

The Good, The Bad & The Ugly

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When discussing dog breeders, there seems to be the same amount of confusion as there are breeders. This short article will talk about the different types.

Let's start in reverse order – Let's start with the 'Ugly'

Most of us have heard of Puppy Mills. Big commercial businesses that sell every breed (and designer mix) under the sun. These establishments keep dogs in deplorable conditions and this infuriates most people.....or does it? Because the puppies that are produced in these mills are sold out of pet stores (and some directly from the mill themselves) – and they are far from going out of business. People delude themselves into thinking THEIR puppy, THAT puppy didn't actually come from a place like THAT! Their puppy is a purebred! And, and, and...IF, on the odd chance they're wrong, if it really did – it will be just fine!! Their other excuse for continuing with the sale of said puppy is that they are "rescuing it" and they are doing the right thing.

So, the puppy mills & the pet stores stay in business – not because they are evil, but because we enable the ugliness.

We move onto the **BAD**. This, unbeknownst to most people, is actual also the **UGLY**. Bad breeders are responsible for more unwanted dogs than Puppy Mills. Really? Yes, really! There are two kinds of Bad Breeders – those that probably don't know any better and those that do.

A backyard breeder (The average pet owner that breeds their dogs) breeds their dogs for the sake of it. *They may have a sweet pet they want to try and reproduce or they think that their dogs are quality because they have papers and/or are registered with some registry. They think maybe they can make a few dollars selling pups, etc. They just produce dogs without real consideration for the future of not only the breed but the puppies produced.* (taken from "what is a Backyard Breeder") These puppies are usually sold on free web classified sites (Kijiji, CraigsList etc..) at low prices (still a huge profit for someone who really did nothing to produce a litter).

The second type of **BAD** Breeder (who make up the majority of all breeders) are just what the name suggests – **BAD** Breeders. They usually have websites, their dogs might have a "title" (probably just a certificate) and might even have some health testing. But these breeders have access to knowledgeable peers yet continue to breed subpar, untested specimens of the breed. These are the sneaky breeders – the ones with just enough information to fool even those that think they've done their homework! A good breeder can spot one of these a mile away. They can point out the lack of tested breeding stock, the disregard for the breed and many other questionable aspects of the Bad Breeder's program.

BAD breeders are confusing to most. People cannot distinguish the breeder from the puppy and if they ended up with a decent dog, they mistakenly assume the breeder was also decent. If we look at it that way, puppy mills aren't so bad. – Many people have bought wonderful, much loved dogs from pet stores....

What is the reality? Message boards, emails & phone calls all about dogs that are exhibiting incorrect temperament, health issues or worse. Is this a fluke – No! Bad Breeders and Backyard Breeders do not breed for temperament and health and ability and everything else that goes into a well bred dog.

So, where were these puppy buyers before they purchased this poorly bred puppy? They were thinking "I don't need to pay \$XXXX for a dog! I'm sure this breeder is fine! I don't need the parents of my puppy to have papers, titles, health tests, I'm rescuing this puppy from this terrible seller..." And the cycle continues...

Good Breeder? That's a pretty easy one. Someone who does all they can to ensure they are producing THE best dogs they can. They don't make money, they spend far more proving their breeding stock is healthy, breedworthy and conforms to the standard. They participate in venues that were created to prove their breed's ability. They take an active role in working their breeding stock. They know so much about all aspects of the breed that you are usually afraid to get into a conversation with them because they will talk your ear off!

And they are constantly trying to educate people to understand **the Good, the Bad and the Ugly**.

