

# 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 in 2007 between August 18<sup>th</sup> and August 21<sup>st</sup>:

- August 18, 2007 - A dog reported to be a Labrador mix bit 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 from a mixed-breed dog. **This incident was reported two times by the local paper only**
- August 20, 2007 - A 6-year-old boy was hospitalized after receiving severe bites to the head by a medium-sized mixed-breed dog. **This incident was reported in one article and only in the local paper.**
- August 21, 2007 - A 59-year-old woman received severe injuries requiring hospitalization from an incident in her home involving two dogs reported to be “pit bull” dogs. **This incident 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.**

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**“Clearly a dog bite-related fatality by an unremarkable Breed is not as newsworthy as a non-fatal incident involving a “pit bull” dog.”**

-Karen Delise, founder and Director of Research, NCRC

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People routinely cite media coverage as “proof” that “pit bull” dogs 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.