



David M. Valadez  
Senshin Center  
Dojocho

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## **Natural Offenses** by David M. Valadez

Today, “natural offenses” are all the rage in the martial arts. However, isn’t this just the wheel being reinvented all over again?

A. If natural offenses are thought to exist, then is it not right to believe that natural defenses also exist? By default, the answer must be, “yes.” If natural offenses are the apex of martial practicality, are not then natural defenses the apex of that same martial practicality? Again, by default the answer must be, “yes.” Does not such reasoning then lead to a martial stalemate and NOT a martial advantage (as is usually claimed by proponents of “natural offenses”)? By default, the answer would again have to be, “yes.”

B. If natural offenses are determined by that which comes naturally, by which we mean, “that which comes without the implementation of a given culture,” then are we not already in possession of such weapons? By default, the answer would have to be, “yes.” Why then is there a need for training of any kind? By this reasoning, there is no need. Or, if we say, “Yes, we are in possession of such natural weapons, but we are not in possession of a natural access to such weapons - hence the need for training,” do we not have to ask then, “How natural are these weapons?” Answer: “Not very natural.”

C. If we accept that natural weapons are present a priori but equally posit that our access to such weapons is not, do we not have to admit then that training should consist primarily of the cultivation of access and not of matters of execution? Rationally, we would have to say, “it should.” Then how are we to understand the near total lack of focus on access within such schools that partake in this line of reasoning? We cannot - we are looking at a contradiction in reasoning and practice.

D. If we wish to avoid a martial stalemate, and stay clear from any type of contradiction in thought and practice, are we not forced to concede that martial practicality can only come from a process that involves both refinement (of what is natural or has been made natural) and a cultivation of access to said degrees of refinement? Logically, we must answer, “yes.” However, if we answer “yes,” are we not simply in the same old realm of traditional martial arts? Answer: “Yes.”

Conclusion: The myth of natural offenses and defenses is no truth of martial practicality, nor is it an antithesis to traditional martial arts. Rather, it is a new sales pitch aimed toward a specific market made up of folks that are habitually deceived by the quick fix and the easily gained.