

Shrink Rap Radio #167, August 8, 2008, Shrink Rap Radio LIVE! #11, Chumps for Chimps

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(Transcribed from www.ShrinkRapRadio.com by Susan Argyelan)

Dr. Dave: Hey, everybody! This is what we would normally call Shrink Rap Radio LIVE! in which I have a conversation with my good friend, Jerry Trumbule. Our experience with BlogTalkRadio has been that the times that we’ve been able to do it evidently haven’t fit well with your times, and so we really haven’t had people calling in live, etc., enough to justify continuing with that experiment. So, Jerry and I are still here, and I’m still alive. How ‘bout you, Jerry?

Jerry Trumbule: Barely, but making it. No, I’m fine, thank you.

Dr. Dave: (laughs) Okay, great. Well, you came up with a good idea, a good focus for our show today, which is all about what? Chimps and animal rights, and animal consciousness – a topic that we’ve kind of tossed around a bit in the past.

Trumbule: Yeah.

Dr. Dave: And so, I’m not sure quite how we should jump into it. Maybe I can set a little bit of a backdrop here...

Trumbule: Okay.

Dr. Dave: ...which will then help get you cranked up...

Trumbule: Okay.

Dr. Dave: ...and rolling.

Trumbule: Okay.

Dr. Dave: You turned me on to an episode of All in the Mind, a podcast that I love, but I don’t always catch all of them. And, All in the Mind is a wonderful psychology podcast that comes out of Australia. I’m sure many listeners are already familiar with it, the Australia Broadcasting Company. The host is Natasha Mitchell, who I have approached about being a guest on our show, and she said she would, but she’s been slow to kind of commit to a time. But at any rate, they did a show on, there’s a case going on in Austria, where people are fighting for the rights of a chimpanzee by the name of Matthew Pan, who is 26 years old. And in the European Court of Human Rights, they’re fighting for this chimp to have legal personhood. And the reason why they’re doing it is not so that he can vote or anything like that, but rather they want to make sure that he is protected and that

he's cared for. And there is a donor who's been willing to set up a fund and to have somebody appointed guardian so that this 26-year-old chimp could live his life out in the most humane of ways. But because he's not legally a person in Austria, you can't have a guardian; you can't have a trusteeship fund unless it's for a person. So evidently Matthew Pan is a delightful chimp who loves to play tug-of-war. And when his caretaker got some bad news and had some tears coming out of her eye, Matthew came over and started stroking her and obviously realized that she was in some distress and tried to comfort her. And he was also described as an artist who likes to use charcoal and chalk, and gets very thoughtful when he does so, and he doesn't like to be distracted. So, we heard about this on the All in the Mind show and also heard an author interviewed who's written a book about a famous chimpanzee in the U.S., who was named Noam – no, no (laughs) – Nim Chimpsky, a play on Noam Chomsky.

Trumbule: Right.

Dr. Dave: Nim Chimpsky, the Chimp Who Would Be Human, by Elizabeth Hess. Sounds like a fascinating book, and I'm thinking I might want to check it out. But just a few quick words about Nim Chimpsky here. He was adopted by a family as part of a, kind of a research project in the 70s and raised in a family context. They really wanted to see, you know, what if you raised a chimp with a family along with other kids. So he was raised in a family of seven or eight kids, and he was taught American Sign Language. And, Nim Chimpsky brushed his teeth, wore clothes, he drank beer and smoked – even smoked pot; even developed his own sign for “Give me a joint...”

Trumbule: (laughs)

Dr. Dave: He ate pizza (laughs), he needed his morning coffee, he sat at the table, he used silverware, he would wait for his turn; he got some notoriety, he appeared on Sesame Street. I went on YouTube, hoping to find that Sesame Street episode, and I didn't. But I did find a kind of a music video that somebody had created. I think they took stills from this book. The music is awful, but the stills are very interesting. So, if you do a search on “Nim Chimpsky” on YouTube, you'll find that. So, maybe that's enough introduction now. I might have a little bit more to say about Nim as we go on. Something about this story, though, grabbed you because of your own past experiences with chimpanzees. So, maybe you want to take us through some of that?

Trumbule: Yeah, very much so. Yeah, I have to give you a little background here. In 1960, at the age of 20, I was working in a law office and going to night school in Washington, D.C., taking psychology classes. And I happened upon one in physiological psychology, which was my main interest at the time, taught by a Dr. Hodos at American University. And so, I enrolled and took that course, and that was really the beginning of my career in psychology because at home, I had been working with rats and trying to replicate some of Skinner's work. And when I

revealed that to Dr. Hodos, he was very impressed and hired me on the spot. And so my first job in the field was at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research. And of course, Walter Reed has been in the news recently with respect to the lack of care being given to Iraqi veterans returning. But, I don't want to get into that. I'll talk about my experience in the, what some would consider the heart of the beast, I guess, because the work that was going on there was, by today's standards, very barbaric and cruel and any name you can think of.

Dr. Dave: Wow.

Trumbule: And, rather than go into those stories, I'll switch now to the University of Maryland, where Dr. Hodos also had a laboratory which was funded by NASA, the Space Administration. And so, I began to work at both locations and then eventually ended up spending full time at the University of Maryland in the infamous Building DD, which, I understand, has been torn down now. But, at any rate, in this laboratory, they had a set of six or seven large walk-in refrigerators. They were probably eight feet tall, and inside, they were probably six by six, stainless-steel interior. And, they had bars on the doors. And inside of two of these refrigerators were two chimpanzees, Penny and Kenny.

Dr. Dave: Now, I take it these were refrigerators that had been converted into cages. Is that right?

Trumbule: Well, it was my understanding that they were built specifically for this purpose, but they had a system of complete temperature control. A giant air-conditioner and heater was mounted on the top of each one, so they could set the temperature, and it would stay precisely at that temperature.

Dr. Dave: Okay.

Trumbule: The doors were normally kept open, and the temperature had nothing to do with what we were doing. But, Dr. Hodos had come up with a schedule of reinforcement that was attempting to refine some of the parameters of existing schedules. A fixed ratio, for example, is where an animal or an organism responds repeatedly, pressing a lever, perhaps, a certain number of times to receive a reward. So, a fixed ratio of 20 would be 20 presses on the lever gets you a little pellet. And, that kind of behavior is fairly slow to extinguish. You have to press 20 times, and then nothing happens when the reinforcement is turned off. So, you press another 20 times, and nothing happens, and eventually, the animal kind of stops pressing. So, one measure is how long it takes to extinguish that behavior. A variable ratio, for example, would be a different number each time you did it and is more resistant to extinction. But what Dr. Hodos was looking for was a schedule that was responsive to changes in the environment; for example, being shot up in a spaceship. Listeners may recall Ham, the first chimp in space, and Penny and Kenny were said to be brothers and sisters. I don't think they meant that biologically, but in reading up on some of this, I discovered that there were 40 such

chimps and astro-chimps, as they were called, eventually winnowed down to 18. And Penny and Kenny were apparently in this group; I didn't know this at the time. So, Dr. Hodos told me that it was going to be my responsibility to look after these chimps; to program the control boards, which were in each cage, which were quite complex, by the way. They had a bunch of switches that you could press that had symbols on them, and they were all set up to be appropriate for any kind of an experiment that you could imagine. And it was all –

Dr. Dave: I remember visiting you during this period...

Trumbule: Oh. Okay.

Dr. Dave: ...and seeing – I'm not sure if it was exactly during this period, but I remember visiting you at one of these research facilities. And, this was before there were computers, really – certainly before there were personal computers.

Trumbule: Yeah.

Dr. Dave: And so, there were sort of vast control panels with all sorts of relays and wires everywhere, and switches everywhere. It was very “mad scientist” impressive-looking.

Trumbule: Yeah. (laughs) In fact, that's part of what attracted me to the whole field. I loved that kind of stuff, and you take these 6' tall relay racks, put all this equipment on them, and then connect the wires up. And basically, you could run the controls on any experiment, and you could measure all the responses, and so on and so forth. It was a lot of fun for me. I was in hog heaven. And, the responsibility of caring for these chimps was kind of worrisome, because first you have to realize that the chimps you see on TV are children; they are adolescent or pre-adolescent chimps.

Dr. Dave: Yeah. I should note that chimps can live to be 50 years or older.

Trumbule: Yeah. And generally speaking, the ones on TV are probably two or three years old. They're babies, pretty much, and they're pretty malleable. They're strong, but they're not overwhelmingly strong. But Penny and Kenny were teenagers. And Kenny, for example, probably weighed 125 pounds. He had huge biceps and was extremely strong. For example, he would climb up to the top of the bars on the door, and he was able to shake the entire cage – refrigerator – that he was in. And by the way, these don't look like refrigerators. They're giant metal boxes, is what they are. And I think, as I recall, they had to have the floor underneath this particular one strengthened because of his ability to rock this thing back and forth. And, I was also given a capture gun, which was kind of interesting. It shot, it used a CO₂ cartridge, and it shot out a, basically, a miniature hypodermic needle filled with nicotine, which was in those days used as a chemical to incapacitate the animal that had escaped. So, I had to take this gun out in the back

and practice shooting it and worry about the day that one of these chimps would get out. (laughs)

Dr. Dave: (laughs) Right.

Trumbule: Because they weren't too happy in their cages. They would work for their food and go through all these complicated schedules. The one that Dr. Hodos invented was called a progressive ratio. It was like a fixed ratio, except each time you went through it, it would add a few more responses. So it got harder and harder to earn a reinforcement as you got more and more reinforcements. So, let's say you started at 50, and each time you went through, it added ten, so by the time you got five or six reinforcements, you were up to 100, 200, 300. Eventually, you would stop responding because the effort was too great. So, and it turned out that schedule was responsive to changes in the environment; for example, as you can imagine, it would be how hungry the animal was. So we had to, we fed these animals, but we kept them slightly hungry, so that they would work for their food. In the meantime, it was impossible not to notice that these chimps had very distinct personalities, but they were very intelligent. For example, Penny had a favorite trick. She had a ball inside the cage, like the size of a tennis ball. And I would watch her from the side, and she would take that ball and put it outside of the cage. And then she would just gently push it until it was beyond her reach, and then she would wait. Well, eventually, an unsuspecting lab assistant would come walking by, and then she would have her arm outstretched out of the cage, pointing towards the ball and making a noise as if, "Please! Get me the ball."

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Trumbule: So her trick was that when the human would say, "Oh, okay, pick up the ball," so then they would pick up the ball. When they tried to hand it to Penny, instead, she would grab their wrist and yank their arm inside of the cage and bite them...

Dr. Dave: Ooh!

Trumbule: ...which is no fun. In fact, the first time it happened, I heard my friend, Silas, I heard him screaming. (laughs) It was because he had been bitten.

Dr. Dave: Wow.

Trumbule: 'Cause he had fallen for this trick.

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Trumbule: And, there were other things they did. They were obviously very bored and did not like being in the cages, especially when there was a chimp of the opposite sex right next door that they couldn't see or get to. And in those days, of course,

you have to remember, animal rights hadn't been invented. I was routinely operating on all kinds of animals, doing brain surgery of various types, implanting electrodes in rats and cats and monkeys. I could go on and on about the horror stories, but I'll leave those in the past for now. At any rate, the experiment... Ham was sent up into space – the first chimp. He was – apparently, it was like a 15-minute flight – and he had to actually press levers and stuff while he was in space. And they did notice he was a little bit slower. He's going 1,500 MPH, weightless, and now he's supposed to be pressing buttons to get a reward. At any rate...

Dr. Dave: So, was the point of this schedule of reinforcement stuff for chimps that were going to go into space, was the point to see if their performance degraded as a result of being in space? Or, what was the point?

Trumbule: No, I think you're right. That was the point.

Dr. Dave: Okay.

Trumbule: Would they perform normally or would they slow down? Apparently, Ham was a little bit slower. But, imagine being in a spaceship. (laughs) I mean, he actually had a "chimp spacesuit" on. And now you're supposed to respond to a blue light that comes on and work for food. I don't know; it just doesn't seem like a very good test to me, but that's what they were doing.

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Trumbule: And of course, shortly thereafter we graduated to putting humans in spaceships, and so the chimpanzees were kind of extra. And, Hodos and I finished off our study, and I'm pretty sure it was published. In fact, it still gets cited occasionally, "Hodos and Trumbule," "Schedules of Reinforcement."

Dr. Dave: Yeah!

Trumbule: And...Yeah!

Dr. Dave: (laughs) Fame and fortune!

Trumbule: (laughs) Yeah, right! And then, the interest in working with them as experimental animals kind of stopped. And one day, Dr. Hodos told me that the chimps were going back to Walter Reed. And I said, "Oh." I knew what conditions were like back at Walter Reed; I wasn't too happy upon hearing that. I said, "Well, what's the deal?" And Hodos said, "Well, they're going to be given leukemia." Because it turns out that in leukemia in chimpanzees, is very similar to leukemia in humans. And, it was kind of funny that I did this because I was a lowly research assistant, but because I had worked with these chimps for a couple of years by this time, I just couldn't stand the thought of these chimps giving up their lives for another study which would kill them.

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Trumbule: And, I said to Hodos, “No. This is not going to happen.” He said, “What do you mean?” I said, “Well, listen. If I have anything to say about it, I’ll let these chimps loose before I will agree to have them carted back to Walter Reed.” And Hodos was kind of (laughs) taken aback...

Dr. Dave: (laughs) Why, you young upstart pup!

Trumbule: Yeah. I was 22 years old and I was mouthing off, and Hodos was actually in the Army at that time and often wore his officer’s uniform. And here I was, telling him, no, this wasn’t going to happen. So... But, he took it seriously, and he said, “You know, you’re right. This is ridiculous.” So, he went back, and over a period of weeks and then months it stretched out. And eventually, it was agreed that no, they wouldn’t be sacrificed for the leukemia study. They instead would be taken to a “chimp preserve.” Now, I’m not sure, but I think it was Holloman Air Force base where they were taken, where they were put on kind of a free range to wander around. It was acres in size; I don’t know how large, but with other chimps. And, they were free to live their lives out and to breed, the only stipulation being that the Air Force would take all of the babies. So, I guess after a few months or so, the Air Force would snatch the babies and use *them* in experiments, but I was at least satisfied that they weren’t going to be killed. And, when I read, or when I looked at the podcast about Nim Chimpsky, I couldn’t help but relate to it because there was a similar story there about how, after the animal had outlived its sign-language experiment, it was eventually transferred to a similar kind of reserve, where it was able to live with other chimpanzees. But, just to show you the kind of empathy that I couldn’t help but have for these animals, I have to tell one little story. Because I was so concerned about them, I would visit the lab night and day at various times to make sure everything was okay. And, one night after a party, I drove by the lab and I could hear Kenny screaming – from outside. And I thought, oh, no! What’s going wrong here? So I rushed inside and went to Kenny’s cage, and there he was at the top of his cage, rocking back and forth, screaming at the top of his lungs. And, I was standing there – and by the way, these chimps were not animals that you could reach in and pet, you know? They weren’t really that friendly, but under the circumstances, I was going, “Kenny, Kenny! What’s the matter? What’s the matter?” And, he was looking at me, and I was looking at him. And, he held his hand out of the cage in a, kind of what I would call a limp-wrist hand extension. And, I knew that that was an invitation to groom. And so, very cautiously, I started rubbing the back of his hand a little bit with my hand – with my fingernails – and he was so excited. He was so pleased, he was whimpering with joy...

Dr. Dave: Wow.

Trumbule: ...at being touched...

Dr. Dave: Wow.

Trumbule: ...because chimpanzees, when they're in the wild, spend a huge amount of their time grooming each other. And here these isolated animals were not being allowed to do that. So, then I presented my hand, and Kenny – this monster chimp – very, very delicately began to groom the back of my hand. And they have these long, black fingernails that kind of come to a point; they look like they're built for grooming. So, he would take individual hairs and pull on them through these fingernails in an attempt to groom me. And, all the while, he was making these little whimpering noises. So, we had a little grooming session there...

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Trumbule: ...and then he turned around and pressed his back up against the bars. Well, there was no, no question in my mind what he wanted.

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Trumbule: So, I began to groom his back.

Dr. Dave: Yeah, yeah.

Trumbule: And, that was an experience I'll never forget, because he was, his muscles were just incredibly large and hard, and his back felt like a fur-covered table. I mean, it was extremely hard. And once again, he was whimpering. I guess this was the first time he had been touched since he had been put in that cage, years before. So, I was going, like, "Oh, my God!" you know, "This is horrible!" (laughs) Especially having come from a party where I had had a few drinks, I was extraordinarily empathetic, and I was going, like, "How can I be doing this experiment with these animals?" They're pressing levers for their food, and science is supposed to be the recipient of this wonderful new information, but I was extraordinarily touched by it. And, I guess at that point in time, I began to develop more of an empathetic attitude towards experimental animals. And, you can see why reading about Nim Chimpsky kind of set me off in this regard.

Dr. Dave: Yeah, definitely.

Trumbule: Eventually, Penny and Kenny were taken away, and they were shipped to New Mexico, I think, if I'm not mistaken. And, I presume – I never went to visit them, as I had hoped to do – but I presume they lived out the rest of their lives in relative enjoyment, compared to their stint as astro-chimps. But, at that time, it was – the environment, experimental psychology was totally different from what it is now. All kinds of horrible experiments were being done. And, I had no problem – I mean, I was 22, 23 years old, and I was going, like, "Yeah, whatever humans decide to do to animals is okay because we're in charge." (laughs) And so, for example, there were studies using newborn beagle dogs to determine what the effect

of the difficulty of sucking for their milk was. These little neonatal puppies were put in this cage where there was an artificial “mother,” and they could adjust how hard you had to suck to get the milk. And, after a few months, the experiment was over. And, they were running many, many dogs through this experiment, and then they were killing them at the end of the experiment, or in psychological terms, it’s called “sacrificing” them. And I guess it’s mostly their sacrifice, but... So, I said, “You’re killing these purebred beagles? That’s ridiculous!” I said, “I know a lot of people that would like to have those dogs.” And they said, “Well, okay, you can have as many as you want.” So, I took one home, and pretty soon, I was going to my neighbors and saying, “Would you like a free little beagle puppy?” And they were going, “Yeah! Great! Fantastic!” So, after a few months, I had placed maybe 10 or 15 of these dogs, and I was feeling pretty good about that. But, it turned out that this experiment had an effect on the dogs later in life: it caused them to eat...anything. They would try to eat anything, and there’s a name for that. I’ve forgotten the name. But they would eat all kinds of inappropriate things, and the regular food, they would wolf it down, in a way. And pretty soon, people were coming to me and going, “You know that dog you gave me six months ago?” (laughs)

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Trumbule: “Well, we’re having some problems...” (laughs)

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Trumbule: I could hear these beagles barking in the distance... (laughs) My brother, Bob, had one, and I lived right across the street; I had one. Oh... In fact, one time my brother laughed, and he said, “Would you keep an eye on the dog?” I said, “Sure.” So one Sunday morning, the dog was barking incessantly, and I went over there with a rolled up newspaper, and I leaned over the fence to give him a whack or two to see if I could get him to stop barking – very bad idea, by the way. And I discovered that being hit with a rolled up newspaper was extremely reinforcing for this dog; he loved it. You know?

Dr. Dave: (laughs) Yeah, yeah...

Trumbule: It was not a punishment for him. It made him bark more! He wanted more whacking.

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Trumbule: So, the point of the story is that these beagles were not normal after they were run through that experiment.

Dr. Dave: Yeah. Well, you –

Trumbule: And...but go ahead.

Dr. Dave: Yeah, I just wanted to comment on your earlier remark that, you know, here you were, a young, 22-year-old. And you were kind of going along with the program. I mean, it's good to hear about the times when you sort of stepped out of the program and said, "Wait a second. What's going on here?" But at some other level, you were kind of, you know, as a young guy... "Oh. This is what psychology is; this is how it's done. Okay. Yeah, you sacrifice animals, okay." And it put me in mind of the research that's been talked about previously on this program. I interviewed **Zimbardo** – Philip Zimbardo – his prison experiments that he did which were based on the work of **Milgram**, Stanley Milgram.

Trumbule: Right.

Dr. Dave: You know, all about compliance and that there is this human tendency that if somebody who is kind of in authority asks us to do something, we kind of say, "Okay." So...

Trumbule: Yeah, the Milgram... You'll go along with it as long as the authority figure is telling you what to do. At some point... I mean, people did drop out before they would deliver these huge shocks...

Dr. Dave: Yeah, there were some people who would...

Trumbule: Yeah.

Dr. Dave: ...and I guess you're one of them, because this real-life situation that you just described, there were points where you, where you balked.

Trumbule: Yes, there were some points, but not very many, I have to admit. My family nowadays, for example, they don't want to hear any of these stories. They've heard 'em before, and they're sickened by them – especially my daughter, who is very much into animal rescue. She runs a, helps run a dog, a basset hound rescue...

Dr. Dave: Mm-hmm...

Trumbule: ...and these stories are sickening. And I'm not even telling you the worst ones. And the rationale within the Army, for example... Late one night I was there about midnight, and I heard this thumping sound coming down, coming from this adjacent hallway. And I was up on what they called the "animal floor", which is nothing but animals in cages, about a block long. And one room after another, rabbits and monkeys and cats and dogs. And, I heard this thumping sound, and I thought, "Well, that is totally weird and kind of scary." So, I went around the corner and looked, and there was a dog walking down the empty hallway with a cast on its leg, on its front leg. And, every time it would take a step forward, that cast would make a thumping sound. So, rather than try to do anything myself, I

went and got a guard, and they went and got somebody. And eventually we got, took the dog, and took it back to the room where it had escaped from its cage. And that was a nightmare, I have to tell you. What I saw in that room was beyond belief. For example, dogs that had had half of the skin removed from their whole body, starting at the back and going around the side of their trunk. The dog that had the cast on its leg had lived through an experiment on shock. And in that experiment, I found out later, they would hold the unanesthetized dog down with its leg extended onto a sandbag, and then they would take a big rubber mallet and systematically break the bones in its leg...

Dr. Dave: Oh, my goodness.

Trumbule: ...to send it into shock. And then, while it was in shock, they would run various experiments to see how they affected the state of being in shock. And, the argument at the time was, "Well, you know we have to study shock because that happens on the battlefield all the time. We have to study what happens when you lose 30%-40% of your skin because that happens on the battlefield. And, although we're not in a war right now, we have to develop techniques for dealing with humans who are in these horrible circumstances. And these animals will give their lives so that we can learn how to save humans on the battlefield." Well, I guess that makes sense. If you're a medical doctor and you're working for the Army, and you're going to be treating battlefield casualties, you better know what to do under various circumstances. And the rationale that the use of animals is acceptable made sense to me then, and in some ways, it makes sense to me now. If, for example, experiments done on rats would, could improve the lives and the health of humans, I wouldn't have a problem with that. The closer you get to the experimenter (laughs) on the phylogenetic scale, the more difficult that becomes. And...

Dr. Dave: Yeah. You know, in, one of the things that they noted in the All in the Mind show was that in New Zealand, chimps are being recognized as belonging to the genus *homo*. In other words, we belong, we're homo sapiens, and they're homo something else.

Trumbule: Mm-hmm... Mm-hmm...

Dr. Dave: So, in New Zealand, non-human hominids are seen as having interests and therefore rights – a right not to be deprived of life, not to be subjected to torture or cruelty, and a right not to be used in experimentation if it's not in their interest.

Trumbule: Mm-hmm...

Dr. Dave: And I believe Spain has passed similar legislation. And so there is kind of a movement...

Trumbule: So, it's-

Dr. Dave: ...across the planet – that’s to be more sensitive to our primate cousins.

Trumbule: Yes, so we draw the line at our own class of organisms. But, then that brings me to another interest in my recent life. I live close to Denver’s city park, and there’s been all kinds of problems with polluted water and so on and so forth. But right in the park is the Denver Zoo. So, I have occasion to walk past the back of the zoo, and I can hear all kinds of cacophony from animals howling and screaming and trumpeting, and whatnot. And, so I was kind of surprised the other day when I read that Denver – the Denver Zoo – is getting ready to build a \$50 million enclosure for elephants. Apparently the Denver Zoo now owns two elephants, and they want to get three more elephants and put them in this brand-new habitat, as they call it. And, I had done some reading on elephant behavior, especially the social structure of elephant herds and the matriarchal relationships. You’ve probably seen these YouTube movies of four or five adult elephants rescuing a little baby elephant that got stuck in the mud. It’s well known that they grieve over the death of another elephant, and they will often go back to an elephant-dying place and kind of gently examine the bones. And, it’s not just like, “What is this?” It’s kind of like, “Oh, yeah. I remember Mama.” You know?

Dr. Dave: Hmm...right.

Trumbule: So, I started thinking, wow, this is a bad idea. I have a problem with zoos, and it all stems from an experience I had in Philadelphia, where I went to a zoo in, let’s say, in an altered state of consciousness. And, this is something you do not want to do.

Dr. Dave: Yes.

Trumbule: Because when you see – and I mean when you really see – what’s going on in a zoo, you see that most of the higher, so-called “higher organisms” are insane. They’re being held in these small cages – or even if it’s a big cage – they’re being deprived of their habitat, their relations with other animals of the same kind, or different kinds, and now they’re pulling out their hair, or they’re pacing back and forth, or they’re banging their heads against the wall. So, what we really have in our zoos is basically a mental institution for animals.

Dr. Dave: Wow, that’s certainly a different view.

Trumbule: Yeah... We drive them insane by putting them in solitary confinement, feeding them well – I presume we feed them well – but like Kenny, not having been groomed by another chimp. And I presume in a zoo, the chimps probably can groom each other, so that’s not that big of a problem. But, when I see this kind of behavior in a zoo, I can tell that the animals are actually mentally disturbed by this experiment.

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Trumbule: Especially an animal like an elephant. Now, of course they're big, lumbering creatures, and they go on a rampage once in a while. In fact, if you go on YouTube and look for "killer elephants," you'll see some amazing footage of elephants "striking back." (laughs) But, to take these creatures and to put them in a zoo – now, our zoo here in Denver claims that they're doing this for conservation purposes, that the elephant population is diminishing, and "We're taking a couple of samples so that we could breed elephants and make sure that their species doesn't go extinct." And, I did a little research, and I think that's a totally bogus argument. First of all, they're talking about Asian elephants, which are the smaller elephants, as opposed to the African version. And, there's all kinds of these. In fact, there's more than 3,000 of these elephants *in zoos!* I don't think it's just American zoos, but around the world. And even when they're well taken care of, they're still poked and prodded and forced to go back and forth. And in the Asian world, of course, they're used as work animals in the jungle, to lift logs and to drag things back and forth. And, you may have even seen the YouTube movie of an elephant painting a self-portrait.

Dr. Dave: Yes, I've seen those.

Trumbule: Well, is it a good thing to be taking an animal that can paint a self-portrait and lock him up in jail for life...and claim that we're doing it for the benefit of the species? I mean, I said to myself, "Well, suppose I was the animal, and I was on a different planet and had been put in a zoo by some alien creatures, and they told me, 'We're doing this for the benefit of your species.'"

Dr. Dave: Yeah, well, that is a science-fiction plot, you know?

Trumbule: Yeah, yeah.

Dr. Dave: I think we saw that in Planet of the Apes, (laughs) for example...

Trumbule: (laughs) Yeah, right!

Dr. Dave: ...where they reversed that.

Trumbule: Yeah.

Dr. Dave: You know, we probably should begin to wind down a bit here.

Trumbule: Already?!

Dr. Dave: Uh, yeah, I think so...

Trumbule: (laughs)

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Trumbule: No, it's amazing how fast time goes.

Dr. Dave: Yeah, yeah. So, yeah, I'm not quite sure how to wind this down.

Trumbule: Well, I would encourage your listeners, if they have an opportunity, to go to a zoo and to see for themselves. And think of it from the point of view of the mental health of the creatures. Now, if you're looking at a praying mantis in a little cage, a little enclosure, you probably won't have a whole lot of empathy with that. But, check out some of the higher animals, and see if they look like they're mentally healthy lying around as they do, well-fed; probably even a little bit overweight, not getting the stimulation they need from their environment. 'Cause I think we need, really, to reverse this whole trend. The idea of caging animals for our education and enjoyment – well, just look around at what the kids are doing in the zoo. Are they actually experiencing something that they're getting from seeing the animals? No, no; they're running around and jumping off of things and everything, being kids. They're not going, like, "Wow, look, an elephant. I need to study elephants." And, I have a personal belief that elephants and dolphins, probably, are at least as intelligent as human beings. I may be wrong. Maybe they're more intelligent. Our ways of measuring intelligence don't do much for these animals. But, with their incredible memories, elephants and their incredible societal structures – I have a feeling that we're making a big mistake. By the way, there's been a large increase in elephants killing humans. I don't know how they all know what they're doing...

Dr. Dave: (laughs)

Trumbule: ...but...

Dr. Dave: They're starting to get ticked off, huh?

Trumbule: I think they're getting ticked off.

Dr. Dave: Yeah.

Trumbule: So, in that vein, maybe we should wrap it up, huh?

Dr. Dave: Okay...

Trumbule: But, go to a zoo. Go to a zoo. Check it out for yourself.

Dr. Dave: Okay. Well, folks, there you have it. (laughs) Hey, Jerry, thanks a lot. It's always good talking to you, and we have to do it again sometime soon.

Trumbule: Okay, Dave.

Dr. Dave: Great. Bye-bye.

Trumbule: Bye.