



The Hammer Comes Down on Dog Breeds and Permits

Description

The Knee “Jerk” Political Decisions We All Suffer

By Linda Hammerschmid

The most aggressive breed, one study found, was the **Dachshund**. The researchers discovered that one in five have bit or attempted to bite a stranger, and one in twelve have lashed out at their owners. **Chihuahuas** were in second place, and **Jack Russells** were the third most aggressive breed. Up to 30 percent of these smaller breeds have bit or attempted to bite unfamiliar dogs.

Surprised? One of the study’s researchers thinks that bigger dogs were thought to be more aggressive because past research looked at bite statistics – but **most bites are not reported**. Bigger dogs have bigger bites, which makes it more likely that those, not Dachshund bites, are the ones being medically treated and therefore reported. This study, however, surveyed **6,000 dog owners** instead.

The least aggressive breeds included Basset Hounds, Golden Retrievers, Labradors, Siberian Huskies and Greyhounds. Pit Bulls and Rottweilers scored about average to below average in the study.

Of course in Quebec we have sadly become anesthetised to the whittling down of our rights and freedoms. When did we give up? When did we decide it was okay?

Instead of treating the issues at the root, politicians more often than not legislate only the end results.

Be it our language laws, burkas or niqabs, or dog breeds, the central theme is the same, we are no longer permitted to do something that for decades, if not centuries, we did until that next law forbade us from doing so.

Instead of treating the issues at the root, politicians more often than not legislate only the end results.



Such is the case in this latest loss of a right by banning the “Pit Bull” or Pit Bull mix, and this notwithstanding that Breed Specific Legislation (BSL) does not solve the actual problem and does not really work.

When did you ever know Quebec to be a follower of Ontario? Yet our elected officials have chosen their legislation to copy – and this albeit the Ontario experience is a proved failure – not too bright. To prove my point, the banned breeds of Ontario are:

- American Pit Bull Terriers
- Staffordshire Bull Terriers
- American Bulldogs
- Any dog whose sire or dam is one of the above breeds.

In Montreal, Pit Bulls will be defined as any of the above same breeds (although for the moment the American Bulldog is safe) and to this pack Mayor Denis Coderre has added:

- **any dog** that presents characteristics of one of those banned breeds.



The result of a breed ban – the rounding up and killing of family dogs in Denver, CO.

Image: [Beverly & Pack](#) via [StockPhoto.net](#)

So basically, **any dog** can effectively be **your dog**, or as Mayor Coderre has slid in, a type of dog!

The result according to the SPCA will be that “adoptable, healthy and behaviourally sound puppies and dogs that come through the SPCA will be **condemned to death**,” as stated by Alana Devine Director of Animal Advocacy at the SPCA.

Now I don’t know about you, but being the recipient of daily petitions to save dogs from euthanasia in China, Taiwan, India, Mexico and the like, these now must take a back seat to those dogs who will potentially be under death orders here thanks to Mayor Coderre.

MPP Cheri DiNovo in Ontario has pointed out that stats since the 2004 Ontario ban indicate that the ban “is a predictable failure” as any (large) dog could be dangerous, if mistreated or trained to be violent. I would add and so can smaller dogs, a topic addressed above already.



In fact, the top 4 breed biters in Toronto have been Labradors, Shitzus, Golden Retrievers (don't even dream Mayor Coderre of coming after mine) and German Shepherds between 2004 and 2014. Oh yes, Pit Bulls too, but they fall behind the German Shepherds.

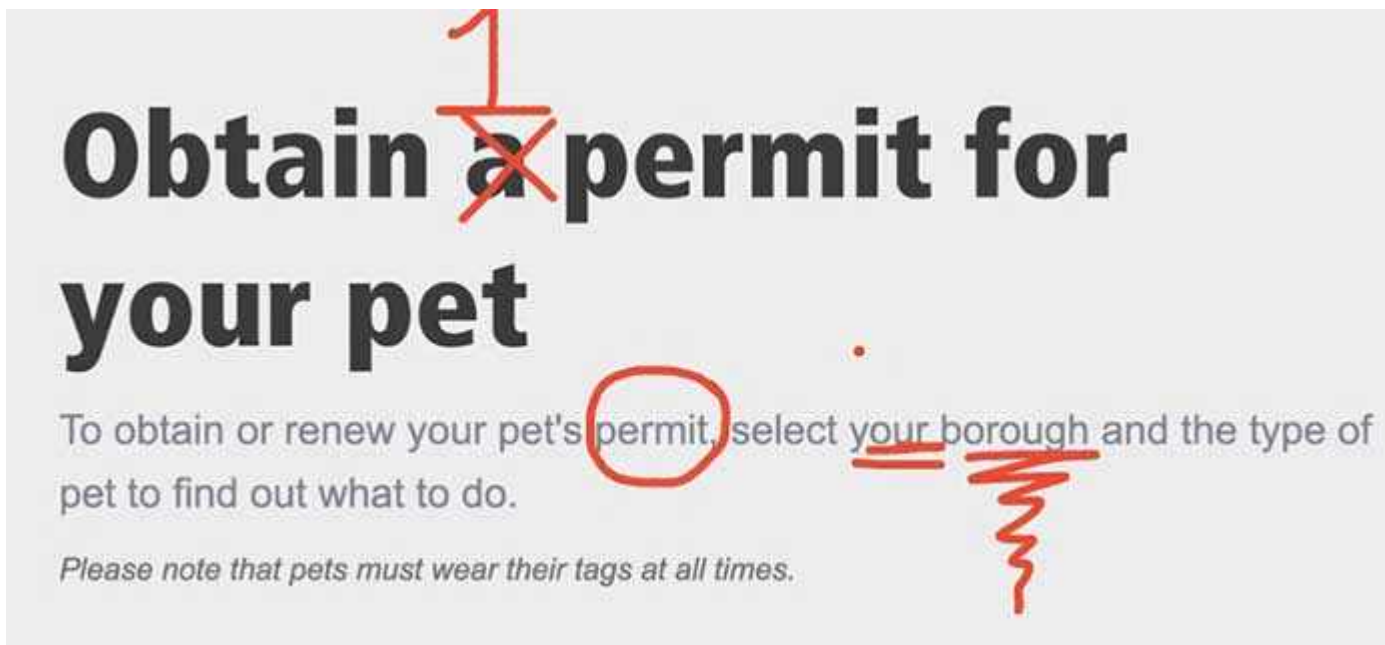
If we had to copy any system, it should be the one employed in Calgary where BSL was avoided while promoting education of dog owners and their children, combined with enforcement. Bites and dogs related issues have dropped dramatically there since the mid-80s.

But what about fatal dog attacks you ask? Interestingly enough, the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) tracks such stats, in the US at least, and there are studies based on media reports since 1887 (Google search, "fatal dog attacks in the U.S." Wikipedia). The CDC study in 2000 reported of the 227 fatal dog attacks studied for which data was available, between 1979 & 1998, less than 1%, or 2 people, died when the dog involved was **restrained**. Ergo, it's not the breed, it's the owners ultimately who need training. And this is not to mention that "reliable" verification of the "breed" of dog is only possible in 18% of incidents.

This may be but one of the legal loopholes by which owners can save their pets from being euthanized. If you are against this ban write to the Minister of Public Security, Martin Coiteux, since racism and pit bulls are apparently priorities for the Quebec Liberal Government this fall. After all, why bother with the important issues of finances and infrastructure when race and pit topics grab the headlines.

If it really was about public security, as Minister Coiteux hints, then address the issue of dog ownership which is where the responsibilities, negligence and blame actually lie.

Read also: [Open Letter from the CPSPC](#)



Misinformation Regarding Dog Licensing

Since a [CTV News story](#) aired Sunday night (August 21) the internet here has been abuzz with dog owners



~~somehow being under the impression that they have to purchase numerous dog licenses for every Town and/or Borough walked through with their dogs, or that they cannot walk their dogs in Montreal proper, or that if their Vet/Dog Trainer is in Montreal they need a City of Montreal dog license as well as the one from their own place of residence.~~

This is not true. Here are the facts:

Go online at ville.montreal.qc.ca/animals and you will be able to verify the rules and costs of dogs licenses (and cats) in your Borough.

The heading is about **Obtaining Your Permit From Your Borough**. Once you have obtained a valid permit, be it for Westmount (go to [their Website](#) for their rules) or elsewhere, you are good to go dog walking. The key is **valid** (you will need to provide proof of up-to-date vaccinations and to pay the fee applicable) and that the **tag** is on the dog collar. Simple.

If you do somehow get a ticket, contest it as you do not need a Montreal license if you have one already (unless maybe you own a Pit Bull but that is another story).

© 2016 LINDA HAMMERSCHMID

Feature image: [Audrey](#) via [StockPholio.net](#)

Disclaimer: *The opinions expressed in this article are those of its author and do not reflect the opinions of WestmountMag.ca, its publishers or editors.*

Read also: [The Hammer Comes Down: Is Reimbursement Due?](#)



Me Linda Hammerschmid is an attorney and has been practicing Family Law since 1982. She is the Senior Partner at Hammerschmid & Associates at 1 Westmount Square, Suite 1290. She is a founding and current member, and past Secretary (28 years) of The Family Law Association of Quebec. She is a frequent guest on CBC TV/Radio, CTV and CJAD, providing commentary on Family Law. You can also hear her regularly on the CJAD show "Passion" with Dr. Laurie Betito, the last Thursday of each month. She and her dog Mac are members of Caring Paws Animal Therapy (CPAT) giving joy to the less fortunate. Me Hammerschmid can be reached at (514) 846-1013 or by e-mail at hammerschmid@vif.com. All inquiries will be treated confidentially.

Category

1. Animal Welfare
2. Animals | Pets
3. Legal | Family Law

Tags

1. Breed Specific Legislation
2. dog breeds



-
3. legal
 4. Linda Hammerschmid
 5. public safety

Date Created
August 2016