

Blackfish by gabriela cowperthwaite: we should not keep orcas in captivity

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



Is keeping orca whales in captivity inhumane and heartless? Blackfish tells the story of Tilikum, a great orca whale who was ripped away from his family and natural habitat when he was only two. It shows us how heartbreaking it is to confine these emotionally aware and highly intelligent orca whales to tiny pools. Tilikum and the other whales were suffering. Tilikum has hurt a few trainers and killed two trainers, Dawn Brancheau, Keltie Bryan, and a member of the public, Daniel Dukes. He didn't attack these people because he was crazy or trying to be a savage, he did it because he was frustrated and deprived of his needs, like his family pod, food, natural habitat and space. CNN anchor Jane Velez-Mitchell put it perfectly when she said: "If you were in a bathtub for 25 years, don't you think you'd get a little psychotic?". After Blackfish came out, people started hoping that a shred of decency and pity would arise within the cold hearts of SeaWorld and that they would grant Tilikum, the one gift he desired the most, freedom. That hope was then snatched from them when Tilikum died on January 6, 2017. He never saw his family pod or felt the ocean life around him once again and died in captivity. Orca whales are meant to be free and should never be kept in captivity.

As far as Blackfish is concerned, humans interact with the ocean and its creatures in a most cold-hearted and revolting way. Orca whales in captivity are psychologically traumatized causing aggression toward humans and other whales. The lack of resources they need in order to be healthy and happy, forces them to act in ways that they would never do in the wild. At one point in Blackfish, it is mentioned that "There's no record of an orca doing any harm in the wild". Tilikum suffered a little more because he was less agile due to his size, more emotional and highly traumatized. In addition

to this, Seaworld lied that orca whales live less in the wild than they do in captivity and that Tilikum's collapsed dorsal fin was normal among wild orcas. A former SeaWorld trainer and an expert both mentioned in Blackfish that "Dorsal collapse happens in less than one percent - we know this - all captive males 100% have collapsed dorsal fins" and that "because the whales in their pools die young, they like to say that all orcas die at 25 or 20 years and of course that's false. We knew by 1980 - after half a dozen years of research - that they live equivalent to human life spans". A dorsal fin collapse is a sign of an unhealthy whale which cuts their life span down by about half. Furthermore, orcas suffer captivity tremendously because they are highly sociable and live in big families. They have different "languages", "nations" and "cultures". Placing these extremely different whales together is going to result in hyper-aggression and rakes, which never happens in the wild because orcas are generally calm and very spiritual animals. About halfway through Blackfish, it is mentioned that "These are different nations. These aren't just two different killer whales - these animals - they've got different genes, different languages." A neuroscientist mentioned that "What could happen as a result of them being thrown in with other whales they haven't grown up with, that are not part of their culture is there's hyper-aggression, a lot of violence, a lot of killing in captivity that you don't ever see in the wild". If different orcas are forced to be together because of some ignorant plan, then they really cannot be blamed for all the aggression. Orcas are meant to be in the wild with their family pods, not in captivity with whales they haven't grown up with.

In conclusion, orca whales are highly intelligent, emotional and social creatures that do not deserve to be captured and mistreated, just for our entertainment. Ripping young orcas from their environment and families is not right. Orcas are remarkable and friendly creatures who are forced to act the way they do in captivity. Even though, Tilikum hurt people, he was a great whale who was mistreated to the point where he couldn't bear it anymore. Tilikum died in captivity, but there are other whales still suffering the way he did. Save the orcas!