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SWORD AND PEN
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Editorial

Practical, Practical, Practical!

WE recently saw recommended as the No. 1 “survival rifle” the Barrett .50 caliber rifle.

Come on, now. A powerful, devastatingly accurate and effective long range sniper rifle? Absolutely. But “the first pick as a **survival** rifle”? Well, you be the judge of whether this fills the bill for you . . . but we suggest that this advice really misses the point. A *survival rifle* as we understand it must be light, easily carried, powerful enough to kill small game as well as people (**if absolutely necessary**), very rugged and easy to maintain, and easy to pack a good supply of ammunition for.

Going by the definition we always thought applied, we can't agree about the Barrett. We'd lean more toward the Ruger 10/22, if anyone's interested. And, for a survival ***battle*** rifle we would opt for the FN/FAL .308, the Springfield Armory M1A (basic rifle) .308, or perhaps the H&K .308. If the survivor's physical strength is minimal then without question we'd recommend the Ruger Mini-14 .223/5.56mm.

Well, this is *not* an article about survival or battle rifles. Our point now is that *any* selection of *any* skills or *any* tools for emergency application should focus upon **simplicity**. Not *overly* simple, to the point of compromising effectiveness and reliability; but **simple in addition to** being top quality for the anticipated task at hand.

Complicated and impressive *looking* is the last thing that matters with anything intended for combat or survival — whether an unarmed technique, an emergency tool, or a firearm or edged weapon. Damn! We remember how some people went tripping over their own feet to purchase “the knife that Sylvester Stalone carried” in *First Blood*. That knife might make a nice collector's item (we loved the movie and we thoroughly enjoyed Stalone's portrayal of the SF soldier home from Vietnam), but that impressive blade is way too big for nearly any man's constant carry, and the hollow handle idea is ***not the best*** for a true survival/combat knife. One needs a full solid tang. The hollow handle construction is weaker than the full tang. You can carry a few fish hooks, band aids, aspirin, button compass, etc. in a small tin in your pocket. You'll be easily able to keep that on your person — not even feel the

weight of it — and have a much stronger, more reliable knife with a full tang, as a result. Again, **practicality**.

Keep this in mind at all times when considering your close combat skills. The stuff that wows audiences at martial arts demonstrations is — *as far as practical application in real hand-to-hand combat is concerned* — worthless, complicated nonsense. We are not criticizing those dedicated practitioners who train constantly in order to render such impressive performances. Their efforts are considerable, and their accomplishments commendable. *But what they do is not the best option for actual close combat.* So long as this is understood, no harm is done. And such demonstrations are enjoyable to watch. But one mustn't confuse that which is impressive-appearing and acrobatic with that which is simple, easily mastered, and very destructive. The latter does not attract and hold audiences . . . but it saves lives.

The same thing is of course important to note when observing competitive fighting. Whether the freestyle sparring of karate, or the randori of judo, or perhaps the kind of fighting popularized by the UFC and MMA; none of this is **close combat**. It is *sport*. And while there is nothing at all wrong with sport, and for many sport fighting is a most enjoyable activity, *to approach it as a self-defense or hand-to-hand military combat method is a mistake*. An MMA or UFC competitor's active "shelf life" is not that long; and retirement in fact usually comes with injuries that hinder his ability to defend himself *for real*, thereafter — should the need arise. Besides which, like the more traditional competition fighter (i.e. karate, judo, wrestling, boxing, kick boxing, etc.) the MMA/UFC fellow has *ingrained his competition habits deeply into his motor memory*. **Tactical imperatives for the real world (such as ramming fingers into an adversary's eyes or gouging eyes, attacking the testicles, breaking the knee/shin bones with kicks, boxing or ripping off ears, biting, tearing the nostrils or mouth, etc. etc.) simply do not surface under stress for the person whose many years of training and conditioning have literally forbade their use.**

It might appear to be “sexier” if a man bypasses a boxer’s approach and deftly tackles him to the mat, then applies a submission hold and “wins the bout”. But it is certainly more **practical** (if forbidden in sport) to break the boxer’s knee with a fast, powerful side stomping kick as he moves within range to punch! (Besides, a skilled and experienced opponent who can really box will belt your teeth down your throat and knock you unconscious if you try to close with him in actual combat. Boxers tend to be street smart, tough hombres!)

Keep it *practical*. If you’re struggling to learn skills that are a challenge in the antiseptic environment of the dojo, just imagine how difficult those skills might prove to be when you’re taken by surprise in the street by some tough, experienced nut who thrives on violence! And, we must add, is likely armed.

Practical skills are for a lifetime. And while no one is as effective at 60 as he was at 25, if he’d been training hard for five to ten years, practical skills do not become worthless as physical prowess and strength diminish. Trained to use the element of surprise, to implement deceit and deception, to be murderously ruthless and without mercy, to use anything at hand to assist in defense, to carry and use actual weapons, and to apply simple, dangerous skills with relentless followup, even the octogenarian can often successfully defend against a much younger, stronger, faster man.

These are **facts**. It took us years of training in *ju-jutsu*, *karate*, and cognate disciplines before we came to understand these truths, back in the 1960’s/early 70’s. Our *Amerian Combato* is the **essence** of practicality and realism . . . and it brooks no nonsense. In fact it has saved some students’ lives, and prevented injuries and serious losses for others, over the years. We suggest that its principles and methodology can serve *you* well, too.

Practicality is the watchword. You will have enough trouble in a combat situation without trying to pull off actions that worked with your training

partners in the dojo but that have no real chance of succeeding in fast, chaotic, **real** combat.

Okay . . . we hope you got the message.

Bradley J. Steiner

“If an injury has to be done to a man it should be so severe that his vengeance need not be feared.”

Niccolò Machiavelli

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*You Can Learn Self-Defense and
Close Combat At Home.*



Here are a few comments about us and what and how

***we teach, from a handful of
the many genuine authorities
in the field of close combat
and self-defense who are
familiar with us and with our
work:***

“Brad Steiner is one of the three finest instructors of close combat and self-defense that I know of, in the world”

— James R. Jarrett, Former U.S. Army Special Forces and LAPD SWAT/Protégé of the late, internationally famous defensive tactics and baton master, Robert Koga. Mr. Jarrett holds a 5th degree Black Belt and is a renown firearms, self-defense, and counterterrorist instructor. He is a former university professor and an author.

“ [Brad Steiner] is simply the finest teacher of any subject that I have ever had . . . I feel deeply blessed to be able to know and to study under him”

— Greg Anderson,

Third degree black belt, author of Weapons At Hand, accomplished professional athlete (wrestled at the national level and played college football), world-acknowledged authority on physical training, author, and Director of Ideal Exercise, one of the finest fitness facilities in the Western states.

“Brad Steiner knows real self-defense and what works in hand-to-hand combat like no one on earth! His Method is incredible!”

— Detective Ralph Friedman (NYPD Retired),
Ralph was, at the time of his retirement, the most decorated police officer in the history of the NYPD. He has received, among other awards, the coveted ‘Combat Cross’. Ralph was featured, along with his brother — an NYPD Transit Police Officer — on the TV Show Top Cops.

“Your Method is excellent. You have expanded upon and improved considerably the method I learned from Fairbairn and Sykes during WWII and what the USMC taught to the Raider Battalions. And you’re a very good student and teacher”

— Maurice (“Maury”) Geier,
Former U.S. Federal Agent and counterintelligence officer during WWII. Also a combat shooting instructor for FBI and other federal officers, as well as a hand-to-hand combat teacher who was so fierce he earned the nickname “Deathhouse Geier”.

“Your American Combato is a very good System”

— Charles (“Charlie”) Nelson,
WWII hand-to-hand combat judo instructor with whom we trained for nearly three years. It was from Nelson that we learned the O’Neill System, as well as what A.J. Drexel Biddle taught (Charlie was one of Biddle’s students).

“You are indeed a ‘Professor’ of combat arts! I quote you all of the time”

— Grandmaster Jim Harrison,

The premier pioneer in America of the Asian fighting arts of ju-jutsu and karate. The late Bruce Lee once said of Jim Harrison that he is the one person he would not like to fight. It would take a thick pamphlet to describe all of Jim Harrison's accomplishments and contributions to the combat arts in America.

**“From you I learned the valuable lesson of ‘attacking’ instead of ‘defending’ when you have to defend yourself”
— Grandmaster John McSweeney,**

The “Father of Irish Karate”, John was one of Ed Parker's first Black Belts. John also studied boxing, judo, ju-jutsu, and kung fu. The quotation above is from a letter John sent to us after reading our Tactical Skills of Hand-to-Hand Combat. We maintained a correspondence and friendship until John's passing.

“You certainly do make many excellent points about how mental conditioning for self-defense may be achieved. Although I had never anticipated RET (Rational Emotive Therapy) being utilized for martial arts training, you have done quite an impressive job. I appreciate your outstanding abilities with hypnosis, and I think that your innovative ideas deserve a widespread audience”

— Dr. Albert Ellis,

One of the most famous psychologists in the world. Of him Dr. Robert A. Harper once wrote that he believed Dr. Ellis' contributions are as significant as those of Dr. Sigmund Freud. We owe a good deal of how we work with students to achieve all sorts of psychological breakthroughs to our intensive study of Dr. Ellis' works.

“ [Y]our articles are read, studied, and saved whenever they are published. You have an understanding and

command of the subject of fighting that very few people have”

— George Kalishevich,

Former USMC Sergeant and combat veteran of Southeast Asia. Kalishevich was a multiple Black Belt holder, a boxer, weight trainee, and hand-to-hand combat teacher since the 1960's. He was also an experienced bouncer. He passed away several years ago.

“As a law enforcement officer working dangerous assignments in the most violent parts of the New York metropolitan area in the 1970's, I found that Mr. Steiner's

advice was always on the money. The information contained in his articles in Combat Handguns, Handguns, American Handgunner, and Soldier of Fortune magazines was lifesaving. As a professional armed and unarmed combat trainer, I regularly referred to many of the concepts Mr. Steiner wrote about. He often went right to the source to discover how and why certain methodologies worked. Bradley Steiner is one of the few civilians actually certified by Col. Rex Applegate to teach close combat.

The late John McSweeney . . . dubbed the ‘Father of Karate in Ireland’ told me that he also was greatly influenced by Mr. Steiner's writings, especially the idea of paring down close combat techniques to a few essential strikes, trained to perfection. Mr. McSweeney told me that he had a pet name for Brad Steiner. He called him ‘The Monk,’ in reference to Mr. Steiner's vast knowledge of martial arts and mayhem. My own writing about martial realism was inspired by Brad Steiner's”.

— Grandmaster John Perkins,

The brilliant innovator of ‘Guided Chaos’, John Perkins’ background in unarmed combat (and armed combat) is the result not only of training but of lots and lots of real world experience.

The First and Only Complete Self-Defense and Close Combat Course in American Combato (Jen·Do·Tao) on High Quality DVDs!

Eleven carefully prepared professional instructional DVDs describe and demonstrate the most practical, powerful, reliable, and authentic skills of no-nonsense realistic and war-proven unarmed and armed hand-to-hand combat methodology and personal defense developed since WWII! This Course, describing methods from that System developed in the early 1970’s by Bradley J. Steiner, which crystalized into the American Combato (Jen·Do·Tao)[™] all-in modern close combat/self-defense martial art in 1975, will teach you how to defend yourself and those you love in any situation! Some of these methods have been copied, imitated, and pirated during the last 25 years, but a complete self-defense course derived directly from the original and authentic System — and

the only authorized presentation of American Combato — is now available for home study. All of the techniques, all of the theory, and all of the mental conditioning and related doctrine in these DVDs is presented by the System's originator, Prof. Bradley J. Steiner, himself. Like Fairbairn, Sykes, Applegate, O'Neill, Brown, Begala, and Biddle in the second world war — from whose lineage this modern Martial Art is a direct descendant — Prof. Steiner clearly, simply, and plainly instructs in real world, lifesaving combatives doctrine.

You can order any of the eleven DVDs individually, or you can purchase the entire Course, in which case you pay for only ten DVDs. You receive one FREE!

Each DVD contains the equivalent instruction normally given in four to eight private lessons. This Course is the equivalent of at least 50 private lessons with Prof. Steiner, personally! And you can review this instruction again and again, and save the DVDs for your children to study when they are old enough.

IMPORTANT NOTICE!—

The system of martial arts presented in these DVDs is not a "traditional" or "classical" martial art.

These DVDs, and the information, and techniques contained within should not be taught, shown, or divulged to anyone under 18 years of age.

Due to the serious nature and lethality of the techniques shown, no one under 18 should be instructed in the techniques.

Due to potential serious injury or death, minors under the age of 18 should not be allowed to purchase or view the techniques demonstrated on the DVD's and in the system.

Minors lack the proper judgment and emotional restraint and discipline and should not be entrusted with the techniques contained herein.

Please utilize the techniques only in those situations where you would utilize a lethal weapon, similar to using a firearm, an improvised or edged weapon.

Please keep DVDs in a safe place out of the reach of minors, similar to safekeeping of firearms.

Contents:—

DVD #1 FUNDAMENTALS

- How to stand, move, distance, and position yourself
- The combat color code
- Attack mindedness
- Evasive footwork
- How to shield
- "Fairbairn's Four" —

The chinjab smash, the handaxe chop, the tiger's claw, and the side kick. All clearly explained and demonstrated so that anyone with no prior experience in any martial art can understand and develop the skills! These are the first four of *American Combato's* 16 Key Blows (originally regarded by W.E. Fairbairn as the "most essential" basic blows, comprising a complete mini-system of personal hand-to-hand combat, once mastered).

DVD#2 BASIC BLOWS

• Continuing from “Fairbairn’s Four”, this powerful presentation completes your lessons in the remaining 12 Key Blows — the most practical and effective blows — in unarmed close combat.

- The straight heelpalm
- The knee attack
- The front kick
- The elbow smash
- The fingertips *thrust*
- The fingertips *jab*
- The snap kick
- The backfist-forearm smash
- The hammerfist-forearm smash
- The basic straight punch
- The ear box
- The throat lock

DVD#3 ATTACK COMBINATIONS - FIRST SERIES

• Powerful and devastatingly effective combinations of attacking actions which are adaptable to an infinite number of situations and emergency circumstances. These attack combinations utilize the Key Blows, and include additional offensive unarmed combat actions and tactics. which enable you to infinitely combine, and improvise limitless sequences and applications of ferocious attacks of your own.

This DVD focuses on attack combinations leading with *HANDAXE CHOPS* and *THRUSTING ACTIONS*, the first two categories of “attack combinations” in *American Combato*.

In this and the next DVD you will learn more combinations of each type than you would ever possibly need.

DVD#4 ATTACK COMBINATIONS - SECOND SERIES

- Completing a well-balanced, comprehensive curriculum in vicious, unconventional, yet simple and readily applicable attacking sequences which enable the practitioner to overwhelm and disable any assailant. These combinations continue to expand your capability with the Key Blows and with other actions and tactics, and turn you into a dangerous, unpredictable, offensive combatant in close quarters combat. You'll be an expert at taking the battle into the enemy's camp and *attacking your attacker!*

This DVD trains you in *DISTRACTING LEAD ATTACKS, KICKING LEADS, and MISCELLANEOUS LEADS.*

DVD#5 COUNTERATTACKING THE UNARMED FRONTAL ASSAILANT

- No realistic close combat system is worthwhile unless the matter of *counterattacking* (i.e. reacting to attacks which you have been unable to preempt) is covered. In this DVD you will learn:

- How to immediately react with devastating and decisive force against any grabbing type attack from the front
- How to break holds that attackers might apply if they catch you off guard
- How very simply to counter punching or kicking attacks

DVD#6 COUNTERING THE UNARMED REAR ATTACK

- Attacks from behind are *deadly*. Learn first and foremost to guard against leaving access to your rear. However, if caught unaware, learn

- How to counter sudden grabbing attacks from behind
- How to counter holds that may be applied from behind

DVD#7 COUNTERING KNIFE AND CLUB ATTACKS

- The proper tactics and mental plays applicable to these situations is emphasized. Technically, you will be taught
 - How to deal with knife *threats*, from varying positions
 - How to save your life if attack by an adversary who is determined to slash or to stab you with a knife
 - How to counter overhand club attacks
 - How to counter the backhand club or baseball bat swing

DVD#8 COUNTERING HANDGUN AND SHOULDER WEAPON THREATS

- Obviously these, like knife and club attacks, are *deadly* threats and only the simplest, most basic and reliable methods should be studied. No weapon “takeaways” or complicated nonsense here! These are commando type actions and will work under the most adverse conditions. Intended to save lives — not your wallet.
 - Frontal handgun threats
 - Side handgun threats
 - Rear handgun threats
 - Frontal shoulder weapon threats
 - Side shoulder weapon threats
 - Rear shoulder weapon threats

DVD#9 COUNTERING MULTIPLE ATTACKERS

- Key principles and tactics of countering more than a single aggressor
- The core *scenarios* and how to develop counterattacking capabilities against two or more attackers that *really work*.

DVD#10 HOW TO USE THE STICK FOR SELF-DEFENSE

- Basic stick techniques
- The *complete* Fairbairn stick method (beyond what is taught in *ALL-IN FIGHTING/GET TOUGH!*)
- The USMC’s Kengla Technique

- Some advanced stickwork combinations
- How to use the *yawara* hand stick (for modern applications)

DVD#11 KNIFEWORK

- Psychological factors
- The universal grip (for stiletto and Bowie type knives, as well as for kitchen, utility, and all other types of knives, and for improvised stabbing and cutting implements)
- Knife *offense*
- Defending yourself with a knife

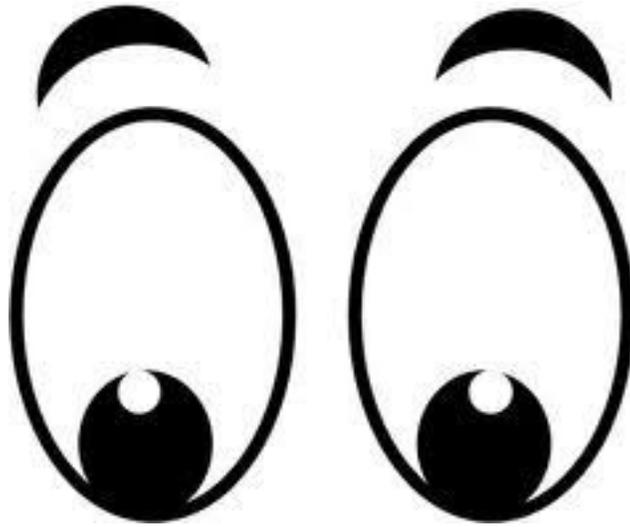
The cost of each individual DVD is \$59.95 + \$6. shipping and handling (**\$20. postage and handling for foreign orders**)

If you purchase the complete 11-DVD Course you pay only for 10 DVDs, bringing the total cost to \$599.50. You get one DVD FREE. **Add \$20. for postage and handling (\$40. for foreign orders).** That's just under \$600. for \$7,500. worth of training! All DVD purchases are of course nonrefundable.

Personal checks may take up to three to four weeks to clear, in some cases. For *immediate* shipment send cash, or a postal money order, bank check or bank money order, payable to Brad Steiner. Send your order to:

**Brad Steiner
P.O. Box 15929
Seattle, Washington 98115
U.S.A.**

You will want to study these DVDs again and again, as they are rich in content and packed with solid, reliable information and instruction!



Be sure to follow Prof. Mark Bryans on Instagram!

“Choose Your Animal!”

WE have always been fascinated by the fact that all of the key “Kung Fu” (actually *ch’uan fa*) systems of China derive from observations made by their originators of *predatory animals*, and of how those animals were inclined to do battle. Classical/traditional Chinese external martial arts have their origins in the adaptation that their founders made of the “fighting styles and equipment” of the particular animals which they chose to emulate. For example: The **tiger**, **bear**, **snake**, **leopard**, **crane**, **mantis**, **snake**, **eagle**, and **monkey** have each been inspirational to long-ago Chinese martial arts masters who formulated their own methods of weaponless combat along the lines of

how these various creatures used their natural attributes and capacities in battle.

While the obvious error that can be observed in thinking along the lines of the Chinese masters should be obvious, it does not appear to be (or to have been) so. That is, each animal certainly did possess unique “natural weapons” and characteristics with which it handled itself in violent conflicts . . . but in order to fully exploit those weapons and characteristics *you need to be the animal in question!* A man may come to believe that he can fight “like a tiger”, however — being a human being and not a tiger — he really **can’t**. *But that certainly does not entirely invalidate the thinking of the Chinese masters who formulated their classical systems. In fact, they really had something there! And if one approaches the study of how animals engage in combat there is a wealth of real wisdom to be derived from the study.* Looking at what the classical “animal systems” have to offer, strictly according to their original curricula, we have to say that **how the human body can form its own natural weapons and fully exploit the human body’s capacity to inflict serious injury and if necessary kill** remains the big contribution. It is obvious and clear to anyone that the expert martial artist has many more natural “weapons” to utilize than does, say, the individual who relies solely upon his clenched fists and crude, unskilled kicking. This may be attributed to the great contributions of the Asian (notably the ancient Chinese) close combat masters.

Our contention is that many modern, logically motivated real world close combat/self-defense teachers and students would do well to examine certain characteristics of how nature has equipped numerous predatory animals to engage in combat, and consider adopting those characteristics — as a human being’s capacity permits — to his own application of skills and training. For example:

- Animals rely on a very limited number of weapons: Each animal employing the one or two that nature provided and that it is able to

employ perfectly against other creatures. **Lesson: From the wide variety of excellent natural weapons and techniques the wise combatant should select those that suit him best and *perfect* their use.**

- Formidable animals *attack*, they do not defend. More precisely, *their defense is an attack!* **Lesson: Attack the attacker. Rely on extreme offensive skills and mindset to defeat a dangerous aggressor.**
- Animals care nothing about “different fighting styles”. Each animal deals with any other animal (or with man) using *it’s own given “weapons” and “tactics”*. **Lesson: Perfect those war-proven skills that work best for you, and use *them* with every ounce of your power, rage, determination, speed, and strength against whoever or whatever “type” of opponent assails you.**
- Animals do not do battle the way that they play. Grizzly bears, tigers, and attack dogs, to use good examples, are capable of lovable, playful, vigorous play. They often “fight” in gentle ways when not in actual combat. But once in *real battle* there is no similarity between what the predatory animal does to destroy his foe, and how he “fights for fun”. **Lesson: Prepare for combat by drilling and training in combat techniques and tactics; sport is play.**
- Animals go *all out* — a 100%-plus aggressive onslaught. No piddling about with lesser force. **Lesson: If you are attacked by a violent troublemaker, *attack him with everything you’ve got!***
- Nothing that any animal does is complicated. It’s all simple, direct, and done with fierce commitment. **Lesson: Keep your skills simple, direct, and devastating. Executed with total force and speed, these are the kinds of techniques that win hand-to-hand engagements.**
- Animals always employ coordinated actions of their *entire bodies* when in combat. *A 90 pound doberman pinscher can take a 240 pound man off his feet and tear out his throat.* The doberman attacks with his entire body behind the action! That 90 pounds backs well-coordinated destructive force that travels at full speed. **Lesson: Use your entire body whenever you must do battle in self-defense, or**

in military combat. *All of you should focus intently upon accomplishing your enemy's destruction.*

- When injured, a wild predatory animal becomes *more* dangerous. **Lesson: Whip yourself into a killing frenzy if an attacker injures you, and destroy him. Get medical attention later. Become murderously enraged when/if you are hurt during an attack.**
- Animals are hyper-alert. No one needs to teach them “situational awareness”. Taking any animal by surprise can be a near-impossible feat. Their priority is survival. **Lesson: Get your sh–t together and stop allowing distractions and non-essentials to clutter up your mind. *Stay alert — in condition yellow — whenever you are in public.***
- In combat animals don't “spar”. Tigers paw and nip when at play, and grizzly bears push and shove; but *in battle they attack to kill*. A Doberman will playfully grab his master's arm with a soft, gentle hold of its powerful teeth and jaws in play. But that doberman's bite will tear open an enemy's throat in a combat situation. **Lesson: No gentleness when self-defense is required. It's do or die; now or never. Anything and everything goes — all-out, to destroy!**
- Animals (to the extent that they are intelligent) do not trust. They are wary and suspicious. Again, intelligent breeds of the larger guard dogs remain a perfect example. You can't “con” them. They remain alert and suspicious of any stranger's actions. **Lesson: Exercise the intelligence of a smart dog! Do not trust anyone you do not know. Be polite. Be respectful. But be ready.**
- Not possessing a reasoning faculty, animals *trust their senses . . . their “gut”, if you will*. **Lesson: Trust your “gut”. Sometimes your intuitive subconscious mind picks up something that your rational, conscious mind missed. *Trust any bad feelings you get about a stranger. Do not trust any good feelings you get about a stranger.***
- Animals flee when they sense hopeless odds. **Lesson: Running away makes perfect sense at times. Stupidly remaining to do battle against hopeless odds when neither you nor anyone dependent**

upon you for protection is compelled to stay at the scene is unwise, to put is politely.

- Animals with the capacity use audible “kiai”. Well, perhaps you wouldn’t call a snake’s hissing *kiai*, but the growl of a jungle cat, or of an attack dog, or of a grizzly is certainly something nature instilled to aid in battle. **Lesson: Growl, grimace, and yell like an insane killer when you attack your assailant.**

Finally, we want to add this. An observation that we made as a child, and that — today, as an adult — makes complete and total sense to us as the **right**, the **moral**, the **rational**, and the **fully human** approach to violence, which (not to our surprise) we see evidenced in animals much more than in members of the human species:

Animals engage in combat for survival. They attack and kill because they must eat and they must feed their young. This may seem cruel to some, but it is certainly not immoral or “criminal”. They also may attack because they believe that they or that their young are in danger. Purely self-defense when you analyze the motive. The animal kills because it believes that it *must*, not simply because an opportunity arose in which it *can*. **Lesson: Learn to be a fully civilized, truly *human* human being. The only legitimate reason for using violent force against another person, and maiming or killing him, is because you are convinced that you must do so to defend innocent life: yours or someone else’s. If someone intends to hurt you, you have the right to stop him, and you *should* stop him. Any way you can. But learn to live by the protocol that we teach in *American Combato*:**

First try in every available and feasible way to avoid trouble. If you believe that you are in danger then take the initiative and attack and neutralize the threat. Preemption is the ideal way to handle unprovoked violence.

If you are caught off-guard then mobilize a counterattack that knows no mercy! You are now acting quite possibly to

save your life or the life of another person. Turn the tables *fast*, and go after your assailant with everything you've got!

If these precepts work for animals, and are sufficient to serve them in defense and survival in the wilds, then they surely will work for you.

Check out seattlecombatives.com when you've finished this edition of *Sword & Pen*! The Monthly Instruction Section has an article on the "classical values" that traditional martial arts teach that are of tremendous value today, in modern close combat and self-defense training!

The *Right* Way To Practice "Self-Defense" Techniques

IN *American Combato* we refer to techniques of defensive combat as **counterattacks**. This is because our entire focus if and when attacked is to, in effect, *reverse the predicament and become the attacker*. But regardless of whether you like our term or stick with the designation "self-defense techniques", we urge your attention to that which we now present, and hope that it enables you to master a *reactive* (i.e. a defensive) capability that will enable you to handle a situation when you are caught unaware.

First, we are going to state unequivocally that *most* of those actions taught as self-defense techniques are **worthless**. They can be *practiced* and they can be done when working against training partners; however, when and if most popular “self-defense techniques” are ever put to the test against *real, live, dangerous, strong, determined* physical attackers, they will almost certainly fail.

Why?

Very simply for the following reasons:

- 1) The techniques are way too complicated and elaborate. They depend upon the attacker moving in a specific, anticipated manner and *reacting* in a very specific, anticipated manner when the “defense” is employed. We think that a lot of students who have trained in *ju-jutsu, hapkido, kenpo-karate, kuk sool won, aiki-jutsu*, and similar systems will, if they are honest, acknowledge this. (**And we have no problem with it, either; so long as the student understands that he is learning movements for art’s sake and for esthetic satisfaction, discipline, fitness, and recreational enjoyment.** But anyone concerned about actual hand-to-hand close combat *for real*, needs to abandon the flashy, the glitzy, the showy, the spectacular, the complex, and the acrobatic.)
- 2) The techniques involve fine motor moves. Under conditions of extreme stress — obviously conditions that exist in direct, actual individual close combat and self-defense emergencies — it requires a literal superman to stand so much as one chance in a thousand of being able to apply such skills as catching a fast, incoming wrist when a punch is thrown, or being able to maneuver rapidly against a clothing or body hold before the enemy can throw you or punch you, using wrist controls and/or arm-locking skills to defeat him. Gross body moves generated by the *major muscle groups in a coordinated, all-out effort* are what is needed.
- 3) The techniques are not dangerous and destructive enough. Pain compliance (a viable method *in certain cases*, for police officers) is a ridiculous, fanciful damn joke for self-defense. A serious attacker

moves on his intended victim way too quickly for the victim to be able to employ a pain-compliance action (partly because these involve fine motor moves), and partly because for most individuals involved in violently attacking someone, their threshold of pain is through the roof, and they will resort to seriously escalated force *before much pain can even be inflicted upon them, assuming the pain compliance action could be applied in the first place (which it probably could not have been)!*

- 4) The techniques entail far too little followup. Often, one or two movements generated will fall short of their potential, and so ongoing, repeated, *barrage-like* attacking is demanded when countering a violent attack. Followup must be rapid and very destructive, and must not end until the attacker is helpless and no longer able to pose any further threat.
- 5) The techniques do not feed off of a trained-spontaneity. That is, in addition to the initial “burst” of counterattacking actions, the effective defender must *keep on attacking ferociously and relentlessly*. No assumptions can be made about any specific action reliably stopping the assailant. It must always be assumed that one will need to *keep on attacking*. (**Note:** Obviously, one stops — and one *should* stop — once the attack has been defeated and the assailant neutralized. The problem is *one never can know ahead of time just what will accomplish that outcome, and how soon it will be.*)

If we have painted a rather desperate picture of the dire straits that you may well be in if you are attacked, **good!** Hopefully we can bring home the need for workable, **REAL** techniques that enable a defender to drop a dangerous adversary. You are kidding yourself if you think that anything less than the most drastic and damaging actions can be relied upon when a real world violent felon (or perhaps more than a single violent felon) targets you and makes a move that catches you off-guard.

So . . . if you are still with us you will now see why we insist that your self-defense (counterattacking) techniques be:

- Very simple. Easily learned, understood, practiced, and retained.
- Physically not too difficult for the *average* individual of either gender and any age to do. Yes, practice is demanded; but for the overwhelming majority of individuals, a reasonably intense period of serious practice will render good techniques very doable, indeed.
- Adaptable! Every technique you learn should be usable in a wide variety of emergency situations. The classical/traditional concept of learning many hundreds or thousands of specific self-defense moves is **not** practical or realistic. You want quality and versatility, *not* quantity. In fact, the fewer techniques that you eventually come to master and to rely upon, the better.
- As dangerously harmful as humanly possible, using the weapons given you by nature. ***If a technique is not dangerously destructive and all but certain to result in terrible harm, maiming, or even death, then it is worthless for self-defense emergencies.***

Please especially note this last point. This is what makes the method of practicing that we insist upon so vital.

If you practice your self-defense techniques solo, imagining an attacker, then you can and should feel completely uninhibited and unrestrained. Practice the techniques full force, full speed, and with a murderous attitude. However, this would be irresponsible lunacy when working with a training partner.

When working with a practice partner *he must understand exactly what you will be doing, and he must be cooperative and willing to avoid any horsing around, wiseguy nonsense, or other form of foolishness.* Better to practice alone than with a jerkoff.

Your partner executes the attack against which you are developing a generalized type of counterattack. **He must not deviate from what you expect, or improvise anything.** This is for his safety. In a street situation you will simply attack relentlessly and devastate whatever target your enemy exposes, with all-out, unrestrained force. *But there must be control when working with a live practice partner.*

Working with your partner you execute the counterattack — which, if it is built along the lines that we advocate, involves immediate attacks to the adversary's **eyes, throat, ears, sternum, solar plexus, testicles, knees, shinbones, foot arches, bridge of nose, philtrum, kidneys.** You will also be using head butts, clawing, kneeling, and biting. If and when a blocking or evasive/parrying move is employed, it immediately is followed up by devastating and continued attacks on the assailant.

— **ALL OF YOUR BLOWS MUST BE CONTROLLED SO THAT CONTACT IS *NEVER* ACTUALLY MADE WITH YOUR PARTNER'S VITAL TARGET POINTS. TWO INCHES AWAY FROM THE TARGET IS A GOOD RULE, IN TRAINING.**

— **AT BLACK BELT LEVEL YOU CAN WORK (WITH ANOTHER BLACK BELT) USING FULL SPEED. BUT DO NOT UNDER ANY CONDITIONS TRY THIS UNTIL YOUR PHYSICAL CONTROL IS PERFECT.**

— **YOUR ATTACKER CAN MOVE AGAINST YOU FULL FORCE. *YOU*, HOWEVER, MUST EXERCISE CONTROL.**

— **DO NOT WASTE TIME ON MOVES THAT DO NOT SEVERELY INJURE . . . FOR IT IS *INJURY AND DAMAGE* — NOT “PAIN” PER SE — THAT DROPS A DANGEROUS AGGRESSOR.**

QUESTION: “WON’T PULLING BLOWS SHORT OF CONTACT MAKE IT LIKELY THAT BLOWS WILL BE PULLED SHORT IN AN EMERGENCY?”

ANSWER: “ABSOLUTELY NOT! IT IS FAR EASIER TO SIMPLY GO WHEN THE NEED ARISES, UNRESTRAINED, ALL-OUT, WITH MURDEROUS FEROCITY AND RUTHLESS DISREGARD FOR THE ENEMY, THAN IT IS TO EXERCISE CAUTION IN PRACTICE. ADDITIONALLY, YOU GET YOUR *CONTACT* EXPERIENCE WITH STRIKING POSTS, HEAVY BAGS, DUMMIES, ETC. *NOT* WITH PEOPLE AT THE TRAINING SCHOOL!

“WE HAVE OVER THE YEARS HAD NUMEROUS STUDENTS OF VARYING LEVELS OF TRAINING EXPERIENCE ACTUALLY USE THEIR TRAINING IN SELF-DEFENSE. *WITH NO EXEPTIONS THEY WERE COMPLETELY SUCCESSFUL, AND DID EXTREMELY WELL.*”

The practice method we advocate enables serious students to master the most reliable combat skills. And while it is true that “full contact” is often allowed and even encouraged in some quarters, for training, you should ask yourself this question: “*If I can utilize full contact in practice, with safety, then how could this possibly be effective against a dangerous attacker who intends me serious injury?*” If a technique is safe enough to apply against a training partner or in a sporting fight, then it is worthless for real combat. And if a technique is dangerous and harmful enough to be utilized in real combat against a violent criminal or military opponent, then it must never be applied to full conclusion against a training partner or permitted in any sporting arena.

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tors” were born! Our writings reflect the knowledge, skills, and teaching experiences acquired over a period of 60 years, and of our training, learning, and doing!

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(Full unedited speech with accompanying commentary)

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Brief #2: *Total Readiness For Self-Defense And Close*

Combat — With and Without Weapons
(Provides a guide to the personal attributes, capabilities, and skills that make for well-rounded, comprehensive readiness for “close range interpersonal confrontations” {U.S. Pentagon})

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Brief #3: *Fairbairn’s “Silent Killing Course”*

(Original and full outline as Fairbairn drafted it — with commentary)

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Brief #4: *“Stay On Your Feet!”*

(The truth about real individual combat vs. sporting matches, and why the myth of ground fighting for self-defense and military close combat is misleading many regarding effective combatives)

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Brief #5: *Rules Of Self-Defense*

(Of course there really are no “rules” in a self-defense emergency; but this Brief synthesizes those precepts that will guide you to realism in your training)

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Brief #6: *Close Range — Quick Reaction!*

(What you don’t learn in the shooting schools, but what has been proven to be the right way to use a handgun in personal

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Brief #7: *Remembering Charles Nelson And His Valuable Lessons*

(We remember our years with “Charlie”; including some of the actual self-defense tips he taught, and a copy of the Men’s Magazine article

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(Action is always faster than reaction. The real secret to being able to handle any attack is to cultivate an immediate and spontaneous reaction. Do not depend upon blocking.) **\$4.**

Brief #16: How To Hit With Great Power

(Genetics sets limits on how powerful you can ultimately become — and eventually train yourself to hit. Your realistic goal should be to master the principles of hitting powerfully, so that you actualize your own maximum possibility.) **\$4.**

Brief #17: Adopting Classical Karate To Modern Close Combat

(Although a powerful martial art, classical karate has numerous drawbacks for the person seeking self-defense exclusively. This Brief explains in detail how to modify any classical method you are studying so that it meets the necessary standards for real combat and street survival.) **\$4.**

Brief #18: Adopting Kodokan Judo To Realistic Self-Defense

(Although judo is much more than a mere “sport”, it is not an all-in combat method. Some judo experts may be able to apply their training in real combat, but to make judo really effective in an emergency the modifications enumerated in this Brief are necessary.) **\$4.**

Brief #19: The Two Biggest Technical Errors Made In Self-Defense Training

(Essential instruction for anyone training in any system

or style for self-defense. Teaches how to overcome those errors that result in nearly 100% useless “self-defense” techniques.)

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Brief #20: *Self-Defense Training For Senior Citizens*

(A truly complete compendium of guidelines and technical instruction that works for senior citizens who want to be able to defend themselves. No “feel-good, socially palatable, politically correct bullshit”. Here is the truth about how to be truly prepared to defend against some of the lowest scum on the planet.)

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Brief #21: *Fighting Vs. Self-Defense*

(Legally, morally, technically, tactically, mentally, and physically, “fighting” and “self-defense” are different. This Brief teaches how and why this is so — and explains to every student and teacher of self-defense just why it is so important to understand the difference.)

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Brief #22: *The Importance Of Solo Training*

(Training without a partner is essential for the fullest development of self-defense skill and mental preparedness. This Brief teaches why this is so, and how to train solo with optimum benefits and maximum practical skill development.)

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Brief #23: *Find And Depend Upon Your Best Techniques*

(Every student and expert is different and everyone serious about self-defense must discover and perfect his own best skills, which need to be drawn from combat-proven doctrine. Here’s how to do it.)

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Brief #24: *Observations, Thoughts, Notes, And Miscellany About Self-Defense And Close Combat*

(A potpourie of insights and tips covering all aspects of practical self-defense and close combat as garnered in over 60-plus years of immersion in and passion about the subjects.)

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Brief #25: *Tactics For Countering A Gun Or Knife Threat*

(There are numerous “techniques” for dealing with an enemy who threatens you with a knife or gun. We believe, and many agree, that th American Combato methods are — hands down — the best. But regardless of what particular techniques you train in, unless your psychological/tactical interface is correct, the odds for you being successful are not at all that good. This Brief explains clearly what interfacing tactics you need to develop.) **\$4.**

Brief #26: *Triple Your Learning And Retention With Mental Review*

(Few give any thought to the importance and value of mentally reviewing the physical skills that they acquire and wish to be able to use. Fewer still do their “mental reviewing” correctly. Learn how from this Brief, and start to enjoy much greater progress in your personal skills and confidence building.) **\$4.**

Brief #27: *The Fighting Knife: A “Must Master” Weapon*

(This is a unique instructional work for all students of self-defense and close combat. It offers a complete analysis of the significance of the fighting knife — its indispensable role in the combat arts curriculum — and valuable training advice for achieving mastery.) **\$4.**

Brief #28: *Finding The Right Teacher And Method For Yourself*

(There are more martial arts schools and teachers in the State of California or New York alone than in all of Asia! And today there are hundreds claiming to be teaching practical, reliable close combat and defense. From the Founder of the first comprehensive and authentic all-combat American martial Art here is a complete guide to locating and evaluating the right teacher for you. Also — what to do if you have limited recourse and can't find a teacher.) **\$4.**

Brief #29: *Conditioning The Natural Weapons*

*(In this 21st century the student of practical self-defense needs impact practice more than the kind of comprehensive natural weapon hardening typical of the classical “karate” schools. Still, for the super-enthusiastic self-defense/close combat student there are some efficient toughening approaches that should be used if hardening of the **practical** weapons is desired.)*

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Brief #30: Analyzing The Combat Merits Of A System

(All of the martial arts are good; but they are not all good for the same thing. Very definitely, there are distinctive characteristics that make a system in question better for combat and personal defense than another system. This Brief provides the information needed to properly assess a given system’s value for combat — not for competition or tradition.)

\$4.

Brief #31: Repetition And Attitude: The Real “Secret” Of Developing Ability

*(Most who take up martial art training of any kind do not succeed in achieving their desired objectives. And the reason is simple: They do not do enough, and they do not do what they do with the right spirit and attitude. Ninety five percent of those who consider themselves “martial artists” spend more time on backyard-gossip type “forums” and other idiotic medium instead of **training hard with the right mindset**. Here’s how to do it right!)*

\$4.

Brief #32: The Moscow Rules

(Principles of intelligence tradecraft are extremely valuable to those who are serious about self-defense. During the Cold War secret agents working in the most difficult denied areas for CIA [and England’s MI6] were guided by an above-Top Secret set of rules called the “Moscow Rules”. Now declassified (but still in use by secret servants) these Rules are valuable for

all seriously concerned self-defense students. \$4.

Brief #33: *Tiger Moves*

(The late John McSweeney was a close friend and colleague of ours for many years. He is correctly known as “The Father of Irish Karate”, and in addition to being a marvelously practical and realistic teacher of armed and unarmed self-defense, John was the creator of a System of exercise which he called “Tiger Moves”. We recommend that everyone — including those who train with weights or some other medium — learn this excellent Program.) \$4.

Brief #34: *How To Evade Foot Surveillance*

(Tradecraft that teaches you how to ditch a tail; discover if you are being followed. Escape foot pursuit. How to do it for real.) \$4.

Brief #35: *How To Evade Vehicle Surveillance*

(Outside an intelligence training center this is the most detailed and complete exposition of the subject. Complements Training Brief #34, and is priceless information for self-defense in a modern urban setting.) \$4.

Brief #36: “*73 Rules Of Spycraft*”

*(After his death a paper by Allen Dulles (Head of CIA) was found among his effects. Titled “Some Elements Of Intelligence Work” this Document was an unpublished goldmine of tradecraft. Here it is reproduced in full. A marvelous companion to *The Moscow Rules*.) \$4.*

Brief #37: “*Going Gray*” (*Secrets Of Clandestinity*)

(In secret intelligence work it is often essential to “go gray”; that is, to become anonymous, low profile, uninteresting. The opposite of James Bond! This Brief explains how to do it for the private citizen who is concerned about autonomy, security, privacy, and

low-profile living.) **\$4.**

Brief #38: Secret Communications — Part 1

(The methods used by secret operatives to communicate securely may be of value to private citizens who are merely concerned about privacy, security, and protection. This is tradecraft the pros use!) **\$4.**

Brief #39: Secret Communications — Part 2

(Much more solid tradecraft enabling you to engage in secret communications with the efficiency of a trained intelligence officer!) **\$4.**

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(Methods employed by trained agents and underground warriors who fight in resistance to tyranny.) **\$4.**

Brief #41: Training Your Observational Skills

(Spies are taught to notice everything. You can learn to be as alert and observant as the finest secret agents, if you'll follow the guidance in this Training Brief.)

Brief #42: Urban Escape And Evasion

(Escaping from captivity is a fascinating aspect of tradecraft training for secret intelligence and special operations military people. It takes courage, fitness, resolve, ingenuity, and a mastery of that which is described in this Brief.) **\$4.**

Brief #43: Developing The Spy's Attributes

(In this turbulent 21st century when Western Civilization itself is being destroyed, the unconventional and unusual attributes of the secret intelligence agent can serve to equip the serious individual for survival by teaching him what history's great secret agents relied upon to survive and win while operating amidst hostile forces.) **\$4.**

Brief #44: Resisting Interrogation (Including The Polygraph)

(An encapsulation of all you need to know in order to effectively resist even professionally qualified interrogators — short of their using torture. And

the polygraph section will surprise you; the method works!) **\$4.**

Brief #45: *How To Manipulate Humans*

(Stop being manipulated and learn to manipulate those who seek to control or to use you by employing the tactics and tricks of intelligence professionals. Manipulation — used exclusively for self-protection and the safeguarding of that which is rightfully yours — is an important, valuable skill.) **\$4.**

These valuable Training Brief presentations are perfect compliments and supplements to our DVD Home Training Course and/or to any martial art you may be training in!

When Non-Violence And Passivity Is Evil

YEARS ago we had a fine student who at the time was a detective and SWAT officer with the Washington State Patrol. He has since left that Service and works for the U.S. State Department's Diplomatic Protection Service. A fine athlete and swimmer, he made Brown Belt before relocating to his new job.

One incident he described to us — completely unrelated to his daily work with the State Patrol — occurred when he and his wife were in attendance at a Bible study. For whatever reason the topic of violence arose and one of the individuals present actually had the temerity and audacity to say to our student that his work was immoral. Why?

Because it involved the use of deadly force on his part — if not always the application of deadly force, then the *threat* of bringing it into play.

We were appalled when we heard this. We offered the opinion that he and his wife should have gotten up, said nothing, and left. And, we added, *never* returned.

This was a classic example of a holier-than-thou a-hole mouthing off with self-righteous indignation, and proving thereby that he was a miserable little, rather creepish, *fool!*

Our student put his life on the line on a nearly daily basis, leading SWAT raids on crack houses, and arresting dangerous, armed felons. *Doing the kind of work that little bastards like the one at the Bible study would never dream of doing.* In fact, it is precisely that kind of little bastard who howls the loudest for *help* when he is in trouble, and who would expect armed police to rescue him if ever the need arose. Yet, this little bastard reserves for himself the prerogative of condemning the very type and quality of individual who is willing to risk his own life and save little helpless bastards with big, tactless mouths — like himself.

The world is full of jackasses like that little batard. It is very, very important that no student of self-defense ever allow himself to be criticized by such little bastards without walking away and *shunning* them, thereafter. How insulting! How outrageous! How **wrong!**

Certainly the need to use deadly force, or even less-than-deadly force against humans is regrettable. *But the need arises from time to time.* And rising to the occasion, whether as a uniformed protector of the community, or as a private citizen with *cujones*, is not an “evil” — nor is it even a “necessary evil”; it is a **necessity for those who comprehend reality and who think clearly.** To oppose unjustifiable force with defensive force in order to protect and to save the innocent is

a virtue. It is commendable. It is, in fact, the only thing that can be relied upon to save innocent people from violent attack, once a predator has decided to ply his trade.

When serious trouble and life-threatening emergencies arise we call the police . . . we do not call Pacifists, Unlimited. When a threat is immediate and there is no time to call the police, self-defense is called for. And, to put it bluntly: ***There is nothing whatever wrong or questionable about the intended victim of physical violation using whatever force he is able to employ, in order to defend himself or his loved ones. Stopping some impulse-dominated violent type is as MORAL and GOOD as any action can be.*** And as a student of self-defense, no matter what malarky the idiots around you — at work, at school, etc. — have to say to the contrary, the individual who acts with violence to stop a violent offender is on the side of the angels!

A while back there was a news story that just about any rational person would say was a tribute to one of the young men reported to have taken action in the story. At a high school, some piece of sh-t student actually struck a blind student. Immediately, another young man — one of the school's football players — charged in and knocked the attacker to the ground, rescuing the blind lad. Understandably, this incident made the news. We are not alone when we say that that young footballer is a genuine hero.

It came to our attention that the two boys — the blind boy and his rescuer — were to appear on the Dr. Phil Show. Not having a TV, we missed it. *But some time later we were advised that the episode would appear on YouTube.* We watched it.

What was wonderful was the opportunity to see the fellow who came to the blind boy's rescue, and then to hear the boy who had been rescued say that his rescuer "is his hero"; *his own words.*

What was sickening was the politically-motivated, socially palatable **bullshit reaction** of Dr. Phil. After giving what we felt was but lukewarm praise to the football player, and acknowledging that he did the right thing by coming to the aid of the blind boy, Dr. Phil was quick to point out — most emphatically — that using violence is always a bad solution, but one should stand up against bullies. Yeah, right.

The truth is, of course, that anyone of teenage years who punches a blind boy and knocks him down deserves to be beaten to a f—ing pulp! How cowardly and evil can you get? Like the sewage in NYC who was reported in the NY Daily News last month to have punched and broken the jaw of a 72 year old women. Why did he punch her? Well, according to the surveillance camera that caught the act, **THERE WAS NO REAL “REASON”, SAVE THE RATIONALIZATION THAT ANY FILTHY GUTTER ANIMAL-WHO-DOESN’T-DESERVE-TO-LIVE** comes up with. He was passing this poor lady and suddenly turned toward her and — slam!

Our feeling is that anyone who would punch an elderly person for no valid reason, such as self-defense, deserves to be strapped down in Old Sparky (the name given to the electric chair at Sing Sing Prison). For monsters who gleefully attack the blind, the infirm, the elderly, the very young, the peaceful, *overwhelming violence is the ONLY answer.*

Now, we probably will surprise some when we say that we are, and we ardently believe everyone should be, a **pacifist**. That is, *we believe that every rational person should be a pacifist until and unless he is attacked, or needs to protect someone else who is under attack.*

Anyone failing to use, or failing to *try* to use, force to defend against unjustified violence is at the very least a deluded fool. **It is not “moral superiority” that forbids a person to act in self-defense, or forbids him to extol the virtues of those who — as society’s protectors in law enforcement and the military — act with professionally-directed force in order to protect the innocent. It is confusion,**

botched thinking, incorrect and self-destroying values, and . . . well . . . flagrant *stupidity*.

By all means value and live by the code of reason and non-violence. As a martial arts student you should consider yourself sworn to that idea. But do not ever forget that violence is not at all infrequently required in this insane world, *because those who are not non-violent have no hesitation about using force whenever they please*. These creatures, from the schoolyard bully to the international terrorist, need to be stopped, and ***should*** be stopped, by the immediate, all-out, unhesitant employment of however much force is required to stop them. And doing ***that***, is virtuous and right. Not doing it constitutes evil.

"The truly dangerous man dresses inconspicuously and is soft-spoken. He walks away from most confrontations. The only time you learn that the truly dangerous man is mad at you is a split second before you die, for he never fights. He only kills. The truly dangerous man knows that fighting is what children do and killing is what men do."

- Charley Reese 1986

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— General George S. Patton, Jr.

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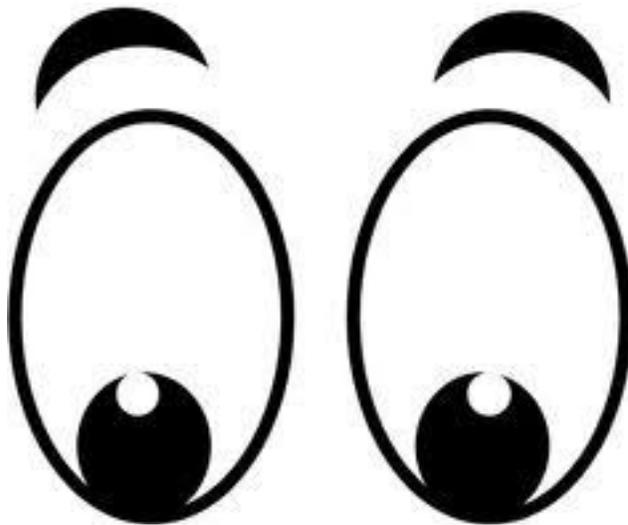
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Shortening The Gap

(One Key To Efficient Self-Defense)

ACTION is *always* faster than reaction. That is a law that must be understood by every student of self-defense and close combat. It becomes especially important when training in the martial arts of Asia, where “*never make the first move*”, and “*karate begins and ends with blocking*” dominates the tactical orientation of the programs.

Because we train solely for self-defense (except in cases where military persons are trained by us for war) we do not start trouble. Our **motive** and our **purpose** remains defense. However, an efficient defense is always based upon and rooted in *offense*; specifically offensive reaction to an enemy's or an attacker's offensive against us. We first noted and publicized this way back in the very early 1970's when we coined the admonition “***When attacked, attack the attacker!***”. Although this has caught on with a fairly large number of “instructors” since (who have touted it as being their own personal expression) very, very few truly understand the implications of this philosophy of self-defense, and how it must be applied in training.

In self-defense it is always the aggressor who makes the *literal* “first move”. This may be in the way of a very convincing verbal threat, followed by a sudden hand movement or body action; it could be when one or more obvious troublemakers block your exit and prevent you from leaving; it could be when someone initiates an obvious *assault*, moving on you, not yet making violent contact, but by his demeanor absolutely convincing you of his harmful intent. Then again it could be much more flagrant. Like a punk assuming a fighting stance within conversational distance of you, and addressing you aggressively. Or some lout making a clear attempt to punch you or kick you; or make a grab for your clothing or limb, etc.; or some invader attempting to force his way into your home.

No matter what specific form any attack against you may take, there are only two possibilities: 1. You will see and be aware of it coming, or 2.

You will not be aware of it until, for instance, you are seized from behind, kicked, punched, or otherwise violated.

The ideal defense when you are *aware* of the onslaught is to preempt it, forthwith. Blast into the attacker as he initiates his first move indicating danger to you, and **neutralize him**. The ideal defense when you have been caught off guard is to go into action *as soon as you possibly can*, usually attacking your enemy fiercely, and sometimes (as in the case of a seriously-applied chokehold against you) first defeating the enemy's initial movement and *then* attacking him without mercy.

There will always be a **gap** between the moment the attack against you begins (whether you are aware of it or not) and the moment that you go into your **preemptive** or **counterattacking** reaction. **Effective training in individual combat and defense must strive to minimize that gap until one's preemptive or counterattacking action occurs with the barest minimum of time delay.**

Please re-read that last sentence. The concept conveyed is vital to your being able to maximize your ability to defend yourself.

Yes, we are aware that our advocacy challenges the karate concept that defense properly “begins and ends with blocking”. Yes, the urging to “never make the first move” which many ju-jutsu systems teach is *not* acceptable to us. And we insist that its *literal* acceptance by students of self-defense **can be suicidal**.

Training in accordance with proper close combat tactics will avoid urging that a defender assume a “fighting stance” per se. Rather, a **READY** stance — a position of non-telegraphing preparedness to attack — must be mastered. Blocking is *not* a desirable (although it may sometimes be a necessary) first move against an attacker. *By far, preemption makes more sense!* Breaking holds such as wrist, arm, clothing, collar, and belt grabs *rarely makes any sense. Too slow. Too ineffective.* Instead, when seized in a manner where the grab imposed is

not injurious or threatening, react with an immediate attack using whatever is available that has not been grabbed, to devastate the assailant, For example: Just about any wrist grab (single or double) can be defended against instantly and reliably by kicking the opponent in the testicles, breaking his knee with a stomping kick, head butting him in the face, chin-jabbing him, or chopping him across the carotid artery with a handaxe blow. In case the softy in you is saying “That’s too severe a reaction against a mere grab of the kind you describe!” mark *this*, and mark it well: **There is no way to tell what the intention of the attacker is. Shootings, stabbings, kidnaps, rapes, serious beatings, and jaw-breaking punches will inevitably follow *any* grab or seizure by *any* serious assailant. DO NOT LET IT GET TO THAT! CLOSE THE GAP!** Go after anyone who moves in to violate you by destroying his entire goddamn day! Blast him with the kitchen sink, as it were, and you will prevent what starts out as a manageable attack from escalating into what could be your **murder!**

Forget about grappling and wrestling and sparring with the sonofabitch who sees you as grist for his mill. **Strike him! Strike fast, furiously, repeatedly, and with blows that knockout and maim . . . no sporting punches.** Remember something else about proper combat techniques:

IT IS MUCH EASIER TO SUCCESSFULLY JAB INTO A MAN’S EYES, STRIKE HIS NECK OR THROAT, OR BREAK HIS KNEE THAN IT IS TO ATTEMPT TO HOLD OR TO THROW HIM. BLOWS HIT INSTANTLY AND INTERFERE WITH THE ENEMY’S CONSCIOUS PERCEPTIONS; HOLDS ONLY ALERT HIM AND GIVE HIM THE CHANCE TO STRIKE *YOU!*

Heed what we say here, please. If the time ever comes when you need to do it for real, you will find that what we advocate *really does work!*

Leave the barest, minimal gap between any attacker's move, and your own devastating act of self-defense.

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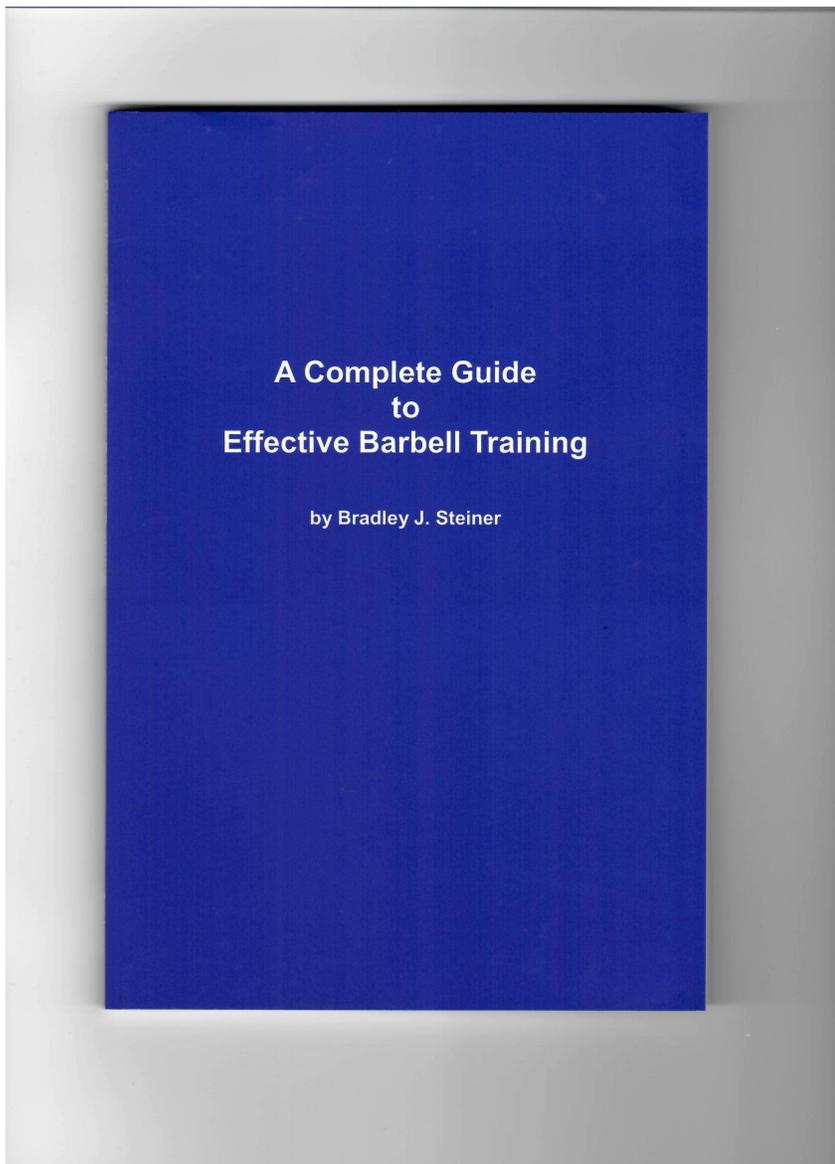
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