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Different views

"They should be where they're fed and cared for," she said. "In the wild they could get killed by poachers."

O'Connor, 82, is author of Life is a Circus (Kilbris Corp. 2001, \$18), a narrative based on her 25 years as a circus press agent for several circuses, including Clyde Beatty—Cole Brothers Circus and Ringling Brothers Circus. What's intended as a light-hearied book of circus-life rends more like an unintended description of the slavery, mackery and indignities circus animals endure.

For example O'Connor described a chimp named Ande as similar to a "well-trained maid." She raves about his intelligence, sensitivity and kindness and even explains his strong similarities to humans. He's so the het tries to stop people when they argue — despite that she doesn't seem to care that when she met him he was in chains and clothed as a human.

Life is a Circus is at least an interesting historial read. Gircuses with animals are slowly disappearing. Banning hem has already happened of the U.S. Canada and India and is under consideration in Puerto Rice. Adding to the decline is the soaring popularity of sophisticated all-human shows als Circus De Soliel.

O'Connor has a sweet nature, but the book's unintentional political incorrectness extends beyond animals. She refers to Native Americans as "Indians" and jokes that she feared being "scaped." Different views

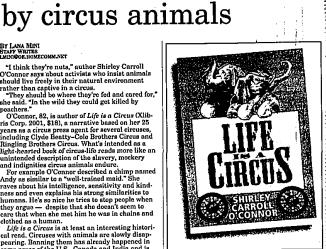
The writer's opinion that animals are treated kindly contradicts the words of Henry Ringling, founder of Ringling Brothers Circus. In the book The Circus Kings, Ringling himself says circus animals perform out of fear and intimidation, O'Connor says she didn't see animal abuse — innecently not making list connection in the book's phots of a Clyde Beatty Circus trainer holding a thick black whip while tigers and lions perform.

During a telephone interview, she said the circus was an integral part of her life for 25 years and saw 'only one' case of harshness toward an animal and 'that person was severely punished.'

The United States Department of Agriculture reports indicate differently. The Human Society of the United States monitors circus incidents including the more recent from the USDA:

Scrious health problems with two elephants owned by Clyde Beatty-Cole Brothers Circus in 2000. Beasie, a 55 - year-old elephant, bleeds when the urinates. Helen, a 46-year-old elephant is partly paralyzed on her tail. The report said both had numerous scars.

"I think they're nuts," author Shirley Carroll O'Connor says about activists who insist animals should live freely in their natural environment rather than captive in a circus. "They should be where they're fed and cared for," she said. "In the wild they could get killed by warches?"



Five Ringling animals die within 18 months etween 1997 and 1999 including a baby elephant

between 1997 and 1999 including a baby elephant who drowned.

\*\*Elargo lesions found on two young elephants in another circus. The scars were caused by rope burns that occurred during the separation process from their mothers on Jan. 6, 1993.

\*\*Wounds found on several clephants at Clyde Bentty Circus in 1998. The USDA stated, "We believe that Clyde Bentty-Cole Brothers Circus abusively used an elephant hook on several animals." Fine was \$10,000. Less than two years later, two more elephants there had scrious health problems, according to the USDA.

\*\*Ekenny, 3, is the name of an elephant who was forced to perform while ill by Ringling Brothers. He died.

\*\*It seems ande to say those animals weren't treat-

It is died.

It seems safe to say those animals weren't treated with care For O'Conner, however, promoting the trainers, clowns and trapeze artists was a "wonderful experience." After that she promoted theater including Grease and Tommy.

The book may be worth keeping; as someday we'll hopefully tell our grandchildron, 'Rend this book and you'll see that in the old days even nice people assumed it was OK to enslave animals for our entertainment."

Lana Mini is a feature writer for the Observer and Eccentric, and can be reached at (248) 901-2572.

## **BOOK IT**

Book it lists author signings, and other bookish events. Send, c-mail or fax announcements to Keely Wygonih, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers 38251 Schooleraf, Livonia, M1 48160, fax (734) 591-7279 or e-mail (test file only, or copy and past into e-mail) kwygonik @oc.homecomm. net.

net. BOOKSTORE

Walden Books (30200 Plymouth Road, Livonia):
Author book signings 1-3 p.m.
Saturday, Fob. 16, Anthony
Collings, Words of Fire.
Stephans Mellen, noon to 4 p.m.
Sunday March 3, and Carl
Lamb, Last Parade, noon to 2
p.m. Sunday, March 10, (734)
261-7611.

LIBRARIES AND UNIVERSITI

Ann Arbor: - Poet Edward Hirsch roads from his newest work, How to Read a Poem: And Fall in Love with Poetry, 5 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 7, Hale Auditori-um, Business Assembly Hall. No charge.

um, Business Assembly Hall. No charge.
Poetry readings 5 p.m. Monday, Feb. 11, Michigan Union Ball Room, reception follows. Lecture The Egret Fishing Through Its Smeared Reflections: Poetics and the End of Nature, 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 12, Michigan Union Ball Room. Call (734) 615-3710 for details.

Northville District Library:
Dr. Weldon E. Petz presents a
slide presentation about the Lincoln Assassination with music
and artifacts, 7-9 p.m. Thursday,
Feb. 7. For more information,
call (248) 349-3020. Carolyn
Griffin, author of four family history books, offers advice on
Organizing your Genealogical
Records, 2:30 p.m. Sunday, Feb.
10 at the Northville District
Library, 212 W. Cady, A class for

those new to family research will precede the meeting at 1:30 p.m. for those new to family research, 734) 878-0361 or visit www.rootsweb.com/-mings/

Walled Lake City Library:
Cat in the Hat Read-a-thon - 6-8
p.m. Thursday, Feb. 28. Readers
and listeners will receive special
Cat in the Hat stickers and n.
cartificate of participation. Readers may plan to read 16 minutes;
or more. The public is invited to
listen.

or more. The public is invited to listen. Refreshments will be served, 1499 E. West Maple, (248) 624-3772.

3772.

Annual folk dance featuring Michigan Dance Heritage musicians, Glen and Judy Morningstar with caller Steve Gold, 1-3 p.m. Saturday, March 2, Richardson Community Conter, 1485 Oakley Park Road, Commerce Township.

Refreshments provided by Friends of the walled Lake City Library.

Library. Call (248) 624-3772 for details.

## Check out 'Photography for Dummies'

BY RICK SAMMON AP WREKLY FEATURES

AP WEERLY FEATURES
I admit it. I sometimes judge a
book by its cover. The back
cover, that is. That's where publishers often list quotes by
experts in the same field as the
author who have road an
advance copy of the book and
recommend it. Such was the case
with Russell Hart's Photography
for Dummics, one of the books in
the Dummics series of how-to
books.

the Dummies series of how-to-books.

Sam Abell, National Geo-graphic photographer, called it,
"The most practical and inspir-ing basic book for photogra-phers." John Isaac, former chief photographer for the United Nations, said, "I wish I'd had a book like this when I started in

photography." And Bob Krist of National Geographic Traveler said, "Chock full of advice ... even experienced photographers will pick up some valuable tips

even experience photographers will pick up some valuable tips and techniques."

So, after reading the quotes, I thought it would be fun to get a copy of Photography for Dummies for myself. I found the book packed with information and, parhaps equally important for dummies, well-organized. Just about everything a beginner needs to know about point-and-shoot cameras, lighting, lenses, composition, film, photo processing and flash photography is in the 400-plus pages.

Even those who have been taking pictures for a few years can benefit from Hart's experience,

which he gained as a professional photographer, and, more
recently, as the technology editor
at American Photo magazino.
For example, in a chapter titled
Ten Favorite Places to Take Pietures" (which includes Bryce
Canyon National Park in United
Mount Rainler National Park in
Washington and the Salton Sen
in California), Hard teseribes
some of the photo ops shutterbugs will encounter, and how to
get the best shots.
So, if you are new to photography, or need some new ideas
about what to shoot and where
to go for good pictures, check out
"Photography for Dummies".
(Hugry Minds Inc., New York,
N.Y., www.dummies.com,
\$21.99).

(Hungry N.Y., \$21.99).