

# Out of the Spotlight

## Chimpanzees and Crowd Aversion

Wild chimpanzees are highly social animals, but the sociality of captive chimpanzees is less well understood. How does exposure to crowds affect how chimps interact with each other and humans?



The chimpanzees at the Oregon Zoo

Images from Oregon Zoo Website

Great apes tend to interact negatively with unfamiliar humans (1).  
Zoos are full of unfamiliar faces.  
How does regular exposure to strangers affect chimp behavior?

**“[In examining] human-animal relationships ... findings for unfamiliar humans are consistent with negative effects of humans on apes' behavior...” (1)**

# Experimental Design and Results:

**Hypothesis: Chimpanzees will be more socially active around crowds**

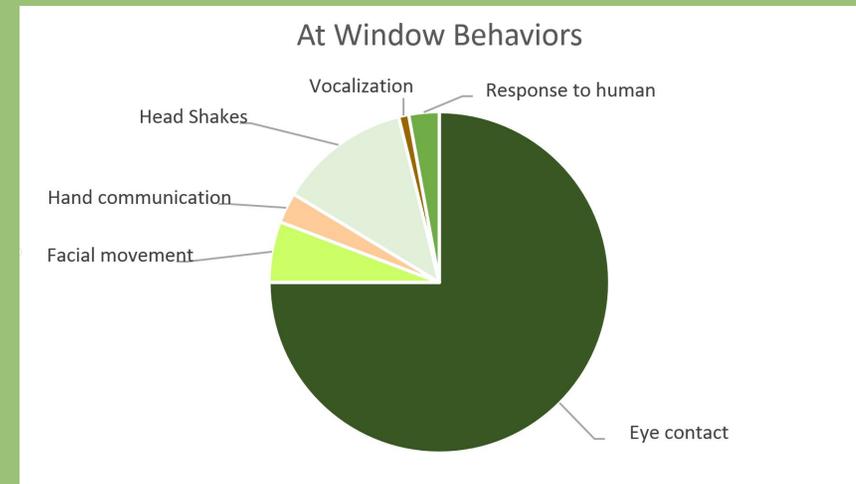
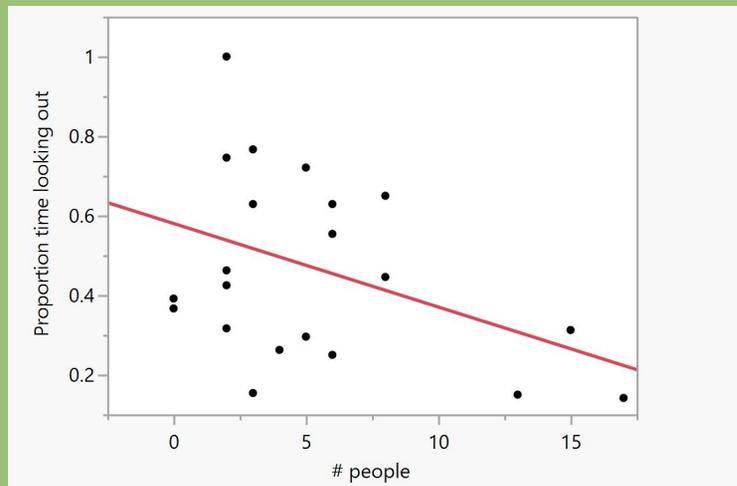
Chimpanzees were observed on 3 separate days

Activities in the enclosure were recorded by scan sample every 2 minutes

Behavior when at a window recorded with continuous behavioral observation in JWatcher



<http://www.jwatcher.ucla.edu/>



**Figure 1: Proportion of attention directed outward by chimpanzees near the window, demonstrating a trend towards directing attention inward in the presence of more people.**

**Figure 2: Proportions of behaviors performed at the window, showing that social behaviors such as vocalizations or responses to humans are rare, compared with eye contact (observation)**

## Conclusions:

Chimps are less active and direct attention inward around crowds

## Future Directions:

Future work might examine the effects of crowds on chimpanzee stress in several zoos. Prior work and our research indicate that great apes respond unfavorably to new humans, but this has not been associated with a long-term welfare outlook.

### **References:**

- (1) "Chimpanzee." Oregon Zoo. N.p., n.d. Web. 07 Dec. 2015.
- (2) Smith, J. J. "Human-Animal Relationships in Zoo-Housed Orangutans (*P. Abellii*) and Gorillas (*G. G. Gorilla*): The Effects of Familiarity." *American Journal of Primatology* 76.10 (2014): 942-55. Print.
- (3) <http://www.jwatcher.ucla.edu/>  
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Austin EW (2004) "G" is for growing: Thirty years of research on children and sesame street. *Journalism & Mass Comm. Quart.* 81 (4): 940-94.  
Cited figures  
Any images used

### **Acknowledgements:**

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