

THE PIT BULL PAPARAZZI

A study by the National Canine Research Council reveals biased reporting by the media, its devastating consequences for dogs and the toll it takes on public safety.

Consider how the media reported four incidents that happened between August 18th and August 21st:

- August 18, 2007 - A Labrador mix attacked a 70-year-old man sending him to the hospital in critical condition. Police officers arrived at the scene and the dog was shot after charging the officers. **This incident was reported in one article and only in the local paper.**
- August 19, 2007 - A 16-month old child received fatal head and neck injuries after being attacked by a mixed breed dog. **This attack was reported two times by the local paper only.**
- August 20, 2007 - A 6-year-old boy was hospitalized after having his ear torn off and receiving severe bites to the head by a medium-sized mixed breed dog. **This attack was reported in one article and only in the local paper.**
- August 21, 2007 - A 59-year-old woman was attacked in her home by two Pit bulls and was hospitalized with severe injuries.
This attack was reported in over two hundred and thirty articles in national and international newspapers, as well as major television news networks, including CNN, MSNBC and FOX.

“Clearly a fatal dog attack by an unremarkable breed is not as newsworthy as a non-fatal attack by a pit bull”

says Karen Delise, researcher for the National Canine Research Council.

People routinely cite media coverage as “proof” that pit bulls are more dangerous than other dogs. Costly and ineffective public policy decisions are being made on the basis of such “proof”. While this biased reporting is not only lethal to an entire population of dogs; sensationalized media coverage endangers the public by misleading them about the real factors in canine aggression.