



P. 07 5445 9116
F. 07 5445 9116

3-5 Briggs St, Palmwoods
PO Box 185 Nambour Q 4560

E. info@martialartsaus.com
W. www.martialartsaus.com

SENSEI'S BLOGS:

February 2010

The Media

For 18 years I have resisted venturing into talking about subjects with significant 'political' overtones however I can't help but see the opportunity to shine a Budo light on a set of statistics published in the local paper over the holidays. The statistics concern road deaths in Queensland from 1985 to 2009 inclusive. It is a very serious subject and I think most families will have had some experience of the terrible loss of life associated with road use. It is certainly not my intention to trivialise that experience - rather to look at the way the media make use of that tragedy to manipulate the emotions of *all* people, the politics of fear that then follows on from that reporting and the hidden economic agendas that further support that approach.

The following are an example that allows the trend in Qld to be apparent:

Year	Deaths	Million registered vehicles
1985	502	1.54
1987	442	1.57
1990	399	1.75
1993	396	1.84
1996	385	2.17
1998	<i>speed cameras introduced</i>	
2001	324	2.49
2005	329	3.53
2008	328	4.08
2009	330	4.21

From this it is clear that road deaths in Queensland have dropped by 34% despite the fact that vehicle numbers / road users have increased by 173%. It is also apparent from the figures that the rate of decrease in road deaths was not affected by the introduction of speed cameras as this rate has not accelerated since 1998.

In no way am I advocating unsafe road practices. I *am* however questioning the motivation of government and media when public information is manipulated, statistics are not honestly reported and a culture of negativity, fear and shame is deliberately fostered to support that calculated misinformation. I *am* advocating that we need to question the tactics of media and government. I *am* advocating that honest reporting in partnership with positive educational practices can change personal and community behaviours. I *am* advocating broad thinking where statistics regards deaths from heart disease are set alongside those from road use and smoking so we are able to more clearly see the whole picture. I *am* advocating challenging the glib and self serving message of spin. Is a company deliberately influencing families (particularly low income families) to consume junk food





with well known links to obesity, increased social / medical costs and heart disease any different to a drink driver causing serious harm to another? How are the two perceived in society generally – how many social resources are expended on deterring the latter as opposed to the former? And so on.

I **am** advocating awareness and personal responsibility – two cornerstones of Budo.

David Dangerfield

