



## BIOGRAPHIES

Thankfully, there are small groups of progressive folks like Home Alive in Seattle and Girl Army in Oakland who teach self-defense in a way that is not about patriotism, racism, xenophobia, or personality cults around a fighting style or teacher.

Many of those who are progressive, anarchists in particular, often fail to deal with “what is” and try to leap directly to “what they wish to be.” Some progressives grew up bourgeois and sheltered, and never have been placed in a situation where their lives were truly in immediate peril (until they got involved in radical politics). Or they got their first education in the concept of self-defense from someone who used the words and the overall concept to justify targeting them for abuse.

There are still those out there who subscribe to the ideology of “redemptive suffering,” a pacifist politico-religious doctrine advocated by Bayard Rustin, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Mahatma Gandhi; that somehow those who do evil to the most defenseless segments of the population will finally ‘come to their senses’ or ‘repent’ for their sins against humanity because of the willingness of a few nonviolent martyrs to be brutalized. Those who advocate non-violent resistance have been jailed and killed in numbers equal to or greater than those who (as Malcolm X put it) “stop singing and come out swinging.”

Proclaiming yourself to have sole ownership of the ‘moral high ground’ or ‘the truth’ in a situation only leads to alienation from those around you and execution at the hands of your enemies, with help from those around you who are now alienated from you. Jesus is a prime example.

I believe in self-defense by any means necessary, but what I specialize in is unarmed self-defense and the use of improvised weapons. In an age of tighter control on handguns, knives, and specialty blunt force weapons (sap gloves, brass knuckles, etc) and longer prison sentences for their use (even if its justified), it makes more sense in my opinion. At the same time, it is good to be well rounded in the use of tools other than your bare hands and I study in that direction.

Philosophically, I believe as Gichin Funakoshi (the founder of the Shotokan style of Karate) did, that “karate is for the development of character.” If you can control yourself, then no one else can control you. If you cannot control yourself, then someone else will control you.

