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English III- 4

A Belanger

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Should the Captivity of Marine Mammals be allowed for human enjoyment?

Animals in the wild are as free and happy as can be, but take those happy animals and set them behind bars, and they are like prisoners held captives. Many people think keeping these wild animals captive is good for them, but it can cause them trauma, health problems, and diminish survival skills they use in the wild. No wild, free animal should be captured and kept captive just for the enjoyment of man because it strips them of what they are used to and causes them many hardships.

Animals, like humans, act and behave somewhat different when they are not in their normal environment. In the wild there are complex social groups, that live, explore, mature and die together. Out in the vast waters of the ocean one would not think that these complex creatures are so dependent, however they "live in complex social groups and maintain strong social bonds with members of their pod"("Orca"). Living in complex social groups can be a challenge and a blessing depending on size and relationships of the pod. Killer whales, also known as orcas, live in pods of two to fifty whales and each different pod has its own special dialect with which they communicate with("Marine"). Having their own unique dialects helps to differentiate one pod from another.

Their capture causes both known and unknown stresses to the animal. Humans capture these animals by using boats to corral their family's pods into shallow water; there the animals are then surrounded with nets that are closed slowly. They are then all lifted onto the boats to be decided if they are kept or thrown back("Marine...Exhibits"). The way these animals are captured traumatizes every one being thrown back can break the hearts and wills of these animals. Taking any one of these creatures from the group they have been in for its entire life can

cause many bad things to happen("Marine...Exhibits"). The family's groups is so closely intertwined that anything that happens to one leaves an effect on them as a whole. If one of them is taken from a group, those that are left can, if female, spontaneously abort their babies, others die from shock or stress, and some go through pneumonia and die("Marine...Exhibits"). The pregnant females, captured or released, can become so traumatized, they may choose to abort their unborn children.

Some dolphins that were in the nets may suffer from pneumonia when they are thrown back into the ocean because the water has entered their lungs through their blow holes . If even one dolphin or pod member is captured it can cause everything to go amiss; those that escape the capture become frightened and frantic when they see their captured companion(s). Some even try to save them("Marine...Exhibits"). This is an attempt to keep the family together.

The following example of an actual capture is in the article "Exhibits". It shows all the possibilities that could happen from such a capturing,

"In one instance, more than 200 panicked dolphins who had been corralled into a Japanese fishing port crashed into boat hulls and each other, becoming hopelessly entangled in nets during their attempt to find an escape route; many became exhausted and drowned"("Exhibits").

This emotional attachment and physical struggle for their pod members show just how closely related these animals are to humans, yet we still treat them as if they are circus clowns or prisoners.

The conditions in which these magnificent creatures are kept are not at all like their natural habitat. Animals that are captured are accustomed to vast and wide areas to swim in, but in captivity, the tanks are significantly smaller. Having small tanks can create many problems for the happiness and emotional health of an animal. Through study we have learned that, "Orca natural habitat is vast expanses of ocean. Wild orcas travel up to 100 miles (160 Km) in a day, and dive to a depth of almost 200 feet (60m)." ("Orca"). Orca whales, dolphins, belugas and all

marine mammals like to swim and explore the sea in order to cover the whole sea and learn things. Without the big family pods that whales and dolphins are used to they lose the mental stimulation of hunting, socializing, and playing with friends. While they are exploring they constantly communicate and warn of objects in their paths because they cannot always see straight in front of them. They find these objects in front of them or near them by using echolocation, which is a "sonar-like system used to detect and locate objects by emitting usually high-pitched sounds that ricochet off the object and return to the animals ears or other sensory receptors" ("National"). Echolocation can be a life saver in the ocean, but it can be torture in captivity. If the animal uses echolocation in a tank it can become confused because the sound will bounce off the walls. The sound is louder in the tank and can cause the animal immense stress from hearing it so much.

The tanks in captivity are also filled with chlorinated water instead of salt or fresh water. Being in a chlorinated water filled tank can cause them skin and eye problems("Marine"). The sea is their home; they feel safe and help themselves to what they need or want. The sea is their life. They like to spend their time underneath the surface, "They spend less than 20% of their time at the water's surface" ("Orca"). Most marine animals prefer to be under the water because that is where they feel safe and comfortable. At the surface they feel exposed because they are a focus of human curiosity which results in their capture for "education".

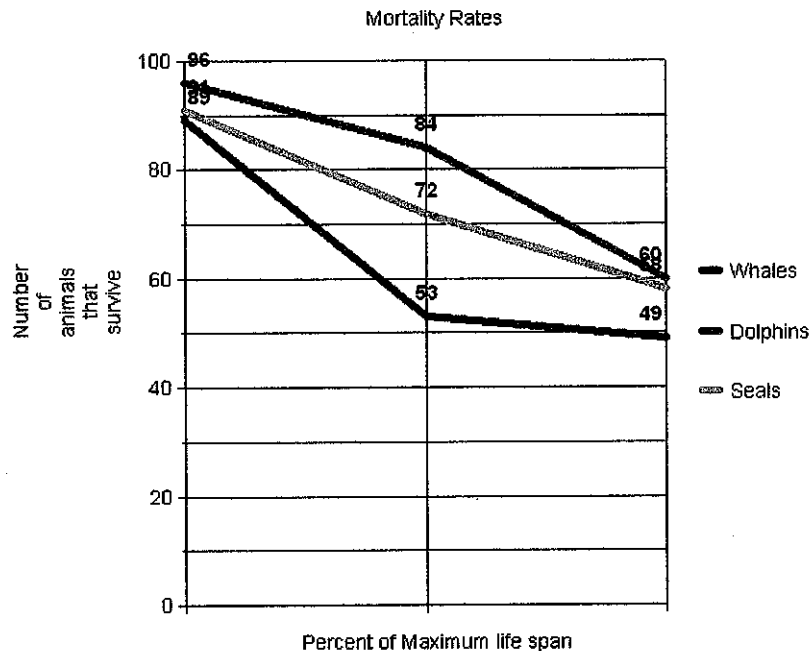
The water depth in the tanks are much different that the unlimited depth of the ocean("Marine"). Having such shallow waters in a tank can cause the animal to spend more than fifty percent of its time on the surface instead of deep below the surface where they prefer. Since the marine mammals spend fifty percent of their time at the surface, some of them suffer from dorsal fin collapse; this is "the result of gravity pulling on the fin when it does not have the support of the water"("Marine"). Not having this stimulation can cause stress levels to rise, which affects whale/trainer relationships, aggression levels, and mental stability("Orca"). These negative effects include are depression, pacing, rocking, and swimming in circles(Ramsey).

In captivity whales and dolphins cannot fluke wave, breach, or forage, which are behaviors that these animals often do in the wild("Marine"). Fluke waving is a unique raise of the tail vertically out of the water. Breaching is when an animal leaps clear out of the water. Foraging refers to the hunt for food. In nature there are many options of what to eat and what not to. With as many choices as they receive, orcas use a wide selection of these things to eat where ever they are located orcas eat "a variety of 30 different species of fish, sharks, squid, seals, sea lions, walruses, sea otters, birds, and even other types of whales"("Orca"). Having such a variety in their diet allows for these animals to grow and change and put to good use all the nutrients they earn from their prey. These marine mammals are animals that depend on the sea for their food("Marine"). In captivity these animals cannot forage because they are hand fed and babied(Ramsey), and their babying affects how they will survive if they are re-released into the wild. In captivity they are fed a monotonous diet of dead herring ("Orca"). The dead herring diet does not provide as many vitamins and nutrients as compared to their vast variety of their wild diet. The food is also provided to them, which causes the animals to lose their ability to forage in the wild(Ramsey).

There are ways to keep captive animals up on their skills for survival, and that is to give them enrichment games. Some enrichment games include searching and swimming after their own fish instead of being hand fed(Ramsey). Other games include doing natural things like bonding with their pod, and playing games with the trainers(Hsun). Sibling play-fighting is a way that these complex creatures get mental stimulation; and it also provides the opportunity to hunt and socialize with others in their group("Orcas"). When animals get mental stimulation, they are challenged and enjoy living more; "opportunities for mental stimulation for orcas in the wild is vast; they are highly intelligent and demonstrate complex problem solving and abstract concept formation in their daily lives."("Orcas") Without mental stimulation these animals would most likely die; not knowing how to find food, protect themselves or others, they would not be able to comprehend when to fight or flee from danger.

Keeping these animals in captivity is wrong, but there are some exceptions to this rule. A proper reason to keep them is for their own health(Ramsey). Their health problem related to pollution, trash, oil, and anything similarly related to that would be an example of a good exception. If an animal is rescued that is hurt from the natural environment, then “they should be rescued and released after they are healthy again”(Ramsey). Having an injured animal in captivity for health purposes is fine because then the animal has a greater survival rate because of the medical help received. If it is a human-created problem that causes the animal to need rescue and help, then that is an appropriate reason to have them in captivity. When they are in captivity because they have been hit by one of man’s boats then they need to be rescued, healed, and properly released to their natural habitats.

Humans, however, contrive many selfish reasons to be able to keep these animals captive. First of all, people may say that the only reason they keep the animals in captivity is for education but one can learn about these animals by watching documentaries, but “this is not education: THIS IS CRUELTY.” (National). People can learn from simply observing marine mammals in the wild. The popularity of these creatures has expanded widely because humans know so little about them and mysteries thrill humans (Kellert). People want to learn about magnificent creatures that are similarly related to humans. There are a few acceptable reasons to keep animals in captivity, but the reasons that humans use most of the time are not acceptable and tend to take advantage of the marine animals to make profit because they are so popular.



The number of animals that are captured and produced each year is a small number compared to those in the wild, but even with the number of new borns there is still a high death rate for the marine mammals in captivity. In SeaWorld, twenty-four out of twenty-five whales died of unnatural reasons("Orca"). These deaths are caused by many different reasons. In 2010, there were many orca-related misfortunes in both the wild and captivity("Orca"). These misfortunes make many people upset, but they still want to see marine mammals in captivity. There were many still births and other pups died because of pollution. Thirty two out of all live births born in captivity have already died(National). The still born births are because of the inbreeding that some companies use to reproduce new animals to watch. On a brighter note, there have been twenty eight live births with only nine dead in captivity(National). The animals living is a good sign, but most of those that live have diseases because of being inbred. Marine parks have enjoyed sixty live births since 1977(National). The chart above shows that all the animals live well out in the wild, but placing them in captivity may make their health go downhill during

the first few weeks. Out of the number of animals kept captive, fifty-four are cetaceans, and out of those cetaceans forty-two are bottlenose dolphins, seven are orca whales, one is a false killer whale (a whale that looks like a killer whale but is not one) and four beluga whales(National). These numbers show just how popular the creatures are. Humans just want to see and learn more about them.

Many people have fought for these animals' rights. All their hard work has paid off because the Marine Mammal Protection Act[MMPA] passed in 1972. This act prohibits the taking of marine mammals in U.S. waters by U.S. citizens on the high seas; it also prohibits the importation of marine mammals and marine mammal products into the U.S.(Kellert). Having people fight and enforce these rights protecting marine mammals shows how much people care about the conditions they are living in. This is one of the most ambitious and comprehensive environmental laws ever enacted(Kellert). Going out of the way to make sure that marine mammals get the proper treatment is a good way to educate people in how captivity affects their wellbeing. The act goes on to forbid the direct exploitation of marine mammals, as well as the economic development impacts on the no-consumptive use of marine mammals(Kellert). The act seeks to keep the population of marine mammals strong in order to contribute to the health and stability of marine ecosystems. The MMPA supports the importance of these animals as scientific, ecological, aesthetic, and economic resources(Kellert). Other acts and movements have been made as well. For example, the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums is responsible for overseeing and promoting animal husbandry standards for animals in zoos and aquariums in Canada. These standards have uphold a code of ethics which recognizes the importance of the animals. They maintain that marine mammals should not be kept in captivity("Marine").

Marine animals live wild and free in their own ocean environment. Being in captivity does not make them happier, live longer, or even feel loved. Being in captivity can actually do the opposite; it may make them depressed and shorten their life span. The true desire of these

animals is to be free and observed from afar, so that they can live their day-to-day lives as nature intended not in some glass container while being stared at by big-eyed little boys and girls. Being held captive for human enjoyment is not right. Humans can watch documentaries and see for themselves how these marvelous creatures act with their innate skills in their natural habitats. They do not need to be behind glass to be watched, enjoyed, and studied.

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ii. Capture

A. How?

1. Boats are used to chase the pod to shallow water, the animals are surrounded with nets that are gradually closed and lifted onto boats

B. How effects animals left or taken

1. Background on groups

- .a. killer whales (orcas) live in pods of two to 50 whales
- .b. each pod has its own dialect (killer whales)
- .c. Belugas do same thing
- .d. dolphins swim together in family pods or tribes of hundreds
 - .i. groups show they care
- .e. (dolphin family groups) consist of mother, her adult sons & daughters

and her daughters offspring

- .f. orcas stay with mothers for life

2. Spontaneous abortions for pregnant females may occur

3. Some die from shock or stress

4. Others slowly succumb to pneumonia when water enters their lungs through their blow holes

5. Capturing one can disrupt everything

6. Those who escape the ordeal of capture become frantic upon seeing their captured companions and may even try to save them

C. Example of actual capture

1. More than 200 panicked dolphins who had been corralled into a Japanese

fishing port crashed into boat hulls and each other, becoming hopelessly entangled in nets during their attempt to find an escape rout; many became exhausted and drowned.

II. Captivity

A. Reasons

1. Keeping them healthy

- .a. pollution
- .b. trash
- .c. oil

2. Human caused problems

- .a. pollution
- .b. boats hurting them
- .c. rescued from being injured in their native habitats

3. Just for education

.a. developing acceptable regulatory standards is a function of adequate biological knowledge, as well as understanding public perceptions & values of marine mammals and preferences for alternative management strategies

- .b. sufficient knowledge is non-existent
- .c. popularity having expanded enormously during the past half-century
- .d. (alt for education) watch documentaries

B. Conditions

1. Tank size

- .a. small tanks filled with chlorinated water
- b. Echolocation

.i. (definition) sonar-like system used to detect and locate objects by emitting usually high-pitched sounds that ricochet off the object and return to the animals ears or other sensory receptors

.ii. small tanks cause the echolocation to bounce off the walls and sometimes cause the animal to go insane

2. Depth of tank

.a. limited, unable to swim to lengths and dive to the depths they do in the wild

.b. 50 % of time at surface

.c. normal Time at water's surface

.i. less than 20%

.d. Natural habitat

.i. orca: vast

.A. travel up to 100 miles (160 Km)

.B. Dive to depth of almost 200 feet (60 m)

3. Mental stimulation

.a. Engaged with hunting, socializing, and playing games

.b. Mental stimulation is vast

.i. highly intelligent

.ii. demonstrate complex problem solving and abstract concept

.c. stress levels

.d. aggression

.e. mental illness

.f. too many negative affects

C. Behaviors

1. Fluke waving

.a. unique raising of tail vertically out of water

2. Breaching

.a. involves leaping clear out of water

3. Foraging

.a. refers to hunt for food

4. (negative) pacing, rocking, swimming in circles

D. Feeding

1. Monotonous diet. Dead herring

2. Food guaranteed

3. Orcas eat wide selection of pray

.a. where?

.b. variety of 30 different species of fish, sharks, squid, seals, sea lions,

walruses, sea otters, birds, and even other whales

E. Enrichment devices

1. Give room to keep their speed, etc

2. Chase their own food instead of hand feeding

3. Give them objects/activities that encourage them to do what they'd need to in

the wild

III. Numbers and Statistics

A. Deaths in captivity

1. Rate of orca deaths for the company (SeaWorld) to 24 whales in 25 years
2. 2012 has seen more than its fair share of orca misfortune
3. 32 of the live birth animals are dead already

B. Living

1. 28 live births, 9 deceased as are 10 mothers
2. Marine parks have enjoyed 60 live births since 1977

B. Animals Kept

1. 54 cetaceans held
 - a. 42 are bottlenose dolphins
 - b. 7 orca whales
 - c. 1 false killer whale
 - i. looks like a killer whale but it isn't
 - d. 4 Belugas

IV. Law and Protection

A. Law protecting marine animals

1. Marine legislation Mammal Protection Act

- a. prohibits the "take" of marine mammals in U.S. water and by U.S.

citizens on the high seas, and the importation of marine mammals and marine mammal products into the U.S.

- b. passed in 1972

- c. one of the most ambitious, comprehensive, and progressive

environmental laws ever enacted

.d. act further focuses on prohibiting and, at times, managing the direct exploitation of marine mammals, as well as economic development impacts on and the non-consumptive use of marine mammals (e.g. captive display in zoos and aquaria and whale watching)

.e. seeks to maintain the capacity of marine mammals to contribute to the health and stability of marine ecosystems

.f. the MMPA endorses the importance of these ocean species as a valued scientific ecological, aesthetic, and economic resource

2. Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums is responsible for overseeing and promoting husbandry standards for animals in zoos and aquariums CAZA has developed a code of ethics for marine mammals in aquariums and while CFHS recognizes the importance of this we maintain that marine mammals should not be kept in captivity