

Policies on abandoned pets sociology essay



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The research paper is for environmental economics. The paper exploits the issue of abandoned pets as well as exotic pets. In addition the issue of United States policies (ie. pet license, foreclosure pets/ abandoned pets, exotic pets, releasing pets into wild) on the same is brought forth. Possible policies that could give incentive to Americans so that they change their mind and behavior (of abandoning pets, letting their pets to die in foreclosed homes/animal shelters, releasing exotic fish to a river that might damage the marine ecosystem) are also tackled in this research. Lastly cost benefit analyses of these policies that govern pets are discussed in details.

Over time, man has changed in the manner with which he interacts with other living organisms. It is worth noting that after associating with fellow human beings, various factors have made him look for companion elsewhere. For this reason, man sought to have a loser association with animals, especially domesticated ones. Later, exotic pets came into the limelight. It is worth mentioning that after the flourishing of this idea of man having pets, it is now emerging that his attitude has changed, this has translated to numerous animals to suffer and even die (American Veterinary Medical Association 21). In this respect, a number of agencies have come forth to advocate for the rights of these animals and have even established orphanages where these animals can be taken (surrendered or confiscated) and cared for.

Problem statement

Most of the Americans are not aware of the vast populations of pets that are abandoned as a result of their changed attitude and behavior on these

animals. The abandoned pets in most cases become feral die as results of diseases and or starvation or picked by animal shelter. Close to 80% of these pets are usually killed (Brown & Dawn 101). For this reason, there is need to bring to their attention how pets are suffering as a result of human action.

The American government through its various organs have developed policy that seek to address the problem, the issue at hand is whether these policies have indeed acted appropriately and successfully in combating the problem.

Objectives of the study

The broad aim of the study is to explain the current US policy on pets. Other specific objectives are

To find out what are the reasons that lead to pets being abandoned.

To establish cost and benefits of U. S policies pets.

To determine ways that will give incentives to American to change their behavior concerning pets.

Abandon pets

In U. S the link between most Americans and there pets are being broken at an alarming rate like never before. This is according to the research carried out by National Council on Pet Population Study and Policy. The study established that the reasons for relinquishing both cats and dogs are indeed the same. They include allergies within family members, lack of enough facilities, incompatibility with other pets especially exotic ones, lack of home mates, house soiling, higher cost of maintaining the pets, larger number of

animals in the family, personal problems of those who own pets, ill health of pets, lack of time to attend to pets by the owners.

It is worth mentioning that very few individuals know of the large number of pets that are abandoned year in year out and apparently, there is no accurate statistic can be brought forth to inform these individuals on how severe the issue is.

Data collected to establish the characteristics of those who owned pets then relinquished them suggested that they are from a wider age bracket, different ethnicity, varied education level as well as income. This thus depicted that each an every American had a higher probability of abandoning and relinquishing their pets. The implications of the scenario calls for more and continuous efforts to be made so that more American to be reached with message that will help change their minds and behaviors they hold on these pets they once treated as being dear to them.

Similarly, the same studies found out that most of the relinquished dogs 48% and 40% of cats were aged 3 months to three years. Most of them were owned for a period that ranged from seven months to one year. Additionally, it was found out that these set of pets had not been taken to a veterinarian, were not neutered and almost 90% of the dogs did not receive any kind of training in obedience. It was interesting that the greater numbers of cats and dogs relinquished were obtained from friends (Brown & Dawn 273).

In line with American policies on pets, it is worth noting that one cannot just take custody of an abandoned pet just like that without following certain rules. It is required that if one comes across a pet that is abandoned, tied at <https://assignbuster.com/policies-on-abandoned-pets-sociology-essay/>

the door or caged with no food or depicts characteristics of and a abandoned animal, one needs to denounce his or her findings.

The steps for helping the animals include the following; informing the police or take it to a shelter. In case a neighbor is moving due to foreclosure, ask if they will be moving with their pets, if not what arrangements have they made to ensure that they are save, for homes that it seems the occupants have moved, make an effort of checking if there are pets tied or confined within the building and take necessary actions, provide some water in instances where you come across a dehydrated pet. All these steps will ensure that pets do not starve, suffer from illness or even shot.

Exotic pets

Exotic pets is a termed widely used to refer to a group of animals that are kept and possessed by man although they are not commonly though of as pets. It is worth noting that in this kind of pets, rodents, amphibians as well as reptiles constitute exotic pets. Additionally, some animals with very unique characteristics or rather look like wild animals and in this case most domestic animals have been called exotic, these include ferret and domestic rat (DiGiacomo et al 49).

It is worth noting that unlike their domestic counter parts, exotic pets are wild animals. Despite the fact that exotic pets are raised for the purpose of business and to be in company of human beings, they are characterized by unpredictability, they can be voracious and dangerous especially to adults.

It will be appropriate if a few examples of exotic pet are mention; they include, sugar gliders, turtles, fish, tigers, bears, prairie dogs hedgehog, primates, large felines, crocodiles to mention but a few. It is worth mentioning that substantially large numbers of wild animal are privately owned. These animals do not successfully adapt to live in captivity that they are subjected to. For this reason, the owner needs to [provide them with special food, care, house and medication.

Statistic show that Americans have about 7, 000 tigers as pets, this number is believed to exceed what is in the natural ecosystem. What makes this worse is the amount with which one can buy a tiger for instance, it costs \$300 only. Commercialization of wild animals has made the business of exotic pet flourish. The business is multi-billion dollar one that usually leads to these animals being treated in a very inhuman manner that has over the years seen to it that their populations in the wild has tremendously declined threatening them extinction.

These pets can be obtained from their natural habitant, zoos, pet shops or backyard breeders. Technological advisement has made it so easy for one to be in possession of an exotic pet. It is worth remembering that as previously mentioned, these pets are usually wild, when one buys an infant exotic pet, when it grows up, there are higher chances of such an animals to regain their natural aggression, this will indeed prompt the owner to abandon it especially after trying to control it (DiGiacomo et al 48). In the same respect, the existing sanctuaries and orphanages cannot be in capacity to accommodate all these animals that are being left by their owners. Due to

this fact most of exotic pets are abandoned, left to exist in unfavorable condition for the rest of their life and euthanized.

There are evidence in America that privately possessed exotic pet have found their way out of where they are enclosed and has caused serious injuries as well as death to man kind and other living organisms. For instance in 2009 Burmese python found its way out of its aquarium and went into a bedroom where it asphyxiated a toddler who was two years old. A similar incident happened in Las Vegas in which a boy three years old was almost killed by a python that was being kept by his father.

Exotic pets do have very high chances of transmitting very deadly diseases. The kind of diseases that are transmitted by these animals include salmonellosis, herpes B among others. The Centers for Disease Control approximates that slightly over 90, 000 cases of salmonella are as a result of exposed to reptiles feces. Certain organizations such as Centers for Disease Control, United States Department of Agriculture as well as American Veterinary Medical Association have strongly opposed the idea of some wild animals being in private possession as pets (American Veterinary Medical Association 41).

The trade in exotic pets usually impact to the natural ecosystem from where these animals are taken from. It is important to remember that most of the fancied exotic pets inhabit very sensitive and fragile ecosystems fro instance marine environment, rainforest among others. Taking some of these animals will leaved the balance between predators and preys skewed, as well as

dispersal of seeds, all these will negatively jeopardize the nature of such ecosystems.

It has been established that just like the domestic pets, exotic pets are also often become victim of abuse. This can be attributed to the fact that most of those who strive and own them have very little knowledge about these animals. In cases where one seems to know all about the animals in his/her possession, meeting the strict and high demands of the pets might a times prove to be frustrating and might resort to activities such as removing the animals, teeth or even claws to help reduce harm to human, this is cruel to the animal (DiGiacomo et al 54).

When exotic animals prove to be difficult to handle, owners resort to activities that will make the animal languish in undesired enclosure hence living a miserable life. There are instances that the animals are abandoned, killed, set free or loose, sold to those business men that indulge in pet business taken to orphanages. Considering the fact that the number of sanctuaries is limited then the existence of exotic animals after being neglected by the owner is seriously compromised. This is because, when they are out there, these animals can be killed, cannot fit into the natural ecosystem as they have been brought up in a caprive environment. The negative implication of letting free or loose exotic pet is felt by both the government and the residence.

Current US's policy on pets

America has come a long way in developing various policies laws and regulations that governs pets. Exotic animal trade is regulated by federal, <https://assignbuster.com/policies-on-abandoned-pets-sociology-essay/>

state as well as local authority laws and policies, which varies from state to state and from animal to animal (Haupt et al 1659). Larger cats, dangerous reptiles, wolves, primates and bears possession is prohibited in 18 states. Partial ban exist in 10 states, 13 of the states require that one gets a permit or license to own an exotic animal.

It is worth mentioning that a number of the states in America have put into action various legal restriction on ownership of exotic pets, despite this fact there are some that are considered outliers, examples include Ohio and Missouri (Lucia 3). There are numerous policies that govern pet licensing, abandoned pets, and exotic pets, transportation of pets as well as releasing of exotic pets into thee wild. One notable law in U. S is the Captive Wild Animal Safety Act this law bans the sale of and transportation of animals in the cat family as well as their hybrid intended to be traded as pets. The category includes tigers, snow leopards, cheetah, lion, jaguars, clouded leopards and cougars (Brown & Dawn 341).

Before one thinks of privately owning an exotic pet, there are five categories that state laws have brought forth. These include B, in this category, a total ban on private ownership of exotic pet exist, animals that are not domestic such as wolves, primates and reptiles fall in this category. This is fully practical in Alaska.

Category N is practiced in Alabama, here the state doesn't need the one who wish to own a pet to obtain a license, but might regulate certain aspects such as permit to allow entry and so on. B* is a scenario where there is partial ban on individuals to privately own exotic pets. This means that there

are certain groups of wild animals that are allowed to be owned privately and at the same time there are those that are not allowed to be privately owned. A typical example of such a state is Arkansas where it is illegal to own large carnivores but one can possess a maximum of five coyote, rabbits, deer, quail, raccoon, bobcat, gray fox opossum, red fox and squirrel (Torres 232).

According to Brown 728 category L calls for owners to have possession of a permit/license or just registering the animal with the local authority or state. This is fully practiced in Arizona, the permit or license is offered for persons who own a wildlife legally, for the purpose of education displays, advancing science and finally in cases where the animal has been deemed not to be able to successfully adopt to life the wild. In state like West Virginia, licensure is based on category O, in this case there are no regulations that govern private ownership of exotic animals. What the state does is to only regulate native species (Paolo 7).

There are policies that govern abandoned pets, be they exotic or not. It is worth mentioning that it is illegal for pet owners to free their pets as well as tearing them unfairly that is by leaving them in deplorable conditions with food and nice shelter (Haupt et al 1655). In cases where one has come across an abandoned pet, what he or she needs to do is to contact police or just take those animals to a shelter (Wakeman 32). And if one wishes to own the animal, there is a grace period in which if the initial owners does not show up to claim the pet, the interested person is given the go ahead to owning the pet but of course following the laws in permit and licensure as

per the various state. Other set of laws include impound laws and cruelty laws.

Scientists have argued against releasing of captive exotic pets into the wild. The argument is that they cannot comfortably and successfully reclaim the status quo in the wild. Similarly, there are cases where the released animal might cause havoc to the naturally existing population especially in the marine ecosystem. The endangered species act of the United States of America has helped a great deal in doing so. It is of significance to note that before 2006, there were no major policies that strictly addressed the issue of reintroduction of exotic species to the wild. About the Lacey Act, should be slightly modified to incorporate various clean ways to determine if exotic species should in the first place be imported and secondly the ways/steps to be followed while releasing the animal back to the wild (Brown 725).

Cost-Benefit Analysis of the policies

All these policies do have both advantages as well as draw back. For instance, those states that have adopted licensing, permits and pet registration is s wise step because before one is allowed to own the pet, they prove beyond reasonable doubt that it is acquired legally and are capable of meeting the need of the animal. This will help reduce the illegal trade in these animals that seems to threaten them into extinction. The draw back is that the procedure usually takes substantial amount of time and may discourage people from adopting the abandoned pets (Alderton 322).

Concerning the issue of acts and policy in restricting releasing of exotic pets into the wild, this will help the animals not to dies in case it cannot fit into

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the ecosystem and at the same time it will help maintain the existing integrity of the natural habitat. Although the endangered species act aims at discouraging trade in exotic animals, those that depend on the multi-billion dollar industry will loss a great deal (Paolo 4).

Giving American incentive

The alarming rate at which American are leaving/abandoning their pets need to be tackled before things go beyond our capability to comfortably address them. Do this successfully I posit is to come up with ways that American will feel encouraged hence change their way of thinking as well as there behaviors towards pets (Brown 714).

Providing citizen with property right especially in housing will help a great deal in addressing the problem. Since it has come to light that most pets are abandoned due to foreclosure, assuring people that they will not be forced to leave their apartment will translate to pets not being abandoned.

Additionally, there is need for each and every local authority, in my opinion to adopt GPRS monitoring of pets, in these regards owners will be aware of the stiff consequence if they treat a pet in a cruel manner. Similarly tagging these pets will ensure that it will take shorter time to trace the owner, instead of waiting for him/her to show up (DiGiacomo et al 44).

Lastly, if the government can provide tax incentive to pet owners as well as other incentives such as free vet services lets say once a month, owners will be relieved on the financial burden incurred while taking care of their pets (Wakeman 22).

Conclusion

From the review of abandoned and exotic pets, it is apparent that in no time in history have a larger number of them left in cruel hand of mankind.

Despite the fact that man fancied having animals as companion, things have tremendously changed, causing pet owners to neglect their pets, leave them loose, releasing them to the wild, killing them, relinquishing them to shelter or selling them to pet traders. There are a myriad of factors that makes pet owners to do this; and they include lack of enough facilities, incompatibility with other pets, lack of home mates, house soiling, and higher cost of maintaining the pets among others.

Similarly America does have laws that regulate pet licensing, pet release to the wild and abandoned pets. It is also important to provide American with incentives that will help change their behaviors toward pets and they include adopting technology in monitoring pets, offering property rights, providing tax incentives, all these in my opinion are key in trying to avert the current scenario.