

ELEPHANT VOICES



THE TRAINING OF BABY ELEPHANTS BY RINGLING BROTHERS CIRCUS

Statement

by

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THE TRAINING OF BABY ELEPHANTS

BY RINGLING BROTHERS CIRCUS

Qualifications

I have studied elephants for over thirty years as demonstrated by my *Curriculum Vitae* (Appendix A). I received a Bachelor of Arts with High Honors in the Biological Sciences from Smith College in 1979. I received a Ph.D. in Zoology-Animal Behavior from the University of Cambridge in 1982. My Ph.D. thesis was on musth and male-male competition in African elephants. I did my postdoctoral research at Princeton University studying the vocal and olfactory communication of elephants at Amboseli National Park in Kenya. I have also studied the effects of ivory poaching of African elephants on the age structure and social and reproductive patterns of several east African elephant populations, and I have carried out and continue to carry out long-term studies of elephants' social and reproductive behavior with particular emphasis on vocal repertoires, communication, and cognition. I am currently initiating a study of the elephants of the Maasai Mara.

I have collaborated on many other elephant studies including genetic paternity, inbreeding avoidance, seismic communication, the long-term effects of trauma, the effects of age and experience, and cognition. I have also authored several papers on elephant welfare. As a result of my work at Amboseli and in my role as Research Director of the Amboseli Elephant Research Project, and Member of the Scientific Advisory Committee of the Amboseli Trust for Elephants, I am intimately familiar with the work and findings of my colleagues, which covers a broad scope of elephant behavior, social development, growth, longevity, life history, reproductive behavior and leadership. To date, the research that has been accomplished on the elephants at Amboseli represents the most comprehensive compilation of data on wild elephants and is relied on throughout the world for establishing basic to complex facets of wild elephants and their lives. I am the lead author on the *Loxodonta africana* profile in the upcoming volumes on Africa mammals edited by Jonathon Kingdon. I am sub-editor for the several chapters on elephant social behavior, communication and cognition for the upcoming book entitled, *The Amboseli Elephants: A long-term perspective on a long-lived mammal*.

My own research has included logging thousands of hours in the field observing and studying elephants both African and Asian. Of these hours, many of them have been spent studying the elephants in Kenya at Amboseli National Park. I have also studied African elephants in Laikipia, Maasai Mara, and Tsavo, in Kenya, in Queen Elizabeth in Uganda, and in Mikumi and West Kilimanjaro, in Tanzania. I have observed wild African elephants in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Botswana, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. I have also observed wild Asian elephants in Mudumalai National Park, India and in Yala, Uda Walawe, Wasgomuwa, Minneriya and Kaudulla National Parks, Sri Lanka. I have collected field acoustic recordings from Asian elephants in the last four mentioned locations and from African elephants in Amboseli, Maasai Mara, Tsavo and Laikipia.

I have observed semi-captive orphaned African elephants in Tsavo, Kenya and Asian elephant orphans in Uda Walawe, Sri Lanka; I have made vocal recordings in both locations. I have also made observations of captive elephants in Thailand that were in the process of being released into the wild. Further-

more, I have observed the behavior and a variety of human handling of captive elephants in Zimbabwe, South Africa, Botswana, and Kenya, as well as in zoos and sanctuaries in the United States and Europe. Likewise, I have observed the behavior and human handling of captive Asian elephants in India, Sri Lanka and Thailand, as well as in zoos and sanctuaries in the United States and in the circus in Norway.

In addition to elephant field research, I have key elephant conservation and management experience. Between 1990 and 1994 I headed the Elephant Program for Kenya Wildlife Service under the direction of Dr. Richard Leakey. I was responsible for establishing and then running the conservation and management program for the entire elephant population of Kenya, which then numbered some 25,000 elephants. I was responsible for elephant surveys, the training of Kenyan staff members, setting elephant management policy, making elephant management decisions, and overseeing human-elephant conflict mitigation. The elephant conservation and management strategy that I wrote has been used by Kenya to this date. I was privy to poaching and ivory trade intelligence, and attended a meeting of the parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna as a delegate from Kenya. On the basis of this experience and upon spending 35 years of my life in Africa, I have extensive expertise on what practices can be considered as benefiting the conservation of wild elephants as well as what practices can be considered as being in the interests of elephants both Asian and African.

I am co-founder and co-director of the organization ElephantVoices. The mission of ElephantVoices is twofold: to further the study of elephant communication and to act as a voice for the interests of elephants. ElephantVoices runs a long-term elephant communication study in Amboseli National Park in Kenya and we have initiated a new project in the Maasai Mara, also in Kenya; through publications, the media, our website and blog and Facebook we share our knowledge of elephants with the public. Our website houses two databases on elephant communication - one on the vocal repertoire of African elephants and the other on the gestural repertoire of elephants, including Asian elephants.

On the basis of the above expertise, I believe I am one of the best placed to determine whether and when elephants are suffering from deprivation, abuse, trauma, stress, harm, discomfort, and insufficient space.

Assignment

I have been provided with a series of photographs that I recognize as being those that were given to PeTA in 2009 by ex-Ringling Brothers employee, Samuel Haddock, who worked for Ringling as an elephant trainer, handler and care-taker on and off for almost 30 years. The photographs were taken by Haddock in 2001 and 2002 and show various stages of training of baby elephants. In a statement, Haddock remarks that when he left in 2005 the baby elephants were still being trained in the same manner. I have been asked by PeTA to provide a statement about what I believe the pictures show as a whole, and to comment on whether the photographs indicate that the elephants are suffering abuse, trauma, stress, harm, discomfort, and insufficient space. I first summarize my opinions and then I comment on each photograph.

Summary of opinions

As an expert witness in the case ASPCA v. Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus, I had the opportunity to read copious amounts of written material (testimonies, depositions, internal memos and emails, USDA inspections, etc), to view many hours of video tape, and hundreds of photographs related to the treatment of elephants by Ringling Brothers Circus. While the case was restricted to a few individual adult elephants, the material I reviewed covered all of the elephants owned by Ringling Brothers including births of calves, separation of calves from mothers, training of calves, and other treatment, injuries and deaths of calves. Furthermore, as an expert witness, I had the opportunity to visit the Ringling's Center for Elephant Conservation (CEC) in 2007 where the baby elephants are kept, separated from their mothers and where they receive their initial training. I spent five hours there viewing the behavior of the adults, who were the focus of the case, but I also saw and heard some of the baby elephants in a neighboring paddock and in the barn. It was interesting to note that the only activity I saw the calves engaged in was stereotypic behavior, which is a good indication of the amount of time they had already spent on chains. The calves stood bobbing and swaying while a radio was broadcast from speakers nearby. I was told that the extremely loud noise was to acclimatize the babies to the noise they would endure in the circus.

In addition to this evidence, I have also read the statement by Samuel Haddock regarding the baby elephants. Everything he writes is corroborated by evidence that came out in the trial or was a part of the documentation I was given as an expert witness.

Before giving my opinions I wish to give several definitions and to very briefly highlight some attributes of African and Asian elephants.

Definitions:

1. *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles, 1973*, defines “privation” as: The action of depriving or taking away; the fact or condition of being deprived of or cut off from something; deprivation. The condition of being without some attribute formerly or properly possessed, the loss or loosely the mere absence of a quality or negative quality. The want of the usual comforts or esp. of the necessities of life. All general privations are great because they are all terrible. Vacuity, Darkness, Solitude and Silence.
2. *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles, 1973* defines “suffering” as: That endures patiently; inured to suffering; submissive. That suffers, or is characterized by the suffering of pain, affliction or distress.
3. “Anthropomorphism” means the attribution of human characteristics or behavior to animals; it is *not* anthropomorphic, however, to refer to these qualities in animals who actually have these “human” characteristics. The terms I have used, such as empathy, love, joy, grief and so on are characteristics that are common to both humans and elephants.
4. The term “baby elephant” or, more correctly, elephant calf refers to individuals up to the age of natural weaning, which would occur in the wild at around four to five years of age. Elephants are considered “infants” up to one year of age, “calves” up to age four, “juveniles” to about age seven

and “adolescents” from seven to the age of puberty. The term “baby” is an acceptable term for elephants up to the age of weaning. The term “calf” is often used more generally to refer to immatures.

Elephant Basics

1. Elephants live in families, which range in size and composition from two individuals, a mother and her calf, to extended multi-generational families numbering 50 individuals or more.
2. Elephants have an unusually large social network, radiating out from the natal family through bond groups, clans, and independent adult males to the entire population and even beyond to strangers from other populations.
3. The close and enduring cooperative social relationships operating between individuals and families within this fluid, multi-tiered society, is rare in the animal kingdom but shared with humans, chimpanzees, some cetaceans and some social carnivores.
4. Female elephants remain with their mothers for life; male elephants leave become independent from their natal family at around 14 years of age, but new research has shown that adult males who associate with one another in bull groups tend to be related. In other words family relationships, though different in intensity for males and females, last for life.
5. Elephant are unusually long-lived mammals with life-history parameters similar to our own.
6. Elephants have very large and complex brains; they have the greatest volume of cerebral cortex available for cognitive processing of all land mammals.
7. Elephants have unusually good memory; they accumulate and retain social and ecological knowledge, remembering the scents and voices of scores of other individuals and places for decades.
8. Elephants are renowned for their memory, intelligence, and sociality, and, as with humans, these traits make them particularly vulnerable to stress and to trauma and its longer-term psychological consequences.
9. Elephants are highly social, complex and intelligent individuals. They are capable of some of the higher emotions, such as empathy; they have an awareness of self and an understanding of death.

Haddock's descriptions and my opinions

In paragraph 8 of his statement, Haddock states that he was involved in the training of a number of baby elephants including: Angelica, Asha, Doc, Gunther, Kelly Ann, P.T., Rudy, and Sara. He also writes that he observed the training of Benjamin and Shirley. I am familiar with the names of each of these baby elephants as they were mentioned in the trial evidence.

In the same paragraph, Haddock also mentions that babies are “typically pulled from their mothers at 18-24 months of age. Once they are taken from their mothers, he writes, “they’ve tasted their last bit of freedom and the relationship with their mother ends.” This information is corroborated by evidence I reviewed for the trial. For example, in the deposition testimony of Gary Jacobson he explains separa-

tion of babies from mothers, first at birth and then permanently at about two years old even though they are still nursing (note that in the wild calves suckle until at least four years old).

We know from our work in Amboseli that the presence of a mother is extremely important to an elephant calf. In the wild orphaned calves under the age of two have almost no chance of surviving, even within the protective care of their family. Indeed, even for calves up to the age of eight or nine years of age, the death of a mother is catastrophic for their lifetime survival and well being. The reason for this impact is due to a combination of factors including loss of nutrition (for the younger individuals) but also, since young elephants learn normal behavior in a social context, the loss of role model and support. Based on the experiences of Daphne Sheldrick, who has rescued hundreds of orphaned elephant calves, grief and trauma also plays an important role.

The removal of baby elephants from their mothers by Ringling Brothers causes them great deprivation - they are deprived of nourishment, they are deprived of a mother's care and protection, and they are deprived of the context for normal social learning. As has been shown in countless social species, the removal of babies from their mothers causes distress and leads to long-term trauma and harm. Elephants being one of the most social of species, and one with life-history parameters similar to our own, the removal of a baby elephant from its mother can be reasonably compared to the forced removal of a child from its mother at the same age.

In paragraph 9 through 10 Haddock goes on to state that, “when pulling 18-24 month-old babies, the mother is chained against the wall by all four legs. Usually there’s 6 or 7 staff that go in to pull the baby rodeo style. We put ropes around the legs, one leg at a time. No specific leg first. The ropes are tied off to the pipes.” They bring in an “anchor” elephant and use her to drag the baby from its mother by putting a rope collar around the neck of the anchor elephant and attaching the other end around the baby’s neck. The anchor elephant then pulls the baby to the other end of the barn. “It can take between 30 minutes to an hour to capture and restrain the baby. The baby tries to run away and fights having the ropes put on. Some mothers scream more than others while watching their babies being roped.”

Haddock further states, “you could hear the babies start screaming and then others would join in. Sometimes they would start crying when they saw their mothers brought in from outside. The babies often had rope lesions from straining against the ropes and would require treatment”

Clearly the removal of baby elephants from their mothers is abusive and causes physical suffering and harm as evidence by the rope lesions. What about psychological harm?

Our studies in Amboseli reveal that elephants are capable of complex emotions, like joy, love, grief, and even the “human” emotion, empathy. There are good evolutionary reasons for elephants to be capable of feeling joy and love for one another. These feelings of wellbeing guide a response that's necessary for their survival. Calves born into large, closely-knit families have a better chance of survival; strong and positive emotional responses between elephants build and reinforce bonds that last a lifetime. Intense joyful greetings are among the many ways in which elephants express their friendship and loyalty toward one another, and renew the support network that's so important to their survival.

There are also good evolutionary reasons why elephants are capable of experiencing grief and empathy. Every elephant baby is biologically extremely important to its mother because she must invest so much

time, energy, and effort in producing and rearing him or her. Just like us, elephants have, therefore, evolved elaborate behaviors to care for and bond with their offspring. If a calf is to survive, it too must form intense bonds with his or her mother and with other family members. In fact, the survival of all elephants depends on maintaining strong ties within their social network. So, it would be odd if elephants did not feel sadness and grief when these bonds are broken.

From my own work on elephant communication (see <http://www.elephantvoices.org/multimedia-resources/elephantvoices-calls-database-call-types.html> and <http://www.elephantvoices.org/multimedia-resources/elephantvoices-calls-database-contexts.html>) I am well aware that roaring and screaming is typically indicative of distress.

Elephants have evolved the capacity for both animated joy and tremendous suffering and they suffer when managers, captors and keepers do not take these characteristics into consideration. Based on all of our observations and published work, the forceful removal of baby elephants from their mothers is abusive and causes incredible psychological distress and harm.

In paragraph 12 Haddock comments that the babies spend about 23 hours each day in the barn restrained, and in the following paragraphs he says, “They are never turned loose to play; that would defeat the purpose, all their movements are under control of staff.” Elephants in the Ringling Brothers Circus spend the majority of their time chained.

There are countless reports testifying to the physical harm it causes to the feet and joints of an elephant to be chained. In the wild elephants are on the move all but 3-4 hours in a 24-hour day, covering many miles with their family and companions. I have made tens of thousands of observations of individual wild elephants and have never observed one swaying or head bobbing. This abnormal, stereotypic behavior is caused by the confinement these individuals have to endure, year in and year out.

These babies are at the beginning of a life of restraint, a life in which they are never permitted to play, never permitted to socialize, never permitted to be normal elephants. In my opinion such chaining and confinement and restriction of normal behavior is abusive to any animal – particularly one so large and so active as an elephant. Restraining an elephants deprives him or her of any semblance of a normal life and is physically and psychologically harmful.

In Paragraph 14 Haddock states that “After they have stopped struggling from being restrained with the ropes, which could take up to six months, ropes are replaced with chains that are padded with clear plastic tubing” and then (paragraph 16) full-fledged training sessions begin that last “1.5-2 hours per day, twice a day until they get it right. It could take a year of training before they are ready to go on the road.”

Haddock goes on the comment that no one is allowed in the training area and it is fenced off so no one can see. “Loud rock and roll music is played to drown out the baby’s screaming and to get them used to the music played in the circus.” (When I was at the CEC I heard this obnoxious music blaring from near the paddock where the calves were kept). *Considering elephants’ acute sense of hearing the blaring of loud music alone is abusive.*

In paragraphs 16 through 18 of Haddock’s statement he describes some of the training methods saying, “After the initial training session the babies fight to resist having the snatch rope put on them, until they

eventually give up. The snatch rope goes over their back, under their belly and is fastened to their left hind leg. We drive stakes into the ground in the ring area. The ropes are tied to the stakes or to the bars..... As many as 4 adult men will pull on one rope to force the elephant into a certain position, such as a lay down, stretch, or sit up.” And further to this that, “Others use bullhooks and hotshots.”

In paragraph 60 he divulges, “The bullhook is designed for one purpose, and one purpose only, to inflict pain and punishment. I should know, I used to make them. I built them to where you can’t break them, no matter how hard you hit the elephant.” He further asserts, “Based on my experience, these violent training methods are the only way an elephant can be trained to perform certain tricks required for a circus act. Its bunk when the circus says that its showcasing an elephant’s natural behavior.”

If there was any doubt about the abusive nature of elephant training in the Ringling camp, Haddocks statement and his accompanying harrowing images clearly show the extreme degree of deprivation and gratuitous violence these elephants must undergo to accept to perform unnatural tricks for human entertainment. Baby elephants are seen straining against their ropes and chains; being trussed up with ropes, poked, and prodded with sharp instruments, manhandled and given electric shocks. The only reason why a bullhook has a steel point and hook is to inflict pain. The word “guide” is merely a ruse to fool the public. Deprivation, force and pain form the basis of the negative reinforcement training baby elephants undergo to perform in the circus. Thereafter, restraint, deprivation and attempts to avoid pain keep circus elephants under constant control.

This form of treatment is painful and causes distress to these individuals; it wounds and injures them and causes them physical and psychological harm and suffering. The unwarranted striking of elephants with bullhooks, whips and other objects keeps them in a constant state of fear and stress so that they will obey and perform on command. Most of all these elephants have been deprived of everything that an elephant has a inherent right to experience - its natural behavior.

Circus elephants are mere commodities for human entertainment: prevented from behaving naturally and forced to perform behaviors never seen in nature, they are bought and sold, poked and prodded, separated from companions, confined, chained, on concrete and on trains.

A close look at the photographs shows that in many of these the people are smiling and laughing. Based on the evidence available I can only conclude that these individuals are either uninformed of current scientific knowledge of elephant cognitive and social behavior, or they derive pleasure out of inflicting pain on others.

I am not sufficiently familiar with the Animal Welfare Act to outline specifically how Ringling violates the Act. Nevertheless, I have no hesitation in stating that in my capacity as an expert in the social and cognitive behavior of elephants, the manner in which Ringling Brothers Circus treats these individuals, and in this case, its elephant calves, is highly abusive and causes them great suffering, trauma, harm, and discomfort. It deprives them of normal mothering and socialization, it robs them of normal elephant love, affection, security, and denies them sufficient space. Ringling’s treatment of elephants is outdated, barbaric and, quite frankly, ignorant. In permitting this - and I do not use this word lightly - sadistic treatment of elephants to continue in any form, it is my opinion that the USDA not only sanctions cruelty, but is seen by an increasingly educated public to do so.

Series one - Calves roped and chained inside the barn

Series one shows a sequence of photographs of elephants calves inside the barn at Ringling Brothers' Center for Elephant Conservation (CEC) after they have been forcibly removed from their mothers. As an expert witness in the case ASPCA v. Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus, I had the opportunity to visit the CEC in 2007. I have seen elephants calves bobbing and swaying in the outdoor paddocks there and I have heard babies scream at the other end of the barn where I was viewing the adult elephants. These images appear to have been taken in the same barn that I visited.

In the first image in this series, a baby elephant can be seen tied and chained and standing on concrete. The calf is lifting his or her right leg and the rope on his or her left leg is taught. Neither the rope nor the chain have any protective covering to prevent damage to the skin of the calf. The legs and body of a second calf are just visible. The angle of the calf's body indicates that she is straining against her fetters.



In this image a baby can be seen using his or her trunk to try to remove the ropes from his or her left foot. Neither the ropes nor the chain have any protective covering to prevent damage to the skin of the baby. Both ropes are taught. In some of the Ringling videos I viewed adult elephants also strain against their chains and attempt to remove them with their trunks.



In this image five or six elephant calves can be seen straining against their ropes and chains. The extreme leaning posture of the closest baby and the taught rope indicates that he or she is struggling to escape. The display of Eye-Widening and Tail-Raising in this calf shows that he or she is fearful and highly agitated. The obvious movement of the trunk of several calves suggest that these individuals, too, are agitated. In the wild these babies would still be suckling from their mothers.



This image shows four calves chained in the barn. An adult can be seen in the distance. The two closest to the camera are older individuals on chains only. Their rather extreme turning posture would seem to indicate that they may already be engaged in stereotypic behavior. The two further away are younger, smaller calves who appear to be tied by ropes and chains. The violent movement apparent in these two calves indicates that they have been recently removed from their mothers and are new to chaining. They appear agitated and distressed. In the wild these individuals would still be suckling from their mothers.



This image shows four calves chained in the barn. These are older individuals - or the same individuals taken at a later stage - than the first four images. The ropes are no longer present and the elephants are not straining against their chains. Rather they are feeding on hay that appears to be strewn on the floor. In the wild all of these individuals would likely still be suckling from their mothers and spending their time no more than 5 meters from her side.



This image shows an older male calf. I estimate he is 3-4 years of age. Among Asian elephants only males have tusks. Typically, in males, tusks erupt at about 1.5 years of age and by age four they would be about 4 inches in length. Standing with the trunk in this position AND the foot raised is not a natural posture for an elephant. I assume that a person has given this calf a command. In the wild a calf of this age would still be suckling from his mother.



Series two - Calves being walked and trained in the barn with an anchor elephant

The second series of pictures shows a baby being taken for a walk and being trained with an anchor elephant. The baby is surrounded by six to seven people. Haddock notes in paragraph 13 that “A bullhook is kept on the front of the elephant’s trunk. More hook pressure is applied if they pick up the pace.” A rope is tied around the calf’s neck and attached to the adult by a short rope that is also tied around her neck. In this way the calf cannot escape and cannot can injure the people attempting to train him or her. The adult elephant is controlled by commands and the use of bullhooks. In addition to being anchored to an adult elephant the calf is controlled by four ropes tied around each leg. Some of these ropes (though not all) are surrounded by protective fabric. People hold ropes tied around the baby’s legs and a trainer is positioned on each side of the calf’s head. This is necessary because the calves are frightened and struggle and would therefore injure themselves. There are numerous documents showing that the ropes used on these calves cause them severe injury.

This image shows a small calf attached by a rope around its neck to an anchor elephant. Seven men surround the calf and appear to be starting to attach the ropes to the calf’s legs. I recognize Gary Jacobson in the foreground holding a bullhook.



The second image shows the same calf being trained to lift its hind leg. The calf is bound by four legs. One man holds the calf by the trunk to control her. Since an elephant’s trunk is actually its nose and is highly enervated this action is likely to make the calf feel very insecure (if you can imagine being led around by the nose with your nostrils possibly pinched closed). Gary Jacobsen uses the rope on the calf’s left hind leg to pull the calf’s leg to an unnaturally high and awkward position - one that would not be observed in the wild and is likely uncomfortable. At the same time he holds the hook of the bullhook under the calf’s leg. This is training by negative reinforcement. The hook of the bullhook digs into the calf’s skin and because the calf feels pain it moves its leg higher in an attempt to avoid pain.



Similarly in this image, the calf is totally retrained with a rope around her neck, tied by ropes on her four legs and a man grasping her by her nose. In this tethered condition Gary Jacobson uses negative reinforcement to train the calf to raise its right front foot. With one hand he pulls the rope up to lift the calf's leg and with the other he uses the hook of the bullhook to poke the calf behind its foot thus forcing her to lift her leg to an unnaturally high and uncomfortable position to avoid more pain.

Image shows the short length of rope between the calf and the anchor elephant allowing the calf very limited movement.



The young calf stands on a tub restrained by the short rope around its neck to the "anchor" elephant. Gary Jacobson grasps the calf by her nose. Note that the calf does not have ropes around her legs.



Series three - Calves being walked

This series of images shows a calf at an earlier stage of training and may be the same calf observed in the first few images in series two. Here the calf is being trained to walk alongside the anchor elephant. The images show the calf surrounded by 6 people a woman and five men. In many of the images the people are laughing, yet the calf looks distressed.

The calf is being pulled by its nose and by a ropes tied around a front and back leg and around her neck. An anchor elephant stands nearby.



The calf is being pulled by its nose and by a ropes tied around a front and back leg and around her neck toward an adult elephant to whom she will be “anchored”. Gary Jacobson and the woman, who is his wife, both carry bullhooks.



The calf is still being being pulled by her nose and by a ropes tied around a front and back leg and around her neck. Gary Jacobson and the woman both carry bullhooks. Note that as the calf is being pulled forward she is has the calf by her tail - she has pulled the calf's tail to the side and is using the spike of the bullhook to poke the calf in the tender skin around her anus. Jacobson further controls the calf by maintaining a firm grip around the end of the calf's nose. And by holding the bullhook ready.



Six people surround the calf. One man pulls the calf by a rope around the front leg, two men hold a rope tied around the calf's back leg, another man holds the calf by a rope around her neck, Gary Jacobson holds the calf by gripping her nose and holds the bullhook ready. The woman not only holds the calf's tail but has her bullhook pointed directly at the calf's tender anus. A second man also carries a bullhook.



Series four - Calves being trained in the barn to do tricks

As an expert witness in the legal case against Ringling Brothers I am aware that training can only begin once the young calves no longer strain against their ropes and chains. This I know from Ringling's documentation, may take up to 6 months. In the fourth series of photographs a male and female calf are being trained inside the barn to do tricks.

This male calf is being trained through negative reinforcement to stand on his hind legs. Note the small tusks just appearing beyond the calf's lip - the angle of the photograph is difficult but I estimate that he is not more than 2.5 to 3 years old. Four men are visible in the photograph, including one barely visible immediately behind the calf. One of them pulls up on a rope that appears to be tied around the calf's nose; the man is pulling the rope and the calf's nose back over his head. Two of the men use the hook of their bullhooks to poke the calf on the posterior of each of his front feet thus forcing him to stand on his hind legs with his feet high in the air in order to avoid more pain from the sharp hooks. His posture is highly unnatural. The calf's eyes are wide and his mouth open suggesting that he is uncomfortable and in distress.



In this image the calf is bound with ropes on two legs - one front and one back - these ropes appear to be tied to the bars of the enclosure. The calf is being trained to lift her left front leg. This is being done by pulling the the front rope when the calf cannot escape. A thinner rope tied is around the calf's nose which is also being grasped by Gary Jacobson. The woman is again holding the baby elephant by the tail. One person in front and one behind hold bull hooks. The calf's eyes are wide.



In this image the calf is being trained to sit on a "tub". She is bound by four thick ropes - the two on her hind legs are taught - tied to the bars in front of her or pulled by people; one on her hind leg is tied to the bar behind her; one on her front leg is held by a man standing in front of her. A thinner fifth rope is tied around her nose. Two people hold bull hooks one of which may be touching the calf behind her right leg. It is not clear to me how they have managed to get the calf to sit on the tub and raise her feet in the air. Her trunk appears to be being forced back to hold her up, but I presume that a combination of hooks and pulling of ropes were used. The calf's eyes are wide and she look as if she is in distress.



In this image a calf is being trained to stand on a "tub" with her leg(s) raised. The photograph is very blurry, but she is retrained by two thick ropes on diagonal front and back legs which are held by two men. Her nose is tied by a thinner rope which is lifted by Gary Jacobson. The woman holds a bull hook near to her lifted back leg. I assume that this photograph was taken at a later stage of training. The calf is being forced to stand in a very unnatural and uncomfortable position. Indeed one of Ringling's calves broke his leg falling off such a tub.



Series five - Calves being trained to “stretch out”

The fifth series of six photographs shows a calf being trained to “stretch-out”. The term means requiring an elephant to get down on her elbows and knees with her abdomen touching the ground. In the wild the closest to this position is a posture seen during play as in this ElephantVoices photograph where a calf is happily amusing herself playing with a palm frond. Note the happy relaxed facial expressions on this calf. Yet, the Ringling training required to “stretch-out” on command is completely gruesome. Once learned it is often required of captive elephants by their keepers who use it to maintain dominance over their elephants. It is also used by Ringling as a punishment. For instance on page 319 in the deposition of Joe Friscoe he talks about using a “stretch out” as a “time out”. In this position an elephant is, and feels, extremely vulnerable, as she cannot easily get to a standing position where she could possibly defend herself. This series of photographs probably involve different calves and I have put them in an order which best shows the likely training sequence. Note that the calves are surrounded by up to six people.



The calf is surrounded by people and trussed up in ropes. At least four ropes are either tied to the bars or tied to stakes that have been driven into the ground. In this way the calf is anchored to at least four immovable objects. In addition a rope is tied around its neck and around his or her nose. The latter is held by a person who appears to be wearing a glove in that hand. Does he expect the calf to struggle?



In this image the calf appears very distressed - its face has a “pinched” look caused by the way it is holding its mouth - an expression we see in the wild when calves are frightened and distressed. The calf is tied by 6 ropes on its feet, over its back, around its neck and its trunk. In addition the woman is pulling the calf by the tail. Gary Jacobson holds a bull-hook and a man on the far side is down on his hands and knees holding the calf in some way. One of the ropes on the calf’s back leg is being pulled taught around the bar of the enclosure - forcing the calf’s back legs down and back.



This is a closer image. It seems that all four feet are tied with ropes. The calf appears distressed and looks to be struggling. She or he is lifting his or her left front leg as if trying to escape. The expression on the calf's face looks as if he or she is vocalizing - likely a protest rumble as the calf's mouth is not open wide. A thick braided rope is being put over the calf's back.



This image clearly shows how the calf is forced to "stretch out". A rope is attached to each foot and to the bars on either side of the enclosure. These ropes are tightened to force the calf to collapse down onto his or her elbows and knees. A rope is tied around the calf's nose and Gary Jacobson holds the calf's nose with a bull hook in his hand. The calf's mouth is open as if likely to be vocalizing.



As in the above picture this image clearly shows how the calf is forced to "stretch out". Four men pull on four ropes - one tied to each leg. In this image one can also see how the rope over the back of the calf is employed. As a man pulls on the rope on the right hind leg this also pulls on the rope across the calf's back forcing her to the ground. Of particular note is that Gary Jacobson increases the pressure on the calf by sticking the sharp point of the bull hook between the calf's shoulders to force the calf to comply. At the same time he holds the calf's nose in his grip.



This image seems to follow the previous one. Still holding the calf by the nose, Gary Jacobson pushes the point of the bull hook into the calf forcing her to collapse to the ground.



Series six - Calves being trained to lie down

Lying down is, of course, a natural behavior. In the wild a calf lies down because he or she is tired (as in the photograph on the right), or because she wants to invite another calf to play (as in the photograph below). Calves, and indeed adults, lie down when they feel totally protected and safe to rest, or for the pure joy of it - note the happy expression on the elephants below.



At Ringling Brothers, however, learning to lie down on command is a kind of torture and this series makes for gruesome viewing. This series contains at least two different calves - the first appears to be larger, perhaps older than the second and Gary Jacobson is in trousers in one and shorts in the other. Not only are the calves trussed up in ropes and forced to the ground by several large men yanking on the ropes, but Gary Jacobson is seen using both the bullhook and a hotshot (electric current) on the calves.

Gary Jacobson holds a bullhook in his right hand and uses it to hook the calf on the side of his body to pull him onto his side. Five men use ropes to pull the calf over and down. Using the rope tied around the calf's nose Jacobson uses it assist in pulling the calf down.



This image shows again the strength required to force the calf onto his or her side. This is not a positive experience for this baby elephant by any means.



Note how tight the rope around the calf's nose is.



Gary Jacobson holds a hotshot in his right hand and uses it to give the elephant calf an electric shock to force it to stay lying down.



Gary Jacobson holds hotshot in his right hand and a bullhook in his left. He can again be seen to use the hotshot on the calf.



Finally the calf surrenders and is “rewarded” by a hand on her side. Her wide eyes show she is distressed.



The second smaller calf is trussed up in a similar manner.



Pulled over and out with ropes.



Finally the calf lies down with Jacobson sticking the point of a bull-hook above her ear.



At a later stage of training five calves are forced to lie down side by side as seen in the show.



Series seven - Being trained to sit like a person on the ground and on a tub

In the wild elephants occasionally sit like a dog, raising their heads upwards, with their trunk in their mouth or flopped over their heads. This is a very playful posture as one can see by the elephant's turned up mouth. Yet, Ringling turns a game into something completely unnatural, ungainly and hideous for an elephant. To train elephants to perform this position on command they put calves through great suffering. In this series of images, several different calves on different days are being being trained to sit like a person on the ground or on a tub with their front legs lifted high in the air. This unnatural posture is *never* seen in the wild. The calves are, for the most part, in the early phases of training and are restrained by ropes and are forced into the positions ropes and kept there through the use of the hook or point end of bullhooks.



This image shows three people surrounding a calf who is tied by at least three legs and has a fifth thinner rope also tied around her nose. At least two of these individuals hold bullhooks. Gary Jacobson can be seen using the hook part of his bullhook to forcefully ensure that the calf stays in position. The muscles in Jacobson's arms indicate that he is exerting pressure on the back of the calf's heel with the point of the hook. It is difficult to see what the man in the foreground is doing, but it looks as though he may have inserted something into the calf's mouth.



In this closer image of the same situation one can see that the calf's mouth is wide open and is likely to be screaming. The man in the foreground still holds his hand in the same position and the same grip as in the previous image - leading me to believe that he is holding a small device inside the mouth of the calf meant to inflict pain if the calf tries to come down. Jacobsen continues to insert the hook of the bullhook into the skin on the heel of the calf.



In this frontal image one can see that the calf's mouth is wide open and her eyes are widened indicating she is fearful. This time the woman is using the hook of the bullhook to ensure the calf does not come down until told.



This image shows a different, possibly younger calf who is further along in training. The ropes have been removed except from around her nose. In this frontal image one can clearly see Jacobsen using the very sharp hook of his bullhook against the underside of the calf's trunk to ensure that she stays in position. If she were to relax downward she would feel the pain of the hook. The calf's eyes show that she is clearly alert and afraid.



At a later stage in training - Jacobson and his wife force a male and female calf to sit on the ground as a pair, their front legs in the air. Husband and wife stand nearby with bullhooks.



I find the next two images very disturbing. The calf is so young and small. He or she is bound by retraining ropes on at least three legs in addition to the rope around her nose. The calf has been forced to sit on the tub and does so with what appears to me to be a look of resignation.



This photograph appears to follow immediately after the previous image. Two men and one woman appear to use great exertion to lift the calf up so that its front legs are in the air. The man on the right pulls on the calf's left leg. The woman is doing something to the calf's right leg and Gary Jacobson is yanking the baby by her nose to force her into an upright posture. The calf is displaying Eye-Widening and is clearly in distress.



This older female calf has clearly had more training than the younger calf in the previous two images and is now retrained only by a rope tied around her nose. Jacobson stands in front of her in the process of using a bullhook to force her to stay in an upright posture. She appears to be vocalizing.



At a later stage in training - Jacobson's wife forces a male and female calf to sit on tubs with their front legs in the air. She stands nearby with a bullhook.



Series eight - Being trained to do a head stand

In the following two photographs calves are being trained to do a headstand. In the wild the closest posture to a headstand is called “Tusk-Ground.” This behavior occurs during highly aggressive interactions or during exuberant play. In this photograph an elephant has mock-charged in play and then as she reached the car she pretended to trip and fall digging her tusks into the ground. There is nothing, however, in the normal elephant repertoire of behavior remotely like the headstands that Ringling elephants are forced to perform. This posture must be extremely difficult and frightening for an elephant. In my opinion forcing an elephant into a position that is so clearly physically difficult, uncomfortable and unhealthy is cruel.



It would appear that calves are trained to do headstands by forcibly pulling their head down between their front legs by dragging on a rope tied to the calf's nose. Once the calf's head is down a combination of ropes and prodding with bullhooks force a calf to put his or her hind legs in the air.



At a later stage in training - Jacobson and wife force a male and female calf to perform headstands. Both people stand nearby with bullhooks.



Series nine - Calves being trained to do the long mount

In the wild male calves begin to mount one another and female calves at a very young age. They do it in play - clambering on top of one another in a very boisterous and joyful manner. Notice the classic smiling mouths of calves at play. At Ringling Brothers all the fun is taken out of this natural male behavior as can be seen in the photographs that follow.



Four men with bullhooks surround these two baby elephants, poking and prodding them into the correct position. The mounting calf appears to be screaming as she is poked with a bullhook on her hind foot and as Jacobson raises his bullhook to poke her under her trunk to ensure she keeps her trunk raised.



Below, at a later stage of training, Jacobson and his wife stand by with bullhooks to ensure that the elephants perform.

