



Redemption: The Myth Of Pet Overpopulation And The No Kill Revolution In America

Nathan J. Winograd

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

Redemption: The Myth Of Pet Overpopulation And The No Kill Revolution In America

Nathan J. Winograd

Redemption: The Myth Of Pet Overpopulation And The No Kill Revolution In America Nathan J. Winograd

Redemption is the story of animal sheltering in the United States, a movement that was born of compassion and then lost its way. It is the story of the 'No Kill' movement, which says we can and must stop the killing. But most of all, it is a story about believing in the community and trusting in the power of compassion.

Redemption: The Myth Of Pet Overpopulation And The No Kill Revolution In America Details

Date : Published June 10th 2007 by Almaden Books (first published January 1st 2007)

ISBN : 9780979074301

Author : Nathan J. Winograd

Format : Paperback 229 pages

Genre : Animals, Nonfiction, Dogs

 [Download Redemption: The Myth Of Pet Overpopulation And The No K ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Redemption: The Myth Of Pet Overpopulation And The No ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Redemption: The Myth Of Pet Overpopulation And The No Kill Revolution In America Nathan J. Winograd

From Reader Review Redemption: The Myth Of Pet Overpopulation And The No Kill Revolution In America for online ebook

Sam says

This book was ridiculous. This is a book to make the public feel better by blaming someone else. His entire premise was that shelter workers want to kill animals. Don't feel bad about getting rid of your pet, it's not your fault if he has to be put down, it's those unscrupulous shelter workers! Working in a shelter is not a glamorous job by any stretch of the imagination. It is a very physically and emotionally difficult job. You have to be truly dedicated to get past the dirt and grime, the people who surrender pets because they're bored with them, the animal cruelty cases, and yes, the heartbreak of having to put down the beautiful dog you've spent the last two weeks caring for because he tries to rip your hand off if you come near his favorite toy. And this happens everyday. No one enjoys killing animals, but if the animal poses a hazard to potential adopters, you can't take that risk. Aggressive animals are not necessarily aggressive all the time. If a cat is so undersocialized that it can't be safely handled by staff, how are they supposed to clean and care for it? No, it's not the animal's fault, but that doesn't change the fact that it would be irresponsible to adopt it out. And the two examples he constantly cites as the poster children for his program? Both have abandoned their open admission, no-kill mission. If his program is unsustainable, it doesn't do much good for anyone in the long run. Shifting the blame isn't going to solve anything, and saying there's no such thing as overpopulation is only going to make it worse. If there is no pet overpopulation, how can 5 million animals be killed every year yet you can walk into any shelter or pet store and have your pick? Why is he such an advocate of low-cost spay/neuter if you don't need to cut back on the number of animals being born?

Wendy says

I wanted to write a good review of this book, but I've left my Goodreads behind for a while and don't remember a whole lot about this just now. We read this for our AR book/reading group in February, and it was insightful for at least one of our members. I found this interesting and at the same time short-sighted. I find Winograd's willingness to shame other advocates at once necessary and irresponsible; it seems he has taken things out of context somewhat. (i.e. when talking about the shelter directors who euthanized/killed animals on TV, Winograd seems to not understand that it was likely the shelter's way of showing the public WHY spay/neuter is important, and why people need to be certain that when they take an animal on, they need to not just dump them because the furniture is getting scratched or something). Winograd also states that if it were possible for him to create a truly no-kill shelter in Ithaca, NY, then it can happen anywhere. I know he addresses the argument that rural areas/the southern US are not immune from this happening, but he isn't convincing. And I apologize - his "rural" shelter was not in Ithaca itself, but nearby. It was also nearby Cornell University. I think it's fairly common knowledge that Ithaca is a progressive town and Cornell, being an ivy league college, is likely to have a different mindset surrounding it than, say, Kodak, TN. I have lived in the north and the south, and I have lived in rural and urban areas, and I have seen the differences in consideration people give nonhuman animals. I do not yet buy the argument that it is entirely possible to have no-kill shelters in rural areas. My current location in a progressive NC town has a no-kill shelter that is highly-touted, but they do not do home checks, and neither does the municipal shelter. Granted, they make great use of volunteers and foster systems, which I think are fabulous. But because the number of unwanted animals is so high, they seem at least as concerned with getting animals into any old home as they do with

getting them into a safe, good home.

Winograd's accusations against HSUS and PeTA do resonate with me, and his conviction that we must stop killing animals is, of course, a given. But his seeming lack of understanding of humanity and the penchant we have for torturing other creatures seems naive and not fully accurate. Yes we do need to make changes and find solutions. But there are, unfortunately, fates worse than death and in some cases an easy death is preferable to a hard one (in my time in TN I found the body of a burned-alive, dead cat; a cat who had been poisoned, and a small dog who had either been shot, poisoned, or hit by a car, all left to suffer and die. And NO agency - from the shelter to the health department to child and human services - would come and investigate, or even show concern).

The book is a step forward and shows that there are other ways of dealing with this issue (I especially like the story about the Philadelphia shelter), but it does feel naive in some respects.

Elizabeth says

I have such mixed feelings about this book. It starts off strong with allegations and statistics that are meant to shock and outrage you but it peeters out after that. This book makes some amazing suggestions for shelters to move in the right direction of becoming No Kill. I love the first chapter that tells the story of the founding of the first animal welfare groups in this country.

I do have some problems with this author though. First, and probably foremost, is that he talks in absolutes. The world is made of gray, not everything is black and white. Yes, changes need to be made but not all can be done overnight. If shelters are city run, part of the blame is on the city and it may be harder to change anything with all the bureaucratic red tape. In some instances the fault does need to be shared with the public. Low cost spay/neuter won't do any good if the public doesn't want to take away their dog's "manhood". That is not a problem with lower incomes either. I know plenty of men who are of middle income and refuse the neuter their male dogs simply because it takes thier manhood away. Probably the biggest issue I have with this book is the feral cat issue. He says let all feral cats live regarless of their environmental impact. That one life is not more important than another. He claims that there are studies that say in many cases feral cats actually help the wildlife and most of the time have no impact. This is a flat out falsehood. There are plenty of environments where cats have exterminated all of the local wildlife. There has been no choice but to exterminate the cats from many islands to save the remaining members of an endangered species. It has happened all over the world, Australia, New Zealand countless islands all over the world. If Jane Goodall says it is ok then it is ok in my book. Last, he gives no citations for any of his statistics. He makes bold claims and says he has seen the studies but does not let the readers know what they are. I am a scientific person and I need proof of your claims.

Definitely read it and make up your own mind, There are good and bad points. But you should decide.

Jasmine Bazaar says

Redemption: The Myth of Pet Overpopulation and the No Kill Revolution in America Paperback – June 16, 2009

by Nathan J. Winograd (Author)

In Redemption, the myth of pet over population Author, Nathan Winograd, makes the point that the killing of animals which numbers in the millions every year across this nation, was not necessary as the so called shelters led the public to believe. With the implications of shelter programs, in 1990, 27,930 dogs and cats were put to sleep. When these same healthy animals could have been found homes. It was just a matter of educating the public and the shelters themselves to change their kill policies to no kill. By using private foster homes until the animals could find forever homes, by using neuter and release programs for cats.]By transferring animals to other shelters where the animal might have a better chance at adoption. Even though the programs were demonstrated to work, the kill policy went on claiming that it was the only humane way to handle homeless animals.

My own experience with shelters, is that they pick up the animal from the owner or off the streets and the animal is stressed beyond belief. They are away from their families, they find themselves in strange surroundings, they are scared and sometimes sick or become sick diseases that come from putting all those animals together in cages. When the animal strikes out against these strangers who would handle them with familiarity. they are labeled as aggressive and put down. I took three really healthy strays to the Portland, Oregon, Humane Society, I had had them neutered and spayed. They had all their shots, and the vet had pronounced them healthy. I just could not keep that many animals. They found two of them homes and the third was put down. I had asked if I could be notified if they were not adoptable and I would come and get them. They said that if I paid this enormous amount of board, which was about \$10. dau per animal they could call me. I did not have the money but called everyday inquiring about them. They told me on the third day they had put down the third animal. I had spent around \$300. per animal to have them be healthy, have their shots, and get forever homes. But because one of the animals was scared and scratched he was deemed unadoptable. The agency could not even call me though I offered foster care for the animals as long as they needed. They simply put the animal down.

Low cost spay and neuter clinics aimed at poor people being able to spay and neuter their pets threatened the profits of vets then these programs were discouraged though they would cost the shelters and tax payers millions of dollars by not having to deal with unwanted pets born to owners that could not afford to spay and neuter their pets.

False stories of how these animals were threatening the eco-system, these animals damaging properties, decline of wildlife. Puppy mills were blamed for increasing numbers of pets being bred when there was a marked increase in the American Kenel Club in their breeders.

This is a book everyone should read. How did a pet loving society become the main way to slaughter animals?

Anna says

A good but not perfect book.

Raises some good points, among them:

- 1) originally, the SPCA was an group that went out halting incidence of cruelty/neglect, and refused to take over city pounds because of the conflict between their 'save the animals' mandate and the city-pound 'kill unwanted animals' function...is the SPCA's current shelter/pound-running a conflict of philosophies?
- 2) in the old days, pounds and shelters could justify the killing of strays (if not their barbaric methods) as public safety since there was no such thing as the Rabies vaccine; but now that there **is** a vaccine against this horrible disease, why the rush to kill strays and cast-offs rather than re-homing them? I mean, people donate enough (alongside the admittedly small tax-funding) to finance greater efforts...
- 3) there are many life-saving options that shelters can use--never adopt an animal out without spaying/neutering first, have hours that allow for working people to visit and adopt or reclaim lost pets, save on the budget by using volunteer labour, have a foster-home system so they can care for more animals than just how many fit in the shelter, show adoptable animals in pet-stores so people can adopt instead of buying 'new' (which just made more cage-space in the shelter, so you don't need to kill for space), co-ordinate with outside rescue groups (again, saving cage-space)--but many (if not most) shelters never do, seemingly because they can't break the 'we've always done it this way' inertia

A couple of points where I disagree with the author:

- a) I disagree with his assertion that stray/feral cats have no significant environmental impact--yes, habitat loss and pollution are huge problems for endangered birds etc, but I've seen enough stray (and pet) cats kill in large numbers despite full bellies; just because there's a machine-gun down the road doesn't mean you can forget about the land-mines scattered around--but I do agree that Trap-Neuter-Release is more effective feral population control than catch-and-kill: better to have the biggest baddest tomcat 'shooting blanks' rather than just let the #2 and #3 tomcats replace the sperm donor you just culled
- b) I disagree with his implication that pet overpopulation does not exist, and that it is not largely due to irresponsible pet owners--having worked in vet clinics, I've seen enough people too cheap, too macho or too can't-be-bothered to spay/neuter their pets, resulting in litter after unwanted litter that get dumped or given away to anyone, regardless of their suitability for pet ownership (I'm not talking about people who are too poor--but that's what spay/neuter clinics are for...which is actually one thing the author and I agree on)
- c) related to point b), i disagree that there is a **good** home available for all available animals: just because there are 100 people who **want** a pet, doesn't mean that all of these people would be good, or at least suitable, owners--if you want a pet but can't afford the care (including regular vaccines **and** spay/neuter, dammit!), if you want a pet but have a hard time feeding yourself (never mind another mouth), if you want a pet but aren't home enough for its mental and social well-being, if you want a pet but you can't or don't know how to handle it, no matter what you **want**, you should not have a pet!

Overall, good stuff in this book if you can sift through the dry and sometimes repetitive writing. Not perfect, but says some important things and brings up valid points.

As a side-note, I've seen some critics say that the 2 shelters the author uses as success-stories have since lapsed away from No-Kill--my answer to that is, it worked for the years the author was managing these shelters and lapsed when this manager left. Maybe the lapse comes from new managers who fall into the old patterns and don't lift themselves out of this rut, or are too worn-out to even try different solutions. I've seen more than one animal die despite easy open-and-shut solutions for reasons as ridiculous as, for example, the authority-figure couldn't be bothered to sign a release of legal liability to hand a fearful dog over to a well-reputed sanctuary specializing in traumatized dog rehab, or would rather kill now and have it over with instead of waiting a few hours for a truck to come and pick them up...point being, failure of leadership to continue successful programs does **not** mean that the programs are not feasible, and the fact that it might take time to get new practices running smoothly does not mean these practices should not be tried.

ESPECIALLY when there are lives in the balance.

Jess P says

Awesome book from the father of No-Kill! If you want to know all the basic tenets and ways to achieve no-kill, this is a great book! Intriguing read for anyone in animal sheltering.

Stephanie *Very Stable Genius* says

at first this book was interesting, but I lost interest because of all the lawyer speak. too dry. too bad, it is an important subject.

Allie says

This was a very inspiring book with lots of important information. It really changed the way I look at the humane movement, and I'm still digesting some of the information. I didn't know much about the No Kill movement's successes, and I'm really surprised and excited to learn about what a few communities have achieved in terms of saving animals' lives.

However, I really wish Winograd had collaborated with a professional writer. This is such an important topic, but I'm afraid that only those who already are seriously passionate about these issues will stay with him through the whole book. The book was dry and awkward in some parts and his "surprise reveal" (several chapters in) of his own role in the No Kill movement was stilted and unnecessary; he should have just been upfront about it from the beginning. I also was left with quite a few unanswered questions.

Overall, though, I think this was a book that needed to be written, and I highly recommend it for anyone who cares about animals.

Dr. Kim says

This had to be one of the best books exposing the myth of pet overpopulation I've ever read. In fact the ONLY one that exposes the status quo for standing by something that does not work. What is even better is the author didn't just write about this he lived it and proved it and provides the ultimate solution to the problem of so-called pet overpopulation and to ending all the killing in the false name of mercy.

Bart says

Nathan Winograd exposes false claims made by animal shelters, many of which aim to "shelter" people from non-human animals. According to Winograd, shelters vilify the public for a companion animal overpopulation, which does not in fact exist, and that if shelter's promoted themselves better, kept cleaner

facilities, and were open for adoption more hours, then the public would more likely adopt animals at rates that shelter murder would not exist. The author cites success stories of No Kill shelters from his experience in San Francisco and Tompkins County, New York. Especially interesting were Winograd's critiques of nativist philosophy and hate/fear of feral cats.

While I found much of this book interesting although somewhat repetitive, Winograd seems to miss quite a bit. He chalks up the kill epidemic to shelter directors who think there is no other way to run shelters, don't want to provide low/no cost spay/neuter services to anger private vets, etc. I don't want to oversimplify the author's arguments because Winograd provides more than these two reasons; however, he fails to consider systemic roots of non-human animal oppression. The myriad of examples of horrendous abuse, neglect, and murder of animals in shelters clearly show those attendants hold little/no regard for the animals' lives. In his insistence of spaying/neutering as a "solution" (to what problem?!), Winograd falls into the trap of treating non-human animals as property by controlling their reproductive capacities.

Shaun Bailey says

This book is an excellent resource for best practices in animal sheltering. However, specific flaws prevent me from liking it.

In my opinion, the author excludes many readers by writing at a college reading level. In other words, his sentences are long winded and riddled with complex words and terms. This runs counter to his cause because it prevents today's entry-level professionals from becoming tomorrow's no-kill evangelists. If he ever publishes a third edition, I recommend he use it to target adoption counselors and not board members.

Secondly, the book fails to provide the guidance one needs to implement its best practices. It provides an 11-page "blueprint" in the appendix. However, this is merely a redundant list of descriptions. A future edition should include fool-proof, step-by-step instructions. If done right, these would enable any first-time director to get each program up and running.

Lastly, the book is severely negative. I understand why; mass slaughter is unfolding, in the author's view. But 230 pages of negativity doesn't exactly make for a pleasure ride.

All that said, I consider this book required reading for anyone seeking a career in animal welfare. It's a chore to read, but it's essential to understanding the full spectrum of people's perspectives and, increasingly, popular opinion.

SIDE NOTE: Similarities exist between Nathan Winograd's no-kill shelter movement and Mark Coker's indie-author movement, yet their approaches are quite different; one being negative and the other being positive. Perhaps they could learn something from each another.

Elektra says

Redemption is not an easy book, but it's an crucial one. It's full of information, and for those who love animals, it's important information. At this moment in time, with legislation concerning the number of pets we own and breed increasing daily, understanding what motivates the opposition in this complex issue is one of the keys to beating them. But be prepared for some pain along the way—some in the form of statistics, but

most in the realization of how many animals could have been saved, if shelters changed the way they were doing things. Most of the book is an in-depth explanation of the following quote:

“In the final analysis, animals in shelters are not being killed because there are too many of them, because there are too few homes, or because the public is irresponsible. Animals in shelters are dying for primarily one reason—because people in shelters are killing them.”

Redemption is divided into several sections—it begins with a history of animal sheltering in the United States, starting with the birth of the “humane society” in the 19th century as one man’s compassionate vision. It chronicles the movement as a whole, showing how it slowly went wrong and somehow began to focus on killing animals rather than saving them, finally ending up where we are now.

It explains how the blame was shifted from animal control agencies to the public and the animals themselves, through initiatives like “LES”—Legislation, Education, and Sterilization. LES supports laws to license cats and dogs, animal limit laws, required spay/neuter, legal prohibitions on the feeding of feral cats and gives animal control broad seizure powers. Shelters weren’t taking the next step, however, and providing low cost spay/neuter options, nor were they trying to reduce shelter deaths. They were too busy pointing fingers.

It details the first success story in American sheltering—when Richard Avanzino took over the San Francisco SPCA and began implementing programs aimed at saving lives rather than just abiding by the status quo. Policy changes during his tenure would eventually lead to no healthy animals being killed in San Francisco, and greatly reduce overall shelter deaths.

And it’s the story of a man, Nathan Winograd, who saw the success of No Kill in San Francisco, and took the lessons learned there to upstate New York, where as Director of the Tompkins County SPCA he built on the success of San Francisco to create the first No Kill community in America. Later, he would move on to found the No Kill Advocacy Center, with a goal of creating a No Kill nation.

It lists the steps needed to achieve No Kill, and where and how it worked—in urban American, in rural America, in the South, etc. and how various programs can lead the way there. It tells you what you can do to help.

There are a lot of amazing ideas put forth in this book, and I urge anyone who loves animals to read it. There are several key concepts that Nathan goes back to again and again. One is that No Kill is achievable if the people involved believe in it and work with a goal of saving lives. Another is that the building blocks of No Kill are simple, and that each piece helps: volunteering at the shelter, feral cat trap-neuter-return, spay/neuter before adoption, fostering, breed rescue, etc. These building blocks are things that individuals can contribute to, each according to their abilities, resources, time, etc. We can all help.

This is a very personal book for me, for a number of reasons. I lived in Tompkins County until a few years ago, and was very aware of the issues facing the SPCA, and the problems they had with funding. In the early 1990s, the Tompkins County SPCA was handling both dog and cat control for the county, with the towns funding some of the dog control. Everything else was paid for by donations. A task force was formed to look into licensing cats as a revenue stream to fund cat control. I sat on that task force. Ultimately, the task force recommended against licensing as a revenue stream—but we discussed many of the same issues brought up in Redemption. I met Nathan when he first became Director at the SPCA, and had a front-row seat as many of the events described in the book happened.

Later, when Redemption was first published, Nathan came back to Tompkins County, and spoke at the

SPCA as one of the stops on his book tour. He is a fine speaker, and is both passionate and knowledgeable about animals and the No Kill Revolution.

I make no claim to being impartial about this one—my copy of Redemption is personally inscribed. Highly, highly recommended.

Keri says

This book is fantastic. Nathan Winograd systematically and unapologetically rips the sheltering industry a new asshole, and then shows us all exactly what needs to be done to fix the mess. He is not afraid to be held accountable for what he believes in, uses sound facts to state his case, and brings hope to a dismal and morbid reality. Anyone who has animals, loves animals, volunteers with animals, or cares a whit about the way our communities treat animals would benefit from reading this book. It was a revelation to me.

James says

This book is filled with information you definitely don't want to hear but desperately need to. Nathan Winograd is a former criminal prosecutor who left the law profession years back to pursue his life's work of restoring America to a nation that does not use murder as a response to dealing with abandoned, feral, or homeless animals. This account on how we as a nation have fallen into a immoral trap of killing detaches much of Winograd's own work (which is substantial and groundbreaking to say the least) and instead focuses on a number of elements of the pet sheltering institution; namely the founding of the ASPCA by Henry Bergh as a no-kill organization in the late 1800s, how it tragically moved away from this goal, how our shelters today use false claims of pet over-population, inaccurate temperament tests, and even rabies to rationalize the slaughter of millions of companion animals a year, how animal rights groups like PETA have been major contributors to mass killing in shelters, how your companion animal will be likely killed in most shelters within 24 hours of arriving if they are lost and you will never receive a phone call, how the shelter's blaming of the public's irresponsibility has led to a majority of the killing, and how No-kills method of including the public and treating them with respect has had a 95% success rate in ending unnecessary killing.

This book is disturbing and upsetting but not without a silver lining and a blue-print on making this a safer place for animals. It's filled with real stories of success in No-Kill in areas like San Francisco and Tompkins, NY as well as real tragedies that have occurred within modern shelters and how it unfortunately takes these tragedies to open eyes. The feral cat section is really incredible too. This is a great book, very readable and very necessary in a world that has a lot of trouble treating living beings like such.

Diane Meier says

I urge anyone who cares about dogs and cats to read this book. Winograd is an amazing author and a wonderful leader of the no kill movement. I've seen him speak at a conference and it was awesome. I believe that we can indeed save 99% of the animals in shelters and that convenience killing is a tragedy that must be stopped. My first novel raises these issues and also tries to entertain because unfortunately, many people will not read this kind of book

