

TITLE: DOGS AND CATS UNDER SIEGE
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DOGS AND CATS UNDER SIEGE

Puppy mills also known as puppy farms are large scale or extensive for-profit facilities that operate below humane standard. In many facilities the animals are considered nothing more than money producing commodities. Sadly, the animals' well-being and care are often ignored. The word 'mill' in the designation puppy mill was likely derived from the fast-paced, fast-selling inhumanity of the operations.

Puppy mills began to appear following the Second World War. Reacting to crop failures in the American Midwest, and a noticeably increased demand for puppies, farmers found an additional source of revenue. Initially, puppies were housed in chicken coops and rabbit hutches. Many of the farmers did not know how to properly care for the puppies and dogs in their care. Soon thereafter, a puppy selling enterprise developed, and to this day has been irreversible.

Ironically, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) encouraged the development of this enterprise by calling public attention to the fact that it was (in their opinion) a profitable business venture. The USDA is now eating its own words.

Today, The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), is the agency within the USDA responsible for regulating puppy mills under the Animal Welfare Act (AWA).

By USDA estimates, in America there are up to 3000 federally licensed commercial breeding facilities (the number of un-licensed facilities outweighs the aforementioned statistic). Missouri and Pennsylvania are America's most rampant puppy mill states. Other notorious states include Arkansas, Iowa, Oklahoma, Kansas and Nebraska. In Canada the Province of Quebec is their counterpart. Quebec's inadequate legislation, lack of proper enforcement and inadequate funding aggravate the problem.

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) and the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) estimate that there are nearly 10 thousand puppy mill operators in the U.S. The HSUS further estimates that more than 2 million puppies are sold every year in the U.S. Unfortunately, the number of puppies that don't make the grade is likely certainly higher. Their fate is often atrocious, to say the least.

The bulk of puppies and dogs that are sold end up in pet stores or under the ownership of people who don't know the facts about puppy mills, don't want to know, or simply don't care. Puppy mill operators want to make a profit, customers want a good deal. It's a cold-blooded business.

Many puppies destined to be sold are unceremoniously transported by pickup trucks, trucks, or airplane, for hundreds of miles or more without adequate food, water, ventilation, rest, or veterinary medical care. Many of the puppies die. Commonly, the puppy is between 6 and 8 weeks old. Worse yet, in countless cases, the mother of the puppies must witness them being snatched away from her. She's likely imprisoned inside a cage, or chained to an inanimate object, and breeding twice a year for several years, I can't imagine the mental anguish these mothers feel.

Unfortunately, puppy mill operations often result in horrible suffering and anguish for the victims (puppies and dogs). Homes of the victims may be tiny cages or makeshift structures, cramped and filthy containing fecal matter, urine, vomit, blood, puss, untreated open sores and other injuries, maggots, insects, parasites, worms; inadequate shelter from the elements (extreme cold, heat, humidity, wind), over-crowding, no place to run or hide from the constant sounds and from

aggressive dogs, inadequate and unsanitary food and water, rusty and/or splintery barbed wire, little or no veterinary medical care, little or no love or empathy.

Puppy mill owners, often being out of sight and out of mind from society as a whole, can reprimand or punish the dogs in their care in any way, shape, or form.

Many puppies are taken from their mothers too early. This is very stressful for the puppies and for their mothers; the word 'bitch' is commonly used to refer to their mothers. It is derogatory. I would prefer to use the word 'mother'. It's more sympathetic, empathetic, and less derogatory.

It's not uncommon for puppy mill dogs to never feel freedom, be petted, stroked, or feels loved.

Mothers are nothing short of breeding machines, literally forced to produce their first litters when they go into their first heat; thereafter following the same action with each subsequent heat. Having 2 litters per year is common. Sadly, mothers are used in this fashion until they're no longer able to be productive, at around 5 or 6 years of age. Thereafter, anything can happen. Considering this business, mercy and compassion are the exception not the rule.

Excessive, unnatural breeding, compounded with common in-breeding result in genetic and health problems for many of the imprisoned animals. The overall filthy and unsanitary conditions only aggravate matters. Oftentimes, dogs are crammed into cages, which are placed in stacks, thereby resulting in fecal matter and urine from above to drop onto the lower-decked animals.

If these cages are not properly cleaned on a regular basis fecal matter and urine will accumulate. Furthermore, vomit and natural saliva, drool, and discharges of blood and puss can also drop to lower decks. Matted hair and flea infestations are common. A dog's natural instinct to keep its area clean and to bury its droppings is literally abolished. Dogs with pre-existing allergies or severe itching suffer even more.

In puppy mills age does not signify beauty. On the contrary, it may result in a death sentence or being tossed away. Most prospective buyers don't want an old dog. Youth or puppy-hood is almost always sought after.

In many of these pathetic facilities, the only humans these dogs see are cold and uncaring. The memories of this languished, horrible life can't be forgotten by the dogs. Play is something not even imagined. Many of the dogs that are eventually sold may cower in fear of humans or lash out in fear, or be overly aggressive.

Below is a list of problems caused by puppy mill life:

- Rotten, decayed teeth (what is a dog without its teeth?).

- Jaw-related problems. In severe cases the jaw actually begins to dissolve.
- Ulcerated eyes.
- Severe stimulus overload. Too much barking noises, yelping, screaming, pouting; little or no time for real rest or sleep.
- Filthy and/or matted hair.
- A persistent horrendous stench.
- Injuries caused by fighting.
- Injuries caused by scraping against rusty wire mesh or cage bars.
- Severe injury caused by a leg or paw getting caught in the wire mesh floors, or bars of cages. The dog's natural instinct is to try to pull back its paw or limb. In severe cases the dog may lose a paw or a leg, thereby making it un-sellable; hence, it will likely be destroyed (often-times in a brutal manner). The puppy mill owner may actually blame the dog for its own suffering and demise.
- Frost or heat burns during summer or winter.
- Problems related to eating cheap quality, bulk food, and water that in severe cases may contain algae in it.
- Stereotyped actions (actions that become repetitive, compulsion-like: going around in circles hours-on-end, persistent barking at an inanimate object).
- Serious socialization problems.
- Unnatural eating habits.
- Temperament problems. Frustrated owners may lash out at the dog by punishing it, throwing it away, or dumping it in an animal shelter, thereby further aggravating the unwanted dog and cat overpopulation problem.
- Many dogs end up dying slow agonizing deaths, no one around to shed a single tear for them.
- Puppies born deformed or seriously ill may be left to die, or be killed.

But why should cold-blooded puppy mill operators and pet store owners in the U.S. really care. Read the text below:

"In a stunning setback in their efforts to increase enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA), USDA has suddenly reversed course and decided to, once again, tolerate substandard conditions at puppy mills. Dr. Chester Gipson, USDA's chief of enforcement for the AWA, recently told animal advocates that the USDA needs 'to enable breeders to sell their dogs to pet stores' and citing violations is an impediment to such sales." (Posted in Action Alert News, October 4, 2014; United Against Puppy

Mills: PA Dog Law Board Member Hired by USDA; the original source of the information came from The Missouri Alliance for Animal Legislation).

Furthermore, the USDA appears to be aiding substandard breeders, recently instructing their inspectors not to cite lesser violations because it would make it more difficult for breeders to sell their puppies.

"At a recent meeting of dog breeders, USDA officials told breeders that, "if at any time a violation has the potential of affecting your business, please call our office immediately and let us know," emphasizing that USDA stands ready to enable breeders to market their dogs to pet stores." (ibid)

Worse yet, the USDA has recently hired Julian Prager, a long-time puppy mill proponent and lobbyist. Mr. Prager is a long-time opponent of regulating puppy mills. The USDA has clearly shown that not only does it not care about the pain, agony, suffering, and deaths of many puppy mill puppies and dogs, but is ready and willing to support this horrible enterprise. Something's quite wrong here.

Injuries sustained in puppy mill life are quite painful, often life-long, and expensive, to say the least. Many rescue organizations are under-funded, employees are over-worked and underpaid, and there aren't enough people willing to volunteer. It costs several hundred dollars to rescue a typical dog, or considerably more depending on the injuries and amount of work needed. Unfortunately, dogs that are deemed too sickly to be helped must be put to sleep. The sadness and despair of this wicked industry is wide-encompassing, indeed, even reaching landfills. If you live in an area that has a high number of puppy mills and/or backyard breeders don't be surprised if you see dead dogs in a nearby landfill. These dogs, although sentient beings that have feelings, were literally dumped into a giant garbage heap. Every-so-often, you may see one of these dead dogs in a dumpster.

"Legally, if an individual treated their pet the way dogs in puppy mills are treated, they could be charged with cruelty or neglect. But these mills are viewed as 'agriculture' and too often, the agencies responsible for overseeing them treat them like they are raising corn, not pets," said Stephanie Shain, director of the Stop Puppy Mills Campaign for the HSUS . (By Mary-Jo Dionne; Modern Dog Magazine: Puppy Hell: The Horrors of Puppy Mills).

Most pet stores purchase their puppies from puppy mills. As a whole, they almost always deny the truth when asked from whom they purchased their animals from. Millions of dogs and cats are put to sleep in American animal shelters every single year. Pet stores are aggravating the problem.

Puppies can be sold online, in the For Sale section of newspapers, magazines or notice boards.

According to Boxworld.com a Backyard Breeder is "The average pet owner that breeds their dogs." Many backyard breeders are unlicensed, and certainly not declaring any or much of their income on their annual income tax forms. It's common for puppy mill owners and backyard breeders to refer to themselves as dog breeders, and their establishments are kennels, surrounding themselves with an aura of 'legitimacy'. They're lying to themselves and to potential customers. The typical backyard breeder is irresponsible, unqualified, and greedy.

Unscrupulous breeders are notorious for having false papers regarding pedigree and personal bios of the dogs in their care. Purebreds are more expensive and sought after than mixed breeds. Therefore, selling a so-called purebred will rake in more money. It may not be until the dog grows out of the puppy stage that the physical manifestations of the under-handed sales become visible.

"Puppy mill operators count on people to be so overwhelmed by the cuteness that they just can't leave the little bundle behind. But people must understand when they take the puppy home they've opened up a space for the next one to fill ... Put bluntly: There is one really easy way to stop puppy mills. And that is not to buy the puppies," says Stephanie Shain, director of the Stop Puppy Mills Campaign for the HSUS. (By Mary-Jo Dionne; Modern Dog Magazine: Puppy Hell: The Horrors of Puppy Mills).

With millions of canines being put to sleep in over-crowded animal shelters, it's insensitive for people to purchase dogs from pet stores, puppy mills, or under-handed dealers. Especially if the dog being sold is not spayed or neutered. Mixed-breed, and cross-bred dogs tend to be the healthier than pure breeds.

An actual pure-bred dog purchased from an under-handed dealer may be the product of incest (mother-son, father-daughter, brother-sister or artificial insemination). Furthermore, many purebred purchases are done on impulse.

Buyers typically have little or no knowledge about the breed in question, and they don't think in advance; it takes much time and effort, love, and money to take care of a dog or any other animal. Bringing it into your care, then tossing it away is quite a shock to the poor animal. Perhaps the animal feels that he or she is a family member. Then what? More pain and anguish for the dog? Furthermore, think about where this dog will end up. Some of them are sold off to animal labs. Therein, they may be experimented on, often-times in a merciless way.

If you plan to purchase a dog from a pet store, ask yourself, where did this dog come from, and what industry will my purchase help to maintain?

Whenever Hollywood makes a 'purebred dog movie', sales for that particular breed will rise thereafter. Unfortunately, the purchases are usually based on the physical appearance and behaviour of the dog that buyers have seen in the particular movie. All collies do not behave like Lassie, the same goes for Rin-Tin-Tin (German shepherd), Frasier's Eddie (Jack Russell Terrier), and Beethoven (St. Bernard), 101 Dalmatians and so on.

Below are some helpful tips to find a reputable dog breeder:

- Get a referral from a trusted person/s, good friends, relatives, or local breeding clubs. The contacted persons should speak highly and confidently of the breeder. Many kennel club websites have listings of reputable breeders for each breed, or you may contact them directly in person, or by phone. Most will respond.
- The breeder must be willing and able to present a legitimate, legal pedigree for any dog. A pedigree is a line of descent, lineage, ancestry; a genealogical and breeding chart.
- Reputable breeders will answer your questions in a straightforward and polite manner. Related work experience, relevant education, and whatever you deem important.
- The breeder loves and cares about every single dog and puppy in his/her care. When talking to the breeder, this characteristic should manifest itself.
- Potential buyers are interviewed and carefully screened. The facility is clean, every puppy and dog should appear healthy. You must visit the facility at least once before deciding to purchase any dog or puppy. I recommend that you make at least a few surprise visits beforehand. An honest reputable breeder will not mind, some will even encourage you to come back soon.
- Wholesome food and clean water is the rule.
- Dogs should not cower away or lash out at passersby, onlookers, or the breeder.
- The dogs should be properly socialized and shown love.
- Opportunities for exercise and play should be available.
- The breeder cares about the particular breed/s of dogs that are bred in the facility.
- Improving or protecting the breed is important.
- Only good, healthy dogs are bred. This applies to potential litters too.

- No mother is over-bred. Breeding is planned. Patience is involved. No 2 dogs are ever bred together in haste.
- Money is never the single or primary motive for breeding. In fact, little money, if ever is made.
- Honest breeders will have legitimate papers for every dog or puppy sold.
- Breeding is done on a limited basis. The facility cannot be over-crowded.
- Responsible breeders will breed if there is a demand for the puppies and there are prospective homes for them. Breeding puppies just for the sake of having large stocks is not done.
- The breeder understands that bringing puppies into this world entails a strong financial and work commitment.
- Ask about money back guarantee in case of genetic abnormalities that are later discovered; seeing it in writing is important. Always remember, most reputable breeders don't make much money in their enterprise.

Unchecked inbreeding of dogs can increase the likelihood of health problems including hip dysplasia (the ball part of the hip frequently slips out of the socket), patellar luxation (the kneecap slips out of place), blood clotting problems, immune system problems, diabetes, breathing difficulties (flat-faced dog breeds), hearing problems or total deafness, common ear infections, eye diseases, digestive problems, stomach or intestinal problems, bloating, cardiac arrest.

A positive aspect of purebred puppy dogs is general the predictability of physical traits. Your purebred puppy, so long as it is healthy and living in a good home will probably look like the typical adult of its breed. Although purebreds do have certain behavioural traits, upbringing, environment, life experiences, and health of the dog are important factors. Regarding health and behavioural characteristics, there is never a 100 percent guarantee for any dog. Cross-breed and mixed breed dogs also get sick. A complete physical exam and a legitimate pedigree chart are vital. Be prepared, do your homework, and raise your companion animal in a healthy and loving environment.

Humans have been breeding dogs for thousands of years, for the purpose of acquiring certain characteristics, attributes, and features. However, since the 19th century dog shows began to play a pivotal role in breed characteristics and physical attributes resulting in stringent standards, and unfortunately, genetic and physiological problems in purebreds. Money and 'showing off' a dog became a more common theme for people who wanted to enter their purebred dog in Kennel Club Shows. Male

show dogs that win championships have genes and desirable attributes that are most sought after. The dog may be bred often, resulting in popular sire syndrome. Unfortunately, any genetic disorders within the breed may be passed on quite easily. But on a positive side, assuming that the dog is raised in a normal and loving environment behavioural and physical traits of specific breeds are more predictable than those of mixed-breed dogs, especially a dog that is of unknown breed-types. A German shepherd puppy will not grow up to look like a Pug, Bulldog, or a Beagle, and so forth.

According to James Serpell, Professor of Ethics and Animal Welfare and Director of the Center for the Interaction of Animals and Society at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine, "Historically, a breeder's primary concern was to produce dogs that look like the breed standard ... Even if they did recognize health problems, breeders were too driven to produce what was perceived to be the most perfect breed." (By Claire Maldarelli and Scienceline, February 21, 2014; Scientific American.com: Although Purebred Dogs can be best in Show, are They Worst in Health?)

Broadly speaking there are 3 dog breeding methods:

- Out-crossing: The breeding of pedigrees wherein the first 6 generations have no common ancestors whatsoever.
- Line-breeding: A method of in-breeding with the intent of maintaining the offspring closely related to a superior ancestor.
- Inbreeding: This is incest. Pairs are always very closely related, father and daughter, mother and son, and siblings. In this kind of breeding the breeder will get the traits that he or she desires from the dogs, but there's a very strong risk of genetic and physical abnormalities.

Below are a few examples of possible inherited health risks pertaining to purebred dogs in particular ones that are purchased from a non-reputable breeder. BUYER CARE AND BEWARE!

- Dachshunds and Basset Hounds have long vertebrae and short legs increasing the likelihood of long-term back, knee, and joint pain and problems.
- Pugs, Bulldogs, Pekingese, and Boxers have smothered faces. Pugs and Bulldogs have noticeable breathing problems. It's common for Bulldog mothers to give birth by Caesarean section because the puppies' heads are too large and the mother's hips aren't large enough to accommodate them.

Pugs' have large exposed eyes making them prone to eye problems.

- Shar Pei dogs are susceptible to an assortment of skin infections because of their unnaturally, excessive wrinkled skin.
- German shepherd dogs are susceptible to hip dysplasia, a degenerative joint disease caused by an abnormal formation of the hip joint. This can be a very painful problem.
- Cavalier King Charles Spaniels and Brussels griffon are prone to Syringomyelia. The affected dog's skull is not large enough to properly encase the brain. Unfortunately, this problem has become extensive.
- Rottweiler dogs are susceptible to hip and elbow dysplasia, the prevalence of bone cancer is on the rise in this breed.

In April of 2011, Richmond, British Columbia instituted the first legal ban on puppies being sold in pet stores. On September 21, 2011 Toronto, Ontario banned the sale of puppies and kittens that were being bred explicitly for the pet store industry.

As of December 2011, one of Montreal's boroughs, Rosemont-La Petite Patrie passed a bylaw prohibiting the sales of animals in pet stores.

Although this is good news, it literally pales in comparison with the terrible news; animals suffering incredibly, many of them without respite or any chance of living a real life. Even in a more positive scenario, things still look very dim.

"There are little slaps on the wrist here and there, but nothing serious ... The USDA bends over backwards to help these folks; if they're out of line with the regulations, they'll give them years to improve," said Mary LaHay, President of Iowa Friends of Companion Animals. (By Josiah M. Hesse, September 15, 2014; Vice.com: I Worked for a Puppy Mill)

If a pet store owner or other seller of puppies or dogs states that their animals are purchased from USDA licensed breeders, it really doesn't mean much, at least not in the context of humane treatment of animals. The standard required for puppy mill dogs is dismal to say the least. Under the federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA), 'enforced' by the USDA, the dogs housed in breeding facilities can be kept in cages 6 inches longer in every direction. Worse yet, they can be stacked on top of each other (allowing for filth to drop and stick onto the lower levels and the animals therein) for their entire lives. This has got to be a worse fate than doing hard time in a maximum security prison. Sorry, there's more. In the vast majority of cases the USDA doesn't even bother to take legal

action against violators. Even when the USDA does go after an AWA violator, most of the time it has no teeth or claws; no bite.

We can do our part in helping to put puppy mills out of business:

- Never purchase a dog or cat from a pet store or filthy puppy mill.
- Save an animal. Go to your local animal shelter and purchase a dog or cat. The poor animal may be on death row. Don't be picky about only purchasing a purebred dog. Cross-bred and mixed-bred dogs and cats are just as beautiful as pure breeds. In fact, the former 2 tend to be healthier, without the genetic abnormalities apparent in many purebred dogs.
- Spay and neuter any dog in your care.
- Sign petitions write letters make phone calls to local, regional, and national representatives.
- Tell family and friends about the plight of puppy mill and kitten mill animals.
- Do volunteer work in animal shelters.
- Donate money, food, and whatever else you are able, to animal shelters and animal rescue organizations.
- Become knowledgeable about this topic. You'll be able to do more.
- Help to change laws in your jurisdiction, and entire country, better yet the entire world.
- GOD-willing, soon animal welfare will be one of the topics earnestly spoken about during election campaigns and in the United Nations.
- Please, never forget the victims of this heinous, cruel enterprise.

Although media attention commonly targets puppy mills kitten mills do exist, and they're infested with the same problems that puppy mills have.

Sometimes puppy mill operators switch to mass-producing kittens, taking advantage of the lack of attention given to this heinous enterprise. Other operators have inducted kittens into their puppy mills, and others have always had both species of animals.

Unfortunately, the advantage of having kittens and full-grown cats is that they're much smaller than dogs. Adult cats, in a literal sense are about the same size regardless of the breed. Furthermore, more of them can be crammed into a tiny,

filthy mesh cage, they require less food and water, and the dead ones can more easily be tossed into a garbage bag, or elsewhere.

Cats can more easily be hidden from public view than dogs, when being illegally transported. They don't bark loud, and they pose a considerably less physical threat to the transporters and puppy mill operators. Sadly many owners of kitten mills couldn't care less about the fate of the animals in their care. Filth, over-crowding, lack of or no veterinary medical care, serious food and water problems, lack of proper socialization and empathy, kittens snatched from their loving caring mothers, and little or no government oversight are festering problems. The Classifieds are a notable place to see ads from kitten mill operators.

Purebred cats are the main prize for kitten mill operators. However, it must be stated that except for the commonly known purebred cats, many potential buyers can't tell the difference between one breed and another. Therefore, it's easier for a kitten mill owner to sell off kittens as being from a particular breed, when they absolutely aren't.

Kitten mills tend to have certain characteristics including:

- Too many cats for the facility; they appear to be everywhere, unhealthy over-crowding.
- Many of the cats will be in cages or crates, others will be in the vicinity, roaming around, or listless; others will be staggering along.
- The cats will appear filthy, dirty, too thin, sickly, emaciated, and unhealthy.
- Fecal matter and urine will be in cages, crates, in the area, and on many or all of the cats. Blood (may be stained or oozing), puss, parasites, body infections, claws grown into the paw, raw-skinned paw, lacerations, wounds, matted hair, rotten teeth and/or eye infections may be present throughout the facility.
- The owners and workers will appear uncaring for the cats. If you choose one, it will be grabbed (in an uncaring manner) by the scruff and then placed in your hand. The cat is an article of trade to be sold.
- Owners and operators are not qualified to run the kitten mill.
- Lack of pedigree charts and other legal papers.
- Sales will likely be in cash, under the table.
- If you approach a particular cat it may cower away, run, or arch its back, bare its fangs and claws. If it's very ill, no response may be given.

- NEVER PURCHASE KITTENS AT A PET STORE.

Below is a very beautiful piece of work written by Jean Firth entitled A PETHOP KITTEN; the following also applies to puppies:

How long have I been here alone?
This pet-shop window as my home,
Confined in this small cage,
I only know it seems an age,
Since I was wrenched from all I'd known,
To face the world, afraid, alone.
To be, like hardware, toys or trash
Sold to someone strange for cash
Meanwhile to only know the hell
Of living in a wire cell,
Where I can only lie and pant,
As through the window, sunrays slant
To flood my cage, of wire made,
No corner cool to offer shade
Where I can lie and note the ways
Of people as they stop to gaze.
Some point a finger, other{s} smile
Some stand and study me {for} a while
Some hurry by or coldly stare
And plainly show their lack of care.
Then closing time, the shop folks gone,
I face the night, so drear and long,
When, still within my cage, I lie,
And dream of days not long gone by,
When I had mother, sisters too,
And life was good and all was new,
With space around me and above,
And all was warmth and all was love.
Life could not always be such bliss
Perhaps, but Lord! Not this. Not this.
Won't someone sigh as they pass by?
Won't someone cry? Won't someone buy?
Won't someone there do more than stare?
Won't someone, God of kittens, care?
(www.catsunited.com/html/kitten_mills.html)

Taking the word of the cat breeder, especially if he or she is someone you don't know very well, should never be considered adequate evidence of good faith. This is the cold-blooded truth.

You should learn the laws in your jurisdictional area regarding catteries and cat breeding. Your jurisdiction may or

may not require a cattery license. But then, this particular license is not necessarily evidence of good breeding practices. A jurisdiction might only require an annual fee, and other minor requirements for a legal license.

A cat breeder who solely uses his or her license as proof positive of legitimacy is someone you should not do business with. Some cat breeders don't have a license, but they're good breeders. If the breeder tells you that all cats from a particular breed have certain medical and physical problems, watch out. This sounds like a justification for selling a sickly cat/s from a particular breed. Cats for sale must be healthy and of sound mind. As in the case of dog breeders, you should have the right to bring your own veterinarian to examine a cat/s you are interested in buying. If the breeder rejects this idea please walk away; never come back. Furthermore, tell your family and friends about what happened. It is best to warn others.

Disreputable breeders will have too many cats on the premises, and too many breeds. The seller will have little or no knowledge about the breed/s in question.

Ask the cat breeder the following questions:

- How much experience do you have?
- How many cats do you have, and how many do you breed, and from what breeds?
- I want to see the entire facility and all the cats therein.
- Ask how much formal education he or she has regarding the particular breed of cat in question.
- Does he or she belong to a cat organization?
- Has he or she ever participated in a cat show/s?
- Ask for pedigree charts, a health certificate.

Non-reputable breeders often can't answer questions about the breed in a straightforward manner, or about the breed's genetic abnormalities. They tend to speak ill of other breeders. He or she appears unconcerned about the cats in the facility, and doesn't care about what kind of home you'll be providing for the cat/s that you purchase. Pedigreed kittens must not be sold under the age of 10 weeks. Most are sold between the ages of 3 to 4 months. You have a right to see their mother.

Horrible things will be seen in the facility; excuses will be given to justify the situation. Cats are sold on a whim. There will be no champion cats in the facility.

Reputable breeders care about every single cat in the facility, and will have a good working knowledge of the breed in question. The betterment of the breed is vitally important. The

breeder will give a health guarantee and ensure a replacement guarantee.

Mentally unstable breeders, known as hoarders may have hundreds of cats, dogs, and other animals on their property. Many will be dead, dying, starving, and in extreme despair. In cases such as this, you must notify the police. It's a matter of life and death, freedom or horrible incarceration, happiness and joy or extreme pain, anguish, and despair.

Regarding cat purchases plan ahead be organized, and know exactly what you want. Learn about the particular breed of cat you intend to bring home, and what you need to do to provide it a safe and happy home. Furthermore, health, nutrition, and play are very important issues.

If you have children or other animals in your home, take this into consideration. The cat must be safe, happy, secure, and welcome in your home. Do not purchase a cat from a pet store, internet, or from the classified ads of a newspaper.

If on a later date you must give away your cat, DO NOT place an ad in a paper that reads 'FREE TO A GOOD HOME'. This is one of the things that under-handed and non-caring people look for when they want a cat. Give your cat to a very trusted relative or friend. Please don't take any chances. Your cat or dog could end up in an animal lab, or under the care of a very nasty person/s, tossed into the street, or on death row in an animal shelter.

Although many puppy and kitten mills operate to the point of impunity, hidden from the public and law enforcement's eyes, raids do occur. Although we want more mills to be raided the more raids that do occur, the more sad and terrible news we will hear. Regardless, the best case scenario is a full-scale legal raid, immediate confiscation of every single animal on the premises, transferring them to a much more humane place, veterinary medical care, good wholesome food, clean water, and lots of loving care. Unfortunately, even in this kind of sought after scenario, some or many of the salvaged animals will suffer from lifelong physical and emotional problems others must be put to sleep. We must work together, be persistent, and always keep in mind that there are an enormous number of canines and felines suffering in many different mills.

A raid on a kitten mill occurred on January 31, 2014, in Savoy Massachusetts. A total of 31 cats ranging in age from 9 weeks to 7 years were rescued from a domicile. Every single rescued cat needed urgent medical care. Problems included serious upper respiratory infections that were so awful blood was oozing from their mouths and noses, 2 cats each had to lose a left eye resulting from serious infection another cat will have to have both of its eyes removed (how sad).

The cats were living in their own feces and urine, no food was visible, the drinking water was green from the presence of mildew; anaemia, scabs, abrasions and scars, and internal parasites were other problems.

The owner of the domicile had no choice but to surrender all of the cats and kittens in his care. He is facing numerous animal cruelty charges. This fellow was selling his cats online, for \$250 each. Reputable breeders DO NOT sell their animals in this manner.

"This is pretty severe ... I've never seen upper respiratory infections to the point where there is blood coming out of their faces. One cat -- I'm not sure he's going to make it," said Carrie Loholdt, animal control officer of Savoy. (By Nicole Adams, February 6, 2014; Examiner.com: Kitten Mill Raided; Cats Found Bleeding from Noses and Mouths).

In February of 2014 HSUS rescue workers removed 183 animals from a puppy mill in Jefferson County Arkansas, located roughly 30 miles south of Little Rock. The animals on the premises included dogs, cats, turtles, horses, rabbits, chickens, and exotic birds. Authorities said it was the most notable puppy mill bust in the county's history.

Initially, James and Tara Best, the owners of the animals and a 40 acre farm were issued misdemeanour citations. Fortunately, there appears to be good news on the horizon; "In all likelihood based on some of the animals' conditions here, those charges will be updated to aggravated animal cruelty which is a felony ... We've had prior complaints in the past but never on this scale," said sheriff's spokesman Major Lafayette Woods. (By Kevin Trager and Kaitlin Barger, KTHV-TV, Little Rock, Arkansas, February 28, 2014; USA Today: 183 animals seized from suspected Ark. puppy mill).

Some of the animals were covered in fecal matter they had no access to clean water or food. Many of the animals appeared sickly, seriously underweight; eye diseases and problems were apparent, and so were dental problems. Some animals had matted hair. The scent in the puppy mill was putrid and noxious, totally unsuitable for the suffering animals therein.

Understandably, many of the animals on the premises were quite shaken and in a state of mental anguish and severe anxiety. "When I opened the door, there was an overwhelming smell of ammonia from the urine and feces on the property ... Not only was it in the cages and the living areas of the animals, but it was also on the floors," said Major Lafayette Woods (ibid).

"I held dogs that were trembling and shaking and with heavy mats ... One looked like there was something wrong with its jaw," said Humane Society Spokesman Dale Bartlett. (ibid)

On September 16, 2011 more than 500 dogs from various breeds ranging in age from puppies to adults were rescued from a horrible puppy mill located in a rural area west of Montreal. Until to 2011, it was the largest seizure in Quebec history. Quebec is the puppy mill capital of North America, with numerous unregulated breeding operations in Montreal alone.

Wholesome food and clean water were noticeably insufficient, skin and respiratory problems were widespread amongst the sickly dogs. Thankfully many of the dogs were cared for by Humane Society International, promptly transporting them to a treatment center. Some dogs were treated on the premises.

"This is definitely one the largest operations that we've ever come across in Canada ... It also involve some of the worst conditions we have seen to date. I personally can say that I found it heartbreaking to see what these dogs have endured ... They just so desperately need a second chance so we'll be turning to the public for that," said Lauren Scott, a spokeswoman for the organization who was at the site. (By Benjamin Shingler, September 17, 2011; The Globe and Mail: Hundreds of Dogs Seized from Quebec Puppy Mill in Mass-Scale Animal Abuse Case)

Greyhound racing is an inherently cruel and inhumane sport. Racing dogs are forced to run at commercial racetracks for the benefit of callous, money hungry owners, and a crowd that until recently didn't seem to understand or want to understand the horrible nature of this sport. Gambling revenues bring in much money for the states that allow this sport. Of course, there's much illegal gambling too.

Absolutely nothing good comes out of this for the racing dogs. This sport is for the benefit of others. It would be sad enough to stop there, unfortunately, there's more bad news. Many of the racing dogs are housed in tiny, filthy cages, where they're barely able to, and often-times unable to stand or turn some are tethered for extended periods of time. At the racetrack, dogs may be kept in kennels.

Thousands of racing dogs are retired each year; the vast majority of them are not placed in homes. What happens to the remaining dogs? Many are brutally killed, others are tossed away, and still others may be dumped into animal shelters, worsening the over-crowding problem therein. And yet other race dogs are abandoned literally allowed to starve and dehydrate to death. Some 'retirees' are sold off to animal labs. Therein, they will be subjected to painful and intrusive experiments. And they're literally forgotten, or hidden from the public's eye. These poor dogs have never seen a loving or caring human.

Some killed greyhounds are tossed into dumpsters, garbage cans, on waste grounds, or some other place. After all, they're

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