Where in the World Is *Animal Sheltering*?

I work at the best little SPCA "down under" on Waiheke Island. We're a beautiful 35-minute ferry ride away from Auckland, New Zealand's biggest city. Having previously been a partner in a city law firm, I decided to accept this job even before the ferry docked! There are around 8,000 full-time residents on the island, and another 32,000 people spend the summer months here. Although it's small, Waiheke SPCA will rehome between 150 and 170 companion animals from its shelter this year, investigate allegations of animal cruelty, prosecute offenders when it is warranted, and assist and release all kinds of wildlife, including native forest birds, seabirds, and penguins. The staff of 17 volunteers and I enjoy sharing *Animal Sheltering* with each other, especially the up-to-the-minute animal research and information about sheltering trends. I was thrilled to attend The HSUS's Animal Care Expo this year in Texas and to experience the North American sheltering movement firsthand in Dallas, Denver, and San Francisco—it was completely inspirational. So come on, USA, you owe us a visit!

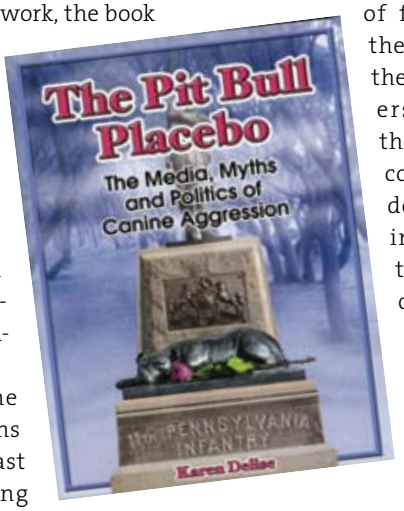
Where in the world do you read *Animal Sheltering*? Tell us at asm@humanesociety.org.

Gwendoline Keel
Manager/Animal Welfare Inspector
Waiheke SPCA
Waiheke Island, New Zealand

A Must-Read for Pit Bull Proponents

BY ADAM GOLDFARB

The Pit Bull Placebo: The Media, Myths and Politics of Canine Aggression is destined to be the manifesto for pit bull advocates. As Karen Delise's sophomore work, the book is a perfect follow-up to her *Fatal Dog Attacks: The Stories Behind the Statistics*. While *Fatal Dog Attacks* focused on specific incidents, *Placebo* takes a broader approach, exploring the facts and fictions of canine aggression and society's relationship to dangerous dogs.



The first half of the book examines perceptions of dog attacks over the past 150 years, demonstrating how the style of old newspaper articles reflected commonly held (and surprisingly progressive) views. The tragic irony of these century-old reports is that, despite a comparative lack of understanding of dog behaviors, they were far more accurate in presenting the true causes of dog attacks: Instead of focusing solely on the breeds involved in these incidents, reporters often described the mistreatment that could have led to the dogs' behavior. Even individuals with extensive knowledge of dangerous dog issues will be hypnotized by these details from the olden days.

In these early chapters, Delise alludes to the similarities between perceptions of today's pit bulls and the "super-predators" of the past. She points out that the vilification of individual dog breeds began long ago, and readers may be surprised to learn that breeds like bloodhounds and Newfoundlands were once targets.

While the headlines of yesteryear are interesting, they can't prepare the reader for the onslaught of contemporary information when Delise hits her stride midway through the book. Step-by-step, the author examines where pit bulls are today and why, and she doesn't pull any punches. Abusive and neglectful dog owners, fearmongering politicians, and hype-driven media all contribute to the problems that pit bulls face. In the standout chapter of the book, "Pseudoscience and Hysteria Triumph," Delise deconstructs every myth and misconception about pit bulls.

Pit bulls are abused, banned, and filling the nation's animal shelters. These dogs are in a desperate situation. At a time when animal advocates everywhere struggle to find solutions, *The Pit Bull Placebo* presents the facts. Everyone who has an interest in pit bulls should read this book. AS