Social Aspect of Dog Fighting

Orhan Yılmaz*, Fusun Coskun2 and Mehmet Ertugrul3
Ardahan University, Vocational High School of Technical Sciences, 75000, Ardahan, Turkey

2Ahi Evran University, Faculty of Agriculture, Department of Animal Science, 40100, Kirsehir, Turkey
3Ankara University, Faculty of Agriculture, Department of Animal Science, 06110, Ankara, Turkey

*Corresponding author: zileliorhan@gmail.com

Abstract

Aim of this paper is to revise social aspect of dog fighting. For centuries usually dog fighting has been principally enjoyed by men. Unfortunately, the popularity of this activity has increased. There are three types of dog fighters including street fighters, hobbyists, and professionals. First type of fights is often spontaneous, unorganized, conducted for money, drugs, or bragging rights. At second type, dogs are used for supplemental income and entertainment purposes. The last types are professionals. Professionals breed generations of skilled "game dogs" and take a great pride in their dogs' lineage. Those fighters make a tremendous amount of money charging stud fees to breed their champions. In USA professional fighters also use trade journals to discuss recent fights and to advertise the sale of training equipment and puppies. There are people who promote or participate in dog fighting from every community and background. It is always asked that why people get involved in dog fighting. There are many reasons people are attracted to dog fighting. The most basic is greed. In additional the attraction lies in using the animals as an extension of themselves to fight their battles for them and demonstrate their strength and prowess. The appeal simply seems to come from the sadistic enjoyment of a brutal spectacle.

Key words: Canis familiaris, Pit Bull, blood sport, illegal sports, animal fight

Introduction

Domestic livestock animals serve humanity by giving plenty of products including meat, milk, egg, honey, floss silk, wool, fur, skin, feather, intestine, work, amusement etc (Ertugrul et al. 1993). Moreover some animals have been and continue to be used for fighting by some mentally abnormal people. In various regions of the world there are popular animal fighting events including fighting of bull, camel, cock, cricket, dog, horse, partridge and ram (Anon 2014a). For centuries usually dog fighting has been principally enjoyed by men. Unfortunately, the popularity of this activity has increased. There was little initial interference from the law, since it was possible to fight two dogs in any hollow or shed without attracting much attention, for dogs fight with relatively little noise. They can easily be removed after the fight, carried away in sacks if their condition was likely to draw suspicion (Drable 2014). For example in
USA dog attacks and bites are not so common (Hussain 2005). Although more than 20 fatalities happened each year in USA because of dog biting, there was no report that a man did during dog fight, but the dog. Maybe the 20 fatalities because of dog biting seem as tragic but at least 8,000 humans were killed by other human each year which was 200 times more than dog biting deaths (Lockwood 1995).

Types of Fighters

There are three types of dog fighters including street fighters, hobbyists, and professionals. Hobbyists and professionals often decry the techniques street fighters use to train their dogs. Such techniques include starving, drugging, and physically abusing the dog. Street fighters are frequently associated with gang activities. They fight dogs over insults, turf invasions, or simple taunts like "My dog can kill your dog". These type of fights are often spontaneous, unorganized, conducted for money, drugs, or bragging rights. Urban street fighters generally have several dogs chained in back-yards, often behind privacy fences, or in basements or garages. The dogs are often found by police and animal control officers either dead or dying after a street fight. Due to the spontaneity of a street fight, they are very difficult to respond to unless reported immediately.

The second types of fighters are hobbyists. They fight dogs for supplemental income and entertainment purposes. They typically have one or more dogs participating in several organized fights and operate primarily within a specific geographic network. Hobbyists are also informed with one another and tend to return to predetermined fight venues repeatedly.

The last types are professionals. Professionals breed generations of skilled "game dogs" and take a great pride in their dogs' lineage. Those fighters make a tremendous amount of money charging stud fees to breed their champions. They also earn the fees and winnings they collect for fighting them. Professionals also tend to own a large number of dogs which are sometimes 50 dogs or more. In USA professional fighters also use trade journals to discuss recent fights and to advertise the sale of training equipment and puppies such as Your Friend and Mine, Game Dog Times, The American Warrior, and The Pit Bull Chronicle. Some fighters operate on a national or even international level within highly secret networks (Gibson 2005, Ensminger 2010, Boucher 2011, Anon 2014b,c).

Law

Dog fighting is an insidious underground organized crime that deserves much legal and political scrutiny (Gibson 2005). In the USA dog fighting generates revenue from stud fees, admission fees and gambling. It is also a felony in all 50 U.S. states as well as the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Worldwide, several countries have banned dog fighting, but it is still legal in some countries like
Japan, Honduras, and parts of Russia (Gibson 2005, Anon 2014b,c). In the world there were some cases about dog fighting. For example Michael Vick who was one of the most popular football players in the USA, was convicted of a federal felony for his involvement in an illegal dogfighting ring. After serving 19 months in prison, Vick returned to the NFL as a starting quarterback and has since become a leading campaigner for antidogfighting efforts (Broad 2013, Iliopoulou 2014).

**Sociology**

Sex, masculinity and the display of animal aggression are the basic ingredients of all illegal blood sports. Generally dogfighters have extensive criminal backgrounds, but they are still highly respected in the local community (Kalof and Talor 2007). In the USA dog fighters are rather defenders of a tradition that has existed for centuries and that has been part of American culture from the very beginning, protectors of a type of dog that will fight to the death, a dog that will valiantly defend its master after the liberals have taken all his guns away. They call themselves “dogmen” and honor the bloodlines of their champions, exchange bronze plaques with crude images of dogs, tell stories of dogs that fought a hundred times, two hundred times. Most of dog fighters are patriots, often proud to be veterans, abandoned by their country for their participation in unpopular wars, true Americans who must live behind barbed-wire fences and gates, down driveways with more “No Trespassing” and “Enter At Your Own Risk” signs than anyone can count, remnants of another time, believers in the righteousness of their cause for whom you are an enemy, always have been and always will be (Ensminger 2013).

A study fished that what attracts men to dog fights. In the study 31 dogmen and 14 dog fights attendees were investigated in the Southern United States by considering of masculinity and class immobility in dogfights (Massey 2012). In most the countries participants and spectators at dog fights are a diverse group. While some might typify dog fighting as a symptom of urban decay, not every dogfighter is economically disadvantaged. There are people who promote or participate in dog fighting from every community and background. Audiences contain businessmen, lawyers, judges and teachers and other upstanding community leaders drawn in by the excitement and thrill of the fight (Anon 2014b). It is always asked that why people get involved in dog fighting? There are many reasons people are attracted to dog fighting. The most basic is greed. For example in USA major dog fight raids have resulted in seizures of more than $500,000, and it is not unusual for $20,000 or $30,000 to change hands in a single fight. Stud fees and the sale of pups from promising bloodlines can also bring in thousands of dollars. In additional the attraction lies in using the animals as an extension of themselves to fight their battles for them and demonstrate their strength and prowess. However, when a dog loses, this can cause the owner of
the dog to lose not only money, but status, and may lead to brutal actions against the dog. The appeal simply seems to come from the sadistic enjoyment of a brutal spectacle (Anon 2014c).

Conclusion

It is too difficult to understand that some people defend dog fighting. According to those abnormal people dog fights are necessary and should be carried out (Gasimzadeh 2014). This kind of people is rare in community but they are always present in the community and always will be. The most important thing to prevent dog fighting is inform related police or gendarme forces. Also penalties should be more increased.

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References