

Circuses with Animals ... Why NOT

USDA is currently investigating Ringling for complaints: that Ringling does not travel with a veterinarian, an employee seen beating elephant (chained by two legs) with a bullhook (training tool resembling a fireplace poker), & large cats confined to cages unless performing, and not given water.

USDA has cited Ringling in recent years for serious violations of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA):

- Failure to provide adequate veterinary care
- Failure to test elephants for tuberculosis
- Failure to dispose of expired tuberculosis drugs
- Unsanitary feeding practices
- Failure to maintain, clean, repair transport cages
- Inadequate housing for dogs
- Failure to provide shade or shelter for breeders
- Failure to keep records of acquisition and disposition of Ringling's animals
- Improper handling of dangerous animals
- Failure of adequate fencing for dangerous animals
- Failure to provide safety barrier between public and (potentially) dangerous animals

In 2011, Feld Entertainment (Ringling's parent Co.) paid a \$270,000 fine to settle charges brought by USDA for violations of AWA dating back to 2007: beatings, lame elephants forced to perform despite chronic pain, a lion's death, and a baby elephant destroyed after fracturing his hind legs when he fell from a circus pedestal.

Nearly all (~60) Asian elephants incarcerated by Ringling were captured in the wild. Baby elephants suffer painful rope lesions when being pulled from their mothers. Ringling admits their elephants have been chained by two legs, on a concrete floor, for 16 hours a day ... in violation of the Endangered Species Act.

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