

Foreword

This book just might affect the way you see the world.

Barbara J. Gislason has made a valuable contribution to legal jurisprudence by setting forth, in meticulous detail, the progression of law that affects animal law in general, and the pet custody aspect of pet law in particular. In her inspiring and interesting book, Ms. Gislason clarifies how scientific knowledge about the cognitive abilities and emotional characteristics of other animals should lead to legal developments.

I appreciate how the author reveals the complexity of the subject of animal law while also helping the family or animal lawyer understand how to control and apply a reasoned analysis. For lawyers who want to win their cases, leave no stone unturned, and gain a foundation as to how to further advance the law, there is a wealth of information about cases combined with her own ideas about how companion animals are, and could be, treated in the legal system. Beyond that, Ms. Gislason synthesizes the information provided in many chapters with case law analysis. This is a very useful and well-crafted work for lawyers. What Ms. Gislason does well is look at the subject of pet custody disputes from many angles. For example, she helps us understand what judges do in a practical way and explores how they might think. She reminds us how cultural perspectives, cognitive biases, and points of view impact negotiations, alternative dispute resolutions, and decision-making processes. Without using the word, the author assists us in realizing and grappling with our own prejudices.

Ms. Gislason stands out for cogently building her arguments one upon another. She helps us not just to see the fabric of the law but also to see the law as a living entity, inhaling and exhaling. She is a breath of fresh air bringing a valuable new perspective through this book with intensity and fluidness. She offers concrete and practical ideas as to how to do things differently based upon a deep and multifaceted examination of the law and the liberal arts. For her, this work is neither an academic exercise nor a mere abstraction of human and animal relationships. Artfully, she has combined her knowledge and respect for the law into a vision for a better tomorrow.

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