

ETHICAL CANINE ADOPTION

◀ Running head

▲ Since the student revised the title of the paper, the running header was also updated with a new shortened title

The Ethical Way to Adopt a Canine Companion

Yolanda B. Student

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Professor I. M. Jackson

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◀ The student has revised the title of the paper so it is more descriptive.

◀ The running header, title, and overall formatting is correct. This paper is written with good APA formatting.

The Ethical Way to Adopt a Canine Companion

Dogs are important members of many families, especially since they live for many years and can be with children from childhood all the way through until they become adults. People without children also enjoy having dogs in their lives as surrogates for the parent-child relationship. There are many ways to obtain a dog in America and similar Western countries. Many people choose to obtain a puppy from a pet store in a shopping center, mall, or another commercial storefront. Others seek out puppies from seemingly licensed breeders; however, many puppies are also supplied by unlicensed or home breeders. Because of the sheer number of dogs lost or abandoned, shelters and rescue organizations take care of homeless or unwanted pets until a forever family can be found. Family pets should be seen as a lifetime guardianship commitment and not a frivolous financial business transaction. The ramifications of treating living creatures as consumer goods are great. Due to the pet overpopulation in America and the exacerbated medical ramifications of selective breeding, it is more ethical to adopt a rescued dog than to purchase a commercially bred puppy.

Pet overpopulation in America may be the cause of numerous environmental and sociological problems. Pet overpopulation can lead to larger numbers of unsupervised and homeless animals across the country. Pet waste left behind by dogs without human guardians is not just unsightly and smelly; pet waste left in the open can have a major impact on groundwater quality (Paterson, 2011). If pet waste is left on the ground, it seeps into the groundwater, gets washed into storm drains, makes its way into streams and lakes, and is left as untreated sewage in the natural water cycle.

Rescue organizations reduce the pet population in America by spaying and neutering all animals before they are released. There were 3,500 individual animal shelters operating at capacity in the United States in the mid 1990s (Motavalli, 1995). The number of shelters and

◀ The student has revised the introduction paragraph based on specific marked-up paper feedback provided by the instructor.

◀ This thesis statement has been revised and reflects a targeted approach to the argument. This sentence is clear and can stand alone as a complete representation of the argument.

◀ During revision, the student found additional research surrounding this topic. Additional information was added, more evidence was integrated, and a rough single paragraph was revised into two fully developed paragraphs.

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pets in need is large and has only increased over the years. The numbers grow because too many pets are allowed to breed freely without control. According to environmentalist Jim Motavalli (1995), the average female dog can produce two litters a year, which means that one unspayed girl dog can be responsible for 67,000 births during her fertile years if her offspring are also left intact and not spayed or neutered. Such prolific breeding increased the pet population exponentially with each litter born. Spay and neuter programs have been found to be most effective in reducing the pet population along with increased adoptions from shelters and rescues (Frank, 2004). A simple choice to adopt a pet from a shelter can greatly and positively impact the entire ecological and ethical issues surrounding pet overpopulation today.

Despite the overabundance of dogs available, some people seek out specialty dogs bred through commercial enterprise. Designer and purebred dogs are created by artificial genetic modification through selective breeding practices. Since humans have selectively bred dogs for physical and behavioral characteristics through inbreeding, pedigree dogs can be plagued by genetic disease (Farrell, Schoenebeck, Wiener, Clements, & Summers, 2015). Breeders who work in commercial enterprises are focused on breeding for desirable sellable characteristics when breeding an animal as a business. With a focus on business, animal welfare can become an afterthought.

Any selective breeding practices can result in exacerbated medical conditions in canines. Because historical breed standards were focused on aesthetics and temperament with disregard for health, increased medical issues are now prevalent in pedigree dogs. Indrebø (2008) found that it will take “several generations to change the breed through genetic selection in order to eradicate the unhealthy overtyped dogs” (pp. 1–2). Shelters and rescue organizations do not participate in selective breeding for designer or purebred animals. Instead, rescue organizations accept animals in any variety until a permanent home can be found.

Rescue organizations do not breed animals, therefore not participating in selective breeding for designer or purebred animals. Pet

◀ The student has worked on transitions during the revision process. Paragraphs now flow with more intention and ease.

◀ Each and every paragraph begins with a topic sentence, contains a clear claim, and presents evidence that is properly cited in APA style.

◀ Nearly all evidence is integrated through paraphrases and summaries. Quotes are used sparingly and only when necessary.

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stores, however, are supplied by breeders who do participate in selective breeding but may not take the steps necessary to ensure healthy pets. The only way breeders can ethically create healthy litters is through ongoing diagnostic screening of all dogs along with genetic testing, regardless of arbitrarily chosen aesthetics of the animal (Farrell et al., 2015). There are 10 recommendations for ethical breeding programs that require a number of actions, including: all breeders must only breed very healthy dogs, breeders must continually calculate percentages for breeding stock, breeders must limit “matador breeding,” breeders must immediately exclude female dogs who are unable to give birth naturally, breeders have to screen all breeding animals for polygenetic diseases, breeders must conduct DNA testing on all breeding animals, and breeders must practice natural puppy rearing with birth mothers (Indrebø, 2008). These recommendations are essential for ethical breeding yet are not mandated by any regulation or law. Without firm regulations and legal ramifications, commercial breeders can continue to breed animals for profit and without regard for the health and welfare of animals.

There is a rich history in dog breeding and Kennel Club registration. Some people feel that pedigree dogs represent an important cultural history. It has been found, however, that desire for a purebred dog is more likely to be based on popular culture trends than more rational or logical decision-making processes (Ghirlanda, Acerbi, & Herzog, 2014). For instance, films featuring Lassie led to more demand for the collie breed. Rin Tin Tin’s popularity led to more demand for the German shepherd breed. Popular celebrities photographed with purse-dwelling chihuahuas increase the demand for teacup-sized chihuahuas. The desire for designer and pedigree dogs is often influenced by fleeting cultural trends rather than complete analysis of the situation and the animal’s best interests. Such activity negates the assertion that designer and pedigree breeding is solely an asset to society, particularly since trends do not contain regard for ethical treatment of animals. Dogs that appear to be designer and pedigree breeds can be found in shelters alongside obvious mixed breeds (Strand, 2015). Without documentation, however, pedigree cannot be proven for a homeless pet.

◀ The rebuttal is supported by credible evidence from multiple sources.

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Just as there is no assurance of breed when adopting from a shelter or rescue group, there is no guarantee of a healthy pet when adopted from a shelter where the animal's history is unknown. While it is true that there is no guarantee of health when a pet is adopted from a shelter, adoptions fees do not financially support breeders who are breeding animals with disregard for health and welfare. Concerns over the commercialization of dog breeding have led a number of municipalities across the country to ban the sale of puppy-mill animals due to the animal welfare concerns (Taylor, 2015). Purebred dogs suffer needlessly and genetic diversity, as exhibited in mutts from the pound, is preferable for a healthy and stable pet (Jeppsson, 2014). While there are no guarantees when adopting from a shelter or rescue organization, the overall impact of adopting pets rather than investing in commercial breeding is positive.

Pet overpopulation is a real concern in America, negatively impacting quality of life and environmental safety. Additional animals bred through selective breeding for popular characteristics not only add to the pet population, but they also suffer from exacerbated medical conditions and genetic disease. Meanwhile, shelters and rescue groups are overflowing with homeless pets in need. Shelters and rescue groups vaccinate and spay or neuter each pet before releasing them to pre-screened families, reducing the potential for pet population growth and assuring better potential quality of life. The sale of commercially bred puppies from pet stores should be banned unless all ethical recommendations become legally mandatory. Therefore, families should first consider adopting a dog from a shelter or rescue organization rather than purchasing a puppy from an unregulated commercial enterprise like a pet store or large breeding enterprise.

◀ The student corrected all contractions during the editing process. Contractions like "it's" are not used in academic writing.

◀ The conclusion has been revised to include all main topics of the argument with a strong call to action that restates the thesis statement.

▲ There is an appropriate page break at the end of the paper, which is longer than 1,500 words. The reference list will begin on the next page.

References

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◀ Additional sources have been added to the reference list. All sources cited in-text are listed accurately with a full reference citation.