Breeding for extreme conformation of dogs and cats

What are we talking about?

and

Why now?
Report of the World Small Animal Veterinary Association Committee appointed to consider Breed Standards in relation to the Health and Welfare of Dogs

INTRODUCTION

At the eighteenth World Veterinary Congress held in Paris 17th–22nd July 1967 a symposium took place entitled “Factors influencing the official control of inherited defects in dogs”. The following resolutions were accepted by the meeting and ratified by the Permanent Committee of the World Veterinary Association at its 12th meeting held on 22nd July 1967.

(a) The meeting unanimously declares that concern for the health and welfare of dogs demands that breed standards should not include requirements and recommendations that hinder physiological function of organs and parts of the body.

(b) That the W.S.A.V.A. establish a Committee to study the standards of every registered breed and report upon those which hinder physiological function of organs or parts of the body.
The meeting unanimously declares that concern for the health and welfare of dogs demands that breed standards should not include requirements and recommendations that hinder physiological function of organs and parts of the body.
Breeding for extreme conformation

What are we talking about?

Why now?
We are talking about:

Breeding of pets
with an extreme conformation
for a particular look
to the point of animal suffering

‘Looks go before Health and Welfare’
Brachycephalic (= flat faced) dog and cat

conformation =
shortened heads and shortened noses
Non-bracycephalic breed

CT scan morph video
... to the point of animal suffering
VA Male 1920

VA Male 2013

1920 - 2013
The upper line runs from the base of the neck via the high, long withers and via the straight back towards the slightly sloping croup, without visible interruption. The back is moderately long, firm, strong and well-muscled. The loin is broad, short, strongly developed and well-muscled. The croup should be long and slightly sloping (approx 23° to the horizontal) and the upper line should merge into the base of the tail without interruption.

conformation = sloping back
Crufts accused of cruelty over German Shepherd with sloped back... to the point of animal suffering
Scotish fold

conformation = folded ears
... to the point of animal suffering
Donskoy cat

conformation = hairless
... to the point of animal suffering
newdesign
Ukrainian Levkoy cat... to the point of animal suffering
Extreme breeding - What are we talking about?

Why now?

huge popularity of some ‘extreme’ breeds
French Bulldogs overtake Labradors as UK's most popular dog breed

Kennel Club warns people about the welfare impact of bad breeders cashing in on the latest trend

- French Bulldogs have overtaken the Labrador Retriever as the UK's most popular dog breed for the first time since records began.
- French Bulldog, owned by celebrities, has seen an astronomical 2964 per cent increase in the last ten years and is likely to be 2018's top dog – a title held by the Labrador for almost three decades.
- Kennel Club warns that people buying the breed on a whim and without awareness of health concerns could lead to a welfare crisis.
- Puppy buyers urged to consider a wider variety of breeds, including the UK's 'forgotten breeds' at risk of disappearing because their numbers are so low.
Urgent action
many factors
many stakeholders
Breeding healthy dogs: the effect of selective breeding on the health and welfare of dogs

The position of the veterinary profession in Europe

‘Health and Welfare should go before looks’
raise awareness