

THE MARTIALIST YEAR ONE FINAL ISSUE

The Case for Insecurity in Your Fighting Skills

By Phil Elmore

Are you insecure in your unarmed fighting skills? I sure hope so.

Let me explain. Confidence is a natural side effect of training in an effective combat style. Confidence is also a desirable personality trait for success in self-defense. Those who project self-confidence are less likely to be approached by society's predators, who are generally cowards who seek targets of opportunity and low resistance.

No matter how effective one's martial art or system, no matter how proficient one is in that system, I hope you never employ your skills in a fair fight. I hope you're not *that* secure.

This brings us to weapons. A weapon, any weapon, is a *force multiplier*. It increases your chances of inflicting damage on an opponent and thus increases the power of your attack in the face of a credible threat of bodily harm. The greater the force of your attack, *the less chance your attacker(s) can harm you* – and that is what fighting unfairly is all about. Provided you are justified in using lethal force (the parameters for which are beyond the scope of this editorial), I hope you *always* have a weapon available with which to deliver magnified force to those who seek to harm you. You do not deserve to assume risk of injury to yourself greater than is absolutely necessary. You do not deserve to be raped or killed. If you are justified in using deadly force, I hope you have more than your fists with which to deliver it.

No matter how "good" you are, it is prudent to carry a weapon when you may do so legally. Every martial artist who may do so should obtain a CCW (Carry Concealed Weapon) license and travel armed for self-defense. It is *prudent* to be armed because *no one* can defeat every opponent,

anticipate every scenario, or control every situation. Only an arrogant fool would believe otherwise.

Even a firearm is not a panacea, for failure to combine its carry with proper awareness could still result in defeat. A weapon – a knife, a gun, a stick, or what have you – helps increase the odds in your favor. It is a means of making a fight *unfair*. No, you should not *fixate* on the weapon, but you *should* use it as the tool that it is. A man who attacks you intent on murdering you is using lethal force. Why would you handicap yourself when meeting that force?

Colonel Jeff Cooper coined the term "hoplophobe" for those with an irrational fear of weapons. A British hoplophobe recently asked me, "If your martial art is so good, why do you go about armed to the teeth?" He opined, with the arrogance of the truly ignorant, that this is a sign of insecurity in my martial skill.

We should *all* be insecure, if that is the case.

It is self-destructive to deny the utility of weapons for self-defense. Weapons are simply tools that make the task of self-defense "easier." That is, they increase our chances of success. I want to be as successful as possible in the pursuit of that goal. I want *you* to be as successful as possible, too.

No amount of unarmed fighting skill obviates the need to be properly, prudently armed. A single human being cannot predict every permutation of dangers he or she may face. To be armed responsibly is to be better prepared to meet adversity.

Anyone who thinks an armed citizen is somehow insecure in his fighting skills fails to understand the nature of reality.

Hoplophobia is incompatible with *reality-based* self-defense. ♠