DOG BEHAVIOUR DIPLOMA COURSE

BRITISH COLLEGE OF CANINE STUDIES

"How a dog behaves at any given time in his life is as a result of a constant and fluid interplay between his genetic potential and his environment"

Dr. Bruce Fogle – Author of 'A Dog's Mind'

INTRODUCTION

This course is designed as a practical guide to the subject of dog psychology, natural dog behaviour and how dogs learn. Hopefully it will provide an insight into the world through the eyes of your pet dog.

Only with better owners can we make better dogs. But what is it to be a good dog owner? We are all, unfortunately, far too aware of stories and news reports of 'frenzied dog attacks', children and adults alike, involved in horrific incidents, seemingly unpredictable behaviour from once trusted and loved pets. So what's going wrong?

With 'dog bite' cases reportedly on the increase, and rescue centres bursting at the seams with unwanted, out of control animals with behaviour problems or issues, now seems a good time to get educated on the subject of dogs and the varying opinions on the way they view the world. Once we understand our dogs a little better and realise what they need from us on a physical and psychological level, we can begin to realise exactly why they do what they do at any given time. Previous 'unpredictable' behaviour, put into context, becomes perfectly predictable and understandable. In fact, once you know how your dog thinks, you'll know what he's going to do before he does it, and why.

The origin of this course is the 'owner training' that the French authorities decided in 2008, was compulsory for anyone wishing to own particular breeds of dog that had been deemed 'dangerous'. Those breeds are: Pit Bull/American Staffordshire Terrier, Tosa Inu, Mastiff, and Rottweiler.

Whilst the subject of 'dangerous' breeds is debatable, the education of every day owners can never be a bad thing.

The world of dog psychology and behaviour is not reserved for those who make a living advising owners of 'problem dogs'. It should not be limited to television shows such as 'The Dog Whisperer', 'It's Me Or The Dog' or 'Dog Borstal'. It is the duty of every dog owner to learn the basics of what makes their pet tick.

Devised by a practising Behaviourist for every day dog owners and anyone who works or has regular contact in a professional capacity with dogs i.e kennel assistants, dog sitters, groomers etc, this course is unique for many reasons, least of all being the first of its kind and the only dog behaviour diploma course to offer a 'practical' element. It is also the first course to study and consider both Positive Reward Training and its application in the human-dog relationship, and the more physical world of dog behaviour between dogs.

Find yourself immersed in the debate of topics such as pack structure, appeasement societies, the need for an authority figure, and the relevant scientific studies. Far from a course that exists to merely educate from one perspective, this course will challenge everything you thought you knew about dogs and dog psychology, calling on the work of Fisher, Scott and Fuller, Bruce Fogle, Cesar Millan, Ray and Lorna Coppinger, Stephen Budiansky, Ian Dunbar and many more leading experts.

The other subject you might learn something about whilst getting to grips with your dog, is you! Once you realise what you may need to provide for your dog, the next question is 'can you do it?' You will be forced to look at your own behaviour, how you interact with your dog, with other people, your general energy, mood, how you carry yourself and your body language.

On completion, the student will…

Have learned the difference between how dogs learn, and how dogs behave.

Have a greater understanding of both dog training and dog psychology.

Have examined the most recent studies and debates in the world of dog behaviour and training, and encouraged to formulate their own opinion based on experience and research.

Have a better understanding of key subjects such as: socialisation, communication, the origins of the dog and evolution.

Have a better understanding of the importance of the role of the owner, human moods, temperament, personality, morality and their affects on the dog.

Be able to recognise key body language, gestures and signals of the dog.

Be able to diagnose classic behavioural problems and put their new knowledge of dog training and natural dog behaviour into effect for possible basic solutions.

Have a greater understanding of what is required for a dog to be happy, healthy, well behaved, and mentally balanced. In essence, what it truly is to be a good dog owner.

Course Content:

INTRODUCTION

UNIT ONE - The History of Dogs

UNIT TWO - Genetics of the Dog's Mind, Nature or Nurture? The Brain, The Senses

UNIT THREE - Breed Difference - Are all dogs the same?

UNIT FOUR – Hormones, Health & Diet – Their Influence on Behaviour

UNIT FIVE - Communication, Pheromones, Body Language

UNIT SIX - Early Learning, Mum and Pack's Influence, Socialization, Habituation

UNIT SEVEN - How Dogs Learn, Classical Conditioning, Operant Conditioning, Discipline etc.

UNIT EIGHT - Social Structure of the Dog, New Understandings Examined - Dominance & Pack Structure

UNIT NINE – 'Punishment' & Dogs

UNIT TEN - Aggression In All Its Forms

UNIT ELEVEN - Fears, Phobias & Anxiety

UNIT TWELVE - The Owner Influence, Energy, Personality

DIPLOMA AWARDED ON SUCCESSFUL AND SATISFACTORY COMPLETION OF ALL UNITS

Email to: coursework@britishcollegeofcaninestudies.com

UNIT ONE

THE HISTORY OF DOGS

Whilst we can state from the offset that we know more than ever now that dogs are not mini wolves, there is no denying the origin of dogs, and so a study of wolves is inevitable. There still remains a great deal that the dog inherited, certain drives and instincts, and to ignore this would be ignorant.

Some believe that the domestic dog, Canis Familiaris, is the descendant of a now extinct European, dingo like wild dog. However, no fossil of this animal has ever been found, and all genetic, behavioural and anatomic evidence firmly supports the belief that our dogs are descended from a small sub-species of wolf. The wolf, Canis Lupus, has the same number of chromosomes as our domestic dog (seventy eight). This is different from other canids, like jackals and foxes.

For generations, those studying wolves have commented on their child like quality, their playfulness. Adolph Murie describes how adult timber wolves will suddenly jump out of hiding places and scare each other for no apparent reason, other than play. They bring things to each other, especially food, and will prance and parade around with sticks in their mouths. Sound familiar?

This is the genetic, sensory, morphological, hormonal and evolutionary root stock of the dog, and to understand a dog's mind, it's essential to understand how we came from wolves, to the hundreds of breeds we have now.

THE WAY OF THE WOLF

The great John Fisher describes the wolf in his book 'Think Dog', as being a pack animal that lives within a very strong social structure where there is an established hierarchy. The Alpha wolf leads the pack. Contrary to popular opinion, he does not rule the pack by regularly showing aggression. His position of authority is maintained by constant displays of deference and acceptance from the other pack members. Aggression is only the order of the day when along comes a challenger! But these challenges are rare and on the whole, the pack lives in harmony.

Research has shown conflicting results. For some it has demonstrated that Feral dogs live in much the same way and exhibit remarkably similar behaviour as the wolf. Therefore, it was safely assumed that the dogs in our living rooms, if born wild and left to their own devices, would be living in much the same way, and by the same pack rules as their ancestor, the wolf. But recent studies by Ray and Lorna Coppinger have shaken

things up somewhat. In their book ‘Dogs’, they write about their observations of stray packs of dogs around the world. The dogs behave much more like scavengers than hunters, and don’t have the same structure at all as a wolf pack. This is covered in depth in later units when we examine the latest research, ideas and theories surrounding such issues as dominance and pack structure.

Wolves are very territorial, each pack marking out a territory and defending it. Despite food being so readily available for our domestic pets, our dogs cannot help but obey their hard-wired programming, their echoes from the past. We all know dogs are territorial and mark and defend in much the same way.

The body posture and body language of wolves and dogs is practically identical. Most of us can read the obvious signs of fear, aggression, pleasure and submission, but we lack the ability to read the more subtle signs transmitted dog to dog. We tend to place our own interpretations on what our dog is trying to say. Some see dominance where others see expectation, playfulness, excitement or friendliness.

It becomes even more difficult for the dogs of today to communicate effectively when their tail has been docked due to breed standard, as decided somewhere by someone in their infinite wisdom, that ‘this’ is how ‘that’ dog should look. This is not the same as genuine working dogs having tails docked to prevent damage, and thankfully, docking for aesthetic reasons is no longer widespread, but purists will still find a way.

So what can we take from knowing the origin of our dogs? Well we know that it is a fact, however hard we try to genetically modify or engineer breed characteristic, size and shape, a huge part of the wolf will always remain an unalterable instinct.

Prey drive and being 'predators' is extremely hard wired in many breeds, and many dogs are permanently in hunting mode when out on a walk. This chase instinct can cause a variety of issues, from chasing cars and joggers, to not being good with other dogs, cats, or anything that could be perceived as potential prey. On the flip side, dogs with a strong prey drive that don't get this psychological need satisfied somewhere somehow, can develop anxiety, frustration, and aggression issues. It's certainly something to keep in mind when rescuing or adopting ex racing Greyhounds for example.

Understanding what we can change in dogs, and what we have to work with is vital if we want to get to the bottom of certain behavioural problems.

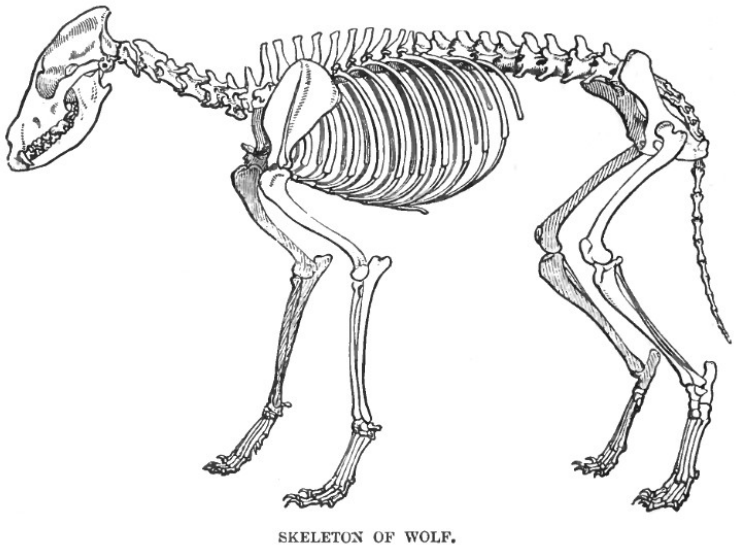
HOW DID WE GET FROM WOLF TO YORKSHIRE TERRIER?

In Israel, a 12,000 year old skeleton of a man was found with its arm wrapped around the skeleton of a four to five month old dog pup. Ancient civilisations around the globe depict dogs in pictures and carvings. But it's generally accepted that dogs have been what we call domesticated, for around 20,000 years.

We've been breeding dogs for over 1000 generations, but back then, 'breeds' were more like 'types' of dog. The Egyptians worshipped Anubis, one of their Gods – a dog. There is a lot of debate over when the earliest fossil evidence of an animal that is without doubt a dog, dates from. A date generally accepted by most is around 14,000 years ago. Skeletons from this period found all over the Near East, have a shortened jaw and crowded teeth, definitely setting them apart from wolves.

Two thousand years later, the agricultural revolution begins, with the cultivation of wheat and barley. Another two thousand years pass, by which time goats and sheep are being herded into great flocks. Permanent villages and farms coincide with an explosion of the dog population, spreading across the world. By 7000 years ago, dogs are everywhere.

In his book The Truth About Dogs, Stephen Budiansky suggests that the dog broke away from the wolf genetically and as a separate species, around 100,000 years ago. He also suggests that far from us enslaving the dog to do our bidding, it was the dog that chose us. They loitered around camp fires, begged for food, and we literally couldn't get rid of them. And they've had us twisted around their little paws ever since.



SKELETON OF WOLF.

Wolf Skeleton – identical to dogs

But dogs aren't wolves. Even when socialised with or reared by humans from puppyhood, wolves retain a high and dangerous degree of unpredictability. Erik Zimen, a German Biologist, carried out extensive studies of wolf behaviour, both in captivity and the wild. Interestingly, he found that the captive wolves with the closest relationships with humans, were by far the most unpredictable. Anfa, a year old female, was completely socialised with humans and greeted familiar people with all the affection we might receive from our own dogs. But on several occasions and without any warning, she launched terrifying attacks on people she had just greeted.

Today, similar unpredictable behaviour can still be seen in trendy wolf hybrids and other less domesticated breeds, particularly when the victim is running, crying or stumbling, triggering a hard wired predatory response.

So in spite of the dangers, did humans have a very close relationship with the original wolf? They may certainly have scavenged camp sites and occasionally shared the warmth of the camp fire. A sub-population that became less fearful and more submissive would have gained an edge in the battle of evolution. In fact, human and wolf remains being found together go back as far as an astonishing 400,000 years ago.

Genetic evidence using DNA probes has shown that wolf and human shared common ground for many tens of thousands of years, but that these 'proto-dogs' may have become genetically isolated from wolves long before the 14,000 years ago that archaeological evidence suggests.

So: long before dogs became dogs physically so that archaeologists could tell them apart as separate species, sub species of wolves were beginning to change psychologically and on a genetic level, evolving in order to sustain a relationship with us humans.

Anubis - we've worshipped our dogs for quite a while!

DNA also discredits various theories that at some point in the dog's ancestry, in order to produce the huge diversity of dogs and all the breeds we see today, wolves and jackals had to have cross bred. The case is closed and we know for sure that the wolf and only the wolf is the direct progenitor of the dog.

For more than 100,000 years, these 'proto dogs' chose to hang around with humans of their own volition, and the fact that their appearance remained unchanged for this long proves that we had not yet begun to intervene or influence them in any way.
Amazingly, we don't need to go back in time to witness this first relationship between dog and human. It can still be seen today. Raymond Coppinger has made a life long study of dogs and has observed villages in South America, Africa and Asia, where free ranging scavenger dogs still exist. They do not kill or molest livestock, they will run away from humans if they feel directly threatened but otherwise show no particular fear of people. They will occasionally beg for food but for most of the time, forage for themselves and live almost exclusively off the waste of the villages. They are not owned by anyone and are definitely not pets.

It started simply enough. Those dogs that had a tendency to bark more, were selected to guard. The faster, silent ones, were selected to hunt. With our knowledge today, it's easier to breed selectively for things like temperament. The Pyrenean Mountain Dog is a classic example. Bred for hundreds of years as a guard dog of mountain sheep, breeding in the last 30-40 years has made the breed more acceptable as a companion animal with a more laid back behaviour.

We started with guard dogs, hunters, herders, and it soon developed, certainly within the last 200 years, to dogs for flushing, pointing, cornering, retrieving, or sitting quietly in pink bejewelled handbags.

Exterior influences like climate, geography, predators, and parasites all led to different breeds of dog emerging. During this evolution, it wasn't just the looks of the wolf that began to disappear in some breeds.

Behaviour was being naturally modified. Dogs became more fertile than wolves. A she wolf has one reproductive cycle a year, compared with most dog breeds (except the Basenji) which has two. Dogs reach puberty before wolves, have larger litters, and the socialisation period of dog pups is longer, making it easier for us to train them.

In almost all breeds of dog, except perhaps for the German Shepherd and similar, we have taken the basic characteristics of the wolf and accentuated them to the point where our dogs are now 'better' than wolves at a specific trait. Bloodhounds for example have far better tracking abilities than the wolf. Salukis and Greyhounds are faster. Terriers tend to be more dominant-aggressive. Border Collies are better at herding and chasing. German Shepherds and Rottweilers are better at guarding.

Of course, this is generalisation. Mrs Smith from Bournemouth need not write in to inform us of her beautifully behaved and submissive Terrier. There is more to come on breed difference, and it doesn't hurt to know something about the breed we're dealing with, but every dog needs evaluating on its own merit, and even generalised differences can be seen within breeds depending on location/geography, inbreeding and such factors.

In short, human intervention along with evolution has led to certain traits being improved on while other traits have been sacrificed. In changing dogs like this through breeding, we have altered not just how dogs look, but how they think.

However, the notion that some modern day breeds have lineage that go all the way back to the pharaohs or the war dogs of Roman legions, is largely fantasy. Those lovers of pure breeds will be a little disappointed to learn that most of the 400 plus breeds we have today, actually started off life no longer than a couple of hundred years ago. It wasn't until the 1870's that Kennel Clubs were founded and began to keep certain types and breeds 'pure'. The notion that Salukis have a distinctive blood line all of their own that goes all the way back to the Pharaohs is a fallacy. Yes, there were dogs that looked like

Salukis or Mastiffs in ancient Rome or ancient Egypt, and these dogs may well be the ancestors of these breeds, but they were NOT Salukis or Mastiffs. Some even theorize that such breeds were later created to resemble the dogs seen in ancient paintings.

The earliest indication of dogs breaking off into clearly different body types and behaviour types (not breeds) is between 4000 and 3000 B.C. Something resembling a Greyhound or Saluki showed up in ancient Egypt and western Asia. By Roman times, there were six distinct types:

Villatici – house or guardian dogs

Pastorales Pecuarii – shepherd dogs

Venatici – sporting dogs

Pugnaces and Bellicosi – war dogs

Nares Sagaces – scent hounds

Pedibus Celeres – sight hounds

A few hundred years ago, categories developed into:

any large dog being called a Mastiff

any small vermin hunting dog being called a Terrier

Foxhounds

Sheepdogs,

Pointers

Retrievers

In fact, and not wanting to upset Kennel Club and pure breed fans, no breed has a breed unique genetic makeup. The same DNA sequences in a Siberian Husky for example, can be found in the Chow Chow, English Setter, Border Terrier, Icelandic Sheepdog, Japanese Spitz, Rottweiler, Papillon, Poodle and Mexican Hairless. The DNA family tree is nothing like the family tree we have of dogs more typically based on appearance. The

only breeds that have anything like a distinctive and ancient DNA origin, are some of the Norwegian breeds.

The dingo has a mystique all of its own. But genetically, it's nothing special or unique. There have been romantic notions that the dingo is a breed all of its own and maybe even the missing link between wolf and dog. Yet the arrival of the dingo in Australia seems to not be that long ago at all. The oldest fossils ever found date back to only 1500

B.C. We know for a fact that it certainly didn't exist 12,000 years ago, when Tazmania broke away from mainland Australia, as no dog fossils have ever been found there.

The Dingo. Not the missing link.

The point then, is that the origin of nearly all breeds we have today, was a genetically diverse pot of mixed breeds. Had any of them diverged into a separate breed long ago, they would now have a distinct genetic makeup, setting them apart from other breeds. This is not the case.

It was with the establishment of breed clubs in the late nineteenth century that distinct breeds began to emerge.

In 1800, a British writer could list just fifteen specific breeds in Britain.

By 1900 it was more than 60 breeds.

Today, there are more than 400 breeds around the world.

Congratulations on reaching the end of unit one. Now complete the questions and email to coursework@britishcollegeofcaninestudies.com

UNIT ONE QUESTIONS

1. **The wolf is a pack animal. What does it mean to be a pack animal?**

2. **We know that dogs are not wolves, but what can we learn from knowing that dogs originate from wolves? What common behaviours that we see in our pet dogs might this knowledge help explain?**

3. **How old is the earliest fossil evidence of dogs?**

4. **Explain the possible evolutionary path from wolf to dog and their relationship with humans? Did they choose us or did we choose them?**

5. **What external influences listed in the unit text led to different breeds or types of dog emerging?**

6. **Is it true to say some modern day breeds were in existence in ancient Rome or Egypt?**

7. **By Roman times, how many distinct types of dog existed? List them.**

8. **What is the truth, on a DNA level, behind what we call pure breeds?**

9. **Try to find out with your own research about a British writer who wrote one of the earliest books on dog breeds available in Great Britain in 1800. List one of the 15 breeds listed in his book and name the book.**

10. **How do we know the dingo was not in Australia any longer than 12,000 years ago?**