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# *Sword and Pen*

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

## EDITORIAL

### *But Will You Be Able To Use It When You're 80?*

**ALTHOUGH** it almost never occurs to the teenager or to the individual in his 20's or 30's who comes to the study of self-defense, one of the most important questions that he should be concerned with answering in the affirmative is: "*Will that which I am going to learn work for me **throughout life**, and serve me many years after I have given up training (if I do give it up), and despite the fact that I may not be in the very best physical shape when I need to defend myself?*"

Disgracefully, people who are in their late 70's, 80's, and older, are in general considered by that class of degraded scum we refer to euphemistically as "violent predators" as highly desirable targets. The reasons should be more than obvious. Still, despite this fact, those who decide to take up the study of self-defense tend almost without exception to commence and — for the duration of their training — to continue to train in, impractical, unretainable skills. They train for a period ranging from a couple of months (or less) to a couple of years (or slightly more) and the skills that they work to acquire demand fine motor abilities, flexibility, dexterity, and extremely precise timing — not to mention *cooperative practice partners* — in order for the techniques to be doable, and three or more years after their training has been discontinued, they possess quite literally **NOTHING** in the way of reliable self-defense ability.

Or, they train in *competition* skills; in *sporting/competitive* methodologies. Obviously, **this** stuff is of no value once the average competitor's **competitive years** have passed. As evidence, remember that in all of the competition arts, the experts and champions RETIRE after reaching an age when the formidable demands of aggressive competition "fighting" prove simply to be too much against younger, stronger entrants into the activity. Certainly there are **WORLD CLASS CHAMPIONS** (men like the incredible Gene Le Bell, and the late, great Jack Dempsey) who retain sufficient skills and readiness to defend themselves with the more basic elements of that which they have acquired over the decades. But even such magnificent champions give up the *sporting/competitive* side of their activities per se, except perhaps to go into teaching others.

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Self-defense has no expiration date. And if self-defense is your reason for training in martial arts, then you had better be training in skills that do not need to be abandoned once you've past your 40's! "Retirement" from competition is normal and necessary — *if* you are a competitor. But explaining to a few street scum or to a mugger that you've retired is unlikely to deter their onslaught, if assaulting you is their motive. (In fact, the idea that you are no longer an active participant in whatever combat sport you once did, would be likely to encourage them, if they discovered that fact about you!)

Turning from competition to classicism, remember that an awful lot of the classical/traditional stuff is doable only by young, strong, athletic, and devoted enthusiasts who train assiduously (three to six times a week) and who are in their late teens, 20's or *early* 30's. The extreme high and fancy acrobatic kicks, the flying and jumping kicks, the intricate throwing actions, the elaborate holds and grappling actions, etc. *just are not feasible* for the older practitioner, and certainly not for the older practitioner who finds himself pressed into a self-defense emergency and who is obliged to employ his skills against determined, vicious, young, strong psychopaths on a sidewalk, or in some other **REAL WORLD** environment.

Those seniors in the classical/traditional martial arts who *can* utilize that which they have acquired over a lifetime of training when attacked for real, resort inevitably to the **simplest** and most **basic** actions which they acquired. Any eighth dan in any classical/traditional *ju-jitsu* or *karate* system who, at 60, finds that he must defend himself will resort to that which he had learned as a **white belt** or as a yellow belt, more than likely. You are not going to see him performing acrobatics!

**Self-defense is a lifetime activity, pursuit, and skill.** You may train in self-defense and close combat when you are a youngster. However — even if you have completely abandoned your interest in training — you may find yourself in need of the skills that you acquired *ten* or **20 years** later. If you were well trained in viable close combat and self-defense skills, then despite the duration of time that has elapsed since you last trained, and regardless of your age, *you should be able to employ much if not all of that which you learned, perhaps not at "peak efficiency", but **efficiently enough** to stand a very good chance of dispatching your assailant.*

Recently, news reports presented the inspiring story of ex-SAS soldier Douglas O'Dell who — at **70 years of age** — routed *four scumbag muggers* who attacked him. Unfortunately, O'Dell did not kill these miserable bastards, but they limped away after he gave all of them a well-deserved trouncing. **NO GROUND FIGHTING. NO COMPETITIVE CRAP. NOTHING FANCY. O'DELL AT ONE POINT FELL TO THE GROUND, AND WHAT SAVED HIM WAS A GOOD COUNTERATTACK FROM THAT POSITION, NOT WRESTLING WITH THE BASTARD WHO TRIED TO KICK HIM WHEN WAS DOWN!**

**Good, basic close combat**, learned a long time ago in an outfit that has no time for classicism or competition, but that trains its men to **PREVAIL**, is what came to this man's aid — **decades after he had learned it, and long after he had retired from the SAS.**

One of our own beloved teachers, the late Charlie Nelson, clobbered a piece of garbage who at the time he attacked Charlie was on drugs and was about 20 years old, **when Charlie was near 80!**

Those with common sense will be thinking: "Gee, if good close combat and self-defense skills work like that for elderly people who are *out* of training, I'll bet they'd work even better for anyone of any age who is in training, and/or who **stays in shape.**" And those who would think that would be **ABSOLUTELY CORRECT!**

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And that is our point.

One fabulous test of the genuine combative quality of whatever you may be training in now is to ask how effectively it can be used when you are 80. Never mind that you have — in your 20's and 30's — “won championships”. That doesn't mean **anything**. The question is: “*Will you still be able to use that which you are learning against a determined and dangerous real world attacker once you've long passed your prime, and may not even be in training at all, any longer?*” No, even the most practical techniques will not be as formidable when done by an out-of-shape 80 year old man who hasn't trained at all for 40-50 years, as they will be by a man the same age who has made training a lifetime habit. Nor will even a man who has made training a lifetime habit be able — at 80 years of age — to render the skill, power, and destructiveness of a fellow in his 20's who is in hard training and in top shape. **However, as numerous experiences and cases on record over the years have proven beyond question, if you trained in the good stuff, you will have retained a capability with it that will give you a better-than-average chance of defeating any assailant, regardless of his, or your age.**

If you are now well past your 30's (or 40's, or 50's!) and are wondering about whether the idea of training in self-defense makes any real sense, **please be assured that it DOES.** Do not be deceived by the nonsense that appears in the mainstream press about martial arts. The real deal is also available — if not too widely taught — and *you can learn it!* Contact us, because our training programs in *American Combato* will convey to you material that will truly serve you — for life.

Whether young or old, good, authentic close combat and self-defense is what you are looking for **IF** you wish to be genuinely prepared, not for a martial arts demonstration or for competition, but for dangerous, real world emergencies.

Remember:

- While most people come to the martial arts when they are young, it is more likely that a dangerous and life-threatening encounter with violent felons will occur when they are *older*
- Realistically, the overwhelming majority of those who do take up training in a martial art stay with it for between a couple of months to a few years (if that long). **Retainability** is critical if that which is studied is studied for the purpose of self-defense
- Competition is a young man's game. Sport and match “fighting” — no matter how aggressive or demanding — is artificial, has rules, and is completely irrelevant as far as combat and self-defense is concerned
- Young or old, **good, real world combat/self-defense skills constitute a study unto itself.** (Douglas O'Dell had *acquired* his hand-to-hand combat training as a young, tough, super well-conditioned SAS soldier. He didn't need to *use* it, however, until he was 70. Nevertheless, **it was there when he needed it!**)

The defining characteristics of good, reliable, authentic close combat doctrine are fourfold:

- **SIMPLICITY**
- **DESTRUCTIVENESS**

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- ADAPTABILITY

- RETAINABILITY

If that which you are learning is not simple, aimed at the merciless *destruction* of your attacking enemy, adaptable to all types of predicaments and situations, and retainable in large measure *for life*, then whatever you are training in — **if your objective is self-defense** — is *not* giving you that which you need and want.

# Bradley J. Steiner

## Don't Miss These New Articles!

CHECK our site, [www.seattlecombatives.com](http://www.seattlecombatives.com), for our three latest postings: **How Quality Counterattacks Should Be Developed, Groundwork In *Real World* Close Combat**, and **The Enormous Error Of Defensive Self-Defense**. These new articles are in the “Monthly Instruction” and “Articles” Sections of our site.

We appreciate completely that there are many who would like to train personally with us, but for any number of reasons cannot do so. Also, we appreciate and respect the fact that some visitors to our site may be quite happy with the martial art that they are training in, but wish to learn a bit more about self-defense and close combat. Thus we try to continually provide helpful and usable information and instruction to assist, not only these individuals, but also those teachers who want input on the subject of combat, perhaps so that they can more effectively tailor their programs to the needs and desires of students who want practical self-defense.

We *always* welcome new students, and we love to work with people in short-term intensive courses, when we have the pleasure of meeting them, from other cities and countries. But there remains the need for an ongoing *literature* on the subject of close combat and real world self-defense. It is this that we seek to provide and to encourage others to read, enjoy, and profit from.

Of course we wish to sell our publications, too. Making a living is important. But we welcome and appreciate those who simply visit and read what we offer.

Our one request is that you *please* be kind enough to tell others about our two web sites:

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

— and —

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

## Training With Injuries And Other Setbacks

**ONE** of the most frustrating things for those who train in close combat skills and who workout regularly with weights is *injuries*. Unfortunately, for serious, lifetime-committed people, training injuries, as well as other inevitable setbacks, will occur. So having strategies with which to deal with these bothersome occasions is valuable and important.

The first thing we must mention, because there may be some who will make a dangerous mistake in this regard, is that *injuries* are not the same thing as *illnesses*; and while it is very often not only possible but highly desirable to train even though you have an injury (providing you do so correctly) it is the height of idiocy to train when you are sick.

The key to training with injuries is to learn to train *around* them. That is, train in a way that does not stress or even involve the injured part of your body. In our experience everyone (including **our self**) has a tendency to become completely discouraged — almost to the point of depression — when a training injury, or injury that affects training, occurs. “What’s the use?” describes the approximate thought that tends to arise in many people, and they feel that if their customary routine of practice or exercise has become temporarily impossible to follow, they are, for the nonce, *sunk*. There’s *nothing* they feel that they can do — and that is a huge mistake.

We who take training seriously and for whom workouts and practice sessions are *not* merely “recreational” but are in fact a most **critical** and **essential** part of our lives, become very “routinized”. That is, we become addicted to the specific approach to working out and practicing skills that our experience has taught us suits us well. This is of course a good thing in a way. It becomes detrimental when our specific training schedule *cannot* be followed, as we have become accustomed to following it, and we have only two choices open to us: **1. Do things differently**, or **2. Quit training**. Amazingly, otherwise intelligent, disciplined, utterly dedicated and seriously committed individuals very often choose option number two — which, let us be frank, is pretty nutty.

One of the finest examples of doing things the *right* way is exemplified by Prof. Mark Bryans. Many years ago (in the 1970’s, in fact) when Mark was a neophyte in our System, he sustained an injury that made doing front kicks painful. He simply could not employ the front kick, and for him to practice it was sheer agony. This was, as we recall, related to a knee injury that might have been caused by some improper weight training regimen that he was following at the time — but we honestly cannot say for certain how the injury originated.

In any case Mark *could* do knee attacks. So, when the Class drilled in the front kick, Mark did knee attacks. Knee attacks caused him no pain. And he continued to do only knee attacks (no front kicks) for well over a year. ***Eventually, Mark Bryans had developed the most incredible knee attacks we had ever witnessed. By FAR superior to even those seasoned Thai boxers that we had observed!*** He could drive a powerful, lightning fast knee blow to just about his own **head height!**

That illustrates the *positive* results that can come when a trainee sensibly accepts and ***works around*** an injury.

Perhaps you have injured your right arm. If you are right handed this can be a particularly discouraging thing. However, it can also be an opportunity to develop your left hand’s capabilities, and quite possibly to do so to the extent that they ultimately surpass your “strong” arm’s capacities.

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Whatever injury you have, consider what you still **CAN** do. Remember that self-defense emergencies may involve your sustaining an injury immediately. So even if you are “100%” *at the moment of an actual attack*, you easily could be battling your attacker(s) at reduced efficiency due to an injury sustained when he/they initiated his/their attack against you. Training properly — i.e. training *around* whatever injury you may have at any given time — prepares you for **REALITY**.

Other setbacks may arise also, from time to time. These run the gamut of whatever pains-in-the-ass we all must deal with routinely, to more serious life challenges. There may be occasions when a temporary discontinuation of training may be necessary — but such unfortunate occasions are **rare**. Most people discontinue training because they are lazy, they become discouraged, or they lack discipline.

The same thing goes for physical training — i.e. *weight training* — which we regard as the **essential** supplementary exercise for the combat arts and self-defense student. If a training injury prevents the use of a favorite exercise — or even of a normally necessary general exercise movement — ***work around the problem until the injury is healed***. Abandoning workouts is foolish and unnecessary (but oh, so typical of many who train!).

Learn the variety of good basic exercises that exist. Often a training injury can be bypassed simply by switching to a different *version* of a given exercise. We our self had this experience recently. Presses-behind-the-neck had been our all time favorite shoulder (pressing) exercise since the 1960’s, until recently the exercise began causing us inordinate pain. We switched to standard presses. Problem solved.

Remember, in a pinch, that doing ***only squats*** can keep you strong and in good shape for a relatively lengthy period of time. Squats, standing presses, and dead lifts provide a complete body workout; so if whatever ails you permits you to work on just those three exercises, you’ll do just fine — *if you do them!*

If a change of environment removes you from where weight training facilities are available, try using cables for a while. Work on calisthenics. Improvise weights. Just don’t quit!

The old adage “Where there’s a will there’s a way” is much more than a pleasant sounding observation. Almost without exception, ***it is true***.

Determine that training will never be omitted from your life, and make up your mind to utilize whatever you can, however you must, wherever and whenever you are able, in order to stay in the groove.

Training injuries and other setbacks need have little or no affect on your lifetime commitment and your training accomplishments.

**Cautionary Note:** *We urge that you always consult with a physician whenever any injury is sustained, and make certain that the MD approves your plan of action to continue with a modified schedule. ALWAYS get a medical examination anytime you are ill or injured and NEVER undertake any training against a physician’s advice.*

## The Scoop On “Pressure Point Fighting”

**WE** have for decades now been adamant about the fact (and it *is* a **FACT**) that pain compliance techniques, and in fact *pain* per se, as a means of stopping a determined and dangerous aggressor, is woefully insufficient. First, because such skills almost invariably depend upon *fine motor articulations*. Such actions cannot successfully be relied upon in serious hand-to-hand combat. Second, because *pain* per se is **SUBJECTIVE**. As a professional, licensed hypnotherapist of more than 20 years, we can tell you that some people can — literally — *ignore* any degree of pain. Some people (admittedly, not too many) can have deep abdominal surgery or tooth extractions with **no** anesthesia. Hypnosis — the power of **suggestion** — is quite sufficient. They do not pay attention to that which would make most of us (our self included) collapse from the pain!

But “pain compliance” via pressure point skills does not cause anywhere near *one fiftieth* the pain that would be felt from surgery or from having a tooth pulled without anesthesia. Some pressure point techniques — applied correctly — will cause *some* people to wince and give up. Unfortunately, fanatical murderers, gang members, home invaders, kidnappers, rapists, and muggers, etc. tend not to be in the “wince and give up” category. ***These bastards need to be maimed or killed, more often than not, in order to stop them.***

One of the greatest law enforcement defensive tactics instructors who ever lived, and a personal friend of ours, Robert J. Koga, devised a most powerful and effective method for police control of suspects when he served as a teacher with the LAPD in the 1960’s. *However . . .* those skills — and **all** non-injurious pain compliance skills — have no legitimate use in situations when one is attacked by a dangerous assailant. Police do sometimes have need for compliance-control skills, and for them and those in similar occupations where security and peace keeping is the idea, okay, they serve a purpose. Such people sometimes need to control pests, nervous but not dangerous physically resistant suspects, and annoying riff raff. But police also need man-stopping methods for dangerous encounters, and any experienced street cop will attest to this. *Private citizens* and members of our armed services (possibly excepting military police, when acting within the parameters of *that specific MOS* ) do **NOT** need and should not waste their time and energy learning “compliance” and “non-injurious” methods. The political correctness of this **B.S.** today, and its popularity in the martial arts field certainly provides an alarming statement about the lack of common sense, the fantasy-worshipping, and the plain stupidity of those who are seeking a “nice” method of self-defense. One might also argue that it says something a bit more foul about those who *cash in* on these customers — but that’s another story.

Demonstrations of pressure point fighting, just like demonstrations of most martial arts skills, can be visually impressive and dramatically convincing. But a martial arts demonstration is not a violent incident, and the fact that something looks good when performed by well rehearsed experts in front of an audience does not mean that the demonstrated techniques translate into **combatively effective** techniques, when attempted under combat conditions.

“But what about those seminars and demonstrations in which subjects from out of the attending group or audience are invited to participate and to experience the effectiveness of the methods?” one might ask. “I have seen people rendered utterly helpless by those techniques.”

The answer is that what you saw was an essentially cooperative, *believing* individual **subject himself to a demonstration that he already was convinced would be effective in causing him to react as claimed by the demonstrators**. This is what happens quite often when one observes one of those popular televangelists cause

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people from the audience to swoon. It is their (i.e. the peoples') ***belief*** in and ***inner anticipation of*** that which is being done to them that causes the reaction.

Let an expert in pressure point fighting try to stop the attack of any member of an outlaw biker gang with that bullshit nonsense! He will quickly discover that when a ***really tough hombre*** is coming at you with murder in his heart, the last thing you can afford to try is some idiotic pain compliance nonsense.

What stops a dangerous, determined attacker in a serious physical encounter is **MASSIVE SHOCK** to the central nervous system or/and **INTERFERENCE WITH THE ATTACKER'S BREATHING**. "Subjective" has nothing to do with anything, here.

Break a man's knee and he ***falls***. Period. Even if, miraculously, he was so high on drugs, or so insane or drunk that he didn't feel any pain (***highly*** unlikely) he would fall.

Smash into a man's carotid sinus with a powerful open hand chop, and he collapses. He likely would "feel" nothing. But he'd be unconscious (in some rare cases, perhaps dead) because when blood flow to the brain is suddenly interrupted, one collapses. Period.

Crush a man's throat, he ceases offensive action, and drops dead.

**Unpleasant as such actions are (and we concede, no decent human being would ever dream of using such actions unless his life or limb, or the life or limb of another innocent person hung in the balance) THEY WORK RELIABLY**. "Pain compliance", "pressure point fighting", "humane self-defense", "non-injurious self-protection", ad nauseum does *not* work in those life-threatening predicaments when dangerous physical aggression by a would-be killer must be contended with. And ***that*** is the type of situation that should be of preminent concern in any legitimate, authentic, professionally taught program of close combat and self-defense.

### **Blows That DO Work**

**IF** the reader would like a straightforward presentation of the sixteen ***most effective blows*** that we have discovered during our lifetime of immersion in the combat arts, we suggest sending for our Text Manual, ***THE MOST EFFECTIVE BLOWS OF UNARMED COMBAT***.

The Manual is in PDF format on a quality CD, recorded in the highest quality mode. It may be read easily on your computer, or you may print out one or more copies for your personal use.

Cost is **\$13**. Send cash or a postal money order payable to **Brad Steiner** to **P.O. BOX 15929 SEATTLE, WA. 98115 U.S.A.**

### **And Combinations . . .**

We also have written a Text Manual on attacking methods, describing **30** representative attack combinations using the ***basic blows*** and other skills. This Manual, ***ATTACK COMBINATIONS***, is on CD in PDF format, and costs **\$15**. Same ordering instructions as per the ***basic blows*** Manual.



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The blows and combinations that we describe and teach are calculated to seriously disorient, knock out, cripple, maim, and — when absolutely necessary in lawful defense of innocent life — **kill**. They rely upon rendering trauma that can be reliably depended upon to stop virtually *anyone* — regardless of size, determination, and despite the influence of liquor or narcotics.

### **And Mental Conditioning . . .**

Our Manual *MENTAL CONDITIONING FOR CLOSE COMBAT AND SELF-DEFENSE* is the first and *only* practical how-to-do-it book (**214 pages**) that actually explains and *teaches* mental conditioning for close combat and self-defense. This is not a book “about” mindset; it is a book that describes how **YOU** can cultivate, develop, polish, and retain the mental conditioning that real world close combat demands. The Manual is recorded in high quality mode in PDF and comes on a quality CD. Readable on the computer screen, or easily printable. **\$30.** is the cost of the Manual — and a copy of Carlin’s *COMBAT JUDO*, and Grover’s *DEFEND YOURSELF!* comes with it! Same ordering instructions.

***PLEASE WATCH THIS WEB SITE AND OUR OTHER SITE — [WWW.SEATTLECOMBATIVES.COM](http://WWW.SEATTLECOMBATIVES.COM) — FOR NOTIFICATIONS OF NEW PUBLICATIONS!***

Make all inquiries and send all orders to: **Brad Steiner P.O. Box 15929 Seattle, Washington 98115 U.S.A.**

***PLEASE WATCH BOTH OUR SITES FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS REGARDING THE AVAILABILITY OF TEXT MANUALS ON COUNTERATTACKS (“SELF-DEFENSE” TECHNIQUES) — NOW BEING PREPARED!***

### **Ear, Nose, And Throat Specialist — YOU?**

**WELL**, not exactly the kind of ear, nose, and throat specialist that we find in reputable medical facilities, but you might one day find it very helpful to have developed the ability to zero in instantly on one of those three *extremely* vulnerable target areas of the human body, and destroy or injure it, in order to save your life.

#### **EARS:**

Just about everyone has two of them. They are within reach, and they are delicate. *Seizing them violently* is one of the tricks we teach our students in *American Combato*, in order to facilitate multiple knee blows to the enemy’s testicles.

“Boxing” the ears with that which Fairbairn referred colorfully to as the “*thunderclap*” (cupped palms blow) is a terrific way to drop an adversary. This dangerous blow can cause concussion and cerebral hemorrhage, under certain conditions. A great blow when you are seized from the front and pulled toward your attacker, or when an attempt is made to apply a frontal underarm body hold. The double ear box is also a great *followup* blow,

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after your man has been injured and disoriented. (Do not open the attack with this blow, since it leaves you wide open for a moment).

After ear boxing — or simply after grabbing the ears suddenly — a strong grip on each ear followed by an *archer's* movement will rip one or both ears off the enemy's head. Grabbing *one* ear and then chinjabbing with the other hand is also likely to rip an ear off. *But you've got to do it powerfully!*

Smacking an ear always distracts a man. It may be done with the back or with the palm of the hand.

One hand ear boxing is excellent on the attack. It turns the adversary's head upon impact, and automatically cocks your hand for a handaxe chop or hammerfist blow.

*Biting* an ear (we hate to say it, but like Mike Tyson did, except with a **REAL BITE**) and then ripping it off the head, is an excellent action to take when close in to the adversary.

If, in a lethal situation (military combat, for example; or defending against a home invader) you happen to have a sharp commando type dagger, *driving it into the ear and through the brain* will prove most decisive.

Remember that the ear box places both hands in a perfect position to drive thumbs to the eyes, following impact. A nice bonus.

### **NOSE:**

Always a sensitive, easy target — and usually a convenient one — to hit. A powerful normal fist punch in the nose is always effective, but we would **STRONGLY** recommend using a heel of the hand blow, instead. Just direct a powerful heel-of-the-hand blow to the center of the attacking individual's face and you will hit his nose. While not per se a "fatal" blow, it can always be counted upon to be a disorienting blow, and followup of a severe and aggressively destructive kind should end the encounter.

The *bridge* of the nose is a great target — especially for the **handaxe chop** and the **hammerfist smash**. By breaking the thin bone normally covered by the bridge of a pair of glasses, profuse bleeding, complete disorientation, and intense pain, coupled with an inability to see for at least several moments is the near certain result. *This is an easy bone to break, and even a child or a small woman can do so, in an emergency.* The **heel** of the hand is also a good weapon to employ against the bridge of the nose, especially in a *downward smash*, following a chinjab blow that landed only lightly, or that missed its mark.

The point right underneath the nose, above the upper lip (the "*philtrum*") is extremely vulnerable to a handaxe chop that is directed into it. A slightly *upward* directed blow is best. Pat O'Neill favored this particular strike and target point, and always urged the "Forcemen" whom he trained to use it automatically in an encounter, when they could do so.

By striking a **hooking heelpalm** blow (like a boxer's "*hook*", but employing the **heel** of the hand as the striking weapon) to the side of the nose and into the corner of the eye or inner cheekbone of the enemy, an excellent disabling hit can be rendered.

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Biting the nose always makes good sense in an anything goes fight for survival and defense — and you can actually bite the nose off the enemy's face if you exert full force and determination with your jaw muscles and teeth.

Driving a finger deep up an adversary's nostril will make him pull his head back, and will expose his throat (for a blow or for a bite).

Either nostril is an excellent target for a pen, pencil, thin blade, or other object capable of penetrating deep. Deep enough and the *brain* will be struck — which if hit with a sufficiently forceful and penetrating thrust, will be fatal.

### **THROAT:**

The throat is probably the closest to a “**certain stop**” target there is in the human body — providing a forceful, crushing blow is directed against it (the **handaxe chop** being the best). In a long time ago conversation with that marvelous producer of practical firearms training films, Alec Jason (**ANITE PUBLICATIONS** — producer of **DEADLY FORCE**, and other classic, outstanding videos) the retired SFPD detective asked us “What shot would *you* take to what target area with your handgun, if you only had one shot and you *had to stop the guy right now*?” Our answer, which we recall pretty much word for word was: “**In a situation where we had only the chance of one, single hit, and it was life or death, we'd rather rely upon a powerful open hand chop to the attacker's throat than we would any single shot from any handgun.**” Retired detective Jason was a little surprised by our answer, *but he did not disagree!*

Obviously, when it's life or death, *a powerful, fast chop to the throat should be employed without hesitation.*

The web of the hand (hand *yoke*) strike is a non-lethal blow that is sometimes useful to discourage a pest, or to set a suspect up for a restraining hold (if you are a police officer). The *best* use of this strike however is to index the hand for the potentially lethal **throat lock**. The fingers seize the upper part of the windpipe — under the jaw — in a pincher grip. By crushing hard and jerking *forward*, a fatal injury to the breathing apparatus of the body will be effected.

The **throat lock** is an excellent attack, and should be perfected by anyone training in practical self-defense.

Remember, when you secure a throat lock with your fingers, if you *hold onto that grip* and then *smash your attacker's head powerfully* with a heel of the hand blow, hammerfist smash, or elbow strike, using your *opposite* arm, you will effect an injury that will likely prove lethal.

Biting into the throat (or neck) is always effective — but please, it's got to be a ripping, tearing *animal-like* bite, not a reluctant nip!

The area immediately to either *side* of the throat is highly vulnerable to any sharp blow (again, the handaxe is best).

A half-fist strike into the throat is an excellent blow, or *if you have strong fingers*, a fingertips thrust to the throat is good.

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Charlie Nelson taught us a terrific little trick for striking the throat with the fist: After clenching the fist normally, cant the wrist slightly *upward*. Now snap those foreknuckles (the same ones that hit with the half-fist blow) to the attacker's throat. You will find that your fist fits very naturally into that area between the opponent's jaw and his neck. This is a quick, snappy blow, and should be followed up immediately with more destructive actions.

Remember the classic "*rising block*" that virtually every style of *karate* invariably teaches? Well, this blow served as a *striking* action as well as a block in William Chow's **original kenpo-karate**. It is still excellent when used to hit. In *kenpo-karate* the blow was normally directed against the arm or arms — ostensibly to break the enemy's elbows. We believe that a **far** better use of the blow is *into the throat or underside of the jaw and throat* of a taller, larger attacker who moves in close. It will stop his advance **cold**, and followup should be immediate.

One final unarmed tactic that targets the throat is a little-known technique developed by Pat O'Neill as a counter to an enemy closing in suddenly from the side. Let's say that your enemy is moving in against you on your **left** side. You snap your body toward him with a sharp pivoting action while bringing your *left forearm high* in a lateral movement across your own forehead (fist *clenched*). Simultaneously, your *right arm* (fist *clenched*) applies a lateral forward blow across your high abdominal area. Both of your forearms form a "wall" of sorts, and your attacker will drive himself into this wall as he moves in to attack you. Your left forearm will slam hard into his throat. Your right arm will hit his midsection. *Followup!*

Attacks to the *ears*, *nose*, and *throat* target areas may of course be undertaken with all sorts of improvised weapons and objects-at-hand. The main thing is: **Attack and devastate those vital, key target areas, when you are in a desperate, dangerous self-defense situation!** "How" you do it is important to a degree, but *that* you do it — and do it fast — is what counts the most.

There is no place for squeamishness or hesitation in close combat and self-defense. Remember: there is no relation between what you do without hesitation and **immediately** in a personal defense emergency, and that which you might do in *any* sporting/competitive "match". Get it clear, straight, definite, and decided, as to which type of encounter **you** wish to be ready for.

### It's Not About Being A "Champion"

**SOME** people like games and sports, others do not. And while it is certainly absurd for those who *do* like sports to criticize those who do not, and for those who do *not* like sports to criticize those who do, it would be refreshingly reasonable to hear sane representatives of each camp acknowledge that that which he enjoys and participates in is separate and apart from that which those in the "other camp" enjoy and participate in.

In other words, narrowing this down to martial arts, we wish that we were not in such a small minority of professionals as we are in, who — being close combat and self-defense teachers — continue to emphasize that that which we do and teach is in no sense "better" than the sporting/competitive or classical/traditional approaches; it is merely **different**. And it *is*.

It takes a great deal to be a sports *champion*; and we have not the slightest quarrel with those whose aspirations lie in this direction. We hope, however, that no one will be offended when we say that, **without doubt**, for any

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whose objective is functional unarmed/hand-to-hand fighting ability and skill in practical self-defense, becoming a “champion” is entirely beside the point. That’s not what it’s about.

Self-defense training is about preparing for the **NON**-sporting encounter, the **UN**-fair fight, the **ANYTHING GOES SURVIVAL** situation, the **UNEXPECTED EMERGENCY** predicament, the engagement that **YOU DO NOT PERSONALLY WANT TO OCCUR, AND THAT IF YOU HAD A CHOICE IN THE MATTER, WOULD NOT HAPPEN.**

A sports champion trains in order to prevail in a particular, understood, agreed-upon arena, using certain skills and *not* using others. He will not be jumped from behind, have a weapon suddenly pulled on him, find himself confronting two, three, or possibly more attackers at one time, or need to defend a family member against attack. A champion does not *have to* do battle in any given instance, at all, should mitigating circumstances pertaining to his health or physical condition prevent him from being able to participate in a scheduled match. A person might find himself in need of self-defense abilities when he is sick, injured, or otherwise at some horrendous disadvantage. *He still will need to summon the will and the skill to do battle, if he is to survive an actual attack, no matter how “unready” his physical condition, health, or personal situation may be.*

A competitive champion often trains with a specific adversary and a particular match in mind. In fact his training may, for some time, be centered around little else but readying to meet one special opponent — an opponent from whom he may be striving to garner a title by defeating. The student of self-defense trains with “dangerous physical attackers” in mind. He does not have anyone in particular in mind when he trains, but instead prepares for ***anyone who might conceivably choose to move against him, in general.***

Champions retire from the type and style of “fighting” that they do. Whether *judo, boxing, karate, kick boxing, wrestling*, or whatever-you-care-to-name, there comes a point when even the greatest champion decides that he is no longer going to participate in the competitive activity in which he won his championship status. This in no sense diminishes the accomplishments of any competitive champion, but it does plainly demonstrate that competition ***HAS AN EXPIRATION DATE.*** Self-defense is a lifetime pursuit, and even at an advanced age a person may need to call upon the techniques of self-defense to protect himself or someone else. There is no “age limit” beyond which a person can “retire” from the need for personal protection skills. In fact, unfortunately, people frequently become *more attractive targets for attack when they become older* than they were when they were young.

Champions train to utilize, and practice, a plethora of skills that literally *depend upon* their being young, strong, agile, fast, and in great all round shape, in order for them to be able to employ them correctly. But the self-defense student trains in skills that “*stick with him for life*”; skills that, once learned, may not be as effective as they were in his youth, but that will *always*, nevertheless, be *very* effective — because they are simple, destructive, easily applied under all conditions, and readily retainable.

Champions train — if they train properly — to be ***good sports***; they train to be gracious as winners, and equally gracious if they lose. They are (again, if they are properly trained champions) ethical to a fault when they do battle. They would regard it as demeaning and undignified to fight “dirty”, to use foul methods, and/or to take even the slightest unfair advantage of any opponent. The self-defense student trains deliberately ***NOT*** to be a “good sport” and *never* to allow for anything to stand in the way of his defeating his enemy in combat. In close combat and self-defense ***THE FOULEST, MOST UNDERHANDED METHODS ARE EMBRACED,***

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***CULTIVATED, STRESSED, AND DRILLED INCESSANTLY, SO THAT IN A CRISIS THEY WILL COME WITHOUT THINKING TO THE INDIVIDUAL WHO NEEDS THEM IN ORDER TO SURVIVE.***

Champions fight by the rules. Self-defense has no rules, and consequently no student of self-defense ought ever be inhibited by any.

Training long and hard when you are young in order to become a champion in your favorite combat sport is a worthy and admirable objective. We do not claim that doing so is not enormously rewarding and worthwhile — ***for those who wish to be champions***. However, we do maintain that training for actual combat and self-defense is different, and we insist that applying yourself to either discipline and expecting to accomplish a high level of achievement in the other is a mistake.

You must decide. There are tens of thousands of people who neither need nor want competitive sporting combat, but who do want self-defense. Such individuals should pursue precisely that: ***SELF-DEFENSE***. It is *not* related to sport.

A “champion” is not a “combatant”.

We point this out and offer the explanation that we offer for the benefit of those who may be thinking that, if they wish to learn how to defend themselves and be fully confident in a street survival or other desperate situation, they need to “train like the champions do”. *Nothing could be further from the truth!*

**It’s not about being a champion. It’s about being prepared, being confident, and being able to survive and prevail. The “trophy” in self-defense is *YOUR LIFE*.**

### **Where The Classicists Have It Right — And What “Combatives” Students Need To Learn From *Them***

**ONE** of the shortcomings in the manner in which the more practical, realistic, modern “*combatives*” arts are currently taught is that in many cases (not in all) the skills are imparted exclusively in seminar or short-term course presentations. These are often excellent *introductory* learning experiences, but for some reason the idea seems to have caught on that *regular, ongoing class drill*, the same way training is conducted in the classical *ju-jitsu* or *karate* arts, is not desirable in a modern combatives program. It is, some believe, “useless”, a “waste of time”, “merely fooling oneself”, etc. to drill repetitively in the blows, attacks, and counterattacks, as well as the weapons skills of the modern systems. **Nothing could be further from the truth.**

Yes — the so-called “WWII methods” *were* taught in extremely brief presentations of, often, no more than four to six or so sessions of training and practice. However, remember that there was a wartime emergency for which the students were being prepared. And even then, *every single instructor urged the students to continue to work and to practice as much as possible on their own.*

One can learn the basic skills of close combat and self-defense in ten hours — maybe less. But to ***perfect*** and to ***master*** those skills requires a considerably longer period of time. And there are a lot more worthwhile skills, applications, derivations, and even innovations that have been made since the 1940’s (some by yours truly). The

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best way for students to acquire solid proficiency, and to actually benefit from the in-depth development of all of the skills and techniques of close combat and self-defense, ongoing group class drill is highly desirable.

When we have the pleasure of working with a student from out of town we cram an awful lot into the intensive private lessons that we teach them; but we **ALWAYS** emphasize that unless they work hard at, and practice that which we have taught them assiduously, they will only have obtained the barest minimum of benefit from that which we had hoped to give them.

Quite rightly, enthusiasts of practical combatives emphasize that a great deal of time and energy is not required to learn the methods. However, a lot of time, effort, and energy **IS** required if the student really wishes to achieve the mastery and confidence that solid, functional ability to **USE THAT WHICH HE HAS LEARNED** will bring him. There really are no short cuts. You certainly do not need to apply yourself for five to ten years before you have a reliable skill level; but you'd better count on **HARD WORK** and a lot of it for *at least* five or six months; and that means **DRILL**, at least three times a week, with consistency and serious effort.

Our personal approach is to teach the entire martial art that we developed and systematized in 1975. What we did is take all of the major WWII systems and *lace their techniques and tactics* together with the strong and practical aspects of *kenpo-karate, ju-jutsu, varmannie, Western boxing, rough-and-tumble ("street") fighting, and modern weaponry*, among other things. Using the principles and foundational elements of the WWII methods we built upon them, and used the great advances in practical combat that they brought us as a springboard to carry the contributions they gave us, many steps further.

We can teach a serious student the essentials of self-defense and close combat within less than half a year. But there is much more to study and learn, and this subject offers an interested person a *lifetime* of beneficial training, if he wants it.

Some people want it, others are satisfied with less. But either way, hard, regular drill — ongoing practice until the desired skill level is achieved, is necessary. Good, reliable techniques will be retained to a large degree, even if practice is discontinued; but obviously the smartest course is to continue practicing. This, if nothing else, is the key principle that every single one of the classical/traditional Asian systems of martial arts teach and emphasize. We respectfully suggest to all who wish to develop proficiency in self-defense that they determine to knuckle under and **WORK**. It is the only way to succeed.

When we began training in *ju-jutsu* as a teenager, classes were 1-1/2 hours long, and we were expected to attend at least three times a week. Often, we'd continue practicing for 30 minutes *after* a regular group class ended. We frequently went to four weekly classes. Back then (late 1950's) the martial arts were new in America. The training then, for the most part, emulated insofar as the few teachers who had learned the arts were able to do so, the way training was conducted in Asia. It wasn't *exactly* the same (Americans would never have tolerated it), but it came close. And while we will be the first to proclaim that 90% of that which we studied was **impractical** and of questionable value in actual combat, we must also say that the disciplined, ongoing practice demanded of the students did make sense. *That is the way to acquire a physical art.*

Anyone who put in the time and effort on **practical, modern skills** (such as we teach, or such as those that are taught by other realistic and practical teachers) that we used to be required to put into *ju-jutsu*, would experience **INCREDIBLE** success within three months of training!

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If you are truly serious about developing the confidence and skill that will enable you to defend yourself and protect those you love, then make up your mind to put a decent effort into learning that which you wish to know. It's worth it.

You can forget all about the classical/traditional trappings, the kata, the bowing, the foreign language terminology, the flashy skills, the acrobatics, the exotica, etc. But please do ***NOT*** forget one of the greatest lessons that the classical/traditional martial arts still have to teach the modern student of close combat and self-defense: ***You need to apply yourself consistently and seriously. You need to work hard, and you need to stick with your training to achieve the goals that you have set for yourself.***

### Combat Handgun Prerequisites

**BE** sure to check our other site, [www.seattlecombatives.com](http://www.seattlecombatives.com), for our latest article on the prerequisites for *real world effectiveness* in close combat and self-defense shooting with the sidearm (as well as for a few other recently posted articles, which we think you'll enjoy).

The mainstream “gun” magazines keep pumping out commercially-oriented hokum (in our opinion) regarding what you need in order to be ready to save your life and protect your loved ones in a situation where the use of a handgun is necessary. Remember that these newsstand periodicals (and many of the instructional books that you can order or find in bookstores, as well) are written to promote shooting instructors and shooting schools, as well as to pander to advertisers and purveyors of various firearms, ammunition, holsters, etc. The nitty gritty; the ***nuts and bolts that comprise the TRUTH regarding that which you really need*** is more often than not, not known, ignored, glossed over, diluted, only hinted at, or *misstated* and *misrepresented*, in our opinion, by numerous contributors to these periodicals.

The semiautomatic pistol and revolver are basic weapons in the *American Combato (Jen•Do•Tao)*<sup>TM</sup> curriculum. Our *only* concern is for **THAT WHICH WORKS**. Our personal training includes (but has not been limited to) study under the late Col. Jeff Cooper *and* Col. Rex Applegate (both of whom we respect, but *only* the latter of whom we agree with, and have found to be completely correct in regard to the mechanics of shooting methodology). We have been officially certified by ***BOTH*** these individuals. Our article (in the “Articles” section of the site) is frank and politically incorrect. It gives you what some may find uncomfortable insights into what being able to use a handgun for keeps really entails and requires of the handgunner. We'd bet a million bucks (if we had it, and if we were a betting man!) that no police academy is giving this information out! And you may check the literature of any “shooting school” you may have heard of, and you'll almost certainly see *nothing* plainly stated about the crucial truth that our new article presents.

Check it out.

**Next Time You Hear Of “Challenges”  
To “Prove” Combat Skills, Think About This!**



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**WE** have never, do not now, and never will have anything to do with that aspect of what some people consider today to be “martial arts” that is known as “*challenge events*”, “*cage fighting*”, MMA, UFC, etc. and so on. If you like that stuff, then be our guest. Enjoy yourself. But it isn’t something we wish to be associated with.

Since there is such popular coverage in the martial arts mainstream media pertaining to this relatively “recent kid on the block”, as it were, a percentage of those who are looking for practical combat and defense skills may be led to believe that the ground fighting/challenge event/competition/MMA/UFC venue is where they should apply themselves in order to acquire the skills and tactics that they wish to possess.

We are all for freedom of choice, so, again, *if that approach to “martial arts” is your cup of tea, then go for it*. However, with all this talk of “challenges”, we wanted to clarify something that many apparently just do not get. Namely, **there is no correlation between competition and combat**. None. And this fact is perhaps most eloquently and clearly *proven beyond doubt* by the very nature of all of these “challenges”. We do realize that this is *not* the intention of those who push the venue as being in fact “combat” or “self-defense” training. The popular challenges are in effect *challenges that prove NOTHING WHATEVER ABOUT CLOSE COMBAT OR SELF-DEFENSE*.

A notable point: Remember that since the serious introduction of the numerous *karate* and combat-oriented *ju-jitsu* systems (those that stress **atemiwaza**, remaining on your feet, and throwing the *other* guy to the ground, etc.) there have been — nationwide — literally thousands of incidents where individuals thusly trained have done a splendid job of defending themselves.

Just as a matter of interest, it might be enlightening to know how many individuals have successfully employed the competitive groundfighting and the other popular contest-oriented skills and tactics successfully in **REAL MILITARY, LAW ENFORCEMENT, AND PRIVATE CITIZEN SELF-DEFENSE ENCOUNTERS** — *i.e.* in **ACTUAL SELF-DEFENSE AND HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT**.

It might interest people to know this. As far as a proven track record — *i.e.* **demonstrated effectiveness in and under real world combat conditions** is concerned, not only the karate (taekwon-do, Okinawa-te, ch’uan fa or “kung fu”, etc.) but **ESPECIALLY** the WWII system-based and modern close combat methods built on and expanding upon those war-tested principles, have **ALL** come through “field testing” — again and again and again, for *decades* — in actual wartime, and in peacetime. Even if those trained in these methods and approaches were *all* to be defeated 100% of the time in the contest arena, that means **NOTHING** in regard to their efficacy in actual combat (which is *their forte*, just as the competitive arena is the grappler/groundfighter/challenge event entrants’ forte). Such frequent defeats as have occurred (when, we believe unwisely, karate and other combat-oriented martial arts experts have been duped into playing the sportsman’s game) prove nothing, since *actual combat experiences* have often been very well handled by these very contest losers. **THERE IS NO POINT IN EVEN TAKING LOSSES IN CONTESTS SERIOUSLY INsofar as any conclusions about proficiency in actual combat is concerned.**

*IF* a genuinely meaningful venue were to be established through which entrants might be “challenged” to test, verify, and validate the merits of that which they train in, then the following would have to be implemented:

- Testing the individual’s ability to respond to full force, unrehearsed *surprise* attacks from behind

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- Testing the individual's ability to meet the challenge of unrehearsed attacks from all and any quarter by *multiple* (2, 3, 4 and possibly even more) attackers
- Testing the individual's ability to counter weapon threats (handgun, shoulder weapon, knife) and outright weapon *attacks* (knife, club, etc.)
- For members of military and special law enforcement (SWAT) as well as normal duty police patrol officers **IN FULL DUTY COMBAT GEAR** : testing their ability to meet the challenge of all types of hand-to-hand engagements under all sorts of battle and field conditions, against all types of potential assailants — armed and unarmed
- Testing how well the individual can meet the challenge of defending himself when *one arm and hand is completely disabled*. Against all types of attack — multiples, weapons, from behind, etc.
- Testing how well the individual can cope with attacks that catch him off guard in *normal*, everyday environments:
  - speaking on a public phone
  - in a restroom
  - in a restaurant
  - on staircases
  - in wooded park areas
  - on cement sidewalks
  - in crowded stores
  - in a darkened theater or night club
  - in an office setting
  - in his home
  - in a parking garage
  - when handicapped in all sorts of ways (even blindfolded, or when at reduced efficiency due to illness, etc.
  - when with a loved one (or two!) and forced to defend *them* (either in addition to or instead of, oneself)

A “challenge” insofar as being relevant to hand-to-hand combat and self-defense is concerned **must** logically be a challenge to demonstrate technical superiority in dealing with hand-to-hand combat and self-defense contingencies — *not* competitive matches.

Now that we have presented that which we have presented, let us once again emphasize this: **WE ABSOLUTELY DO NOT BELIEVE THAT ANY “CHALLENGE” OR CONTEST EVENTS OUGHT EVER TO BECOME A PART OF COMBAT AND SELF-DEFENSE TRAINING. OUR PURPOSE HERE IS MERELY TO SHOW THE ABSURDITY THAT PRESENTLY EXISTS IN THE “MINDS” OF THOSE WHO INSIST THAT CONTEST AND COMBAT ARE SYNONYMOUS.**

The combat arts and methods have **ALREADY** met the necessary challenge; which is, of course, that of *actual combat*. To introduce competitive methods and means would, as Fairbairn so aptly noted during WWII, merely serve to dilute and greatly weaken the value of the skills and of the training.

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We cannot resist adding this one, final note. It actually speaks to something that embarrasses those who have permitted themselves to be duped into the “challenge” nonsense much more than it is a criticism of the groundgrapplers and MMA, etc. crowd . . .

Historically, the challenged has *always* enjoyed the choice of weapons, location, terms of combat, etc. Yet the modern “challenges” amount to something more along the lines of: “*I challenge you to fight my game on my terms, according to my rules, in the venue I am most at home in, and with all of those restrictions that may well block off and completely prevent you from doing or using that which favors your approach to combat.*”

This sounds to us uncomfortably like dirty pool. Just a thought.

How about someone *accepting* one of those (in our opinion) ridiculous “challenges” but demanding *HIS* terms for the encounter? Perhaps fighting with one arm only used in the fight?

Well, we’re back to what we began with. We have no quarrel with those whose thing is competition. We do know and wish to teach all who are looking for the truth, that contest and combat are completely different — in all ways. Decide which you prefer, and go for it. But know that a choice is involved here.

Don’t be duped by the “challenge” thing. The guys who excel in the contests are terrific, tough athletes, and are formidable, indeed. But their art is that of competitive sport, not hand-to-hand combat. Besides, the finest champions of all (in judo, boxing, wrestling, sport karate, kick boxing, etc.) restrict their challenges to those who, like themselves, are avid participants in the same sport that they - the champions - are champions in!

We love what the late Bruce Tegnér used to say about two genuine experts each attempting to “prove” that *his* art was superior by fighting the other expert — for *real*. Quite correctly, Tegnér said that all that the two would ever end up “proving” is that each of them is a **FOOL**. We cannot escape the feeling that many people have, during the last couple of decades, been solidly establishing *their* foolishness by attempting to prove something in a context that is irrelevant and entirely beside the point!

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Once again we come to the end of an edition of *WORD & PEN*. We ask that you please tell others about this monthly Newsletter, and that you visit our other site: [www.seattlecombatives.com](http://www.seattlecombatives.com), where we frequently post new articles and commentaries and book reviews, etc. You can also check the archived articles for information and instruction that we’re certain you’ll enjoy.

Watch for the October edition of *WORD & PEN*.

Until next month, stay combat ready!

Yours in defense,

Prof. Bradley J. Steiner

[AmericanCombato.com](http://AmericanCombato.com) & [SeattleCombatives.com](http://SeattleCombatives.com)

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