



# PROSECUTING RECKLESS OWNERS AND MUZZLING DANGEROUS DOGS



PRESENTED BY THE TORT TRIAL & INSURANCE PRACTICE SECTION ANIMAL LAW COMMITTEE, THE ANIMAL FARM FOUNDATION AND NEW YORK UNIVERSITY STUDENT ANIMAL LEGAL DEFENSE FUND (NYU SALDF)

**December 1, 2007  
New York University  
New York, NY**

There are 73.9 million dogs living in the United States. A recent poll revealed that 69 percent of Americans view their pets as members of their families. However, severe dog attacks are generating more media attention than ever before, and legislators often react by passing dangerous-dog ordinances. Some dangerous-dog ordinances fail to adequately address the problem of dangerous dogs and reckless owners. Some ordinances and statutes have been ruled un-constitutional because they infringe on the property rights of owners.

This one-day session will examine the constitutionality of canine profiling. Effective dangerous-dog/reckless-owner ordinances and suggested ordinances to protect citizens from dog bites will be discussed. A case study of the breed ban in Prince George's County will be discussed.

The factors involved in fatal dog attacks also will be examined. Last year, there were 31 fatal dog attacks in the U.S.: Unsterilized dogs were involved in 97 percent; reckless owners in 84 percent; and guard dogs, yard dogs, or fighting dogs in 78 percent.

Successful prosecutors will discuss what is involved in litigating these high-profile cases, and private attorneys will talk about their successful representation of dog owners appealing a dangerous-dog determination. Dr. Randy Lockwood will speak on the role of the expert witness in dangerous-dog cases.

Insurance issues regarding breeds will also be discussed. Larry Cunningham, author of *The Case Against Dog Breed Discrimination by Homeowners' Insurance Companies* (11 Conn. Ins. L.J. 1), will discuss canine profiling done by insurance companies.

Bernard Rollins, renowned philosopher, will talk about the implications of canine profiling and the human-animal bond.



## Presenters

- **Larry Cunningham**, Assistant District Attorney, Bronx County District Attorney's Office, Bronx, NY
- **Robert Ferber**, Supervising Attorney, L.A. City Attorney Animal Protection Unit, Los Angeles, CA
- **David Furlow**, Partner, Thompson & Knight, Houston, TX
- **Marcy LaHart**, Private Practitioner, West Palm Beach, FL
- **Adrienne Lefkowitz**, Harford County Humane Society, Riverdale Park, MD
- **Dr. Randall Lockwood**, The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), Falls Church, VA
- **Dr. Bernard Rollin**, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO
- **Joan Schaffner**, George Washington University Law School, Washington, D.C.
- **Amy Trakinski**, Egert and Trakinski, New York, NY
- **Ledy VanKavage**, The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) Maryville, IL
- **K. Michelle Welch**, Assistant Attorney General, Virginia Attorney General's Office, Richmond, VA

**This program is co-sponsored by the following ABA Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Section Committees: Law Practice Management, Law in Public Service, Solo and Small Firm Practitioners and Trial Techniques**

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