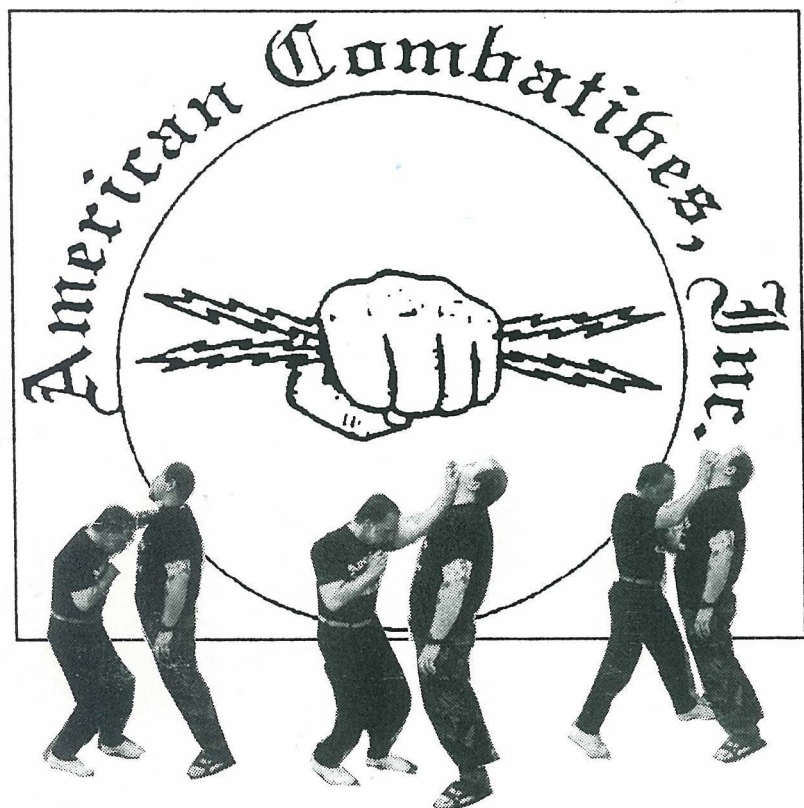


AMERICAN COMBATIVES



DEVASTATING Military Self-Defense

by John P. Kary
with Thomas J. Nardi, Ph.d

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**by
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About the Author

John P. Kary was first introduced to Combative Skills as a part of his training with US Marines. While in the Corps he was sent to Vietnam. The year was 1969. While in Vietnam, Kary's hand to hand fighting skills were put to the test. He fought Viet Cong assassins hand to hand, thus saving the life of a South Vietnamese officer. This act of heroism earned Kary the coveted Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry.

Unfortunately, Kary's military career was ended tragically when a Viet Cong booby

trap exploded. Eight members of Kary's twelve man patrol were killed instantly. Kary escaped death but was left sightless, deaf in one ear, and with severe hip damage.

After a long period of rehabilitation, Kary's strong fighting spirit led him to pursue Combative Skills training in earnest. Although many instructors refused to teach him because of his blindness, Kary persevered. He earned black belts in kempo karate and ju-jitsu. He was, however, far from satisfied. He wanted more realistic, more effective techniques.

Kary eventually found what he was seeking. He met a group of former Marine

close quarter combat (CQC) instructors who, as the Gung Ho Chuan Association, were teaching the original military combat techniques from World War II. Kary was impressed with the simple , direct, and lethal techniques that had already been proven effective in the arena of war. He began studying, researching and mastering all of the CQC techniques of the past, including the work of W. E. Fairbairn, Rex Applegate, John Styers and D. Biddle. Kary's proficiency was such as to earn him the title of Master Instructor by the Gung Ho Chuan Association.

Kary has synthesized all of his study and combative experiences into an easy to learn, effective method of street self-defense. He calls his system American Combatives. It is the most advanced development of the World War II methods that has ever been offered to both civilians, police, and military personnel.

Today, Kary's students include the US Marine Corps Scouts Sniper Unit of the 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Corps, countless governmental and law enforcement officials, (including the Department of Defense SPECOP units The West Virginia State Police, and civilians.

Dedication

This book is respectfully dedicated to
the men and women who have paid the
ultimate price in defense of their country.

Special Thanks

Special appreciation is expressed to Dr. Thomas Nardi, for his assistance in the preparation of this book. Dr. Nardi is a clinical psychologist, university professor, and a prolific martial arts writer. He is the author of six books and over 100 articles that have been published in the leading martial arts magazines.

An active practitioner, Dr. Nardi holds black belts in several martial arts. He is a private student of Mr. Kary in American Combatives.

Acknowledgment

Thanks are extended to Steve "Red Dog" Williams, Bruce La Porta, and to Scott MacDonald for posing for the photographs in this book.

Chapter One

American Combatives

History

American Combatives is based upon the close quarter combat (CQC) techniques developed during World War II. The two leading figures in the development of the "commando techniques" taught to the elite Allied forces were W. E. Fairbairn from Great Britain and Rex Applegate of the US. These men knew that individual lives as well as the fate of the world's democracies would

depend on the effectiveness of the CQC methods they devised.

All of their techniques had to be brutally effective and simple to master. They also had to be easy to recall and perform when under extreme military conditions of a literal life or death struggle.

As effective as these methods were in war time, the post-World War II military establishment felt they were too lethal for a peacetime army. The techniques were almost lost, save for the efforts of a small number of CQC instructors. It is from this legacy that John Kary has evolved his American Combatives. American Combatives has

updated the original methods to meet the needs, situations, and circumstances of contemporary American society. They are true to the original concepts that were proven in actual warfare.

Philosophy

The philosophy of American Combatives is reflected in Kary's Six Principles of Combat. Keep in mind that American Combatives is designed first, foremost and only, for actual survival. There is no sport involved in this approach. The techniques are not designed for tournament competition. They do not look flashy or

pretty; they are designed only to destroy an enemy as quickly as possible. For this reason, the methods are to be used only for legitimate defense of yourself, family or Country.

1. Develop An Offensive Mind-Set.

This is one of the most important principles of CQC. To survive a real encounter on the street, you must be thinking of destroying your enemy, not "defending" yourself.

In true military fashion, develop a strategy of pre-emptive attacks once you know your enemy is going to attack. Put him on the defensive by taking the attack to him.

2. Trust Your Instincts. The experience of Kary and his students is that your instincts will warn you of an imminent attack. Learn to listen to your "inner voice" cultivating an awareness of your environment and those around you. Your "feelings" will warn you of danger; heed them.

3. Attack with Ruthlessness and Aggression. In most street assaults, you will only have one chance to survive.

An attack on the street will not be in rounds, will not have time outs, and will not have a referee. You must attack as explosively and with as much ruthless aggression as possible. To survive, you must

be prepared to hurt your attacker with the same intensity that he hoped to use against you.

4. Keep Your Attack Basic and Simple.

Most martial arts "experts" have never been in a real fight, much less the life or death combat of war. Veterans of real combat know that under the duress of a fight, the rush of adrenaline will effect your ability to function. You will only be capable of gross motor movements, you will not be able to perform intricate, complex techniques. Keep all of your techniques basic and simple and they will serve you well in a real encounter. The beauty of American Combatives is that a

limited number of simple and effective techniques can be used in almost unlimited ways. You do not need to learn one hundred different techniques for one hundred different situations. These are universal techniques that work in an almost unlimited number of situations.

5. Attack Vital Parts of the Body. Do not waste your energy with strikes that, even if they land, will either not hurt the attacker or will increase your own risk of injury. Study the target areas and the body weapons described in the next chapter and you will be prepared for real survival.

6. Be Confident and Determined. You must be confident in yourself and your techniques if you are to be victorious. Once you have begun your attack, do not stop until you know, without a doubt, that the assailant is definitely incapable of continuing his assault. Too many people have been injured, crippled or killed when they erroneously thought they had beaten their assailant. An assailant may feign injury or retreat and then, if you let up your attack, resume his assault even more viciously. A downed attacker can still rise with a gun or knife that had been concealed. Be determined to

continue your counterattacks until you have no doubt you have won totally.

Basic Stances

American Combatives does not use "martial arts" stances. Adopting such postures does nothing but warns your assailant that you may be a trained fighter. Do not give him that information. Let him find out the hard way that you are capable of fighting back.

American Combatives students use one of three ready stances depending on how close they are to the assailant. Do not forget however, that a student of American

Combatives is always prepared to strike, regardless of his stance whether he is seated, lying, etc.

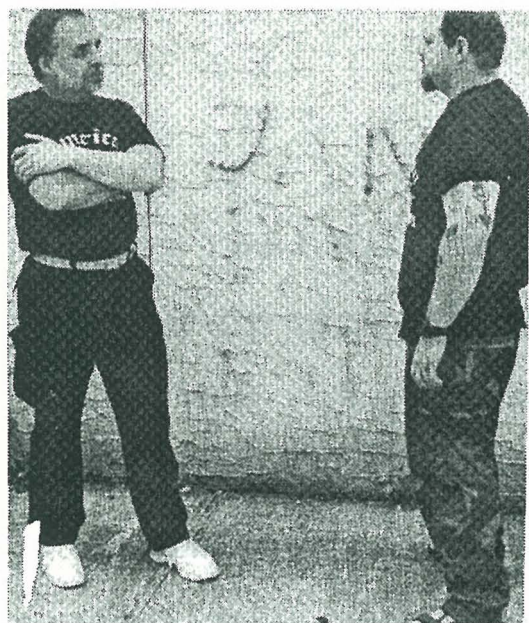
Photo 1. Long-range stance: This stance is used when the distance between you and the assailant is such that either or both of you must move to engage in combat.

Kary's arms are across his body, ready to move. Do not interlock your arms; they can be trapped very easily if you do. Note how Kary's feet are in a natural, well-balanced position. He is aware of his attacker and ready for action.

Photo 2. Mid-range stance: Kary raises his hands, palms towards assailant. He may

be telling the assailant "Look, I don't want any trouble" by his body language and/or his comments, but he is definitely ready for action from this position. The worse position for your hands at this range of confrontation, is down at your sides or in your pockets. This is a ready stance that also does not appear aggressive.

Photo 3. Close-range: This is the range in which most real life assaults occur. It is at this range that actual fights erupt. Note how Kary does not appear aggressive in his stance but he is ready to strike instantly. His hands can be used defensively as well as offensively with lightning speed from this position.



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Chapter Two

Natural Weapons

American Combatives teaches both armed and unarmed CQC. The armed techniques include the use of the stick, knife, utility shovel, and other improvised weapons. These techniques are important and will be taught in future volumes in this series on American Combatives. It is the philosophy of American Combatives that beginning students should not be overly

dependent on weapons other than their own natural body weapons. These are weapons you will always have with you. They are not illegal to carry nor can they be taken away and used against you.

American Combatives does not employ closed first strikes or punches. It is too easy to damage your hand with these blows, and, in combat would surely lead to your defeat.

Ax hand

The ax hand is a major striking weapon in the American Combatives arsenal. It employs the edge of the hand and

forearm, from below the pinky to about four inches below the elbow joint. Do not be too concerned about which part of the hand or forearm is used to strike. The entire surface will be more than sufficient to do damage to the properly chosen target area. The hand is kept more relaxed than in the "karate chop" practiced by many martial artists. Extend your fingers and keep them together but not rigid. This would allow for a faster strike.

There are three types of ax hands used in American Combatives: the long ax hand, the short ax hand, and the vertical ax hand.

long Ax Hand

The long ax hand is swung from the shoulder. Torque your body and keep your shoulders loose and relax for maximum power. Imagine that you are slashing with a sword and you are going straight through your target for maximum penetration.

Photo 4. Kary in long range basic stance from which **Photo 5** he swings the long ax hand as he steps towards the assailant.

Short Ax Hand

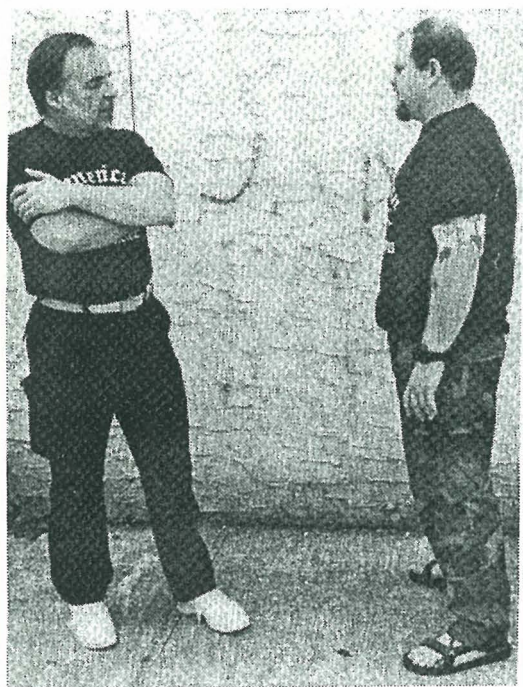
The short ax hand is thrown horizontally from the elbow. It is snapped

out and whipped back as quickly as possible. Think of snapping a towel and you will get the power feel of the short ax hand.

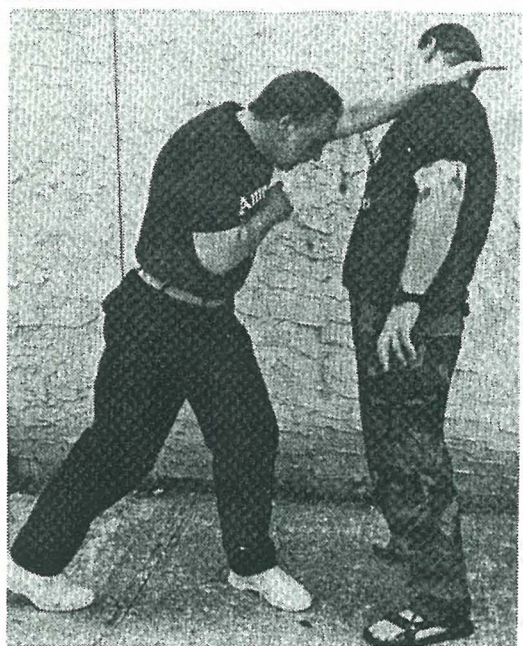
Photos 6 and 7. Kary delivers the short ax hand strike. Note how he ducks his head to avoid any punch the assailant might throw.

Vertical Ax Hand

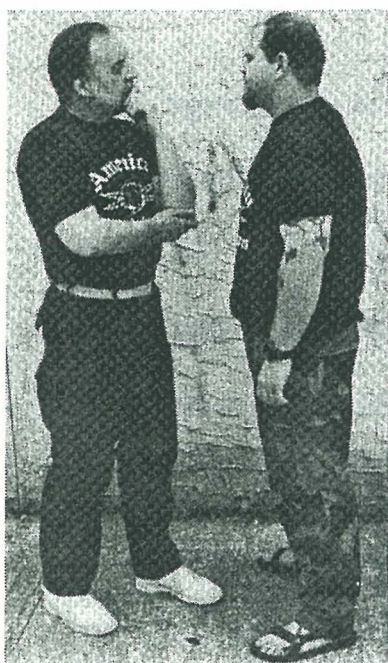
The vertical ax hand is also thrown from the elbow. Start with your palm next to your ear and your elbow pointing upward. Rock your upper body forward and you slash downward, putting your entire body weight into the strike.



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Photo 8. Kary at mid-range faces assailant, (9) then loads the strike by bringing the elbow straight up, and then (10) down onto attacker's collarbone. This is ideal when directed to the neck after the assailant has been forced to bend over.

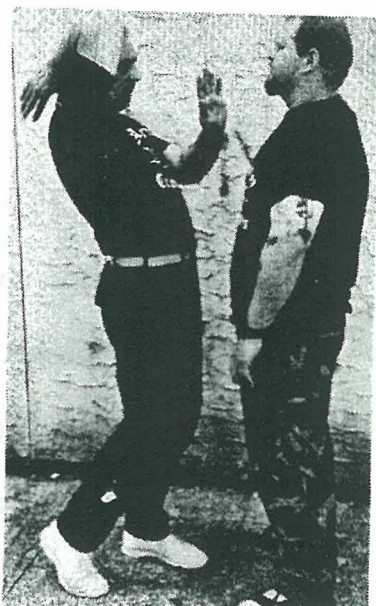
Practice these ax hands from standing, seated and lying positions. You will find them to be very versatile additions to your unarmed combative skills.

Chin-jab

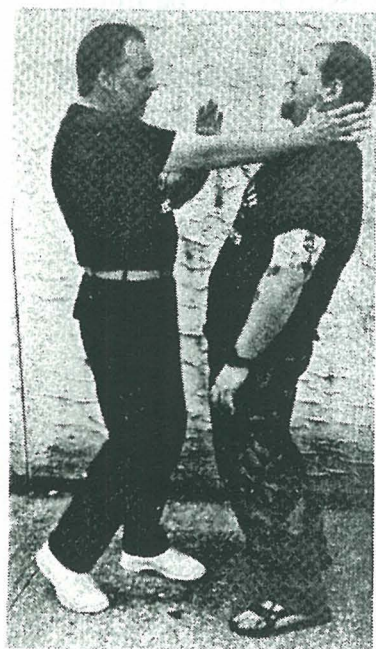
This is an extremely dangerous, and extremely effective technique from the commando methods of World War II. It is



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somewhat similar to the palm heel strike found in many Asian martial arts. The chin-jab, however, is different in the hand formation used, body mechanics when thrown, and effective when it lands.

The proper hand position can be made by imagining you are holding a grapefruit in your hand. Spread your fingers apart and curl them inward. Then hook the thumb and pinky in the center of your palm. This is the striking zone.

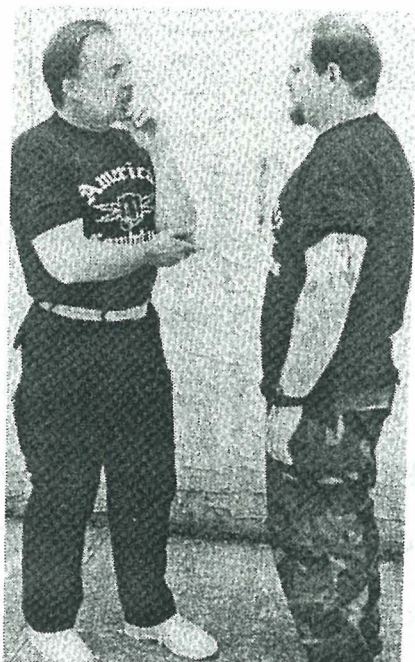
The chin jab should be thrown straight up the center of the assailant's body, directly under the chin.

Bend your legs slightly and then forcefully straighten them as the chin jab is thrown. This "lift-off" with the legs adds tremendous power to the blow. Keep your own forearm close to your body as you make the strike. Your goal should be to blast the assailant's head from his shoulders.

Photo 11. Kary is in the close-range stance then (12) he fires in a left chin jab.

Photo 13. Kary at long-range, (14) steps in and throws a right chin jab.

Note: this strike can break the attacker's neck. Be very careful in practicing and applying this strike.



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Cupped Hand Strike

The cupped hand can be used to strike in various ways. It is basically an open hand, palm strike. There is a slight cupping of the hand that is achieved by relaxing the hand and allowing the thumb and fingers to curve closed naturally. The slight "cup" produced in the palm magnifies the force and impact of the strike.

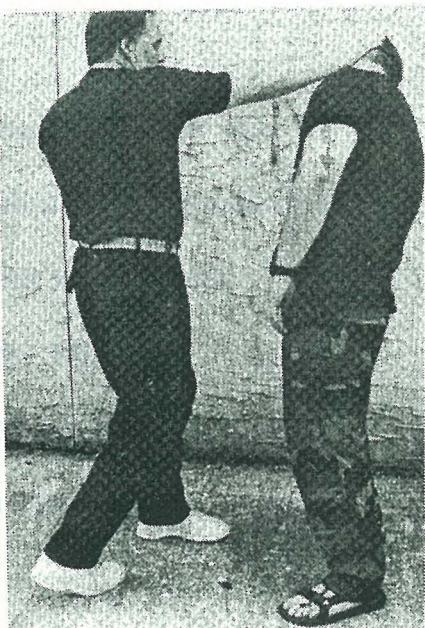
Swing the cupped hand in a short, loose arc from your shoulder. The target area will be the assailant's entire side of the head. The neck and ear are especially vulnerable, but anywhere on the side of the head will produce a deep internal shock to the attacker.

It can also be thrown with both arms simultaneously as a double ear box.

Photo 15. At mid-range Kary raises his hands, then (16) drops his right while keeping his left up. (17) He then throws the cupped hand to the side of the head/neck area.

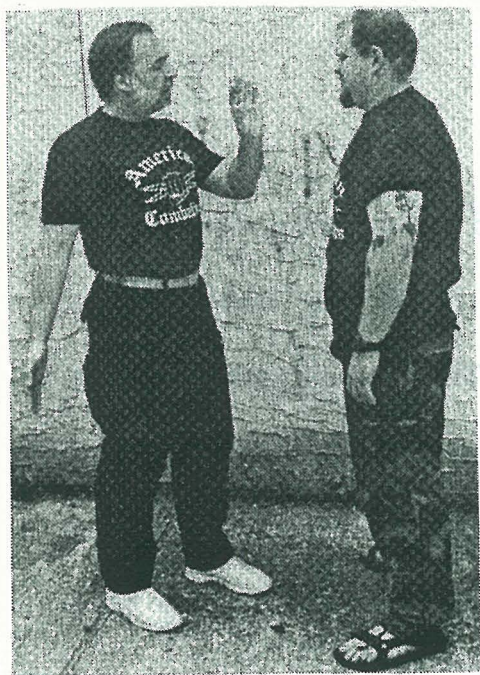
Shovel strike

The cupped hand strike can also be directed upward, under the testicles in a shoveling strike. The cupped palm smashes the testicles up and into the attacker's body. From this strike, a natural follow up would be a groin grab. After the strike, clench your



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fingers, squeezing and yanking the assailants testicles.

Photo 18. From a close-range stance, he (19) throws the shovel strike groin slap.

The shovel strike is a true "one-strike, one knockout" blow. It is almost impossible for the assailant to see the groin slap coming if thrown properly. Do not telegraph your palm slap by pulling back your hand or winding up to throw the slap. Just let it come forward as you snap your hips forward.

Knee Smash

This is a powerful, close-in attack. The knee is lifted forcefully and swiftly upward,



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under the attacker's testicles. As soon as the knee strikes, retract it and throw it again. The direction of the strike is upward, not forward. Do not lean forward or backward too much when using this devastating strike. Use the top of the knee, not the thigh, to make contact.

Photo 20. Kary is ready then (21) throws the knee smash.

Side Kick

American Combatives only uses low kicks. They are easier to do and harder to defend against. The side kick to the knee can easily break an attacker's leg. Lift your



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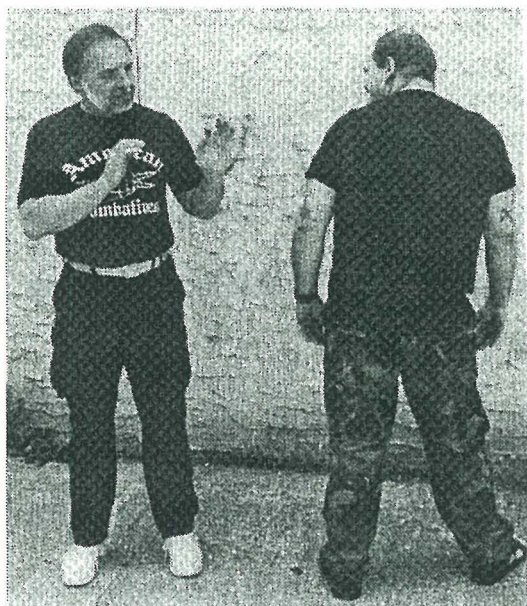
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kicking leg and stomp downward and through the attacker's knee. The front, side or back of the knee are all vulnerable to this kick.

Photo 22. Kary prepares to throw the left leg kick by (23) lifting his right leg and (24 & 25) stomping it down then kicking with his left. The stomping with the support leg is used to generate power, very much the way a pole-vaulter will plant the pole to generate more energy for his lift-off.

low Scooping kick

The low scooping kick is delivered by stepping forward on the opposite foot and



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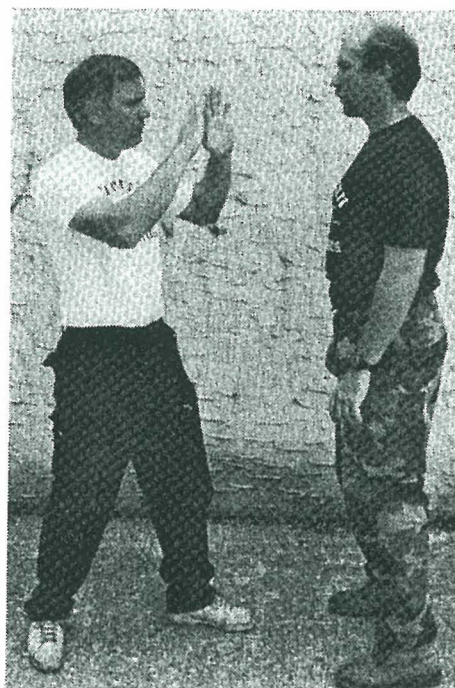
scooping the striking foot forward and upward. Use the inner side of your foot to hit the shin. Rocking your body forward adds extra power to this kick. This kick may drop your opponent or, at least, set him up for other attacks.

Photo 26. Defender on left, (27) does low scooping kick.

Face Smash

The face smash is an open palm strike delivered to the face. It can be done in a whipping fashion or like a boxer's jab.

Photo 28. Kary is in close-range stance and (29) then smashes his open palm into



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the attacker's face. Note how Kary's fingers are clawing the attacker's eyes. In photo (30,) Kary is in mid-range, he then (31) lifts his elbow and (32) quickly whips the face smash down and (33) back. It whips into and off the face in a whipping fashion.



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Chapter Three

Targets

American Combatives advocates limited target areas. The criteria for a target area includes it being an extremely vulnerable part of the anatomy. American Combatives is not interested in controlling an opponent with pressure points or pain compliance holds. Instead, we seek to destroy the attacker as quickly and as decisively as

possible. The target selected has to produce immediate devastation in the enemy.

Another criteria for a target is that it must be relatively easy to hit, especially under the extreme stress of an actual attack. Targets that are difficult to locate, even on a stationary opponent are avoided. So, too, are targets that require precise, pinpoint accuracy.

In a real survival situation, only those vital body areas that can be hit quickly, easily, and with true stopping impact, are to be targeted.

American Combatives does not use strikes to the torso. In combat, the enemy will probably have protective tactical vests or

gear to shield the chest and abdominal area.

In civilian life, heavy winter clothing or extreme muscularity in the abdominal region can negate most strikes.

The targets proven effective in real combat are those taught in American Combatives. These targets are:

1. Eyes
2. Ears
3. Throat
4. Sides and back of neck
5. Bladder, groin, pubic area, testicles (all found below the belt line)
6. Knee
7. Shin

8. Top of foot

All of the techniques taught in American Combatives will target one or several of these eight target areas. American Combative students wear protective gear and padding in their practice. This allows them to practice with the realism of fullcontact to vital areas. Often times students of martial arts who do not train with protective gear and make contact have difficulty in unleashing their full force strikes when in a real fight. Remember: realistic practice yields realistic results; unrealistic practice yields unrealistic results.

American Combatives also teaches the students to role-play various defensive scenarios. The attacker, for example, will verbally threaten or be abusive and the defender will role-play mock submission before he counterattacks. This dialogue adds to the realism of the practice.

Chapter Four

Attack Sequences

American Combatives does not employ form (e.g., kata) practice per se. Instead, it teaches short explosive combinations of strikes. These attack sequences can be applied to an almost endless number of situations. They should be practiced until they are automatic. Practice with an opponent as well as against a heavy bag or air shield. When possible, practice

with a partner who is wearing suitable protective gear so that you can get the feel of actual contact.

Attack Sequence #1

Photo 34. From close-range, (35) Kary steps in with a chin jab, (36) followed by a knee smash then (37) another chin jab.

Attack Sequence #2

Photo 38. Attacker threatens a punch, (39) Kary throws a cupped hand strike to the head/neck, (40) shows same action from the other side, (41) Kary then does a face smash



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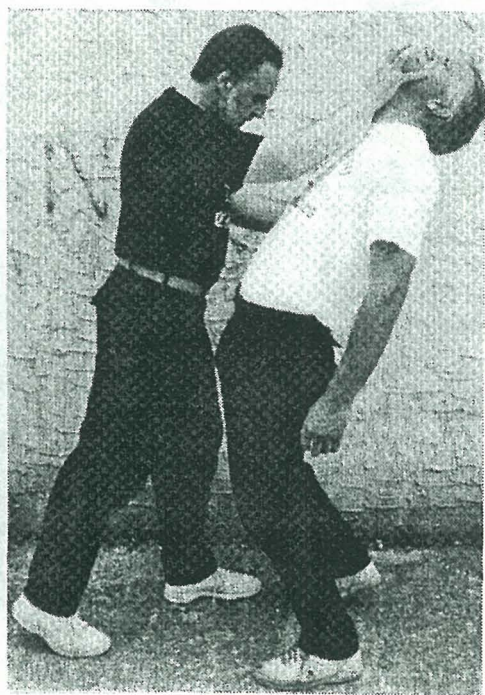
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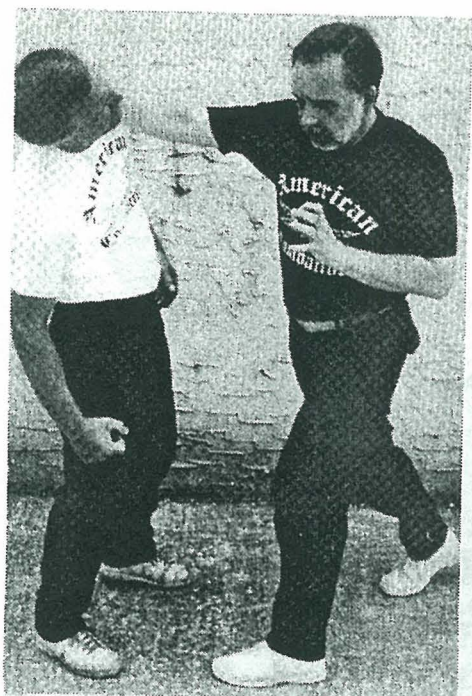
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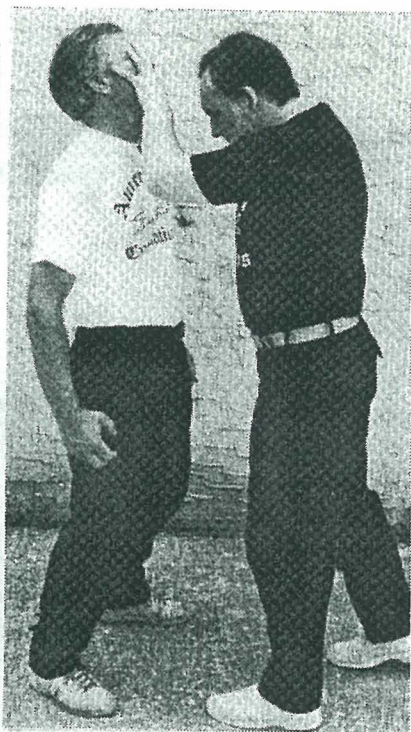
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and (42) while holding the attacker, finishes the sequence with a knee smash to groin.

Note how Kary uses his right hand to hold the opponent in place.

Attack Sequence #3

Photo 43. Defender on left faces assailant then (44 & 45) steps in and throws two ax hands to the neck, (46 & 47) followed by a shovel strike to the groin, then (48) the defender bends his knees and then (49 & 50) delivers a clothesline strike and takedown.

Attack Sequence #4

Photo 51. Defender on left is confronted by attacker approaching from the side. (52) Defender turns and drops his

weight while performing a chin jab, (53) knee smash, and (54) chin jab with the opposite hand.

Attack Sequence #5

Photo 55. This time the attacker is approaching from the rear. (56) Kary lifts his right arm to protect his face then (57) turns and uses a right long ax hand strike to the neck (58) followed by a left cupped hand strike. Note how Kary has turned his upper body. (59) He then rotates back and throws a wheeling shovel strike to the groin with his right hand.



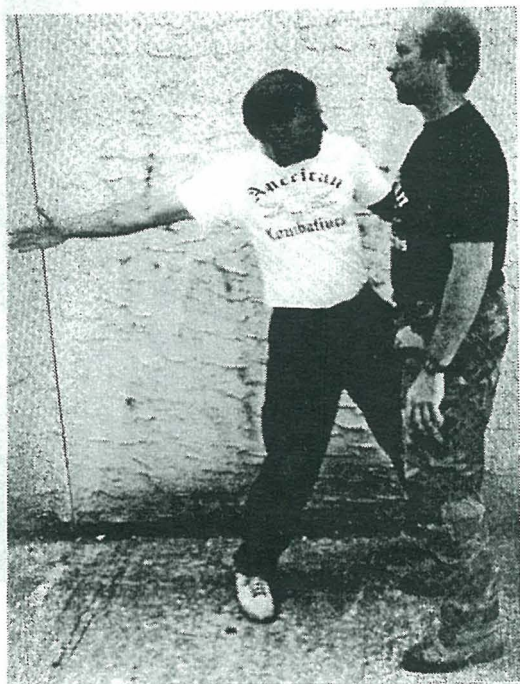
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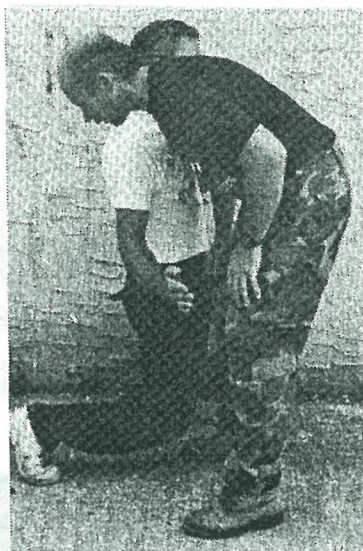
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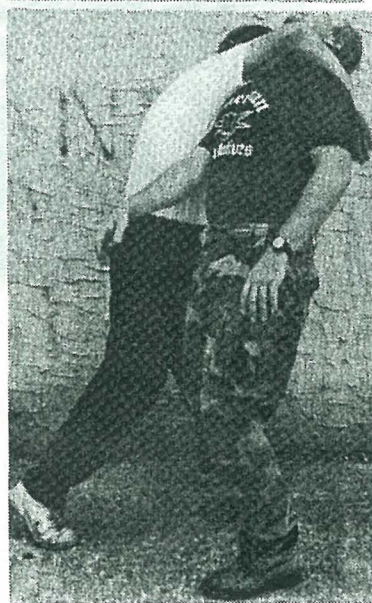
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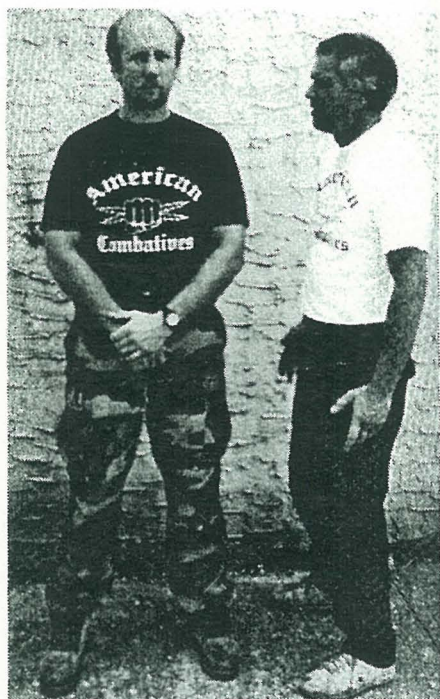
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Attack Sequence #6

Photo 60. Kary is in mid-range stance.

(61) He does a low scoop kick that (62) causes the attacker to bend forward. Kary then lifts both of his hands, forming a diamond-shape position with them, and (63) delivers a double cupped hand strike to the ears. This double ear box is extremely punishing. (64) Kary then grabs the attacker's head/neck to steady him while he lifts his elbow to (65) deliver a vertical ax hand to the spine, followed (66) by a knee smash to the face. Note how Kary holds attacker's head steady so that it absorbs the full force of the knee.



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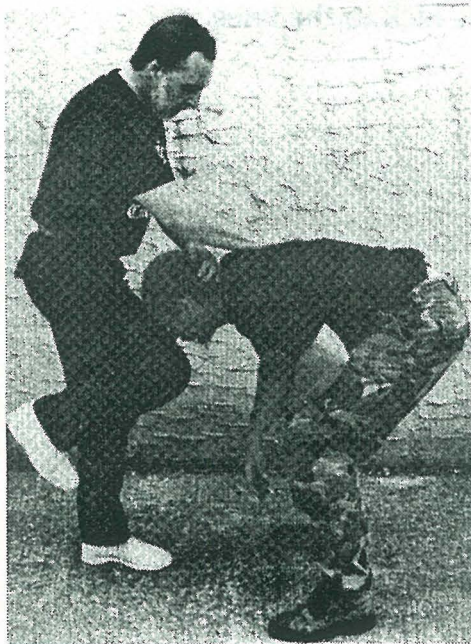
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Attack Sequence #7

Photo 67. Kary in mid-range position, (68, 69, 70) whips a face smash down and back and then (71 & 72) throws a wheeling shovel strike to the groin, (73 & 74) and finishes with a side kick to the knee.



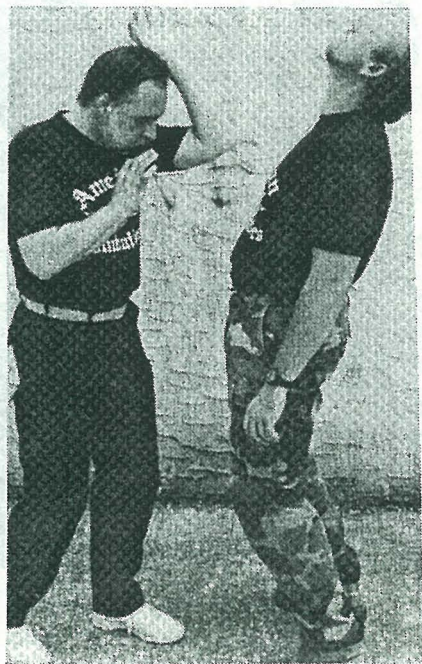
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Chapter five

Situational Self-defense

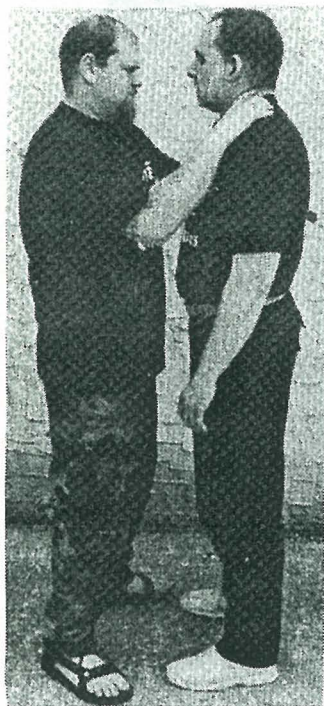
American Combatives emphasizes awareness as the first line of defense. When an attack is about to happen, it is best if you can throw a pre-emptive strike to stop it. Sometimes, however, you may find yourself grabbed or attacked before you can launch your couterstrike. Here, then, are some possible responses to common street attacks.

Front Finger Choke

Photo 75. Attacker chokes Kary who (76) steps back while pulling down on the attacker's wrist/forearm, while throwing a face smash then (77 & 78) a short ax hand and (79) a low side kick to the knee.

Rear Finger Choke

Photo 80. Attacker applies a rear choke. (81) Kary tightens his neck muscles, drops his chin and moves his hip to the side (82) so that he can grab the attacker's testicles. Kary



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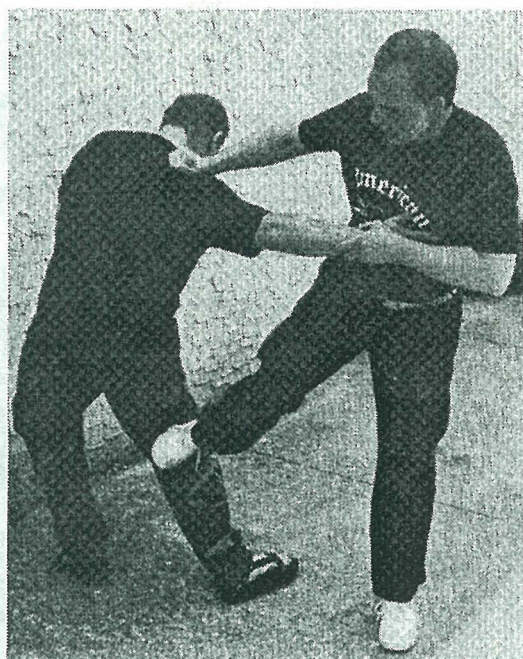
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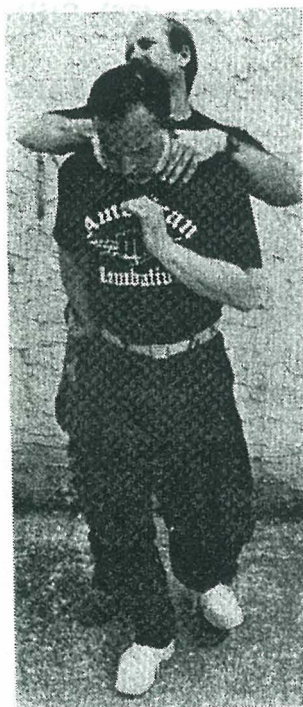


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grabs tightly and then jerks up. (83) Still holding onto the attacker's testicles, Kary stomps on his instep and then (84) wheels around and strikes the rib area with his elbow, (85) and finishes with a sidekick to the knee.

Rear Forearm Choke

Photo 86. A typical mugging choke is applied. (87) Kary turns his chin into the crook of the attacker's elbow to take pressure off of his throat while he pulls down on the wrist and forearm. (88) He then moves his hip and grabs the attacker's testicles and jerks them upward. (89) Kary then stomps the



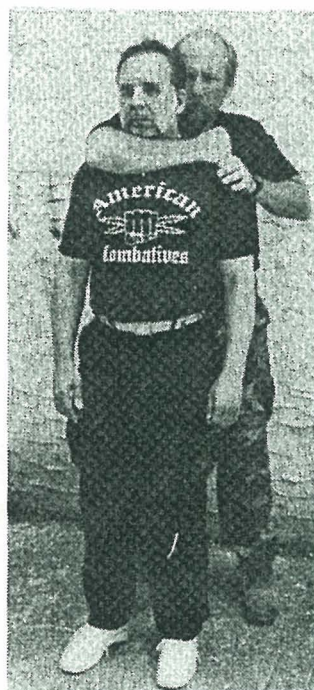
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attacker's instep, (90 & 91) frees himself, (92) elbows the attacker's ribs and (93) does a side kick.

lapel Grab

Photo 94. Assailant grabs Kary, who (95) immediately throws a whipping face smash, then (96) grabs the attacker's face, clawing the eyes, while throwing a knee smash (97) followed by a short ax hand.

Boxing Defense

Photo 98. Attacker assumes an aggressive boxing stance. (99) Kary throws an



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ax hand, followed (100 & 101) by a cupped hand to the neck/head which bends the attacker over. (102) Kary then grabs his head and throws a knee smash to the face.



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Chapter Six

A Final Word

Realize that these techniques are simple, direct, effective. They have been proven in actual combat. Do not take lightly the devastation that these techniques can cause. Use them only for legitimate defense.

This book is an introduction to the theory and practice of American Combatives. These elite military techniques will be the building blocks for more advanced levels of close quarter combat.

My next book will address Special Tactical Situations including armed assailants, multiple attackers, and, for police and military personnel, weapon retention techniques.



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