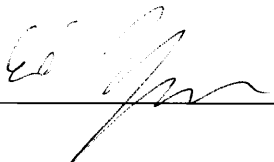



06 B017I
JS6-1002-51

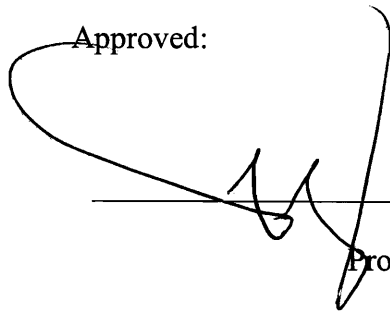
Animal Care Video
An Interactive Qualifying Project Report
submitted to the Faculty
of the
WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Bachelor of Science
by


Eric Magnuson


Kelly Martin

Date: October 12, 2006

Approved:


Professor John Sanbonmatsu

1. animals
2. education
3. video

Abstract:

This project explores the treatment of companion animals in today's society and ways in which it can be improved. A draft 20 minute video segment was produced for public access television based on interviews with professionals working in animal related fields.

Acknowledgements

We would like to recognize the following people for their help with this project:

Dr. Lynne O'Neil
Leife Wheeler
Patty Migneault
John Sanbonmatsu

Thank you!

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Authorship Page	v
1. Introduction	1
2. A Brief History of Pet Keeping	3
3. Philosophy	
3.1. Custody vs. Ownership	7
3.2. Eric	
4. Methodology	17
5. Conclusion	25
6. Bibliography	26
7. Appendices	
Appendix A- Interview with Dr. Lynne O’Neil	27
Appendix B- Interview with Patty Migneault	28
Appendix C- Interview with Liefe Wheeler	29
Appendix D- Voiceover Script	30

Abstract	KM
Acknowledgements	KM
8. Introduction	KM
9. History of Pets in the United States	KM
10. Philosophy	
10.1. Kelly: Custody vs. Ownership	KM
10.2. Eric	EM
11. Methodology	Both
12. Conclusion	KM
13. Bibliography	
14. Appendices	
14.1. Interviews	
14.1.1. Dr. Lynn O'Neil	KM
14.1.2. Patty Migneault	KM
14.1.3. Lief Wheeler	KM
14.1.4. Script	All

Introduction

For three years now, Kelly has spent one day a week at a nearby greyhound rescue center. It is at a place of this nature where the drastic schism in the customary and casual treatment of animals - specifically pets - makes its most obvious appearance. The many different facets of pets and pet ownership, and the problems that lie therein, are juxtaposed for ready comparison. The dogs which are brought into this particular shelter are an industry, a sport, a cause; but they are also living beings, individuals, with unique and identifiable personalities. The hope for these animals is that some day they will be able to be part of more than just a byproduct of the industry and become part of a loving family which will care for each dog as one of their own. These greyhounds are just one of many examples of the disconnect between many of the ideas and customs surrounding pets and their treatment in the United States today.

This project developed from our belief that the public should be better educated about companion animals and society's treatment of them. It is our feeling that many new pet owners do not give adequate thought to all the ways in which bringing an animal into their family changes their life and are often times not well equipped to provide the animal with what it needs to be healthy and happy. These situations often end up in tragedy for both the family and the animal. This was the case with one such family. Their 17 year old daughter experienced a terrible loss when her best friend committed suicide. Hoping to help their daughter through this loss, the family decided to adopt a dog as the friend had worked at a shelter and always wanted a greyhound. The adopted greyhound was with the family for a mere 6 months, before it was decided that with the

daughter going off to college, the parents simply would not have time for him. The parents went about looking for a new home for the dog and the daughter, understandable so, became extremely upset at going through the loss of yet another friend. This situation could have been avoided had the family put more thought into the turns their lives would take in the future. It is not as if they experienced an unexpected move, they knew that the daughter would be leaving for college. This should have been thought of before the animal was brought home. This is just one of the many examples of things that people do not take into consideration before bringing an animal home.

When Kelly's family was approached by the local public access channel about the possibility of producing a show for the channel to air on companion animals we knew that this could be a great resource for public education. From there the idea of an educational video based around interviews with professionals who work with pets arose.

In the paper that follows we will explore the history of pet animals in the United States, we will present and defend some of the many philosophical ideas around animal treatment, and we will explain the process used while creating the video. While the video has not been completed quite to our satisfaction it is our hope for the future that it will continue to be improved, in order to be able to air it on the public access television channel as originally intended.

A Brief History of Pets Keeping

The history of domestication is tightly woven into the history of humans. The domestication of goats and sheep over 10,000 years ago allowed for humans to undergo a drastic change in their way of living. Goats and sheep were just the beginning, soon followed the domestication of dogs, deer, horses, cats, camels, buffalo, cattle and many other animals (Caras 47). They had a myriad of uses. Stock animals like goats and cows provided food, sheep provided wool for clothing, horses were a means of transportation, cats kept barns free of vermin, dogs guarded homes and flocks. However, not all animals were used for food or labor; some animals were kept “simply for the purposes of delight, some people just liked animals (Grier 20)”. It is estimated that dogs have been living with humans for some 14,000 years, perhaps longer (Caras 75). Over the vast period of time the work and nature of pet animals has changed considerably.

The word “pet” evolved slowly, meaning a spoiled child in the 1500s, shifting to mean a hand reared lamb in the 1800s, and eventually into its meaning today. Before the development of the word “pet”, animals who were singled out as being special or given names were often referred to as “favorites” (Grier 6). Of course as we have seen, “favorites” were not the only animals that humans lived in close quarters with.

Historically humans worked closely with animals that were used primarily for food and as laborers. What makes pets different from animals with other uses is “that they have been singled out by human beings. (Grier 8)”. They have been given a name, an identity that gives them a place in this human world. Over the years people have kept many different species as pets. From small furry “pocket pets”, to aquariums stocked full of

fish, to caged birds that were common in the ninetieth and early twentieth centuries.

Each pet fills a little different need. Grier explains some of the reasons that people keep them.

Pets are kept for many reasons. Some are regarded primarily for the beauty of their bodies or their movements; others make beautiful sounds. Some are living toys; others are symbols of our desires for social status. Many pets combine more than one of these characteristics; high status show dogs may also be their owners' "best friends" (7).

Out of all these species two have proven to be the most compatible with modern human routine, the dog and the cat.

Today just over 60% of American households have at least one pet, 77.7 million cats and 65 million dogs reside in homes around the country (Grier 9). Millions of people spend hundreds of dollars on their animals trying to keep them happy and healthy. Americans spent a total of \$34.4 billion dollars on the pet industry in 2004 (Grier 316). Yet, despite the billions of dollars spent and the millions of animals cared for, still millions more slip through the cracks. The Humane Society of the United States estimates that between 6 and 8 million cats and dogs enter shelters each year. About half of those animals are lucky enough to be adopted, the other half are euthanized. The fact that an estimated 4 million animals are being killed annually, simply because there is no where to put them, is very disturbing ("HSUS Pet Estimates").

There is no simple fix for animal overpopulation, because it is a problem that stems from many different sources. "As the United States became a modern industrial and commercial society, pet animals occupied another, increasingly important role. They were commodities, reared specifically for the purposes of sale, to be purchased as inventory by store owners and as goods by consumers. (Grier 231)" This idea of pets as

merchandise to be bought and sold is one of the main causes of animal overpopulation. The pet industry as it is today is relatively young. A couple of hundred years ago pets were not something that was bought and sold, but rather shared among neighbors or caught in the wild. When a favorite animal had babies the young would be given away to neighboring families. Children would pilfer baby birds from nests or scrounge for fish in local ponds. It is only in the last hundred years that animals have been specifically bred for resale and sold in stores (Grier 232). However, there is one terribly large problem with the idea of animals as products, what does one do with them when they are no longer wanted. When the living room needs to be redecorated and the couch no longer matches it gets thrown away. The same is often true with animals. A puppy bought as a gift for a young child grows up and no longer has a place in the home. Then what?

The answer to the problem, we believe, lies in education and changing the way the public thinks about pets. Animals should not be thought of as merchandise, goods, or an object to own, but rather as living beings. Luckily, in the last few decades our ideas surrounding animals and their treatment have shifted considerably. That's not to say that it has been a quick change, the first welfare acts in the country were passed in the 1820s. It has long been considered wrong to treat an animal cruelly. Children are taught kindness through animals. The idea that children who take pleasure in causing pain to animals will grow up to be cruel to humans as well, is hundreds of years old. However, causing pain to animals was not only considered wrong because it produced cruel people, but also because it was recognized that animals felt pain (Grier 130). Even still, most of the ideas surrounding animals involved a hierarchy in which humans were at the top, allowing the use of animals for human benefit when it was felt necessary. This is still by

far the case today, however there are more and more people supporting the ideas of animal rights and equality for other species.

The question of what distinguishes the human species from all the others sharing the earth with us has been debated for thousands of years with unsurprisingly, no concrete answer. In the following sections we will explore more deeply the philosophical ideas surrounding pet treatment and ownership.

Custody vs. Ownership

Kelly Martin

I believe that animals have moral standing. There is no reason that I can come up with or that I have read that leads me to believe otherwise. Here I will present some of the historical arguments surrounding animal rights. I will then go on to explain the more recent ideas in animal rights philosophy including those of Tom Regan and Peter Singer, the leading deontological and utilitarian thinkers on the subject. Finally I will attempt to use these ideas to criticize the current treatment of companion animals or pets, and suggest the alternative where custody over a pet is granted rather than the current status of property.

Throughout history animals (animals, refers to all non-human animals) have been used by humans. Today they provide food, companionship, research tools, clothing, entertainment, and are used to manufacture numerous products that we use every day. We can not go through a single day in our life without in some way coming in contact with animals or animal products. More than 60% of households in the United States share their home with a dog or cat companion animal (Grier 9). One would think that with our lives so tightly intertwined with the lives of other beings we would have given some thought to the creatures around us. However, surprisingly or perhaps not so surprisingly, we give little thought to the other living things we share this world with.

The struggle to find the correct place for animals in the ethics of society is not a new one. Numerous philosophers over the centuries have held a view on non-human

animal's moral standing. Most of them believed that using animals for human gain was easily justified.

Ancient Greek philosophers had varying thoughts on the moral status of animals. Aristotle, Plato, and Socrates, combined some of these ideas into the "Great Chain of Being".

It worked like this: An infinite number of finely graded forms were arranged along the ladder. Creatures who were barely alive occupied the lowest rungs. Above them ranged the sentient beings, conscious, perhaps able to experience. Rational beings inhabited higher rungs, with the most rational human beings on the highest rungs that could be assigned to beings with physical bodies.... The lower-rung dwellers were designed to serve the higher-rung dwellers, for they generated more heat, had souls made of better stuff, and were more perfect (Wise, *Rattling the Cage* 13).

The "great chain of being" did not include only animals, but plants as well. Everything on the earth had its place along the chain. It was thought that plants were on the earth for the purpose of being eaten by the animals above them on the chain. Likewise, animals were on the earth for the use of higher beings, humans. So, the Greek philosophers added to the idea of human supremacy.

As we progress through the ages of philosophical thinkers we reach some that thought even less of animals. Descartes maintained that animals were biological machines. They did not possess souls and therefore, had no moral standing. Regardless of the fact that other animals resemble us closely biologically speaking, he believed that all of their actions could be explained using science. What separated us from animals was the fact that we had a mind and other animals did not. To Descartes it was the possession of a mind that was important in the decision of whether animals had moral

standing. Descartes therefore concluded that we were both free to use animals as we wanted and we did not need to worry about harming them (Rowan 255).

I completely reject Descartes beliefs that animals are simply machines. If we are to define biological beings as machines, then surely all animals including humans are machines. The scientific explanations for the behaviors of animals are the same explanations for the behaviors of humans. For example, pain is a natural defense mechanism that keeps biological systems from harming themselves. If a creature is not able to feel pain then it has no way to tell that it is being harmed and would quickly die. Evolutionarily speaking, pain is extremely important. Both humans and non-human animals experience pain for this reason.

Descartes claimed that animals did not have a mind. I argue that at least higher animals do. Let's take our closest cousin, the chimpanzee. Steven Wise discusses chimpanzee cognition extensively in his book Rattling the Cage. He informs us that our DNA is 99.5% similar to that of the chimpanzee.

Human and chimpanzee brains certainly appear similar. Human brains weigh perhaps three pounds. Chimpanzee brain weighs about one pound. Our brains contain between 10 billion and 100 trillion neurons. That humans have triple the number of neurons of chimpanzees almost certainly makes no difference when such vast numbers are involved (133).

Our brains are similar in their organization as well. Chimpanzees can learn sign language, use tools, and recognize themselves in mirrors. It is quite clear that they possess a mind. Dogs on the other hand do not seem to be quite as good at jumping through the mental hoops that we set up for them, but do they have a mind? They don't seem to respond to self recognition tests, however anyone who shares their home with a dog will tell you that they are capable of some form of thought (Wise, Drawing the Line

117). Dogs can learn simple commands, follow eye movement and read body language. Some seem to be waiting at the door long before their human companions have announced that they are going on a walk. Dogs most definitely have a mind, but it may not be as complex as that of the human or the chimpanzee.

Kant drew the line of moral standing between humans and animals for a different reason. He categorized humans as moral agents and animals as moral patients. He believed that to be a moral agent one had to be self-conscious and have the ability to think morally.

Animals are not autonomous or self-conscious in Kant's sense, and so cannot be considered moral agents. For Kant, moral obligations and moral rights apply to agents alone. As moral patients, animals are accorded no respect. They are simply lumped together with mere things as far as the theory of moral standing is concerned (Franklin 31).

However, Kant did believe that humans possessed an indirect duty to be kind to other animals. When we cause animals harm or death we are acting inhumanely and if we were to expand these inhumane practices beyond our relations with other animals and into our relations with humans we would in this way violate the rights of moral agents (Franklin 37). While Kant didn't give animals moral standing he did acknowledge this connection between ourselves and other beings.

Kant's belief that the mistreatment of animals will affect our treatment of humans only makes sense if animals are similar to us. Therefore they must possess some moral standing beyond what he grants them. I quote Franklin on this matter "If the infliction of pain and death on animals, without legitimating cause, is not cruel per se, why should it harden us towards humans?" (Franklin 37). Our treatment of non-sentient objects does not influence our treatment of human beings. A construction worker is not a cruel person

or more prone to violence because he spends his days beating a nail into a beam with a hammer.

While animals are not on the same mental level as a fully functioning adult human, this does not mean that it is morally justified to treat them poorly. We do not condone the torture of children or babies simply because they do not have the same mental abilities as adults. We demand equality for people with various handicaps. What matters in determining whether a being has moral value is not the being's mental capacity or capacity for spoken language, but rather its capacity for pain or suffering. This is the point that Peter Singer argues, a point with which I agree. Unlike Kant's reasoning that an animal should be treated kindly, because our treatment of animals influences our treatment of humans, Singer believes that a being's suffering should always be recognized and prevented if possible.

If a being suffers there can be no moral justification for refusing to take that suffering into consideration, No matter what the nature of the being, the principle of equality requires that its suffering be counted equally with the like suffering- insofar as rough comparisons can be made- of any other being (Singer 8).

Simply the ability to suffer is enough for Singer to grant animals moral standing.

On the other hand Tom Regan argues that since animals are subjects-of-a-life, this is what entitles them to rights. Regan explains what he calls a subject-of-a-life:

Like us, these animals are in the world, aware of the world, and aware of what happens to them. And, like us, what happens to these animals matters to them, whether anyone else cares about them or not. Despite our many differences, humans and other mammals are the same in one crucial, fundamental respect: we and they, are subjects-of-a-life (Regan 59).

There is no situation we could be put in where Regan would agree that taking the life of a creature which can fit this definition as being a subject-of-a-life, is the right course of

action. I disagree with this. I believe that there could be a case where the harm of a being can be justified. This is true not only of the lives of animals, but the lives of humans as well. For example, say someone is driving along a busy street, when a squirrel dashes out into the road. There is not enough time for the driver to stop, so they are faced with the decision to swerve around the animal or keep going. Chances are in a busy street the driver is not going to be able to safely avoid both the animal and the oncoming traffic, so they keep going. The driver is justified in doing this because by swerving he risks seriously injuring himself, a passenger, or someone in another car. Of course, it is not certain that anyone will be injured, but it is also not certain that the squirrel will be injured. Here the choice must be made to risk the injury and death of an animal.

Knowing that I agree with Singer's ideas that animals have the ability to suffer and we therefore are not acting morally if we are to cause them suffering, we have to look at the keeping of companion animals to determine if this ownership of another creature's life causes suffering.

I believe that an important distinction must be made between domesticated animals and wild species. A wild species should in most cases not be kept as a pet in the general sense. It is nearly impossible to provide adequate housing, food, and entertainment to keep most wild animals healthy and comfortable. Domesticated animals, more specifically cats and dogs, on the other hand have evolved to a point where they can not really take care of themselves in the man-made world that they populate. They have no natural habitat and would wreak havoc on the habitats and populations of

native species. These animals have actually been genetically modified by selective breeding. Caras describes many of the ways that dogs differ from their canine ancestors,

There are distinct characteristics that make it not only possible but also relatively easy to separate wolf bones from those of domestic dogs... Dog muzzles are shorter than wolf muzzles, and the teeth are smaller and closer as a result. The brain capacity of the wolf is half again as large as that of a dog of the same size... In all of this, the matter of neoteny is of paramount importance. Neotony is the retention of juvenile characteristics into adult years. A dog, in one very real sense, is a wolf cub that won't ever grow up (Caras 82).

Releasing all the animals who have been domesticated and bred to be compatible with our way of life, would lead to death for many of these animals, an increase in animal related accidents harming both humans and the animals, and a destruction of native species. This leaves a few choices, we eradicate these species or we go on caring for them in a way similar to, but not exactly like, what we do today. Eradication of a species is not a moral way to solve the problem. It strikes me as far too similar to genocide. I believe it is possible to care for pets in a morally responsible way, but this will require a couple of major changes. We must stop thinking of pets as possessions and we must stop treating pets like merchandise.

A shift in the way we think about our companion animals has begun, one that will hopefully lead to thinking of animal care more in terms of the responsibilities we have towards a being capable of suffering, rather than the ownership of an object. Dogs and cats when well taken care of are quite content with the lives they live in the company of humans. They have been bred for thousands of years to be this way, "unconsciously or not, we have bred dogs to our specifications and enculturated them (Wise, Drawing the Line 115)." The moral dilemma is not whether we should keep animals at all, but rather

how we should think of them morally and the legal status that they should occupy.

Rather than owning a pet, I believe we should have custody of a pet.

Custody comes with a very different set of responsibilities than ownership. A person with the custody of an animal has the responsibility to keep them physically comfortable as well as mentally content. Food, water, and shelter are not enough for an animal. Animals have been found to suffer from mental illnesses much like ourselves. Drugs previously prescribed to humans are now prescribed to animals to treat the same illnesses such as the use of Prozac to prevent feather plucking in parrots (Nature). From this we can conclude that animals have the same need for mental stimuli as we do. These needs are not the needs of an inanimate object over which we can have possession.

When we own an object we often times have some responsibility to take care of it for the sake of others and ourselves. For example, we have a responsibility to keep the brakes working on our automobile in order to prevent harming ourselves and others in an accident. Custody would mean we have a responsibility to take care of an animal for the sake of the animal rather than simply ourselves and the humans around us. We come back here to Singer's point on preventing suffering. Someone who has custody of an animal must keep the animal from suffering, both in a physical sense and in a mental sense.

Changing from the idea of ownership to custody also means changing the pet industry. Treating animals as merchandise causes huge amounts of suffering. When animals are a way for someone to make money the quality of care the animals receive decreases in order to raise profits. Puppy mills and commercial breeders, farms that breed large quantities of dogs, are the prime example of this. Often times these places

breed the current “fad” in dog breeds. The puppies are sold to pet stores where it is easy for someone to make a spur of the moment decision to buy a pet without thinking about the consequences. Not only does thinking of pets as commodities lead to problems before the animals are purchase, but it leads to problems after they have been purchased as well. When an animal is bought without forethought the family is often unaware of the size of the commitment the animal requires. This can lead to inappropriate care for the animal, abandonment, or surrender to a shelter.

Some may argue against custody, maintaining that animals should remain in the status of objects over which we have ownership, believing that because an animal can not take responsibility for themselves someone must own them. This argument has two sides to it. On one hand, an animal must be owned for its own protection and on the other an animal must be owned to protect others from it. I completely disagree with this argument. First of all, why must all animals be owned by someone to protect them? Wildlife is not under the ownership of a human, but it is equally wrong to harm wild animals as it would be to harm someone’s pet. The claim that ownership affords protection to animals, is true if the owner is interested in keeping the animal safe. Custody would most certainly provide protection, both from other people and from the person into whose care the animal is entrusted.

Beyond that, I disagree with the assumption that if a being can not be responsible for its actions someone must own it. We do not own our children. Parents have a responsibility for them, but it is not one of ownership. They can not treat them as they do a toaster. They are responsible not only for the actions of the child, but for its needs as well.

This leads me to conclude that our current beliefs and legal standards are not adequate in regards to the status of pets. Pets are more than simply objects over which we can have ownership. People should rather be granted custody, meaning they are responsible for appropriate care, which should yield a healthy, happy member of the family instead of a legal possession.

Methodology

This project arose from the need for material to be used on a public access cable channel in Groton, Massachusetts. The initial idea was a show that would help raise public awareness about pet related issues. Having a show about such issues seemed like a great idea for public access television. The channel is free for those who have some form of cable and reaches a lot of people in a town with a population of just over 10,000. Of the three main mediums by which one can address the public; writing, such as journals or newspapers, radio, or film; film requires the least amount of work on the part of the viewer. It is easily accessible, although more expensive as it requires having cable access. It is hoped that this project will set a foundation for an ongoing show.

The short segment (about 20 minutes) that has been produced addresses some of the most basic and yet at the same time the most complicated issues surrounding pet ownership. The segment is based on interviews with professionals working in animal related fields. The first task when conducting interview was choosing an interview subject. There are a few different types of subjects, each having a use within a documentary. These types include experts, witnesses, and the general public (Lewis 154). For our purposes interviews with experts were what we needed to get accurate information. The main concern when considering interview subjects was that we picked people with a range of knowledge about animals. Since the aim for the video was to have a few different sections, medical animal care, psychological animal care, and the ethics of animal care in our society today, it was decided that we should have interview subjects that specialized in each of these areas.

. We decided that the specialist for the medical part of the video would be a veterinary doctor, more specifically one in small animal practice, since the video focuses on dogs and cats. For the psychological specialist someone with a training or animal behaviorist background was what we felt was most appropriate. Along, with these two subjects we felt strongly that we wanted someone who had dealt with animal rescue and adoption. A person with this background could help to illuminate the problems that occur when a family feels they can no longer care for their pet, as well as share with us some of the conditions that humans put their animal companions through.

Once the animal fields we wanted to draw from were nailed down, we needed to find individuals that would fit the criteria we were looking for. Kelly's involvement in Greyhound rescue led the group to Dr. Lynne O'Neil, a veterinarian at a successful veterinary hospital in Massachusetts. Dog trainer Liefe Wheeler was also suggested by the staff at the Greyhound Friends kennel.

Finding a rescue manager or director proved to be a bit harder. We approached a few people with the request to interview and had little luck. We finally located a willing candidate at the Worcester Animal Rescue League. Patty Migneault was a volunteer long before she became a staff member at the local no kill shelter.

The different backgrounds of the people we interviewed combined to give us an array of information.

When conducting an interview it was important that all the planning and preparation be done before the interview takes place. Interview questions were carefully crafted to get at the needed information. It was important that the questions are open-ended and allow for more than yes or no answers. The questions and answers should not

be memorized or rehearsed, but rather allowed to flow to make for a natural feel to the conversation (Lewis 154).

Interview questions were carefully chosen to relate to both the area of study that each interviewee specialized in, as well as the overall concern about the treatment of companion animals in today's society. The first part of the interview was tailored to the specific work of the interviewee. We asked veterinarian Dr. O'Neil questions like, "Can you explain the basic physical needs of dogs and cats?" and, "In your opinion what is the most important thing that should be done to care for a pet?" (see Appendix A). When interviewing dog trainer Liefe Wheeler we asked questions that focused more on the emotional needs of animals.

The end of the interview was made up of questions that we asked to all of the interview subjects such as, "Legally and socially what do you think is wrong with our treatment of animals in the US today?" From this we hoped to get both the facts about caring for animals as well as the individual opinions of different people on the more general treatment and attitudes towards animals. While the opinions on treatment were not necessarily going to be that of the general public, given that the people interviewed all had attitudes about animals that have led them to working with them, they still give us some insight into the problems with the system.

Finally, we remembered to keep the interviewee comfortable and relaxed. All of these things aid in a successful interview and by extension a successful video.

Locating subjects and conducting interviews would only work if we were able to get good footage of the subjects. This required knowledge of helpful filming techniques and appropriate (though limited) technology for the job.

This project was completed using very few technological tools. We had access to a mini-DV camera, which worked well for our purposes. This was aided by a tripod, a lapel microphone, and a set of headphones. Filming was done for the convenience of the interviewee and for that reason, we traveled to them. Editing was done on a personal laptop, using the program Final Cut Pro. With these tools we set about interviewing professionals working in animals related careers about companion animals and society's attitudes towards them.

Cinematography techniques, when used properly, are very powerful tools. Filming is not nearly as simple as point-and-shoot. Using the proper technique can be as drastic as portraying good versus evil or as subtle as a subconscious influence on how one views the speaker's credibility. Most cinematography techniques do not apply for the purposes of this project, which is primarily comprised of conducting interviews, while other techniques make great differences.

The background is one of the most important things to consider when filming an interview subject. If the background is in motion or is too busy, it will take away from the focus on the interview. However, if it is too bland, then the picture becomes boring and the viewer may lose interest more easily. Finding the proper balance is both a matter of choosing the scene and choosing the lighting.

Different lighting will portray the scene in drastically different manners. Due to the fact that we are not filming a horror film or drama where the lighting would play to the mood, the most important thing we need to know on the subject is how to light our interview subject. Adequate lighting of a subject like this is most often achieved using three point lighting. Three point lighting is a combination (as its name shows) of three

different lights. The first of these lights is a key light. The key light is focused off center of the subjects face. It is a bright, direct light and throws harsh shadows across the face. To make up for these shadows a second light is used, this one is called a fill light and fills in the shadow areas created by the key light. This light is multidirectional. Often times it is created by shining a bright light off of a white umbrella to make a softer, fuller light. Finally the third light used is a backlight, the backlight is placed above and behind the subject. It is a very bright light that illuminates the top of the subjects head and helps to separate the subject from the background (Roth 319). Unfortunately, we did not have access to portable lighting to bring with us to on-site interviews or a proper studio in which to conduct interviews, so we worked with the lighting we had on-site as best we could.

The camera angle also plays a unique and important roll when filming an interview. The height of the camera relative to the subject can portray the subject in a different manner. For example having the camera elevated slightly above the subject may subconsciously portray the subject in a context of inferiority. Similarly, positioning the camera slightly below the subject will imply that the subject is superior. This may affect how credible the subject appears so the viewer. Because we want our viewers to learn from our video, the superior camera angle is most useful to us during our interviews. This will help the viewer to subconsciously accept what our interview subjects say as a more credible source.

There are two ways to setup an interview shoot. In the first the interviewer is off camera and must ask open ended questions as the interviewer will be edited out, so the interviewee must provide all the needed information to the audience. The interviewer is

positioned next to the camera, so the interviewee looks towards, but not directly at the camera. The second is an “on screen” interview. Here the interview is shown to the viewers like a conversation. Both the interviewee and the interviewer are filmed, though with different cameras and possibly even at separate times. The questions and answers will then be pieced back together with editing (Lewis 154). The first method was chosen. This would allow the interviewee to be the main focus of the audience.

Just as important, or perhaps more important than the picture, is the sound. It is possible to turn off the picture on a television and still have some understanding of what is going on, but when you turn off the audio it is much harder to interpret the message of the program (Roth 281).

Different tape formats have different audio recording capabilities; luckily for us we had access to Mini DV which is the best choice for good audio quality. Mini DV also, allows us to record at a 12-bit setting so that we can add in audio later or a 16-bit setting which is a slightly better quality, but doesn't allow for further addition of sound (Roth 287).

Most cameras have built in microphones and the one used in this project was no exception, but rarely are these adequate to achieve high quality sound. There are a multitude of other microphones to choose from all of which fall into two main categories; condenser microphones, which are cheap, effective, and can be very small like a lapel microphone; and dynamic microphones which are expensive, but often a better value for the money. Microphones all have different pickup pattern, some are designed to pickup sound both in front of and behind them, while others only pickup sound in one direction

(Roth 289). In our case we were using a small lapel that clips to the shirts of the speaker and is adequate for the interviews we will be conducting.

Microphone placement is as important as the microphone itself. When filming you don't want to record wind or rustling to drown out the voice of the person you are trying to interview. You also must be careful not to run microphone cords over AC power cords as this causes interference (Roth 297). Microphone placement wasn't as much of an issue for the type of filming we were doing, as the lapel was simply directed at the speaker. The interviews were conducted indoors in a quiet area to minimize distractions and interruptions.

When filming, headphones should always be worn to allow the audio to be monitored. You would never film without checking where the camera is aimed; likewise you shouldn't try to film with no idea of the quality of your audio. The best headphones for this job are large ones that cover the ear to block out other sounds (Roth 298). This advice was followed during filming and the sound was monitored using a set of headphones.

The techniques used to film are just as important as the material being filmed. With the wrong techniques, even the greatest interview subject will seem mediocre at best. Using the right techniques at the right time gives the director almost complete control over the viewer's experience.

Once the rough footage of the interviews was obtained, we went about editing it. We watched the interviews numerous times to pick just the right clips to include in the final piece. These were then selected and compiled together grouped by subject. A script was written to allow the video to flow in between interview subjects (see Appendix D).

It was decided that the narration of the script would be strictly a voice over and that we would show footage of animals and title screens during the narration. The extra animal footage had been filmed at the two shelters that we visited while conducting interviews and at Kelly's house with her own animals. The footage was slowly pieced together by picking short video clips and pasting them together with transitions and titles. Audio was adjusted to be even throughout the length of the video. Finally transitions were smoothed between video clips which made for a much neater finished product. All this yielded a final draft that while not ready to be aired quite yet, should be without too much more work.

Conclusion

Originally, we set out to make a video to educate people about the care of pet animals in the United States. In the process we have learned a great deal about the history of pet keeping, the historical attitudes surrounding pet care and the changing attitudes of today. This information has helped us shape our own ideas about how pets should be treated and their role in society. We believe that the way pets are treated today is far from morally right and propose that they be thought of as living beings who we are granted custody over, rather than objects over which we have possession. In order for these ideas to be changed, people need to be educated.

Through the production of this video it is hoped that we can educate the public and help to change ideas and attitudes. While our video is not ready to be aired just yet we hope that it will be a rough cut that the volunteers at the public access channel are able to work with and eventually air on television.

Bibliography

- Caras, Roger A. A Perfect Harmony: the intertwining lives of animals and humans throughout history. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996
- Franklin, Julian H. Animal Rights and Moral Philosophy. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.
- Grier, Katherine. Pets in America: A History. Chapele Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006
- “HSUS Pet Overpopulation Estimates.” The Human Society of the United States. 2006. 10 March 2006 <http://www.hsus.org/pets/issues_affecting_our_pets/pet_overpopulation_and_ownership_statistics/hsus_pet_overpopulation_estimates.html>
- Jamieson, Dale. Morality’s Progress. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002.
- Lewis, Rowland. The Home Video Maker’s Handbook. New York: Crown Publishers Inc, 1987
- “Nature.” Narr. Steve Kroft. Inside the Animal Mind. PBS Television. 29 May 2001.
- Regan, Tom. Empty Cages: Facing the Challenge of Animal Rights. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2002
- Roth, Cliff. The Low Budget Video Bible. New York: Desktop Video Systems, 1996
- Rowan, Andrew. Of Mice, Models, and Men: A Critical Evaluation of Animal Research. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984
- Singer, Peter. Animal Liberation. New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 2002.
- Wise, Steven M. Rattling the Cage: Toward Legal Rights for Animals. Cambridge: Perseus Publishing, 2000.
- Wise, Steven M. Drawing the Line: Science and the Case for Animal Rights. Cambridge: Perseus Publishing, 2002.

Interview with Dr. Lynne O'Neil:

Dr. Lynne O'Neil is a practicing small animal veterinarian who donates her time and skill to help the Greyhound Friends rescue organization in Hopkinton, MA. This interview was conducted at the Greyhound Friends kennel on March 11, 2006.

1. Why did you become a veterinarian?
2. Can you explain the basic physical needs of dogs and cats for us?
3. In your opinion what is the most important thing that should be done to care for a pet?
4. Are most of the animals that you see adequately cared for? When they aren't what goes wrong?
5. What do families need to consider before bringing an animal into their home?
6. How important is spaying and neutering your pet?
7. Do you believe animals have emotions? If so what are their emotional needs?*
8. Legally and socially what do you think is wrong with our treatment of animals in the US today?*

*Question asked of all interview subjects.

Interview with Patty Migneault:

Patty Migneault is a staff member at the Worcester Animal Rescue League in Worcester, MA. This interview was conducted at the Worcester Animal Rescue League on March 29, 2006.

1. Why did you become involved in rescue?
2. What is the most common reason that people give when surrendering an animal?
3. Is there one type of animal that gets surrendered more often or is harder to place?
4. What do families need to consider before bringing an animal into their home?
5. Can you share one of your more memorable rescue memories with us?
6. How important is spaying and neutering your pet?
7. Do you believe animals have emotions? If so what are their emotional needs?*
8. Legally and socially what do you think is wrong with our treatment of animals in the US today?*

*Question asked of all interview subjects.

Interview with Liefe Wheeler:

Liefe Wheeler is a dog trainer and Norton, MA. This interview was conducted in her home in Norton on March 30, 2006.

1. Why did you become a trainer?
2. When you are teaching, do you find that you are training the people as much as the animals?
3. In your opinion what is the most important thing that should be done to care for a pet?
4. Are most of the animals that you see adequately cared for? When they aren't what goes wrong?
5. What do families need to consider before bringing an animal into their home?
6. Do you believe animals have emotions? If so what are their emotional needs?*
7. Do you ever see animals with some of the same emotional problems as people?
8. Legally and socially what do you think is wrong with our treatment of animals in the US today?*

*Question asked of all interview subjects.

Animal Care Script

Introduction:

Narrator: Humans and animals have worked together for thousands of years. From dogs herding sheep to horses plowing fields, our lives have always been intertwined with those of the animals around us. Americans share their homes with an estimated 65 million dogs and 77 million cats. Regrettably there are also 6 to 8 million dogs and cats living in shelters across the US. Half of them are euthanized each year. With so many animals being euthanized annually, it is important that people understand and consider all of the responsibilities involved in caring for a companion animal.

So you decided you want a pet:

Narrator: Once you have decided that you want to share your home with a companion animal, there are many things to learn about the various aspects of care. Professionals, who work with these animals on a daily basis, can offer a great deal of advice on how to successfully integrate an animal into your home.

Narrator: We have asked three women who work closely with animals for some advice on adding a pet to your family.

Pet Personality:

Narrator: One of the most important factors in deciding what pet best fits your lifestyle is its personality. When you are deciding on an animal for your home, you should be aware that each animal has its own lifestyle as well. Different breeds have different tendencies. While some breeds tend to be shy around strangers, others are more outgoing. Similarly breeds differ in areas such as attention requirements, energy levels, and noise levels. Lief Wheeler, a dog trainer, recommends some things people should consider when researching animals.

Lief Wheeler: Lief clip 7

Physical Needs:

Narrator: Animals are living beings, and as such they have a variety of physical needs. Animals grow to be different sizes, and require different amounts of space. They also consume different amounts of food. As animals age, their requirements for care change as well.

Lief 8

Lief 9

Lynn 6

Medical Needs and Expenses:

Narrator: One of the most expensive parts of caring for an animal is the medical expense. In addition to basic immunizations, yearly physicals are also important to the health of your pet. Spaying and neutering your pet is also very important. It serves as a population control and also improves the health of your pet.

Lynn O'Neil 3
Lynn O'Neil 4

Narrator: Animals also have grooming requirements the same as any human would. Some animals may require a visit to a groomer while others require much less attention. Pet hair is also one of the most common issues found in homes shared with animals.

Patty 6

Mental Needs:

Narrator: Pets, unlike your car, require more than just maintenance to keep the parts working and fuel to run the engine. They have emotional and psychological needs and sometimes problems. Like all living creatures, they require love and attention.

Lynn 2
Patty 3
Lynn 7
Lynn 8

Where to get your pet:

Narrator: After you have gathered the appropriate information and decided what type of animal fits best in your home, now you need to go out and find which pet you want. There are many places where you could find your new friend. Some of the more common ones include pet stores, shelters, local advertisements, and private breeders. Each choice has benefits and drawbacks. Some shelters will take care of many of the initial medical expenses such as vaccinations and spaying or neutering your pet. Private breeders can provide you with a very specific type of animal whose family history is well known. Pet stores offer the convenience of shopping at the mall, however the quality of life for the animals is severely depreciated.

Liefe 11
Patty 8
Liefe 12
Patty 5

Training/Communication:

Narrator: Once you get your pet home, it is very important for you both to learn how to communicate effectively with each other.

Liefe 1 - .5

Liefe 1

Liefe 10

Liefe 5

Liefe 3

Narrator: Understanding why the animal does the things that it does will greatly improve the relationship you have with it.

Social Norms with Pets:

Narrator: Often times in today's society we treat pets like possessions. However animals are clearly very different from possessions such as a camera or a toaster.

Liefe 6

Lynn 10

Closing:

Narrator: It is important to make sure you learn about an animal before you bring it into your home. Knowing about your pet will help ensure that you both have the best relationship possible. We hope that this video will help you when you are choosing your pet, and when you think about the way animals are treated in today's society.