



LADY
FREETHINKER.

Action for Primates



Monkey Abuse on Social Media

October 2023

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Data.....	6
Physical Abuse by Humans.....	9
Monkeys in Distress.....	12
Children Abusing Monkeys.....	15
Aggressive "Bathing".....	18
Monkeys Attacked by Dogs.....	22
Sexual Abuse.....	25
Extreme Violence & Killing.....	28
Torture Content on Facebook.....	31
Why is this Problematic?.....	33
How to Help Stop the Abuse.....	38
References.....	40



Some of the details and images in
this report may be distressing





Introduction

Popular social media sites are allowing videos and images that show monkeys being beaten, tortured, and even killed to spread across their platforms.



Introduction

Videos showing monkeys being abused, tortured, and even killed are growing more prevalent across popular social media platforms.

Nonprofit animal protection groups Lady Freethinker and Action for Primates have been tracking the abuse for more than two years and compiled this report based on videos logged between **May 2023 and October 2023**.

It's important to note that the abuse highlighted in this report is just a snapshot of the monkey torture videos that were promoted and circulated on social media platforms in that time frame. This list is not exhaustive.

Many videos are repeatedly posted on the same or different social media platforms or on the same platform in a different group. Videos highlighted in this report also may be segments of longer torture videos, where the monkey is violently killed in the end.

This report highlights videos posted on some of the most widely used social media platforms: **Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, and X, formerly known as "Twitter,"** although these are not the only places Lady Freethinker and Action for Primates have documented monkey torture content.

Other sites, such as the private messaging platform Telegram, are also filled with graphic videos of extreme violence and brutality inflicted on monkeys. Disturbingly, groups on Telegram have paid for monkeys to be filmed while being tortured and killed, with people even dictating what cruelty they want the monkeys to be subjected to. Other platforms to be used by individuals to distribute and promote monkey torture videos have included Discord, TeleGuard, and Keybase.

The videos and images noted in this report are categorized into six main sections. Please see the categories as well as the criteria used to group them.

Physical Abuse by Humans

Falling under this category is content showing monkeys clearly being harmed by humans, including monkeys being hit, picked up by their tails or ears and swung around, their head squeezed, and their arms zip-tied together or tied behind their back.

Monkeys in Distress

Falling under this category is content showing monkeys deliberately put into distressing situations, including monkeys stuck in the mud, tied to trees, stuck in nets, "rescued" from snakes and dangerous situations, and monkeys subjected to psychological abuse and torment.

Children Abusing Monkeys

Falling under this category is content showing young children/toddlers roughly handling monkeys, including throwing them around, picking them up by their tails, hitting them, lifting them by their neck, and other similar abuses.

Aggressive "Bathing"

Falling under this category is content showing people aggressively "bathing" monkeys, including repeatedly dunking them underwater for long periods of time, spraying water in their faces, hanging them by their tails as they're being "bathed," washing them with rough bristles, as well as water being used as a form of torture.

Monkeys Getting Attacked by Dogs

Falling under this category is content showing monkeys being attacked and set upon by dogs, including being dragged around and bitten.

Sexual Abuse

Falling under this category is content showing monkeys being sexually exploited or abused by people, including people touching monkeys' genitals and/or rubbing limes on them, and putting them in their mouths.

Extreme Violence and Killing of Monkeys

Falling under this category is content showing monkeys being burned, shaken violently and repeatedly until they are unresponsive, sealed in jars filled with water, hung by their necks and having their limbs and/or genitals cut off. This category also includes videos that show monkeys being killed on camera.



Our Data

See the breakdown of the number of videos recorded by Lady Freethinker and Action for Primates between May 2023 & October 2023.



Data

Research Methods

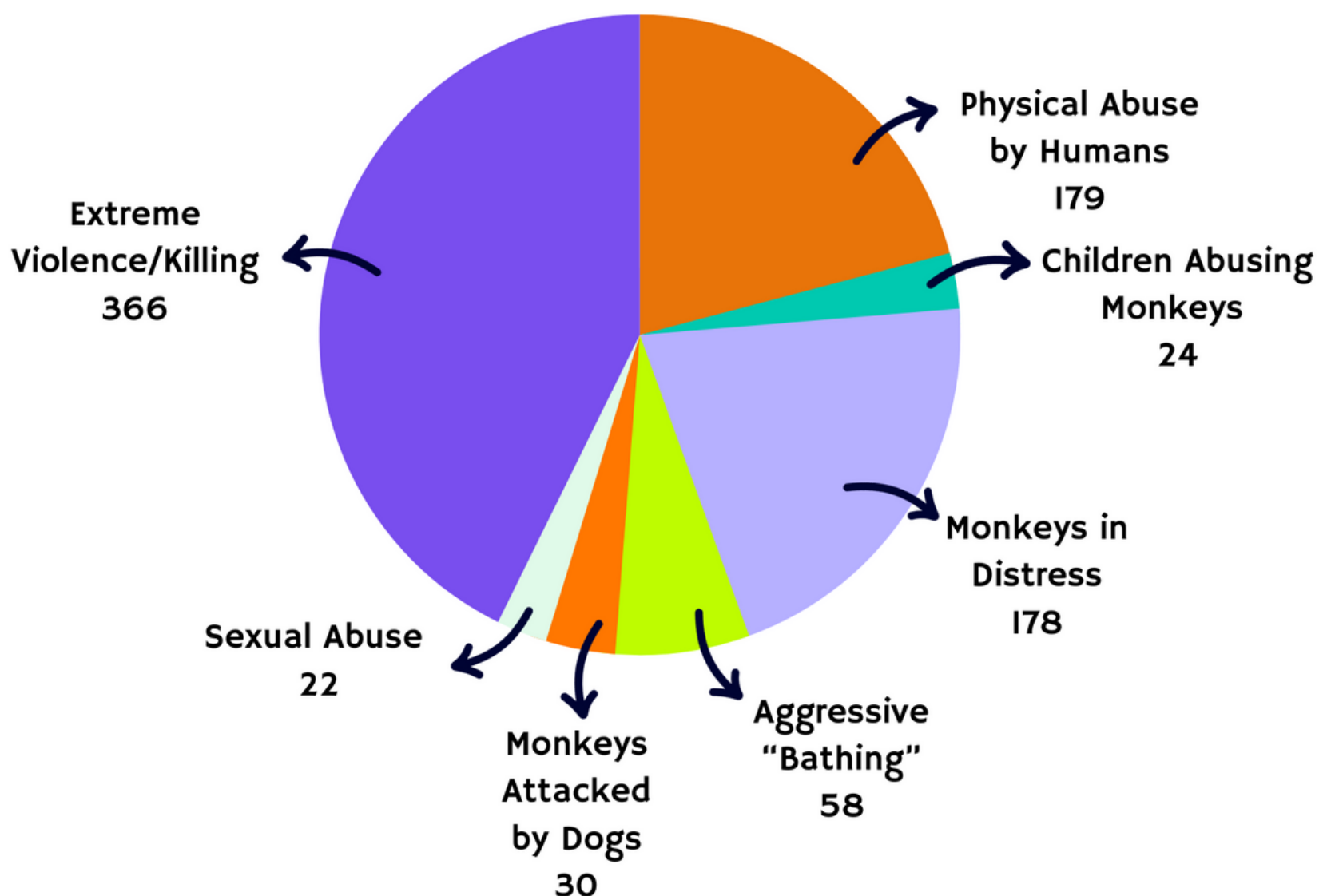
The data in this report was gathered from Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and TikTok between May 2023 and October 2023 by Lady Freethinker and Action for Primates. At the time of publication of this report, some videos and images have been removed, either by the user who posted the content or the platform (although many remain up as of October 2023).

Data Analyzed

Lady Freethinker and Action for Primates recorded **857 monkey abuse videos and images** within the time period. Please see Figure 1 for the categorization of content.

Figure 1.

Monkey Abuse Categories on Social Media From May 2023 - October 2023



The majority of content showing cruelty to monkeys was found on Facebook, with 768 videos and images out of the 857 logged being posted on the platform. Please see Figure 2 below for a whole breakdown of platforms.

Monkey Abuse on Social Media Platforms May 2023 - October 2023

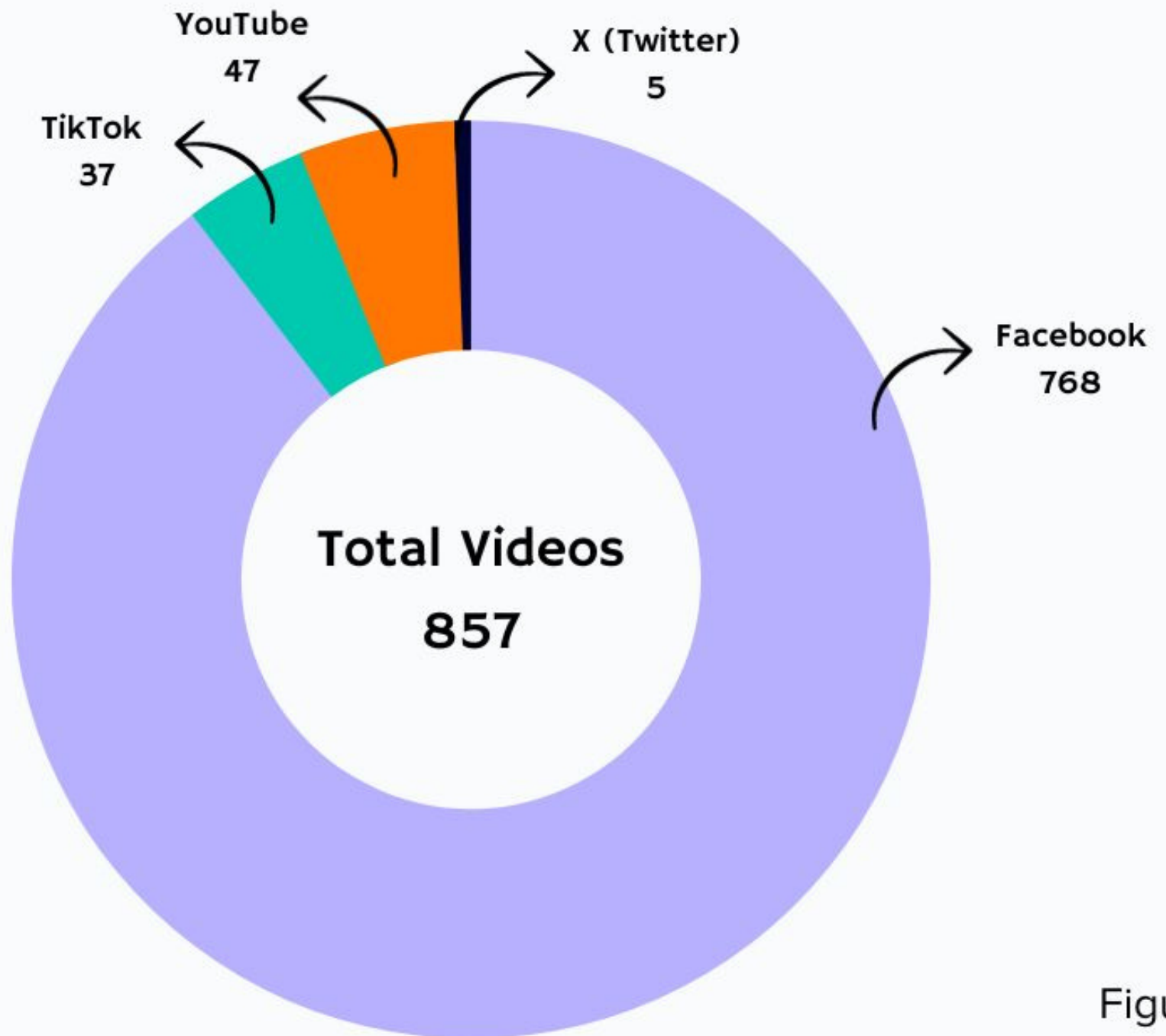


Figure 2

As of October 2023, many of the videos and images are still up on these platforms, with more and more being posted everyday.

Of all videos where viewing data was obtained, which was about half of all videos, **view counts totaled over 300,000,000.**



Physical Abuse by Humans

**Research by Lady Freethinker and Action
for Primates shows the disturbing trend
of monkeys being physically abused by
people for views.**



Physical Abuse by Humans

Lady Freethinker and Action for Primates logged 179 videos and images between May 2023 and October 2023 showing monkeys being physically abused, including being smacked or hit, pulled up by their ears and being forced underwater.

One video posted to Facebook on June 25th, 2023, shows a monkey dressed in human clothes with their arms tied behind their back. Later on in the video the monkey is hit twice by a person.



Monkey with arms tied together. Image via Facebook.



Monkey being hit. Image via Facebook.

On July 20th, a video was uploaded to Facebook that shows a person grabbing a monkey's head and twisting it while the monkey screams out. Later on in the video, the person jabs the animal in the stomach with their finger repeatedly.



Monkey having head twisted. Image via Facebook.



Monkey being jabbed in stomach. Image via Facebook.

Please see more examples of monkeys being physically abused below:



Monkey's ears being pulled. Image via Facebook.



Person puts tube down monkey's throat. Image via Facebook.



Monkey's head squeezed and tormented with a rubber snake. Image via Facebook.

These videos are just a snapshot of the physical abuse content Lady Freethinker and Action for Primates found on social media between May 2023 and October 2023. Other videos posted show similar harm, including monkeys being violently shaken, hit in the face, or tossed around.



Monkeys in Distress

**Research by Lady Freethinker and Action
for Primates shows monkeys are
repeatedly filmed in stressful situations.**

Monkeys in Distress

Lady Freethinker and Action for Primates logged 178 videos and images between May 2023 and October 2023 showing monkeys in serious distress after having been deliberately placed into 'staged' stressful and frightening situations, such as buried in mud, stuck in water, tied to a tree or part of their body, such as their head, stuck inside an object. The videos then often show people coming to the monkey's 'rescue' - a ploy used by individuals to elicit 'likes' and even donations online.

One video posted to Facebook on August 29th, 2023 shows a monkey who was buried up to their neck in mud until a person comes to "rescue" the animal.



Monkey buried in mud. Image via Facebook.



Monkey being "rescued." Image via Facebook.

Another video posted on Facebook on August 28th, 2023 shows a monkey who had soap rubbed in his or her eyes. The animal is unable to open their eyes and cries out.



Monkey with soap in their eyes. Image via Facebook.



Monkey with soap in their eyes (2.) Image via Facebook.

On August 24th, 2023 a video posted to Facebook shows a monkey stuck inside a watermelon rind. The animal struggles in the water inside the rind for the entirety of the over 6-minute-long video. At one point, he or she appears to pass out.



Monkey stuck in watermelon rind. Image via Facebook



Exhausted monkey in watermelon rind in water. Image via Facebook.

Please see more examples of videos that show monkeys in distress:



Monkey inside a pant leg. Image via Facebook.



Monkey stuck inside a plastic soda bottle. Image via Facebook.



Monkey drowning in a lake. Image via Facebook.



Children Abusing Monkeys

Research shows a disturbing trend of toddlers abusing monkeys.



Children Abusing Monkeys

Lady Freethinker and Action for Primates logged 24 videos and images between May 2023 and October 2023 showing young children hurting monkeys. Video footage shows toddlers picking the animals up and throwing them, pulling them by their tails, and hitting them, among other abuses.

One video posted to Facebook on August 29th, 2023 shows a toddler pulling a monkey by their tail and handling the animal roughly.



Toddler pulling monkey by tail. Image via Facebook.



Toddler pulling monkey by tail (2). Image via Facebook.

In a separate video posted to Facebook on August 15th, 2023, a toddler holds a monkey in the dirt by his or her neck, then throws the animal in the water repeatedly, holds them upside down, and throws dirt on the animal's face.



Toddler squeezing monkey's neck. Image via Facebook.



Toddler putting monkey in dirt. Image via Facebook.

In another video posted to Facebook on August 31st, 2023, a toddler is seen squeezing the mouth of a monkey who is stuck inside a soccer ball. The child picks up the animal by the head and squeezes their face.



Toddler squeezing monkey's mouth. Image via Facebook.



Toddler picking monkey up by head. Image via Facebook.

More examples of toddlers abusing monkeys include the following:



Toddler picking monkey up by the ear. Image via Facebook.



Child rubbing dirt on monkey. Image via Facebook.



Toddler carrying monkey by leg. Image via Facebook.



Aggressive “Bathing”

Monkeys being aggressively “bathed” is another shocking trend spreading across social media platforms.



Aggressive “Bathing”

Lady Freethinker and Action for Primates logged 58 videos and images between May 2023 and October 2023 showing monkeys being aggressively “bathed,” including being abused during “bathing.” Water is also used as a form of torture, with monkeys being violently sprayed with water and forced and held underwater.

One video posted to TikTok in March 2022 shows a person holding a monkey’s arms behind his or her back. The animal screamed out and was forced under a continuous spray of water.



Monkey with arms held behind back. Image via TikTok.



Monkey with water being poured on head continuously. Image via Facebook.

In another video posted to Facebook on April 16th, 2023, a person puts goggles on a monkey and forces the animal underwater for a long period of time. Then, the person splashes the monkey in the face and pulls him or her by the tail.



Monkey forced underwater with goggles on.
Image via Facebook.



Person pulls monkey’s tail in bath. Image via Facebook.

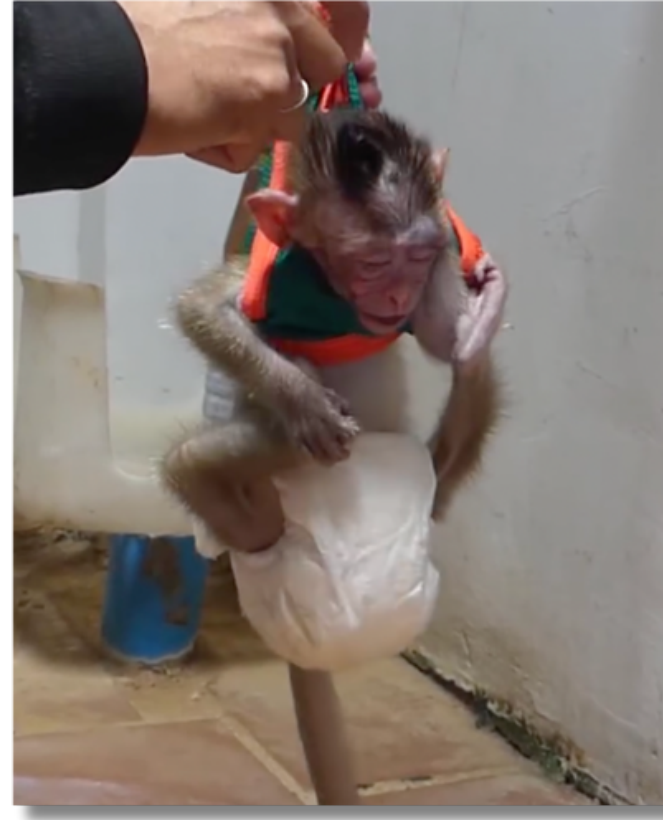
On July 10th, 2023, a video was uploaded to Facebook that shows a monkey being “bathed,” their face and eyes covered in soap. The person repeatedly grabbed the animal by the tail, before suspending them off the ground, and repeatedly hitting them around the head.



Monkey with soap in their eyes.
Image via Facebook.



Monkey's tail pulled. Image via Facebook.



Monkey being hit on head after bath.
Image via Facebook.

More examples of monkeys being aggressively “bathed” include the following:



Monkey being violently shaken underwater.
Image via Facebook.



Monkey being scrubbed with brush with hard bristles. Image via Facebook.



Monkey held underwater for long periods of time and shaken. Image via Facebook.



Man pulls two monkeys by their tails while they're under a stream of water.
Image via Facebook.



Monkey held up by the skin of the head and sprayed in the face with water. Image via Facebook.

Additionally, primate experts have noted that just the act of washing monkeys in itself poses serious health and welfare issues for the animals.

"There are serious health and welfare issues with washing captive baby monkeys. Foremost from a welfare perspective, handling baby monkeys, because they have been taken from their mothers, is stressful and results in fear and anxiety. It diminishes the well-being of the individual. From a medical perspective, repeatedly washing a baby monkey using any form of soap or similar surfactant agent will remove essential oils from the hair and skin of the baby, resulting in the potential for infection by microorganisms or infestation by parasites. It may also result in harmful chemicals being able to penetrate the skin. Although baby monkeys get wet under natural conditions and, depending on species, may even immerse themselves completely in water and swim, this is done voluntarily (they are not forced as with people) and no soaps or other chemicals are involved."

Nedim C Buyukmihci, V.M.D.

**Co-founder & Veterinary Advisor, Action for
Primates**



Monkeys Attacked by Dogs

The disturbing trend of monkeys being attacked by dogs is spreading across social media sites.



Monkeys Attacked by Dogs

Lady Freethinker and Action for Primates logged 30 videos and images between May 2023 and October 2023 showing monkeys being placed in dangerous situations with dogs. This is terrifying for them, as dogs are predators to monkeys.

One video posted to Facebook on February 28th, 2023 shows a monkey being attacked by several puppies, who bite the animal on the neck and back as the monkey struggles to get away.



Dog biting monkey on neck. Image via Facebook.



Dog biting monkey on neck (2.) Image via Facebook.

In another video posted to TikTok on February 7th, 2023, a dog grabs an adult monkey by the neck and shakes the animal before the video ends.



Dog biting monkey's head. Image via TikTok.

On May 3rd, 2023, a video was posted to Facebook that shows a dog attacking a monkey for the entire 10-minute-long video. The dog bites the monkey's neck, head, arms, legs, and tail.



Dog biting monkey's arm. Image via Facebook.



Dog biting monkey's tail. Image via Facebook.

More examples of monkeys being attacked by dogs include the following:



Monkey being bitten on arm by dog. Image via Facebook.



Monkey bitten by dog. Image via Facebook.



Three dogs roughly handling monkey. Image via Facebook.



Sexual Abuse

Monkeys continue to be sexually exploited and abused by people for online views.



Sexual Abuse

Lady Freethinker and Action for Primates logged 22 videos and images between May 2023 and October 2023 showing monkeys being sexually abused, from people pulling on the animals' genitals and putting the genitals in their mouths to more violent and sadistic abuse.

On April 24th, 2023, a video was posted to Facebook that shows someone touching a monkey's genitals while giving the animal a bath.



Person touching monkey's genitals. Image via Facebook. Note that this image has been blurred slightly by Lady Freethinker.

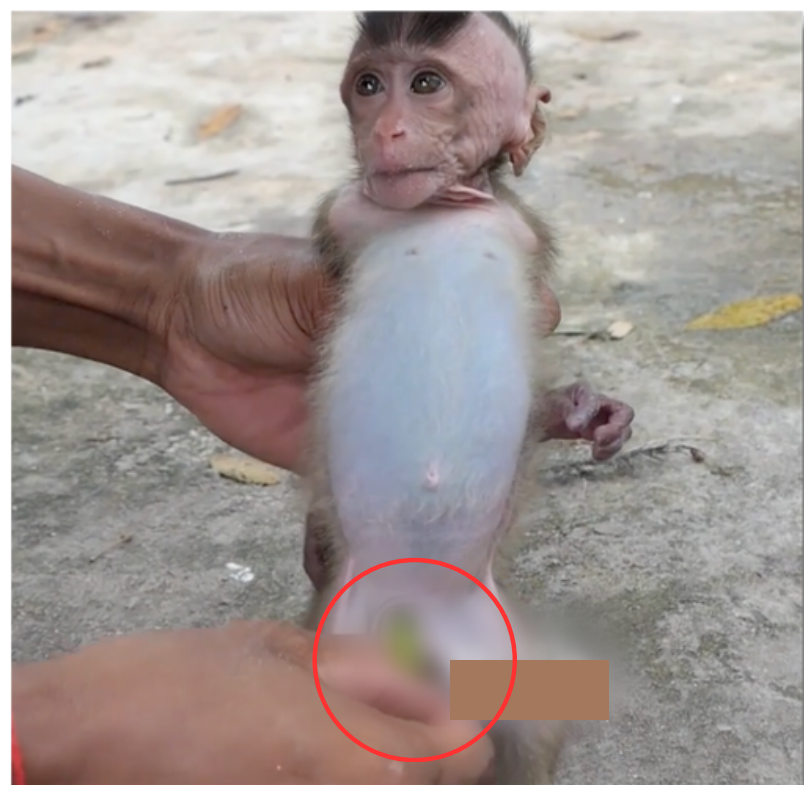


Person touching monkey's genitals (2). Image via Facebook. Note that this image has been blurred slightly by Lady Freethinker.

In a separate video posted to Facebook on September 4th, 2023, a person grabs and pulls on a monkey's genitals. Then, the person holds the monkey's arms behind their back and jabs their genitals with a pepper.



Person pulls monkey's genitals. Image via Facebook. Note that this image has been blurred slightly by Lady Freethinker.



Person jabs monkey's genitals with pepper. Image via Facebook. Note that this image has been blurred slightly by Lady Freethinker.

On September 23, 2022, a video was posted to Facebook that shows someone rubbing a lime wedge on a monkey's genitals and other parts of their body.



Lime rubbed on monkeys' genitals. Image via Facebook. Note that this image has been blurred slightly by Lady Freethinker.



Lime rubbed on monkeys' genitals (2.) Image via Facebook.

More examples of monkeys being sexually exploited include the following:



Person using a toothbrush on monkey's rectum. Image via YouTube. Note that this image has been blurred slightly by Lady Freethinker.



Person films a monkey's genitals up close and rubs them with a towel. Image via YouTube. Note that this image has been blurred slightly by Lady Freethinker.

Some of the most disturbing examples found by Lady Freethinker and Action for Primates involved sadistic genital mutilation, including a monkey having his penis cut off and another having a stick forced into his anus.



Extreme Violence & Killing

Monkeys are being tortured and even killed in social media videos.



Extreme Violence & Killing

Lady Freethinker and Action for Primates logged 366 videos and images between May 2023 and October 2023 showing extreme violence and sadistic brutality to monkeys, including animals being set on fire, having parts of their bodies cut or sliced off, fingers and toes broken with pliers, eyes gouged out, beaten viciously and violently killed.

In August 2023, a video was posted to Facebook that shows someone pulling violently on a monkey's arm until it's ripped off at the shoulder.



Monkey with arm ripped off. Image via Facebook. Note that this image has been blurred slightly by Lady Freethinker.

One video posted to Facebook on July 14th, 2023 shows a monkey crammed into a jar that is sealed shut.



Monkey being stuffed in jar. Image via Facebook..



Monkey in closed jar. Image via Facebook.

In another video posted to Facebook in October 2023, a monkey is observed beaten and bloodied and tied spread-eagle while being strangled by a cord tied around the neck that has a weight at the end of it. A bagful of ants is poured onto the monkey's head and face, and as the animal struggles, it worsens the strangulation.



Monkey being tortured. Image via Facebook. Note that this image has been blurred slightly by Lady Freethinker.

More examples of monkeys being tortured include the following:



Monkey tied against a tree on fire.
Image via Facebook. Note that this image has been blurred slightly by Lady Freethinker.



Monkey crammed inside a jar.
Image via Facebook.



Monkey bloodied on the ground. Gun appears in video. Image via Twitter. Note that this image has been blurred slightly by Lady Freethinker.

These videos are just a snapshot of the extremely violent content Lady Freethinker and Action for Primates found on social media between May and October 2023. Other videos posted show similar abuses, like monkeys being restrained, strangled, and beaten.



Torture Content on Facebook

Monkey torture content continues to be posted in private and public groups on Facebook.



Torture Content on Facebook

Lady Freethinker and Action for Primates work to expose the monkey torture and abuse on Facebook, where horrific content is posted in both public and private groups. Such content logged by the groups includes the following:

- A macaque who had their eyes drilled out one at a time with a power drill
- A macaque who was burned and branded with a heated wire
- A baby monkey who was beaten for eight minutes
- A monkey who was trapped inside a jar with biting ants, had their eyes gouged out with scissors, and a skewer forced through their anus into their body and out through their face
- A baby macaque who had their face smashed in over and over again until they died
- A baby macaque who was tied to a fan blade and rapidly spun for 6 minutes
- A person used a box cutter to hack a baby macaque to pieces
- A person used a fire torch to burn the eyes of an adult macaque
- Whisky forced into the mouth of a baby macaque
- A baby macaque, with their arms tied behind their back, was held up by the fur on their head. A person then cuts off the animal's ears with scissors, and starts cutting off their toes.

This is just some of the abusive content that was posted on the platform, with other such content posted daily.



**Why is this
Problematic?**



Welfare Concerns

Macaques are intelligent, complex individuals who enjoy spending time in the forest, foraging for food, and building relationships with one another [1]. When they are exploited for videos online, however, abuse and torture are not the only serious issues for them. By being held in captivity, even without the abuse, they are denied everything that is natural and important to them, severely diminishing their welfare and well-being.

These primate species are also endangered and protected by virtue of being listed on Appendix II of CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora). In addition, the conservation status of long-tailed macaque and southern pig-tailed macaque – the main primate species abused and tortured in these videos – has been increased to Endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species [2]. The future of these species, which play an important role in biodiversity and ecosystems, is seriously under threat as a result of human activities resulting in habitat loss and degradation. A trade in wild infant macaques, some just a few days old when taken from their mothers, to be abused for online social media content is also impacting wild populations.

Violence Against Animals vs. Humans

Many studies have shown a significant relationship between animal abuse with interpersonal violence, including domestic or family violence, as well as violence within the community. In fact, one study by the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and Northeastern University found that people who commit acts of animal cruelty are five times more likely to be violent towards humans [3].

Primate Experts Speak Out

In response to the nature of the content available on social media platforms, and highlighted in this Report, Dr Nedim Buyukmihci, veterinarian and co-founder of Action for Primates, stated:

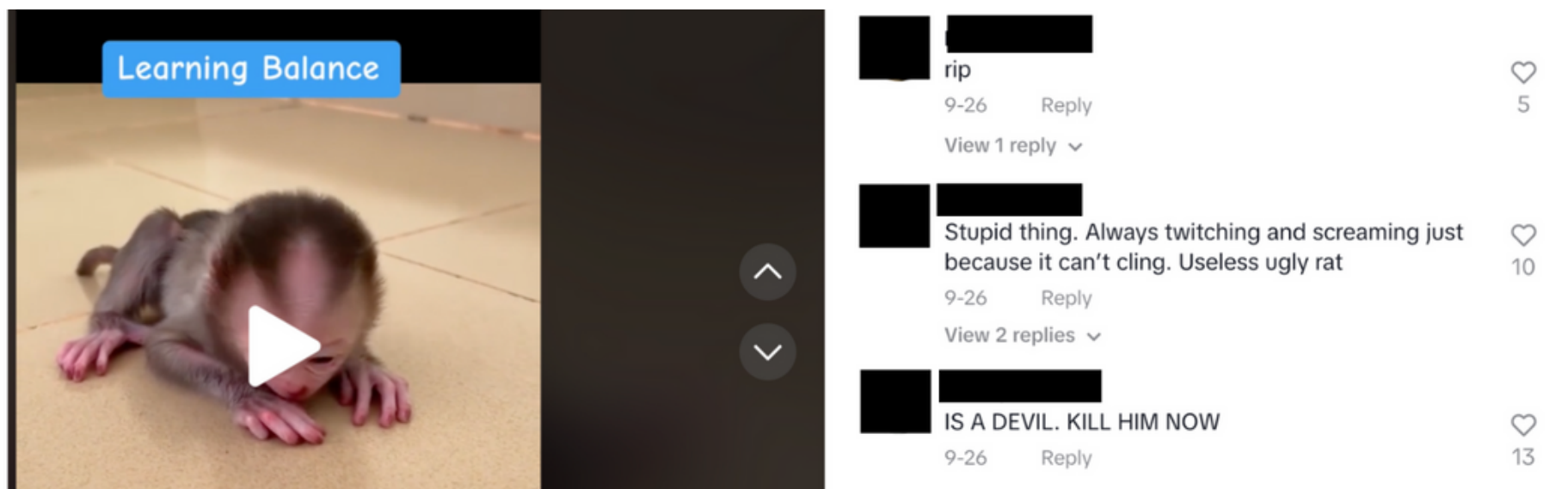
"As a veterinarian with many decades of experience, I have never witnessed the degree of sadism I have seen in these videos. What the people are doing to these infant monkeys is particularly grotesque and disturbing. The psychological and physical torture of these monkeys, instilling abject fear into them, cutting off body parts, nailing onto trees and setting individuals alight, is being done with apparent impunity. It is untenable that any social media company would tolerate the existence of such individuals and groups on their platforms, not only because of the appalling nature of the atrocities being inflicted upon non-human primates, but also because of the harmful and damaging impact the viewing of such content will have on people, especially children."

If people want to help prevent violence against humans within our communities, it's crucial that we all take a strong stance against cruelty to animals, too.

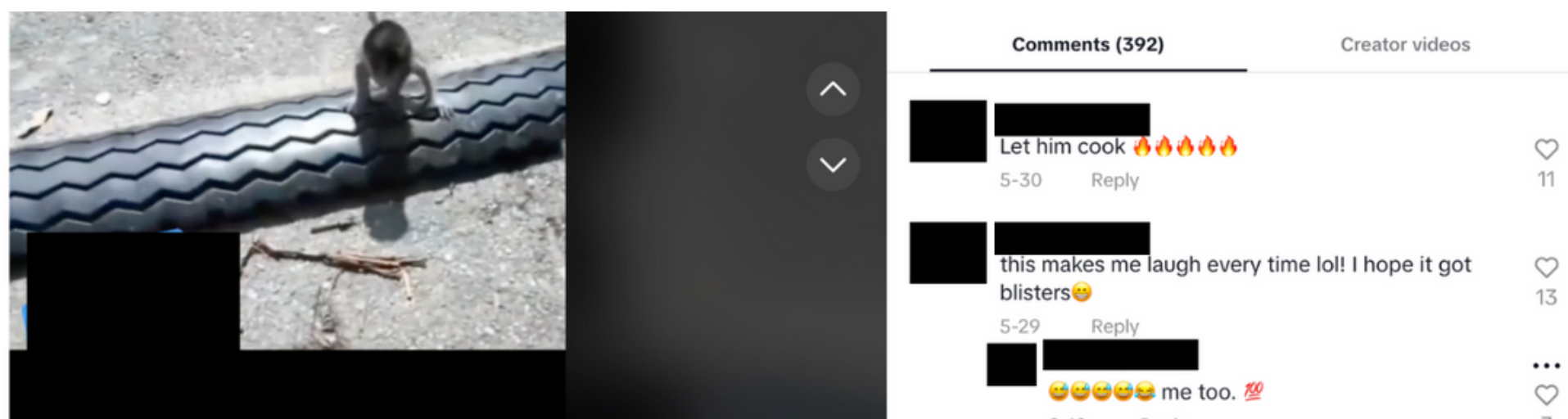
The people involved in watching, sharing, and commenting on the monkey torture videos -- not just those who post them -- encourage violence and cruelty to animals often, which is concerning for both animals and humans. These are just some of the comments Lady Freethinker and Action for Primates documented:



Screenshot via TikTok.



Screenshot via TikTok.



Screenshot via TikTok.

Give it alcohol & a hard slap in the face

5-12  23 Reply

View 5 replies 

Screenshot via TikTok.

Smack some discipline into the rat 🤔

9-12 Reply


1

Who would want these noisemakers in their home!

9-9 Reply



2

I'm glad they got away

9-8 Reply


1

kick the tree rat into the wall....stop it's whinging

9-8 Reply


4

Screenshot via TikTok.

Good video... do feed him chilli 🌶️🌶️🌶️ and alcohol, 😁

Screenshot via Facebook.

Please fit more monkeys in a jar 😁😁😁

Screenshot via Facebook.

smack it a few times and it won't move so much

8-17 Reply


3

Screenshot via TikTok.

Because of the direct link between violence towards humans and violence towards animals, this is especially concerning. To help keep members of our communities safe (and of course keep animals safe too), **it's absolutely crucial to speak out against violence to all beings.**



How to Help Stop the Abuse

How to Help Stop the Abuse

As social media users and members of the community, we all have the power to make impactful changes to help animals who are being abused in online videos.

Here are some simple steps you can take:

- **Report any videos you come across that show monkey abuse using the platform's reporting system.**
- **Ask people to report the videos to Lady Freethinker by emailing: ReportPosts@LadyFreethinker.org or to the Social Media Animal Cruelty Coalition (SMACC) (of which Lady Freethinker and Action for Primates are members) by visiting this site: <https://www.smaccoalition.com/report-a-concern>.**
- **Don't comment, engage, or otherwise interact with any videos that you see that promote cruelty to monkeys or any animals. Commenting or interacting with videos, no matter how well intentioned, boosts views and visibility.**
- **Urge social media platforms to do more to stop animal abuse from spreading on their sites and from being posted in the first place.**
- **If you haven't already, please sign Lady Freethinker's petitions urging [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) to do more to stop animal torture videos from being posted.**

The content highlighted in this report is just some of the abusive videos found on the platforms, with much more being posted daily. Social media platforms must put a system in place that forbids content like this from existing in the first place.

Please visit LadyFreethinker.org and ActionforPrimates.org to learn more.

References

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