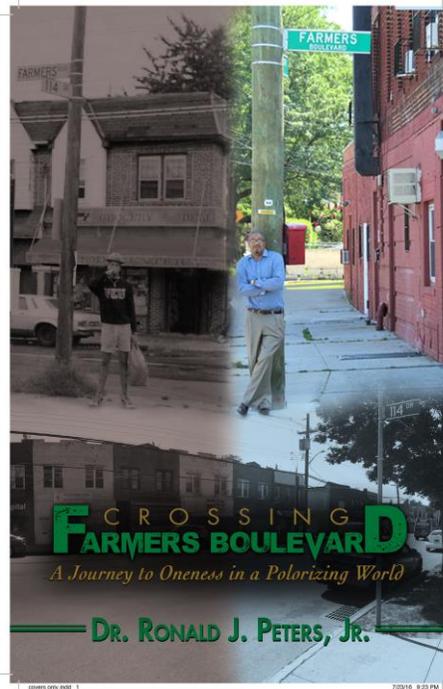


SAMPLE CHAPTER

CROSSING FARMERS BOULEVARD
A Journey to Oneness in a Polarizing World

BY RONALD J. PETERS, JR.



CHAPTER TWO

THE MAKING OF A DOMESTICATED DOG

For the strength of the Pack is the Wolf, and the strength of the Wolf is the Pack.

—[Rudyard Kipling](#), author of classic bestseller, *The Jungle Book*

Wolf versus Dog

Artificial selection is a term devised by the great scholar, Charles Darwin, to describe the evolutionary process by which plants and animals can be developed, usually through interference from man. Human handlers, trainers, or overseers manipulate the time, space, and place of animals and plants to develop and ultimately breed unnatural yet desired traits.¹ Until the twentieth century in the United States, humans and gray wolves were at the top of the food chain. However, over the last century humans have killed thousands of these dominant, orderly, strong, team workers and tactical hunters out of fear they may attack their loved ones or invade their environment. As a result, most of the wolves that survived were the most mentally and physically nonresistant and broken wolves in the pack. They were bred to recessively submit to man's orders, happily eat man's leftover scraps and bones for their meals, and even bark and alert their overseers when their own biologically predisposed cousins are autonomously attempting to feed themselves and pack members.

Through evolution and breeding of the weak, the species that evolved is today's domesticated dog, man's artificially made best friend. Take heart, I am a dog lover and have a canine companion I love dearly. Nevertheless, there are three major reasons why I find dogs to be very disloyal and overwhelmed with fight-or-flight, reptilian-brained characteristics.

First, whoever feeds a dog the most is the dog's master. Regardless of the number of years you spend caring for a dog, if someone else offers it more *food currency*, it will *take flight* and disloyally give it obedience and attention to the highest feeder. A dog can be "married" to a family for years; however, as soon as something looks prettier or more lucrative than its present source of existence, it is overwhelmed by the reptilian brain and thoughtlessly gives itself over to the moment.

Second, because of its fight-or-flight nature, the only real methodology that can be used to train a dog is fear. A human can give a dog all the love in the world, but the only thing that stops it from ultimately knocking over garbage cans, chewing leather shoes, humping children, or stealing food from those it perceives as tolerant, loving, or weak is the insurmountable fear it internalizes from its master's firm conditioning. Today, it is considered abusive to beat a dog into submission, so twenty-first-century overseers now use food currency or "bonuses" for appropriate behavior and high-pitched tormenting noises (screaming) and food deficiency (currency cutbacks) for maladjusted behaviors.

Finally, a dog can get all the training in the world, but it is still a very impulsive hunter. Wolves realize that working tactically with the pack is more efficient and produces much better profits than trying to keep all the earnings for themselves. While most dogs will bark and impulsively *take flight* after their prey, a lone gray wolf howls to draw attention to itself while its counterparts attack the prey from behind. Because most dogs want all the profits, they are subjected to a polarized lifestyle. While some are successful, most live a life of begging. During my developmental years from age two to five, while my parents worked, I was being trained to be a dog instead of a gray wolf.

Conditioning

After I was two years old, my parents felt it was time for my mother to return to the workforce. She worked as a keypunch operator, a data-processing job that is obsolete today due

¹ Gregory, T. R. (2009). Artificial selection and domestication: modern lessons from Darwin's enduring analogy. *Evolution: Education and Outreach* 2(1): 5-27.

to technological advances, and my father worked long hours as a corrections officer. Consequently, half of my weekdays were spent at the home of a community elder who my mother affectionately told me to call "Aunt." Regardless of the weather, my mother carried me in her arms to my non-biological aunt's big house near 175th Street and Linden Boulevard. As we approached, I always looked forward to ringing her black doorbell. For some reason, my gray-haired aunt always allowed me to see my mother leave through her screen door. My mother would wave and blow kisses as I cried profusely upon seeing her leave my sight.

As a man, I now understand the misconstrued message that I gave my mother by crying. While she may have thought I was crying because of her loving absence, it was the exact opposite. I was crying because of the doglike treatment that I would be given by this soulless individual in the hours to come. Although her house was huge, I was only allowed to explore two areas. I never saw the light of day or stepped foot outside to play. I was confined to this individual's open entry area near her front door and basement. Everyday my routine was exactly the same. I would play with my trains and toys for probably an hour, eat, and then get escorted to her dark, cold, moist, scary basement for my so-called nap. She would turn off all the lights, make me lie on a hard cot and tell me to go to sleep. She would immediately go upstairs and close the door.

Anything other than this elderly woman thinking I was asleep led to extremely venomous consequences. When I blindly walked my way up to the top of her staircase to get rescued from what I perceived as monsters coming to get me in the dark, she counter-punched me with a harsh opening of the door and a swift and irate summons back to my cot, "Go back down there, boy, and lay down and go to sleep."

When I followed her rules and called her from my cot to use the bathroom, she gave me a combination mental left hook for interrupting her soap operas, better known as "her stories" and a ferocious jab for asking her to walk downstairs to escort me to the only bathroom I was ever allowed to use, the one in the basement, followed by her intimidating stare down and body language that loudly told me while I was sitting on the toilet that I was playing games and wasting her time just to get the lights on.

When she did turn on the lights while *conducting her bi-hourly rounds* and observed that I was lying on her cot in my *prison cell* awake in the dark, she gave me a punch in the eyes with her fear-based screaming and ordered me to close my eyes and go to sleep. Usually about two hours before my mother arrived, I was allowed out of my dark cell and brought back to the northern side of the open entry area she had converted into a *chow hall*. Then, systematically, after my meal, I was escorted to the southern side of the same room for brief recreational time with my train and toys and, finally, staged by the front door for my mother's arrival. Every second until I saw my mother walk up the drive seemed like an eternity. I looked through that screen door like a watchdog, and when I saw her face, I was overwhelmed with excitement. To my mother, my display was an exhibition of our connection and love. But to me, it was a celebration of her freeing me from that dog breeder's kennel. Ironically, while my father was working as a corrections officer, his son was imprisoned for ten hours a day. While he was trying to make me into a dominant and healthy man, I was being trained to be a nonresistant and recessive dog.

Cohabitation

Some may view my "aunt" as an extremely negative individual. However, every perceived, selfish action that she enacted on me helped me to survive among the wolves of the world.

Eventually, I did not call her to take me to the bathroom. I learned to walk in the darkness to attain my goals. Through this experience, I learned to move forward in the face of darkness and extreme criticism. This skill was essential to my walk through the valleys I faced in life, resulting in my acquisition of what many perceived as inconceivable personal goals.

Eventually when my aunt flicked on her lights to conduct her rounds, I feigned sleep in order to show compliance and avoid attack. This skill proved very important during the 1980s crack epidemic when thieves raided my house and looked me over while taking my belongings. It also proved useful when I was on a hijacked train full of impetuous reptilian young men stabbing and robbing innocent people. I realized from those experiences that acting like I was “down for the count” and “already served up” may have saved my life. After all, the courageous gray wolf was nearly terminated and the compliant sleeping dog exists in abundance.

My placement in the dark as a child also taught me to use my time wisely. I always felt that I had a higher level of emotional and spiritual intelligence compared to most people my age. Today, my wife is amazed at my level of intuition or the development of the right hemisphere of my brain. When I see a person, I can actually see “right through them” from the start. This gift was developed in my aunt’s dark basement, a place where I had no choice but to meditate and connect with my inner self.

About this same time period, my father graciously gave me a dog of my own. I named him Chippy. We had great times together. Because most of the children in my community were either teens or existed under reptilian conditions, other than my younger cousin Gordon, my dog was my only friend. He was a medium-sized dog that never got his fluffy hair cut. He was not fully domesticated, living most of his life in the backyard chained to my corroded, metal swing set that was missing a swing. Although most of the time he was relegated to urinating, defecating, and walking around in the same fifteen-foot area that my father allowed him to explore, when I was older I was eventually required to “go walk the dog.” Because of my age (time) and the environmental confines of his chain (space) in the backyard (place), usually Chippy feverishly walked me.

While walking in our neighborhood, he would often pull toward other canines that were usually being walked by their older teenage handlers. We would then go through a process that would eventually lead to one of two polarizing outcomes. First, my dog and the other dog, regardless of their size, would sniff one other. Then, because most of the dogs we encountered were the bigger and more intimidating dogs of the time, Doberman pinschers or German shepherds, the young handler would instigate a fight by saying something similar to, “My dog can fuck your little dog up.” I would counter with, “Okay, we will see what happens.”

From this process, I learned a lot about immature dog handlers. Regardless of age, most immature handlers with perceived intellectual or physical advantages can be very careless and sloppy with the opposition they select for their fighters. Wise handlers would never put their fighters into the ring without conducting an extensive audit of their fighters’ or the competitions’ strengths and weaknesses.

Because of prior research, most good handlers usually win before the first round of the bout. While some journalists and critics devalue handlers who do not allow their fighters to go up against certain opponents, I have great admiration for those who respect their research and place emphasis on the longitudinal health and welfare of their fighter’s career compared with the “financial currency” they will receive from one prize fight.

I was once told that a true predator selects the time, place, and space that they attack their prey. The only thing an individual controls is his or her own opportunity for victimization. An

exceptional handler is extremely watchful, tactical, and patient. In fact, most do not allow a champion fighter to engage in mega-bouts until the opponent signs off on the time (usually an age when the opponent is past his/her prime), place (usually a boxing arena that provides the most money for the handler and fighter), and space (an area most comfortable and fan-friendly for the fighter). Good handlers know that controlling these three variables gives them a great advantage and protects them and their fighters from both financial and physical harm.

For every overpowering Goliath, there is a little David with the heart of a champion. Consequently, the greatest handlers and fighters are extremely unassuming in their preparation and training regimen for any fight. In addition, they have an understanding that the more you allow your dominant fighter to battle, the greater the odds of meeting a small-pawed, inconspicuous dog that possesses some kind of rare fighting gene that makes him an undefeated champion among his peers.

Time after time after the initial sniffing, an ill-prepared young handler in my neighborhood would initiate a confrontation. Because I was younger and my dog was smaller, they wanted to “dog us out” from the start. Nonetheless, their botched attempts to bully us always resulted in regret—for them. After the first round of sniffing, my little champion delivered the opposite outcome for the fight they arrogantly initiated. By the start of the second round, he was either sexually or physically on top of the situation. It made me very happy to hear the once antagonistic, older, and now humbled handlers beg their perceived younger and weaker victim: “Get that fucking dog off of my dog.” They had no idea that they were our prey all along. In fact, after engaging their big dogs in battle and getting them injured, some would say they were going to “fuck me up” when they saw me later. But as a masterful handler, I controlled my “opportunity for victimization” by always walking in my community with what they grew to call my “crazy fucking dog.”

Sometimes I would kick the broken beer bottles off the corner of an abandoned lot and Chippy and I would race. He would give me, and sometimes Gordon, a head start. I would yell, “Go, Chippy!” And like the champion he was, he would beat us to the finish line almost every time.

Sadly, sometimes at night he would whine and cry from being chained and lonely. I would come down the stairs, pull over a rusting metal rocking chair next to him, allowing him to briskly jump into my lap. To comfort him, I would sing the same song over and over again, a song that I thought was magical and full of hope, the theme song from the Disney World commercials, “When you wish upon a star, makes no difference who you are, anything your heart desires, will come to you.” He loved it and, most of the time, went right to sleep. There were times, however, when he requested several encores and after several walks up and down, up and down, up and down from the bedroom to the rocking chair, my patience and empathy were overpowered by my need for sleep. Out of fatigue and based on what I was taught, I would invoke fear-based conditioning toward my only friend by throwing rocks that I gathered during my last encore performance from my bedroom window, yelling at him like my “aunt” did me from the top of her stairs. “Shut up and go to sleep, Chippy!”

Later in life, my best friend got sick. I wanted my parents to take him to a veterinarian, but I knew that they didn’t have the money or value him enough to save him. Consequently, I did not ask them for empathy and watched my best friend spit up blood until he eventually died. Although I was devastated, when my father took me outside the next day to talk about Chippy’s death, I knew not to cry or share my inner thoughts because that would show weakness. When he

asked how I felt, I just replied, “He was a good dog, Dad. I am okay.” My dog fought dogs, lived like a dog, was treated like a dog most of the time, and died like a dog.

In this period of my life, I gained the intuition to see through the intentions of many handlers and to walk in the dark. I learned to avoid confrontation and to avoid being arrogant. Most importantly, I have learned that in this dog-eat-dog world fraught with avoidable or unavoidable opportunities for victimization, everyone sooner or later gets “dogged out.” However, based on the universal law of polarity, we must humbly recognize that under the right conditions or teachings, we are also capable of “dogging out” God’s creations. One of my greatest regrets in life was throwing rocks at my best friend just because he wanted to get cuddled and comforted. It reminds me of myself wanting to come upstairs from my aunt’s dark basement. Based on my recollection of these events, I now understand that I have no right to stand in judgment of anyone. All I can do now is ask God to continue to guide me through the time, space, and place where I have been planted to grow.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	xv
CHAPTER ONE	
Time, Space, and Matter	4
CHAPTER TWO	
The Making of a Domesticated Dog	12
CHAPTER THREE	
Farmers Boulevard—The Place and Space of My Formative Years	21
CHAPTER FOUR	
Intermediate School—Parasitic Relationships	41
CHAPTER FIVE	
Hillcrest High School—The Miles Davis Years	65
CHAPTER SIX	
Virginia Commonwealth University—The Years of Improvisation	96
CHAPTER SEVEN	
The Graduate—Understanding the Power of Marketability	135
CHAPTER EIGHT	
The Doctoral Student—The Great Years as a Survivalist	153
CHAPTER NINE	
Doctor of Public Health—The Period of Pathological Justifications	173
CHAPTER TEN	
The One Won—No More Polarity	209
Author's Self-Defined Glossary	218
About the Author	234