



*The **FONGline** is a Cyber Newsletter  
Published to Inform, Inspire and Instruct*

March-April 2008

**IDENTITY**

We hear a lot today about identity thief. Everywhere you turn, someone has become a victim. As our society becomes more high tech; identity thief becomes more rampant. Victims not only suffer great financial losses, but also loss of credibility and reputation, until the damage is fixed. Although we hear a lot about identity thief in the personal sector; seldom do we hear of identity thief in the martial arts. In my seminar travels across the country and occasionally overseas; the word Jeet Kune Do is very loosely used to identify the practitioner's style or system. Having been a friend and colleague of Bruce Lee in the 60's I am still awed by his renowned worldwide. As we look at his martial arts legacy it is something to revere. No doubt Bruce has had tremendous impact on the lives of thousands, if not millions of people. I know he impacted my life. Yet, I would never feel comfortable saying to potential students "I teach Jeet Kune Do." Unfortunately there are scores of people out in the martial arts world claim to be teaching Bruce Lee's art. No one really know accurately what Jeet Kune Do is; only Bruce himself. We can only speculate, guess and conjecture what JKD is. Only the man himself knows. To claim one teaches JKD and charge outrageous rates for lessons; is to "steal Bruce Lee's identity." One of the things Bruce feared when he realized he was gaining in popularity was the fine line between personal integrity, exploitation and prostitution. He mentioned to me more than once the need to keep control of his Jeet Kune Do. His greatest fear was that his name be exploited unfairly for profit. When the Green Hornet series hit the television screen he was offered big money to go world wide with a chain of Bruce Lee Kato Gung Fu Schools. Bruce "nipped that idea in the bud" as quickly as he could say "Thanks but no thanks." Anyone who is familiar with franchising is well aware of the difficulty in keeping quality control. No matter how talented you are, you cannot ever be just like another person. You may be talented in impersonating others but to embody the true persona of a person requires having the same genes. In my observation, many of those who are riding on the Bruce Lee "shirt tail" would make greater progress by embracing their own identity within the context of learning from others and use Bruce Lee's inspiration as seeds to personal discovery and growth. Bruce Lee said it in an article in Black Belt Magazine dated September 1971, "*Learning is definitely not mere imitation, nor is it the ability to accumulate and regurgitate fixed knowledge. Learning is a constant process of discovery, a process without end. In JKD we begin not by accumulation but by discovering the cause of our ignorance, a discovery that involves a shedding process. Unfortunately, most students in the martial arts are conformists. Instead of learning to depend on themselves for expression, they blindly follow their instructors, no longer feeling alone, and finding security in mass imitation.*"

Seeking your own truth was a "big thing" with Bruce Lee. When it dawned on me what he really meant, it was the turning point in my martial arts journey. Substance and

depth requires us to go inward. Imitation is too superficial for growth. I heard a song in church this morning that confirms the value of being honest to self. The words went something like this; “You have raised me up to be who I am.” Someone reminded me some years ago, “Your life is God’s gift to you; what you do with that life is your gift back to God.” Trying to be a clone of someone else stifles the uniqueness that is characterized in each individual.

*Peace, Leo Fong*

## **MMA**

I want to make a couple of comments on the emerging popularity of MMA in general and the fight between Kimbo Slice and Tank Abbott in particular. Everywhere I go, people ask me what I think of MMA. From the standpoint of combat effectiveness, MMA can be a lethal weapon. The biggest challenge that is facing those who practice the art and compete; is the ability to refine each range of attack until one can move fluidly from range to range. It seems most of the present MMA practitioners are still specialists; those who come from a wrestling background will try to take an opponent to the mat, those who come from a boxing background will try to win by striking, those who come from a kick boxing or Muay Thai background will try a little of each. Reputation of a fighter is based on winning. A winning record does not always reflect great skills. A fighter’s skill is determined by the quality of the opposition. I remember years ago fighters like Rex Layne, Lamar Clark, Harry Kid Matthews, and Billy Fox had perfect knockout records; but when they met the likes of Rocky Marciano and other top rate talents they were knocked out. The measure of one’s ability is determined by the caliber of one’s opposition. This is also true in the MMA arena.

## **The Fight of Legends**

The recent MMA match between Frank Shamrock and Cung Le was a match that could have been. Two great competitors with awesome skills finally will decide who has the bragging rights to be the best of the best. Yet, it was a great disappointment. It is my suspicion that ego played a role in aborting what potentially could have been the match of the year. Contrast and contradictions makes great drama in movies; it is no exception in sports competition. They say in boxing, “style makes the fights.” I was looking forward to the match between Shamrock and Le, because Shamrock was a great grappler with awesome ground skills; Cung Le was a great stand up fighter, with powerful kicks and punches. The contrasting fighting skills had the potential for an exciting match. It was disappointing because Shamrock was determined to “beat Cung Le at his own game.” As results of that choice, it led to Shamrock’s defeat. I truly believe that if Shamrock had chosen to do what he did best (the ground game) the out come would have been different and the fans would have been privileged to an exciting match. Bruce Lee said years ago, “You jab a hooker, hook a jabber, kick a puncher, punch a kicker, grapple a puncher and punch a grappler.”

## **Fight Quest / Human Weapons**

The martial arts series presented by Discovery Channel and The History Channel were very informative. It gave us an overview of how each culture approached the fighting arts. It was an affirmation that martial arts go beyond combat; but a way to

express custom and culture. Every movement in each style had a philosophical basis for the way it expressed its techniques. Those techniques were influenced by the social structure of that country. Both History and Discovery Channels should be commended for the series.



### **Transformed the Movie**

“TRANSFORMED” the movie produced by Leo Fong, starring Fred Williamson, Tadashi Yamashita, George Dillman, Dustin Seale and scores of martial artists is now available on DVD. Master Dillman demonstrated his Pressure Point art in the movie. He actually knocked out two of his students with pressure point strikes in the movie. The director had to call “cut!” quickly so the two students could be revived. **You can purchase copies of the movie by send a check or MO for \$19.95 to Sky Dragon Entertainment Corp. P.O. Box 7, Woodland Hills, CA 91365-0007. The cost includes postage and handling.**

### **Wei Kuen Do Seminar in Martinburg, W.VA.**

Leo Fong will conduct a seminar at Otterbein United Methodist Church in Martinsburg, West Virginia on Tuesday, April 8, 2008 from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM. Subject covered will be Angles of Attack, Circles of Destruction and Quick Counterattacks. In addition to instruction on martial arts, scenes for Leo Fong’s next movie will be shot following the seminar with those who are in attendance. For details contact Rev. Ken Fizer (304) 263-0342.