



**A Woof of Greetings to All:**

When I first met Alfredo Tucci several years back we resonated well. Conversation flowed easily between us—he even pretended to understand my Spanish!—and I enjoyed the range of subjects in which he was conversant. Since then as I have done two videos with Budo and various articles we have come to know each other better and the connection has strengthened. I am happy to begin writing here on a semi-regular basis.

The Adventure continues,  
Marc "Crafty Dog" Denny

# The Fire Hydrant

## The Coming of "the Dog Brothers" to Europe

I am often asked about our name, "the Dog Brothers." It can be explained on many levels, but one of my favorite ways of looking at it can be found in a newspaper article by one Jeff McMahon:

**"Most actions of men can be explained by observing a pack of dogs. Not wild dogs, just neighborhood dogs who all scurry under the fence on the same night and set off together to reclaim a glimmer of the glory their species possessed before domestication."**

I think that's right. The dog is the interface of man and the wolf and we can connect so strongly because our dynamics are so similar. Even as we humans change the wolf into the dog to suit our purposes, we still need its glimmer as wolf. In some breeds, and in certain individual dogs, the glimmer is brighter than others, and that is why you see an Akita named Zapata in our logo.

I know the Dog Brothers have a good reputation for allying it out pretty well, but we know what we do is well short of death matches of yore in the Philippines, a policeman going into an abandoned building after a bad guy or those who step forward to stop hooligans, mobs, or religious fascists. It is important not to take ourselves too seriously, and I like the way the quote captures a certain perspective— we are not wolves, we are but human dogs.

Still, it is important to be aware of something else too. Yes we are but dogs, and just like dogs we have territory, hierarchy, and squabbles over females. But there is something more. There is also the bond of the pack. In humans we call this the tribe.

The bond and aggression go hand in hand. ALL animals with individual relationships (wolves, monkeys, geese, dogs, humans etc.) also have aggression. Animals lacking the ability to discriminate between other members of their species, e.g. minnows do not. The presence of aggression does not always mean that there is a bond with other individuals, but a bond with other individuals always means there is aggression.

Aggression is an instinct, even as sex is an ins-

tinct. And just as a man eventually will have a nocturnal emission in the absence of sex, so too aggression will discharge eventually even in the absence of suitable reason. All efforts at eliminating aggression by removing its "causes" and/or its triggers are inherently doomed. Indeed, to the extent that the efforts to eliminate the eliciting stimuli of aggression succeed in delaying the discharge, the greater the eventual discharge becomes and the time and place of the discharge becomes less predictable and thus far more dangerous! As is so often the case in life, the law of unintended consequences is the rule. We need to understand aggression and to channel its expression in healthy, productive and moral ways.

### **Aggression exists throughout Nature. Why?**

Aggression has three purposes in nature. The first is to spread a species out over territory so as to not overload an eco-system. In humans this is sometimes known as War.

The second is for rank within the hierarchy of a social group. Unlike the Anonymous Horde of a school of minnows, individual members of the group can distinguish each other. All social groups have hierarchy.

And the third is for reproduction. Classically this means two males fighting over the female, but it also means the female defending her young.

If there is no social unit, e.g. Siamese fighting fish, it does not matter that the loser dies, only that the winner breeds. In contrast, in social animals, there is a strong biological benefit if the second and third types of aggression do not damage the loser. This is so that the social unit, (the pack/the tribe), which exists precisely because of its survival value for the species, remains strong.

Most martial arts are usually of the second type of aggression, with overtones of the third: Young males competing. In contrast, the Filipino Martial Arts originate in the first form of aggression, in

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"Crafty Dog"  
**DOG BROS.**  
Marc Denny





war. Thus there is a quality of cooperation in the learning process of the FMA that can be distinctive.

How so? If, as a tribe we are going to defend our land, women and children, it is in our respective individual interests that the other warriors of the tribe become good fighters as well. If I push you too hard and break your spirit, it does not serve my interests. If I push you too little and you are soft, it also does not serve my interests. And the same applies with you for me.

The Dog Brothers are not a pyramid with one Alpha at the peak. Instead the "governing body" of the Dog Brothers tribe is "The Council of Elders" which consists of the three founders now so-called because we are old: Top Dog (title: The Fighting Force); Salty Dog (title: The Silent Force) and yours truly (title: The Guiding Force). No money is involved in the Dog Brothers. Although many Dog Brothers train in Dog Brothers Martial Arts (DBMA), this is not necessary—anyone of the right values from any background is eligible to become a Dog Brother. We look for people who manifest that of which they are capable. A person of ordinary gifts who manifests his gifts with Dog Brother spirit will be accepted whereas we will pass by someone who is genetically gifted but lacks the understanding of what we are about: "Higher Consciousness through Harder Contact"®.

Since our founding in 1988 with three consecutive day long days of fighting known in our lore as "the Rumble at Rambles" (each man there averaged 20 fights over the three days), the Dog Brothers tribe has grown gradually. With our recognition we certainly could have grown much more and much faster but to do so would have risked dilution and diminishment of what we are about. Our tribe is real and requires real human connection.

We've had many people fight with us and profess their desire to be one of us, yet after one or two days of fighting we don't see

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them again. We've had a few people fight with us and seek to use it as a vehicle of self-promotion. These we don't want—nor do we want those who do not understand our code of "Be friends at the end of the day".

This means we need time to get to know someone, time to smell him and get to know what he is about. Over time we have come to use the following framework: A minimum of fighting at two of our "Dog Brothers Gathering of the Pack" is necessary before someone is eligible to become a member of the tribe when someone in the tribe speaks in his behalf to the Council of Elders. If he is accepted in our parlance he becomes "a Dog". When someone begins to manifest that special level we

look for in a full "Dog Brother", then they become a "Candidate Dog Brother". If he maintains this level for three Gatherings and expresses that of which he is capable, he becomes a Dog Brother. Thus, the shortest amount of time it takes to be a Dog Brother is five Gatherings. In that we hold our Gatherings twice a year this has meant the whole process requires a minimum of two and a half years— which is a considerable amount of time to maintain this level of fighting.

Even with the financial burdens that travel to our home in Hermosa Beach (Los Angeles) California entails, the Dog Brother tribe can be found throughout the United States, Canada and even Europe (at present in Switzerland, Italy and Great Britain). And

because of this financial burden I have often heard requests from those who would dearly love to get involved that we hold "Dog Brothers Gatherings" beyond our home.

I am pleased that our efforts in holding a DB Gathering make it look easy. That said there is far more to holding one of our Gatherings than meets the eye. (If I make it to old age perhaps I will tell some of the behind-the-scenes stories in my memoirs!) To have that much testosterone from so many different groups (not just different martial arts groups, but also different social and ethnic groups) in one place with security a matter of an honor code is a really good trick. And so, for reasons explainable and inexplicable, I have kept our Gatherings exclusively here where I live and can steer them to maintaining their special quality— until now.

Benjamin Rittiner of Bern, Switzerland first came to me with two students for a week of training in 1997. Since then he has trained with me diligently and sedulously in Europe and at my home in Hermosa Beach. He has assisted me at countless seminars and assisted me in many of our DVDs. He has brought character, integrity, and talent to the process and he has become a close friend (his Cornelia and son Robin too!) and I have taught him as a son and should

something happen to me he will do the same for mine when the time comes should mine be so inclined. He is the only man that I have promoted to "Guro" in Dog Brothers Martial Arts. He heads up DBMA in Europe and is the only person I have authorized to present seminars in Europe. And with my authorization he recently taught a DVD on DBMA for Budo International.

During this time he has become one of the most highly respected of all the Dog Brothers. He fights seemingly without fear and with tremendous technical excellence (no student applies more of what I have taught than him) and shows the highest levels of true Dog Brothers spirit in his fighting. People often comment to me after a Gathering that they thought he was "the best man there".

I go into this detail to make clear the depth of the connection which I believe is necessary for the next step in the Adventure of the Dog Brothers—to have someone there capable on all the many levels necessary of anchoring an additional "Dog Brothers Gathering of the Pack". This Gathering will be held once a year in Bem, Switzerland and will be held for the first time on Sunday October 1, 2006. I will continue to be there to serve as Guiding Force and as "ringmaster".

In respect of the importance of this special moment in the history of the Dog Brothers tribe, also there to witness will be my co-Founders, Arian "Salty Dog" Sanford and Eric "Top Dog" Knaus. We are currently working out the details of a seminar featuring them during their visit. Top Dog looks forward to the opportunity to use his German (and some Norwegian!) "Higher Consciousness through Harder Contact"®!

**"Crafty Dog" Guiding Force of The Dog Brothers**

