

Breeders [Are] Clouding the Issue

Instead of keeping things simple.

(Where do you fit into the picture?)

All through time breeders of various types of animals have kept breeding records. We call those records pedigrees. This is done because the good or bad results of any breeding usually take quite awhile to manifest themselves. The pedigree helps the breeder figure out where a good or bad thing came from. Thus he can repeat the recipe or insure it is not repeated, respectively. An accurate pedigree serves all purposes well.

When a breed or type of dog becomes so popular that many people are breeding them, the pedigree is the record that helps breeders maintain or improve the breed. Many breeders working together can quickly develop a superior strain, bloodline or breed.

This can only happen if the pedigrees are accurate. Sadly, the practices of some breeders prevent or sharply retard such progress. Here are some of those practices.

The most common cause for confusion comes when new owners change the name of a dog as it comes into their possession. Vanity [a sin in most religions] is what's expressed in this behavior. The pride of ownership leads the new owner to want some sort of credit for simply owning the thing. This practice is wrong! The correct thing to do is to affix the new owners name in some manner that does not obscure the dogs origin.

A basic rule in keeping an accurate pedigree is that of keeping the breeders name attached to the dog. The dog's name should never be changed without the breeder's specific consent. This is particularly important for the females. As a basic tenet for breeding anything, the owner of the "mother" is the breeder of record. Some registry services hold carefully to this rule while others do not. Allowing owners to change the name of dogs willy-nilly helps cloud the issue further.¹ This is something registry services are supposed to be avoiding by keeping those records in the first place.

Again, this is something a registry service is supposed to be trying to avoid rather than promulgate. If a registry service allows any form of change to any pedigree it should be done as transparently as possible to help others understand what happened.

Footnotes next to the dog's name would be very useful in keeping the matter clear.

Another standard of maintaining a pedigree is to not change any dogs name once it has produced offspring or earned a title. This rule applies to males and females alike. Once there is progeny, the identity of the parents should never change...ever. Some breeders and registry services routinely violate this rule. That doesn't make it okay.

¹The UKC is particularly notorious for allowing new owners to change the name of the dog. It is impossible to know if a UKC pedigree is accurate without a lot of specific knowledge that isn't shown on the pedigree.

Another very confusing practice of breeders is to apply the same name to different dogs. One modern breeder has used the same name for at least 3 different females. (Some think it may be 6 different females!) This is the height of inconsideration to others who fancy the breed in question. There can be no satisfactory explanation for this particular practice other than the breeder is a thoughtless jerk! Don't let it be you! Making up a new name is not difficult. You can *call* the dog whatever you like but its name-of-record should be unique. This is where the use of a "call name" or simple "aka" (also-known-as) would help a lot. We see this in some pedigrees. It's a useful tool.

Perhaps the most onerous practice is when a known breeder or group of them decide to change a pedigree long after the original form was made public. This is especially troublesome if the dog in question has become famous within the breed. Changing a pedigree so late in the game causes confusion throughout the breed in incalculable ways. This particular nuisance is being practiced today by well-known breeders and their associates. They simply change the pedigree without any explanation offered. This practice casts a dark shadow of doubt over the credibility of that breeder as well as any associates that go along with it. It's a shameful disgrace for a whole breed to endure such a scandal. The correct use of a footnote by the dog's name would have been adequate. Instead we are left to guess at the reason for it while the veracity of many pedigrees around the world suffer mightily. Some type of petty squabble is the most likely cause. It seems that the sin of vanity reaches through decades!

Perhaps the biggest offense in breeding dogs (or any animal) is keeping no record at all. A breeder might be able to keep his own little breeding program intact for awhile but without records his efforts will eventually fall apart and become just a waste of time.

This nuisance is so heinous that we are grateful that any form of records are kept. Even when the names are constantly changing and breeders are hiding truths, any kind of record is better than none. With enduring patience the rest of us can usually make a good guess about what a pedigree really shows. Sometimes it takes years to learn the truth. Sometimes the answer to a question is never found. Sometimes two men make a breeding and then refuse to agree on the pedigree. You can be sure that at least one of them is concealing a truth. Lying comes under the 9th Commandment!

So, what can the rest of us do about all this? Not a thing except...

- (1.) Keep records the way they came to you and check them against others for errors.
- (2.) Be sure your own records are correct and understandable for any who read them.
- (3.) Be very sure that YOU are not guilty of any of the above questionable practices.

Remember at all times that your personal honor is always at stake.