The Ethics of Ear Cropping

Jennifer L. O'Rourke
Honors Senior Thesis
Advisor – Dr. RW Leid

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PASS WITH DISTINCTION
INTRODUCTION

The Problem

Every year, thousands of dogs undergo a surgical procedure in the name of fashion. This procedure involves an alteration of the dog's ear, followed by a lengthy propping of the ear in an attempt to make it stand in an unnatural position. This process is called ear cropping and racking. There are several breeds of dogs who have their ears cropped in the United States and they include: Doberman Pinschers, Miniature Pinschers, Boxers, Pitbulls, large Terriers, Giant Schnauzers, Bouviers des Flandres and Great Danes. Although ear cropping is historically important to these breeds of dogs, many people now feel that it is an outdated and unethical tradition, one that's not beneficial to the dog.

Background

Ear cropping began about 500 years ago (2). Owners soon discovered what anatomical features of their puppies were the most vulnerable to snags and tears while working or hunting; hence the birth of ear crops and tail docks. Dogs such as the Boxer and Pitbulls, who were used for fighting, had their ears reduced to minimize the surface area available for an adversary to grip and tear (2). Surface area reduction was also the reason herding dogs such as the Bouviers, Terriers and Schnauzers had their ears cropped. Should they encounter a wolf or other predator, owners wanted to minimize injury to the dog. Great Danes were bred to hunt boars; Dobermans were bred to be guard dogs and were also used in war (8,9). Both of these dogs were expected to crawl...
through brush that may snag and tear at their ears, as well as attack opponents who would stop at nothing to win a fight. Miniature Pinschers are one of the few breeds who have no historical basis for the procedure. These dogs are cropped merely to follow the fashion of their larger cousins (8).

Surgical Procedure

When owners decide to have their dogs' ears cropped, the most important choice they can make is selecting the veterinarian who will perform the operation. It is a delicate procedure that involves intensive post surgical care on the part of the veterinarian and owner. The dog is taken into the veterinarian's office, where it is placed under anesthetic. While the animal is anesthetized, the pinna of the ear is cut into the appropriate shape, a shape dictated by the breed standard and the owners preference. The incisions are stitched and the ears are racked.

Racking is a method of training the ears to stand on their own. This is done by continually wrapping the ears in an upright position, which allows the ear cartilage to set in this upright position. This is why the procedure is done at an early age; if it were done too late, the cartilage would have already set and the racking would be a failure. The scar tissue and healing from the incision also facilitates the upright position (11). There are three different types of ear racks. The first type, called a felt rack, involves placing a piece of foam, cut to the shape of the ear, inside the dog's ear. This foam is then taped to the ear, and the ears are taped together over the heads. The second kind is the rolled rack. This rack uses popsicle sticks wrapped in tape as the ear support, instead of foam. The ears are taped to the sticks and then to a foam cup on the top of the head. The
third method involves the use of a metal frame that goes under the dog's chin, with two triangular supports at the top to which the ears are taped.

Racks are first changed one to two days after surgery, then three to five days later, and on finally day seven post surgery. The stitches are removed 10 days post-surgery and the ears are re-racked. Seven to ten days later, the ears are checked to determine if another racking is necessary. If the ears are standing upright on their own, they are not re-racked. If they are not standing on their own, racks are replaced every seven to ten days until the ears have been trained to stand upright. This process can take from two weeks to six months, depending on the age of the dog, the ability of the surgeon, and client compliance (10).

Qualifications for Success

The success rate of the ear crop depends on several factors. The first is the skill of the surgeon performing the procedure. Like any other surgery, the experience and ability of the veterinarian performing the operation is crucial to the success of the crop. A commitment must also be made on the part of the owner to follow the regimen of care and taping set forth by the attending veterinarian. The age of the dog is another important factor. In larger breeds, crops should be done and racks started before the animal reaches six weeks of age. The procedure should never be performed on a dog that is more than nine weeks of age, as the ear cartilage sets by the time the dog reaches four months of age. Thus, crops done after 9 weeks of age may never stand up properly (11).
Pro-Ear Cropping

Breeders and owners who support ear cropping

Like any ethical debate, there are several sides to the ear cropping issue. First, supporters of ear cropping insist that the procedure is not painful to the dog. This support is strong, since hours after the procedure, most dogs are eating and playing as if nothing happened (7). Second, ear cropping is a tradition important to the history of the indicated breeds, and most breeders and owners are not willing to give up that history. The American Kennel Club (AKC) requires that certain breeds be cropped in order to be shown in AKC sanctioned shows. Third, some breeders insist that the dogs look better with their ears cropped. Finally, it has been suggested that the crop can increase the health of the dogs ear. With an increase of light and air circulation, many owners find cropped ears much easier to manage and less prone to infection (7).

Veterinarians who support ear cropping

Veterinarians are just as diverse in their opinions. Some veterinarians feel it is hypocritical to be opposed to ear cropping. If a veterinarian is opposed to ear crops, then one should then be opposed to all surgical alterations, including spaying and neutering. Dr. Richard McCormick, who shares this view, feels that, given the choice, the animal would choose gonads over ear tissue, therefore he chastises those who attempt to “speak for the animal” in their opposition to the ear cropping issue (15). Dr. Joe Soileau takes this concept one step further. He claims that if veterinarians are to discourage ear crops because “the procedure has no medical necessity and is done only for reasons of style”, then they should
oppose all grooming done for show purposes, as this can also be a source of stress for the dog. To further his pro-cropping argument, Dr Soileau claims that all pet animals are purchased or adopted to fulfill some self-serving need. Style is important to humans, therefore the veterinarian has no right to refuse, or even discourage, any cosmetic procedures requested by the client. The final point in Dr Soileau's argument is that those who "cry the loudest against ear cropping may be those who have never learned how or have no artistic ability to do the procedure properly" (20). Dr. H.B. Anderson, in a debate published by the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association (JAVMA), argues that cosmetic surgery for dogs is no different than cosmetic surgery for humans. He states that people are having more eye tucks, face lifts and other varieties of cosmetic surgery, so it naturally follows that humans will want the same or similar procedures performed on their canine companions. He feels it is the duty of the veterinarian to perform these procedures without passing judgment upon the owners. Dr. Anderson also maintains that the procedure is "not painful or abusive". However, Dr. Anderson gives no behavioral or physiological support for his opinion (18). In his experience, dogs with trimmed ears are less prone to ear infections. He further argues that there is no difference between ear crops and the removal of benign tumors or the repair of ectropions. He concludes his article by expressing his dismay with the American Veterinary Medical Association's official stance on the issue, stating that it is equivalent to the American Dental Association taking a stand against braces for children (18).
Anti-Ear Cropping

Breeders and owners who do not support ear cropping

As easy as it is to find people in favor of ear cropping, it is easier still to find those who oppose the practice. Many people feel that ear cropping is a tradition which is outdated. Since most dog breeds are no longer used for the original purposes to which they were bred, many wonder why it is still necessary to cut off a portion of the dog's natural ear. Several breeders, who are opposed to cropping, feel it is ridiculous to cut off a dog's ear, merely because they may one day get hurt. Stella Louisa Metheos, a breeder of Giant Schnauzers who opposes ear cropping, wonders since "people stub their toes all the time, should they have their toes removed at birth?" (7). Breeders and owners have also observed that cropped ears, especially in Giant Schnauzers, are more susceptible to frostbite and tear more easily when they are snagged (7). It is also important that breeders and handlers realize that dogs with cropped ears can not be shown internationally where ear cropping is illegal, a feature which will be discussed later.

Veterinarians who do not support ear cropping

Veterinarians oppose ear cropping for many and various reasons. Wendy Wallner, DVM, states in her article on ear cropping that although pendulous ears may have a higher incidence of ear infection, such infections are easily prevented with proper hygiene. Thus, justifying the procedure on the basis of ear health alone is not sufficient (10). Dr. Susan Hall challenges this viewpoint, claiming that it is the set of the ear canal, not the pinna, which is the relevant
factor in otitis externa (21). Dr. Deborah Kropp has not noticed a significant decline in ear infections in cropped versus non-cropped ears in her practice (22). Dr. Greg Mathis has noticed an improvement in ear health due to cropping. However, he feels that “most ear crops are done for the wrong reason (cosmetics) and that improved ear health should not be used as an excuse to justify the procedure.” He further states that if ear health were the primary concern of those undertaking this procedure, then several breeds of dogs that are predisposed to ear infections, such as the Cocker Spaniel, would also have their ears cropped (25). Moreover, dogs with cropped ears have other health problems associated with the crop.

Many veterinarians balk at the comparison between ear crops and human cosmetic surgery. The prevailing opinion is, that while it is okay for a human to subject himself or herself to cosmetic procedures, an owner does not have the right to make that decision for the animal, and to do so is inappropriate (23, 24). Many feel the main difference is informed consent and freedom of choice, options which are unavailable to our pets (21). Several people feel it is unfair to compare the removal of unhealthy tissue (benign tumors) or the repair of a defect (ectropions) with the practice of removing healthy ear tissue (ear cropping). Some veterinarians even claim that ear cropping can not be placed in the same category as tail docking and dewclaw removal, both of which can still serve some purpose in working dogs (24).

Veterinarians also disagree as to the amount of pain, if any, felt by the dog. As stated above, there are doctors who feel the procedure, if performed
properly, is painless. However, both Dr. Hall and Dr. Randall Norstream point out that the pinna of the ear is richly innervated, therefore one can only conclude that the procedure is painful for the dog (21, 26). They feel that most owners who choose to have their dog’s ears cropped do not realize the pain the puppy goes through when the racks are changed. Even with cotton over the incision, the dog still experiences pain when the racks are removed, especially before the ear is healed. Another concern is the fact that the procedure is being performed at a time in the puppy’s life when its immune system is developing. Dr. Ronald Stone expresses this concern in his letter to JAVMA (27). However, there is no support for this latter opinion in the literature.

Several veterinarians address the social issues of ear cropping and their profession. Despite veterinary medicine being a “people business”, many feel there is no reason to blindly accept what people want done to their animals or society’s current exploitation of animals for various leisure activities (28). One veterinarian, Dr. Michael Everett, even goes so far as to state “if clients want an animal with upright ears and a short tail, I recommend a rabbit” (29).

Many veterinarians oppose ear cropping because of their lack of control on post surgical care. It is very important to the success of the procedure and health of the dog that the racks be changed and cared for properly. Should the owner not bring the dog into the clinic for a scheduled change, it is possible that the ear flesh may start to rot inside the bandage, especially within the first ten days of surgery. It is impractical, due to the amount of time the dog’s ears are bandaged, to keep the dog hospitalized, therefore, client compliance of the
utmost importance. It is also important that the racks stay dry, are not scratched or chewed and are checked daily for pinching and loosening.

Perhaps the single most significant reason that people are against ear cropping is the fact that some breeders do the surgery themselves. There are breeders who do not wish to pay the cost of a crop, which can be anywhere from $60 to $200. Instead, these breeders perform the operation themselves in unsanitary conditions, and with no anesthetic. Often they merely hold the puppy down and use a pair of scissors on the animal's ear. Home surgery is then followed by unprofessional racking (6, 7, 10, 32). This non-professional treatment can cause problems because if the ears are racked incorrectly, the ear tips, or the whole ear, can lose blood supply, slough and fall off. It is also possible to cause a failure to stand through improper taping (6, 7, 10).

**What is pain?**

Both sides of the ear cropping issue use pain as their keystone, one side claiming there is no pain, and the other claiming there is significant pain. One must ask how it is that life-long dog fanciers and trained professionals can differ in their opinion of pain, so much so, that each side of the ear cropping debate uses pain as the supporting reason for their debate.

In 1986, an article called "Guidelines for the recognition and assessment of pain in animals" was published in *The Veterinary Record*. Many agree that pain is uncommonly difficult to define, and this article offers two possible definitions: Pain in an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage or described in terms of such damage;
Pain in animals is an aversive sensory experience that elicits protective motor actions, results in learned avoidance and may modify species specific traits of behavior, including social behavior (33). This article, and its assessment of pain, has since been used as the hallmark definition in most papers assessing pain management, especially post-surgical pain management (30, 31). The article continues with a species-specific guide to recognize pain. Specifically for canines, the article states:

“Dogs in pain generally appear quieter and less alert with stiff body movements and an unwillingness to move. In severe pain the dog may lie still and adopt a crouching attitude...Spontaneous barking is unlikely, the dog is more likely to whimper or howl...and may growl without apparent provocation...signs vary greatly from individual to individual.” (18)

For our purposes, we will work with the first definition of pain, since ear cropping clearly causes tissue damage, and it is difficult to evaluate the true social behavior of ear cropped dogs without any human influence. Combining the definition of pain and the signs which can be exhibited by a dog in pain, it is unclear as to how the two sides can vary so much in their opinion. It is possible, however, that those who support ear cropping on the basis of no pain are evaluating that pain anthropomorphically. One might be likely to make the assumption that, if a dog is not vocalizing, as a human in pain would do, then the dog must not be in pain. Not only is this opinion naive, but it is clearly dangerous as one is relying on vocalization, or the lack of as a diagnostic technique.
Association Views

If there are so many negative aspects of ear cropping, one must wonder why the various associations representing dogs, breeders and veterinarians allow it to continue. The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), in a pamphlet titled "The Veterinarian's Role in Animal Welfare", issued the following stance:

"The AVMA has recommended to the American Kennel Club and appropriate breed associations that action be taken to delete the mention of cropped or trimmed ears from breed standards and to prohibit the showing of dogs with cropped or trimmed ears if such animals were born after some reasonable date." (4)

However, for five straight years, delegates at the AVMA national convention failed to pass resolutions that would oppose ear cropping, unless done by a licensed veterinarian for therapeutic purposes. These obvious inconsistencies were finally reconciled in 1999.

The Association of Veterinarians for Animal Rights (AVAR) "opposes various surgeries done to meet breed standards...because the suffering and disfigurement they cause the animal are not offset by any benefit to the animal" (12). For six years, the AVAR presented resolutions to the AVMA's House of Delegates, which called for the Association to oppose ear cropping, unless performed by a licensed veterinarian for therapeutic purposes. These resolutions were finally ratified in 1999 by the AVMA's House of Delegates (17).

In November of 1998, the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) drafted an animal welfare position statement regarding ear cropping, calling on
veterinarians to counsel owners about the pain and risks involved before performing the procedure. Although the resolution does not prohibit veterinarians from performing the procedure for strictly cosmetic purposes, it stipulates that owners need to be advised of risks and discomforts for the dog, and that the procedure is not necessary. The position states that the procedure "cause[s] pain and distress and...[is] accompanied by inherent risks...Therefore veterinarians should counsel owners about these matters before agreeing to perform the procedure" (13).

The American Kennel Club is inconsistent with its published stance on the procedure. In the AKC 1992 Guidebook, the AKC "prohibits cosmetic procedures for the purpose of showing." Included in the definition of cosmetic procedure is the surgical enhancement of tail or ears. However, in the same publication the AKC states that "exceptions to the rule" are permitted if required by breed standards (3). Although the AVMA issued its recommendation to the AKC regarding ear cropping in 1991, the AKC has yet to respond, nor has the association deleted mention of cropped or trimmed ears from its breed standards. It is unfortunate that the AKC can not take a firm stance on this issue, because many professionals feel this is the first step necessary in regulating ear cropping.

**International and State Laws**

Ear cropping, along with many other cosmetic procedures, is illegal in Australia and 12 European countries, including Belgium, Holland, Switzerland and Germany (1,5,17,31). Ear cropping is not illegal in Great Britain, however,
the procedure is not performed for 2 reasons. The first reason is that the British Kennel Club does not allow the showing of dogs with cropped ears. The second is because “to veterinarians there, it is obviously inhumane,” says Dr. Holly Cheever, spokesperson of the AVAR (17). The Canadian Veterinarian Medical Association adopted their anti-ear cropping stance in 1975 (14).

Michigan was the only state in 1990 to have a law specific to ear cropping. The operation is illegal in Michigan unless performed by a licensed veterinarian, while the dog is under anesthetic. Massachusetts had a law in 1990 that forbid the mutilation of a dog, but whether or not this law applies to ear cropping is unclear (5). The procedure was illegal in New Jersey until 1954. The law required that veterinary certification be provided, stating that the ears were cropped due to disease. Many of these certificates were found to be fraudulent, and it seemed there were “more diseased ears in Boston Terriers, Boxers and Great Danes than there were fleas in dogs of those breeds.” The laws were finally repealed in an effort to protect the public, allowing only licensed veterinarians to perform the procedure (19). There are several other states with laws preventing the surgical alteration of animals other than dogs, such as horses or birds. For example, in New York it is punishable with up to a year in prison and a $500 fine to surgically alter a horse’s tail for the purpose of showing. Should a person possess an altered horse and wish to show the horse in New York, they must possess documents stating when the procedure was done, by whom and why, or they can face the same penalty. There is no such protection for dogs (6).
Student Research

Although ear cropping has been a highly debated topic, no where in American peer-reviewed literature is there a comprehensive survey detailing the opinions of veterinarians, breeders and owners on this subject. It was our hope, with this project, to change that. However, due to a lack of adequate funding, our sample size was limited. We were unable to query veterinarians and breeders, so we modified our original idea to include only owners of dogs whose ears are traditionally cropped.

Hypothesis

• Men will be more likely than women to have their dog's ear cropped
• Individuals who have chosen to have their dog's ears cropped will have lower perceived pain scores than those who did not have their dog's ears cropped.

Significance and Objectives

As we have already seen, the ethics of ear cropping is a highly debated and unresolved issue. Several European countries have made the practice illegal, and there are groups pushing for the same in the United States. However, we feel it is necessary to make a complete, scientific survey of all parties involved (veterinarians, breeders and owners) before such a move is made in the United States.

The following objectives will test our hypothesis:

• Interview owners of dogs who have traditionally had their ears cropped
• Review the collected data
• Determine a correlation between sex of owner and cropped ears
• Determine a correlation between the amount of pain as perceived by the owner and cropped ears

Materials and Methods

An original survey (see appendix 1) was administered either over the phone or in person to the test subjects. The survey was completely anonymous, and participation was voluntary, in keeping with the Office of Grant and Research Development (OGRD) Human Studies Protocol.

Subjects were obtained in two ways. First, surveys were handed out to appropriate dog owners known to the principal investigator. Most of these participants are veterinary students. Second, the PI obtained permission to seek appropriate candidates from the files of the Washington State University College of Veterinary Medicine Behavior Service. The PI was given access to 2 years worth of files. Names and contact information was recorded for dogs of appropriate breed, with no regard to the presenting behavioral complaint.

The collected data was then analyzed using Microsoft Excel.

Results

Unfortunately, the response to the survey was not as great as we had hoped. Our sample size was 10 (n=10), therefore, it is impossible to make statistically significant correlations, which may prove or disprove our hypotheses. However, preliminary evaluation of our data shows a promising trend, and we will discuss what data we have.
Our sample was of 10 individuals with an average age of 29.3 years. Seventy percent of the respondents were female, 30% were male. The breeds owned by the respondents were Miniature Pinschers (30%), Boxers (40%), American Staffordshire Terriers (20%) and Bouvier des Flandres (10%).

Of these dogs, 4 (40%) had their ears cropped. Owners cited breed standard (75%) or breeder pressure (25%) as the reason. The remaining 6 (60%) did not have their ears cropped because the owners felt it caused too much pain (83%) or they were not planning on showing the dog (16%).

Sixty-six percent of males participating in the study have dogs with cropped ears, opposed to only 28% of females owning dogs with cropped ears.

Seventy-five percent of respondents with non-veterinary medicine associated careers chose to crop their dogs ears, whereas only 16% of respondents with veterinary medicine associated careers had their dogs ears cropped.

Of the respondents who did not choose to crop their dogs ears, the average pain score after surgery was 2.83 (out of 4). The average pain score for bandage changing was 2.66 (out of 4).

Of the respondents whose dog’s ears are cropped, the average pain score after the procedure was 3 (out of 4). The average pain score for bandage changing was 2.75 (out of 4).

Only 10% of respondents would choose to crop the ears of their dog, given the opportunity to own another dog whose ears are traditionally cropped.
Discussion

Although our sample size makes it difficult to see any trends, and it is not possible to significantly correlate any of the variables, we feel it does provide us with valuable information and a worthwhile starting place for an expanded study.

This data supported one of our hypotheses and did not support the other. In our study, 66% of males and 28% of females own dogs with cropped ears, supporting our hypothesis that males will be more likely to have dogs with cropped ears.

Our hypothesis that respondents who own dogs with cropped ears will score lower on the perceived pain scale than those who own dogs without cropped ears, did not appear to be supported. However, we are still optimistic that, in a larger study, this theory would prove to be true. In this study, only 4 people had dogs with cropped ears, which makes it difficult to evaluate a trend based on such a small sample size. We also feel it important to mention a unique circumstance in this group of dogs which we feel may have skewed our results. One of the dogs whose ears were cropped had the procedure performed by the breeder when the dog was four days old. The owner of this dog scored both pain categories with a four, making her the only respondent to do so, which also raised our pain index for this group.

Nine of our ten respondents would not crop the ears of a dog obtained in the future. The one respondent who would cited “breed standard” as the reason. This respondent also tied for the lowest perceived pain score in both categories. The nine who would not choose the procedure gave the following reasons why:
don't show, too risky, one dog almost died during procedure (owner did not realize it was such a serious procedure), it is a bad social experience for the dog, inhumane (answer given by the owner of the dog that was done by breeder) and there is no benefit to dog.

Discussion

If ear cropping is such a controversial practice with potential to cause pain for the puppy, one might wonder why veterinarians, whose profession is to prevent pain, continue to offer this service to their clients. Veterinarians all around the country have stated that, while they may ethically disagree with the surgery, they continue to perform the operation because if they do not do it, someone else will (18, 21, 23). For these veterinarians who oppose ear crops but perform the surgery anyway, the primary motive is not financial, but concern for the animal's welfare. While this stance may seem hypocritical, should veterinarians cease to provide professional, high quality care to these dogs, they may be subjected to inhumane "kitchen table" procedures (18, 21, 23). The main veterinary concerns are pain control, unsterile conditions and lack of proper post-surgical care. Therefore, these doctors vow to continue to perform the procedure until they become illegal (16, 17, 18, 19).

There is now evidence that physiological side-effects caused by the incision could be a source of chronic pain (27). This hypothesis has yet to be proven, but if it is, research may verify that dogs have been subjected to acute pain during the racking, as well as chronic discomfort afterwards.
An often unexplored side effect of the procedure is the behavioral implications which result due from the surgery. Without education, it is difficult for most owners to understand how dogs communicate. Facial expressions are very important in canine communication, and a dog who is deprived of his natural ear shape and movement is deprived of a communication tool. Although it is possible for these dogs to learn to communicate with their modified ears, the initial appearance of the cropped and racked ears to another dog is one of dominance and challenge. Dogs who receive ear crops, such as Dobermans, Boxers and Pitbulls, are traditionally viewed as aggressive dogs. This view could be due to several factors: the history of the dog, the attitude of the owner who would desire such a dog, and the physical changes inflicted upon the dog's primary mode of communication. More than likely, it is a combination of all these and other unmentioned factors. Therefore, some behaviorists feel that the three breeds of dogs, which may have a natural tendency for inter-dog aggression, should not be deprived of a natural communication mechanism.

If any progress is going to be made in the effort to stop ear cropping, the American Kennel Club and other breed associations must participate willingly. While it could be possible to make ear cropping illegal, this legal maneuver would have to be accomplished state by state, and, in the past, it has been difficult to get politicians to seriously consider many animal welfare issues. Many believe that politicians would refuse to see the legitimacy of anti-ear crop legislation. Since the American Kennel Club is a national organization, once new standards
prohibiting crops and trims were established, the practice would stop, since the breeders could not show their dogs in AKC sanctioned shows.

**Conclusion**

Ear cropping is a deplorable, unethical operation that serves no practical purpose in modern society. Changing ear racks is a painful process, one that the animal is subjected to several times during the course of several weeks or months, depending on how fast the ears set. It seems pointless to continue a tradition that has long outlived its usefulness. To inflict unnecessary pain upon any animal is wrong, but when this pain is in the name of fashion it becomes appalling. It is the ethical responsibility of all those who can to educate the public, to speak out on ear cropping and take the necessary steps towards eradicating the practice. No person would ever consider putting their best human friend through such an ordeal, so why should their canine friends be forced to suffer?

_you are referring to US values_
Appendix 1
Ear Cropping Survey
Owners

1. Did you have your dog's ears cropped and racked?
   Yes - Please answer 2a, 2b
   No - Please answer 2c

2a. Why did you crop and rack?
   Ear Damage
   Health
   Breed Standards
   Breeder Pressure
   Financial Reasons
   Other

2b. What was the initial age at which your dog was cropped and racked?
   < 6 weeks
   6-9 weeks
   > 9 weeks

2c. Why did you choose not to crop and rack?
   Appearance
   Financial Reasons
   Pain
   Other

3. What degree of pain do you think the dog experiences post-surgically?
   None
   Mild
   Significant
   Severe

4. What degree of pain do you think the dog experiences when the racks are changed?
   None
   Mild
   Significant
   Severe

5. Should ear cropping continue?
   Yes
   No

6. If you got another crop-able dog in the future, will you have its ears cropped?
   Yes
   No

7. Why or why not?

8. Do you think that cropping can cause chronic pain in the dog?
   Yes
   No

Age of owner
Sex of owner
Breed of dog owned
Where do you live?
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