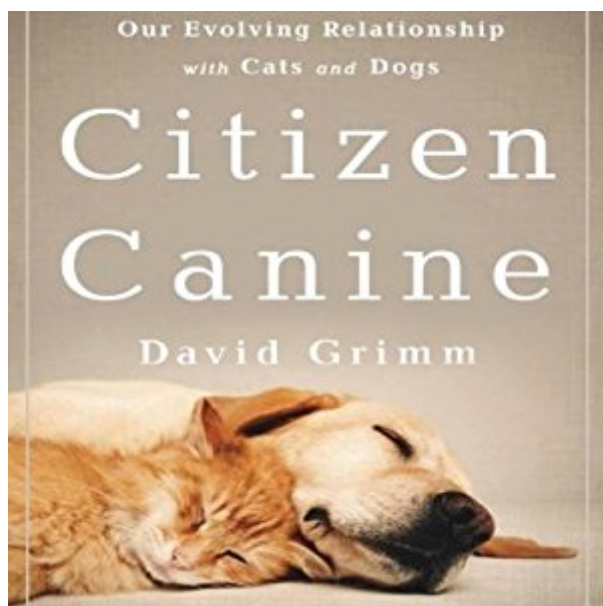


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Citizen Canine: Our Evolving Relationship With Cats And Dogs



Synopsis

In this fascinating exploration of the changing status of dogs and cats in society, pet lover and award-winning journalist David Grimm explores the rich and surprising history of our favorite companion animals. He treks the long and often torturous path from their wild origins to their dark days in the middle ages to their current standing as the most valued animals on Earth. As he travels across the country - riding along with Los Angeles detectives as they investigate animal cruelty cases, touring the devastation of New Orleans in search of the orphaned pets of Hurricane Katrina, and coming face-to-face with wolves and feral cats - Grimm reveals the changing social attitudes that have turned pets into family members, and the remarkable laws and court cases that have elevated them to quasi citizens. The journey to citizenship isn't a smooth one, however. As Grimm finds, there's plenty of opposition to the rising status of cats and dogs. From scientists and farmers worried that our affection for pets could spill over to livestock and lab rats to philosophers who say the only way to save society is to wipe cats and dogs from the face of the earth, the battle lines are being drawn. We are entering a new age of pets - one that is fundamentally transforming our relationship with these animals and reshaping the very fabric of society. For pet lovers or anyone interested in how we decide who gets to be a "person" in today's world, Citizen Canine is a must-have. It is a pet tale like no other.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

We read David Grimm's book with interest, having heard him being interviewed on NPR. The subject matter and the history of our interactions with these animals is something we want to know

more about, and Mr. Grimm delivers. The book is sometimes cumbersome because of whole chapters that go back and forth in time, leaving one uncertain of when or where an incident occurred. But some historical details are fascinating and often funny. The author's conclusion is one that we had reached well before the end. What lawyers will do with it all remains to be seen.

Ever wonder why cats and dogs have become such a staple of the American family? Ever wonder how 'kibble' became the mainstay of the average pet's diet? Or how the current healthy pet-food revolution came to be? Ever wonder what triggered the legislative changes making it illegal for emergency responders to force someone to evacuate from a disaster, without also evacuating their pets? Then this book is an enjoyable and informative read you're sure to enjoy !!!

Captivating, informative and written in an entertaining style - adding substance and history to help the reader understand the unique and intermingling relationships man has forged, broken and recreated over time with the two most amazing co-inhabitants in our lives. As a Veterinarian I'd recommend it to ALL who treasure cats and dogs (and other companion animals) and yet want to know more about our own species' history with companion creatures.

If you are an animal-person -- a reasonable assumption if you are considering reading this book -- then be prepared for your beliefs and biases about dogs and cats and the role they play in society and family to be affirmed, challenged, and broadened. Grimm begins with background on how dogs and cats evolved from being property (with a distinct utility for their owner) to becoming family-members who are no longer "owned" but are adopted and have human-guardians. Grimm then goes on to explore the notion of personhood for pets and the more controversial idea of citizenship. Whether or not you agree 100% with Grimm you will almost certainly finish the book with an appreciation for the complexities inherent in the human-pet bond and its social and legal implications.

If you care about animals and how they fit into human society this is a good read. Grimm bases his discussion on a lot of research and examples - the section about the use of dogs in combat is particularly interesting. He arrives at a middle ground - dogs are not people, but to quote the book, dogs are not toasters either. He's also quite articulate about the downsides of thinking of animals as persons, and how that could actually cause a lot of peril for our animal companions. It's a good read, and leaves you a lot to think about. I have to add that the section about pets during Hurricane

Katrina is just heartbreaking. I wasn't really aware of just how completely we failed the animals that were under our care during that disaster, and it's pretty inspiring to read about the people who reacted to it by working tirelessly and thanklessly to make sure it doesn't happen again - especially Animal Rescue of New Orleans, ARNO. These are just great people.

This book was an eye-opener about the animals we share this planet with every day. Divided into 3 parts, Grimm begins with a history of how animals entered our worlds. He moves on to how laws became enacted, how they impacted animals, and how society changed too. The third section explored how life would be different, not necessarily better, if animals became citizens, not property. The end of Grimm's book will leave you wondering about cats and dogs as citizens or property and forcing the reader to, at least privately, take a side. CITIZEN CANINE is a book we all need in our homes.

My dog, Dingo, is family. However, I had never thought about her legal status. I never thought of me as her "owner," except when visiting the vet. The book is a good introduction to the subject of animal rights in a very broad sense. As a lawyer, I had hoped for more legal analysis. Overall, a very good read and it provides me with a jumping off place for further study.

Great book.

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