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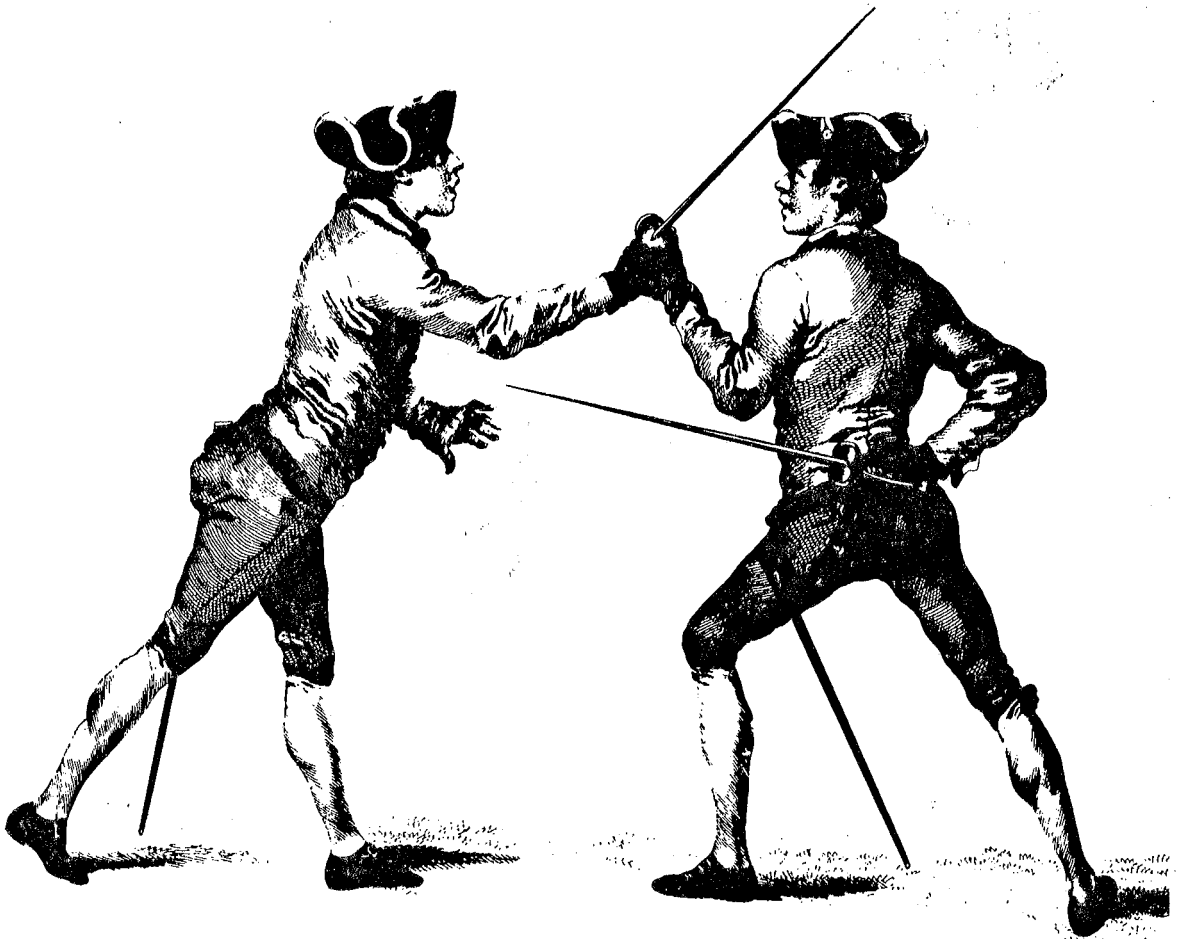
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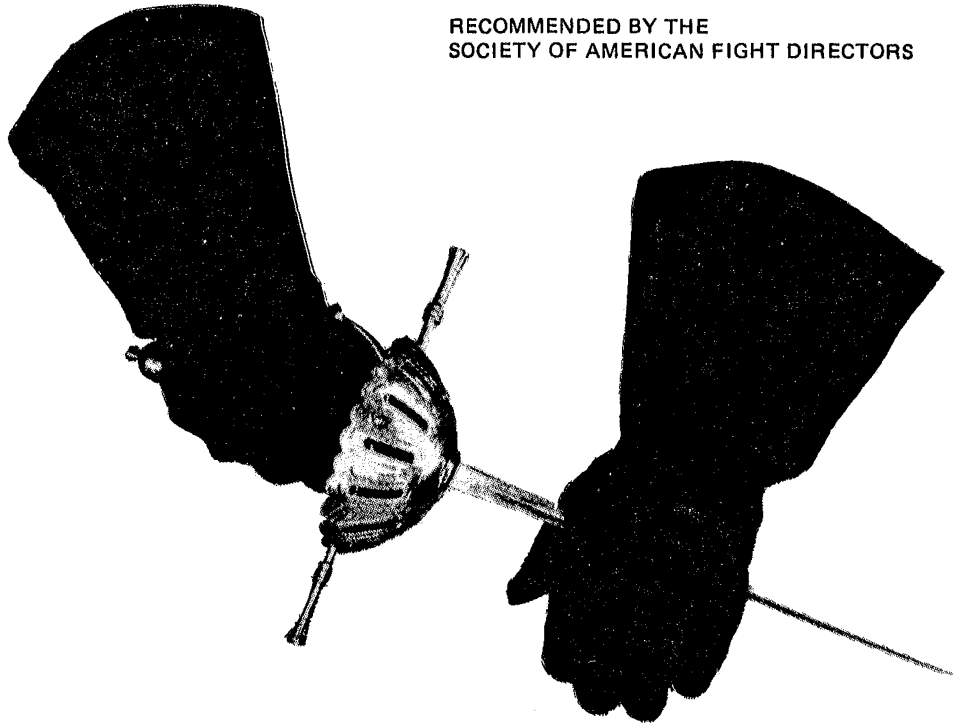


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THE FIGHT MASTER

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SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS

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SOME METHODS OF WEAPONLESS
STAGE COMBAT

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"Stage Violence," as I define the term, is any theatrical bodily contact action which could produce physical harm to the recipient or doer of that action. I further limit "violence" only to bodily contact actions of the hand-to-hand variety, thereby excluding fencing, stick fighting, and gunplay. A knife fight can be included in the definition if it involves physical contact, such as barehands versus a knife.

Stage Violence includes such myriad topics as fisticuffs, kicks, slaps, judo, karate, savate, and so forth. Even fainting, stumbling, or simply falling down on stage are included. In essence, Stage Violence is any bodily contact action on stage which could result in actual injury to the affected persons, whether it be a fall, a kick, or a judo toss.

The problem in staging violence is self-evident: how to make the action performed look realistic enough to convince an audience, and yet leave the actor unharmed? For instance, a judo circle-throw (a toss of an adversary over the tosser's head) is designed to break the thrown party's back, but an actor thrown in such a manner must be able to arise and do it over again the next performance. Even a simple fall must be faked so that the actor or actress can continue falling without injury. The problem then is how to simulate violence, without injury to any participating member, and still make the action performed realistic enough to be convincing to an audience.

There are four main reasons for doing a study on Stage Violence: (1) the desire of the human psyche for violence--if not as a participant, then as a spectator; (2) the large amount of violence present in world dramaturgy; (3) the minuscule amount which has been written on the topic; and (4) the fact that every actor should be able to command his body to do anything needed for a role, including violence.

Violence is present in the various entertainment media because (1) it is faithful to man himself, and (2) it is an audience pleaser. As Hamlet says, the purpose of theatre "...was and is, to hold as 'twere, the mirror up to nature..." (Hamlet, III, ii, 21-23) and what would be more faithful to human nature than the depiction of an innate human impulse--violence? And as any successful playwright (especially Shakespeare) knows, violence can appeal to the most general or the most sophisticated audiences.

Whether an appeal of this sort is art depends upon the playwright's purpose and the treatment of the violence.

Violence can be found in all types and styles of drama. The slapstick of farce is no more than comical violence, and no less a playwright than Molière resorts frequently to slapstick. However, the chief source of serious violence seems to be the modern-day melodrama (i.e., any serious drama other than a tragedy). But violence is found even in so-called Children's Theatre--and in many respects, children can be quite brutal in their violence.

A production of Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale (Winter Quarter, 1966), contained one wrestling match, a fist fight, and a knifing. A modern adaptation for children of an ancient Chinese play titled The Wonderful Tang, contains not one, but three separate fights. (And I can state from personal experience, having acted in "Tang" three times, and directed it twice, that children loved the fights.)

In fact, the only justification needed for a book on Stage Violence might be the growing number of plays which have violence as an integral part of their unity. Depending upon a director's ingenuity, or the playwright's intent, violence can be a major part of the plot. For example, the climax of Edward Albee's The Ballad of the Sad Cafe is a knock-down, drag-out, slug fest between an Amazonian woman and a physically smaller male. (This sequence, incidentally, was staged by a professional Hollywood stuntman for the original Broadway run.) And what audience member can ever forget the dining-room battle between half-blind Annie and deaf-and-dumb Helen in The Miracle Worker by William Gibson? And violence is also good for comic relief other than slapstick or farce, as demonstrated by the rousingly funny fights in What Price Glory! by Stallings and Anderson.

Violence can be found throughout the history of theatre, and is present in all styles of production, from the ancient Greeks to the present-day "Happenings" and "Living Theatres."

Violence is present in world drama because the subject matter of drama was, is, and always will be man, and the history, psychology, and physiognomy of mankind proves that he is a fighting animal--consequently, the history of theatre is filled with violence.

Violence, either comic or serious, can be found in all stages of theatre history and by such renowned playwrights as Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes, Lucius Seneca, Plautus and Terence, Christopher Marlowe, and not the least of these, William Shakespeare. Violence appeals to many of the modern playwrights, also. Authors such as Henrik Ibsen, August Strindberg, Maxim Gorki, Gerhart Hauptmann, Karel Capek, Bertolt

Brecht, Maxwell Anderson, Arthur Miller, Eugene Ionesco, and Eugene O'Neill, have all found violence to be a necessary part of their plays at one time or another. As long as man is the subject of drama, violence will be present. This is perhaps unfortunate, but it is so.

Stage Violence is not only found in all phases of theatre history, but also in all types and styles of drama. There are five main types or kinds of drama: tragedy, melodrama, comedy, farce, and fantasy. The number of styles is legion, determined by either the playwright's handling of his script, or the manner of actual production of the play before an audience, or a combination of both. A sampling of styles would show such categories as classicism, romanticism, realism, naturalism, symbolism, expressionism, and so on.

Not only is violence found in plays of differing types and styles, but Stage Violence itself can be stylized to match the tone of the production. For instance, a fight scene might be extremely realistic in Edward Albee's The Ballad of the Sad Cafe, or symbolistic in Maurice Maeterlinck's Pelléas and Mélisande, in which the actors might not even touch one another. In fact, the most highly stylized forms of Stage Violence may be found in the Oriental Theatre, mainly the Japanese Kabuki in which no blows are actually struck. Even in the most seemingly violent sequences, there is no contact between bodies or swords. Nevertheless, the audience readily accepts this stage convention for there is no pretense of reality in the fighting.

The matter of styles and types of drama, as related to violence, leads to one inevitable question: How should Stage Violence be presented to the audience?

The first requirement to be fulfilled by violence is that it appear convincing to the audience viewing the action, but not so convincing as to destroy the audience's detachment or aesthetic distance. The important word is "convincing." A scene of fighting (tachimawari) in the Kabuki is quite convincing to a Japanese audience, although the actors make no pretense of touching one another. A stylized, choreographed knife fight and "rumble" is convincing in the dramatic-musical West Side Story, because the action is fitting to the production.

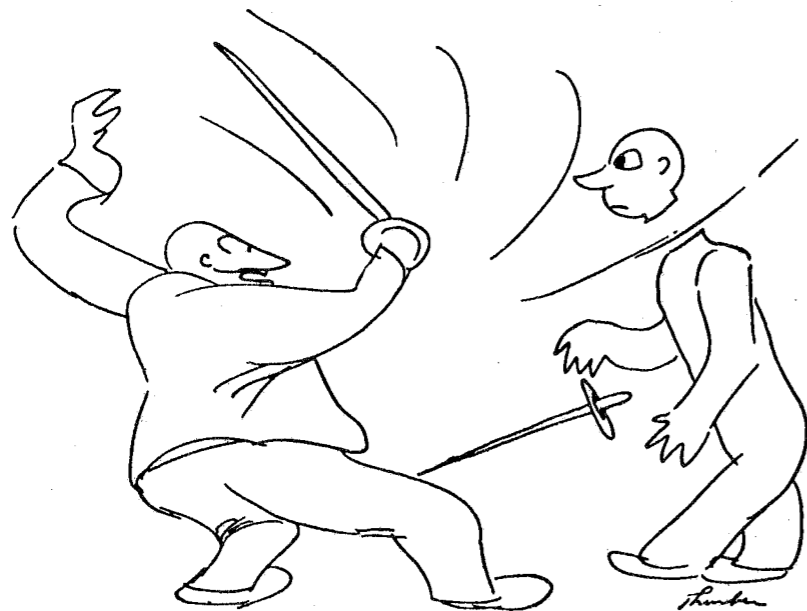
To paraphrase the old adage that "beauty is in the eye of the beholder," one might say that "what is convincing to an audience is whatever the audience is willing to accept."

There is no one answer to the question of in what style Stage Violence should be? The only answer possible is that violence will be determined by the script itself, and the style of direction. I would recommend

that fights in melodrama be realistic, while violence in comedy and farce be humorous and perhaps even fantastic.

The answer to how Stage Violence should be presented, must always be determined by the script and the director. The director can be assured that if the violence is in keeping with the spirit of the script, and the style of the direction, the violence will be convincing to the audience. An audience will normally accept what is properly presented to them.

To summarize, then, it is the purpose of this (article) to make stage fighting safe for actors, and possible for directors. Whether or not one agrees with the use of force in real life, violence or at least the threat of violence, has been, is, and will be a strong factor in the production of plays, old and new. It is my hope that this (article) will remove the "School of Hard Knocks" from stage violence.



"Touché!"

ON TAI CHI CHUAN

I use Tai Chi Chuan (Sword Form) as an exercise, but more importantly as a vehicle in establishing in young students a physical form that can help them immensely in becoming more aware of their bodies. The advantages of Tai Chi lie in its direct relationship to the mind and body. Through it one can learn how to move with flexibility and centeredness. It is invaluable to the state of mind and body for coordinating and balancing the body. Besides the meditative qualities of Tai Chi, the various forms can improve energy flow to a point where the movement becomes a free flowing natural force.

I use a sword form because it can be related directly to stage fighting. It is advantageous for a student to have to deal with a prop while performing certain movements because after all how many times is a student called upon to act and do something with a prop at the same time; in addition, the fact that it is a sword works very nicely for a fight choreographer. I cannot say enough as to how valuable it has been to me to not only use it as a teaching aid but also for my own state of awareness. I strongly recommend that as potential fight teachers and choreographers many of you would find Tai Chi Chuan a marvelous aid. I taught my form at the national workshop this past summer in Illinois. I intend to teach it again this summer.

T.Y. Pang has written a book on Tai Chi Chuan which illuminates the subject far better than I can. The following is from his book On Tai Chi Chuan.

D. L. Boushey

* * *

ON BEING NATURAL

What is natural? That which is natural is Tao, or the Natural Law. All our studying is ultimately for the purpose of understanding the Natural Law. We must first understand the Tao, then we can coordinate ourselves with it, we can follow and harmonize our lives with it. Obviously, we do many things in our lives and have many habits which are unnatural. While many people take "the way things are" to be natural, this is not correct. On the surface, to let everything be natural seems easy and effortless, but, as a matter of fact, this is not so! If we let things be natural in our lives without trying to understand and control, to be at random, then what we are doing is based on blind force and we as human beings become lower than the animals. There is no purpose in saying "Let's be natural". If it is to be said at all it can only be when we have done what should be done and doing what should be done is trying to understand nature so the Natural

can be followed.

In saying, "Practice Tai Chi Chuan naturally," the important word is practice because if we could be natural, Tai Chi Chuan would not be necessary and would never have been developed--it wouldn't need to be studied. What we refer to here as being Natural is that which is the end result in a series of logical relationships of things. Take, for example, a person who is sick because of overeating improper food; being sick in this person's case is being "natural". Here, natural means logical consequences. In this article, we cannot discuss at great length the nature of this Natural Law or Principle, but what would be helpful is to call attention to what we can recognize as unnatural in our life habits with the intention of suggesting that Tai Chi Chuan can help correct what is unnatural and harmful to our total health.

If we want to correct unnatural life habits, we must first know what they are. This seems simple for us and, roughly speaking, we do know something about our life habits. But we do not know enough. For instance, when we are happy we move unconsciously--perhaps in waving our arms and jumping up and down. And so, when we are sad, we also make bodily movements that are perhaps unconscious. We actually lose control. There are many different times in our lives and our daily living when this is so. What we are meaning to say is that we only have a rough idea about ourselves and how we behave. When, for example, we turn to the left, we really don't know how our muscles move and we don't ordinarily consider how the other parts of our body relate to this movement. There are two facts here that are worthwhile noting. First, we are biologically limited. Second, there are mechanical laws that can describe any specific movement. These mechanical laws that describe our movements are in fact Natural Laws. Without knowing these Laws, it is easy to go against them and, very often, the result is loss of balance and awkwardness. This will disturb our nervous system and can cause certain disturbances both mentally and physically. Our health can be destroyed after a long period of unnatural movements which injure or deform certain parts of our body or organs.

Although today we can explain certain movements in terms of mechanical and biological laws, Tai Chi Chuan was developed when these laws were perhaps not understood in the same way, but, rather, experienced through practice. This is why Tai Chi Chuan is practiced slowly--so as to be able to discover natural laws the natural way through feeling. It is through practice that we can learn these laws and through practice that these laws can, for us today, be transformed from pure intellectual knowledge to physical functioning and movement. It must, however, be realized that Tai Chi Chuan should not be practiced only as a means of achieving motor skills; it should also be

practiced as a form of art.

The present form of Tai Chi Chuan has been developed as a result of many years experiences of many people. Through these people's accumulated experiences, the biological and mechanical laws of human movement had been slowly felt and controlled and, according to this, a series of movements, Tai Chi Chuan, was developed.

Tai Chi Chuan's relatively fixed form and characteristic slowness and smoothness will help a person who practices to slowly learn to feel and control the natural mechanical and biological laws of movement.

This is why Tai Chi Chuan can improve health and cure sicknesses and can promote understanding and eventually lead to self-realization.

It is a common experience for people who are first beginning to practice Tai Chi Chuan to feel that the movements they are trying to make are unnatural. As a matter of fact, it is not unnatural; it is unhabitual. Many muscles are unused in ordinary daily movement and it takes time to control and strengthen these muscles. In time, their movements will also feel natural.

Natural movement is not necessarily habitual movement, but, rather, a self-conscious self-controlled movement based on biological and mechanical laws. Perhaps it can be said that one of the purposes of Tai Chi Chuan is to try to gradually develop or enforce our habitual movements to be more in tune with the Natural Laws. This is why we say simple "Be Natural".

"Man models himself after Earth.
Earth models itself after Heaven.
Heaven models itself after Tao.
And, Tao models itself after Nature."

Lao Tzu

WHY TAI CHI CHUAN IS GOOD FOR HEALTH

Tai Chi Chuan is an art emerging from a culture over a period of many years (and) is most emphatically Chinese in character. Its philosophical basis, its beauty and its form are representative of China's highest cultural expressions. It is interesting to notice, however, that given its long and rich history, it has not been until modern times that people have been conscious of the qualities that Tai Chi possesses that make it a most beneficial aid to good health and effective means of curing and preventing certain kinds of illnesses. There are examples of people who have found themselves cured of diseases after practicing

Tai Chi Chuan for a certain length of time--the varieties of maladies range from high blood pressure to ulcers, arteriosclerosis and tuberculosis. These facts remain and yet little effort has been made to attempt to explore the scientific basis that underlies these amazing experiences.

If, then, we should begin to make such an attempt to understand what kinds of principles lend to Tai Chi Chuan such qualities that make it an effective contributor to good physical and mental health, we need somehow to realize and clarify what process of learning and training is in fact involved in Tai Chi. Upon approach, it does rather immediately become clear that there are actually two important and fundamental principles that affect and characterize Tai Chi Chuan as a whole. The first principle which is taught to a student who practices Tai Chi is the unity and calmness of mind. When a person's mind is calm and united, he is able to begin to consciously focus his attention and mind to where he chooses. When the mind is calmed, the body can then be consciously directed and relaxed. This is the very first step in learning Tai Chi Chuan. After the mind is calm, the body can begin to move, and here is where a student begins to learn to use his will rather than his physical power to move his body. The more a person can consciously relax his mind and body, the more he is able to begin to feel his movements; he comes to essentially use the least amount of power possible, or, rather, the exact amount required in order to make a desired movement. Through feeling with a calm and relaxed body, he learns how to move with flexibility, balance and use of his energy. The body is alert and relaxed, not limp but crisp, able to know what is correct and natural.

It becomes clear that a person who practices and trains himself in this way is actually training his central nervous system. With a mind calmed and a body relaxed, the brain can, through feeling, receive and transmit more accurate and thorough information through the central nervous system. The body can be trained to move in harmony and good coordination. It is true that Tai Chi Chuan can, to an observer, look quite simple, but this is because of its smoothness and continuousness. Actually, it is very difficult and the mind is very active, the central nervous system is receiving good discipline and the functional quality of the cerebrum is being strengthened.

Even though the movements in Tai Chi are soft and gentle, the exercise does effectively mobilize all parts of the body. The central nervous system gives orders to, directs and adjusts the blood circulation. Also, there is a particular kind of rhythmical breathing that accompanies the exercise which sinks the breathing to the lower abdomen and causes the diaphragm to move. This movement massages the internal organs and thereby aids the glands by stimulating the circulation and cleansing the blood.

The more Tai Chi is accomplished, the more enjoyable and emotionally pleasing and soothing it becomes. This is very important in the way Tai Chi contributes to good health because it so positively affects the chemical balance of the body and the functioning of the endocrine system. The entire metabolism changes and improves.

Not only are the blood circulation and endocrine system affected positively, but also the digestive system. This same diaphragmatic movement also massages the internal organs and affects the pressure of the organs.

It has been observed that people who live sedentary lives often become victims of heart attacks. Insufficient exercise which can adequately stimulate and mobilize the body and relieve tension is considered to be a major factor in the occurrence of heart attacks experienced by these people. The smooth, total exercise that Tai Chi Chuan is learned as a self defense art. Actually fighting is not thought about, but rather, attention is paid to how to function in protecting yourself from danger. The mind is tranquil and is the director and the true self; the dance of life emerges.

In Tai Chi Chuan one can find his own rhythm and become in tune with the universe. Rather than trying to attain something, one learns to return to what is Natural and, in doing so, improves his mind and body.

TAI CHI CHUAN AS PHYSICAL THERAPY

Physical therapy is a concept and practice which is very ancient in China. There are records which reveal that even two thousand years ago the Chinese people had certain kinds of understanding and practices that can be compared to some most modern and contemporary approaches to the problems of physical and mental health. The Chinese people have believed that if any part of the body does not function adequately and normally, then the total health of a person is somehow affected negatively. They believe that the nervous system should act and react adequately or there will be sickness. To be sick to the Chinese means that the person's mind and body are not in good harmony. It means that the different organs and the nervous system are functioning incorrectly or inadequately in a manner that is too strong, too weak, too fast or too slow.

To be sick, then, means that to some varying degree there is disharmony and disorder within the body. From the point of view of physical therapy, the question continues. Why do these disorders appear? Can we prevent them? How? Again, according to traditional Chinese medical theory, the causes of sickness are two-fold. There are those that

originate within the body and those that originate without. Wind and fire, heat and cold, dampness and dryness are the six external factors that can affect one's state of health. Internal Factors originate emotionally and some of the emotions which can most negatively affect health are worry, fear, fright, thought and sadness. When a person cannot make sufficient adjustment to these conditions which affect all humans, then sickness is inevitable. Sufficient adjustment would mean sufficient control or flexibility so as to not let any one factor dominate in such a way that natural harmony is lost.

In view of the way in which the Chinese people have understood health and harmony, it is easy to appreciate how Tai Chi Chuan so totally reflects this understanding and how it in fact has come to be such an important part of Chinese culture. Tai Chi Chuan is a rich art--of dance, of self-defense, of meditation, of physical exercise and of physical therapy. Because of the calmness and harmonious qualities that it nurtures, it has been used for centuries as a way of promoting good health and of preventing and curing illnesses. Through the calmness that Tai Chi Chuan generates, the life forces that have become locked within an unbalanced body are released and allowed to restore and sustain natural health.

TAI CHI CHUAN AS CALISTHENICS

The majority of people agree that good health is important for good living, and almost everyone also agrees that exercise is essential to maintain good health. The question arises, however, as to how much exercise is, in fact, necessary to maintain good health. Not long ago, someone made a study about the amount of exercise necessary according to a point system. To many people this seemed very sensible.

If we consider this point system more thoroughly, we find that a question arises as to whether or not it really is possible to say how many points a person needs to maintain well-being. We may first find ourselves asking the question, "What is good health?" Some say that a person who is not sick is healthy. Others say that, when a person can carry out his daily work without interruption, then he is healthy. Still others say that a healthy person is one who can carry out his daily activities as well as fully enjoy his leisure time. Well, rather than answer this question directly, we have chosen here to discuss physical well-being and to see if it leads to a more valid statement about the question of health in general.

We are using the term "physical fitness" instead of the word "health" for good health. As a matter of fact, health has many aspects besides physical fitness. For example, emotionally, socially and

educationally, there are factors which can affect health and cause mental illness and psychosomatically induce disorders. Even though we cannot separate the physical and mental health of a person, we have, nevertheless, chosen to focus on the physical fitness factor of human life.

Everyone is more or less physically different and has a different background and experiences. Family, society, education--all contribute to making a person what he is and, therefore, a general statement declaring the certain number of points of exercise that people need a week is meaningless. We say this because a person's attitude and personality affect the end results of a certain kind of exercise and not all people have the same likes or opportunities. Perhaps a person doesn't like any physical exercise at all but he knows that he will not be physically fit unless he does some kind of exercise. For him, to exercise is to maintain his physical well-being. If there would be another way for him to maintain his physical well-being, he would do it. So, under these circumstances, he will not enjoy any exercise or sport and this is a pity! We doubt that what he does do to exercise will help him very much. Some people like swimming. Swimming is a good exercise and, if a person enjoys it, it will benefit him even more. The same is true for tennis, golf and other exercises and sports. But how many people can afford this kind of activity every day? It is costly and it takes much time. Also, it is possible to overexert in these exercises and this is harmful to one's physical well-being.

Tai Chi Chuan as a physical exercise and vehicle for good physical fitness provides many, many advantages without the disadvantages. One can practice morning and evening without any equipment or preparation. It is personal; each person can find his own movement and rhythm. The rules and scope are found by each individual in keeping with his own body and inner laws. It can be enjoyed alone or with others. After a certain amount of disciplined practice, one will grow to enjoy it more and more. Many other types of exercises tend to exercise only certain parts of the body and neglect others; this is not good. Tai Chi Chuan exercises every part of the body harmoniously. Its smoothness and slowness help to calm the mind and lead to tranquility. Blood circulation improves; deep breathing coordinated with the movements helps to move the internal organs smoothly and so improves digestion and elimination and metabolism. Simply speaking, these are the advantages that Tai Chi Chuan offers.

The Fencing Master's arrival on the theatre scene can really be said to have begun with Domenico Angelo in the eighteenth century. The odd thing about this was that Angelo was not a qualified fencing master at all, and did not actually arrange any stage fights. But his many theatrical friends and interests, and the fact that his son was the first master known to arrange stage fights, make him an important influence on the coming together of swordplay and drama.

In Paris Angelo, as a young man, studied equestrianism, dancing and fencing with equal enthusiasm. As a man-about-town he met, at a fencing demonstration, the Irish actress Peg Woffington. She gave him a bunch of roses which he pressed fervently to his lips, then pinned to this right breast and challenged his fencing opponents to disturb with their foils, a single leaf of this unusual corsage. None of them succeeded, and soon after Angelo became Peg's lover. In this capacity he travelled with her to England. After the affair was over he married a girl of seventeen and was set up as a riding master by his friend, the Earl of Pembroke. In 1761 he bought Carlisle House in Soho, where he moved in high society and was soon the leading fencing master of the day, though he never acquired the technical qualification of the French masters with whom he had studied. His pupils included many brave souls who fought duels with the sharps, including the playwright Sheridan, and among other theatrical friends were Garrick and Foote, the comedian.

Angelo had for many years been fascinated by the stage, particularly the mechanical effects backstage. When Garrick organised the first Shakespeare festival at Stratford in 1769, Angelo played the part of Mark Anthony in selections from "Julius Caesar" and was also the official Director of Fireworks. He advised Garrick on costume, warning him against dressing Macbeth in scarlet laced with gold, advice which Garrick ignored.

Among all Angelo's theatrical activities, however, there is no record of him ever arranging a fight. This may be partly explained by the fact that when his great friend Garrick staged "Hamlet" he omitted the fencing match! Actor-managers of Garrick's ilk took great liberties with Shakespeare's texts, though it is difficult to imagine how Garrick's version ended without the fencing bout.

Harry Angelo, Angelo's son, inherited his father's love of the theatre, appeared onstage as an amateur actor, and even though of turning pro. Unlike his father, Harry was a qualified Maitre d'Armes,

and did arrange stage fights, notably for Edmund Kean in "Hamlet". Harry's fencing rooms were at one time in the Royal Opera House, in the Haymarket, the site of the present Her Majesty's theatre. Like his father, he was the centre of a great theatrical and social circle. By now, in Regency London, actors were learning fencing to improve their deportment, and Harry Angelo also taught several actresses who played Hamlet.

At that time women were only allowed, when fencing, to perform the exercise known as "thrusting carte and tierce" in which one fencer made a number of attacks by disengagement with as much style as possible, while the other parried with equal style. These movements were known as "the salute", and were a conventional overture to a fencing bout. An actress called Mrs. Glover, after only four lessons, made such a tour-de-force of her salute, before the Hamlet fight, that she got rounds of applause.

The fights arranged by Harry Angelo for the stage seemed to have exactly mirrored the academic fencing he taught at his Salle. The fencing mask had been invented, but it was considered an insult to your opponent to wear it, since this suggested that he could not confine the hits with his buttoned foil to your breast and avoid the face. Partly, no doubt, to avoid the risk to the eyes, fencers came on guard opposite each other and remained in one position only, without advancing or retiring, only lunging and recovering alternately. One would lunge to attack, and the other would defend. After the attack, the defender would wait until his opponent has recovered before lunging on the counter-attack. So the proceedings must have resembled a polite game of tennis, the spectators' eyes swiveling from side to side with plenty of time to adjust to phrases of bladework. It was this kind of fencing which Harry Angelo transferred wholesale to the stage fight.

All the leading actors of the day flocked to learn from Harry-- the Kembles, Kean, Macready, Munden and Ingleton. None of them questioned the anachronism of fighting Shakespeare's Rapier and Dagger, Medieval and Roman fights, with contemporary small sword, or foil-play. It was when fencing with Kean prior to a performance of a play called "The Admirable Crichton", done for Kean's benefit at Drury Lane, that Harry strained the tendons of his left thigh so badly that he had to give up fencing altogether. He handed over his fencing school to his son, Henry Angelo III, who unlike his father and grandfather, seemed to have had no theatrical interests.

The revolutionary figure of the mid and late nineteenth century stage fight was Professor Baptiste Bertrand, the first master to have a knowledge of ancient weapon-play and make use of it for the theatre.

Bertrand liberated the fights he arranged from the old eighteenth century foil fight with fixed foot and no riposte until the attacker had recovered. Writing of his fight in "The Dead Heart" at the Lyceum in 1889 the Pall Mall Gazette praised "its grace, its freedom from conventionalty, and its almost painful air of reality. This duel will take its place among artistic traditions of the theatre. It had rendered the duél of convention impossible for the future."

The contestants in "The Dead Heart" were Henry Irving and Squire Bancroft" and rumour has it that Bertrand refused to let them open in this play until they were perfect in the duel. Another tale about this fight is that only the final hit was planned, all else being improvised nightly on the spot. It is difficult to square these two stories, and it is hard to believe that no accidents would occur in an improvised fight, however good the fencing. It would be so easy to land a hit by mistake thus either truncating the duel in its early stages, or if the wrong man was hit, reversing the plot of the play! Whatever the truth of the matter, the fight became the talk of the town. In view of Irving's well-known short-sightedness, this was a remarkable achievement (he once played a scene with a "blind" girl and when he dropped his glasses by accident only the "blind" actress could see to retrieve them.)

For a time no stage fight was seen on the London stage that had not been arranged by Baptiste Bertrand. Tree and Fred Terry in "Hamlet", Forbes Robertson's "Macbeth", Wyndom's "Cyrano de Bergerac". Janette Steer played and fought as Hamlet, Esme Berringer played and fought as Romeo, and also with rapier and dagger in "At Sword's Point."

In the late nineteenth century fencing was enjoying a revival generally. A group of Englishmen created renewed interest in swordplay of all kinds. This group included the explorer Richard Burton, who qualified as a Maitre d'Armes in France, Alfred Hutton, author of "Old Swordplay" and many other books, (and the only man in modern times to record his occupation as Swordsman) as well as Egerton Castle, who wrote the famous "Schools and Masters of Fence". Castle was not, technically, a fencing master, but his experience in period swordplay was unquestioned. It was he who arranged the fights in Tree's celebrated production of "The Three Musketeers" at Her Majesty's Theatre. There are still photographs surviving of the fights in this show. Castle gave each of the Immortal Three a different combination of weapons--single rapier, rapier and cloak, and rapier and dagger. This variation was repeated, incidentally, many years later by William Hobbs in the Richard Lester film of "Three Musketeers".

There was also a great interest at this time in competitive fencing as a recreation among actors generally. Some of them formed

the Foil Club, of which the dramatist Pinero was president.

Baptiste Bertrand's grandson, Professor Leon Bertrand, was a qualified fencing master and also a theatre fight-arranger. In his entertaining book "Cut and Thrust", he mentions, among the actors he worked with, Lewis Waller in another production of "Three Musketeers", Tree as O'Flynn, Martin Harvey in "The Corsican Brothers", Seymour Hicks as Richard III, Robert Loraine as Cyrano. Bertrand complains that his expert advice was only sought two or three weeks prior to production, and says that the management expected a finished product to emerge from one hour's daily practise. The result, he writes, was that actors were "pass perfect, parry and thrust so studied anyone can see they are fencing from the book. The duel looked arranged in a double sense." He also comments (as true today as all those years ago) that "the piece may improve with each performance but the duel steadily deteriorates".

Bertrand writes that Robert Loraine as Cyrano, wanted, as a climax to the fight, a dazzling series of six or seven feints to be performed by himself. This would be difficult enough for a modern fencer, says Bertrand, but a herculean feat with period weapons. What was intended as a grand climax often ended up apparently as grand confusion.

Playing Valvert to Laraine's Cyrano was an actor called Marston Garsia, of formidable stature and boundless enthusiasm. This was Garsia's first job in the theatre, after abandoning a career at the bar. Bertrand mentions going to the Horseshoe pub for lunch after strenuous rehearsing in New Oxford Street and having to repeat the duel for the ninety ninth time with Garsia, using table cutlery for weapons. When Garsia had to retire from the show to have his tonsils out, Loraine, peeved at the inconvenience, harangued the new Valvert on the importance of the role he was to undertake, and finished as follows: "Now I want you to give your whole kind to the part. You must think of nothing else. I'm paying you a good salary and what's more, you needn't be a Spanish soldier in the fourth act".

A fight Leon Bertrand did not, in the end, arrange, was for John Barrymore's London Production of "Hamlet". Barrymore made not secret of his shortcomings as a fencer, and did not want to learn a new routine. Finally he fell back on the duel he had staged when playing the part in America, telling Bertrand not to let it be on his conscience.

Although he lived to a great age, Leon Bertrand's theatrical connection did not continue to the end. Professor Leon Paul, another veteran Maitre, arranged, among other fights, Ralph Richardson's "Cyrano" in the Old Vic production in the forties, and also the film

duels in "Meet Me at Dawn". This was based on the entertaining notion of a professional duellist who was hired to disable his opponents by a flesh wound, the target named before hand, just sufficiently to put him out of action for a specified time.

Professor Bob Anderson was British National Fencing Coach, appointed in the fifties. Anderson worked as a fencing double on "Master of Ballantrae" (see Patrick Crean's article on Page 19) and soon built up an interesting second-string speciality in film duels and occasional stage fights. He arranged the combats in "Tom Jones" and "Barry Lyndon" and worked at Stratford. After resigning as National Coach he went straight to work on "The Empire Strikes Back".

There was a time when many British fencing masters did their stint of fight-arranging. Professor Reggie Behmber described the fact that Donald Wolfitt went to his grave with a scar on his stomach, because he forgot to parry. No reflection on Behmber's arranging--when everyone worked in distance failure to parry could have lasting consequences.

But specialisation in modern fight direction has edged out the Fencing Masters who doubled as Fight Arrangers, except for a small handful. When we formed this Society in 1969 the founder members included one full professor of the British Academy of Fencing--Roy Goodall, and two associate members--Ian McKay and Charles Alexis. Alexis was a veteran fight-arranger for films, television and stage, but also under his real name, Lidstone, a fencing coach and author of a book on Fencing. Now Ian McKay is better known for his stage fights than for his fencing, and Charles Alexis is, alas, no longer with us. Only Professor Roy Goodall remains. He is heir to a long and honourable tradition that has played a leading part in the history of fight direction.



I WAS FLYNN'S DOUBLE

By Patrick Crean

It was a strange moment when the great swashbuckler first came on set in costume for we were identical even to our swords. Missing from the look-alike was the gold cigarette holder, and the pretty girl the real Flynn had at his side. Errol had a penchant for nubile young blood and good luck to him I always thought. (I was once in a Rome bar with Errol and the usual little miss. "What would your friend like to drink, Errol?" I asked. "Milk," was the laconic reply). In my view the girls were fortunate to have him as their patron.

When Errol walked in he began talking to Gus Agosti, the first assistant director, and I caught a smatch of their conversation: "... If you could fix her in a bit part...just for a couple of days" murmured Errol, his eyes wandering restlessly around, "I'd appreciate it, sport." The young lady stood beside him, long-lashed eyes innocently staring, gold cross on chain round her neck, auburn hair cascading down her high-school back, and I thought I wish I were in your shoes, Errol.

Then we began the fight, and swords flashed and clashed everywhere as rehearsed, and fast action exploded. Bill Keighley had just cried: "Cut and print!" on the 'master' shot, when Anthony Steel came striding up. Tony Steel was then a promising young British star, successor to Stewart Granger who had gone to Hollywood, and had been best fencer in my class at the Charm School. He was a left-hander and I have always enjoyed, unlike some Fight Directors, pitting left-handed fencers against right, because I think it makes for interesting combinations in routine. "Paddy!" he said, containing himself, "You've got to do something about this chap Anderson. He can't fence!" "Tony!" I exclaimed, aghast, "I matched you with him because he's the best fencer on the set. He's the coach to the British Olympic Team!" "My God!" gasped Tony Steel, "Why didn't you tell me?" Red-faced, he went back to Bob Anderson and after apologising profusely as one ex-member of the Brigade of Guards to another ex of the Royal Marines, fenced superbly with Bob for the remainder of the sequence.

There was a scene where Errol had to fight Tony Steel in a stable full of restless horses. This episode was one of the best pieces of action in the movie. The horses were flashy of eye and snorty of nostril, reminding me vividly of when I rode old Rollo at Newbiggin Hall as a boy, and the duel was fought with rapier-type swords as opposed to the court small-sword variety used in the castle hall fight.

At one point Errol broke off his rehearsal with me and said sharply: "Cavens never taught me this!" I was appalled. How could I have given him a move the great Camens hadn't? I should have stuck to the rapier swordplay I knew he knew. But to my surprise Errol said: "It's good. Do it again. Do it again and finish with the assembly." What on earth was that, I wondered? "I'm sorry, Errol," I said heavily, "I don't know what that is." "Keighley," Flynn scoffed, "Who is this guy? Doesn't know what the assembly is!" Suddenly I had a hunch. "Is it a corps-a-corps? Like this?" and I banged my sword hilt against his in the classic fashion. "Whatever you said that's it!" remarked Errol and laughed.

It was one of the few times I ever saw him laugh heartily. Mostly he only half-smiled his eyes restless even sad, as if his thoughts were far away among people and places that he loved. An impression at variance with the popular idea of Errol Flynn as the dashing blade. But when he worked he was the epitome of professionalism, and he knew picture-making backwards. When fencing he used to whistle softly and was always very quick on his feet. He had a habit of goading me when we fought--"to get the gut" as he put it--and encouraged me to do likewise. "Goddam Limey!" he would hiss, thrusting fiercely. "Aussie bastard!" I'd retort, cutting back.



HAMLET: A FIGHT REVIEW

The B.B.C. is in the midst of producing the entire Shakespeare Canon through public television. Their most recent offering was the play many scholars acknowledge as the greatest play ever written. The play, Hamlet. It was very well acted and well produced. Derek Jacobi was a marvelous Prince of Denmark. The supporting cast including Clair Bloom, Patrick Stewart and Eric Porter were very strong. Hamlet in itself is a very long play and when there are little or not cuts to be found, you had better prepare yourself for a 3-1/2 hour break. It was long in coming but alas it did come. I am referring to the final duel of course.

The part of Laertes was played by David Robb. The build-up to the final fight was quite good and all we needed was a super fight to top off the whole production. Unfortunately, that isn't what we got. What we did get was some very good bits without much technique to support them. The en garde positions were interesting in that the combatants crossed their daggers instead of their swords. They held their swords in a high guard over their heads with the hand pronated. The first hit was very quick and caught Laertes unprepared. Hamlet beat the dagger from his hand and touched his back claiming a hit. A hit it was and a rather clever one at that. It worked especially nicely because Laertes says "No!" giving one the impression that he wasn't ready or at least he felt fouled because he didn't have his dagger and therefore was unduly taken advantage of. Anyway, so far so good.

What happened next was something approaching Bill Hobb's "fight on the ice" in the Four Musketeers. The two fighters commenced to slip and slide and fall all about the playing area. One would have assumed that the court lackey had just mopped the surface with olive oil. I am not sure why this approach was taken (at least so early on in the fight) but this very well could have been a director's choice and not the fight director's. There was very little point and blade work. The blade work was not clean and consequently, the fight lost its effectiveness. One could not believe for a moment that Laertes was a fine swordsman which is alluded to in the script. Both men looked very awkward and anything but poised. I can see this happening when the "have at you now" hit takes place but there seemed to be little reason for Hamlet throwing Laertes around the stage. It approached a "barroom brawl" more than it did a "friendly" bout for the odd wager. One can totally accept the brawling when the illegal hit is made and Hamlet is wounded, but with the frantice action taking place so early on, the impact of the wound and what was to follow was all but dissipated.

One of the nicest touches in the fight was when Hamlet had disarmed Laertes and hands his sword to him hilt first and Laertes grasps the handle and shoves the blade back into Hamlet's wrist! This was a very effective move. But the disarm could have been less violent and Hamlet could be simply offering Laertes his sword like any gentleman. This is the turning point in the fight by this reviewer's point of view. This is where it should get hot and heavy. Now there were be reason to part them. All of the point work and clean bladework could now give way to passion as Hamlet pursues Laertes. Now is the opportunity to throw Laertes around the stage and attack him viciously.

The audience (in the play) could start to become more active trying to get out of the way of these two hot-heads. With a total switch in the behavior of those viewing the play, the effect of Hamlet's wounding of Laertes can be heightened. Everyone is scrambling, not just the combatants. It was simply a matter of building to an early peak and thus having nowhere to go with the fight. The wounding of Laertes was merely academic instead of a very powerful moment in the play.

The fight director was B. H. Barry who has many fine credits to his name. One got the impression that B. H. was aching to get both men disarmed so he could have a jolly good punch up. Unfortunately, it is a sword fight and weapons must be dealt with and dealt with effectively.

Because of the mediocrity of the fight, one wonders if the director had put too many restrictions on the fight director. Apparently, Jacobi and Robb are pretty fair swordsmen so I don't know if they can be faulted. All this reviewer knows is that something went wrong. The fight didn't work and the fight did not enhance the action of the play as it should have. This report is one man's point of view and perhaps there are some of you who would care to comment on the fight. I would be pleased to hear from you.

D. L. Boushey



NEWS FROM THE ARMOURY

The Armoury now has in stock the new cup-hilt rapier fittings. There are two new developments due to complications at the foundry which will apply to some of the weapons being recast. One change is that we will be receiving the items unpolished from the foundry. In an unpolished state the items look older, almost antiquish, not at all unpleasing in aesthetic senses, though if you prefer a high-gloss polish it can be attained by spending just a few minutes at the grinding machines brush wheel. The second change is that items which are larger or thicker will be recast in a durable aluminum as opposed to the manganese which we have found to be excessively heavy in some recastings. The aluminum is silver in color and will add a new dimension to the primarily gold Armoury. The cup guard of the new cup-hilts is cast in this aluminum as the manganese sample was fairly weighty. If any of you would prefer a slightly heavier weapon, please contact the Armoury and it will cast some cup-guards in manganese. Until then however the new guards will be aluminum.

The new handles, pommels and quillons are cast in manganese and the quillons now have pas-d'anes for added protection and strength. All of these items are now cast with a square hole to minimize grinding on tang of blade. Plates are now being made for the casting of art. 21, 51 and 5 and these weapons will be the next to be available in the new durable castings. The days are gone when you ordered three extra quillons for your rapier in case of breakage. These new items should last for some time. Any suggestions or criticisms on the new castings are welcome at the Armoury.

We are also currently looking at samples of Samurai Swords from Tokyo, as well as some German Schlagger blades (durable steel blades, one straight broadsword-like blade and one curved saber-like blade) that we have discovered. The Armoury is also in communication with an Indian co. that carries everything from bayonets to sword canes. Any of these items are possible additions to the Armoury in the future. As always, you will be informed through the Fight Master as to progress in these matters. Until that time please don't hesitate to contact us in reference to needs. We are here to serve the fight director and hope to offer him more and more in the future.

P.S. As before, I again remind you to specify
when ordering new castings, as old items will still be on sale.

Jerome Smith

PART VI

DUELS IN BRITAIN

From: The Duel: A
History of Duelling

After riding out together for about two miles, the duellists dismounted, stripped off their doublets, and, standing ankle-deep in water, set to. The Earl of Dorset's vivid description of the encounter goes on:

I made a thrust at my enemy, but was short, and in drawing back my arm I received a great wound thereon, which I interpreted as a reward for my short shooting; but in revenge, I pressed into him, though I then missed him also; and then received a wound in my right pap, which passed level through my body and almost to my back. And there we wrestled for the two greatest and dearest prizes we could ever expect trial for—honour and life; in which struggling, my hand, having but an ordinary glove on it, lost one of her servants though the meanest, which hung by a skin, and to sight yet remaineth as before, and I am put in hope one day to recover the use of it again. But at last breathless, yet keeping our holds, there past on both sides propositions of quitting each other's swords; but when amity was dead, confidence could not live, and who should quit first was the question, which on neither part either would perform; and restriving afresh, with a kick and a wrench together I freed my long-captive weapon, which incontinently leving at his throat, being master still of his, I demanded if he would ask his life or yield his sword? Both which, though in that imminent danger, he bravely denied to do. Myself being wounded, and feeling loss of blood, having three conduits running on me, began to make me faint, and he courageously persisting not to accord to either of my propositions, remembrance of his former bloody desire, and feeling of my present estate, I struck at his heart, but with his avoiding, missed my aim, yet passed through his body, and drawing back my sword, repassed through again, through another place, when he cried: "Oh! I am slain," seconding his speech with all the force he had to cast me; but being too weak, after I had defended his assault, I easily became master of him, laying him on his back, when, being upon him, I redemanded if he would request his life? But it seems he prized it not at so dear a rate to be beholding for it, bravely replying he scorned it, which answer of his was so noble and worthy, as I protest, I could not find in my heart to offer him any more violence, only keeping him down; till at length, his surgeon, afar off, cried out he would immediately die if his wounds were not stopped: whereupon I asked if he desired

his surgeon should come? which he accepted of; and so, being drawn away, I never offered to take his sword, accounting it inhumane to rob a dead man, for so I held him to be. This thus ended, I retired to my surgeon, in whose arms after I had remained awhile, for want of blood I lost my sight, and withal, as I then thought, my life also; but strong water and his diligence, quickly recovered me; when I escaped a great danger, for my Lord's surgeon, when nobody dreamt of it, came full at me with my Lord's sword; and had not mine, with my sword, interposed himself, I had been slain by those base hands although my lost Bruce, weltering in his blood, and past all expectation of life, conformable to all his former carriage, which was undoubtedly noble, cried out: "Rascal, hold thy hand!"

Despite all the King's disapproval of duelling, it does not appear that his 'fatal and barbarous affair,' as one chronicler called it, resulted in any proceedings against the Earl of Dorset or any diminution in his favour at court.

After thriving during the first decades of the seventeenth century, duelling became an extremely rare occurrence in the Civil War. As Charles Moore explained, 'since it was not a struggle between two powerful factions of the nobility and gentry one against the other, but of the commonalty against whatever was called royal, noble or honourable in rank and fortune, the consequence was that the gentry, and those who had been accustomed to look to their own swords for revenge in personal affronts, would have disdained to have settled points of honour by private duel, with antagonists of such ignoble birth. The general course of their thoughts being also bent on the repulsion of the common enemy of the order of gentry, they became more closely united within themselves, and were less in the habit of paying a scrupulous attention to all the supercilious dictates of a captious honour.'



THE HIGGINS ARMORY

Recently I discovered the John Woodman Higgins Armory in Worcester, MA and feel that its existence should be made known to the Societys membership. The Higgins Armory has the largest and most diversified private collection of ancient arms and armor in the Western Hemisphere.

Established in 1928 by Worcester industrialist and collector John Woodman Higgins, the armory is housed in one of the nations first all steel and glass buildings built specifically to house the collection.

Higgins purchased his first suit of armor on a European schoolboy trip from Christies Auction Room in London. Later as a manufacturer and pres. tres. to Worcester pressed steel, he traveled many times abroad to visit castles, museums and dealers to study and secure what he regarded as historic examples of functional art.

In 1961 Mr. Higgins passed on and left behind his collection which is now on view to the public and accredited by the American Association of Museums. The collection begins with samples from the stone and bronze ages and includes Classic Greek and Roman helmets and swords as well as a rare example of the Gladiator helmet, it then continues through the iron ages to the renaissance and finally to decorative or parade armor. Also displayed are examples of Japanese arms and armor, an extensive gun collection, stained glass, tapestries, paintings, wood carvings and armorial banners. There is a mock armorers shop complete with anvils and all the tools of the trade. The Great Hall houses over 100 suits of armor including harness for child, horse and dog. Also hung in the Great Hall, are a large variety of two-handed broadswords and numerous polearms. A large exhibit displays the chronological progression of the sword, from broadsword to courtsword ending with some continental swords fashioned from European blades. And, to turn all you fight directors and students of arms green with desire, the armory also houses a collection of approximately 4,000 volumes in its library ranging from three editions of the Tahlhoffer Fechtbuch to Stones Glossary. Works from the 1300's and 1400's to contemporary printings and everything in between can be found in this incredibly extensive collection on arms, armor and related subjects.

For those of you who are in the area and wish to visit, or if you desire information, simply contact The Higgins Armory, 100 Barber Ave. in Worcester, MA 01606. For those of you who cannot get so easily to Massachusetts, I will be doing research at the armory and will be submitting articles about the collection to the Fight Master beginning with a study of polearms in the next edition.

Jerome Smith

'POINTS' OF INTEREST

We have three new members to the Society plus one individual who was not listed in the last issue of The Fight Master. We welcome these new members and hope that they will play an integral part in the Society of American Fight Directors. They are as follows:

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|--|
| John Heil | (Affiliate) | Roanoke College
c/o Psychology Dept.
Salem VA 24153 |
| Gregg Kohlhepp | (Student) | 218 S. Mill Road
Princeton Jct., NJ. 08550 |
| Craig Turner | (Affiliate) | University of Washington
c/o Prof. Actors Program
Seattle WA 98105 |
| Jim Robinson | (Actor/
Combatant) | S.M.U.
c/o Theatre Arts
Callas TX 75275 |

Methinks I do protest too much but nonetheless, I will. The number of articles submitted to the Editor of the Fight Master this quarter was insufficient. There is absolutely no excuse for the membership of this Society to put the onus on a very few. Now I wish to appeal to my colleagues. Christmas is coming soon. It is the intention of the Society to bring the magazine up-to-date for the month of January. We intend to get the magazine to the membership in the first week of January. The only way that can be done is if we have articles to put in it. I will be spending Christmas with my son and family. I do not want to spend my entire holiday season writing articles for the magazine. I appeal to my colleagues to help me and the Editor by submitting an article. Many of you have promised but to date no results. It is terribly frustrating to realize that you are destined to write many of the articles because your colleagues don't make the effort. There isn't a fight director in this country who is busier than I am and it boggles my mind when so few articles are sent in. We make the effort to keep the magazine a valuable source of information; will you please take the time to offer just one article. We will accept any article that relates to our mutual profession, and we will be glad to edit it!

D. L. Boushey

William Hobbs' new book Stage Combat is on the market in Great Britain but to the Society's knowledge is not available over here yet. It is published by Barrie & Jenkins and costs 5-1/2 pounds (around \$11). We hope to review it in the next issue of The Fight Master.

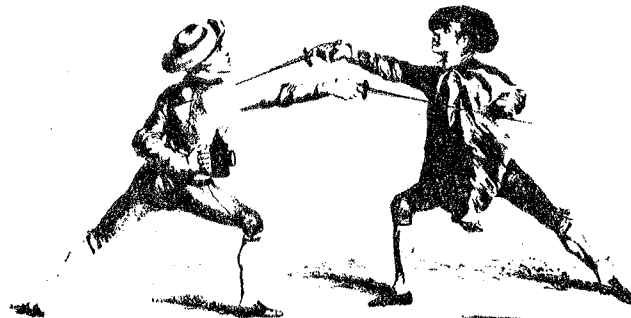
The Society of American Fight Directors intends to conduct another national workshop this summer. It is hoped that it will be held in Ann Arbor, Michigan at the University of Michigan, sometime in mid-July. If you missed last year's workshop, you will have another opportunity. Last year's workshop was a substantial success and we hope to follow suit again this year. We will keep you informed.

There are now 75 members in the Society of American Fight Directors. We continue to grow and prosper. We are now a recognized organization throughout the entire country. We are in the process of becoming an integral part of the theatre/cinema scene.

The Society encourages those teachers in armed and unarmed combat to get their students certified. The certificates are a nice addition to a student's resume. Notify the Society when you would like student in your school or workshop tested. We must take off with this certification program. It is another way in which the Society gains more notoriety and prestige.

We continue to boycott Castello's Fencing Supply.

According to documentation through the Society of British Fight Directors, Fencing Masters live longer. I wonder if this applies to Fight Directors?



J. R. BEARDSLEY (Affiliate) is in a play in Berkeley, California. It is entitled Fourplay. He is also doing some work with Drama Studio, the off-shoot of Drama Studio-London, located in Berkeley.

GEORGE BELLAH (Student) is in a production of Bat at the Brass Ring Theatre in Seattle. He also did the fights for the show.

ERIC BOOTH (Affiliate) is presently rehearsing in London with Alec McGowen for a U.S./World tour of the one-man show St. Mark's Gospel. He has conducted theatre classes which include stage fighting at Lincoln Center Institute.

DAVID L. BOUSHEY recently choreographed Cyrano at Actors Theatre Louisville and Romeo & Juliet at S.M.U. He is now choreographing Cyrano at the University of Washington. He is also teaching combat at the U of W and Cornish Institute of the Arts in Seattle.

KIM DeLONG (Affiliate) recently finished a season with the California Shakespeare Festival where he acted and also assisted D. Boushey as fight choreographer.

RICK DUET (Student) is now residing in New York. He was recently in the Hartford Stage Co. production of Beaux Strategem where he assisted in the fight choreography.

ERICK FREDRICKSEN is playing the titel role in Hamlet at the Kelsey Theatre in New York. He will soon be going to Webster College to do an extensive fight workshop.

JAN KIRK (Affiliate) recently did the Tybalt/Mercution fight for the Institutional Program at Lincoln Center. He choreographed the fights in Michael Kahn's production of The Ruling Class. Performed and staged the fights for The Robber Bridegroom at Virginia Commonwealth University. Presently, he is teaching armed and unarmed combat at the University of New Mexico and will be doing a short workshop at Winona State College shortly.

PETER PHILLIPS (Affiliate) recently directed La Boheme at the Brooklyn Opera Society as well as doing the fight in Act IV. He is also going to London to do Company with the comic karate fight. (He is directing the show).

JEROME SMITH (Affiliate) is teaching at the Artors Workshop in Boston and has started a stage fight troupe. He is also staging some fights to be presented at the Higgins Armory. He will soon be choreographing the fights for Richard III for the Boston Shakespeare Co.

MARK ANTHONY TAYLOR (Actor/Combatant) recently choreographed the fights in Twelfth Night for the University of Utah. He also acted in the production.

CHRIS VILLA (Affiliate) recently choreographed the fights in Romeo & Juliet at Dominguez Hills College in L.A. He is presently doing the fights for Richard III at Humbolt State University where he is also teaching a class in armed and unarmed combat.

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The
SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS

wishes all of its members
and their families

A VERY HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON!!

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ABOUT THE SOCIETY

The Society of American Fight Directors was founded in May, 1977.

Its aims are to promote the art of fight choreography in such a manner that the Fight Director will be accepted as an integral part of the theater and cinema industry. Promoting the aesthetics of well-conceived fight choreography as an integral part of the total production is another aim of the Society.

Full members are professional Fight Directors.

Affiliate members are fencing masters in drama schools, overseas members, or Fight Directors of limited experience.

Actor/Combatants are actors working professionally and pre-professionals who want to increase their knowledge and skills as combatants for their use on the stage.

Friends are people interested in stage fighting but who are not necessarily connected with professional fight directing.

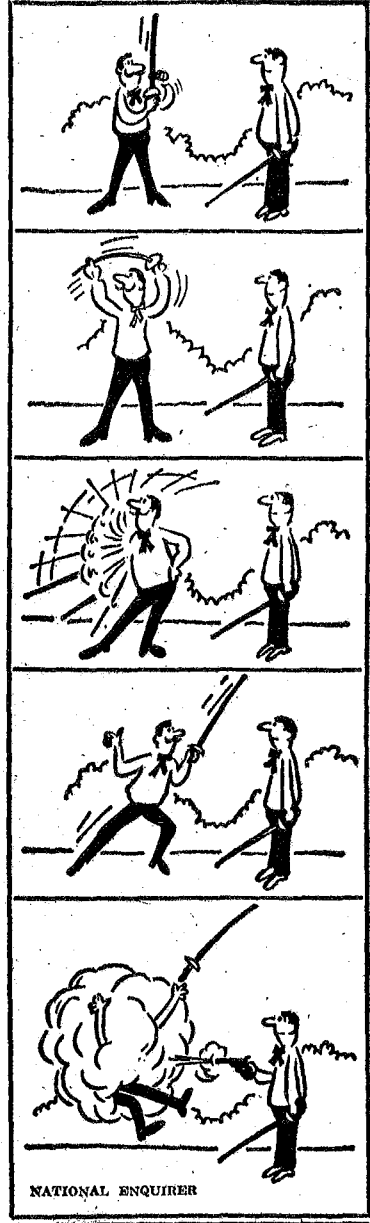
Student members are drama students who aspire to become Fight Directors.

SOCIETY RULES

Members are reminded that only full members may use the Society's name to secure employment; however, affiliate, actor/combatant and student members may use their status in any capacity other than securing employment.

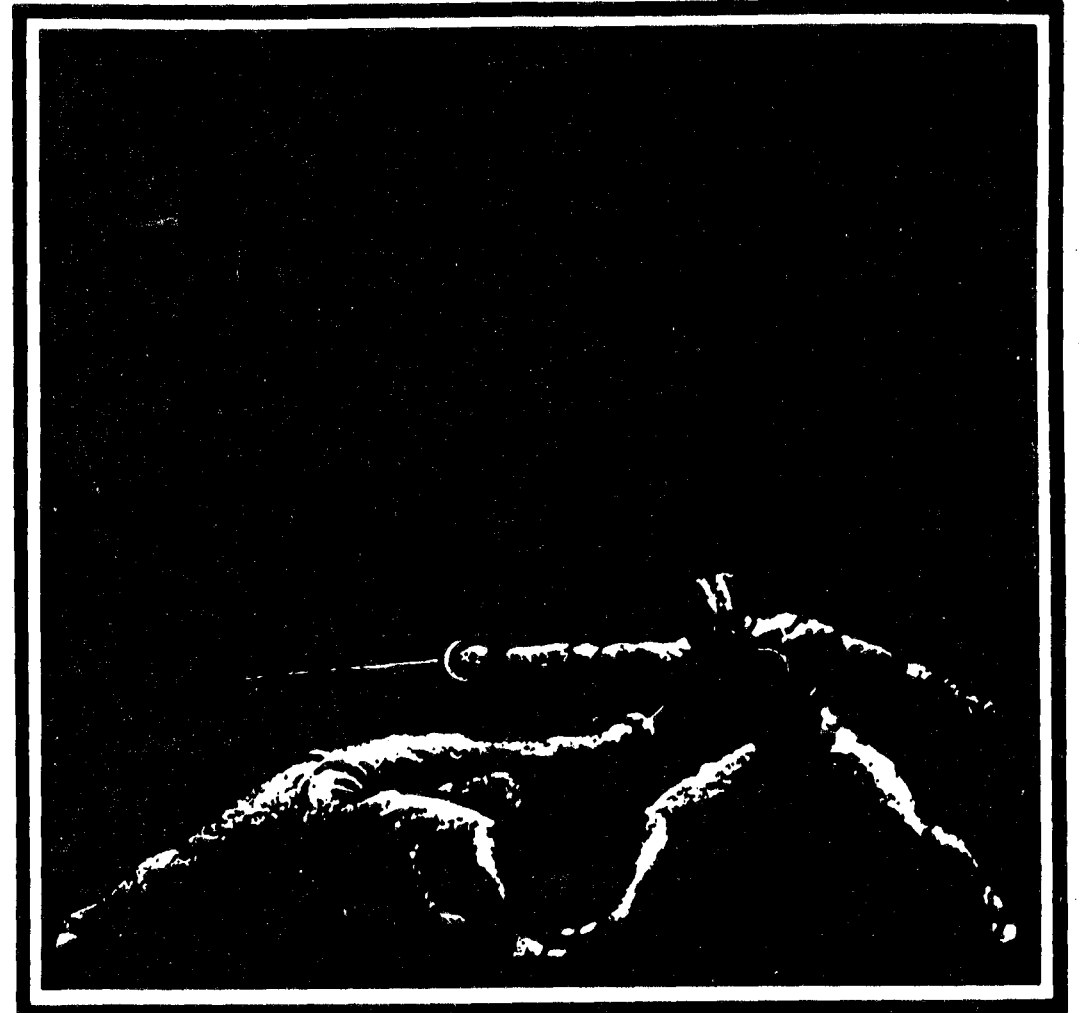
Inquiries about membership and editorial articles should be mailed to the Society's permanent address:

THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FIGHT DIRECTORS
4720 38th N.E.
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