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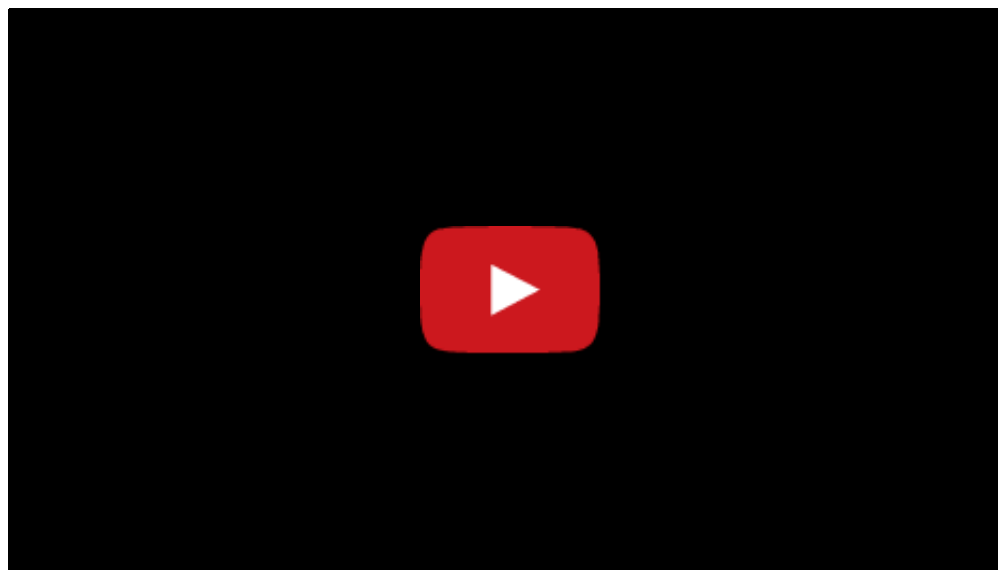
CHIMPANZEES FEEL EMOTIONS AND SHARE DEEP SOCIAL BONDS

March 28, 2014 · by Jonathan Silver · in Endangered Chimpanzees

Dr. Jane Goodall recently spoke at the World Bank ([video here](#)) about how chimpanzees are deeply emotional and social beings, each having a unique character and a powerful memory. Combining these three elements, we can better understand the damage caused whenever a chimpanzee is harmed or killed.

Jane Goodall taught us to [appreciate that each chimp is an individual character](#). She vindicated this outlook in her field study reports, where she set the precedent of referring to each chimpanzee by name instead of the traditional method of referring to each by number.

Chimpanzees are capable of developing and sharing emotions and deep social bonds with fellow chimps (and even other human beings). If you're skeptical about the emotional capacities of chimpanzees, check out this clip, which captures what Jane Goodall describes as, "The most moving thing that's ever happened to me in my life":



Chimps, like all great apes, also have a powerful long-term memory, which allows these bonds to endure over time. Watch [this astonishing clip](#), where a gorilla remembers his human caregiver after not seeing him for ten years.

This combination of unique character, deep emotional and social bonding, and enduring long-term memory, make it understandable that chimps would suffer enormously even long after a fellow chimp is killed.

Chimps aren't the only animals capable of developing these deep and lasting social bonds; [dogs](#), [lions](#), and [hyenas](#), for example, are also capable. Click on the links to see for yourself.

We often hear about how the number of chimps is declining. But we hear a lot less about the non-numerical loss that accompanies this numerical loss — the emotional loss. Each time a chimp dies, surviving fellow chimpanzees suffer emotionally; they've lost a unique friend or family member with whom they shared deep social bonds. If we start to recognize this emotional loss and take it into account when we perform actions that harm or kill chimps, we will understand that the consequences of these actions are not simply that there is one less chimp in the wild but that we have caused deep emotional harm to a number of other chimps and damaged their social fabric.

Understanding chimps in this way will also help to [keep chimps out of the entertainment business](#). Once we understand that the chimp in some ad, television show, or live performance is a unique character who has been separated from family and friends and suffers deeply because of this, we won't find that display entertaining.

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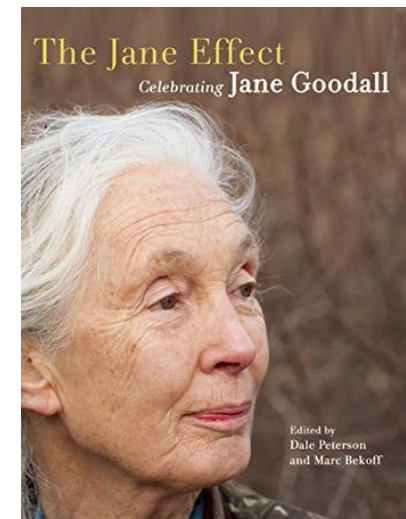
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We need to become aware of the emotional and cognitive capacities of other animals. If we start accounting for this loss whenever we talk about chimpanzees, we will start attributing to them the higher value they deserve. This means we will stand a better chance at saving them. Help enlighten your friends and family by sharing what you've read here. Help change how we evaluate the loss of individual chimpanzees. You can also check out [JGI's Chimp Guardian program](#), which cares for orphaned chimps, helping to alleviate their emotional suffering.

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