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Huffington Post - Puppet for the Animal Rights Extremist Agenda

Popular News Agency Reports Unsubstantiated Assertions Designed to Restrict Pet Ownership

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The Huffington Post recently ran an article by Joanna Zelman entitled: "PETA And Bob Barker Call For Spay/Neuter Law To Fight Animal Overpopulation".

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/09/22/peta-bob-barker-spay-neuter-pets_n_977032.html

This article is filled with many errors and misperceptions from celebrities who really do not have facts or logic on their side. Let's correct some of these urban legends right here and now.

SPAY-NEUTER AND SHELTER INTAKES

There is an assumption by the article author that mandatory spay and neuter laws work to decrease the number of shelter intakes, and thus reduce killings. In fact, the opposite is true. Every locale that has enacted a mandatory spay and neuter law has seen a RISE in shelter admissions and killings. Fort Worth, Texas repealed their mandatory spay and neuter law as licensing and compliance plummeted, and cases of rabies increased.

Memphis passed a mandatory spay and neuter law last year. Since then, shelter intakes have risen 8% in that city.

Los Angeles is another case in point. After decades of steadily declining shelter numbers, LA reversed the good trend in one fell swoop with enactment of a mandatory spay and neuter law. Intakes and deaths immediately rose by over 30% and continue in an upward spiral. (1)

No mainstream animal welfare organization supports mandatory spay and neuter. The AVMA opposes it. So does the ASPCA, Best Friends Animal Shelter, American Humane Association, Ally Cat Allies and the No Kill Advocacy Center. They know what the Huffington Post should have also discovered, had they done their due diligence - that punitive legislation increases shelter admissions and deaths.

The American College of Theriogenologists is composed of veterinarians who specialize in reproductive medicine. They also have studied the issues and oppose mandatory spay and neuter. The ACT notes:

"....the decision to spay or neuter a pet must be made on a case by case basis, taking into consideration the pet's age, breed, sex, intended use, household environment and temperament. The use of generalized rules concerning gonadectomy (removal of the ovaries or testes) is not in the best interest of the health or well-being of the pets or their owners."

"In fact, in some European Union countries where gonadectomy is illegal unless deemed medically necessary (such as Norway) there are no significant problems with pet overpopulation, indicating that the pet overpopulation problem that exists in the United States is due to cultural differences on the importance of pets, the responsibility of pet owners, and the ability of the government and national agencies to properly educate the public. "

All the experts who have examined the issue (not actors who don't have a clue about the truth) are opposed to mandatory spay and neuter because it increases shelter intakes and death. But, why wouldn't spay and neuter be in the best interest of the health and well-being of the pet, as stated by ACT?

SPAY-NEUTER AND HEALTH

In fact, there are few benefits, and many health risks associated with surgical removal of the sex organs. The American Veterinary Medical Association admits to some seldom-mentioned problems with sterilization in this journal article:

"....potential health problems associated with spaying and neutering have also been identified, including an increased risk of prostatic cancer in males; increased risks of bone cancer and hip dysplasia in large-breed dogs associated with sterilization before maturity; and increased incidences of obesity, diabetes, urinary tract infections, urinary incontinence, and hypothyroidism." (2)

In 2007, in an attempt to verify previous scientific testing regarding negative health effects resulting from spay-neuter, yet another study was done on the effects of neutering on the male urogenital tract. The results were shocking.

Neutered dogs were **four times** more likely to suffer from *malignant bladder cancer* than intact dogs. Neutered dogs were **eight times** more likely to suffer from *prostate transitional cell carcinoma* than intact dogs. They were **twice** as likely to suffer from *prostate adenocarcinoma*, and four times as likely to suffer from prostate carcinoma. *On average, castrated dogs are three times more likely than their intact counterparts to develop some type of prostate cancer.* (3)

But specific health problems are not the most serious concern when it comes to sterilization surgery. In a recent study reported in the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association, female Rottweilers spayed after the age of six years old (or never spayed) lived on average 30% longer than spayed dogs. (4)

In a nutshell, you could have many more years with your dog simply by avoiding unnecessary spay surgery. The *only* medical indications for spay surgery are treatment of pyometra when it occurs, and prevention of breast cancer in breeds that are genetically predisposed. These problems affect a relatively small number of dogs. Bottom line, spaying is a decision best left to the owner after weighing the risks vs benefits of the procedure.

The government has no moral, ethical or medical justification to mandate spay/neuter surgeries. Sterilization can jeopardize good health and can shorten the dog's lifespan. Such nanny laws violate our rights to make our own decisions regarding our animals. Who likes being forced by our lawmakers to spend hundreds of dollars on surgery that is unnecessary, and that can be harmful to our animal's health? No one.

SPAY-NEUTER IS PART OF THE ANIMAL RIGHTS AGENDA OF PET ELIMINATION



And then, we have to deal with the issue of the radical animal rights groups like PETA. Who out there is still foolish enough to listen to PETA? PETA claims to love animals, but their actions betray their hypocrisy. PETA kills animals. They killed over 94% of the animals they took into their Virginia "shelter" in 2010, even while other shelters in the area have excellent save rates. (5)

PETA's employees were convicted of picking up dogs and cats from local veterinarian's offices and shelters, promising to find them homes, but instead killing them in the van within a few minutes, and then dumping the bodies in various regional dumpsters. These poor animals never even made it out of PETA's pickup van alive! (6)

Elimination of pet breeding a stated goal of Animal Rights groups, as per their twelve-step convention platform. This platform was printed in "Animals' Agenda" magazine in November, 1987 in an article entitled "Politics of Animal Liberation" by Kim Bartlett. Item #10 states:

We strongly discourage any further breeding of companion animals, including pedigreed or purebred dogs and cats. Spay and neuter clinics should be subsidized by state and municipal governments. Commerce in domestic and exotic animals for the pet trade should be abolished.

Are things becoming a bit clearer now? The animal rights groups have admitted upfront their agenda to end the pet trade. And the aggressive push for spay/neuter, sales bans and over-regulation of breeding is all part of that agenda to end pet ownership. It's a goal they have been progressing for the past 30 years. And claims of "abuse" and "overpopulation" are tools used to achieve that end.

We need to preserve the gene pools of our breeds of dogs and cats if we expect to have pets in the future. We all want to have pets a few years down the road, don't we?

Well, most of us do, but not PETA and other radical animal rights groups. PETA's Ingrid Newkirk has stated:

"In the end, I think it would be lovely if we stopped this whole notion of pets altogether."

and

"If people want toys, they should buy inanimate objects. If they want companionship, they should seek it with their own kind."

So PETA would be happy if pets went extinct, but I doubt that it would be OK with the 2/3 of the households in the US who enjoy having pets to enrich our lives.

Pet Population Problems are Grossly Exaggerated

The number of animals killed in shelters needs to be viewed in perspective. Let's look at some REAL facts and figures.

According to the 2011-2012 nationwide survey conducted by the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association, there are 165 *million* owned animals in the US. The numbers killed in shelters, an estimated 3-4 million, is less than 2% of the total number of all owned animals in the US.

And those killed are not all OWNED animals. There is a large population of unowned feral cats in the US. Nationwide, over half the shelter intakes are feral cats and their kittens. These should be trapped, neutered and released, not killed.

Considering that there are probably countless millions of feral cats out there to add to the total numbers of owned dogs and cats in the US, the percentage of those killed in shelters is minuscule. By the way, feral cats are not going to line up to comply with the law and be sterilized. Spay-neuter laws won't affect their numbers one whit.

Next, a goodly percentage of those animals who are killed are aged, ill, injured, aggressive, or brought in for owner-requested euthanasia. Another fun fact: In California in 2011, a full 11% of animals listed as shelter intakes were DOA. Yet these already-dead animals count as shelter intakes.

The APPMA survey further informs us that a full 78% of owned dogs are ALREADY spayed or neutered, and a whopping 88% of all owned cats are also spayed or neutered. So where are all these dogs and cats that need to be forcibly neutered?

They exist solely in the overactive imagination.

ANIMAL ABUSE IN OTHER COUNTRIES - PET IMPORTATION INTO THE USA

David Duchovny is quoted as saying that other countries "control stray dog populations by poisoning, hanging, throat slitting, beating to death, electrocution, and shooting."

What do Mr. Duchovny's statements about the inhumane treatment of dogs in other countries have to do with the conditions of dogs living right here? Absolutely nothing.

Abuse of animals is a separate issue from pet population control issues. Correlating animal abuse with population issues is a common logical fallacy. If there is any relationship, it is one of the US supporting abuse in other countries. US rescue groups import animals from these other, less humane, countries on a regular basis.

Why? Because we have a SHORTAGE of adoptable animals here in the continental US. Check out the websites of such groups as "Compassion Without Borders", "Save a Sato", "Dogs Without Borders", "Animal Rescue Team Taiwan", "Pets From Paradise" and many others. By importing from areas with purported abuse, we only perpetuate the cycle of animals raised under poor conditions.

According to the illogic presented in the Huffington Post article, it's not OK to breed our animals here in the US under regulated and humane conditions, but it is fine to import them from other countries, when they are bred under unknown, possibly abusive conditions? There have been so many instances of dogs imported by "rescues" exposing US citizens and animals to rabies and other problems that the USDA is currently writing regulations on the importation of puppies.

All in all, over 300,000 dogs are estimated to be imported each year (7), and even more are smuggled into the country illegally. (8)

Shelters in the New England states have to import dogs because they don't have enough to fill the demand. "North Shore Animal League" has made this into a full-time business. There are tens of thousands of dogs being imported to fill New England shelters that would otherwise be empty. And now, the New England Federation of Humane Societies recently held a conference in Maine.

One of the topics for discussion was:

"New England is Running Out of Kittens! Discussion of kitten importation and how we can get ahead of the issue." Facilitated by Bert Troughton, ASPCA (9)

I guess that pretty well blows the assertion out of the water about one cat producing 420,000 kittens. All New England would need would be one lone cat to supply them with all the kittens they would ever need.

THE TRUTH ABOUT PET "OVERPOPULATION"

Why the need to relocate and import dogs and cats? After all we have "overpopulation", right?

WRONG. The facts and figures paint a different picture.

According to shelter statistics recently assembled, there are approximately 3 million dogs and cats killed each year. According to shelter expert Nathan Winograd:

"How many need to find new homes? If shelters are doing their jobs comprehensively, just over 2 million (3 million on the high end). The remainder should be increased reclaims or in the case of feral cats, TNR'd." (trapped, neutered and released)

Winograd recounts that there are 23 million homes opening up each year for dogs and cats. Four million homes will adopt a shelter pet. Another 17 million have not decided where they will obtain their new pet, and could be influenced to adopt from a shelter.

"So, 17 million people for 2-3 million dogs and cats. Has this happened anywhere? Yes, there are many communities which have hit the 90th percentile in save rates. How long did it take them? They did it virtually overnight when new leadership committed to the No Kill philosophy and passionate about saving lives replaced long standing bureaucrats mired in defeatism and excuse making." (10)

So yes, Ms. Gauld, we CAN adopt our way out of this. We already have. We have a shortage of pets. Maybe someone needs to speak up and say, enough with the sales bans and the spay-neuter rhetoric. It's time to start breeding some nice animals before all we have left is street strays from distant lands where abuse is rampant. Do we really want to support the system of abuse in other countries as detailed by Mr. Duchovny?

The statement that breeding causes shelter animals to be killed is absurd. It makes about as much sense as saying that no one should have a baby as long as there are homeless people on the streets, or kids in orphanages. The logic is the same as that which our mothers used when they implored us to eat our peas, because there are starving children in other countries. Such statements are light on logic and heavy on guilt.

Again, why is anyone listening to the hypocrites over at PETA? Mandatory spay and neuter does not save lives; in fact, such mandates shorten the lives of our animals and cause increases in shelter intakes and deaths. (11) Perhaps a new law requiring celebrities to be muzzled in public would be more beneficial to society.

Our animals pay with their lives for these anti-animal spay-neuter laws.

The Price is WRONG, Bob.

- (1) <http://www.cfodconline.org/MSNFailures.htm>
- (2) <http://www.avma.org/onlnews/javma/may09/090515j.asp>
- (3) <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17516571>
- (4) <http://www.avma.org/onlnews/javma/mar10/100301g.asp>
- (5) www.petakillsanimals.com
- (6) <http://petakillsanimals.com/news.cfm>
- (7) <http://abcnews.go.com/Health/story?id=3765973&page=1>
- (8) <http://veterinarynews.dvm360.com/dvm/ArticleStandard/Article/detail/662872>
- (9) <http://www.newenglandfed.org/conference.html>
- (10) <http://www.nathanwinograd.com/?p=1390>
- (11) <http://www.nokilladvocacycenter.org/pdf/mandatorylaws.pdf>