

Tell Me About Your Dog! Part II

by Armin Winkler

I believe that reading dogs is one of the most important parts of dog training. In part one of this article I tried to address general qualities in dogs that we hear often when dogs and their training are discussed. I deliberately limited myself to traits that deal with perception and reception of stimuli. In this part I would like to tackle the active side of dogs' characters and talk about the traits that determine how dogs respond. As always my intention is to share ideas and provoke thought.

Directability

I put directability at the beginning of this article because it is an important aspect of a dog's personality when it comes to training for any type of performance, be it sport or service. Two terms are commonly used in the discussion of this trait, they are "biddable" and "tractable." However, I was never really happy with the picture I got in my mind with those terms. Webster defines "biddable" as "ready to do as commanded" or "obedient." To me that describes more what we achieve through training than an inborn trait in the dog. Webster defines "tractable" as "easily managed, taught, or controlled" and as "docile and compliant." This term comes a little closer, but it almost contradicts the picture I have of a high spirited working dog.

The German term that is used to describe what I am talking about is "*Führigkeit*." Loosely translated it describes a dog that is willing to follow a leader. I like the image I get from this term. And even though some trainers still equate this with a subservient and even submissive attitude, I always chose to translate the term "*Führigkeit*." as directability.

Directability is truly the willingness to follow the directions of a leader. Think about this for a moment. I am not talking about a dog that works great for food or a toy. I am not talking about a dog who is submissive. I am not talking about a dog who can handle heavy compulsion and learn his lesson that way. I am talking about a dog who has an internal trust that following the direction of the leader must be in his best interest. This is a dog who can be shown what to do. Not a lot of coaxing with rewards is necessary and neither is a lot of force. I guess one way to assess directability is how much or how little coaxing or force was necessary to get a dog to take the direction.

(When I am talking about force, I am not describing a correction -soft or -hard dog.)

High-drive dogs that are eager to work and that learn quickly are not necessarily examples of directable dogs. Dogs like that often figure things out quickly on their own in order to satisfy their drive. But there is an attitude that shows, this attitude has a "I know, I know! Let me do it on my own!" feel to it. A directable dog welcomes guidance from the handler and does not see it as an interference in his quest to satisfy his drive.

The directability of a dog shows in all phases of the work-- tracking, obedience, and protection. It is a great trait to work with and gives the trainer a unique opportunity to help his dog. It does not mean the dog is dependent on the handler that he lacks confidence and needs help. It simply means that the dog can be shown what to do, and how, more easily. With this trait, achieving team harmony is much easier. The team spirit flourishes.

One thing I have noticed with directable dogs: they seldom display a lot of dominance behavior (more on that later). Now, that does not mean they are submissive; they simply do not have a strong desire to seek top rank.

Drives

What are drives? Unfortunately, people have forgotten what the term is meant to describe. It shouldn't be used to give a name to every little thing a dog does. Drives are the internal impulses and urges that motivate animals-- in this case dogs-- to take certain actions. In order for something to be classified as a drive there has to be a drive specific stimulus, drive specific action, and a drive goal. We can manipulate the drives in our dogs during training to suit our purposes and to get them to perform tasks that are the results of these manipulated drives. However, we should never lose sight of the fact that a drive has biological significance for the animal and its species. It is this biological significance that is specific to every drive that gives us a better idea of what we can and cannot achieve by manipulating the drive. Drives can be split into two main categories. The criteria that create the division are the drive goals. One category contains the drives that lead to the gain of something positive or pleasurable; for example: sex drive, prey drive, pack drive (in this case the desire to be with members of the same species). In this category there is a tone of excitement and lust during the drive action and deep satisfaction

when the goal is reached. The other category contains the drives that lead to the prevention of something negative or harmful; for example: defense drive, flight drive, the desire to remain unscathed. In this category there is a tone of stress and tension during the drive action and relief when the goal is reached.

Fighting "Drive"

Let me say one thing right off the top that I have stated in previous articles. I do not believe that there is a natural drive to "fight." I believe that what we refer to as fighting "drive" is a package made up of a number of components which are in turn individual drives, drive-products, and behaviors. How good or strong a dog's fighting "drive" is depends on how many of the components are usable in the dog's training, how strongly the individual components are present in the dog, and how well promoted all usable components are when the dog is being assessed. I will now discuss the major components that I have been able to notice separately. I will wrap up my thoughts on fighting "drive" at the end.

Prey drive

A lot has been written about prey drive, so I won't re-hash all of that again. Prey drive is part of the food acquisition behaviors of dogs. The stimuli triggering prey drive are erratic, fast evasive movements. The prey drive actions are chasing, pouncing, biting, pulling down, shaking to death, re-biting, and carrying. As I mentioned above, prey drive is a lust oriented drive. This means that all drive specific actions will be performed in a lustful manner. During training this should be kept in mind to ensure that we are in fact working in prey drive. The end goal of the drive is possession of the prey with the intent to eat it (at least from a biological standpoint before human manipulation).

I'd like to make one point here. Prey drive in itself will generally not motivate a dog to bite a human being (I said generally, there are some exceptions). Since prey drive has consumption (or eating) as the end goal of the drive, and canines are not cannibalistic by nature, a properly socialized dog who views humans as his own (even though only adopted) kind will experience very strong inhibitions when it comes to carrying out the follow through drive actions. The fast evasive movement of a human can stimulate prey drive and it can even lead to pursuit and chase. But when it comes to biting, there is a mental block. I will get to why I brought this point up a bit later in the article.

Now, this article is about assessing the traits in dogs. So let's look at the things to consider where prey drive is concerned. Naturally we have to look at the stimulation threshold of the drive. By this I mean how easy or how difficult it is to trigger the drive. Then we should look at the intensity with which the dog carries out the drive actions. How fast the dog pursues and how hard the dog bites, relative to his physical capabilities needs to be looked at. We can assess how strong the dog's prey drive is. In other words, how much difficulty is the dog willing to overcome in order to engage in drive specific activities and to satisfy the drive. And one final assessment category for prey drive is the drive endurance. How quickly does the dog ?have enough? of doing prey drive actions? Or how soon does the drive exhaust? Drive intensity, strength, and endurance even though related can appear in different levels. So a dog with low intensity can have strong and enduring drive, etc..

Defense drive

A lot has also been written about this topic, however, I feel it is an aspect of protection training that is often misinterpreted. Therefore I will spend some time discussing the defense drive. Defense drive definitely falls within the category of aggressive behaviors in dogs. But I think the biological significance of this drive needs to be examined closer in order to get a proper perspective. Defense drive can appear in conjunction with other behaviors and drives, or as self defense. Defense of prey, defense of territory, and defense of a weaker pack member (such as a puppy) are common overlaps during which defensive behaviors will appear. I will address these overlaps a bit more later. For now I want to discuss self defense further.

Self defense behavior does not only belong in the realm of aggressive behaviors. It also falls into the realm of self preservation mechanisms. The trigger stimulus for defense drive is threat or the perception of threat. I'm sure you are familiar with a variety of techniques that are used to threaten dogs for the purposes of protection training. So I don't need to go into too much detail. One thing I want to point out though is that once the dog experiences a threat, he feels a worry or concern that harm may come to him. So the true trigger of defense behavior is the feeling of worry.

The goal of defense drive is always the same, namely making the worry go away. This is achieved when a safe distance is reached between the dog and threatener or when fear is caused in the threatener.

I use the drive specific actions as a way to split dogs' defense behaviors into three divisions. The first major division is between the active defense reaction and the passive defense reaction.

Active defense reaction

The active defense reaction is a very aggressive form of defense behavior. This type of aggression falls in the category of re-active aggression. My description of the active defense reaction is that once the dog gets the trigger stimulus for the defense drive, he uses physical violence as a means to achieve his drive goal. I am deliberately using the term violence here to make a point. Dogs who show this reaction will resort to biting as the first or one of the first responses that their programmed behavioral pattern dictates for this drive. This is my personal line of distinction that I use when I assess dogs. The reaction is strong and powerful and stems from confidence in the dog. Dogs exhibiting this form of defensive reaction will go towards the threat and attack the threat physically. They show a clear "offence is the best defence" mentality.

Passive defense reaction

The passive defense reaction is split into two separate forms to give us our three divisions.

First there is the strong passive defense reaction. This reaction is one that we see in confident and strong dogs. The dog uses threatening displays such as barking, growling and gesturing while confidently standing his ground. The big distinction is that behaviors other than biting appear as the first responses to the trigger stimulus. And because the initial response is not physical, I classify this reaction as passive. Why a passive or non-physical response appears before the biting response can have different causes. One major one is simply the predetermined behavioral response pattern that the dog was born with. Another cause in highly social dogs is that they realize the threatener is human, and the biting response is inhibited, so other forms of defense behaviors are used first. I do not believe that dogs who show this type of reaction are any less tough or strong than dogs showing the active reaction. Generally dogs who fall into this category of passive defense can be taught to bite in defense quite readily. They will bite when a threat cannot be driven back by other means and continues to advance.

Second there is the weak passive defense reaction. During this reaction we can see the dog using threatening displays such as barking and growling, etc., but he is retreating to maintain a safe distance. How quickly a dog will retreat will vary. These types of dogs are definitely weaker and have less confidence than the two types discussed previously. They will only bite as a last resort when retreat is blocked and the threat continues to advance. This falls into the category of fear biting and is everything but an active response.

There are a few more points I'd like to mention regarding defense drive. I strongly believe that these three defense drive categories are pre-determined and that this predetermination sets limits to how much we can change through training. Comments like "we need to put more defense into this dog" make me cringe and feel sorry for the dog. All we can do is work with what the dog brings with him. Less mature dogs generally cannot show either of the two strong reactions, so the only defensive reaction that can be elicited from them is the weak passive reaction. The strong reactions rarely appear in dogs before 18 months of age. An important point to remember when training young dogs.

As with all drives, the stimulation threshold is a factor during the assessment process. In this case the threshold is at what point the dog feels concern or worry. This threshold can be raised through deliberate confidence building exercises.

Frustration aggression

The next component of the package we call "fighting drive" is frustration aggression. Frustration aggression is also a form of reactive aggression that is created by depriving the dog in one of the lust oriented drives or at least by preventing their satisfaction. This form of aggression in my opinion serves the purpose of relieving built-up drive energy that has no proper outlet. The most useful drive to create this type of aggression in training is naturally prey drive. But other positive gain motivated drives can also be used. Such as hunger, sex drive, social reunification (or pack-)drive, or simply a high desire to expend physical energy through movement. When the satisfaction of these motivations is blocked, the dog experiences a sense of frustration. This frustration will reach a point where the dog reacts aggressively. Once this stage is reached, the aggression appears in the same form as all forms of aggression. Barking, growling and biting are the actions that are visible.

I made a short point during my discussion of prey drive, that a properly socialized dog will generally not bite a human being in prey drive. However, if the prey drive builds up to a certain level, and no outlet is presented, frustration aggression will set in. And once a dog is in a state of aggression, he will bite a human being.

Good examples of this model are high drive Malinois, who reach an aggressive state very quickly, because of their high drive and the fact that they seem to frustrate easily.

This is a very useful form of aggression, as it presents a much less risky training methodology than, for example, defense drive, yet still adds intensity and seriousness to many dogs.

Social aggression

Social aggression is the only type of aggression that can be categorized as active aggression. Even though the term active aggression is used frequently, it really only applies here. The reason social aggression is called active aggression is because it really does not require any specific action as a trigger stimulus. Social aggression serves two purposes of biological significance. One is ensuring the even distribution of a species across a given territory by repelling equally strong individuals. And the other is to establish and maintain order in social units such as a pack. Social aggression is always directed at the individual's own kind. In the breeds that were created for police and military service, selection took place that expanded the direction of social aggression to also include the dog's adopted kind, humans. As an example of contrast, in the dog fighting breeds, selection took place to ensure that the social aggression would not include humans.

Let me give you a couple of other reasons why I hold this view. In virtually all older texts describing the police service dog breeds a few points were always made. They were that the dogs show mistrust and aggression against strangers and that they are very devoted and loyal with the family and very loving with children. To me this combination of qualities stem from a very strong closed pack oriented social behavior. That means loyalty and devotion to members in the pack and aggression against all outsiders, even those belonging to the same species.

Unfortunately, this form of aggression is not very common in our dogs anymore, because many people find it to be socially unacceptable.

Dogs today are supposed to be social and to a certain degree friendly. And while I see nothing wrong with a social dog, I personally also see nothing wrong with a socially aggressive dog. These dogs are not unpredictable menaces to society or vicious animals. They simply have inborn motivations that include this form of aggression. Social aggression is a trainable trait, meaning it can be directed and controlled. Naturally that requires the right handler, so that accidents are prevented.

Socially aggressive dogs have an urge to be aggressive towards strangers. This can be controlled and the dog can be taught to tolerate strangers. However, the dog will not become a social or friendly dog with strangers, no matter what type of training is done. The only way this urge to confront a stranger aggressively when not under control would go away is if the stranger meets the confrontation and social order is established. This happens either if the person can subdue the dog and subordinate him or if the person unequivocally submits to the dog. (At that point the person is no longer a stranger though but an integrated pack member).

The trend in breeding has been to breed dogs who do not have social aggression. And that may be what many people want. The point I would like to make is that social aggression is nothing that should be made out to be something evil. It is a valuable trait in dogs that are in the right hands. Such dogs do demand a high degree of responsibility and vigilance on the part of the handler. Socially aggressive dogs who are also dominant are difficult to handle and to train and should be in the hands of experts.

Dominance behavior

Dominance behavior falls in the category of social interaction behaviors. It can appear together with social aggression, but it does not have to. It can appear on its own as well. In many ways dominance behavior resembles aggression, but it really is not a form of aggression in itself. Dominance behavior stems from an internal urge to prove superiority and status. In discussion I use the phrase "this dog likes to throw his weight around." The reason I am making dominance behavior a component of fighting "drive" is that it has an impact on how a dog physically interacts with other individuals and therefore it becomes part of the picture we see.

Dominance behavior includes climbing up on the helper, eye contact, puffing up to impress, and physical dominance through power.

Satisfaction seems to occur when the dog gets a sense of power over the helper. This trait is almost always more strongly developed in males than in females.

Dominance behavior can appear on its own or it can overlap with other components. For example, in a dog with a sense of dominance and good prey drive and a personality that frustrates easily we can see that the dog becomes aggressive only if he cannot get a sense of power. This is not the same as social aggression. This type of dog likes to assert his strength while working in prey, the frustration occurs when he cannot express his power over his adversary for the prey. We can also see a dog with a sense of dominance but only capable of the weak passive defense reaction. This type of dog must naturally have a lower threshold for defensive reactions. For him not being able to feel physical power over the helper triggers the sense of worry which in turn triggers the defensive reaction, which in this example would include retreat.

Naturally there are countless examples of different combinations. There is no need to list them all, the point I am trying to make is that dominance is not automatically aggression. It is not an isolated trait, and always occurs in conjunction with another motivation. But it warrants examination on its own. I feel this is important particularly because the re-active forms of aggression can occur without any expression of dominance (Socially aggressive dogs always have some sense of dominance).

Rage

This is the last major component that I want to include in my discussion of fighting "drive." What is rage? Webster defines rage as "a furious, uncontrolled anger" or "a brief spell of raving fury." I think that definition gives us a pretty good point to start examining what I am talking about. Rage is a re-active form of aggression. Even though most dogs have some form of rage, only a few dogs have it as a useful trait for training. Rage can be directed, but it is very difficult to control. It is therefore not a trait that is selected for in breeding for performance dogs. Biologically this trait is if anything a contradiction. It does not seem to have a biological goal. Rage is triggered by mistreatment, pain, and opposition. It can appear as a result of frustration overload. What is unique about rage is that it is extremely forceful and violent and also that it seems to be able to override self preservation instincts. No other form of aggression has that quality. As soon as the negatives become too much and self preservation is

threatened dogs will choose other options if they exist in defense, social aggression or frustration aggression. But rage seems to be able to shut out "good sense" even if only for a short period of time. Another unique quality to this form of aggression is that it has a certain vengeful or retaliatory tone to it. Vengeance may be the only goal we can give it. But that is very hard to quantify, and I may be anthropomorphizing a bit here. I am sure that rage differs from the active defense reaction, because I have seen dogs who clearly showed the weak passive defense reaction to all threatening stimuli. But when pain was caused without any further reduction of safety distance, the dogs suddenly became enraged and came forward aggressively without any regard for their welfare. I have seen the term pain aggression used in a similar way. However I feel that is an inadequate description of rage. The Germans use the word "*Wut*," which means rage or anger, as part of their protection terminology.

Fighting "Drive," Conclusion

This brings me to the end of the discussion of fighting "drive". The major contributing components I have been able to isolate are the six I just described: prey drive, defense drive, frustration aggression, social aggression, dominance behavior, and rage. All dogs will have these components in some form or another. But we have to draw the line at the point where the components stop being useful. I hope you will agree with me when I say that a dog that everyone describes as having great fighting "drive" will display most if not all of these components in a useful form. I feel that it is important to look at this concept as a package made up of components, and not one drive. The individual components need to be promoted, solidified and manipulated to where a dog can freely switch between all the components he has in order to deal with virtually every situation he may encounter. Only then does a dog have fighting "drive." We also have to accept that some dogs will have fewer dimensions to their individual fighting "drive" package than others. Knowing which components are workable is very important in choosing the right training approach. I would say that in the good modern day sport dog the package consists of prey drive, defense drive (with the strong passive reaction being the most common), and frustration aggression. Social aggression, dominance behavior and rage are more rare. But when we see a dog that has all six components, we will not forget him soon, because the fighting "drive" that is displayed when those dogs work leaves a lasting impression.

There are few more terms I would like to discuss.

Sharpness

Sharpness is probably the most incorrectly used term in English dog terminology. I may be wrong here, but I thought the word sharpness was a translation of the German term "*Schärfe*." But the use of the term sharpness is very much a contradiction of the German term. In every conversation I have, people use sharpness synonymous with spooky or jumpy or nervy. But the word "*Schärfe*" in German texts is actually defined as being synonymous with aggression. So there certainly is a great discrepancy between the uses of the word.

The type of aggression that is talked about when the term sharpness is used seems to vary depending on the designed use of the dog. For example, in big game hunting dogs and terriers it refers particularly to the intensity and attitude with which these hunting dogs kill their respective prey. It is not prey drive as such; it is the actual killing response that is assessed. I have heard the term "gameness" used in the US in a similar context. For the large game hunting dogs the word used is "*Wildschärfe*," which translates as game sharpness. This assessment is made best when observing how the dog deals with wild boars. Because of the "bringing down" requirement in this type of hunting many of the dogs of these breeds use physical dominance techniques. For terriers the term is "*Raubzeugschärfe*," which translates as small predator sharpness. Terriers are used to hunt and kill small predators such as martens, foxes, badgers, etc. It is no easy feat to kill these predators without suffering injury. So a particularly fast and furious shaking technique is very common, as is a chomping bite behavior. These types of sharpness categorize the dog's prey drive.

Now to the term that we should be most interested in for our service dogs. The term used here is "*Mannschärfe*," which translates into man sharpness. The definition of this quality states the following. The quality in the dog that leads him to actively confront any apparent (or feigned) or actual threat from a person in a hostile manner. If I were to use terminology I have already discussed in this article I would say that sharpness could be equated to showing an active defense reaction to a real or perceived threat.

I did a fair bit of research and could not find anything written that stated that this quality has to come together with a low stimulation threshold for threat. So in fact how easily a dog is triggered does not seem to be a factor by definition. But to be fair, when I was growing up, the dogs we called sharp were the ones that would become very

aggressive without much provocation. One thing that I never thought of when I used the term sharp was spooking away. In the old East German Koerung system, sharpness was rated from 0-5 with 5 being the most desirable. So when did sharpness become a bad thing? I don't know. I don't think it is a bad thing.

Flight Drive

Flight drive is part of the self preservation mechanism of animals. All animals have this in them somewhere. In some cases flight drive is described as just a very strong form of avoidance behavior. I don't think that is a wrong way of putting it, but I don't believe it is totally accurate either. Flight drive is more than just staying clear of a threat, it is actually turning around and running away. I generally use the term flight tendency when I discuss this trait. I have seen weak dogs who do not have a high flight tendency. But I have also seen fairly strong dogs who still have in them a tendency to bolt away when the right trigger is hit. I think for us to get a clear picture of a dog we should make an assessment of the flight drive or flight tendency in a dog, so it can be weighed against the other traits the dog possesses. The trigger stimulus is for flight is fear.

Defense Drive Overlaps

Defense of prey

This trait is often referred to as guardiness or possessiveness. This is naturally an overlap of prey drive and defense drive. The trigger stimulus is a sense of worry over losing prey. This has proven to be a very useful trait during protection work. Guardiness is to some degree inborn, but it can be created to some degree through training, it most certainly can be promoted. It is a good way to add the intensity that defense drive brings with it without having to threaten the dog himself. As with all defense work, avoidance or retreat is a possibility, so caution has to be taken here also to ensure the work is done correctly.

Dogs seem to have different levels of guardiness depending on the prey object. In some it is limited to actual food related items like bones, etc., in some toys are the focus of their possessiveness, and in others only protection equipment seems to be worthy of defending and only against strangers. I feel it is a worthwhile trait to assess because it gives us additional training options.

Defense of territory

Territorial aggression as it is sometimes called can be one of two things. It can be an actual defense of the territory the dog considers his, like a yard, or even a car. This kind of aggression is a type of defense reaction where the worry is over the potential loss of territory. And this worry leads to a defensive reaction. Dogs who display this overlap don't act like they are personally threatened, for them the dispute is over territory.

Or dogs may sometimes appear to be territorially aggressive, but in fact aren't. This can happen in dogs who actually feel personally threatened, but only feel secure enough on home turf where they feel protected to show a defensive response. While anywhere else the dog would retreat or be avoidant and submissive. For these dogs I would call it a self defense reaction.

Mistrust

I am putting mistrust as part of the defensive drive points. The reason for this is that aside from socially aggressive dogs, we can also have mistrusting active defensive dogs who appear to be almost the same thing. Naturally, the other forms of defensive reactions occur as well, since they are triggered by the same stimulus. But only the active defensive dogs will appear like a socially aggressive dog. To a certain degree this form of re-active aggression does fall under the aspects of social behaviors. Mistrust of strangers is what will lead to the worry that may trigger the defensive response in the dog, no matter what the response may be. The difference between this and social aggression is the following: the socially aggressive dog, as I see it, is not really in defense drive. He treats strangers with aggression, period. I'm sure trust plays a role here but is not a deciding factor. As I mentioned under social aggression, the aggressive response does not stop (if left uncontrolled) until integration occurs. But a mistrusting defensive dog will stop reacting defensive towards the person as soon as the threat of mistrust is neutralized. Once this is done such dogs can be social towards people they would have met with aggression before.

Play drive

I will end this article with a discussion on play drive. What is play drive? Does such a drive exist? I believe it does exist and it is a drive in itself. Now, it also has a certain componential nature, but because I

believe it has pretty much a singular biological function I think it is a drive in itself. I believe that play drive is nature's school. The drive to play ensures that young animals practice adult behaviors in a non-risky way. How good a dog's play drive is I think depends a little bit on how many dimensions there are to his play. Dogs practice prey drive by stalking and chasing each other and other moving objects. They practice defense drive overlap behaviors by guarding objects, food, and small sections of territory, they practice dominance through wrestling matches. The desire to compete is a way to practice the survival of the fittest principle of nature. It is this competitive spirit that leads puppies to race each other and play tug of war. Sometimes a puppy won't show any interest in an object or running, until he can measure himself against another. We can capture a part of this competitive spirit and make it part of protection training. I think that it is this competitive spirit of play drive that leads people to link play drive with fighting "drive." I believe that play drive is linked to fighting "drive" on two levels. On one hand the competitive spirit allows dogs to develop the urge to measure themselves against human competitors as well. It is not serious enough to warrant the term fighting however. On the other hand I believe the more extensively a dog plays the more dimensions he will later have to his fighting "drive," since nature's way of practicing techniques allows a bit of a glimpse into what will be. So play drive lets the dog practice the components of fighting "drive" on his own. That is why dogs who have an extensive play drive can develop a well rounded fighting "drive" even if the training people do with him is fairly one or two dimensional. Such dogs are able to develop the other components to some degree on their own. Still, the seriousness we want to see in the adult dog's fighting "drive" needs more work than what play drive will do for the dog.

Another point to make about play drive: since our dogs are infantized wolves, we can preserve certain pieces of play drive long into adult life and even for the entire life of the dog. The desire to play is a lust-oriented drive in the dog. And by keeping this alive we give ourselves yet another drive to work our dog in to make training even more fun and successful.

Conclusion

This article was difficult to write, but it was a lot of fun too. It gave me an opportunity to browse through many books on my shelves that sometimes just sit there. It gave me a refreshed interest in talking about dogs and delving into their minds. I had a hard time putting

some of these thoughts into words so that they wouldn't be misunderstood. But in the end my goal is to get people to think about their dogs and talk about them and learn more about them. And I think I accomplished that. Thank you as always for reading my thoughts.