



Position Statement Monkey Rodeos

The North American Primate Sanctuary Alliance (NAPSA), a coalition of nine primate sanctuaries in the U.S. and Canada, which cares for over 800 nonhuman primates, is opposed to “monkey rodeo” shows.

While it may seem amusing on the surface, the monkeys used in these archaic spectacles are poorly treated. Although the records of many monkey rental operators are generally less than stellar, and training and housing conditions can be incredibly stressful (and often abusive), the simple fact that they are forced to dress up and perform on cue in a terribly unnatural situation is reason enough for many people to boycott such events. "Inappropriate portrayals of non-human primates in such a manner have extremely negative consequences for both the welfare of the individual animal and the welfare and conservation concerns of primates in general," explains Elizabeth Lonsdorf, PhD, Professor of Animal Behavior at Franklin and Marshall College, and former Vice President for Education and Outreach, the International Primatological Society.

The entire lifetime of a primate is negatively affected when they are exploited for entertainment. As infants, they are removed from their mothers at a very early age – *years* before they would naturally separate. They are trained using methods that intimidate and inhibit their innate behaviors. Even then, the intelligence and unpredictable nature of these wild animals means that they often can only be used for a short time as actors before they become too independent, unmanageable, and dangerous. Primates are then deemed useless to the entertainment industry, and sold into situations that range from uncomfortable to downright harmful. The lucky ones are able to spend the remaining years of their life in a primate sanctuary.

Monkey rodeos are dangerous and frightening to the monkeys, and potentially harmful to the audience as well. Monkeys can carry diseases transmissible to humans, and they can attack. They are wild animals and remain wild, regardless of how many years they have been forced to “train” with a human being.

Increasingly, corporations and other organizations, including sports teams, are wisely and compassionately forswearing the usage of primates to entertain. We encourage the public to avoid monkey rodeos, for the health and safety of the human and nonhuman primates in attendance.

For more information:

[“ ‘Cowboy Monkey’ Acts are Abusive to Primates.”](#) The Humane Society of the United States

[“Facts about ‘Monkey Rodeos.’”](#) People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

[“Is It Time For The Cowboy Monkey Rodeo to Go Extinct?”](#) NPR