

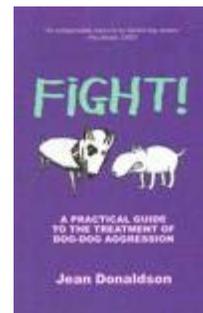
An excerpt from

## ***Fight! A Practical Guide to the Treatment of Dog-Dog Aggression***

Chapter – 2 Descriptions of Common Types

by Jean Donaldson, Dogwise Publishing. 800-776-2665, [www.dogwise.com](http://www.dogwise.com)

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### **Bullying**

Play is apparently highly reinforcing for a great many dogs. The derailing of play by overly rough behaviors therefore serves as a sufficiently rotten consequence to purge it from most dogs' repertoires. Likewise, play attempts directed at non-consenting dogs fall flat and so also usually diminish in frequency. For some dogs, however, roughness and harassment of non-consenting dogs is quite obviously reinforcing. They engage in it at full tilt, with escalating frequency and almost always direct it at designated target dogs. This can be enormously distressing for target dogs, as well as for humans who witness it.

### **Play Skill Deficits**

Sometimes when two dogs are playing, the play becomes too intense and tips over into a fight. The genesis of this can be found in the breakdown, or in sever cases, complete absence, of the role reversals (also called demeanor shifting) and constant atmosphere cueing that characterize normal play. When dogs play, there is a frequent give and take: one dog bites the other and then is bitten, one dog chases and then is chased, one dog is on top, then on the bottom. All this is punctuated by continual full or partial play bows, paw raises, inefficient bouncy movements, explosive bluffing-type movements and open, grinning play faces. When this system breaks down it's as though one dog becomes a broken record, repeating the same thing relentlessly and often with increasing intensity. The other dog's attempts to move on to something else or get his playmate to dial it down a notch are ignored. Irritation, self defense and fighting can ensue.

Certain dogs are prone to tipping over – they don't reverse roles often enough and fail to punctuate their play with atmosphere cues. In contrast to a bully, a dog with a play skill deficit does not direct his ministrations at a specific target dog and, very often, the play starts off normally but then deteriorates. In contrast to a Tarzan type, a dog

with a play skill deficit does not improve with carefully orchestrated off-leash socialization. Meet & greets may be normal – the problem emerges as play heats up.

### **Dog-Dog Resource Guarding**

Many beautifully socialized dogs will threaten or bite is approached while eating or while in possession of a coveted object such as bone, pig's ear, their owner, a stick or a stolen piece of laundry. Other dogs may guard sleeping locations such as their bed or get growly when you try to move them off the sofa. This behavior can be directed at humans, at dogs or at both. For information on how to handle resource guarding with it is directed at humans, refer to *Mine! A Guide to Resource Guarding in Dogs*, also in this series.

Dog to dog resource guarding is very common and can crop up in multi-dog households where they dogs are deeply bonded to each other, between dogs who are well acquainted and between perfect strangers.

Author **Jean Donaldson** has over 30 years experience in dog behavior and training. As the Founder and Director of the San Francisco SPCA Academy for Dog Trainers, Jean leads a new generation of dog trainers to better understanding of the research and science of canine behavior. Jean's award winning book, *The Culture Clash*, is a pivotal book in the dog trainer's library because it called into question many sacred assumptions about the origins of behavior and behavior problems. Jean lives in the San Francisco area with her Chow Chow, Buffy.