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# Sword and Pen

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

## EDITORIAL

### *Why "American Combato"?*

**W**E recently were asked by a correspondent "how we would define" our System — American Combato (Jen•Do•Tao)<sup>TM</sup>. Apparently participating in some "forum" this fellow had read someone's (rather absurd) dissertation concerning what he (someone who had never met us nor ever studied our System) had decided American Combato "is". This "commentator" apparently (and absurdly, and ignorantly!) further proclaimed that on our web site our title of "SHINAN" was obviously a misspelling, and really should be "SHIHAN".

SHIHAN is a classical/traditional upper-level belt ranking in numerous martial arts. SHINAN — which is NO "MISSPELLING" — is the correct,

proper, and appropriate title for the Founder or Originator of a System — which we most assuredly are.

Hopefully our readers now see why we refuse to participate in on-line "forums" or "discussions" — or to respond by posting material on them. A friend reported the "shihan/shinan" thing to us, and both of us laughed at the abysmal ignorance and literal asininity of those who pontificate with an air of authority without even knowing what they are talking about! Their shallowness is matched only by those who pay attention to them in these ongoing (and pointless) on-line "discourses". That old saying of "The blind leading the blind" comes to mind — except in some cases "deaf" and "dumb" must obviously be added to the old saw to apply it fully in these cases!

My personal response to the individual who had asked us the question (NOT a response that I would waste time on giving to the forum participants) follows. We respect and appreciate respectful visitors to our site who read SWORD & PEN, and therefore we wish to share our reply with THEM:—

"What is going on amongst those who — not knowing me, my System, or anything firsthand about either — presume to "define" it, is essentially semantic game-playing (or idle gossip).

"Of course AMERICAN COMBATO (JEN•DO•TAO)<sup>TM</sup> is an "eclectic" System — in a sense. It is also, of course, a "reality-based" System — in a sense. But it is much more than both of those things, combined.

"American Combato is a unique, modern, comprehensive martial art, in the strict and literal sense of the meaning of the word MARTIAL. That is:

"OF OR PERTAINING TO WAR". It is an Art of personal self-defense that draws upon proven war-fighting methods of man-to-man combat as well as the cream of classical/traditional methodology — from Eastern and Western sources. It is an Art of military close combat. It is an Art that entails the use of all known methods of EFFECTIVE offensive and defensive individual battle and combat survival, with and without modern personal weapons. It is also an Art that bases its philosophical teachings on rational, ARISTOTELIAN-based philosophy, as opposed to that Platonic/really Asian, mysticism (derived from the Orphics of ancient Greece) that permeates most so-called "martial" arts. American Combato is also a System that makes full and complete use of modern methods of physical training and of mental conditioning (including but not limited to hypnosis). It is a unique System, and although words that are in common (and, I would add, rather loose) usage today in the so-called "martial arts field" may in some ways be thought to describe it, they fall short when one appreciates that which these words — in their most common and popular usage today, and in this field — reference."

That's the end of that. We have no intention of elaborating further. It is interesting, however, that those who train seriously with us for even a short period of time somehow "get it"; they miraculously "figure out" how our all-combat comprehensive System is best defined. Hmm. Imagine that.

Had we found what we were looking for when we were new to the martial arts, we never would have spent the time, done the research, undertaken the effortful physical and mental work, or gone from system to system and from teacher/school to teacher/school. We would have been delighted to have found an all-combat, no nonsense, non-sporting, non-classical, comprehensive armed and unarmed combat art that trained mind, body, and spirit properly and thoroughly for the task of winning in close combat and self-defense emergencies. But we didn't find such a system. And since

that is what we were after, we were left with no choice but to develop such a system, ourself.

And we did.

AMERICAN COMBATO (JEN•DO•TAO)<sup>TM</sup> was formally founded in 1975. It has given rise to a number of imitators, and it has inspired serious changes in the way legitimate teachers of such traditional arts as karate and ju-jutsu do things, when teaching personal combat.

We did not develop this System as an ego satisfaction, or in order to cash in on the martial arts market. We have never made a great deal of money doing that which we do, and we have NEVER compromised our philosophy or the integrity of our System — for anyone or for anything. We have made and had some wonderful friends over the years — some of whom have remained close friends, many of whom have grown apart from us (with no hard feelings on either side), and some of whom, regrettably, proved to be that form of toxic human bilge that never was a friend in the first place, and that one can only excise forever from one's life, when once one discovers what they in fact really are.

Our System replaces nothing, and we make no claim that our System is "better" than any other system or style of martial training — we only maintain that it is unique, and that it will offer some individuals that which they are looking for. Our system is suitable for those requiring COMBAT training. And therein lies its value (and therein it is of ENORMOUS value). But Judo, ju-jutsu, taekwon-do, Okinawa-te, kenpo-karate, etc. and so on are all more than likely going to continue to be much more popular and in demand than American Combato, and that is fine with us. In fact, no one respects, admires, and appreciates the values that are to be derived

from the study and practice of all of those legitimate martial arts and ways, than our self.

But for practical self-defense and only practical self-defense; for hand-to-hand combat and for armed personal defense in the military, private, intelligence, or law enforcement sectors, we've "got something here". And it is GOOD.

Through our studies of ju-jutsu, taekwondo, varmannie, karate, kenpo-karate, boxing, rough-and-tumble ("street") fighting, and weaponry, we have had the good fortune to discover really excellent techniques and skills that, when combined logically with other excellent skills from other sources, and — ultimately — when blended with the formidable WWII methods of close combat, and when taught with the best methods of mental conditioning, produce a first-rate solution to the modern civilized person's need for a practical, complete, readily learnable, retainable, and reliable system of close combat and self-defense.

That is the "why?" of American Combato. It was developed, has been refined, and is practiced and taught as a close combat and self-defense System. And that is what it is.

Plain and simple.

Bradley J. Steiner

## **The U.S. Army's Special Forces Wakes Up And DUMPS MMA/Cage Fighting!**

THE distinguished combat judo expert and Founder of the Ju Te Ryu System — a longtime teacher of practical self-defense — Mike Blackwell, was kind enough to forward the following news story to us. It is self-explanatory. Please read it carefully and let others know about it by sending them a copy!: This is the kind of news that serious individuals looking for the real world approach to personal defense and close combat need to see! (Oh, yes, and by the way . . . when you read the story you'll notice that much of that which these warriors seem now to be just awakening to, amounts to an indirect acknowledgment of the validity of that material written and taught by US, during the last 20+ years: we told you so!)

For our readers' information:

Source for the following: "Sine Pari: U.S. Army Special Operations Command" web site. Sine Pari is described as follows:

"FORT BRAGG, N.C. (USASOC News Service) — The U.S. Army Special Operations Command Public Affairs Office recently published the online version of its previously discontinued print magazine, the Sine Pari.

"The Sine Pari is a command information resource featuring news from around the USASOC community. It was recently made separate from the USASOC News Service site, a hard news site aimed at providing up-to-date and accurate information to the media.

"The USASOC News Service is also available to users of mobile devices through the UNS Mobile web site."

FORT LEWIS, Wash. (Courtesy of 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne) Public Affairs Office, Feb. 8, 2008) – For Special Forces Soldiers, there are a few things that are just part of everyday life: shooting, airborne operations, studying foreign languages and cultures, teaching foreign soldiers and combat-focused combatives training.

The techniques of the current Modern Army Combatives Program are essentially mixed-martial arts techniques that are certainly effective in individual cagefights and tournaments. However, these techniques may not be the best available for actual combat situations where Soldiers wear full battle kit. A full kit usually includes a helmet, body armor, weapons and tools.

It was with this in mind that leaders within the unit began using their own experiences and knowledge to develop a fighting program called "Defanging the Serpent."

"About 6 years ago (at 1st SFG's 1st Battalion in Okinawa), then-Lt. Col. Wendt came to me about developing a combatives program," said Chief Warrant Officer Maurice K. Duclos, co-founder of the program.

"Together, in 2002, we came up with 30 standard moves that were learned by the entire 1st battalion."

After developing the initial program with Wendt, Duclos set out to continue to improve the system.

"I was thinking, 'what did we miss, what could we have done better,'" Duclos said. "Based on operational experiences and feedback, I started to come up with a plan to make what we have better."

"We started out with 30 good moves, but they were "martial arty" and didn't necessarily pertain to our job," Duclos said.

In 2006, Duclos was tasked again by Wendt to develop another system that could be used by all the Soldiers of the 1st SFG. By this time, Wendt had been promoted to colonel and is the current commander of the Group.

The current program has a much better developed strategy and does not require students to learn a lengthy series of moves, said Duclos.

"In developing this program, we wanted to stick to 'most likely to happen' scenarios and moves that are high-percentage payoff," Duclos explained.

Wendt agreed, saying the moves in the updated program are more likely to be used by Soldiers conducting operations.

"We want Soldiers trained in combatives techniques that work in confusing combat situations," said Wendt. "Cage fighters are very tough individuals with great techniques for that venue, but we are not training our Soldiers to be cage fighters in a one-on-one match or tournament."

He further explained that 1st SFG Soldiers work "through, by and with" the populations of countries when deployed.

"Because we operate in these situations, it is important to know highly effective techniques in a system designed specifically for these combat situations," Wendt explained. "'Defanging the Serpent' is a system that can be used by Soldiers who are wearing their full battle kit in situations that require different levels of lethality against single or multiple



opponents. In other words, it is a system designed precisely for what our Soldiers face when deployed."

His thoughts were shared by more junior members of the unit.

"I love the command emphasis on combatives in Special Forces," said Pfc. Shawn M. Carson, a support Soldier in the Group, and one of the graduates of the first-ever 1st Special Forces Group combatives instructor course. "I feel much more confident."

Carson, who wrestles in a Seattle-based club during his off time, compared the current Army program to the unit's.

"The Modern Army Combatives program pales in comparison to what we got here (in 1st SFG)," Carson said. "This system is all about preparing Soldiers for real combat situations instead of cagefighting. There is no comparison."

Wendt added his own thoughts, saying that he is very pleased with the 'Defanging the Serpent' program.

"Our Soldiers are further developing the ability to either diffuse an operational situation with a small amount of force, or escalate the amount of force to be used as required, up to and including how to close with and subdue or destroy the enemy," said Wendt. "Fully combat-functional combatives training of this type is time well spent."

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And before we move on, please consider and share with others the following quotation from an excellent article by former U.S. Army Special Forces soldier Andrew Curtiss. Curtiss is a professional MMA athlete and a black belt in Tae Kwon Do and Kenpo. Mr. Curtiss has over 24 years wrestling experience and has kickboxed for 15 years.

"The last thing a soldier wants to do in close quarters combat is injure him/ her self or be on the ground and especially on their backs. Unarmed combat is a SURVIVAL skill. It is a last ditch effort to regain a weapon and survive. There are no weight classes, time limits, rounds or rules and therefore mixed martial arts techniques are poor choices to train soldiers in."

We again must thank Mike Blackwell for bringing the Ezine Article from which we have quoted the brief statement above to our attention.

## **Mental Conditioning: If You Won't Your Attacker Will**

DECENT human beings do not like to fight. Reasonable people do all that is possible to avoid physical violence, and one mark of a savage (a category into which violent criminals, troublemakers, and anyone who is inclined to get physical without objective justification fall neatly into) is that his mindset, lifestyle and conduct reflect the following psychological syndrome:

- He tends to enjoy physically assaulting and dominating others — and he is of the conviction that violence is really a good "solution" when one is

displeased with other people for any reason, or frustrated by them in any way

- He tends to believe that there is justification for him personally to physically assault and batter, or otherwise terrorize others, whenever disagreements or disputes arise, or whenever he observes or confronts behavior or ideas that conflict with his own. Often, he sees little wrong with the idea of using violence to take property that belongs to others; his only concern being how to get away with the act
- He possesses extremely poor impulse control (much like an animal) and "just gets violent" whenever he "feels like it". Unlike a rational human being, the savage often "feels like it", and the savage takes that feeling as full and complete justification for becoming violent.

Precisely why some people are this way is an interesting psychiatric or psychological question. The problem is: Some people are this way. And whenever a civilized human being finds himself targeted by such a creature he is in imminent danger.

One of the big problems in developing the ability to defend oneself is developing the psychological "set" that enables one to maintain a **READINESS** to go into "war mode" and to physically stop a dangerous aggressor in whatever manner one must, and to achieve and to maintain a **WILLINGNESS** to do so. The two are related, but they are not identical.

"Readiness" refers to that state of physical, tactical, and mental "equipping" by which one has learned the mechanics of combat, and has developed practical skill and ability in the use and application of such skill and ability. In other words, the individual who is "ready" **CAN** do it.

"Willingness" refers to that mindset, established and "in place" that assures with reasonable certainty that when and if it ever becomes necessary to do so, one will unhesitantly use whatever one must in order to neutralize a dangerous attacker. In other words, the individual who is "willing" WILL do it.

Proper training in any form of personal defense, with or without weapons, must address this matter of readiness and willingness, because without it, physical skill can be irrelevant. After all, if you are in possession of a loaded handgun but are not technically able to employ it properly, you lack the readiness to use it. And if you are deficient in the mindset that enables you to shoot someone immediately, when a life-threatening emergency demands that some lethal felon be shot in order to prevent him from murdering either yourself or another innocent person, you lack the willingness to use it. For all practical purposes, were you to be thus deficient, your possessing a loaded firearm would do you little good. Being "armed" in such a case, would mean literally nothing.

Most people who take to the study of self-defense do have some inclination toward becoming genuinely ready and willing to act when and if they must. However, a surprising number who gravitate toward certain martial arts lack even a minimal inclination to that mental and physical state, and they believe — incorrectly — that merely by learning physical movements they will be able to defend themselves. This is not true.

Many who are to a degree "ready and willing" are not SUFFICIENTLY SO. They tend to fudge. Their motives may be honorable (ie they hate violence, they do not want to injure someone, they wish to be "absolutely certain" that causing serious injury to another is totally necessary and

justified, etc.) but motives — honorable or not — do not alter FACTS. Thus, when confronted by a dangerous attacker, they HESITATE, and in consequence their skill and mindset, such as they possess either one or both, does them no good.

Here, hopefully, is the wake up call some people need:

WHILE YOU, AS A CIVILIZED AND INNOCENT PERSON BEING VICTIMIZED BY A DANGEROUS CRIMINAL ASSAILANT MIGHT NOT BE PREPARED TO RUTHLESSLY KNOCK OUT, BLIND, MAIM, CRIPPLE, OR KILL HIM (IE THE ASSAILANT) HE MOST CERTAINLY IS QUITE PREPARED TO DO THIS TO YOU! SO, IF YOU NEED TO DEFEND YOURSELF AGAINST SUCH A MONSTER, HE WILL HAVE THE UPPER HAND EVERY TIME BY VIRTUE OF HIS POSSESSION OF A MINDSET THAT YOU DO NOT HAVE.

We have no time for or interest in "toughguys". People who enjoy conflict — physical or otherwise — tend often to be at root quite cowardly, and are in any case, by our standards, less than fully human. (We do not refer, when we say this, to legitimate combative sports participants. Judo and karate competitors, kick boxers, wrestlers, and boxers operate in a wholly different venue than our self. We are a combat arts professional and a self-defense teacher. We respect those who train for sport, but that is not what we do, and it is a separate matter). What we wish to emphasize here is the need for anyone who aspires to be able to defend himself to work hard at that mental conditioning that is so necessary for the realization of his goal.

If you are nonviolent and do not wish to hurt others, good for you! But consider that the context of an emergency, when some extralegal swine

has decided that he will victimize you regardless of your nonviolent preferences, then it behooves you to transform yourself — to be ABLE to transform yourself — into a vicious, ruthless, unmerciful combatant. If you do not do so, there is virtually no chance that you will be able to handle a serious aggressor. You might be a technically expert practitioner of a legitimate martial art. That's not the point. The techniques might be effective — potentially. But unless you are READY and WILLING to ferociously and relentlessly go into action and take the battle into the enemy's camp (as Fairbairn put it) you are operating, if you "operate" at all, at greatly reduced efficiency.

We realized, back in the 1960's as a student of ju-jutsu and karate, that while these arts were worthy, beautiful, and somewhat applicable to self-defense, the crux of the issue when a real attack comes, is MINDSET; and proper mindset was either not addressed in classical/traditional training at all, or it was addressed in the context of winning matches, which is a kind of mental conditioning quite different from that which is required for winning in combat.

See a violent aggressor as a TARGET, not as a human being. Condition yourself to attack his eyes, his throat, to break his leg, or otherwise seriously maim him the moment you perceive yourself to be in imminent danger of serious injury. Cultivate remorselessness. This should be easy, but isn't for some people. Consider that — a) You did not ask for the situation that now threatens you or yours, and b) There is absolutely no objective reason on earth to care even slightly about the damage that anyone who attacks you ends up suffering. HE STARTED IT. YOUR WELL-BEING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN A TROUBLEMAKER'S. TO HELL WITH HIM.

We cannot say if the question is standard any more, but we can say that we knew it to be standard some years ago, when the live interview portion of a prospective police trainee's screening process was given: "HOW WOULD YOU FEEL ABOUT USING YOUR SIDEARM AND ACTUALLY SHOOTING SOMEONE, IN THE LINE OF DUTY?" The exact wording varied, of course; but that was essentially the question.

While no police department wants to hire anyone who is inclined to resort to lethal force under less than extreme, emergency conditions, there is no police department anywhere that knowingly hires anyone who feels that he "couldn't" bring himself to shoot someone! Why? Because the truth is that some people need to be shot in order to stop them from doing something horrible. And if and when a law enforcement officer finds himself in a situation where in fact he cannot bring a situation to conclusion either peacefully or with some lesser degree of force, THEN HE MUST BE CAPABLE OF TAKING AN OFFENDER'S LIFE. Period. There's no "nice" way to say it or to do it.

And the exact same thing applies to every student of personal self-defense and close combat. Be like a GOOD police officer: Never use any level of force if peaceful means remain open to you to resolve any situation. Try to use means other than force whenever and for as long as possible.

However, when it becomes clear to you that one or more others is unamenable to either settling something peacefully or permitting you to disengage and leave the scene without further discord, HAVE NOT THE SLIGHTEST QUALM ABOUT DOING WHATEVER INJURY MAY BE NECESSARY TO YOUR ATTACKER(S), AND DOING IT IN THE MOST VICIOUS, UNDERHANDED, FEROCIOUSLY MERCILESS MANNER POSSIBLE. ONLY SAVAGES PREFER TO USE VIOLENCE, AND WHEN THEY DO, SUCH SAVAGES DESERVE TO

**REAP THE FULL CONSEQUENCES OF THAT WHICH THEIR OWN OUTRAGEOUS AND EVIL ACTIONS BRING ABOUT!**

When you go to war, you go to WIN. Any way you can or must. The enemy, never forget, intends fully to do whatever he can or must to achieve the violation and destruction of YOU; and that is his intended purpose.

You may not be willing to destroy an attacker. But you can bet your life on this (and many have bet foolishly before you, and have as a result lost their lives by betting wrong!) **YOUR ATTACKER IS PERFECTLY WILLING TO DESTROY YOU!**

Let the full message sink in.

## **Analyze Yourself**

WE believe that every teacher who is fully competent recognizes this about his students: Each one is radically different from the others. Those individuals who think and who reflect intelligently upon themselves and upon their own propensities versus the propensities of others, realize that they are unique (as all others, in their own ways, are unique, also). In some ways training in the martial arts often tends to neglect acknowledgment of this fact, and consequently affords very little practical benefit for a large number of those who participate in them.

The rigidity of technical performance standards ("There is only one 'right way' to do it!") does not do as much harm when training participants of the classical/traditional or the sporting/competitive martial arts, as it does when training participants in the combat/defensive martial arts. In this last



case, which is the one that we personally are concerned and involved with, the cost of failing to accommodate unique physiological propensities can be very serious. Finding it difficult to do a move (classical/traditional) or not winning a contest (sporting/competitive) may be irksome; but not being able to stop a dangerous attacker is much worse.

Combative engagements are unforgiving. No one wins because his techniques "look good", and no one wins any "rematch". In close combat it is now or never!

There are certainly good techniques and poor techniques, as far as combat and self-defense is concerned. But each student — and this means you, too, if you are a combat and/or self-defense student — must do a lot more than "learn the best techniques". That is step one, in the physical training and learning process. Step two (which, in a properly run school, is really integral to step one) is the individual adaptation of the good techniques to each student, personally.

Your teacher, assuming that he really is a professional, will be cognizant of your personal strengths, weaknesses, and unique idiosyncratic requirements and propensities as you train under him. Once you've been seriously at training for six to eight months or so, your teacher will know a lot about what you, as an individual, can and cannot do best, and where and where not you should be focusing your attention in skills and tactics acquisition.

But that is not enough. YOU have to take yourself in hand, as it were, and analyze yourself as you train and develop.

If you cultivate the habit of introspection, of always checking how you as a unique individual are adjusting to any new techniques that you are being taught (or perfecting old techniques — or perhaps failing to perfect them, etc.) then you will certainly have placed yourself on the road toward greater progress and development.

We find that even with white belt beginners, after a month or so of training they begin — if encouraged — to gravitate toward "molding" that which they have been taught to themselves. Some beginners LOVE the chinjab. Others love the handaxe blow. Some students find that a particular low kick works beautifully for them, while another would as soon leave it off training entirely. And so on.

Naturally, students must submit to fairly stringent discipline during the initial year or two of training, since as beginners there may be a technique or two that they will come to love as they develop it and train. However, from the earliest days in training until, if they elect to work toward it, they acquire their first degree black belt, our students are encouraged to **PAY ATTENTION TO THEIR OWN SENSE OF THAT WHICH WORKS BEST FOR THEMSELVES, AND TO THE PARTICULAR STRATEGIES AND TACTICS OF CLOSE COMBAT THAT THEY FEEL MOST NATURALLY CAN BE APPLIED AND EMPLOYED BY THEMSELVES.**

All really good, effective self-defense and close combat techniques are **GROSS** body movements and actions. That is, since the stress of combat precludes the individual's employment of fine motor articulations, the smart student — and teacher — wisely omits such techniques and emphasizes that which works under combat conditions of stress, chaos, confusion, and desperation — as well as rage, fear, and hatred. Like it or

not, these are the phenomena that manifest involuntarily when the battle is "for keeps", Gross body movements are readily modified and adapted. There is MORE than one "right way" to do them; and it is the task of each individual student, with the help and guidance of a professional who knows what he is doing, to build a unique "personal" combative repertoire.

There is nothing magical, mysterious, or secret about close combat and self-defense. The task of achieving practical proficiency depends upon emphasizing the RIGHT skills, first and foremost, while acquiring the combat mindset, and then upon tailoring those skills to yourself through self-knowledge, hard training, and will power. It is never an overnight process; but it is a logical and definable process; and if you'll approach it in the proper manner, the process will work for YOU.

Start at once, if you have not already begun to do so, to think of yourself as being, to an extent, your own teacher. What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses? Have you certain experiences in your background that have taught you something about close combat? Are there people in your life who have had such experiences, and with whom you might discuss things that can assist your development. Which techniques do you feel most confident with? Do you find that by modifying one or another technique you can make it more effective for yourself than it is "as taught"? What has your own personal sports or exercise experience taught you about your physical capabilities?

There are a hundred other questions that might be profitably asked during the ongoing process of self-analysis and self-development. Do not fail to ask them — and then, carefully considering all that you are learning and have learned about yourself, answer them.

## **Both Customers And Students**

WE suspect that every reader who is a dedicated teacher of any experience in the martial arts can relate to what we are now discussing: i.e. the difference between a "customer" and a "student".

We have been teaching since the 1960's and we love it. We have, all told, trained what has more than likely been in excess of 10,000 individuals personally, to some degree, in classes, lessons, seminars, specially prepared military and law enforcement courses, etc.. We hope that, through our books and articles in the martial arts, bodybuilding, firearms, security, survival, and paramilitary areas we have reached and influenced for the good, many more, in addition to those whom we have (we hope!) benefitted via personal instruction.

When we say that we have taught this rather large number of individuals we must add, unfortunately, that only a very precious few have been true STUDENTS, in the way that we, personally, think the designation applies. We use the term "unfortunately" here, speaking only from our own subjective and wishful standpoint, considering what we personally like the most (which is the pleasure of acquiring students, rather than customers). In not the slightest way do we intend the term "customer" to be derogatory!

Every teacher, ourself included, loves students. We have perhaps been more fortunate than is typical in that we have enjoyed having a considerable number of genuine students over the years, in addition to the inevitable body of customers.

Customers are a great, and we fully appreciate and respect them. These are people who, not being particularly serious about training per se, but wishing to acquire "basic self-defense, and that's all" will never train for that long a period of time, and frankly will not need to train for that long a period of time. They come, take that which they wish to acquire from the Art that we teach, pay the cost of training, and then go their own way. We respect these people, appreciate their motives, are grateful that they came to us, and we always work as hard for and with them when they are with us as we do for our most devoted and loyal long-term students.

But students constitute our greatest personal reward in teaching. These are people who train very seriously with us, usually until they become black belt level practitioners of American Combato, and what is more, they **STICK WITH THE ART**, keeping it as an important part of their lives for their entire life. These people are, additionally, loyal friends. Friendship always tends to arise naturally when a mutuality of interests and a kindredness in philosophies, combine with a mutual deep respect for one another.

Have we had any bad experiences with people? Nothing significant enough to dignify by mention in this Newsletter. We have been very fortunate in this regard, too. We have been teaching a long, long time, and we focus our thoughts, attention, and efforts solely on that overwhelming number of people who have come to us — some remaining as students, and others, leaving as much-appreciated customers — and whom we consider it having been a privilege, an honor, and a pleasure to have served — and to continue to serve.

All too often, we feel, otherwise good teachers of the martial arts tend not to fully appreciate how important are those who, as customers of that

which the teacher has to offer, are every bit as important to the teacher while they are with him, as are his completely dedicated, long-term students. These people, quite properly enrolling for that amount of instruction that fulfills their personal requirements only, and not wishing to be "martial arts devotees" per se, deserve respect, the full abilities of the teacher with whom they enroll, and appreciation.

Just a thought for the teachers who follow SWORD & PEN.

## **The "Non-Lethal" Weapon Question**

OUR position, with apologies to no one, is that modern lethal weapons are properly integral to all close combat and self-defense training that is worthy of the name. Weapons have always been part and parcel of the martial arts, with unarmed combat being, in reality, the least desirable way in which one would be expected to engage an enemy. After all, to remind anyone who may have forgotten, MARTIAL arts are ARTS OF WAR. To exclude the appropriate weaponry of the times — whether those weapons be swords, maces, spears, or bows and arrows (during feudal times), or handguns, fighting knives, and shotguns (un this 21st century) — is absurd. The martial arts (NOT THE MARTIAL "SPORTS") have as their purpose survival in combat. For the military man, this means the battlefield. For the law enforcement officer, this means street patrol. For the private citizen this means anywhere trouble may find him — at home, at work, at play, or ANYWHERE!

A very popular item today is that category of so-called "weapons" that go by the designation "non lethal weapons". They are extraordinarily popular with precisely that type of individual who needs to become trained and

educated in LETHAL weaponry; i.e. the rather soft yuppiesh soul who finds violence so vulgar and crass, yet who believes that the ever-present threat of its perhaps intervening into his own "non violent life" these days, makes it desirable for him to do something . . . "just in case". But he could never, mind you, actually "kill" or "cripple" anyone! No. Not him.

The absurdity that passes for acceptable "self-defense" measures in the statistically average adult's mind(?) today is startling. "Non injurious unarmed defense skill", "Humane tactics of controlling assailants", and "Non-lethal weaponry". What foolishness.

When a predatory felon targets his prey he hardly gives a moment's thought to being "careful" and "considerate" about the amount of injury he inflicts. His concern is to GET WHAT HE WANTS, AND THEN TO GET AWAY!

The victim of any violent atrocity whose concern is both to defend himself and not to "hurt" the individual against whom he is conducting the defensive action "too badly" is — putting it as politely as possible — UNREALISTIC, IN THE EXTREME.

First and foremost, everyone should understand that "non lethal weapons" of the type that are available to private citizens over the counter or through the mail (and even, in most cases, of the type that law enforcement organizations utilize!) ARE NOT RELIABLE OR EFFECTIVE AGAINST THE MOST DANGEROUS AND DETERMINED PHYSICAL ATTACKERS. And these types are, let us hasten to remind everybody, the ones against whom a means of defense is most critical.

"But what about those demonstrations I've seen where big, strong cops are totally rendered helpless by a MACE or pepper type spray?" one might ask. Or, "Gee whiz! I got a demonstration of being tasered, and I dropped like a rock and couldn't do a damn thing!"

The answer to such questions or comments is: "YES INDEED, BUT YOU WERE NOT AN INSANE, ENRAGED, DRUG-INFLUENCED KILLER WHO WAS FANATICALLY BENT UPON DOING MURDER, WHEN YOU WERE 'TASERED'. AND WHEN YOU SAW THAT 'BIG, STRONG COP' CRUMPLE UP AFTER BEING SPRAYED, IT WAS DURING A DEMONSTRATION, WHEN THE COP WAS NOT MURDEROUSLY AROUSED TO A LETHAL FIGHTING PITCH, AND OR WHEN HE WAS DRIVEN BY THE INFLUENCE OF NARCOTIC SUBSTANCES, LIQUOR, OR LITERAL MADNESS."

We have been shown actual police reports where large canisters of some damn spray failed to stop a felon. The cops used the stuff because they were MANDATED TO DO SO, before — finally — resorting to more realistic measures to bring the dangerous freak that they were battling to a halt. We have also seen reports where tasing went UNNOTICED by madmen who were determined in their insane path of destructiveness, and who finally needed to be dropped by more effective means, after law enforcers "followed policy" and zapped the murderous nut before moving on to "step two".

Private citizens almost never have the luxury of acting in concert with others in order to stop their attackers; and they do not have an array of followup weapons that may be resorted to if or when their "lesser means" should fail to work effectively. The police (sometimes at the cost of



injuries to themselves) do have and use these options, after their "lesser means" fail.

But the truth is that non-lethal weapons are a scam.

If you wish to be capable of offering serious resistance to armed, dangerous, potentially deadly felonious attack, then you want to be armed with firearms, knives, hardwood clubs, or tomahawks. These are the modern weapons of personal, individual close combat, and there is not a single reason on earth why sensible private citizens should not avail themselves of these protective tools.

Unarmed combat skills are necessary, and critically so. Their study boosts self-confidence through the roof, improves physical coordination and the ability to use all other hand held weapons. Their study also fosters courage and the will to fight and to prevail — vitally necessary for the self-defense student. Additionally, by mastering unarmed combat you will not see any weapon as a "crutch", and you will be much more amenable to proper, responsible weapons usage because you know that, even if you are without any manufactured weapon, you can still make good use of the equipment provided you by Nature!

But do not make the mistake —no matter what you may be told by others or read — of believing that non-lethal gadgets make sense, and that if you "don't happen to like" guns, for instance, all you need is some pepper spray or a taser device. **YOU ARE PREPARING TO DIE, IF YOU BUY INTO SUCH IDIOCY.**

If real weaponry intimidates you, overcome your personal weakness. Believe it: **YOU WILL BE A LOT MORE INTIMIDATED IF YOUR**

HOME IS EVER INVADED BY TWO OR THREE SEWER RATS WHOSE INTENTION IT IS TO ROB AND KILL YOU. The sprays and the taser device won't help. A .45 automatic or a 12 gauge shotgun WILL, providing you now how to use it.

No sane human being wants to have to use a deadly weapon or deadly force in any form on another person. However, when we advocate firearms, fighting knives, and other lethal weapons for personal defense we do so precisely for that purpose and that purpose only: **LAWFUL, MORAL, LEGITIMATE, ABSOLUTELY JUSTIFIABLE AND UNAVOIDABLE SELF-DEFENSE.** The same reasons we advocate unarmed self-defense and the application of weaponless combatives. We personally abhor violence, do not condone it or advocate its use ever, save when circumstances not of the individual's choosing make it necessary for defense and survival.

In all honesty we remain unable to fathom how or why any intelligent, peaceful, law-abiding adult would have any problem or point of disagreement with our position. If you do, please understand that the only possible beneficiary of your timidity and reluctance will be an egregious, dangerous, violent criminal. And we believe that you do not want that ever to be the case. Neither would your loved ones, should you one day be the bulwark standing between them and death.

## **New Web Site Is Up!**

WE are most grateful for the numerous e-mails and phone calls of appreciation and thanks for SWORD & PEN. We are delighted that our monthly messages are well received, and we hope that visitors to this site

continue to derive benefit from what we provide.

We are happy to be able to inform our readers that our second web site is up and running: The new web site is

[WWW.SEATTLECOMBATIVES.COM](http://WWW.SEATTLECOMBATIVES.COM)

THIS site will present what we sincerely hope and intend to be articles of value to all of our visitors — articles that provide information and instruction and commentary to assist in training, and to help in learning about the subjects to which we have been dedicated for our entire life. The new site will have new material each month dealing with the subject of close combat and self-defense, and cognate disciplines. We will be doing reviews of those excellent classics of unarmed and armed close combat and self-defense (some well known, and some not-so-well-known), and we will be discussing techniques and methods of combat, as well as physical and mental conditioning. There is a comprehensive question and answer section, in which we have endeavored to anticipate (or simply to record as we have during years past been asked them by students, other teachers, and correspondents) questions pertaining to self-defense, close combat, our System, how best to train, proper physical conditioning, etc.

We certainly would appreciate your telling others about both this present site, and also about our NEW site.

SWORD & PEN will continue to appear each month as usual on THIS site, and we will be offering some new and exclusive publications for sale that will assist you materially in developing your abilities in the close combat and self-defense arts, even if you are not a student of our System.

While we obviously and clearly do (and must!) have a degree of commercial motivation behind the implementation and continuance of these two web sites, we also have a genuine love of our subject, and a sincere desire to reach and to assist all of those who share our passion for the close combat and self-defense arts, and in whatever way we may be able, to help them in their quest for personal development and progress.

Until next month then, we remain,  
Yours in Defense,

Prof. Bradley J. Steiner

[www.AmericanCombato.com](http://www.AmericanCombato.com)

[www.SeattleCombatives.com](http://www.SeattleCombatives.com)

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