

death's door, bewildered people are getting in touch with her from all over the country, and even from places like Norway, England and Singapore, where some breeds of dogs have recently been banned.

Hearne is a collector of horror stories: dogs whose teeth were pulled so they could stay alive; a well-trained pit bull shot by police while dutifully in the "sit" position. In England, a woman who had agreed to have her dog put down did so, and then on her way home committed suicide in her car. A schoolgirl in Norway, where pit bulls have not only been banned as a breed but labeled "bastard" dogs, was taunted by schoolmates, and her dog-trainer mother threatened by toughs because she has so far refused to get rid of their well-mannered beast. Hearne researched the dog's antecedents in the United States and sent an affidavit that the "bastard" dog had proper bloodlines going back to the turn of the century. In California, after pit bull panic set in, hundreds of pit bull terrier owners—in fear of arrest, attack or lawsuit—turned in their dogs at animal shelters, asking to have their pets destroyed.

Hearne recently traveled on the West Coast to promote her book and address dog groups in the San Francisco area. In California some of the harshest terms of the pit bull scare laws have been modified. Dogs generally no longer stand accused of viciousness simply because of their breed. In some places, too, the review panel for accused dogs no longer includes the canine-control people who grabbed the dog in the first place. Even so, Hearne found many dogs in unnecessary trouble and owners in distress. In an unprecedented coalition, owners have got together to provide, via hot line, the names of lawyers who will take dog cases, as well as a list of nationally known dog-behavior experts qualified to evaluate individual dogs. "A lot of people wanted these laws," says Hearne. "They thought it would all be about Colombian drug dealers and young toughs who feed their dogs gunpowder and fight them, not Aunt Millie's high-strung golden in the suburbs."

Tougher training and "off-lead" tests

Some attempts have been made by the dog world to provide more dog training. The American Kennel Club, not every dog person's favorite organization (a well-known dog journal runs a regular monthly watch on AKC iniquities), has launched a small national program for dogs and owners called the Canine Good Citizenship Award, thus far notably underfunded.

Needless to say, Hearne agrees about the need for training. Needless to say, she has more exacting ideas about how tough things should be. "The tests are all on-lead," she says. "They ought to be off-lead. And harder, as hard as the AKC Companion Dog obedience test. After all, people deserve some serious guarantee

that with a dog around, it isn't going to cause trouble." Since you can't force people to do anything in the United States, she thinks any broad training program needs to provide an incentive. If you and your dog really train, you should be privileged in some way, by having earned the right to move freely in public, perhaps in restaurants or parks. "All Canine Good Citizenship does is give you a piece of paper."

Dogs, well-behaved dogs, used to go into restaurants and stores. In Europe they still do. But the American way is that if any dog misbehaves, all dogs are banned. "'No Dogs Allowed' signs are up everywhere. They're locked out. There's hardly a place anymore," Hearne says, "where you can go with a dog or train a dog. That's one reason why people don't do it."

She thinks a national campaign might be organized around local groups, with mostly amateur trainers and programs in schools, perhaps with promotional TV coverage to encourage participation. "If you passed the test, and local restaurateurs agreed, your well-trained, street-sound dog could come into a restaurant with you and curl up quietly beside your chair. And people, in-

Hearne and husband, Robert Tragesser, a professor of philosophy, take wintry tramp with some family dogs.

