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Hand to hand, knife vs knife, is bullshit

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This Southnarc article is too true to resist reposting. It's about the myth of proportional armament. I'll add to it and include the myth of proportional initiative.

You won't find yourself [similarly armed](#) as the Threat. And if you are, you're unlikely to find yourself holding the [initiative](#). How do I know? Because otherwise the Threat would've chosen an easier target. Does your training reflect these facts?

Article taken from [StickGrappler.net](#)

The Myth of Proportional Armament

by Southnarc (aka Craig Douglas)

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Usually when one takes training or instruction what they are receiving is an instructor's vision of a confrontation and the means to prevent or manage such. A lot can be gleaned about someone's reference points to the realities of self defense, by examining the methods they espouse. This is important from the standpoint of insuring that you are indeed training in a system that matches the realities of the way life or death struggle flows.

One of the biggest areas that I see instructors lacking is in their belief that two individuals in a confrontation will be equally armed. They may acknowledge that disparate force confrontations are common, but does their instruction reflect this? An example:

Many proponents of knife work teach a system that is predicated on maintaining range and cutting an appendage as it comes into one's protective circle. The next thing that follows is usually a statement such as "If you can maintain range, you should since you don't want close with his blade". Now let's stop right there and think about that for a moment.

What this implies is that he has a knife and you have a knife, and both of you have been able to get said knives in hand and are at range. How often does it really happen this way folks? In my experience, not very often.

So let's address some things, point by point.

Real bad guys aren't stupid. Most will not make the decision to attack unless the odds are in their favor. They will usually have weapon and a friend or two. They will not approach someone whom they perceive as a hardened target, for the most part. This is where not looking like food comes into

play. Your job is to be alert and be able to see a threat before it gets within your protective sphere. If they do make the decision to attack they have to get close to do so. There may be a ruse involved and some deliberate misdirection. They are certainly not going to let you see a weapon in their hand and give you the time to run. So if it's probable that the bad guy is not going to let you see his weapon at range, then why do we always see systems and methods that are teaching ranged combatives where the good guy and bad guy are equally armed? Would both allow the other to do so?

So at this point what can we do to accelerate the curve of advantage?

If you see a threat and acknowledge it as such, it's probably a good idea to at least covertly establish the grip on your tool of choice, be that a firearm, a knife, or OC. We want to do this

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because establishing grip on the tool is the most tenuous part of any drawstroke to bring any tool into play. This is due to the fact that the majority of our tools in this day and age have to be kept concealed on our body, and ripping through various layers of garments is the slowest part of the stroke. When we establish the grip on our tool, an acknowledgment of the bad guy and aggressive body kinesics should be utilized. What do I mean here?

Picture seeing a guy rapidly approach you. He's disheveled and his right hand is in his coat pocket. You step back with your strong foot, and sweep your jacket, establishing the grip on your handgun. At the same time, you bring your off-hand up palm out in the universal "Stop" sign, a one-handed fence if you will. Now we ask the guy, in a serious tone, "What do you want?", and maintain eye contact.

What we've done at this point, is get through the slowest part of accessing a tool, assumed a protective posture, and challenged the guy non-confrontationally. We've also sent him some messages. First that we see him, and second that we are potentially armed. Bad guys carry their tools in the same place that good guys do, so when he sees your hand disappear in your waistline or into a pocket he'll very likely assume that you are armed. What we haven't done is said anything provoking or brandished a weapon. We may very well have read it wrong. This process allows you some margin for error in your assessment. Even if he's not a bad guy, most will still react to aggressive body language. Remember that the majority of our communication is non-verbal.

That being said, sometimes we don't pick up the threat and they are on us before we can preemptively get a grip, on our tool. Remember when I said before that bad guys aren't stupid. You can be rest assured that his weapon, and there will probably be one, will be in hand, and out where he can use it. He will keep it hidden but in hand, close the gap, and only let you see it when he's right upon you. Doesn't matter whether it's a gun or a knife. So where's the range now? Is this a place in the confrontation where forward grip has a significant advantage over reverse grip? What about cutting the limb instead of the body to see if that will stop him before we "escalate" to pumping his torso with steel? Do any of these atypical system arguments that we've all seen even apply? I don't think so.

At this point, the only thing we can really do is deal with the weapon hands on. At some point while doing this, a window may open for you to be able to access a tool in-fight. This skill sub-set must be practiced and incorporated into your combatives training. Additionally, if your tools are not set up optimally for this type of scenario, you may very well not be able to get them into play. Do you really think you can get that folder out and thumb it open after dealing with an adversary who has just had a knife to your throat during a robbery? And here's a real key issue: If you have successfully negated an opponent's weapon, then there is a strong possibility that he's out of the fight which probably nullifies any legal justification that you may have for drawing a weapon of your own. Think about it.

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So what are the parameters? Pretty simple. The bad guy is not going to be at range and brandish a weapon, giving you time and the cue to equally arm yourself. If he chooses to go after you, then it's probably because your awareness has lapsed. Even so, he's not going to close on you unarmed, and if he does then it's usually because he has a buddy who more than likely is.

So the idea that confrontations begin with both participants equally and proportionally armed is a myth. You will either see the threat and make preparations for a potentially armed encounter, or you will be in one before you know that it's an armed encounter and have to deal with it hands on or access a tool in fight. Either way it's usually disparate. Knife on knife at range, or gun on gun at range very rarely happens in the realm of citizen self defense scenarios. Once these parameters are understood, then we can make some educated decisions about hardware and software. I encourage everyone to use the reality of disparate force encounters as the litmus test for a system's street efficacy.

You can contact Southnarc via his site: <http://shivworks.com/>