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AP Environmental Science- 1B

The Pit Bull Protection Project

Pit Bull Terriers are a largely misunderstood hybrid breed of domestic dog. These pets were popular among people whether it was through their aid in military affairs, medical aid, or just as a part of the family. Before the mid-1800s, pit bull attacks were virtually non-existent (Bastian). Having owned pit bulls for a majority of my life, I have always been an advocated for eliminating negative stereotypes of these loving dogs.

The pit bull today was originated from the mixing of several breeds- American Pit Bull Terrier, American Staffordshire terrier, Bull Terrier, Staffordshire bull terrier, and American Bulldog (Breed). Old English Bulldogs are the earliest ancestor of pit bulls and were found in Great Britain in the 1800s. Originally used for bull baiting (immobilization of bulls), a common lower class entertainment form as well as an economic law for obtaining meat (Bull baiting). When bull baiting became illegal dog fights began to become popular and introduced the need for a new type of Old English Bulldog. When pit bulls were brought across the sea with immigrants, they soon wove themselves into American culture. They were used as companions, protectors and just family friends. Pit bulls quickly gained their way into American culture and became popular with politicians and celebrities. Dog fighting became enormously popular in the 1980s following increased urban poverty. Negative press coverage led to breed specific legislation and has plagued responsible pet owners since (Breed).

Dog fighting is now a felony in all 50 states on the United States and people are working intensely to eliminate the negative stereotypes of pit bulls and others discriminated dogs. The Pit Bull Protection Project is working along side with these people and other organizations to create a positive chain reaction. We are fighting to bring awareness to the myths of breed stereotypes and provide the truth so that dogs such as pit bulls will be adopted more often, along with other discriminated breeds, and so that we don't lose these dogs. We are also working rigorously to protest breed-specific legislation and help pit bull lovers and possible pit bull owners keep their dogs and adopt new ones without extra fees, owner training, and restrictions.

Since the Pit Bull Protection Project has been launched we have released a website at www.thepitbullprotectionproject.weebly.com which highlights different aspects of breed-specific legislation, the facts about pit bulls, celebrity pit bulls and celebrities with pit bulls, and gives a link to the Forsyth County Animal Control's adoption information. The “Breed Specific Legislation” tab also includes the “Top Ten Banned Breeds” such as the Dogo Argentino, Presa Canario, and the Neapolitan Mastiff. The “Pits and Pop Culture” tab includes celebrities like Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Jessica Beil, and many more. The website also holds a poll asking visitors to vote on whether or not breed-specific legislation is a good idea. The “no” has16 votes, while the “maybe” has 2 and the “yes” has 0. Overall the website has received 262 views and 245 Unique visitors. We also created a petition “to change their mindset and embrace Pit Bulls: End the prejudice and misconceptions targeted towards Pit Bulls.”. The petition has received 263 signatures since being created on change.org a week ago. We also released a service announcement on YouTube, Vimeo, and other media sharing sites. This announcement has received 89 views since its release not including those on our website.

When I was younger, I constantly owned Pit Bulls. At one time I had owned three- Red, China, and Brownie- as well as a Chihuahua-Pekinese mix. My pit bulls were the sweetest animals in my whole house and I loved them all dearly. I would play with them every day. One day, Brownie had gotten cancer so we had to put him down. Two weeks following we had to give China and Red away because we were moving. My love for pit bulls has been strong since I was you, and when Camryn introduced the idea, having her dog Satchel in mind, I immediately jumped on board.

I think that our work, as well as the work of others that we found and used for references, will help set off a reaction towards pit bulls. The popularity of our petition and web page excites me because it shows that others care about our cause. I know that what we have done so far has really inspired me to keep the cause going as well as adopt another pit bull. I hope that soon my mom will take me to the shelter in order to explore the options. Unfortunately, we did not get to fulfill our plans of going to the Forsyth County Animal Shelter and interviewing the employees and actually playing with the pit bulls they have there. I feel that would have been a good experience to display in our service announcement. I also wish we could have protested the previous breed-specific legislation that was circulation through Raleigh, but fortunately that bill died on its own. I do plan to keep up with the website and petition and track its success. I also plan to keep pushing friends looking for canine companions to look into the pit bull terrier breeds. I also hope to save pit bulls who are in dangerous situations or have been in dangerous situations and help them rehabilitate from their past. We are the voice for animals of all kinds and we should work indefinitely to give them a voice in a world of selfishness. I also want to aid non-domestic animals as well against the fight for survival.

Works Cited

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