Opinion

Big dogs aren't scary

By ADRIANA CERBONE
Copy Editor

Large dog breeds are not dangerous. As someone who has only ever had a large dog, I'm getting tired of people saying they're vicious.

Now don't get me wrong, I've met vicious big dogs. But I've also met vicious small dogs; they just aren't as "scary" because they're 10 pounds.

My dog is a 95-pound German Rottweiler with a heart made of gold; this isn't another love piece for him, don't worry.

My point is, people have moved to the other side of the road when I take him for walks just because he looks scary. One man literally said to me, "I'm gonna move away so I don't get eaten." Didn't we learn in elementary school not to judge a book by its cover? On the bright side, I always feel safe from creeps.

When a stranger knocks on the door and hears my dog's loud bark, it scares them away. Selfishly, I love it. I have my own personal bodyguard helping me feel safe in a scary world.

However, if that stranger were to walk in, my dog would lie on his stomach demanding belly rubs. I'm serious. When I come home for the weekend, my dog will literally slap me with his paw until I rub his belly. You're probably thinking, "Just walk away?" Well, that's not an option; my dog will wrap his paw around your leg so you can't leave. We call it a "leg wrap" in my house.

So, once again, they may seem scary, but big dogs are just big babies.

My parents trained my dog to love people, other dogs and cuddles. If we didn't train him to be comfortable around people, I'm sure he'd be much less friendly.

If you isolate a dog from people, they won't like people; it's that simple.

Dogs are a reflection of the way you train them, just like children are a reflection of their parents. They have the ability to read and match human emotions. If you seem nervous, your dog will be nervous. So, if your dog hates people, it's probably your own fault.

People just need to learn how to properly train their dogs to end these unfair stereotypes.

For my dog, we send him on hikes with multiple dog trainers and multiple dogs of different breeds. This helps keep him friendly and comfortable with people and dogs.

There was one time a dog actually bit his nose. Guess what kind of dog…a little rat dog that's the size of my dog's head.

Smaller dog breeds are harder to train. They literally act like children and act out when they want attention. They do this because people often baby them since they're so small. One way they tend to seek attention is by being aggressive. Meanwhile, when a large dog wants attention, they try to sit in your lap like it's 10 pounds.

Even though small dogs can act "aggressive," they're all bark and no bite. The Napoleon syndrome explains how they make up for their small size by overcompensating with their barks.

There's a study which found that smaller breeds have higher aggression rates and more aggressive tendencies due to factors like age, fearfulness, their breed and owner interaction.

Quick question: how many small service dogs do you see compared to big service dogs? Exactly.

Personal dog trainer Jonathan Jones said, "Larger dogs also tend to perform much better as service animals and are better equipped to provide aid in an emergency. And their size and temperament often make them ideal choices for therapy animals or emotional support dogs."

If this isn't enough proof that large dogs are just simply better, I'll keep going.

The top 10 most loyal dog breeds are the Cane Corso, Doberman Pinscher, Boxer, German Shepard, Belgian Laekenois, Australian Shepherd, Caucasian Shepherd, Bull Terrier (who share common ancestry with Pit Bull Terriers), Rottweiler and Estrela Mountain Dog.

All of these dogs are large breeds.

According to the Urban Pet Hospital, the top 10 most aggressive dogs are the Pit Bull Terrier, Rottweilers, Doberman Pinschers, German Shepherds, Dogo Argentinos, Chow Chows, Boxer, Dachshunds, Wolf-Dog Hybrids and Dalmatians.

As you can see, the lists are very similar.

A small dog like a Chihuahua will never be in the "aggressive" dogs list because their bite will do very little harm.

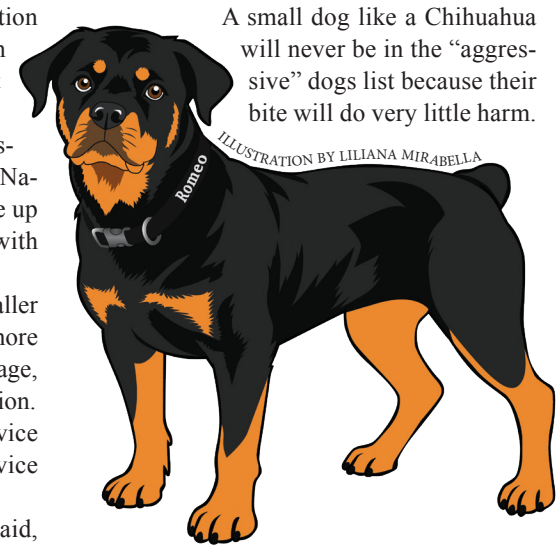


ILLUSTRATION BY LILIANA MIRABELLA

With a bite force of 100–180 PSI compared to large dogs with a bite force up to 743 PSI, obviously the large dog will do more damage.

That's why the big dogs are more often classified as aggressive. They're not actually vicious; they are just capable of more damage. No one cares if a little Yorkie bites you because it barely hurts, but if a large breed bites someone, they could end up in the hospital.

Small breed bites are also not reported as frequently as large breed bites, so how is that fair?

Now, no matter how much I defend big dogs, they're still animals. Dogs have become part of our family and because of this, we humanize them. As much as I love my dog, I still respect that he's a dog.

Some people think of their dogs as just "pets," but they are living creatures with feelings and boundaries.

If you're getting in a dog's face and annoying them, they'll probably bite you. Not because they're aggressive, but because that's how they communicate that they're uncomfortable.

We can't label a breed as aggressive just because they stood up and defended themselves when they felt vulnerable. Humans do the same thing. If someone bothers us, we speak up about it; dogs growl. If someone crosses a line, people yell; dogs bite.

They don't have a voice, so we need to start reading their body language and respecting them instead of making aggressive accusations.

My point is that every large dog, like Rottweilers or Pitbulls, I've met has been the best dog, and the small dogs have been the mean ones. We classify large dogs by an unfair stereotype, and it needs to come to an end.

The press is not the President's enemy to silence

By KELSEY SWEET
Staff Writer

A president should be able to criticize the press. As an involved college student, I agree wholeheartedly with that statement. A president should be able to call out reporting they believe is inaccurate while having the opportunity to defend their administration when journalists get something wrong.

What a president should not be able to do is decide that a news organization no longer deserves access to the government because they do not like what it reports. The truth hurts sometimes.

That is why President Donald Trump's decision to ban CNN, MS NOW and Politico from the White House is so disturbing. Putting my political viewpoints aside, there is a time when caring about how a leader carries themselves versus how the leader holds themself as an individual.

You can adore Trump or hate him; that is not my business, but when it comes to his common decency in how he interacts with people outside of his workforce, he should be ashamed.

On Sept. 18, Trump announced that three news organizations would no longer have access to White House grounds; he later accused the press of publishing what he called "fake news." His administration pointed out specific reports from the outlets and argued that some of their reporting raised national security concerns.

The three organizations responded by filing a lawsuit arguing that the ban violated their First Amendment rights. They claimed their rights were abruptly revoked when they were shunned with no advance notice, reasoning or due process.

This is not about whether the reporting from these three news outlets are always right because, spoiler alert; they aren't.

Journalists make mistakes; news organizations publish work that deserves criticism. Presidents should be allowed to criticize inaccurate reporting, and journalists should be held accountable when they fail to meet the basic standards of accuracy.



ILLUSTRATION BY AVA STANGO

Criticism and punishment are not at par. Criticism is meant to be constructive and teach a lesson and then move on. Punishment is the idea of a penalty or negative outcome. In this situation, a punishment was not necessary.

The White House has argued in press releases on AP News as well as other organizations that access to the president is a "privilege" and that the administration has authority to control access to restricted areas of the White House.

That creates a dangerous predicament. If a president can remove journalists because he believes their coverage of him is too negative, what stops the next president from doing the same thing to a different news outlet?

The answer is that which news outlets are allowed to cover the president cannot depend on which political party controls the White House.

The purpose of the press, in short, is to give the public information about those in power, including the information they dont want out there.

That means reporters are going to ask uncomfortable questions and relive experiences that are unsettling. They are going to publish stories the community or president dislikes. They are going to investigate government officials and sometimes get things wrong.

That is part of democracy. This "controversy" has already affected more than the three organizations that were banned.

After CNN was removed from the pool, other major TV networks decided to back away from the situation. The result was that fewer journalists were able to provide the kind of direct coverage that the public has come to expect from presidential standards. They chose to leave because the idea of a job with freedom of speech had just become tainted.

This First Amendment violation quickly made its way to court. On Sept. 24, U.S. District Judge Timothy Kelly temporarily blocked Trump's ban and ordered the White House to restore access to the three outlets. He also questioned the national security of the government. The court's temporary order does not yet settle the larger legal matter, but it highlights why this issue does matter.

A free press was never meant to be comfortable. It was meant to be the voice in the room that refuses to stay quiet when everyone else is told to sit down.

As of today, that voice belongs to CNN, MS NOW and Politico. Tomorrow, it could belong to a local reporter, a student journalist, or anyone who asks a powerful person a question they would rather not answer. Hopefully, one day, that person is me.

The terrifying part is not simply that a president is angry at the press; it is what happens when we become so comfortable with silencing what we dislike that we forget why those voices need protection in the first place.

The press may have to wonder whether telling an uncomfortable truth will cost them their access, their career or a place in the room is soon to be tainted. When in reality, the silence will have already begun.