

## Don't Lick the Dog - Making Friends with Dogs

by Wendy Wahman

Henry Holt & Company, 32 pages, 2009, \$16.95

**W**hen kids and dogs meet it can be a frightening encounter or a chance to make a new friend. Unfortunately, so few dog owners or parents know what to do to ensure a good outcome. They tend to stand by as the scene unfolds, watching either as the dog intimidates a child, or as a child overwhelms their dog. Dogs learn to feel unsafe, even defensive, around children. Children learn that invasive touch and unruly behavior are acceptable. It's a story that sometimes ends in hurt feelings and dog bites.

Now there is a new story. It is an illustrated children's book called *Don't Lick the Dog: Making Friends with Dogs*. The narrator of *Don't Lick the Dog* is a pony-tailed lady out on a walk with her six dogs. On their walk they encounter three young kids, who run up to the dogs with their hands extended. The dog lady, who speaks in easy-to-remember rhymes, teaches them what to do instead: "Stand still and let dogs come to you, to smell your hand or sniff your shoe." One of my favorite pages shows a dog being patted vigorously on the head. The huge schnauzer-type dog is shown on a black background. He stares directly at the reader, clearly annoyed by the many hands flapping near his eyebrows. But after one of the children heeds the narrator's advice to stroke him gently on his chest, his demeanor is transformed; he raises his paw and gently looks up, and the page color turns to sunny yellow. The narrator's other dogs have lessons for the kids as well. There are tips for what to do if a dog jumps up, how to coax a shy dog out of her shell, and a dramatic moment, shown in close-up and bathed in bright red, when one of the little girls suddenly swoops in to hug a small, aloof dog. The narrator knows just what to say to keep the child safe and to make sure the dog has her space.

The drawings by Wahman, who is a dog owner, former veterinary technician, and an award-winning illustrator, are unlike those I have ever seen in a children's book. They are bold, vibrant and modern, and perfectly express the range of emotions that children and dogs experience in each other's company. There are oodles of dogs of all shapes and colors, each with unique tail and ear positions, and faces full of emotion. With each drawing, there are opportunities for children ages three to eight to learn how to win over the pooches they meet.

One of the best things about this book is the little visual jokes and puns that reveal themselves with each new reading. I won't give them away, but suffice it to say this book is just plain funny. It will delight your clients and their kids while they are learning all the right things. And, call me naïve, but I like to think that parents will identify with the narrator, and maybe even strive to be like her. She understands all of her dogs' body language, teaches the kids what to do in a clear, upbeat manner, and leaves them with these words of wisdom: "Dogs aren't toys to hug and squeeze, or poke or chase or tug or tease. Just like you, and just like me, dogs have personalities." Thanks to *Don't*

# Reviewers' Corner



*Lick the Dog*, her message may get through to dog owners, parents and kids, one bedtime story at a time.

*Barbara Shumannfang, PhD, CPDT helps people and dogs enjoy each other more through her training business, Top Notch Dog, LLC. She is the author of **Happy Kids, Happy Dogs: Building a Friendship Right from the Start**, and teaches a class at Duke University Hospitals for dog owners expecting a baby. Visit her online at [TopNotchDog.com](http://TopNotchDog.com) or contact her at [barbara@topnotchdog.com](mailto:barbara@topnotchdog.com).*

## Low Stress Handling, Restraint, and Behavior Modification of Dogs & Cats: Techniques for Developing Patients Who Love Their Visits

By Sophia Yin, DVM, MS

Cattledog Publishing, 2009, \$149.00, 468 pages (includes DVD with three hours of video)

**T**his fantastic tome belongs on every trainer's bookshelf, as well as in every veterinary clinic and shelter in America. Is that endorsement an overstatement? Absolutely not! Dr. Yin's new book is the ultimate guide for new and experienced trainers and anyone who regularly deals with animals and who wants to learn about gentle, humane techniques. Despite the hefty price, this book is worth it and then some.

The book is packed with 1,600 full-color photographs demonstrating a variety of handling techniques and a DVD with three hours worth of video to accompany the text in the book. The DVD makes both an invaluable educational guide for yourself and can also be used to demonstrate specific behaviors to clients. If that's not enough, owning the book gives you access to information on Dr. Yin's Web site including PDF files of client handouts on behavior, and several entire chapters (1, 9, 11 and 15) online. Some of the client handouts include Training Dogs to Love Receiving Oral Medications, Training Dogs to Love Having Their Collar Grabbed, Training Dogs (and Cats) to Love Wearing a Muzzle, and Training Dogs and Cats to Love Having Their Ears Handled.

The book begins with a discussion of how to recognize the early signs of fear and aggression in dogs and the factors the lead to worsening of these behaviors in dog and cats. The second chapter, "Dominance Vs. Unruly Behavior," delves into a lengthy discussion of the role of >

dominance in training and how our understandings of it have evolved over the years. (An abridged version of this chapter can be found in the March/April 2009 issue of *The APDT Chronicle of the Dog*). In section two, Dr. Yin then goes into an explanation of how animals learn and the basics of learning theory, an understanding of which is a must for any trainer or behavior consultant, and this section can be particularly useful for trainers studying for their certification. She closes the first section of the book with an examination of behavior modification methods, and how they are used and misused.

The third section of the book presents step-by-step instructions on how to prepare your dog or cat for positive interactions at the veterinary clinic. The instructions are presented both with text and clear, full-color photographs that are easy to follow. Section four covers low-stress restraint techniques for use in the veterinary setting. Again, instructions are presented with both detailed text and photographs. All of the techniques she describes are focused on decreasing an animal's stress, and no doubt these techniques also lead to a reduction of injuries to clinic staff. If you are a trainer working with your local veterinary clinic and trying to demonstrate positive methods, I suggest bringing this book with you as an instructional tool that is sure to impress and engage your audience. In fact, I kept a copy of this book at the APDT's educational booths at veterinary conferences this past year and found it to be an incredibly useful avenue for broaching the subject of training and handling methods.

The book's final section, "Preventing and Reversing Problems," presents detailed protocols for a variety of counterconditioning situations common to dogs and cats (i.e. toenail trims, injections, grooming). She concludes with recommendations for steps to prevent behavioral problems with puppies and kittens.

If you buy one book this year on dog training and behavior, I urge you to consider *Low Stress Handling, Restraint and Behavior Modification of Dogs & Cats* as your choice. While it priced higher than most books that trainers and behavior counselors will consider, it is well worth the price and you will find yourself referring to this book again and again, as well as using it with clients and other dog care professionals to discuss animal behavior and the benefits of using positive, low-stress methods.

*Mychelle Blake, MSW, CDBC is the Editor-in-Chief of The APDT Chronicle of the Dog and Communications Director for the APDT. She lives in Las Vegas, NV with her husband, two dogs, and two budgies. She is an active volunteer with The Animal Foundation in Las Vegas, and prior to her full-time position with the APDT, operated her own behavior consulting and dog training business in Lancaster, PA and Los Angeles, CA.*

## How to Run a Dog Business: Putting Your Career Where Your Heart Is

By Veronica Boutelle  
Dogwise Publishing, 126 pages, 2008, \$19.95

[www.APDT.com](http://www.APDT.com)

I was very lucky when I started my dog training business to have a law degree that helped me navigate the ins-and-outs of setting the business up, previous managerial experience that helped me work with clients and staff, and a mentor to help me set up my classes and business offerings. If you are missing any or all of those pieces, grab a copy of this book and you'll be on your way to a professional start in this business. Veronica Boutelle has put together a brief, concise, and easy-to-follow guide to setting up a new dog business. Even as an established business owner, I found some useful tidbits of information (I had no idea that some insurance policies didn't cover after-contract claims!) and found the real-life examples of others' experiences motivating and inspiring.

On the whole, the book covers every topic from A to Z that a new business owner needs to deal with and serves as an excellent check list to follow along your journey. In fact, the resource section—which is comprehensive and chock full of information—includes check lists for readers to follow. When the author cannot point each reader to the specific resource in their state, she provides search terms for a Google search to help the reader find the pertinent information. The book can be read straight through, or the reader can pick it up and look up information quickly on a particular topic, as needed.

The author generally does a good job of walking the fine line of providing legal information, without stating exactly what will or will not pass legal muster in your state. Many written resources will simply state, for example, that the reader needs to see a lawyer to obtain a release form. This resource provides ways that the reader can obtain a basic release that they can then take to an attorney in their state, saving money but still obtaining legal protection.

I did find it a bit troubling that readers were advised to modify the reporting of the start-up date of their business when trying to obtain business licenses after they had already begun to function as a business based on whether or not they would get in trouble with their state or city for filing the actual date. If a new edition is printed, the author may want to consider omitting that advice.

If you are starting a business, are fairly new to your business, or are already running an established business looking for some inspiration or a quick way to be sure all of your T's are crossed and your I's are dotted, grab a copy of Veronica Boutelle's guide to the business end of the leash!

*Cara Shannon is a Certified Professional Dog Trainer and the owner of Buddy's Chance, LLC Dog Training and Behavior in Austin, TX. Cara teaches group classes and consults with owners on behavior issues, including fear, aggression, reactivity, and anxiety. She is currently working on **Bad to the Bone: Analyzing and Assessing Dog Bites**, a DVD designed to teach consultants, veterinarians, and animal control professionals to assess the severity of dog bite injuries. The DVD is due out in July of 2009.*

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