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[Animal Rights Activists Are Back Doing Their Monkey Business.](#)

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by [REXANO](#) in [All News](#)

REXANO, www.REXANO.org Editorial by Scott Shoemaker

With the recent chimpanzee attack on Charla Nash and death of the Chimpanzee Travis in Connecticut, all the Animal Rights (AR) groups are spinning their message: from the Humane Society of the United States to Primarily Primates. They are promoting their attempts to ban these animals (and others) from private ownership. Never mind that this is a rare and unfortunate event.



Nobody is asking the right questions. Rather than asking: “Should we be able to keep these animals?” the question should be “What can be done to help keep these animals safely?”

I have not seen any commentary on what safety precautions could have been taken. The woman used a butcher knife? There are a multitude of non-lethal methods to [break off an animals attack](#).

The best answer coming out of the [AR groups](#) is banning the possession of such animals. They want to make the possession of such animals evil. The fact is that if it were the common household dog (other than pit-bull or wolf dog) that did the attack and sent some one to the hospital, it would just be a statistic, rather than world wide prime time news. They mention 42 non-human primate [attacks on humans](#) in the past four years, yet no deaths.

Maybe things should be put in perspective: in 2001, 494 people drowned in pools. These people are dead and we are not calling for banning people's ability to get a pool. On average about 800,000 people a year end up in the hospital due to dog bites/attacks and about 18-30 die. Worldwide, from 1950 thru 2008, there have been 1,300 accidents with fatalities involving commercial aircraft. We are not banning airplanes; we find out the cause of the accident and make flying safer. Yet when a person gets attacked by a primate, all primate ownership is portrayed as evil that should be abolished. Maybe [we should abolish beds, chairs and furniture](#), since about 900 people a year in the US die from falling from them.



We should focus on making it safer to own such animals and prevent future incidents. Rather than letting AR groups use a tragic incident to push their agenda of banning the ability to have animals.

For PDF version of the table below click [HERE](#).

TOTAL NUMBERS AND ODDS OF AN ACCIDENTAL DEATH IN THE USA BY CAUSE OF INJURY in 2005: comparing human fatalities caused by captive exotic and wild animals (average from 1990 – 2008, <http://www.rexano.org/Education.htm>) to deaths caused in every day life in 2005. REXANO, www.rexano.org, only used fatalities numbers since all deaths are reported and there is only one degree of death. Injuries in all walks of life range from life threatening to simple Band-Aid fix, and many go unreported. The average life expectancy of 77 years was used to calculate the lifetime odds. The odds are statistical averages for the whole U.S. population.

Cause of Death in 2005	Number of Deaths per Year	One Year Odds	Lifetime Odds
Captive non-human primate	0*	0	0
Alligator, crocodile	0**	0	0
Captive bear	0.16**	1 in 1,901,875,000	1 in 24,700,000
Non venomous snake	0.44**	1 in 691,590,909	1 in 8,981,700
Captive elephant	0.72**	1 in 422,638,888	1 in 5,488,816
Venomous snake	0.88**	1 in 345,795,454	1 in 4,490,850
Captive big/exotic cat	1.1**	1 in 276,636,363	1 in 3,592,680
Fireworks discharge	4	74,126,765	952,786
Flood	12	24,708,922	317,595
Toys	20	14,825,352	190,557
Struck by or against another person	26	11,404,118	146,582
Bitten or struck by dog	33	8,985,062	115,489
Contact with hot tap-water	43	6,895,513	88,631
Lightning	48	6,177,230	79,399
Contact with hornets, wasps, bees	82	3,615,940	46,477
Drowning and submersion while in or falling into bath-tub	344	861,939	11,079
Alcohol	346	856,957	11,015
Fall on/from ladder, scaffolding	477	621,608	7,990
Accidental suffocation and strangulation in bed	573	517,464	6,651
Drowning and submersion while in or falling into swimming-pool	607	488,480	6,279
Cataclysmic storm***	874	339,253	4,361
Fall involving bed, chair, furniture	899	329,819	4,239
Drowning and submersion while in or falling into natural water	1,603	184,970	2,378
Fall on and from stairs and steps	1,690	175,448	2,255
Exposure to smoke, fire, flames	3,197	92,745	1,192
Narcotics and psychodysleptics	11,050	26,833	345
Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter	16,692	17,763	228
Motor-Vehicle Accidents	45,343	6,539	84

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Sources: U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, National Safety Council, National Center for Health Statistics, FBI, U.S. Census, animal attack news reports

*In 1997 in Atlanta, Georgia, a Yerkes primate researcher supposedly died of herpes B after she was splashed in the eye with bodily fluids from a rhesus macaque; this can NOT be classified as animal 'attack', just like a nurse or doctor being accidentally infected with a blood from an AIDS patients can not be called a murder.

** Based on 18 year average 1990-2008 numbers, since the fatalities numbers per year are low (statistically insignificant)

(***) Includes hurricanes, tornadoes, blizzards, dust storms, and other cataclysmic storms

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No One said,
in February 20th, 2009 at 10:01 pm

I followed your link and see you are in the animal slave trade. Did you run out of young children to exploit?

[mark](#) said,
in February 20th, 2009 at 10:27 pm

Sorry, but sleeping with your monkee just is not right on so many levels.

heart said,
in February 20th, 2009 at 11:35 pm

Animal Slave Trade?

Can you tell us about your business so we know you don't have a personal Agenda?

[Bob Orabona](#) said,
in February 21st, 2009 at 9:24 am

You missed this point. People may choose to use swimming pools, go into the wild and face its dangers, even jump out of airplanes without a parachute — but bringing the wild into everyone else's backyard and exposing them to its risks should not be allowed.

[VeganVixen](#) said,
in February 21st, 2009 at 11:22 am

Non-human animals are not our slaves! Stop the speciesism!

[Kari - Jungle Friends Primate Sanctuary](#) said,
in February 21st, 2009 at 12:13 pm

Unlike domestic animals, monkeys in many states are completely unregulated. It is not legal to buy kittens or puppies who have not been weaned, unfortunately in the case of baby monkeys and apes they are sold as tiny infants - baby monkeys are torn from their mother's arms as early as three days old! They do not have the benefit of being nurtured by their natural mother or their mother's milk - they not only have psychological problems, but physiological problems as well. I don't care if you grow a tail and can swing from the trees, mother monkeys should be raising baby monkeys, not humans! And they BITE! You cannot imagine how many monkeys are decapitated due to bites, most health departments will always err on the side of the human and if you don't believe me, call your local health department. Even though there has not been a case of rabies being transferred from monkey to human in over 100 years, they still decapitate monkeys and send in their brains to check for rabies! We absolutely need legislation, not only to protect the monkeys, but the humans too. White-faced capuchins are one of the most popular 'pet' monkeys and they also happen to be one of the most aggressive and territorial. They are one of the few species (along with humans) who will fight to the death! White-faced capuchins are killed more by their own species than all of their predators combined, and yet people are buying these monkeys for their children as birthday gifts! I am against any wild animal being sold as a 'pet' wild animals belong in our hearts not in our homes. It is a shame that the only time there is talk of legislation is when a human has suffered, you rarely hear the problems the animals suffer in captivity as a 'pet'. I just hope Travis' death was not in vain and hope that with his death laws will be put in place to protect other wild animals that find themselves imprisoned by captivity.

Amy said,
in February 21st, 2009 at 1:32 pm

That's funny, I'm sure I remember bottle raising abandoned kittens and pups when something happened to the mother. I have a thirteen yr old monkey, raised by me from 10 days old. No aberrant behaviors, was with 24/7 until she gradually grew more independent. For every BAD incident there are many more GOOD that are never heard about- just negative from self righteous sanctuaries and hard core AR trying to force their beliefs on others. One monkey I KNOW of at Jungle friends was not abused, neglected and was actually a very good monkey- the reason you got her was because she was being pet-sitted in a ban state and got loose. No other reason, not bad animal husbandry or meanness or abandoning. Bet she isn't the only one. If people push for bans basing it on poor care and 'danger' reasons then they shouldn't cry when they get them to take care of at least! Maybe looking for the good owners instead of passing judgement based on your experience (being a sanctuary I don't imagine you see the good, just the bad)and quit trying to push for laws that will only add to your 'burden'. There are many good owners, they just aren't hardly ever in the news to complain about. I'll continue to learn to live with rather than without. Even people, I'm not anti-human like some appear to be nor wish to change the natural order of things. Steak eating pet monkey owner= Me Natural- humans are omnivorous just like most nhp's are. Whodathunkit

Amy said,
in February 21st, 2009 at 1:55 pm

Below are two paragraphs written by an 18 year old girl, barely an adult, and she has learned already to use FACTS, not hearsay, fear mongering or personal agendas as fact or anything to base our choices on.

After some extensive investigating I have uncovered the recorded chimpanzee attacks in the United States. I went through records as far back as 1974, 35 years worth of records! It seems that many people are under the impression chimpanzee attacks are quite common, but in fact there is only a tiny morsel of attacks documented.

There are eight cases of chimpanzee attacks, some trivial some severe, in the past 35 years. There were nine chimpanzees involved in these cases, two of them belonging to the St. James Davis incident. It's estimated there are as many as 400 privately owned chimpanzees in the United States. Nine chimpanzees out of 400 is only 2.3%. Around 97.7% of privately owned chimpanzees have never been engaged in human related injuries.

Reuben said,
in February 21st, 2009 at 5:42 pm

So most privately owned primates don't result in human injury - shall we think about injury to the primates, Amy? No, I don't mean the kind of neglect you speak of when you say "One monkey I KNOW of at Jungle friends was not abused, neglected and was actually a very good monkey"; I'm not talking about underfed or beaten. I'm talking about social animals being ripped from their mothers as babies and raised by another species in an unnatural setting, usually trained to behave in a way that has no connection with nature's intentions. How do you not see the cruelty in that? How about this: you have a baby, and we hit you over the head, steal it away, and let it be raised by chimps. The baby won't be able to communicate with them or to engage in most of the behaviors that come naturally to him. He won't have his mother to raise him, or siblings or the extended social network that humans (and so many other primates) enjoy. No, just him - being punished for or prevented from doing what comes naturally to him - and some other species, pretending that he is one of theirs.

I think it's a shame when captive primates attack and injure humans, but as you say that is not a terribly common occurrence. The real tragedy is that being a captive primate is torture (for them) and that you and other "owners" are too selfish and too stupid to see that.

Wild means Wild said,
in February 21st, 2009 at 10:52 pm

Amy- Comparing bottle feeding a kitten or a puppy, because something happened to the mother, to bottle feeding a baby monkey, because it was ripped from it's mother's arms, is a poor comparison. For one thing a bottle fed dog or cat will not be as healthy as one who had the benefit of being raised by its' mother. And, a cat or dog is weaned at a couple of months of age. A monkey drinks mother's milk for a couple of years.

You looked up reported Chimp attacks? Most bites are not reported.

You have a 13 year old monkey who hasn't attacked you yet? Just recently I spoke to someone who had a monkey for 14 years before it started viciously biting her. You didn't say what kind of a monkey you live with, but capuchins can live over 50 years. How old will yours be when it decides it has had enough?

You know a person who had a monkey confiscated and you say 'the reason you (the sanctuary) got her was because she was being pet-sitted in a ban state and got loose. No other reason, not bad animal husbandry or meanness or abandoning'. Putting the monkey in danger by taking her to a ban state, to a place where she could get loose is bad animal husbandry.

Sanctuaries are not trying to pass laws to get more monkeys; they are trying to end the abuse inherent in wild animal ownership.

As for you being a meat eater, people are much healthier when they eat a vegetarian diet because our digestive tract is too long to be a carnivore.

http://www.naturalhealthwizards.com/Ideal_Diet.pdf

timbalionguy said,
in February 22nd, 2009 at 2:22 am

I will start with the last first: Humans are closer to carnivores than herbivores. Our gut might be comparatively longer than that of a cat, but is far shorter and less complex than that of any herbivore. I feel best and can control weight when I eat a strict carnivore diet, which I do as much as life lets me.

Now, for the drama. What's all this 'ripped from their mother's arms', 'torture', 'slavery' and 'cruelty' come from? These terms, in the hands of the people using them here, are 'anti-euphanisms', designed to create maximum emotional effect, and paint a picture in one's mind. Its like saying 'My dog Fido had cancer and was suffering, so we had him destroyed.' You would never hear a dog lover say that.

Where do you get the idea that every primate is treated cruelly? Although I work mainly with big cats, I do see primates in my travels as well. Most are happy and well-adjusted to captivity. The baboons I see most often, in the hands of caring owners, are remarkable animals. Extremely intelligent, but also needing their human friend as much as many people need a wife or friend. Primate keeping is not for everyone, but for those for whom it is their world, nothing else can compare to the (positive) experience. These people should not have their loving animals 'ripped' from them, or denied their right to work with them because some AR folks feel no one should have them. Last time I checked, this is a free country, and any person who can responsibly care for a given animal should be allowed to keep it.

Amy said,

in February 22nd, 2009 at 10:53 am

I counted on the usual ar response- it's always the heart tugging "ripped" and hit over the head is a good one I guess. Most people don't know about bans, they don't LOOK for them- they consider freedom to make choices in our country a given. Sorry some get a rude wake up call that the few want to dictate to others through legislation from pet owning to dietary choices. If I remember correctly a primate sanctuary in Kentucky helped press that ban even though they admit their first monkey was an unresearched gift. Hmm, now they are capable of keeping them in captivity but no one else? Instigating bans is bad human husbandry in my opinion.

There are always those who use ANY instance of ownership to attack all owners. Considering you have no idea where any of my monkeys came from nor their care I'll leave you to your generalizations and assumptions. One track minds- honesty and truth have no place in them nor allowing others to make their own choices. Will continue to learn to live WITH, not without.

jan manuel said,
in February 22nd, 2009 at 12:28 pm

Anyone who believes these dangerous animals should be kept as pets is an idiot. There is no comparison to domesticated animals. Chimpanzees kill each other in the wild. They are unpredictable. Other people in the neighborhood are also endangered. Chimps are cunning and can use tools to escape. Maybe these people need to look at this poor woman's face (what's left of it). Also, the man who was mauled trying to save his wife from a chimp. He can't walk, his face doesn't look normal, he still has major bleeding problems and this was years ago.

Some people have no common sense.

Amy said,
in February 22nd, 2009 at 8:30 pm

Common sense also includes looking at things factually. From AZA zoo to sanctuary to private owner- ALL have had incidences. Wild, jungle, habitat or whatever you want to call it is disappearing. Are they better off extinct or learning to live with and taking a few risks? No one has said the owner had proper facilities or enclosure for Travis anywhere in any of these posts. Seems to be a gang mentality against private owners to me. St. James happened in a SANCTUARY by two chimps he did not raise. A chimp was shot in a AZA Texas zoo last year I believe...
Yes, common sense should prevail- not warm fuzzy idealistic wishes.

timbalionguy said,
in February 23rd, 2009 at 2:59 am

It always amazes me what comments people can make that have no practical experience working with animals. Those that can't understand why someone would want to work

with a 'dangerous' animal IMHO really don't understand animals to begin with. I do have three domestic cats, and I love them (and they love me) dearly. But there is nothing that can compare to the relationship I enjoy with the lions I care for. Catlike? Sure. And I have watched them tear animals apart and consume them. That's what cats do. But they are also highly intelligent, emotional, caring beings who desire of us more than anything else, our friendship. I once had a cat come up to me once crying because he thought that he had somehow hurt me. Before that, I didn't even know cats could cry. I would not trade these relationships for anything in this world.

Primate owners experience this even more intensely. Primates are the most intelligent animals there are. Even the small ones are amazingly intelligent. Primate people are very special people, and they thrive on the special bond they have with their animal friend, just as I do with my lion friends.

If you really want to present an informed opinion to others, go and volunteer somewhere where you can take care of animals like big cats or primates. I guarantee that it will change your whole worldview on animals, and your life in general!

Rawr said,
in February 25th, 2009 at 4:54 pm

If exotic pets need to be banned for "public safety," then shouldn't dogs be banned as well?

I've never had a chimp, lion, boa constrictor, etc. terrorize my neighborhood, but I've had plenty of aggressive pet dogs do it. Just last year a neighbor's black lab got loose and was charging aggressively at anyone it could find, to where people had to go back into their homes and call animal control. This dog could have easily mauled someone, especially a young child playing outside.

Yet I think it would be ridiculous to ban dog ownership based on a few incidents. Unfortunate things happen in life, but banning everything potentially dangerous isn't the answer.