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Sword and Pen

Official Newsletter of the International Combat
Martial Arts Federation (ICMAF) and the
Academy of Self-Defense

EDITORIAL

“Always Trust Your Gut!”

WHEN we were nineteen years of age we became enamored of Ayn Rand and her brilliant philosophy, *Objectivism*. We proceeded to acquire, read, reread and study just about everything she wrote, and to take a course titled *The Basic Principles of Objectivism*, given by her then top protégé, Nathaniel Branden. In the years following we came pretty far away from Rand’s orthodoxy, retaining — as we do retain to this day — full agreement only with her **political** and **economic** thinking. We also appreciate and agree significantly and substantially — though not totally — with her **esthetics**, but we reject her atheism and we have come to see her “knowledge of human psychology” as being pretty one-dimensional, unsophisticated, and — frankly — inconsistent with what the medical discipline of psychiatry, and that which the field of psychology, have concluded and teach us about the mind, emotions, and behavior of man.

Make no mistake about this: We have enormous respect and admiration for Ayn Rand’s achievements, and we regard her as one of the greatest defenders of man’s rights, liberty, and the America that we knew and loved when we were growing up, in history. We recommend her books — which we once suggested to the late Dr. Mortimer J. Adler be included in his and in Dr. Robert M. Hutchins’ list of *The Great Books of Western Civilization* — to every thinking individual. *One does not need to agree completely with anyone, in order to see great value in*

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their work, and — often — very specifically in elements of that work, which one finds that one can in fact agree with completely.

In any case, we were in our adolescence and young adulthood once pretty close to being a fairly consistent “Objectivist”.

One of the most detrimental things that Objectivism taught us was to minimize the significance of our emotional reactions and our feelings. This, according to that which we understood from Rand, was necessary whenever one’s “reason” and one’s “feelings” were in conflict.

“*Emotions,*” Rand pronounced, “*are not tools of cognition.*” And because of this, **reason** and only **reason** could possibly be man’s proper guide to knowledge and to an accurate understanding of reality. As our deeper studies in psychiatry, psychology, philosophy, and especially hypnosis would teach us, ***one must be very, very careful in how one accepts, interprets, and uses Rand’s admonitions in this regard.*** Otherwise, one will be literally sabotaging one’s ability to protect oneself (not just physically, but in *all* ways), and to live with genuine rationality and happiness.

What we learned in our years of studies *since* having been immersed in the works of Ayn Rand — most especially during our study of *hypnosis* — is that insofar as immediate perceptions and intuitive, short-term evaluations are concerned, ***there are times when our SUBCONSCIOUS assessment may be entirely accurate and correct, when in fact our “rational” and conscious perception and assessment may be entirely inaccurate!*** Thus, *as far as trusting our “immediate gut reactions to persons and to events” is concerned, it is absolutely dangerous and self-sabotaging to dismiss “gut feelings” or intuitive “hunches”, etc.*

Since this is not a dissertation on the nature of the subconscious, on hypnosis, on psychiatry or on anything save ***SELF-DEFENSE*** and ***CLOSE COMBAT***, we shall now simply cut to the chase and tell our readers:

Your feelings, your intuition, your emotions, your GUT (or whatever anyone wishes to call it) is a critically important instrument of survival and personal defense. You must, regardless of what truth there may be to the premise that *validating the ultimate truth or falsehood of anything is a responsibility that must be left, not to one’s feelings, but to one’s reason*, take your “gut reactions” and your inner “sense” about anyone and about any potentially threatening situation with *DEADLY SERIOUSNESS***. Your gut may be wrong. But then again, **IT MAY BE RIGHT.****

When dealing with random encounters with strangers one does not have the time or (usually) the inclination to get to know anything at all about those strangers. In most cases, a stranger is

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not going to initiate violence or even behave poorly. His approach to you is almost always motivated by some reasonable, or at least *harmless*, purpose. *But because he is a stranger, you cannot, and must never assume to be certain of his “innocent intentions”.*

The lifesaving caution is: ***TRUST YOUR GUT!*** Whenever you are in any situation, whenever you encounter anyone you do not know personally, and whenever you feel — for whatever as yet undetermined reason — that “*something is just not right*”, **TREAT THAT FEELING SERIOUSLY. RESPECT IT. AND, IN SITUATIONS WHERE THERE WILL BE NO LONG-TERM OPPORTUNITIES TO SAFELY RECONSIDER, EVALUATE, AND REASSESS YOUR INITIAL IMPRESSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS, GO WITH THAT “GUT FEELING” JUST IN CASE!**

Could your “gut feeling” be wrong? Absolutely. So we would, insofar as self-defense and personal security is concerned, add this caveat: ***Do NOT trust your gut feeling about a stranger or unusual situation if that gut feeling is a POSITIVE feeling!*** Impose caution — serious caution — whenever you feel “trust”, “respect”, “safety”, or “friendliness”, etc. without apparent **reason**, but simply on the basis of some unknown subconscious assessment that may or may not be correct.

During the so-called “Cold War” American and British intelligence found that operating inside Moscow, Russia was just about the single most difficult arena in which to work. The then KGB (today, SVRR) had quite probably the single most effective *counterintelligence* and *counterespionage* capability of the world’s secret services. In response to the daunting task that confronted operatives of the free world’s intelligence services in penetrating/eluding/defeating Moscow security, a set of “Moscow Rules” was compiled. These rules were also employed in East Germany and in Cuba, but they were originally created and presented to those secret servants whose mission was working in that most *denied* of the earth’s areas: Moscow, Russia.

One of the “*Moscow Rules*” was: **ALWAYS TRUST YOUR GUT.**

Speaking personally we will say that during the last quarter century we learned ***without exception*** to “trust our gut”. Whereas we once would have rejected any odd or suspicious feelings about persons with whom we dealt (in any context, not speaking now of work in any intelligence capacity, alone), we learned to **USE THIS PRINCIPLE ACROSS THE BOARD.** We are, putting it mildly, *absolutely delighted that we made this decision!*

Yes, indeed, we perhaps have dismissed from our life one or two individuals who we incorrectly assessed as being questionable. But we **know** this much for certain: ***We disengaged from and completely discarded a huge amount of human debris, as well: and by our rigorous***

attention to “WARINESS AS LIFESTYLE”, made our self quite difficult to con or to manipulate in any fashion.

Previously (as a youth) we “gave the benefit of the doubt”. As a result, one individual in a hundred proved ultimately to justify our benevolence; while 99 proved that we *should have paid attention to our original “feeling” when we first encountered or dealt with the person.* We have no problem living with the present *reversal* of that statistic, which we enjoy, thanks to our dismissal of such infantile thinking as we had at one time been guided by! *C’est la vie!*

Whether our readers elect to accept that which is our personal philosophy and — as we put it — our “*wariness lifestyle*” — must remain their choice. But we certainly urge strongly that anyone wishing to improve his self-defense capabilities and his personal security accept our advice to **always trust his gut** in any encounter with *unknown* persons, and casual acquaintances — *anywhere*.

Such an attitude **pays**.

Bradley J. Steiner

“Points To Ponder”

MOST especially if you are a student of a classical/traditional martial art and wish to prepare for self-defense and close combat, *please* go to our other web site, www.seattlecombatives.com, and read (in the ARTICLES section) Parts 1 and 2 of a two-part series on tips, suggestions, and points to ponder that can help you greatly in coming to terms with adjusting whatever training you participate in to real world personal combat. Our own students will find the material a concise and important review of essential concepts.

The “World War Two Methods” Excellent, Indispensable Material — But Not Without Flaws

WE have two documents in our possession that mean more to us than virtually all of the other “credentials”, awards, acknowledgments, certificates, diplomas, and letters or plaques of recognition that we have received during the last 40 years, combined: **1. A letter from the late Col. Rex Applegate, personally certifying us to teach his and Fairbairn’s combat systems,** and **2. A personal memo, dispatched to us many years ago, from Col. Applegate, in which he states that our System, *American Combato (Jen•Do•Tao)* is “a better product” than that**

which he, Fairbairn, Sykes, and all of the other instructors in the 1940's had during WWII.

We say the above because we do not wish the following to be misinterpreted as any kind of “slam” on the WWII-era methods of close-in, hand-to-hand armed and unarmed combat. ***Much, much more so than any of the classical/traditional martial arts, our own System — American Combato (Jen•Do•Tao) — has been influenced and inspired by our in-depth researches into, and by our personal studies of and participation in, the world war two-era systems of armed and unarmed lose-combat.***

One of the primary values to be secured in a thorough study of the original WWII systems and methods is the “***wartime fighting spirit***” which virtually permeated all of the instruction given to our fighting men during the 1940's, and which — thankfully! — found its way into those manuals and books written by the excellent Allied Forces teachers of that era. The documents of that period clearly communicate this spirit, and — as we have been emphasizing since the late 1960's — ***it is absolutely vital that this mindset and spirit be understood, assimilated, cultivated, and EMPLOYED, if one hopes to be able to actually use one's acquired physical skills in serious close combat and self-defense.***

But all that was included in the *technical curricula of the WWII systems* is not by any means to be accepted as “perfect”, or as the “last word” in manhandling and close combat. Modern students must be careful in this regard. The true believers in these methods have in some instances totally blinded themselves in regard to the **flaws** in some of the skills that the WWII methods teach. Amazingly (and almost *amusingly*) we have noted that some of the true believers have denigrated ***the exact same techniques that some of the WWII systems espouse, when and where they observe those techniques described almost identically in other (usually post-WWII) “ju-jutsu” or “self-defense” books!*** In other words, “If Fairbairn (or Applegate, or O'Neill, or Sykes, or Hipkiss, or Leather, or Biddle, or any other ‘WWII era instructor’) taught it, then it is sanctified, and never to be questioned, challenged, or approached with any idea of improving upon it!” in these individuals' eyes. And, “Do not even begin to open your mouth to advance the suggestion that anything that *these* authorities taught should be omitted from a present-day training course!”

Dear reader: ***This was not even the mindset of the (deservedly) revered WWII teachers, themselves! We know. We trained personally under two of them, and we trained under others who had themselves trained other WWII era teachers whom we never had the privilege of meeting, personally, but whose written works we have pored over and been studying meticulously, since the 1950's!***

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We are, and we do not intend this in any sense to be a boast, a kind of “transmission belt” between the WWII era and today, upon which the skills, philosophies, tactics, experiences, and techniques of *that* time period are conveyed into the present. We are also a continuation of that *lineage*, having created a modern System — in 1975 — that *builds upon* the great merits of what the “wartime masters” gave us, and goes on considerably to improve it, by enhancing the ways in which the WWII era principles and mindset may be further cultivated with even more and better techniques and tactics. By drawing upon the WWII methods and their combined strong points, and adding the cream of the *practical* aspects of *ju-jutsu*, *boxing*, *Indian varmannie*, *taekwon-do*, *Chinese ch’uan fa (“kung fu”)*, *rough-and-tumble (“street”) fighting*, and even *criminal skills*, we have (again, *not* intending to boast) built a more complete, comprehensive, more carefully wrung out methodology and curriculum than was ever produced previously. World war two itself lasted less than five years. **We have been doing this full-time for more than 30 years, and very seriously and intensively (let us say “half time”) for more than 20 years prior to that!** . It stands to reason that such efforts will advance a study and a discipline to a significant degree.

In any case, no less a figure than Col. Rex Applegate enthusiastically agreed with us, and he was a man of such great stature that acknowledging facts was *never* a problem for him — no matter where those facts led. The great Colonel was given the assignment in WWII by his commanding officer, “Wild Bill” Donovan (in the OSS) to “Learn everything there is to know about close combat, and then teach it to our agents.” Col. Applegate was the first to admit — to *proclaim* — that the assignment he had been given was one that he was continuing to carry out, insofar as the “learning everything that there is to know about close combat” part was concerned, *even when he was in his 80’s*, prior to his passing. Never, ever did this giant consider that he or that anyone else had written or said the “final word” on this massive subject.

Nor do we propose that we have done so. Or that we could do so.

We are simply continuing the effort.

There is pure, solid **GOLD** in the major WWII methods. This is why we regard those classic works by the combat masters of that era to be so indispensably valuable. *KILL OR GET KILLED*, *ALL-IN FIGHTING*, *COMBAT JUDO*, *V-5 HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT*, *AMERICAN COMBAT JUDO*, and other classics whose authors hail back to that time in world history, bear the same relation to the art of close combat that the works of Freud bear to the science of psychiatry. **And, as is the case with the works of Freud, and the science of psychiatry, there is and always will be much more to study, discover, learn, and apply than was pioneered by this genius.** Freud many a number of *mistakes*. In those ways that are necessary, there must be *corrections* made, where the works contributed by those who “came before” are found to be

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flawed. **And this can and should be done without throwing out the baby with the bath water!**

We have become aware, by the literally worldwide feedback we are receiving, that the material we post here and on our other web site is appreciated and eagerly looked forward to as an assisting guide to the training of many who, unable to train with us, must self-teach and self-study. Invariably we recommend the classic texts from the WWII and post-WWII era that provide good, solid, real world instruction, in addition to that which we endeavor to present monthly. However, we would be remiss if we did not caution those who are unable to attend training at our own hands that the books we recommend are not flawless in their contents and advocacies. *And we are certain that — just as Col. Rex Applegate did — virtually every one of the WWII masters would welcome, if not agree with in every instance, the following points:*

- *KILL OR GET KILLED* . . . although The Book by which the value of all of the other WWII era classics may be measured, is flawed in the following ways:
 - There is no advocacy of the most valuable and important *basic, low front kick*
 - Combinations and followup is certainly *discussed*, but too few examples are given in the text, and the subject is in no sense emphasized the way it needs to be
 - The so-called “front stranglehold” is better employed in the *ju-jutsu* manner, rather than in the manner described
 - The forearm “comealong hold”, which is endorsed in the text, is not a good hold. The *arm lock comealong* is better, but not much. It too is advocated and, in our opinion, should (*must*) be preceded by a **BLOW** or it is too risky to apply
 - The flying mare is *strictly* a limited-value technique. Without a *lot* of training, a *lot* of strength, and a *lot* of luck, you are well advised to avoid attempting this action. Even then, only incorporate the flying mare if you possess a natural propensity for grappling/throwing actions
 - The above applies equally to the hip throw
 - The cross-arm choke is okay, but never from a standing, head-on position. This is a *finishing action*, best relegated to judo contest, rather than hand-to-hand encounters
 - The outside choke is, we must say, *suicidal* to attempt, since it leaves the applicant wide open to being punched, kneed, kicked, or even thrown by someone with a grounding in *judo, ji-jutsu, or wrestling*
 - Countering a two-hand front choke with a knee-to-groin is recommended only when the attacker has you pinned to a wall (and even then a finger stab to the eyes should *precede* it). Otherwise attempting this action may throw you off-balance to your rear. Besides, *real* two-hand chokes are normally administered with *momentum* that drives you backward, *and* the attackers almost invariably have *one leg advanced* when employing this attack, which **guards their groin area**

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- The *rear* forearm stranglehold is incorrectly described and should *not* be attempted as illustrated. The proper way to apply this hold is in classic *ju-jutsu* fashion which locks the throat and braces the enemy's head for quick strangulation
- The wrist throw is *not* recommended against a clothing grab. This throw requires great hand strength, clumsiness and slow reaction on the part of an attacker, and the absence of any offensive move *with the attacker's free hand*. Even when such an action *might* make sense (i.e. by a police officer against what he perceives to be a very low-level threat at the time), it **must** be preceded by a **disorienting blow**, or the user is wide open to being defeated
- The push counter described is not always effective, even against a very low level threat, if the individual against whom it is being applied has very flexible wrists. This should be *strongly* emphasized — but is not
- The rear clothing and the cross arm comealong holds should **not** be considered as they place the applicant in a helpless position in all instances, save those where he is dealing with a completely passive, weak, and non resisting individual over whom the applicant has an **enormous** strength advantage
- Countering a rear overarm bearhug using the back elbow to the solar plexus as an initial action is ineffective **unless** the hold is applied *high* around the upper arms, and the defender is stronger than the attacker

- ***ALL-IN FIGHTING (GET TOUGH!)*** . . .
 - Teaching the use of the edge-of-the-hand blow against the forearm of an adversary should be restricted to *strong men* who learn the Fairbairn System. This blow will be virtually ignored, for example, by a large, powerful man who seizes a diminutive woman or underpar man, should the victim attempt to effect a release via this action
 - Defeating a two-hand choke with Fairbairn's technique is only effective if the attacker is *less* powerful than the victim, and if the victim is really expert in the application of the counter
 - Fairbairn does not seem to appreciate that clothing grabs from the front — as opposed to “frontal bearhug” type attacks — are not only much more common, but *present a greater threat to the victim*. One can surmise that chinjabbing or edge-of-the-hand striking and/or kneeing may be utilized here . . . but this type of attack per se is not even mentioned
 - The “bent arm hold” is difficult to apply and is **impossible** to use against a knife stab unless employed with lightning speed and *perfect* precision **before** downward momentum is gained. That a knife attacker will immediately use his free hand, his feet, his knees, and even his head and teeth **immediately** should his intended victim attempt to seize his knife-wielding arm is a **fact** that should be — but is not — emphasized; and that makes the bent-arm hold **wrong** against a knife attack. We personally believe that application of this hold is also **impossible** against a powerfully, speedily delivered punch
 - The “handcuff hold” requires superior strength and enormous speed, coupled with a rather dimwitted adversary upon whom it is presumably to be applied, if it is to succeed

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- The wrist throw should be discarded as a viable combat technique. It has value for arrest and control (police) application of less-than-formidable, non-dangerous individuals, only-
- While we would agree that a technique resulting in an enemy's back being broken should most enthusiastically be embraced and mastered, we do not believe that the "back break" illustrated and described by Fairbairn is actually doable against a determined, powerful, resisting and attacking enemy in combat
- Arising from the ground in a backward somersault is unwise

- *HANDS OFF!* . . .
- Techniques 1, 9, 10, 11, and 17 are ridiculous and ineffective for use by most females against most males; and we'd not recommend them for men, either

- *V-5 U.S. NAVY HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT MANUAL* . . .
- While advocating kicking, the book neglects to describe the proper delivery method for the front kick (the primary kick advocated) or the side kick (almost completely neglected in this book — yet **the most important kick**)
- High kicking is advocated and high kicks should *never be attempted, ever, in hand-to-hand combat*
- The *arm drag* and *the switch* (wrestling moves) are advocated; yet these techniques require a *great deal of strength and wrestling skill* before one can hope to employ these actions against a relatively **inept** foe
- Emphasis on wrist turning and wrist locking is ridiculous, save (as we have said before) for police use against non-dangerous, mildly resisting, physically inferior suspects. Advocating this for fighting men makes no sense — yet there is considerable focus on these moves in this book
- The application of the full-nelson with forward trip as a "liquidation" technique would appear to make little sense when you consider how much speed, skill, strength, and good luck even an **expert** would need to secure a full nelson on any half-awake fighting man
- The knife defenses using the crossed **hands** to catch, then grab, then apply some hold on the knife-wielder's arm are too dangerous to employ. In fact, they are **idiotic**. (Actually, there was a time when these very moves were taught — believe it or not) at the FBI Academy in Quantico. Today, FBI training is even worse! Now they do ground wrestling and mat work — but this is a digression
- Countering a man's attempt to draw a pistol from a shoulder holster by applying an armlock is absurd
- Many of the grappling actions (doubtless the result of Wesley Brown's and Joe Begala's **wrestling** background) would much better be replaced by stomping kicks, thrusts to the eyes or throat, kicks to the knees, chops to the neck or temple, etc. The book contains a lot of these actions that parallel relatively mild, ju-jitsu-based "self-defense tricks"

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- The bayoneted rifle actions described are *not* good. In fact, they are almost as impractical as those taught by Pat O’Neill in his otherwise quite excellent combat system

• *COMBAT JUDO* . . .

- It amazes us that Robert Carlin, a fine hand-to-hand expert (and the author of this particular book, in 1945), nonetheless advocated a double *drop kick* — which is utter madness for real world self-defense or hand-to-hand combat
- It’s trebly amazing that this book, by an author who purportedly *boxed*, contains utterly unusable “boxing counters” that could work only a slow-moving, inept dolt
- There is no detailed description and urging of the chinjab smash in this work
- Carlin’s stickwork neglects totally the preferred *two-hand grip* method, and using the stick to thrust double-handed into the enemy’s torso or face
- The bent arm hold is a poor choice when Fairbairn describes it for a downward knife thrust, and it is an equally poor choice when Carlin describes it for a downward club blow *and* for a downward knife stab
- Carlin’s *knifework* is limited to showing a few generally agreed upon ways to thrust, and one or two moves that one should *never* stake one’s life on. (like the “feint — stab to ribs”. *There are way better ways to do this sort of thing!*)

We actually could go on, but we’ve made our point if the reader is at all receptive to common sense arguments.

We regard every single one of the works cited above as being of **top quality** and classic stature, in the body of literature that we would regard as dealing with close combat and real world self-defense. But we also would hope that readers who are wise enough to procure and to study these outstanding tomes, as well as other titles of great value from that era, will not regard them as *canonical* texts — but rather extract the pure gold from their offerings, and set aside — respectfully — that which we who have studied this subject for a lifetime have determined is not really the best way to go in all-out hand-to-hand combat.

Stop All Of That Punching!

THE normal, properly clenched fist is certainly a viable weapon. In fact, when that fist belongs to a professional *boxer* it is regarded under the law as a “deadly weapon”. Whether this should or should not be the case is arguable; but unless we’re talking about someone on the order of the late Mas Oyama, or Hidetaka Nishiyama, etc., please believe us, the fist is *only accidentally* a “deadly weapon” if it belongs to the statistically average *karate* exponent. Or to a *ju-jitsu* man, etc.

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And if the exponent happens to be a *female*, or if the *ju-jitsu* “man” happens to be a “*woman*”, then the use of the fist, *per se* by that person in a seriously dangerous emergency is **SUICIDAL**.

We are all too well aware that there will be numerous individuals who will disagree with us, and certainly that is their privilege. However, we stand by our assertion, and we hope that our readers will at least *reconsider* their clenched fist punching in the dojo, and factor in the experiences of **war**, and of **actual, real world close combat** *on the mean streets* of the world’s cities.

The clenched fist, in **hand-to-hand combat** and **self-defense**, should be restricted to soft body targets. The **STERNUM**, the **SOLAR PLEXUS**, the **LIVER**, the **SPLEEN**, the **BLADDER and TESTICLES area**, and the **KIDNEYS**. A quick jab with the fist into the nose may sometimes be a good *setup* shot; but one had better close in fast with some truly *destructive action* following such a punch, or a hardened, street fighter/violent criminal adversary will merely suck it up, and proceed to kill you.

Be realistic. Who among the readership of this Newsletter, for example, has not, in some fight at some time, been *punched*? Are you dead? Did it drop you instantly? *Did you even notice it?* Or — perhaps more to the point — have you, as a martial arts student, ever found yourself needing to defend yourself *for real*, and finding that your “lethal punches” (that cracked so easily through insentient pine boards) were not all that bothersome to your attacker?

Clenched fist punching requires more than “makiwara training” to make it effective. It demands the advantage, which few of us possess, of having been born with naturally heavy bones, large and strong hands, and a propensity for coordinated hitting. **Boxing** — not *karate* — teaches the right way to punch with the clenched fists. However, boxing is a sporting/competitive form of fighting; it is *not* “combat”.

For combat the **OPEN HAND** is almost always preferable as a weapon.

These should be your primary, mainstay “natural hand weapons” if you are training for self-defense and unarmed close combat:

- The handaxe chop
- The chinjab smash
- The tiger’s claw thrust

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- The extended fingertips thrust
- The ear box

Those five natural hand weapons constitute the *cream* of the very finest and most reliable open hand blows upon which an individual ought to rely in *actual* individual combat. **Notice, with great educational benefit, that NOT A SINGLE ONE of those blows is permissible in any sporting/competitive venue!** (So much for “sporting competition” as preparation for close combat!)

That list of five basic blows by no means exhausts the options of “open hand” techniques that are eminently viable in serious combat. There are arm strikes, elbow smashes, reverse handblade strikes, fingertip *jabs* (in addition to thrusts), and all sorts of variants of *heelpalm* strikes, from different angles and positions, as well as finger *strangulation* methods, that have their place in an extensive, long-term curriculum and training program in comprehensive close combat and self-defense. However, anyone who will make it his business to **MASTER** those five simple blows, will be fifty times better prepared to stop a real world assailant thereby, than would a “competition champion” whose forte in hand blows was his clenched fist normal punching action.

It is not merely that the blows enumerated are more powerful than clenched fist punching. That they are, but they offer something of equal or often even greater importance and value to the combatant: ***Those blows better enable the body’s most vital target areas to be accessed and destroyed with focused precision, than clenched fist punching offers.***

Do not be misled about this. *There is no rational disputation of the fact that the open hand blows of unarmed combat are vastly more reliable for anyone to employ, than are the clenched fists, in actual combat.* Period. One of the reasons why the clenched fists are universally utilized in virtually every sporting/competitive venue where percussory skills are the mainstay is ***because clenched fist normal punching is only MINIMALLY harmful and likely to result in serious injury or death.*** In close combat the *opposite* standard must be our guide to technique selection — or we are preparing to die.

“But what if I *like* to emphasize punching when I train, and if I *believe* sincerely in my ability to make punching work for me?”

Years ago we had an aunt who (with the help of her less than honest husband — regrettably, an uncle of ours) *convinced herself* that, because she “liked to paint” she was, therefore, good at it.

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She and her husband (quite possibly, *only* she) were the **ONLY** people on earth who truly in their heart-of-hearts saw the smudges and streaks that she ruined perfectly good blank canvasses with, as “art”. “Garbage” was a better and much more accurate designation for the laughably ridiculous blotches of junk that more closely resembled a monkey’s attempts at finger painting than they did anything intentionally produced by a human being using brushes and oil paints. But — doubtless right up to the time of her passing (with the enthusiastic support of her attorney-husband) — this desecrator of canvasses believed, ***because she wanted to believe***, that she was “an artist”. The obituary placed by our uncle that read: “ _____ , artist, passed away on _____ ” approximated, in its logic and accuracy, placing an obituary for a gibbon that had been caged at the Bronx Zoo and had died, saying: “Gomer the gibbon, debonair gentleman/entertainer/noted avant garde philosopher, passed away on 10 November.”

It doesn’t matter what you subjectively *feel*. The facts are what matter. And, concerning the fact about what works best in hand-to-hand combat, the hands down **TRUTH**, whether anyone cares to accept it or not, is: *open hand blows*.

You really should discover and accept the facts before an emergency strikes. It may just be a “lesson” that costs you your life, if you insist upon waiting for the emergency.

Our aunt never sold one painting. She was supported and insulated from reality by the unconscionable shyster whom she had married. There may not be anything or anyone to support *you* in an emergency but your ability. And even if some deluded fool were to write of a “great warrior’s passing” in *your* obituary, it would not bring you back to life.

Learn How To Act

“**BY** means of deception thou shalt do war.” That saying is the motto of Israel’s secret intelligence and covert action service, Mossad.

“All warfare is based on deception.” That simple statement comes from the oldest book in history on the subject of war: *The Art Of War*, by Sun Tzu.

Deception like every other principle of all-out **war** is wholly applicable to individual combat (“*war*”).

One of the greatest tools in the combatant’s bag of tricks is the ability to deceive his enemy by pretending the exact opposite of his true intentions, and then — after distracting and taking that enemy off guard — attacking with relentless fury and mercilessly destroying that enemy.

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The ability to **ACT** is, for the self-defense and close combat student, as important as it is for the spy!

Misleading an adversary is a skill. For example, if we had a son who were attending school and he were to ask us for a technique by which he could protect himself from that sort of vicious little crapbag known as a bully, when the bully shook our son's hand and attempted to inflict severe pain by squeezing his hand powerfully, we would say:

“Immediately *wince* as the scumbag squeezes your hand. Make a face, double over and with your left hand hold onto the bully's hand as it squeezes your right hand, as though you were literally paralyzed with pain and submissive fear. This will probably cause the bully to laugh; but regardless of his immediate response to your feigned agony and physical debilitation, **SUDDENLY SEIZE HIS HAND POWERFULLY WITH YOUR FREE HAND, GROWL LIKE AN INSANE ANIMAL, AND KICK HIM WITH EVERY OUNCE OF STRENGTH YOU CAN MUSTER, IN HIS TESTICLES.**” We'd advocate kicking him perhaps three or four *more* times — if necessary — and seeing to it that he was so badly injured that he **FEARED** to bother or even approach our son again.

The use of deception enables an intended victim to turn the tables in many instances and deliver the surprise of a lifetime to any troublemaker.

Another example:

A couple of punks approach you. They block your path and say “We gotta talk to you, dude. You got some money for us?”

Two or more assailants is *always* a deadly attack. This is a multiple assailant holdup situation.

You react by meekly halting and saying timidly: “Hey, no problem guys. No problem. You can have my money, just please, no trouble, okay?” You, acting shaken and scared, reach for your wallet, mumbling “Here's my money guys, just please . . . no trouble.” With your free hand, you suddenly spin without warning and ***chop the punk who you were not looking directly at across his throat or neck.*** You then kick the second lout in his knee or testicles, and — unless you can escape at that point, to safety — you proceed to smash and bash each of the two pieces of sewer garbage repeatedly until each is so damaged that he has lost the capacity to be of any danger to you thereafter. *Then* you escape.

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The trick is to be **CONVINCING** when you utilize this type of “psychological camouflage”. Remember, street smart sewage is very aware of how subterfuge may be employed, and they are **not** stupid or naive regarding good combat tactics. However, if you are a good enough actor to make these bacteria specimens **believe** that you are a terrified, meek, compliant victim, and that you are all-too-eager to give them exactly that which they have demanded, you **WILL** be able to take them by complete surprise. Once that tactical imperative has been achieved, victory will almost certainly be yours **PROVIDING YOU ATTACK WITHOUT MERCY OR SCRUPLES AND PROCEED TO DO THE ABSOLUTE MAXIMUM OF DAMAGE YOU ARE CAPABLE OF DOING — RIGHT AWAY.**

Good tactics will avail you little benefit unless back up with decisive techniques!

During WWII the famous USMC Second Raider Battalion (led by Evans Carlson) had, in addition to its well-known motto, “*Gung Ho!*”, another tactical motto. It was: “*Always do the unexpected!*”

Good acting better enables anyone to “do the unexpected” by enabling him to lead his enemy to *expect* the exact opposite of that which he intends to do.

Self-defense is **WAR**. It is neither sport nor aesthetic/classical personal cultivation training. War demands brutal, savage tactics, unfair and unscrupulous approaches to winning, and a foul, gutter attitude toward the opposition. ***CRUSH HIM NOW! BUT FIRST LET HIM BELIEVE THAT YOU'RE NO THREAT, WHATEVER.***

Get a troublemaker sufficiently distracted by a good performance that convinces him you are no threat, and you will likely be able to untie his shoelaces before he realized that you are about to tear his larynx out!

Here is a crucial tip that you should bear in mind when training to react to an armed kidnap attempt: If your attacker orders you to “get in the car” or to “get down on the ground”, etc., ***be convincing*** and always react in a shaky voice expressing fear and compliance ***as you turn your head in the direction that you have been ordered to go.*** Human beings first *look* where they are about to go. Before you get down on the ground, for example, you will *look* at the ground. Before you go into that vehicle, you will *look* in the direction of that vehicle. Etcetera.

As your attacker “registers” that you are complying, ***SUDDENLY SHOUT AS LOUDLY AND FIERCELY AS YOU ARE ABLE, WHILE SMASHING ASIDE HIS WEAPON (IF HE IS OBVIOUSLY ARMED) AND GOING AFTER HIM WITH FORCE TO KILL.***

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Unpleasant? “Un-martial-artsy”? Too *dirty*? **TOO DAMN BAD!** This is the stuff that works, that saves lives, that you and that nearly anyone can effectively employ when the chips are down, to stand an excellent chance of getting the enemy before he gets you!

Although our students are nearly entirely male, we occasionally get one or two female students. One of the tactics we teach them is to feign compliance, cooperation, and even enthusiastic arousal when threatened by some predatory male. “Smile softly, move in close to him, gently embrace his face with your hands, and even kiss him,” we advise. Then, **DRIVE BOTH THUMBS VICIOUSLY INTO HIS EYES, AND PLANT YOUR MIDDLE FINGERS IN HIS EARS, THUS LOCKING ONTO HIM IN A BLINDING ATTACK. NOW DRIVE YOUR KNEE REPEATEDLY INTO HIS TESTICLES WHILE GOUGING DEEPLY UNTIL YOU’VE RIPPED HIS EYES OUT OF HIS HEAD. ALTERNATIVELY — OR ADDITIONALLY — SINK YOUR TEETH INTO HIS FACE AND BITE A PIECE OF HIS FACE OFF WHILE GOUGING AND KNEEING LIKE A WILD ANIMAL.**

No dangerous male is going to be even slightly discouraged by some female’s “bold, assertive” voice, and her “demand” that he “back off, or else . . .”. **In fact, such conduct will almost certainly cause her attacker to become more ferocious, dangerous, and violent. However, if a female ACTS compliant, her tormentor has no reason to hit her or otherwise feel concern, and he is SET UP for a powerful, decisive counterattack.**

Women, by and large, do not like to hear that which we tell them, or to practice that which we advocate they make their own. That’s too bad. They only cheat themselves. Their “female self-defense courses”, in which they learn how to die, teach them what they **WANT**, and tell them that which they **LIKE** to hear; but as is always the case, the measure of that which is true is not to be gauged by the degree to which one finds it “palatable”.
Cé la vie.

Self-defense situations are not, in our opinion, paralleled by “cage fighting”, MMA, or UFC. Let those who enjoy these events continue to do so. Same thing goes for those (in our opinion much saner) people who gravitate toward judo, karate, kick boxing, etc. **Do what you like.** We couldn’t care less. **However . . .** if you want to *really* be able to defend yourself, handle a dangerous attack by one or more savages, and deal with unprovoked violence at the hands of troublemakers and other examples of human debris that unfortunately pollute our society today, then cultivate those **combat** skills that have been proven to work in *war*, and master those tactics (like acting and the use of deceit and deception) that enable you to take another by complete surprise, and disable, maim, or kill him, before he can do that to you or to someone you love.

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Here are some suggestions to guide your utilization of the suggestions we are making here:—

- Develop the ability to feign illness (dizziness, a need to take medicine, etc.) — then attack like a wild animal
 - Learn some phrases in some obscure foreign language (cynics might suggest that English is a good choice) and speak them — looking completely puzzled — at the troublemaker’s approach — then kick him in the testicles as he attempts to reply
 - Plead with a troublemaker about just having had surgery and being completely unable to stand any violence — then drive into him like a madman, screaming at the top of your lungs
 - Look at the troublemaker and smile. Say “Hey, man, don’t you remember me?” in the most sincerely friendly tone and with the most cordial expression imaginable. When he begins to reply (no matter what he says) lash out with a side kick and break his leg, or smash into his throat, gouge his eyes, etc.
 - When confronted by a punk who intends trouble, face him meekly and throw a quick glance behind him, then return your attention to his face. Say ***nothing***. Let him wonder if you saw someone approaching him from behind. Then tell him: “Gee, I really don’t want any trouble. Then **ATTACK!**”
 - Get creative! Come up with your own little “skits” and “performances”. Build strategies for all sorts of situations, and master a **convincing** delivery.
- * To master expressions and convincing gestures, practice in front of a mirror. Get feedback from training partners. If it looks really — *really* real — to a practice partner, it will fool a criminal

Check Around For “Weapons”

WHEREVER you work, live, play, visit, shop, or stroll, it is almost certain that you will be able to discover *many* available objects and implements that, in a crisis, can serve as deadly weapons to assist you in defending yourself. *You should always use something to assist you in defending your life and well being, rather than your bare hands and feet, except in situations where the only things available to you are your bare hands and feet.*

Never fight fair.

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Never think that it would be wrong to use a stick, a rock, a bottle, or **anything** as a weapon to help you defend yourself — even if your attacker is seemingly unarmed when he attacks you. It is a certainty that a violent offender possesses weapons, even when he does not bring them into play at his initial approach. Besides, no one who initiates violence or provokes trouble deserves the benefit of ethical consideration or sporting conduct from his intended victim.

No student of close combat and self-defense is properly preparing for the “real thing” unless he is aware of the plethora of improvised weapons that are ever-present in almost any and every normal environment, **and** unless he is ready, willing, and **able** to make ferocious, immediate, and effective use of those “weapons”.

As his thesis for Black Belt, 1st degree in *American Combato* Greg Anderson wrote so excellent a work that we encouraged him to publish it as a book. He did. **WEAPONS AT HAND** is available directly from him. A copy costs \$25. plus \$3. postage and handling. Order from:

Team Intensity, NW
P.O. Box 77636
Seattle, WA. 98177

You can use your credit card to purchase. Just telephone (206)-364-9944 to place your order.

Always remember that *all* personal weapons — manufactured *or* improvised — should be thought of and trained with as **extensions of your body and will**. The idea that a weapon is, by itself, going to offer you protection is a very wrong and potentially dangerous concept.

Check around wherever you are and wherever you go. *There are plenty of objects and items that, in an emergency, you can seize immediately and use to attack a dangerous adversary.*

You can get a bit elaborate (for instance, dropping a salt and pepper shaker into the center of a cloth dinner napkin and folding the ends over to make a formidable blackjack, or folding and breaking a credit card in half to produce two lethally sharp edged weapons, etc. However you;ll need *time* and a bit of secrecy to do this. Grabbing a can off a store shelf and bashing an attacker in the face with it, can be done instantly, when you’re assaulted in a grocery store.

Got an umbrella? Use Fairbairn’s stick technique with it (see **Get Tough!**) or simply grab it securely with both hands — each one about four inches from each end — and drive the end into your attacker as if you were using a bayonet. Go for the throat or face.

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We've trained individuals in the past, when working on "hostage survival" and "escape" techniques which they might have needed, to remember that broken glass makes a great knife. Go into any lavatory and break the mirror. Take a nice shard of glass and rip a piece of clothing off your shirt. Wrap the cloth around one end of the glass shard and use that as a grip. Use the pointed end of the shard to rip open the hostage-taker's throat, or to sever his carotid artery, stab him in the eye, etc. A toothbrush can be sharpened on any concrete or stone ledge, window sill, or step available. Hold the *brush* end and sharpen the plastic. You now have a *pike* or *dagger*.

Towel racks offer possible club weapons. So do chair legs. So do heavy branches.

Do what a merchant mariner acquaintance of ours once told us he did, so as to be "armed" when in port: Take a hefty lead fishing sinker and wrap it in a handkerchief. Use a rubber band to secure the handkerchief around the sinker. You now have a great blackjack, or — by holding the item firmly and letting the end of the covered sinker protrude from the clenched hand — a terrific "yawara stick" jabbing implement.

In order to defend yourself you need to not merely "get tough", you need to *think* tough; to think about "what if", and to plan for every eventuality. Take advantage of every edge you can give yourself in any dangerous emergency.

We have taught our students how to use even the "harmless" plastic type "knives" that the airlines now provide, as *deadly weapons*, in an emergency.

Your primary weapon is, as General George Patton so aptly pointed out, your *MIND*. However, your secondary weapons are not merely your hands and feet and any manufactured weapons that you may be fortunate enough to have when trouble strikes — they are *anything and everything that you can seize at the moment*, **IF** you'll start to realize that fact.

E-Bat May NOT Be A Safe Place To Make Bids And Purchases

SELF-DEFENSE is whatever protects you, and we feel a responsibility, after a disgusting experience reported to us by an acquaintance, to *warn* you and to ask you to *warn everyone about whom you may care*, about the potential for getting ripped off by *SCUMBAGS* who utilize the popular "e-Bay" product venue, on line.

Our acquaintance bid on — and won the bid for — a rather hard to find copy of a book on judo — sold, as we recall his telling us — by some con artist in Sweden.

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After winning the bid, and paying this bastard over \$400. for the book, he never received what he purchased! The bastard who “sold” it to him did **nothing** but offer excuses about the postal people in Sweden being “unable to do anything”, etc. Neither did this hemorrhoid bother to *insure* the mailing! “That’s it” was his terse and final reply to our acquaintance after a series of polite e-mails initiated to attempt to secure the book that he paid for.

What a scumbag! What a rip-off! What a bastard!

Fortunately, our acquaintance made his purchase using American Express (bless that outfit!). They canceled his payment for him (after a **month** of no delivery of the item paid for) and so our acquaintance lost no money. But he was disappointed, and very much let down.

No more e-Bay for him! (We never trusted that venue, and we never will).

Interesting enough, the book that our acquaintance had purchased appeared on the excellent and interesting site **ScribD** — and it appeared there at precisely the same time (about a week after the bidding on that judo book ended) when he — our acquaintance — should have received it. The conclusion that the scumbag simply diverted the book that was purchased to *another party* would seem to be a **very strong** possibility. The book had virtually *never appeared for sale for years*; and so the likelihood of there having been **TWO** copies suddenly surfacing (during the same month!) is virtually impossible to believe.

PLEASE BE WARNED! WE ACCUSE AND BLAME NO ONE IN PARTICULAR, SINCE WE DO NOT KNOW THE IDENTITY OF THE PARTY WHOSE UNMANLY, DESPICABLE, DISHONORABLE, AND UNSCRUPULOUS CONDUCT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS OBVIOUS RIP-OFF. HOWEVER — WE WARN YOU: MAKE SURE THAT YOU CHECK OUT EVERY SELLER OF ANYTHING YOU PURCHASE, AND PURCHASE ONLY FROM ESTABLISHED, REPUTABLE BUSINESSES.

WE WOULD NOT TELL ANYONE TO AVOID MAKING ANY PURCHASES FROM INDIVIDUALS IN SWEDEN. WE’LL JUST SAY THAT WE WOULDN’T DO IT.

PLEASE BE CAREFUL. WE PRESENT THE FOREGOING IN GOOD FAITH WITH HOPES THAT IT ASSISTS YOU IN AVOIDING THE STING OF GETTING SCAMMED!

We’d also recommend good old American Express, as they apparently can prove a real money-saver (if not a life-saver), as they are quite prepared to help you retrieve that which some defrauding bastard may try to take from you.

Now On A More Pleasant Note

WE take great delight in assisting our visitors with their personal training — regardless of whether they train in our System or in another. So long as their purpose is combat and self-defense training, we regard their objectives and interests as being consistent with our own.

All of the informational and instructional articles and sections on our two web sites is *FREE*. We regret that we have no possible way of replying individually to all of the personal requests for instruction and training that we receive, but we try our best to cover as much relevant and helpful material as we can, on our sites.

Please be sure to check both www.americancombato.com and www.seattlecombatives.com frequently. We add new material *at least* once every month.

We also would sincerely appreciate our visitors telling others about these web sites so that they can benefit from our offerings, too.

Until next month when the March edition of *SWORD & PEN* is posted, we wish you success in your training and happiness in your life.

STAY COMBAT READY!

Yours in Defense,

Prof. Bradley J. Steiner

www.americancombato.com

www.seattlecombatives.com

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