

# Misconceptions of pit bulls essay sample



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Few dogs are as renowned and as feared in America as the Pit Bull. The American Pit Bull Terrier is the product of interbreeding between Old English Terrier and English Bulldogs to produce a dog that combined the gameness of the terrier with the strength and athleticism of the bulldog. These dogs were initially bred in England, and arrived in the United States with the founders. In the U. S., these dogs were used as catch dogs for semi-wild cattle and hogs, to hunt, to drive livestock, and as family companions. Some have been selectively bred for their fighting prowess. The United Kennel Club (UKC) was the first registry to recognize the American Pit Bull Terrier, in 1898. It can be challenging not to be emotional one way or the other about these canines. Especially if you've cared for one or if a friend or loved one was involved in an incident with a Pit Bull. One group of Americans would say they are blood thirsty monsters, while another argues they're loving, safe dogs and owners are to blame for any " bad" Pit Bulls. Where is the truth?

It's somewhere in between the two. It becomes more confusing when attempting to identify exactly how many Pit Bulls are to blame for dog or human attacks. When the term " Pit Bull" is seen in the press, it can refer to any type of dog. More often than someone would assume, a dog that attacked someone and is mistakenly labeled a Pit Bull is actually a mutt or a different breed completely. Even if a photo is included and it appears to be a Pit Bull, it could very well be any number of mixes which produce similar characteristics in a breed. When giving a thought to it, condemning a dog based on its physical traits is actually declaring his guilt based purely on his appearance. That simply isn't fair. Unfortunately there are sensible people who honestly feel that Pit Bulls and any dog that remotely resembles one is a

danger to society. These people may not retain the proper information regarding dogs and certainly have a misconception pertaining to Pits. These people are being bombarded with an excess of bad press about these canines.

It's evident that the media skews and misconstrues important information in relation to Pits and ill informs the public. Statistics behind the rage are less than accurate. Even the Center for Disease Control states that dog bite and dog attack data cannot be gathered precisely. Still, the section of society that does not feel safe with Pit Bulls has a right to their side being heard. Considering the load they are fed about these animals, it's no wonder they don't believe the Pit Bull supporters. One common misconception is the notion that all Pit Bulls are "bad." Dogs do not possess a conscience and they cannot be "bad." Pit Bulls react to their world based solely on their breeding and training. They have been bred for the past two hundred years for the purpose of producing instinctual fighters. It is unlikely that those instincts would disappear from the species. That being said, no dog is innately "good." Their behavior is based on a combination of their owner's instructions and their instincts. Attempting to sell the Pit Bull to the public as an innocent puppy does a disservice to the public, to potential Pit Bull owners, and to Pits themselves.

Since Pits were bred to fight dogs in a ring, the owners had to make certain they would not turn on them when they attempted to retrieve their dogs after a fight concluded. Imagine an aggressive dog with the ability to be calmed by its owner after being riled up from fighting. When a Pit Bull attacks a person, there are almost always other factors involved, such as

protection of food. Any dog may bite if provoked. One common assumption is that Pit Bulls have a very strong bite. Unfortunately for Pit Bull lovers, this is sometimes sadly true. Myths such as the locked jaw have been disproved. A Pit Bull's traits make him naturally more driven. Consider these: tenacity (they often fought till the death in dog matches), gameness, prey drive, a compact, strong, muscular body (Pits can pull up to 7, 000 pounds) and centuries of fighting instinct. Although, there are too many factors involved in dog bites, such as the size of the animal and where the bite in question occurred, to make a blanket statement.

In their favor, a Pit Bull will likely listen and obey better than other dogs if properly trained. Another assumption is that once a Pit Bull has a past of fighting it's impossible for them to be adopted and retrained. Despite this common opinion, an experiment was once performed. Fifty Pit Bulls were rescued from a fighting ring. Forty nine of the fifty dogs were rehabilitated. Some went to shelters such as Best Friends and many are well-loved family members today. The testing used to determine these dogs' ability to fit into society was exhaustive, extensive, and carefully carried out. Pit Bulls are different from other dogs and potential owners need to be made aware of the facts before considering rescuing or purchasing one. For example, a dog lover who has had Bichons all her life will be sorely surprised unless she does her homework and understand the bully breeds. Pits need a lot of structure, a very pronounced human alpha, training, exercise and lots of attention.

The owner needs consistency, time, energy and quite possibly some muscle. Any animal who has this much energy and motivation embedded into his DNA can cause problems if he doesn't get enough attention and exercise. Pit

Bulls especially put their whole hearts into destruction - one's carpet, couch, trash, or worse, one's 300\$ boots. In all actuality what they really require is to have that boundless energy redirected. A potential owner would definitely need to be educated thoroughly in means of training their new pet. Pit Bulls are highly trainable but that being said, training is absolutely mandatory. Considering the size, power, and enthusiasm of Pits, a stern, determined trainer and consistent training is absolutely mandatory. Their intelligence, focus, gameness, loyalty and desire to please make them one of the most teachable dogs. Unfortunately, both sides of the Pit Bull debate are often stubborn concerning their opinions and solutions. The group against Pit Bulls is in favor of something called Breed Specific Legislation.

This gives power to an office to determine certain breeds are unfit for society, and in turn ban the breed in question from being legally owned. For those that think the Breed Specific Legislation is wrong, they need to be realistic about how to put an end to it. For those that think Pit Bulls are dangerous, they need to recognize that banning Pits tears deeply loved pets away from their families and what they propose simply will not put a complete stop to all dangerous dogs. A practical and considerate solution would call for a bit of giving on both sides. Mandatory muzzle legislation of Pit Bulls in public places in exchange for no Breed Specific Legislation may prove the only hope in coming to a reasonable compromise.

Pit Bulls are similar to other dogs, yet they're also unique. Their gameness, focus, desire to please and boundless energy can be seen strongly as either productive or unproductive qualities. The real trick is to utilize these characteristics in focused play and work, in turn shaping a loyal, obedient,

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loving animal from what was once thought a dangerous creature. Regardless of one's own experience with these animals, the issue simply cannot be observed in a black or white manor. Hopefully one day society as a whole can be better educated of the difference between fact and stereotype, and Pit Bulls will be seen for what loving, highly trainable, loyal, and misunderstood creatures they truly are.