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APBT vs Amstaff (American Staffordshire terrier).

Are they a different breed?

Defining what is a breed.

Looking at defining the term "Breed".

Webster's Desk Dictionary of the English Language defines a breed as "a homogeneous grouping of animals **within a species, developed by humans,**"

The Oxford English Dictionary defines a breed as "**a line of descendants perpetuating particular hereditary qualities.**"

This tells us that a specific "breed" of dog has a certain standard to be measured at and any descendant thus having the same perpetuating hereditary qualities.

A breed is developed over time by mixing together two or more different types or breeds and selecting based upon working function - performance.

A new breed is typically created and defined by mixing of a variety of types to create a new unique functional "type".

Then ensuring this type breeds true among all members of the new breed.

The answer is not a simple one and to know even what a breed is you must have true knowledge of the genetic background.

Historic records proves the heritage of a breed for centuries.

The bull and terriers have a relatively short legacy **and are obviously the result of breeding for a type standard, particular set of characteristics (same traits) and most definite qualities - mostly defined by functional working ability.**



ILLUSTRATED A.D.B.A STANDARD

Breeding a male of one breed with a female of another breed does not produce a purebred puppy of any breed and this resulted in a mix breed.

For example, putting an APBT with a Boxer does not produce a new breed, for the second generation offspring from these crosses will probably look nothing like their parents or could be somewhat similar one way or the other.

The first pairing produces puppies that are 50% APBT and 50 % Boxer therefore they are all a mix breeds or mutts.

The second generations may be more or less of either breed - the percentage is unknown unless a genome study is conducted on the chromosomes of each puppy.

For a new breed to be founded we must have a selection for a specific working type using these founding breeds at input.

This is something that would take numerous generations and defined selection.

Then we must obtain paired (homozygous) alleles for all the traits we are hoping to have present in our new breed.

If we want a dog with an APBT body but a boxer head, every puppy produced must be of this phenotype **no matter** whom within this new population we are breeding too.

As a whole it can be said that dogs **similar** to the APBT as a breed was experimentally developed in one country, imported to another, and, because of breeder's preference (his choice of a litter pup to be bred to again) and the **limits of the gene pool (plus new genes from dogs from America and then added dogs from say Mexico or Croatia)**, changed in appearance somewhere along the way.

This means that breeding with a limited amount of dogs of a certain breed – breeding without adding genetic same genes will most probable in time produce certain difference in looks – this then enhances by the breeders choice picking out of each litter breeding stock – different that where the original gene pool was started from – this is then when standard conformation in judging the APBT by breeders breeding **only for conformation** will differ somewhat with those breeders breeding for the working dogs “**practical functional conformation**” that work in practice and is needed for the specific breed of working dog or fighting dogs.

In America, the APBT was highly selected for **practical & functional working ability** -- as a fighting dog (from a variety of the imported gene pool) ... for specific working traits with **exact conformation geared just for this** (practical functional) - gameness, temperament, selected for type and using all of the selection theory, the same as practiced by professional horse racers.

It is not the nice horse that win it is the right conformation - practical functional - coupled with the right abilities.

The APBT was crafted and forged in the hottest of working type, forges to be the utmost game athlete.

The progenitor breeds and strains may have come to America from England and Ireland as a much smaller more refined game athletic dog with some other physical changes - **150 years later, the original variety of types is still preserved throughout America**, but you do not see it often today in the UKS or AKC show ring.

Today you see a cartoon caricature of the working breed that was forged by knowledgeable dog **men of old**.

Now in the UKC especially, because to infusion from the AKC of judges and competitors, lack of judge education of working type, over promotion in magazines of **overdone dogs**, and market demands by public of cartoonish versions of our all-around working breed -the breeding programs are producing **a much larger** dog with heavier bone, too much substance (bordering on English bulldog substance), -with the predominant type now being a **dilute blue fawn** because these recessive traits, founder effects, and the popular sire syndrome are now rampant -particularly with the influx of internet.

These dogs also have a **distinctly different physical characteristic** with **no gameness** (and or never testes) than the working stock and the breed type -that proved to be so successful when the breed was defined from the original game temperament tested APBT.

Scientifically the **American Staffordshire terrier (Amstaff)** came from **different selective functional and structural breeding** – started 1907 but defined in 1937 and again 1972 **but derived from the APBT**.

Different in looks and movement and named, registered as the American Staffordshire terrier and today recognized as such.

The average Amstaff **has lost much of what an APBT was "functionally derived" to possess**, relating to temperament and true working type (functional form) and gameness.

The Amstaff has been selected since 1937 (from out of the under the umbrella "pit dogs" of the time) **for show ring dogs, "ring gait" - movement and for looks** -appealing exaggerations of head and shoulders (this is what happens to most show breeds that are no longer utilized as working dogs).

The APBT as fighting game dog has also been **specifically and highly selected since 1937 but for functional "type" and functional conformation for the task at hand** (from out of the under the umbrella "pit dogs" of the same time) then for their working ability, and functional conformation, for specific traits - gameness, prey drive temperament, selected for type and using all of the selection theory, the same as practiced by professional horse racers.

The APBT was crafted and forged in the hottest of working type, forges to be the utmost game athlete.

When did the APBT become a breed and distant from the Amstaff?

It started in the 1890s when Chancey Bennett founded the **United Kennel Club (UKC)** and made his "pit dog "Bennetts Ring" the **first registered APBT a name liken to this breed of dog.**

The American Dog Breeders Association (ADBA) formed soon after this!

The ADBA and UKC grew and the popularity of the **APBT** with the American people was soon noticed by the American Kennel Club (never accepted the APBT as a breed) as a viable entity.

When did the AST become a breed?

During the depression and in 1937 and for overwhelming popularity and political reasons, the American Kennel Club (AKC) -for the first time, ...

recognized and registered APBT's as a breed (realising the APBT then an already established recognised breed for more than 50 years).

Different from the Amstaff because the Amstaff's selection and conformation was for the show ring - and started to re - registered APBT's in the United Kennel Club's (UKC) registry.

The "Pit bulls" was registered under the name **Staffordshire Terries**.

Men determine a breed and with this new name "Safordshire Terrie" for the APBT, they needed a breed standard.

After visiting various APBT kennels at the time, a committee headed by Wilfred T. Brandon "**chose a Colby dog "Colby's Primo"** with UKC registration 233-460 and also with AKC 641-443 registration and also with ADBA registration 500-1, **as a standard for the new registered breed "American Staffordshire terrier - AST"**.

Our Colby family dogs (APBT) are probably the oldest purest stain of dog's in the world, with pedigrees dated back to 1890.

John P. Colby started his bloodline of APBT in 1889, from the best pit fighting dogs from England and Ireland.

These dogs were brought to America by immigrants to such Ports as Boston, Ma, Portsmouth, NH and New York.

Now 150 years later, are the American Pit Bull terrier and today's Staffordshire terrier a different breed?

Using the scientific definition to described this, **the answer is no!**

This is absolutely what logically derived when interpreting the scientific definition of "Breed".

Because the true bred AST has had no **outside** input of genetic material from other breeds, it cannot be a new breed, at least not in such a short time.

It is by definition a family, type or bloodline of the **original APBT bred by selection and for specific show conformation.**

Also by using the criteria of the APBT game-dog owner's historical breeding goals - by selectively breeding the APBT **for type, desired correct traits** - ...

temperament, gameness and functional type (in the pit) versus looks, conformation and temperament.

Genetically they are the same breed but a level of selection genes, for the popular look, have had tremendous founder effect.

The popular stud effect, lack of performance and gameness based criteria, and a closed gene pool (to sustain looks and conformation) has created a specific look and temperament change over the last 95 years since they have been renamed (1937).

Thus, there is less diversity among AKC Staffordshire terrier's phenotypically than there are between the UKC and ADBA American Pit Bull Terrier as a whole, because the APBT's greater gene pool and purpose of selecting.

Type importance, as seen by man **is what determines breeds** and the gene pool used **to breed type**.

AST and APBTs have the same overall "phenotype".

Compared to other breeds they also have one of the most **varied or widest ranges of "looks", styles type and most of all specific traits.**

What then constitutes a "new breed"?

A new breed is typically created and defined by mixing of a variety of types to create a new unique **functional** "type".

Functional, being the key word here. If you have a new task "running around a show ring" and breed two different breeds to produce an animal that excels at this, then you have created a breed. (If they breed true to type).

The Doberman is a breed that was created by mixing together a variety of other breeds followed by intensive selection for the desired working **type** (not show type or phenotype). It is not known exactly which different strains were used in the creation of this new breed.

The Rottweiler, Pinscher, Manchester terrier and the Beauceron probably form part of its make-up.

The colour of this dog appears to have been derived from all of these breeds.

Then over time with selection based upon working quality a new breed was created.

How can this possibly apply to the AST which derived directly from the UKC APBT without infusion of additional "types" or "strains" or "breeds" - (i.e. how can the AST be a different breed if no other breed was mixed in followed only by intensive selective breeding for a new functional "type"?)

Selective breeding within a breed does not produce a new breed it just creates modification and narrowing within the range of "type" that defines the APBT/AST.

It creates a family or a subtype or even a strain.

South Africans originated from various European, African and later from many different nations.

This makes us nothing more than human but a type difference.

The many different types like English, French, German, Netherland or Chinese - all have an influence and changing the type - in looks and functionally.

Big humans do heavy work small humans do not have the stamina or drive doing the same heavy work successfully because of the selected genes.

The only difference is the name.

Even with man's influence and a "closed" gene pool (APBT) of over 150+ years, evolution has not even taken notice of the APBT enough to influence or differentiate them from a genetic standpoint.

The only thing evolutionarily different is the name.

With DNA which can differentiate certain breeds that emerged "separately" from various separate wolf populations around the world, it would be unlikely to detect more than one substitution in the Amstaff and APBTs from the most varied of bloodlines.

In the sense that breeding is selective (non-random mating) there is a micro evolutionary process occurring ...

but the genetic population that founded the AST was not that large and such selective breeding has not occurred for enough centuries to result in a significant evolutionary change.

Man has placed a breed standard on the "type" that defines the APBT.

Especially with the AKC standard which was written for the Amstaff, based upon a specific **APBT "type"** and breeders continuously breeding **and strive to improve to this standard.**

How can "type" so radically change such that for any given Amstaff you cannot find a phenotypically similar APBT?

Granted you can find APBT's that do not phenotypically resemble any Amstaffs because the original genetic pool is still so **much larger** for the APBT.

American Pit Bull breeders on the other hand also continuously breeding and strive to **improve to APBT standard**, type and specific temperament, gameness and other traits but also for functional working ability and functional conformation to complete the task.

There are distinct germ-lines among the Amstaff and there is as much or more selective divergence among specific germ lines within the APBT breed as there is between the Amstaffs and the APBTs as a whole.

And to classify this different gene-line as different breeds we will land up with 200 new breeds.

A rose by any other name is still a rose.

Obvious today is that the UKC's APBT is looking more and more like the AKC's Amstaff ...

because show judges are more familiar with the similarities to the Amstaff type than the differences and through judge preference.

Breed development.

About 60 million years ago a small weasel-like animal lived in the part of the world that is now called Asia.

This ancestor of all modern day canids (dogs, jackals, wolves and foxes) was called Miacis, and although they did not leave any direct descendants, Cynodictis, the first true dog-like canid did descend from them. Cynodictis appeared about 30 million years ago.

This line eventually split off into two branches, one in Africa and the other in Eurasia.

The Eurasian branch was called Tomarctus and is the progenitor of wolves, dogs, and foxes.

Until recently, it was thought that wolves and jackals were both the ancestors of the domestic dog, but a recent paper appears to demonstrate that the wolf is the only ancestral species.

This somewhat controversial paper also asserts that the first domestication of wolves seems to have taken place about 100,000 years ago.

Whether or not it happened that long ago is still in dispute as the fossil records do not support this, however, different domestication events did most likely occur from multiple populations.

This makes sense as both wolves and humans coexisted over a wide geographical area and so multiple domestication opportunities would have arisen.

As a hunter-gatherer, humans would have found these animals very useful, but then about 8,000 years ago humans turned to a more settled way of life.

This is when **severe selection** for **specific behaviours and traits** became important and 'modern' breeding practices started. And so it begins.

Although the domestication of the dog is shrouded in mystery, it is all but certain that dogs developed from wolves that settled on the fringes of human development.

Wolves found easy pickings in the garbage heaps near human settlements, and, as the wolves became more accustomed to humans and vice versa, humans probably found equally easy pickings among the wolf cubs.

These cubs became working companions, cave or hut guardians, hunting companions, war dogs— and later, livestock herders.

Once a truce was established between wolves and men — a situation that likely happened over and over again in different parts of the world — people began selecting from different wolves to enhance **certain traits/skills**, and specific dogs were skilled in herding, tracking, guarding, retrieving, and coursing emerged.

Wolves in **different parts** of the world contributed to development of dogs **with different body types and coats**.

There are several theories about the details.

According to Fogle, four types of wolves contributed to the development of dog breeds: the North American wolf (with some influence from the Chinese wolf) led to the northern breeds such as Alaskan Malamute and various Eskimo dogs and primitive North American dogs;

the Chinese wolf led to the Chow Chow, prehistoric North American dogs, and the Pekingese and various toy spaniels.

The southern Indian and Middle Eastern wolves led to development of a broad spectrum of breeds from sight hounds to mastiffs.

The European wolves were the progenitors of the shepherd dogs, spitz breeds, terriers, and gun dogs and through crosses with breeds developed from Asian wolves, of spaniels, bloodhounds, pugs, and bulldogs.

War, nomadic tribes, trade routes, pastoral communities, the spread of civilization — all contributed to the dispersal of dog breeds, the development of new breeds, and the extinction of others.

Many of today's breeds can be traced back hundreds or thousands of years, but the modern version may not bear more than **superficial resemblance to the original**.

The value of purebreds.

People developed breeds in attempts to **refine dogs for particular purposes – this go hand in hand with particular type conformation for the given task**.

British sheep farmers along the England-Scotland border developed Border Collies to gather the flocks from the hills and move them from one field to another.

European sheep farmers developed a different type of shepherd dog to work the terrain in their countryside.

Shepherds in mountainous areas developed dogs to guard the flocks from wolves.

Shepherds on the Shetlands and other islands developed smaller breeds of dogs (and sheep) to fit the size of the habitat.

Hunters developed upland game dogs and waterfowl dogs to hunt birds, terriers to hunt pests, and hounds to chase rabbits, hares, and gazelles.

Nomadic people developed breeds to haul goods on sleds and carts. Warriors travelled with large guard dogs.

Noblemen used fierce dogs to protect palaces and property.

People who lived in cold, harsh climates developed breeds with weather-repellent coats.

Those who lived in deserts developed dogs that could withstand the heat of day and the cold of night.

Those who lived by the sea developed dogs that could swim in cold water without ill effects.

Although many — if not most — of these breeds no longer work at their **original jobs**, they maintain many — if not all— of the skills and the conformation to do those jobs.

This combination of physical attributes working conformation and mental abilities makes them predictable as pets and in many cases adaptable to other purposes.

Prospective dog or puppy buyers can select a breed based on **the attributes that fitted the dog to do its original job**.

For example, Labrador Retrievers, the top dog in the AKC's registrations, are in high demand as pets for active families because they are gentle, playful into adulthood, active, and relatively easy to train.

Border Collies, on the other hand, usually make poor family pets because they are workaholics, if they do not have enough to do, they may herd the kids gees chickens or destroy the house.

Some dogs no longer ply their original trade, but they work at other jobs.

German Shepherds rarely herd sheep but they assist the police and the armed forces in a variety of jobs.

Many other breeds put their **skills** to good use in finding lost or injured people, sniffing out contraband, working in arson investigations, helping handicapped owners, and visiting hospitals and nursing homes.

Breeds in trouble.

Predictability of **appearance** is a two-edged sword. Not only can it be an advantage to a family looking for a pet, it can be also have major drawbacks.

To breed **type** occurs when the sins of a few individual owners of a breed and the acts of these untrained, un-socialized, un-kept dogs of a breed are visited on the **entire breed**. Such is the case with a growing list of breeds.

Many American dog club jurisdictions have **breed specific bans or vicious dog laws**.

These laws blame deeds on the **entire breeds**, not the individual dogs and owners that commit such acts.

They indict the therapy dogs and search and rescue dogs and gentle family pets along with the APBT's owned by morons, gangster, drug dealer and dog fighter that roam at large, threatening neighbours and their pets.

Then to understand is the fact that the APBT is **a recognized breed type of dog**.

But the "pit bull type" also includes breeds like the American Staffordshire Terrier, the Staffordshire Bull Terrier, the American Bulldog, The Bull Terrier and many more.

Dogs of these **breeds** are generally not used for fighting **any more**, yet the **stigma of history** and specific **owner type's** remains and the breeds are included in "pit bull" bans and restrictions.

Some breeds suffer from great popularity.

A motion picture, a television show, a product commercial — all influence the public to seek out a particular breed of dog.

Market demands increase, commercial kennels and breeders produce puppies and registrations rise.

Commercial kennels and casual breeders produce litters of these dogs, often leading to a decline in health and temperament in the rush to sell puppies.

The dogs of today may not be shepherders and guardians, palace protectors, or royal hunt companions, but they are **just as valuable** and **worth preserving as breeds**, as companions, and life partners.