

Women and the World of Canine Rescue¹

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Introduction

In the wake of the considerable cultural changes and societal shifts that beset the United States and all advanced industrial democracies since the late 1960s and early 1970s, one can also observe a completely altered manner in how humans in these societies have come to relate to animals, dogs in particular. One of the new institutions created by this novel attitude and behavior towards dogs has been the many canine rescue organizations that emerged all over the United States beginning in the 1980s. While a blossoming scholarship on the changed dimension of the human – animal relationship attests to its social, political and intellectual salience to our contemporary world, we are reasonably certain that the work presented here constitutes the first academic research on the particularly important and new institution of dog rescue.

Far and away the most central players in all facets of this comprehensive discursive and societal change -- often referred to as the “animal turn” -- have been women. Like many other institutions and structures in the world of human – animal relations, the world of dog rescue is a world populated almost entirely by women. In this paper, we present some key findings of our research on canine rescue organizations in the state of Michigan and concentrate specifically on an exploration of both the dynamics of rescue organizations that seem to appeal more to women and to some of the ways in which the men and women who are involved in canine rescue differ in their perceptions about rescue work in general and the place of women in rescue work in particular.

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Background

Hardly a day passes in which one does not read about the centrality of pets – dogs and cats in particular – to the lives of contemporary Americans. Dog boutiques continue to sprout all over the country, with Ann Arbor – a town of 113,000 year-round inhabitants – boasting three such stores, all of which seem to be doing well. High-end international fashion houses such as Gucci, Louis Vuitton and Burberry rolled out specialty pet products in recent years, as have mainstream retailers like Target Corporation. Consumer spending on pets has steadily increased over the past twenty years attaining \$36.3 billion in 2005 and an estimated \$38.4 in 2006. Much of this has been fueled by a vast increase in sales of specialty products and medical care.² One article in the *Los Angeles Times* describes at length how “creature comforts” drive architecture, art and décor decisions for houses and apartments from coast to coast.³ Another, published in *The New York Times* just a few days before that, discusses how a newly passed law in Maine shields animals in domestic violence cases because of growing evidence that there exists a statistically significant overlap between the violence committed against women by their disaffected and angry male partners and the harm that these men inflict on the pets whom they identify as the women’s main source of emotional solace and support.⁴

Indeed, there are almost daily accounts of public sympathies having shifted from humans to canines as victims such as the case in Princeton in which a landscaper was mauled by a German shepherd with a majority of the community rallying on behalf of the dog and not the person.⁵ Lastly, the salience of every aspect of the Michael Vick case – from the national headline news surrounding the discovery of the gruesome deed to the National Football League’s prompt

² American Pet Products Manufacturers Association

³ Bettijane Levine, “Wow! Home design now makes a bow to the dogs,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 15, 2006.

⁴ Pam Belluck, “Battered Wives’ Pets Suffer Abuse, Too,” *The New York Times*, April 1, 2006.

⁵ Sarah Kershaw, “A Landscaper Is Mauled, and an Outpouring of Sympathy Goes to the Dog,,” *The New York Times*, November 30, 2007.

reaction, to the length of Vick's prison sentence – cannot be explained without an understanding of the changed nature of the human – animal discourse in contemporary America and the advanced industrial world.

These are merely a few randomly picked examples that underline how vastly the position of pets and animals has changed in the United States over the past 20 plus years. Indeed, as a survey conducted in early 2006 by the Pew Research Center demonstrates, fully 85 percent of American dog owners say they consider their pet to be a member of their family with 78 percent of cat owners saying the same. More of those same respondents reported feeling close to their dog than to either their mother or their father.⁶

The question, of course, is why. Certainly, in all countries of the advanced industrial world, humans have come to relate to animals in general and dogs in particular in a profoundly new manner. Though this changed way of relating to and speaking about animals -- pets in particular, and dogs a fortiori as special representatives of the latter – commenced in the 1980s, we strongly hypothesize that this shift hails from the advent of the changed discourse about power and institutions that began in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Indeed, one of the positive contributions of the changes wrought by the phenomenon called “the sixties” has been a greater tolerance towards the disenfranchised and disempowered in most advanced industrial societies. Official and acceptable discourse has become much more considerate towards and inclusive of the physically and mentally challenged, ethnic minorities, women, immigrants, hitherto marginalized groups of all kinds – and increasingly, animals.

Indeed, one can also witness the appearance of something called the “animal turn”. Equally antinomian in its methods and purpose as the “culture turn”, this change, too, purported to represent animals in a completely new light by making them subjects instead of objects as they had been previously depicted. Ranging all the way from the animal-centric work of historian Brett

⁶ Pew Research Center, “Gaining Family Intimacy: Dogs Edge Cats (Dads Trail Both)” Washington, D.C.: March 7, 2006.

Walker who delivered a paper about the history and reintroduction of wolves in Yellowstone National Park at a conference in Montana from the wolves' perspective and who used a similar epistemology in his book on the extermination of wolves in Japan, to the well-known books by Peter Singer whose work assumed an early and leading role in this "animal turn", there occurred a massive shift in how humans, and scholars in particular, began to think about the place of animals in human societies.⁷

Our research focuses specifically on dogs because humans' interactions with dogs in particular seem to us historically (and currently) more varied and complex than humans' interactions with other companion animals. Moreover, for no animal has the aforementioned "turn" become more powerful, explicit and lasting than for dogs. One well-documented reflex of this shift is the positioning of dogs by their human companions in the context and concept of the family. Many of these human companions refer to themselves as "moms" and "dads" in their relationship with their dogs; dogs are referred to as the siblings of human children; people know dogs' names before (and sometimes instead of) the names of the dogs' human companions. Multiple studies have also documented the degree to which humans speak to their pets using features of child-directed speech (also sometimes called "baby talk") and use their pets as a means of mediating family disputes and disagreements.⁸ Studies have also shown, particularly among women, the existence of a greater affiliation with dogs than with human family members.

Marjorie Garber has claimed that it is dogs that make us human⁹, while Jon Katz¹⁰ has argued that in a world in which divorce, instability in the workplace and the loss of extended family and

⁷ Alex Lichtenstein, "History from a wolf's perspective? or a cow's? A new breed of thinkers looks beyond *Homo sapiens*"

<http://www.animalliberationfront.com/Philosophy/Morality/Speciesism/wolfhistory.html> ; See also Brett Walker, *The Lost Wolves of Japan* [Seattle: University of Washington Press,]. Perhaps the most influential statement by Peter Singer on this subject is his book *Animal Liberation* [New York: Ecco, 1975])

⁸ Deborah Tannen, "Talking the Dog", *Research of Language and Social Interaction*, 2004.

⁹ *Dog Love*, 1996

¹⁰ *The New Work of Dogs*, 2003

friendship networks are common, people have come to rely increasingly on dogs as their primary means of social and emotional support, often to the dogs' own detriment. Thus, while Garber's views correspond closely to ours, in that she regards the changed treatment of dogs (which, in turn, is a consequence of our emotional experience, if not always intellectual conviction, that dogs love us) as a testimony to the growing humaneness of our society, Katz views this massive shift in human-canine relations as testimony to the deficiencies in our human institutions that have failed to offer the appropriate amount of humaneness that we crave and deserve. In Katz's view, we therefore harness dogs – possibly against their will, and most certainly not always to their benefit – to offer us intimacy and companionship that we are simply unable to form with humans anymore.

Katz links this massive shift in the way dogs have come to be perceived by humans as of the 1980s to a loss in community, public commitment and collective social interaction. Indeed, he explicitly connects this phenomenon to the larger societal construct that Robert Putnam delineated in his influential work *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. Somehow, dogs – according to this view – have become the substitutes and props for our failures to create a genuine intimacy that is lasting and comforting. Katz presents this as a phenomenon that features two salient characteristics: The first pertains to the absolutely central and leading role of women in the new quality of this human-canine bond. The second alleges that this shift pertains only to the more or less affluent suburban, exurban thus predominantly white middle class.

While we do not treat the question of class specifically in this paper, we find that Katz could not be more correct as to the central role of women. There exists overwhelming evidence that the new discourses about dogs are intimately tied to women. That this goes much deeper than the stressful effects of sociopolitical dislocation and economic changes and social isolation wrought in the 1980s is evident by the fact that surely men experienced these adversities as well. Yet, it was mainly women who became the agents in the new quality of this altered human-canine relationship in the United States. To be sure, as historical feminist writers from Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley,

Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton all the way to contemporary scholars such as Josephine Donovan and others have persuasively argued, there are clear parallels between man's domination of nonhuman animals and man's domination of women.¹¹

Indeed, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals founded in 1824 in Britain, just as its cousins in the United States such as the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals established in 1866 followed by the Massachusetts SPCA two years later and the American Humane Association in 1877 combined their support for animals with campaigns to protect women and children.¹² In Victorian England “the majority of those who joined the major [anti-vivisection] societies were women.”¹³ Thus the gender disparity in both attitude and behavior towards animals is not new. The link between animals and women as disenfranchised beings in man's abusive relationship to nature has a long history.

The question remains open, however, as to whether the social alienation that Katz outlines explains the predominance of women in this landscape. Indeed, one of the guiding questions of our comprehensive research project is to ascertain the reasons for this massively preponderant female presence in the new human-canine relationship. Has this happened for “good” reasons (one could call them the Garber reasons) because women are essential players in the enhancement of many inclusions, thus democracy and because women are key democratizing and “civilizing” agents? Or has it happened for “bad” reasons (one could call them the Katz reasons) because women are the most victimized members of this increasingly individualized, fragmenting and race-dominated society that is unable to bowl together anymore and thus is in desperate need of new structures that offer love and community? But in the paper at hand, our ambition is much more modest. Here, we deal solely with the world of dog rescue where – we are reasonably certain

¹¹ Josephine Donovan, “Animal Rights and Feminist Theory” in *Signs*, Volume 15, Number 2 (Winter, 1990), pp. 350 – 375.

¹² Mark Derr, *A Dog's History of America: How Our Best Friend Explored, Conquered, and Settled a Continent* (New York: North Point Press, 2004), pp. 167 – 169.

¹³ Elston, as quoted in Corwin R. Kruse, “Gender, Views of Nature, and Support for Animal Rights,” in *Society & Animals: Journal of Human – Animal Studies*, Volume 7, Number 3, 1999.

– we have entered uncharted waters since to the best of our knowledge no scholarship has ever been published on this aspect of the human – animal relationship.

Canine rescue

Despite the greatly altered and, we would argue, improved nature of human-canine relationships generally, the rise of canine rescue organizations during the same period of shift we discussed above attests to the fact that not all dogs are being taken to spas for aromatherapy or treated to gifts from boutiques. Many dogs find themselves unwanted, uncared for, and abandoned by their human guardians. For these dogs, a different landscape awaits as they are “set loose” to roam as strays; picked up or relinquished to Animal Control/local shelters; or relinquished to a canine rescue organization. It is this latter option that is the focus of the current study.

Dog rescue – especially rescue organizations for particular breeds – emerged in the course of these two decades totally separate from, often complimentary to, but also frequently in direct competition and conflict with humane societies and animal shelters. Activists in the latter have often perceived the breed rescuers as “elitists” who only care about the welfare of their favorite breed while neglecting the fate of other dogs in need of shelter and a home. Dog rescuers, in turn, regard shelters as ill-equipped, sometimes even uncaring, institutions which cannot provide the proper care that dogs deserve. Dog rescue organizations differ from humane societies and animal shelters primarily in the sense that dogs are housed in volunteer members’ homes, taught some basic household manners (housetraining, in particular) and then placed into new families, who have generally undergone a rigorous application and review process prior to taking ownership of the dog. Like the altered discourse of dogs generally, the discourse of dog rescue is full of the language generally used in the context of abandoned or neglected human children. Dogs are “fostered” by “foster moms and dads” and “adopted” by new “forever” families hand-selected by the foster family as being a particularly good match for the dog in question. Rescue organizations

typically guarantee a life-long commitment to the dog and will generally take the dog back into the organization, even after several years, if the placement fails for whatever reason.

People involved in canine rescue are quite passionate about their work, and like much of the changed landscape involving humans and canines, women are the predominant participants in dog rescue. As an example, of the 95 officially registered Golden Retriever Rescue organizations in the United States in 2005, only five had a male president and nine others listed a male-female combination as co-presidents, most often a married couple. Of the 60 plus Golden Retriever clubs registered in the United States in the same year, only two had male presidents. The feminization of this world goes well beyond the presidencies of these organizations. Yankee Golden Retriever Rescue which, by having been founded in 1985, is one of the oldest of any dog rescues in the country, features 22 women among its officers, volunteer board of directors and professional staff with only one man being listed as having any leadership role in the organization. The Golden Retriever Rescue of Michigan, founded in 2000, has no men in any leadership roles at all, something that was true of all but one of the rescue organizations represented by the 37 dog rescue workers whom we interviewed for this project and who formed a subset of a larger group of rescue workers who completed a comprehensive survey about dog rescue work.

Data collection

In conducting our analysis of dog rescue workers, we used a mixed approach, incorporating both survey and interview methods. The survey instrument was administered on-line using proprietary polling software developed at the University of Michigan. Survey respondents were solicited using the following method: Using petfinder.com (a sort of “one-stop shopping” for people interested in placing or adopting a rescued animal), we gathered all the rescue organizations listed as operating in Michigan (411). We then eliminated any organization that were not primarily focused on dogs (217 or 53% remained). We then eliminated any organization that did not have any dogs for adoption as of May 15, 2007; that did not have e-mail contact

information or that were all-breed rescue groups that had fewer than 10 dogs listed.¹⁴ We then sent the survey information via e-mail to 105 contact e-mail addresses on May 25. The survey was “live” until June 22. We asked the contact people to forward our e-mail solicitation to the volunteers from their respective rescue group. We received 283 completed surveys. 37 additional people started the survey but did not finish it and thus were excluded from the analysis. 28 completed surveys were omitted from final analysis because the respondents did not answer 20% or more of the survey questions even though they completed the survey itself. Thus, statistical analysis is based on 255 respondents. Our respondents worked with 79 different rescue groups, and of those, 64 were rescue groups included in the original solicitation e-mail. This yields a 61% response rate from at least one person affiliated with a group that received a solicitation. 14% of the rescue organizations represented by our respondents did not receive a solicitation e-mail directly from us and 11 respondents reported that they did not work for a specific organization and thus must have received the solicitation from a source other than us.

Following the close of the survey, we proceeded to the interview stage of the project. 211 of our 283 respondents indicated on the survey that they would be willing to be interviewed. Of these 211, we selected all respondents who identified themselves as having been presidents or vice-presidents of rescue organizations (24). Then we randomly selected 36 additional respondents to be interviewed. We contacted these 60 people in early July, approximately two weeks after the close of our survey, and asked if they were still interested in being interviewed. 44 people responded affirmatively. We did not re-contact anyone who did not respond to our earlier messages. Three people contacted us asking to be interviewed, so we included them as well. In total, we assigned 47 interviews to three interviewers (or a combination of interviewers). Of the original 47, nine people did not respond to requests to set up the interview and one person did not appear for her interview. In the end, we interviewed a total of 37 people, which amounts to 13% of

¹⁴ We eliminated all-breed rescue groups with fewer than 10 dogs available for adoption because we wanted to balance all-breed and breed-specific rescue groups to whom we sent the solicitation e-mail.

our original survey respondents. The interview data were analyzed using traditional discourse analysis.

The survey instrument contained 93 different questions and provided both categorical data, which were analyzed using chi-square analyses, and Likert scale data (7 point scale), which were analyzed using analysis of variance. A separate class index was constructed based on a variety of questions concerning household income, house location, etc. This index was then used for linear regression modeling. The survey consisted of three parts. The first part concerned largely personal demographic and belief questions; the second part concerned questions related to the respondents as dog owners; and the third part concerned questions about canine rescue generally and the rescue organization the respondent worked with specifically.

In the current paper, we report on two primary sets of survey results. First, we report on the responses to the survey based on the sex of the respondent, showing specific differences in the ways in which male and female respondents approached some questions. Second, we report on differences in the ways respondents answered questions concerning the involvement of women in rescue work as a function of other independent variables (such as income level, political affiliation, etc.). Both of these analyses are supplemented through comments concerning the place of women that were found in our interviews.

Prototypical survey respondent

Before we delve into details, here is what we believe will be a helpful overview and characterization of the proto-typical subject in our study based largely on the median frequency for all the questions on our survey. This “prototypical” respondent has many similarities to the prototypical respondent in the Pet Products Manufacturers’ Association bi-annual survey of pet owners, suggesting that, prototypically at least, people involved in dog rescue do not differ demographically from the more general pet owning population.

The average responder is a white, heterosexual female between the ages of 36-65. She is married and has never been divorced and lives with no children under 18.¹⁵ She holds a bachelor's degree. She is a Democrat and politics are reasonably important to her. She is a fairly liberal Protestant and religion is of middle importance to her. She eats most types of food and is 4 on a 7 point scale for physical fitness and physical activity.

She owns her own home in the suburbs and the home is a detached, single-family home with 2-3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and a formal dining room. The yard is fully fenced and is less than ½ an acre. Her household income is between \$70-100 and she is employed full-time, spending an average 41-50 hours outside of the home. She spends 1-3 hours a week reading dog-oriented materials but does not subscribe to any. Very little (0-5%) of her time on the Internet is devoted to dog issues.

She definitely sees herself as a dog person and believes that there are no bad dogs, only bad dog owners. She generally prefers dogs to people and feels that people do not understand her relationship to dogs fairly often. She believes that animals have the same basic rights as people. She occasionally chooses to spend time with her dogs over her spouse or best friend; many of her friends spend as much time with their dogs as she does with hers and she thinks she would have about the same number of friends whether or not she had dogs. The majority (60-80%) of the people whom she knows who spend a lot of time with their dogs are women.

She has 2 dogs and no other animals. Her dogs sleep in bed with her and she believes it is very important for dogs to live in the house. Her dogs spend between 1-4 hours alone during the day but would not be left in the house alone overnight. When she travels, she brings the dogs to a friend's house. She feeds the dogs a premium dry dog food, takes them on daily walks and they play daily in a fenced backyard. She uses traditional vet care and has no personal experience with veterinary medicine. She believes the two most important commands to teach a dog are "come"

¹⁵ The lack of children in the household is almost certainly an artifact of the number of people over 45 who responded to the survey. For survey respondents in the 18-35 age ranges, there is a higher number of children in the household than would be predicted by chance.

and “stay” and they are important because of the dog’s safety. She is primarily a positive reinforcement based trainer.

She’s been involved in dog rescue for 1-4 years and got involved after adopting a dog from the group with which she volunteers. She spends about 2 hours a week on rescue work. She sees the following as important benefits of rescue work: Spending time with the people in the group; talking to people on the phone/over e-mail; solving problems; feeling valued and needed by her rescue work; hearing new ideas and taking her mind off the stresses of life. She also likes raising awareness of the breed she rescues and finding people the dog of their dreams. The only major cost of rescue work to her is knowing that there are dogs that cannot be saved.

The rescue organization for which she works has no paid employees and more than 30 volunteers. She does not now hold and has never held a position of leadership. 90% of the leadership positions in the group in which she volunteers are held by women. She has fostered dogs for 1-4 years and has fostered more than 12 dogs in that time. She had no foster dogs at the time of the survey. She believes it is important to try and save all dogs.

She believes that women are more involved in rescue than men because they are more caring and nurturing, reasonably more interested in animal well-being, more willing to deal with problems and more likely to get emotional or social support from rescue work. She does not believe that women make better rescue workers than men or that women care more about their companion animals than men.

Independent Variable: Sex

235 of our respondents defined themselves as female; 20 as male. This fact alone underlined our initial hypothesis, our reading of the relevant literature and our own informal and anecdotal observations that women assume a massively preponderant presence in virtually all aspects of dog rescue work. Although males furnished a small percentage of our sample, their inclusion in our analyses was methodologically feasible and we modeled sex as an independent variable using an independent samples t-test on all of our non-categorical survey data (see Appendix A). We used

.05 as the level of significance and cases where the results were significant at the .05-.09 levels are reported as “trends.”

Thus, on a 1-7 Likert scale, men reported their general fitness and activities levels as higher than did women. The only other demographic difference between male and female survey respondents was in terms of political affiliation (chi-square=26.308, df=1, $p < .000$), where fewer men reported having no political affiliation or being Democrats than the statistical model predicts and more men reported being Independents, Libertarians or Republicans than the model predicts. The female respondents more or less follow what the statistical model predicts except that more women reported having no political affiliation than would be predicted by chance.

Women were more likely than men to agree strongly with the idea that animals have the same basic rights as people and were also more likely to agree that they regularly chose to spend time with their dog rather than their spouse or significant other. Women were also more likely to agree that their friends with dogs spent as much time with their dogs as they (the respondents) did with theirs. Overall, then, this cluster of questions suggests that women see themselves as spending more time with their dogs and preferring to spend time with their dogs than did the male respondents.

Whereas we found no statistically significant differences between men and women in terms of the benefits they derive from rescue work, we did find fascinating (and statistically meaningful) differences in how women and men assess the costs of being involved in dog rescue. Women consistently gauged their involvement with rescue to have greater costs to their lives than did men. Female respondents were more likely to agree with the statement “I do not have enough time for other things I want to do” than did the male respondents. Similarly, women were more likely than men to agree that rescue work impinged on their ability to get their paid work completed and that they spend too much time on the computer as a result of their rescue work. Perhaps the most interesting responses that highlighted gender differences pertained to a cluster of questions that featured putative reasons why women might be more involved in rescue work than men. For

instance, men were more likely to agree that more women were involved in rescue because they had more time and fewer responsibilities whereas women were more likely to agree that more women were involved because women are more caring and nurturing, more interested in animal well-being and more willing to deal with problems.

An interpretation of this cluster of responses leads us to the conclusion that – at least in this instance – women had a much more essentialist interpretation of the reasons for women being more involved in dog rescue than did the men. To men, women seemed to be primarily involved in dog rescue because they had more time and fewer responsibilities. In other words, the reasons were purely instrumental and technical. But to the female respondents, the more important reasons for women's involvement with rescue were their perception of women being more caring and nurturing, more interested in animal welfare and generally more willing to deal with problems. All of these bespeak the fronting of innate characteristics that have conventionally been ascribed to women as opposed to men.

These findings were amply corroborated by our interviews. The most frequent responses given by women interviewees as to the reasons for women's overwhelming presence in dog rescue were their sentimental, loving, sensitive, maternal and emotional nature. Other answers varied from women being more talented at multitasking to women's role in society as "the givers". Some interviewees argued that women are more prone to volunteer in general. If, in fact, this is the case, and if therefore dog rescue contributes directly to an increase of women's activities in public life, and if in fact such activities in general foster a democratic polity and culture, then the growth of such organizations over the past two-to-three decades might indeed be beneficial way beyond the millions of dogs that it has helped.

Some of our interviewees voiced other conventional gender traits. Thus, one person argued that the emotional involvement of women in dog rescue also leads to lots of infighting and cattiness and if men were involved, there would be less of both and work in rescue would be more productive. Others said that men would not even want to deal with all the drama that accompanies

many aspects of dog rescue and thus stay away. Some believed that much of such drama was caused – essentially – by women being women and that a greater presence of men would reduce such behavior. Men’s presence in dog rescue – while appreciated – was also subject to a traditional perception of gender roles: Men’s contribution was helpful in various “manly” activities such as lifting. Only one respondent stated flat out that men’s involvement in rescue would not be helpful at all.

A traditional view of “masculinity” constituted the most important reason for our interviewees’ interpretation for the low presence of men in rescue. Since dogs are perceived as “cute”, men tend not to associate themselves with them, because men do not want to be much associated with the signifier “cute”. When men associate themselves with dogs, it will be for hunting, police training or other “manly” purposes, but certainly not rescue. A frequently heard comment was the lack of competitiveness in rescue. If there were more competition in rescue, or if it looked less like “doing laundry”, then maybe more men would be involved. Others stated that men simply had “better things to do” than get involved in rescue. Moreover, interviewees also addressed the importance of money. Men were described as more “money driven” than women and more concerned with being involved in matters related to property owning. Conditions making dog rescue more appealing to men would have to feature more manly activities such as increased competition and money-related involvement.

However, married interviewees or those in a relationship seemed to believe that although men tended to stay away from being involved in dog rescue on their own, they were very supportive of their wives’ and partners’ engagement with rescue even though they at times bemoaned the great amount of time exacted by rescue work. Respondents noted that those men who were actually actively involved in rescue were superb foster parents and, perhaps tellingly, were characterized as being more “feminine” types of men. Our only male interviewee seemed to attribute the preponderance of women and the paucity of men in dog rescue to women’s greater work ethic. He also opined that men were actually more sensitive than women and could not handle giving up the

dogs they fostered; men would rather keep the dogs than surrender them because they were actually more emotionally attached to them than were women.

Other independent variables and responses to why women are more involved

In addition to comparing how female and male respondents answered the survey questions, we also examined a wide-variety of other independent variables, for instance education level, marital status, political affiliation, religious affiliation, income level, type of employment, etc. We briefly report on significant differences among these various categories with the cluster of questions we asked concerning women's involvement in rescue work in order to round out the exploration of why women are more involved in dog rescue. For the most part, there were few main effects and no interactions among factors.

Beginning with age, women in the age groups of 26 to 35; 36 to 45; and 46 to 55 report working in rescue organizations where at least 90% of the leadership positions are held by women and this differs significantly from what our statistical model predicts. This means that women in their prime working years play, or are perceived to play, a disproportionately prominent role in leading these organizations. Respondents in the 36-45 age group were more likely than other age groups to agree that women are involved in this endeavor because "women are more interested in looking good by doing good"; because "women are more willing to deal with problems", and lastly, that women participate in dog rescue because such work is more likely to give them emotional and social support.

In terms of class, two trends are worthy of mention: first, the higher the respondent's class scale the more likely it is that she will agree with the statement that rescue work is less valued than other types of volunteer work; and second, that women seem to make better rescue workers than men. Very similar results hail from when we modeled income alone: there is a statistically significant positive correlation between income level and seeing rescue work as being less valued than other kinds of volunteering. Additionally, as income level increased, respondents were more

likely to agree with the statement that women have fewer responsibilities, which allows them to partake in dog rescue activities.

In terms of education, those with some college experience, as well as respondents with Associate, Bachelor's, Master's, professional and doctoral degrees feel quite strongly that women are active in dog rescue because they derive emotional and social support from such work. Though to a lesser degree, education also seems to be a significant variable in gauging women to be better rescue workers than men.

As to the marital status of our respondents, the only instance where we discovered any statistical significance relating to the cluster of questions pertaining to why women are in dog rescue, was the issue of women being more caring and nurturing. For this item, respondents who were currently married and never divorced different from all other groups in expressing less agreement with the statement that women are involved in dog rescue because they are more caring and nurturing.

Interestingly, while religion did reveal some significant findings pertaining to matters such as wholistic care of the dogs and the use of food treats as a training tool for one's dog – where, with the exception of the one Buddhist in our sample and the three neo-pagans, all respondents clocked in at a high 6-plus range with the six Jews marking this item coming in at a perfect seven – it seems not to have played any role in terms of emphasizing possible reasons for women's involvement in dog rescue. This was not quite the case with the political orientation of our respondents. Here, all groups – Independents, Democrats, Republicans, Greens, Libertarians, and "Other" – felt quite emphatically that women were more caring and nurturing; however, the Libertarians and the Independents had lower mean scores (as determined in post hoc testing) than the other groups. Similarly (and interestingly), the Libertarians also had higher mean ratings for the statement that women were involved in rescue because they were more interested in looking good by doing good.

The number of years someone was involved with rescue, the number of years someone had fostered dogs and whether or not someone had held a leadership position in the rescue group also demonstrated main effects with two items of our battery of questions as to why women are involved in rescue. Pertaining to the assertion that women make better rescue workers than men, being in leadership and the longer someone has been involved with rescue and fostering correlates with stronger agreement that women make better rescue workers and with the assertion that women are more caring and nurturing.

Conclusion

Our study demonstrates quite clearly that the relatively new world of dog rescue is an overwhelmingly female one. Women dominate all of its facets, from its leaders to its foot soldiers. They do so – on the whole – with verve, enthusiasm, commitment and with the perceived and experienced benefits of this activity much outweighing its costs. Our study also reveals that these women – far from being social misfits and/or loners in search of a meaningful involvement that might fulfill their otherwise empty lives – are leading active lives, are married or partnered and are, by all measures, “normal” citizens who happen to love dogs on whose behalf they assume many tasks and obligations which they, however, do not, as a rule, experience as burdensome. Our study also reveals that most of our respondents view their activity in dog rescue as a form of creating and fostering social capital which they clearly treasure. While the form of this capital is obviously more of the “bonding” rather than the “bridging” kind – unless one categorizes inter-breed rescues as an expression of the latter – it is nonetheless a clear means of a social involvement that bespeaks civic commitment. In other words, our study seems to bear out the positive reasons of women’s involvement in the world of dog rescue that we associated with Marjorie Garber’s view of human involvement with dogs rather than the negative ones expounded by Katz who characterized dog rescue as a crutch for women’s lack of social contacts. If indeed there is a clear relationship between the way people regard and treat animals, dogs in particular in our case, and the way they view and treat humans, as many studies in different disciplines have

demonstrated, than the argument might not be too far-fetched that these women's passionate commitment to dog rescue might indeed harbor a humanizing and civilizing force in our society.¹⁶

Our data also reveal that an overwhelming majority of our respondents are well aware of the preponderance of women in the world of dog rescue. Perhaps one of our most interesting findings featured the different reasons that men and women attributed to this phenomenon. Whereas the former saw this largely as a function of women having more time and being less taxed in their work lives than men, the latter reasoned much more emphatically in terms of women's more caring and nurturing nature which furnished a much greater compatibility with the world of dog rescue than men's allegedly more aloof emotional inclination and psychological constitution. While our data hail only from one state of the union, we are reasonably certain that our findings would not be too different on a nation-wide scale. Indeed, many of the traits defining our subjects are also prevalent among dog owners in the United States well beyond the specific world of dog rescue as reported by the 2005-2006 National Pet Owners Survey conducted by the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association. Still, our future research entails a broadening of our study to other states in this country and to nations in Western Europe, Germany and Britain in particular.

¹⁶ For just two articles presenting arguments and citing further studies corroborating the fact that empathy towards animals correlates positively with empathy towards humans, see David A. Nibert, "Animal Rights and Human Social Issues," in *Society & Animals: Journal of Human-Animal Studies*; and William F. Vitulli, "Attitudes Toward Empathy in Domestic Dogs and Cats" in *Psychological Reports*, Volume 99, Number 3, 2006, pp. 981 – 991.

Appendix A

Responses to Likert Scale Items grouped by respondent sex

	SEX	N	Mean	Std.	Std. Error
<i>Personal characteristics</i>					
Politics are important to you	Female	228	3.92	1.716	.114
	Male	20	3.65	1.927	.431
You are theologically liberal	Female	213	4.89	1.680	.115
	Male	15	4.40	1.882	.486
Religion is important to you	Female	226	3.95	2.005	.133
	Male	17	4.76	1.985	.481
What is your Fitness level**	Female	232	4.44	1.194	.078
	Male	20	5.05	1.276	.285
You are physically active *	Female	234	4.56	1.175	.077
	Male	20	5.50	1.100	.246
<i>Self as a dog owner</i>					
You are a dog person	Female	232	6.72	.590	.039
	Male	20	6.85	.366	.082
There are no bad dogs, only bad owners	Female	235	5.64	1.317	.086
	Male	20	6.15	1.089	.244
You prefer dogs to people	Female	231	5.19	1.480	.097
	Male	20	4.60	1.465	.328
People understand your relationship with your dogs	Female	233	4.57	1.516	.099
	Male	20	4.60	1.501	.336
Animals have the same basic rights as humans *	Female	229	5.26	1.638	.108
	Male	20	4.25	2.023	.452
You often choose to spend time with dog over spouse**	Female	224	4.00	1.508	.101
	Male	19	3.32	1.600	.367
Your friends with dogs spend as much time with theirs as	Female	226	4.35	1.460	.097
	Male	20	3.70	1.559	.349
<i>Costs of rescue work</i>					
not enough time*	Female	227	2.77	1.989	.132
	Male	20	1.95	1.605	.359
no social life	Female	225	2.16	1.745	.116
	Male	20	1.65	1.496	.335
not getting work done*	Female	226	1.65	1.448	.096
	Male	20	1.10	.308	.069
too much time on computer*	Female	227	2.33	1.868	.124
	Male	20	1.60	1.095	.245
too much drama	Female	227	2.67	1.971	.131
	Male	19	2.26	2.130	.489
not valued	Female	227	1.53	1.213	.081

	Male 20	1.35	.813	.182
Unpleasant people	Female229	2.37	1.752	.116
	Male 20	2.40	1.635	.366
not enough say	Female229	1.61	1.243	.082
	Male 20	2.05	1.669	.373
too many dogs can't be helped	Female230	4.79	2.138	.141
	Male 19	4.84	2.433	.558
not enough time with own dogs	Female227	2.38	1.838	.122
	Male 19	2.00	1.563	.359
too much responsibility	Female231	1.90	1.440	.095
	Male 20	1.75	1.251	.280

Why are more women involved in rescue?

	Female232	2.97	1.893	.124
Rescue less valued	Male 20	3.00	2.176	.487
Women have more time*	Female232	2.22	1.586	.104
	Male 20	3.30	1.750	.391
Women have fewer responsibilities*	Female230	1.43	.972	.064
	Male 20	2.45	1.820	.407
Women are more caring and nurturing*	Female232	5.41	1.625	.107
	Male 20	4.05	1.932	.432
Women are more interested in animal welfare*	Female231	5.08	1.656	.109
	Male 20	3.80	1.824	.408
Women want to look good by doing good	Female232	2.02	1.474	.097
	Male 20	2.40	1.930	.432
Women are more alienated from other people	Female231	1.73	1.295	.085
	Male 20	1.70	1.302	.291
Women are more willing to deal with problems*	Female232	4.71	1.877	.123
	Male 20	3.50	1.906	.426
Women get more social support from rescue work	Female228	4.75	1.801	.119
	Male 20	4.10	1.861	.416
Women have less control elsewhere in their lives	Female233	2.15	1.606	.105
	Male 20	2.35	1.694	.379
Women make better rescue workers than men	Female225	3.51	2.025	.135
	Male 20	2.85	1.599	.357
Women care more about their companion animals	Female225	3.61	1.966	.131
	Male 20	3.05	1.791	.400

* significant at .05

** significant at .05-.09

The New Discourse of Dogs -- SURVEY
Rescue Survey, Part 1
About You

1. Choose your age.

- 18-25 years old
- 26-35 years old
- 36-45 years old
- 46-55 years old
- 56-65 years old
- 66-75 years old
- Over 75 years old

2. What is your sex?

- Female
- Male
- Transgender/Other

3. What is your primary race/ethnicity? (Select all that apply.)

- Caucasian/White
- African American/Black
- Hispanic/Latina/o
- Asian or Asian American/Pacific Islander
- Native American/Indian
- Other (Please explain.): _____

4. What is your highest attained education level?

- Less than 12th grade, no diploma
- High school diploma/equivalent
- Some college, no degree
- Associate's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Professional degree
- Doctoral degree
- Other (Please explain.): _____

5. What is your sexual orientation? (Select which best describes you.)

- Gay/Lesbian

Bisexual
Heterosexual
Unknown
Other (Please explain.): _____

6. What is your marital status? (Select your current status.)

Living with partner
Single, never divorced
Single, previously divorced
Married, never divorced
Married, previously divorced
Widowed
Other (Please explain.): _____

7. How many people under 18 currently live in your household?

0 people
1-3 people
4-6 people
6 or more people

8. How many people 18 years old or older currently live in your household?

1 person
2 people
3-5 people
6 or more people

9. Do you share your living expenses with a roommate or housemate who is not your spouse or partner?

Yes
No
Unsure

10. How many bedrooms does your home have?

0-1 bedroom
2-3 bedrooms
4-5 bedrooms
More than 6 bedrooms

11. How many full or partial bathrooms does your home have?

1 bathroom

- 2 bathrooms
- 3-5 bathrooms
- More than 6 bathrooms

12. Do you have a formal dining room?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

13. Do you have a recreation room?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

14. Which of the following best describes the structure of the house where you live?

- Multi-unit/apartment building
- Duplex
- Attached single family (e.g. condominium, row house)
- Detached single family, with foundation
- Manufactured/mobile
- Other (Please explain.): _____

15. Which of the following best describes your living situation?

- Own home
- Rent home
- Other (Please explain.): _____

16. Which of the following best describes the setting where you live?

- Large urban (population over 250,000)
- Small urban (population under 250,000)
- Suburb
- Small town
- Rural

17. Which of the following best describes your lot/yard?

- Fully fenced back and/or front yard
- Partially fenced back and/or front yard
- Unfenced
- No yard

Other (Please explain.): _____

18. How many acres is your property (give best estimate if unknown)?

- Less than 1/4 acre
- 1/4 acre
- 1/2 acre
- 1 acre
- 2 acres
- 3-5 acres
- 6-10 acres
- 11-20 acres
- More than 20 acres

19. Estimate your yearly household income from all sources.

- Under \$10,000
- \$10,000-\$30,000
- \$30,000-\$50,000
- \$50,000-\$70,000
- \$70,000-\$100,000
- \$100,000-\$200,000
- \$200,000-\$300,000
- More than \$300,000

20. What is your employment status?

- Employed full time
- Employed part time
- Full time homemaker
- Not employed and looking for work
- Not employed and in school
- Not employed
- Retired
- Other (Please explain.): _____

21. If you are employed for pay, what is your occupation?

22. If you are not employed for pay, but have been, what is your usual occupation?

23. How many hours a week do you work away from the home (either for pay or as a volunteer)?

- 0 hours

- 1-10 hours
- 11-20 hours
- 21-30 hours
- 31-40 hours
- 41-50 hours
- More than 50 hours

24. What is your primary political preference? (Select the one that best describes you.)

- None, not political
- Independent
- Democrat
- Republican
- Green/Rainbow
- Libertarian
- Other (Please explain.): _____

25. On a scale of 1-7, how relevant are politics to your life?

- Very relevant Not relevant
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

26. What is your primary religious preference? (Select the one that best describes you.)

- Protestant
- Catholic
- Do not follow organized religion or have no religious preference
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Unitarian Universalist
- Neo-pagan
- Other (Please explain.): _____

27. On a scale of 1-7, do you consider yourself theologically more conservative or more liberal?

- Very conservative Very liberal
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

28. On a scale of 1-7, how relevant is religion to your life?

Very relevant Not relevant
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

29. Which of the following best describes your primary diet?

I eat most types of foods at least occasionally
I eat no red meat
I am primarily vegetarian, but I eat fish/seafood
I am vegetarian or vegan
Other (Please explain.): _____

30. On a scale of 1-7, what is your general physical fitness level?

Very unfit Very fit
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

31. On a scale of 1-7, what is your general physical activity level?

Very inactive Very active
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

32. For what organizations, other than dog rescue, do you volunteer (list up to 5)?

Please list the organization, the type of volunteer work you do and the estimated number of hours per month.

The New Discourse of Dogs
Rescue Survey, Part 2
About you and your dogs

1. On average, how many hours a week do you spend reading books/magazines/journals that focus on dogs?

0 hours
1-3 hours
4-6 hours
7-10 hours
More than 10 hours

2. How many magazines or journals do you subscribe to that are focused

primarily
on dogs?

- 0 magazines
- 1-2 magazines
- 3-5 magazines
- 6-8 magazines
- More than 8 magazines

3. Which of the following is closest to the rough percentage of your non-work Internet time per week that is devoted to dog issues?

- 0-5%
- 15%
- 25%
- 40%
- 60%
- 80%
- 100%

4. On a scale of 1-7, do you consider yourself a “dog person”?

Not at all Absolutely
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. On a scale of 1-7, what do you believe about the statement “There are no bad dogs, only bad dog owners?”

Completely disagree Completely agree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. On a scale of 1-7, would you say you generally prefer people or dogs?

People Dogs
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. On a scale of 1-7, how often do you feel like people don’t understand your relationship with your dog(s)?

Never Always
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8. On a scale of 1-7, do you agree or disagree that animals have the same basic rights that people do?

Completely disagree Completely agree

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

9. On a scale of 1-7, how often do you choose to spend time with your dog(s) rather than your spouse, significant other or best friend?

Never Always
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

10. On a scale of 1-7, how many of your friends spend as much time or more with their dog(s) as you do with yours?

None of them All of them
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

11. Do you think you would have more friends or fewer friends if you didn't have a dog?

More friends
Fewer friends
About the same number of friends

12. Among the people you know who spend as much time or more with their dogs as you do with yours, what rough percentage are women?

0%
10%
25%
40%
60%
80%
100%

13. How many dogs currently live in your household?

0 dogs
1 dog
2 dogs
3 dogs
4 dogs
5 dogs
More than 5 dogs

14. How many cats currently live in your household?

- 0 cats
- 1 cat
- 2 cats
- 3 cats
- 4 cats
- 5 cats
- More than 5 cats

15. How many animals other than cats and dogs currently live in your household?

- 0 animals
- 1 animal
- 2 animals
- 3 animals
- 4 animals
- 5 animals
- More than 5 animals

16. Please list the breed, age and sex of each dog in your household (up to 10).

17. Which of the following comes closest to describing where your dog(s) normally sleep(s) at night?

- In bed with me or another member of the household
- In a bedroom, but not allowed on the bed
- Wherever he/she/they want to
- Outside
- Contained in a room other than a bedroom, such as a bathroom, laundry room or family room
- In a crate in my bedroom (or someone else's bedroom)

18. On a scale of 1-7, how important do you believe it is for dogs to live primarily in the house?

- Not important at all
- Very important
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

19. For any dog in your household who spends time alone, how many hours a day does he/she spend on average without the availability of human companionship?

- 0 hours

- 1-4 hours
- 5-8 hours
- 9-12 hours
- More than 12 hours

20. Would you leave your dog(s) unattended in the house overnight?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Don't know

21. Which of the following arrangements have you used in the last year for a trip of more than one night without your dog(s)? (Select all that apply.)

- Boarding facility
- Bring dog(s) to friend's home
- Have a friend stay in home with dog(s)
- Have friend/neighbor care for dog(s) but not stay in your home
- Hire pet sitter to care for dog(s) but not stay in your home
- Hire pet sitter to stay in your home with dog(s)
- Have not traveled without dog(s)
- Other (Please explain.): _____

22. Which of the following have you fed your adult dog(s) in the last month? (Select all that apply.)

- Raw food diet (Example: B.A.R.F.)
- Home cooked diet
- Vegetarian diet, either prepared or home made
- Regular dry dog food (Examples: Old Roy, Purina Dog Chow)
- Premium dry dog food (Examples: Science Diet, Iams, Eukanuba)
- Super premium dry dog food (Examples: Wellness, Canidae, Wysong)
- Regular canned food
- Premium or super-premium canned food
- Semi-moist food
- Mix of regular canned and dry
- Mix of premium or super premium canned and dry
- Other (Please explain.): _____

23. How many days of the week does your dog do each of the following?

- Walk for at least 10 minutes on a leash
- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Run/Play in a fenced backyard
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Run/Play in an unfenced backyard
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Run/play off leash in a large unfenced area such as a field, school yard or park
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Run/Play off leash in a large fenced area such as a field, school yard or dog park
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Work (e.g. farm work, service work, herding, protection work)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Activities training (e.g. agility, flyball, rally, formal obedience)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

24. What is your primary type of veterinary care?

Free/reduced fee clinic, such as the humane society
Emergency clinic
Self-administered
Mobile vet (e.g. a vet who makes house calls)
Traditional veterinary clinic
None
Other (Please explain.): _____

25. Do you have expertise as a veterinarian, veterinarian assistant or veterinarian technician?

Yes
No
Unsure

26. Have you ever used wholistic/natural/alternative veterinary care (e.g. herbs and medicinal plants; acupuncture)?

Yes
No
Unsure

27. If you only had time to teach your dog(s) two commands, what would they be and why?

28. On a scale of 1-7, how likely are you to use a choke collar for your dog?

Not at all likely Extremely likely
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

29. On a scale of 1-7, how likely are you to use food treats as a training tool for your dog?

Not at all likely Extremely likely
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

30. On a scale of 1-7, how likely are you to roll a dog on its back to show you are the boss?

Not at all likely Extremely likely
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

31. On a scale of 1-7, how likely are you to pop or jerk the leash as a training strategy?

Not at all likely Extremely likely
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

32. Do any of your dogs compete/train in any of the following dog activities? (Select all that apply.)

- Agility
- Frisbee
- Formal Obedience
- Rally
- Flyball
- Tracking
- Earthdog
- Dock diving
- Lure coursing
- Racing
- Dog freestyle (e.g. dancing)
- Other (Please explain.): _____

33. Do any of your dogs work/train in any of the following dog activities? (Select all that apply.)

- Search and Rescue
- Herding
- Guard work

Therapy work
Service work (e.g. seizure dog, guide-dog)
Mushing/Sledding
Hunting
Other (Please explain.): _____

The New Discourse of Dogs
Rescue Survey, Part 3
About your rescue work

1. How many years have you been involved in rescue work?

Less than 1 year
1-4 years
5-7 years
8-10 years
More than 10 years

2. How did you learn about the main rescue group with which you are currently involved? (Select all that apply.)

Adopted a dog from this group
Heard about them from a friend
Saw them at a dog event
Saw them on the Internet
Heard about them from my veterinarian
Heard about them through another rescue organization
Heard about them from my training club/organization
Other (Please explain.): _____

3. Roughly how many hours a week do you spend on dog rescue work?

Less than 2 hours
2-5 hours
6-10 hours
10-15 hours
15-20 hours
20-30 hours
More than 30 hours

4. Rate the benefits of rescue work for you.

I enjoy spending time with the other people in the group

Not a benefit An important benefit

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I enjoy e-mailing and talking to people on the phone

Not a benefit An important benefit

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I like to solve problems

Not a benefit An important benefit

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I feel valued by my work with rescue

Not a benefit An important benefit

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I feel needed by my work in rescue

Not a benefit An important benefit

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. Rate the benefits of rescue work for you.

I like raising awareness about the breed I rescue

Not a benefit An important benefit

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I like helping people find the dog of their dreams

Not a benefit An important benefit

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I get to spend more time with my spouse/loved ones who are also involved in rescue work

Not a benefit An important benefit

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

It takes my mind off the stresses of life

Not a benefit An important benefit

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

It relieves me of boredom

Not a benefit An important benefit

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. Rate the benefits of rescue work for you.

It gives me a break from my family
Not a benefit An important benefit
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

It gives me a break from my work
Not a benefit An important benefit
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I get to learn new things and hear about new ideas
Not a benefit An important benefit
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I get to meet new people
Not a benefit An important benefit
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. Rate the costs of rescue work for you.

I don't have enough time for other things I want to do
Not a cost A serious cost
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My family or social life is suffering
Not a cost A serious cost
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I am not getting my paid work (or primary work) done
Not a cost A serious cost
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I have to spend too much time on the computer
Not a cost A serious cost
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

There is too much drama
Not a cost A serious cost
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8. Rate the costs of rescue work for you.

I don't feel valued
Not a cost A serious cost
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

There are too many unpleasant people to deal with

Not a cost A serious cost

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I don't have enough say in how the group works

Not a cost A serious cost

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I know there are many dogs we can't save

Not a cost A serious cost

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

I don't spend enough time with my own dogs

Not a cost A serious cost

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

9. Rate the costs of rescue work for you.

It is too much responsibility

Not a cost A serious cost

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

10. How many years have you been involved in fostering dogs?

I have never fostered

Less than 1 year

1-4 years

5-7 years

8-10 years

More than 10 years

11. How many dogs have you fostered for the rescue organization(s) you are currently working with?

0 dogs

1-3 dogs

4-7 dogs

8-12 dogs

More than 12 dogs

12. How many dogs are you currently fostering?

0 dogs

1 dog

2 dogs
3 dogs
More than 3 dogs

13. On a scale of 1-7, how important do you believe it is to try and save all dogs?

Not important Very important
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

14. On a scale of 1-7, do you believe it is right to spay a pregnant female dog that comes into your rescue group?

Under no circumstances Always
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

15. Does the main rescue organization you currently work with have any paid employees?

Yes
No
Unsure

16. Approximately how many active volunteers does the main rescue organization you work with have currently?

Fewer than 5 volunteers
5-10 volunteers
11-20 volunteers
21-30 volunteers
More than 30 volunteers

17. On a scale of 1-7, how difficult do you think it is for someone to adopt a dog from the main rescue organization you currently work with?

Extremely difficult Not difficult at all
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

18. Do you currently hold a position of leadership in the main rescue group you work with?

Yes
No

If yes, select all of the following that apply.

President/Director
Vice-president
Secretary
Treasurer
Foster Home Coordinator
Intake Coordinator
Board Member
Other (Please explain.): _____

If no, have you held such a position in the past?

Yes
No

If yes, select all of the following that apply.

President/Director
Vice-president
Secretary
Treasurer
Foster Home Coordinator
Intake Coordinator
Board Member
Other (Please explain.): _____

19. In the rescue organization you work for, what rough percentage of the leadership positions are held by women?

0%
10%
30%
50%
70%
90%
100%

20. People have given many reasons for why more women than men seem to be involved in rescue work. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following explanations.

Rescue work is less valued than other types of volunteer work
Strongly disagree Strongly agree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Women have more time
Strongly disagree Strongly agree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Women have fewer responsibilities
Strongly disagree Strongly agree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Women are more caring and nurturing
Strongly disagree Strongly agree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Women are more interested in animal well-being
Strongly disagree Strongly agree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

21. People have given many reasons for why more women than men seem to be involved in rescue work. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following explanations.

Women are more interested in looking good by doing good
Strongly disagree Strongly agree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Women are more alienated from other people
Strongly disagree Strongly agree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Women are more willing to deal with problems
Strongly disagree Strongly agree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Women are more likely to get emotional/social support from rescue work
Strongly disagree Strongly agree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Women have less power and control in other parts of their lives
Strongly disagree Strongly agree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

22. List any other reasons why you think more women than men seem to be involved in rescue work.

23. On a scale of 1-7, do you think women seem to be better rescue workers than men?

Not at all Absolutely
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

24. On a scale of 1-7, do you think women seem to care more about their companion animals than men?

Not at all Absolutely
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

25. We will be conducting a small number of face-to-face interviews concerning dog rescue work. These interviews will last from 30 minutes to an hour on average and you will be compensated for your time with a \$20 gift certificate to Amazon.com. Would you be willing to be interviewed about your rescue work and your life with dogs?

Yes
No

26. If you are willing to be interviewed, please provide an e-mail address where you can be contacted.