

How a Breed Gets Banned
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This is a Fictional Scenario:

Big Time Gansta Rapper uses rugged looking dogs in many of his videos. Every fan of his just has to get this breed. Popularity begins to soar. Breeders are afraid of the backlash this music star's latest video is going to bring. Yes, the breed looks tough and needs an experienced owner, but in the right environment, it a very sweet pet. They become very protective of the breed. Sadly, a few breeders end up selling to the wrong people, or a couple dogs get stolen. New groups of bad breeders start up. They push for aggressive dogs and breed only those who they feel are the toughest out there. They do not care to whom the pups go. They sell the pups as great protectors and status symbols. Gangs are starting to pick up on certain colors of this dog. One gang is known to prefer brindles, another fawns, and another prefers black. The dogs are turning up in drug houses and guarding stashes. John X down the street is a big fan of BTGR and gets a dog. He wants the image. He already drives a car very much like BTGR, dresses and talks like his idol. John X is not unknown to the police for petty theft, minor drug violations and a few assaults. John X goes to one of his dealing buddies and gets a pup.

Pup is left chained during the day and isolated except when John X goes out for his daily toughening routine. He has big hopes for this pup. At night, it is brought inside, but the pup being a pup, played a bit rough with John X's daughter. Pup now lives outside. Better anyhow as the pup can warn of anyone trying to come on the property. John X spends a lot of time yelling at the pup to shut up, stop whining and barking. His young kids go out with their friends to torment the pup. They throw rocks and sticks at it. The pup grows and one day decides not to tolerate the kids. He bites one after being hit in the head. One time he jumped the four-foot fence in order to escape the kids. John X beat the young dog for escaping and chains him to a rickety doghouse. Now the pup cannot escape. Every couple of days he throws out an open bag of dog food and lets rainwater fill the bowls. If there is no rain, he fills the water every few days. Sometimes the dog goes for a few days without water or food if John X has been arrested. His girlfriend will have nothing to do with the dog. Kids keep tormenting it. The dog is now turning nasty. He lunges and snarls at anyone walking by the fence. He has learned to fear humans. Humans are bad. John X sometimes walks him – when he had buddies to impress and maybe a dogfight to bet on. Dog shows several battle scars. If the dog snaps at him, he beats the dog down.

One day, the kids are tormenting the now adult dog. The dog is big, strong, and very distrustful. The dog starts lunging at the kids. The chain tethering him to the doghouse is pulled free. The dog manages to jump the fence. Dog tears after the kids. One is bitten seriously. John X comes out and the dog takes off. Over the next few days, the dog injures many people. The police finally shoot the dog. Across town, actually, several places in town, similar scenarios are playing out. Some dogs are the same breed as John X's dog was, some are not, but share similar traits.

The media gets wind of the trouble and start printing stories about killer dogs. One breed, the type owned by BTGR, is mentioned repeatedly. However, it is not always this breed causing the trouble. Yet because it sells papers, any dog resembling what BTGR owners is called this breed. No one bothers to talk to responsible owners of this breed. No one bothers to learn the truth behind the breed. The public and local legislation begin to fear this breed. According to the people, something needs to be done. The council decides to get rid of the dogs. No more of this breed and the problem will stop. A program to restrict ownership of and eventually eliminate the dog from the program is started.

John X gets a few more dogs. He does not care about the new law banning the breed. He just hides his dogs in the basement and takes them out after dark. Sometimes one escapes and is shot. So what? John X can always get another. Finally, his home is raided and all his dogs taken. No big deal, this breed is becoming passé. BTGR is losing favor with his fans. A New Star is rising. His dogs are bigger, rougher and could eat BTGR's for lunch according to the rumors on the street. New Star's breed becomes the new choice. Concerned breeders and owners try to keep the dogs out of the public, but a few bad people get them and start breeding.

The problem of dangerous dogs never goes away. The town council kept promising that once a breed is banned, the attacks would stop. The dangerous dogs would be gone. However, every time one breed is all but eliminated, another takes its place. Several years have passed; John X is now on his fifth breed. Punishments for owners like him are nothing. He pays a small fine and gets another dog or another breed. Finally, his new girlfriend comes home with a breed assumed a great dog for kids. John X is angry that she came home with this wimpy piece of crap. The kids continue to torment this dog. However, the kids are older and the torment is worse. John X is fed up and shoots it with a pellet gun. The hurt dog eventually gets loose. One of his kids corners the dog and charges it. The dog panics and the child ends up seriously injured. Doctors are not sure if the kid will make it. The dog is caught. However, because of its breed, a local rehabilitation group is called to evaluate it.

Sadly, they recommend the dog be put down. The damage was done. John X had created yet another menace. This time, people are outraged at a bad owner. Nevertheless, it is too late.

This is how breed bans get started: the wrong people getting a breed of dog for the wrong reasons, or, an irresponsible person getting a dog. The dog reflects the human and becomes what the human makes it. When the dog ends up a problem in the neighborhood, it is the one blamed – not the human. Eventually, there is enough bad press and problems because of a very small minority of dog owners and the result is more often a call for a restriction of the breed. Instead, the restriction needs to be placed on the owners like John X who create the real danger.

Revised 2006