Redemption: The Myth of Pet Overpopulation and the No-Kill Revolution in America

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Redemption: The Myth of Pet Overpopulation and the No-Kill Revolution in America
by Nathan J. Winograd
Almaden Books, 238 pages

It's not hard to be discouraged by the appalling numbers of healthy, loving, adoptable dogs in America's animal shelters who are systematically put to death. Don't be discouraged - do something about it instead. Get involved at your local animal shelter, and make yourself aware of what goes on at such places across the country. A great way to do that is by reading Nathan J. Winograd's excellent, empowering new book. Winograd loves animals so much, he left his career as a successful criminal prosecutor and corporate attorney to dedicate himself to shelter reform. His compelling writings on the subject have been featured in Reader's Digest, USA Today, and The Washington Post, among many other publications.

Leavening heartbreak with humor, Redemption offers a "simple yet highly effective three-step process" that not only increases public satisfaction (resulting in increased volunteerism and adoptions) but also reduces costs and generates revenues: 1. Stop the killing. 2. Stop the killing. 3. Stop the killing. "There is hope," promises the author, who will appear at the Harrah's in Reno, Nevada on Tuesday, November 6th to present his seminar, "Building a No Kill Community"; he'll also sign and sell copies of his book, with all proceeds benefiting the programs and services of the national No Kill Advocacy Center, of which he is the founder and director. (There's no cost to attend the presentation/signing, but registration is recommended).

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In this no-kill manifesto, attorney Nathan Winograd identifies the moment when he believes the budding humane movement lost its way. Overruling the wishes of its founder, Henry Bergh, ASPCA agreed in the late 1800s to operate New York’s cruelly primitive dog pounds. Thus, the organization became accustomed to killing animals, albeit more compassionately than under the city’s. He also explodes the claim of inherent overpopulation, demonstrating that sufficient homes are available if only they can be more effectively linked with needy animals. Finally, Winograd indicts the humane establishment for seeking to discredit rather than embrace these successes. There is no pet “over-population” problem but there is a pet relinquishment problem and Winograd has very practical and extremely effective solutions to deal with it. His goals are definitely achievable. Unfortunately, we have a heated cultural war going on with short-sighted “animal rights” adherents attacking all breeders, accusing us of being the source of the problem and proposing counter-productive legislation. However, I must admit I find the idea of calling pet overpopulation a “myth” to be a dangerous statement. This is something that has SOME merit—as we don’t need to kill millions of healthy animals in shelters if they are properly marketed and take the place of puppy mill or breeder animals.