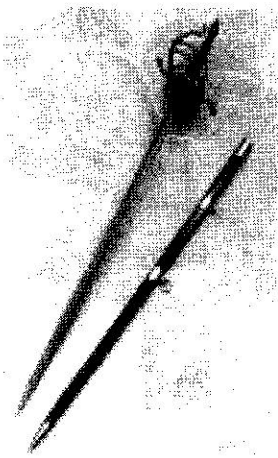
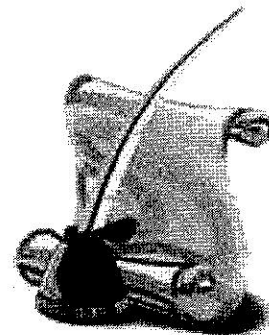


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# Sword and

# Pen



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*Official Newsletter of the International Combat Martial Arts Federation  
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## Editorial

### *“Learning” It Isn’t The Problem — Stupid!*

**E**VERY martial arts instructor who is worth anything has had (and doubtless is still having) this problem. We may well be the only one who is honest enough to forthrightly *state* it, however — and to identify it (and to identify the fact that **we recognize it!**) not merely to other “teachers”, but to students, as well. It goes like this:—

A student is taught a technique. If the system being taught is a rationally appropriate *practical* combat and defense system, then the technique is very *simple*. Because it is simple, the student feels that “he’s got it” pretty quickly. A few repetitions (so the student feels) and he’s *ready to learn something new*.

We confess unapologetically that we have felt the genuine urge to **KILL** more than a dozen times over the years, when confronted by this phenomenon. (Obviously, we confronted the matter with tact, diplomacy, and extreme patience and courtesy. But we *felt* like killing the individual.)

The fact of the matter is that no one (including, we emphasize, our **self**) has ever reached anything even remotely approaching an “adequate” level of development in the rendering of *any* technique. We say this because, absent a situation that we certainly hope never arises in which the technique must be — and is — applied

for real, there is just *no possible* way to determine that one has achieved an “adequate” level of development for employing the technique.

Do you know why martial arts books and DVD's are so popular? *Because it's fun to sit and read through a book or sit back and watch a presentation. It's **hard work** to train.* So, because people have always preferred that which is “fun” to that which demands *effort*, more copies of books and videos are sold every day, than are enrollments in actual training programs. And all of us who have been around the block a few times can tell you that *of those who do get off their asses and enroll for training, maybe (**maybe**) five per cent **stay the course**, and work incessantly in order to acquire and in order to **DEVELOP** and **MAINTAIN** real, functional **ability and skill**.*

We have always found that private lessons are infinitely more popular than group training classes. And, let us make this clear, private lessons are **The Best** way to learn — no doubt. However, we have also noticed something else: *While the typical student will usually attend and pay attention during a private lesson, he will conveniently ignore the fact (and it is a **FACT**) that if he doesn't get his lazy, worthless ass into hard training classes regularly, his “instruction”, despite the fact that it may have successfully taught him something, will have been entirely insufficient to **GIVE HIM PRACTICAL ABILITY**. Mere “learning”, when it comes to a physical art, skill, or process, is **not enough!** Functional ability only come from **LOTS OF PRACTICE**.*

The individual who “quickly learns” how to perform a technique should avoid the apparent tendency that so many seem to have to assume, therefore, that he is especially bright, and that “now he is ready to move on”. *Oh, how we would like to be issued a license to shoot those who — impatiently — “feel” that they are ready to advance because they “know what they've been taught” in previous lessons. **Of course they do!*** It's not because these fools are so damn bright . . . it's because everything that one is taught in a *good* system of close combat and self-defense is **SIMPLE**. A good combat technique may be learned in anywhere between five and twenty or so *minutes*. However, the full and “perfect” ability to **DO** that technique may never come. It certainly will not come for the arrogant snot-jerk who simpers and snivels and whines that he's *bored* because he's not learning anything “new”. *Get the hell to work — **REAL HARD WORK!** — on the techniques that you've been instructed in, and strive mightily to **master** those!*

Your teacher will tell you when you're "ready to learn something new", you lazy, imbecilic glob of uselessness!

A boxer "learns" the mechanics of basic boxing in a few weeks. *Real boxers*, however, train, and train, and train, and train *f-o-r-e-v-e-r*, and constantly strive to *master* the simple, few movements of boxing. Of those few who *do* train, and train, etc. in the few moves of boxing, fewer still become *champions*. Why? Not because a boxing champion "knows more" about boxing, and has "learned more" boxing skills; *but because a CHAMPION, in order to be a CHAMPION, has set himself on a grueling and unending PHYSICAL ROUTINE of hard, hard, hard work and effortful training.* The champion has **internalized** and **developed** his techniques so that he can **BOX**, and box a helluva lot better than almost anyone else!

If you want to master the art of self-defense and close combat, follow the boxer's example. **TRAIN**. Regard every technique and movement that you are taught as a valuable component of your growing repertoire; and realize that, *for any technique to actually become a part of your repertoire, you must work very long and hard to master it.* "Learning" the technique is only the first — and the easiest — step.

**BJS**

### **Is Knifework "Distasteful"?**

**"KNIFEWORK" is the term** that we use to refer to that which is commonly called "knife fighting". The term *knifework* was widely used during world war two, and is how one of our great teachers and associates, Col. Rex Applegate, referred to the subject. He in turn had apparently picked the designation up from *his* wartime teachers — William Fairbairn, and Eric Sykes.

Recently, in a telephone conversation with a prospective student, we heard something rather odd.

"What weapons do you teach in your System?" the prospective student asked.

"The modern individual weapons," we replied. "We teach students how to

use the short stick, the walking stick, the fighting knife, the handgun and shoulder weapons, the tomahawk, and unconventional or *'improvised'* weapons."

"The *fighting* knife?" came the prospective student's response. His voice was grave.

"Yes," we said simply.

"Well," came the individual's reply, "that's a pretty nasty type of weapon. I don't really think that learning how to use a *fighting knife* is appropriate for a *martial artist*" (**Note:— the caller's own voice placed emphasis on these words. We merely quote accurately.**)

"Why not?" we asked.

"Well," he began, almost indignantly, "only criminals use *knives* when they fight," he said (**Again: the caller's emphasis on that word, "knives".**)

"Actually, that's not true," we said. "Fighting knives have always been utilized in the military services. Special forces and commando type troops regard a knife as a basic combat tool. Even some law enforcement units go into action with most if not all of the members carrying a suitable fighting knife."

"Well . . . knives just seem *dirty* to me." (**Again: the individual's emphasis.**)

Realizing that we were now speaking to a male possessed of a more-or-less *female* type mentality (i.e. a mentality that does not require and that does not bother much with **facts, truth, or objectivity and realism**) we simply wound down the conversation politely,

"I'm sorry you feel that way," we said. "Perhaps you'd come to change your mind if you studied a bit into the subject," we continued. "After all, you already said that you've done considerable training with the *live blade* in your previous school of *aiki-jutsu*."

"Oh, the *samurai sword* is different!" came the reply. (We were pretty much anticipating this). "The sword is a *traditional martial arts weapon*. It has *historic and traditional significance*," the caller continued.

"I appreciate what you're saying," we said. "But in the exact same way the fighting knife has enormous significance. In fact, *it is a weapon that is as current and modern today, as it was thousands of years ago.*"

"Yeah," the caller said, "but this just doesn't sound like what I want to do. I want to learn self-defense in a more 'honorable' way . . . more in line with the '*warrior spirit*'."

"Well, I thank you for your call," we said. "I hope that you find what you're looking for. Good luck to you."

We never bother to engage in debates or arguments. We do wish to make it clear, however, for those who read our work and who look to us for instruction: **There is absolutely nothing especially “dirty”, “nasty”, or “foul” about using a fighting knife (or any knife!) in self-defense.**

Asian and Latin cultures have always been receptive to “cold steel” in personal combat and self-defense. Unfortunately, in Western European and American society, the *knife* holds “bad guy” connotations. This is ridiculous — really! — but nevertheless remains (as our caller proved) something that is for the most part an unchallenged, axiomatic “*fact*” for the majority of our citizens. *Even people who have studied so-called “martial arts” that include(!!!) edged weaponry of a traditional or classical kind.*

Do not fall for this drivel, please.

When considering what weapons ought to be studied for practical use **today**, do not dismiss the fighting knife! It is, as the great knifemaker John Ek so beautifully referred to it, a fighting man’s “*silent partner*”, and it is a lifesaver in hand-to-hand combat. We have emphasized to quite a number of U.S. servicemen whom we have trained, and who were preparing to deploy to the Middle East, that they should obtain a good fighting knife and *“never leave home without it”* once they are in their area of operation!

Fairbairn correctly referred to the knife as the *deadliest of all weapons in hand-to-hand combat*. He also correctly observed and taught, as we teach, today: *There is no certain defense against a knife.*

Certainly a knife is a terrifying weapon. It is capable (in capable hands) of speedily inflicting horrific wounds — of killing fast, in a fearsome, bloody way. *But that is what makes it a desirable weapon!*

Remember that our advocacy of the knife in modern close combat and self-defense training relates to the weapon’s efficiency, handiness, practicality, and ***psychological effect on the enemy***. It is a helluvan equalizer! And when a firearm is not at hand, and an enemy must be dealt with in an unavoidable emergency, it is far better to have a good fighting knife in your hand, than it is to rely upon unarmed combat skills — no matter *how* expert you may be with those unarmed skills.

About the only real objection that can rationally be raised in opposition to the use of a fighting knife in personal defense pertains to *legality*. We certainly **DO NOT** advocate the breaking of any laws at any time, by anyone. Thus, it may indeed be impossible for many of our readers to avail themselves of a fighting knife as a “carry weapon”.

Still, there is no law to our knowledge that prevents anyone from keeping a fighting knife at home or in one’s office. Doing so might save an innocent life should a home invader or other marauder intrude into and onto one’s lawfully controlled private premises.

Is the knife a “*distasteful*” weapon? Well, that depends upon your perspective. As far as *we* are concerned, we like knives and we appreciate their place — and their great *value* — weapons of personal combat and defense. We find them no more “distasteful” than firearms or bludgeoning weapons.

*Combat and violence* is, for us, **distasteful**. We would on no account *ever* raise even an empty hand against a human being unless it was absolutely necessary to do so in legitimate defense. That is the attitude we teach our students. That is, as far as we are concerned, the only attitude possible to a truly civilized human being.

We would no more wish to use a knife on anyone than we would wish to use a pistol or a tomahawk or a stick or a rock — or our bare hands. However, if the unavoidable defense of our self or, even more importantly, someone we love, was necessary, then we would not only use a *knife* to eliminate the threat, and use it with every ounce of our strength, will, and ability, but we would use (and **do**) ***anything***.

That’s real world self-defense. Perhaps *preparing* for such an eventuality is distasteful; but we deem it far more distasteful to contemplate the result of *not* being so prepared. And we cannot help but think with affection about *any* tool that might help us in such an emergency.

### **SWORD & PEN ON LINE**

**FOR** approximately 25 years *Sword & Pen* (this Newsletter) has been published and has been distributed to our students, friends, and associate teachers by “hard



copy” — at our School, and through the mail. With this issue we are placing the Newsletter on line, and providing whoever accesses this web site the opportunity to read the Publication every month. And it's **F R E E**.

By publishing on line we save the cost of printing, of mailing, and of envelopes. We also save ourself the rage and frustration of discovering discarded copies for whose production we had to spend money! To hell with that.

We appreciate that most people do not appreciate anything that's free. However, *some* people do. And is for those exceptional people, and *only* for those, that we spend the time and provide the material presented in *S&P* monthly,

By placing this Newsletter on line we can be sure that anyone with the desire to read it and with the brains to appreciate it will *have it*, at no cost. And while so doing — on line — we do not have to curse those who cavalierly ignore or discard the Newsletter, *at our expense*. “Our expense” is no more!

We hope you enjoy and benefit from our monthly musings.

### **“Non-Violent” Self-Defense**

**ONE of the greatest** frauds being perpetrated today in the so-called “martial arts” field is the promulgation of “humane” and “non-injurious” so-called self-defense. This crap is being successfully marketed because the people in our society have been psychologically hamstrung and emasculated. By brainwashing efforts the media and the school system have combined their influential powers to persuade an entire generation of *morons* that there is something wrong with knocking out, maiming, or — when absolutely necessary and legally justifiable — *killing*, in unavoidable self-defense.

That most non-martial of “*martial arts*”, aikido, has been for decades now, selling itself to a mindless yuppified sea of braindeads as a method of combat(?) by which the combatant(?) can defend himself without being “either victim or victor”. If you *believe* that this is possible (let alone, for some obscure reason, desirable) you belong in a strait jacket. (Note:— **In fairness we will say that aikido's founder, Morihei Uyeshiba *never* espoused the art that he created as either a “combat” system, or as a “self-defense method”, per se. It has been the wishful thinkers, the idiots, and the commercializers who have taken a**

most beautiful and worthwhile study — aikido — and misled a self-defense-seeking-public into believing that there was now a way to handle dangerous, fierce attacking felons “*without using force*” and “*without inflicting permanent or serious injury*”.)

As far as being able to defend yourself or someone else against violence attack get this, and get it straight: *There is no “nice” or “sanitized” or “pleasant” or “non-violent” or “peaceful” or whatever-the-hell-you-care-to-call-it method.* This is one of the many reasons why sane, civilized, decent, and rational human beings go to extremes to *avoid* violence and to *avoid* trouble. **There’s no way out of it, once it erupts, other than by the use of *greater* violence!**

However . . . the concept of “nonviolent self-defense” is not entirely wrong. If you wish to know how to defend yourself against the obnoxiousness and the despicable behavior that is a kind of *psychological* “sport” with too damn many people, then the concept has validity. Once a hand is raised against anyone in unjustifiable violence, then ***force of an overwhelming kind is the answer, and it is the ONLY answer***; but when *obnoxiousness* is thrust upon you (as it is upon all of us, from time to time, in this most disappointing world).

How can you keep your cool and your temper when some rude slob intrudes upon your space — bulldozing ahead of you on line, snatching a parking space, cutting you off in traffic, making a wisecrack that is disrespectful and offensive, cracking an unfunny “joke” at your expense, etc. etc. ad nauseum — and makes you, often quite literally, want to **KILL** him?

Certainly, in such contexts, violence is never the answer. *Not* because you would be “wrong” or “immoral” for unleashing savage fury and destruction upon such living debris, but because doing so is **illegal**. *You can get into trouble if you smash in the face and break the kneecap of that smartass at work who makes some untoward remark about you.* So . . . don’t do it. Handle the situation, but handle it **non-violently**, and handle it in a way that enables you to avoid any and all negative repercussions for yourself.

In our lifetime we have never found the counsel of anyone more helpful than that of the late Dr. Albert Ellis. If ever there was anyone who could teach people how to deal with the incredible amount of s—t that they had to deal with when interacting with their “fellows”, then it was the good Dr. Albert Ellis — founder



of *Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy*.

We knew and corresponded with Dr. Ellis for many years. In fact, we have incorporated his methods of therapeutic treatment into the way in which we teach certain aspects of mental conditioning for personal protection and combat. Ellis was a genius and, in our opinion, a truly great man.

We shall close this *Sword & Pen* by recommending two excellent books to you:

1. *The New Guide To Rational Living*,

and

2. *How To Master Your Fear of Flying*

. . . both by Dr. Albert Ellis.

The first book is *The Masterwork* for anyone wanting and needing a practical guide to overcoming the problems that life (and that *people*) throw in his path. We cannot recommend this book too highly!

The second book is a virtual goldmine of advice and information on how to master not merely your “fear of flying”, but **any** fear, if you really want to learn how to master it!

Doesn't sound related to close combat and self-defense? Try it. Read the books. See if they do not assist your development of a stronger, healthier, more disciplined and powerful psyche. *And that contributes immensely to your ultimate combative and defensive capabilities — not only in physical confrontations, but in the “battle” that is Life.*

Until next month . . . train hard,

— E N D —