in these environments.

I believe legislation must always be based on science and reason as opposed to emotional rhetoric.

- Should the Breeding Of Animals Still Continue in Circuses/Marine Parks?

Yes, maintaining animal populations in human care is a safeguard against extinction, provides an incomparable opportunity for the general population to view and gain an appreciation for animals up close, and without valid welfare grounds there is no logical reason to phase these animal populations out.

- Does the Current Legislation/Acts Adequately Protect the Welfare Of Animals?

The current legislation is more than adequate.

Animals on display in public establishments are held to a far higher standard of welfare than animals belonging to the general population.

Contrary to the hysterical rants of Animal Rights campaigners, Australian circus lions in 2019 are housed in spacious outdoor enclosures comparable in size to those seen in city zoos.

Hoofstock on Australian circuses are kept in electric fenced paddocks.

Detailed record keeping is required by circuses for the lifespan of their animals.

The legislation covers all areas of care and husbandry including dental/hoof/veterinary care, transportation standards and duration, mental enrichment, training methods, social groupings and appropriate housing.

Unfounded claims of neglect and abuse are quite absurd when one considers the highly regulated nature of the industry and the constant visibility of animals to public scrutiny.

There have also been no convictions of animal cruelty in Australian circuses for over 30 years.

There is no justification for claims that the welfare of Australian Circus animals is at a low standard.

Furthermore I strongly believe that any proposal to take away people's livelihoods and impose restrictions on the population, based on little more than aesthetic taste and cultural profiling, is a decent into tyranny.

Words like "outdated" and "exploitation" are irrelevant to animal welfare.

They are nothing more than moral opinions which can be equally applied to any area of animal stewardship which is not in line with the personal preference of an individual.

To pursue a ban based on personal taste is a dangerous slippery slope.

As the circus industry is my area of expertise, I will focus on this portion of the inquiry.

I am opposed to any proposed bans of exotic animals in circus for four reasons.

1. There is insufficient, science based evidence that well run, regulated circus environments are detrimental to animal welfare.

To the contrary, there is a significant body of scientific research that consistently refutes claims of stress during transportation, low standards of health and lack of stimulation.

- The Use of Salivary Cortisol to Assess the Welfare of Elephants By Immanuel Birmelin Society of Animal Behaviour Research

All creatures on our planet have a potential of adaption for unpredictable or changed environmental conditions. If the potential of adaption is exhausted, the animal might suffer from stress. A non-invasive assessment of welfare in captive elephants can be realised by measuring the salivary Cortisol, which indicates stress. Animal rights activists often argue that circus-elephants suffer from stress under the conditions of the circus. That is why we measured the salivary Cortisol of three African circus-elephants in the paddock and during the transportation. We did the tests in the paddock always at the same time on four sequentially following days to avoid diurnal effects. To measure the salivary Cortisol during the transport we took samples before and after the tour from Monte Carlo to Plaschow in Germany (approx 1500km). The biological analysis of the samples was done by Prof Sylvia Kaiser of the University of Muenster, Germany. The measured values of the elephants in the paddock were similar to the measured values of elephants in a compound ((Menarques et al 2008). There were also no differences between the measured values before and after the transport, which leads us to the conclusion, that the tour did not cause stress for the elephants.

I. Birmelin

<https://elephantconservation.org/downloads/pdf/2011%20Research%20Symposium%20Program%209-11%20WS%20DO.pdf>

<https://youtu.be/0AH1LkqnR7Q>

- "The academic panel concluded that there appears to be little evidence, to demonstrate that the welfare of animals kept in travelling circuses is any better or worse than that of animals kept in other captive environments".

-Executive summary of DEFRA Circus Working Group 2007.

<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130403081434/http://archive.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/farmanimal/welfare/documents/circus-report.pdf>

- "It is irrational to take a stand against circuses on grounds that the animals in circuses necessarily suffer, unless they are to take the same stand against zoos, stables, race horses, kennels, pets and all other animal keeping systems".

-Dr Marthe Kiley-Worthington, world renowned animal behaviour expert.

http://the-shg.org/Kiley_Worthington/index.htm

• “I was contacted by several veterinarians and scientists based in Italy who are very concerned about Italy banning animals in circuses. The ban is controversial because the overwhelming misinformation espoused by activist groups and individuals has led to an incorrect interpretation of the scientific literature on the welfare of animals in circuses.”

“I am a Registered Professional Animal Scientist and a Diplomate of the American College of Applied Behavior Sciences. The Diplomate certification is the highest certification possible in the Applied Behavior Sciences. I have been conducting behavior and stress-related research on a wide range of species of animals for over 30 years. I was a Professor and Texas Agrilife Research Faculty Fellow with Texas A&M University’s Department of Animal Science for 38 years, where I was their head scientist working in the field of Animal Welfare. I retired two years ago after a successful career as an animal advocate by conducting objective research and applying basic logic to assist legislators and other policy makers in making wise decisions.”

“My many students and I confirmed that Kiley-Worthington’s 1990 RSPCA funded study got it right, which I quote. “It is therefore irrational to take a stand against circuses on the grounds that the animals in circuses necessarily suffer, unless they are to take the same stand against zoos, stables, race horses, kennels, pets, and all other animal-keeping systems.”

Dr. Ted Friend, Ph.D., PAS, Dpl. ACAABS Professor Emeritus Animal Welfare Scientist
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<http://www.sivelp.it/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/TED-FRIEND-PDF.pdf>

2. Proposed bans against circuses and zoos are spearheaded by radical Vegan/Animal Rights groups* who deliberately mislead the population about all animal industries to further their extremist agenda.

It is well established that Animal Rights groups such as PETA, Animals Australia, Animal Justice Party, Anonymous for the Voiceless, Justice for Captives, etc are opposed to the concept of all animal ownership and use.

This extends to domestic animals and is highly publicised with campaigns to end animal agriculture, ban zoos and end human/interaction such as horse riding, service dogs and pet ownership which are sensationally likened to slavery.

Circuses are the thin end of the wedge which will eventually impact all forms of animal stewardship.

*(Not to be confused with Animal Welfare.

- Animal Welfare is a human responsibility that encompasses all aspects of animal well-being, including proper housing, management, disease prevention and treatment, responsible care, humane handling, and when necessary, humane euthanasia.

- Animal Rights is a radical philosophical view that animals have rights similar or the same as humans.

True Animal Rights proponents believe that humans do not have the right to use animals in any way, shape or form.)

"Pet ownership is an absolutely abysmal situation brought about by human manipulation."

"Eventually companion animals would be phased out."

-Ingrid Newkirk, President of PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals).

3. Bans specifically targeting the circus community are discriminatory.

Anti circus groups have relied on bigoted portrayals and stereotypes of the circus community for many years to manipulate public opinion.

However it is very frightening to see that in our supposedly tolerant society that rejects hatred against minority groups and discrimination, that the circus community are noticing persecution more than ever before.

The aims of animal activist groups goes far beyond banning exotic animals, notable figureheads of the movement are open in their aims of banning the circus community from owning and working with any animals including dogs and horses.

4. Maintaining animal populations in human care is a safeguard against extinction and is an invaluable experience for the general population to witness animals up close. This applies equally to zoos, marine parks and circuses.