

FMA

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Boxing's Knockout Punching

A Lethal Martial Art

When Leo Fong was just a teenager, there were no martial arts schools in Arkansas so Leo sought out the American fighting style - Western Boxing.

Wei Kuen Do the art Founded by Leo Fong is not just a style restricted to one aspect of fighting or training, but is comprised of many aspects of the martial arts. Brought together and formed and continuously updating its self to progress with the future.

Leo T. Fong



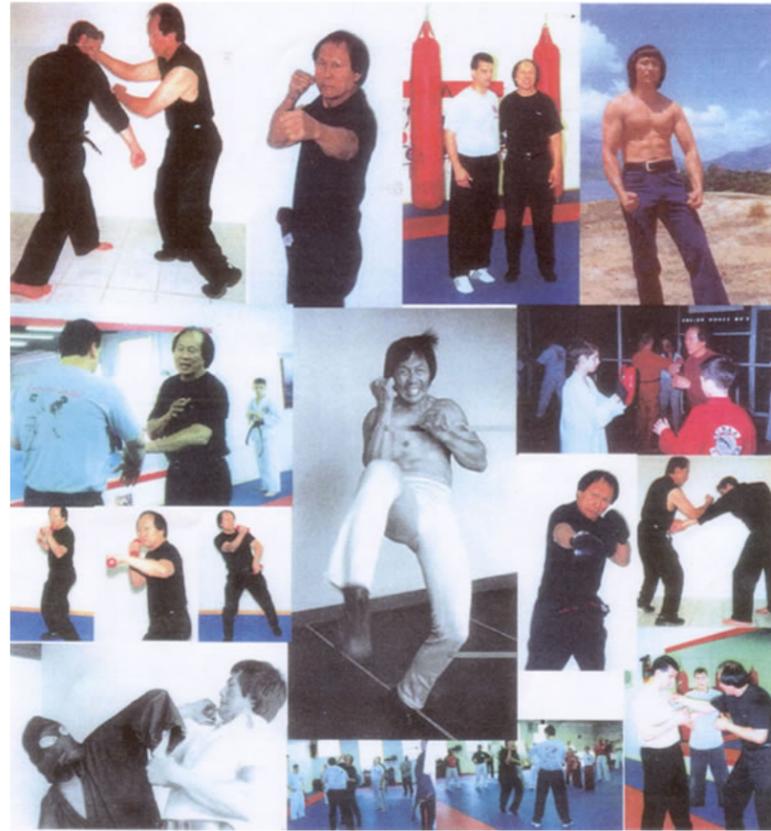
Boxing's Knockout Punching

Western Boxing can be even more lethal when combined with pressure points

James J. Corbett
Bob Fritzsimmmons
Kid Gavilan
Kid McCoy
Bob Foster
Joe Louis
Rocky Marciano
Sugar Ray Robinson

Wei Kuen Do

Thoughts on Knockout Punching
Accuracy



Each issue features practitioners of martial arts and other internal arts, other features include historical, theoretical and technical articles; reflections, Filipino martial arts, healing arts, the culture of the Philippines and other related subjects.

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Leo Fong a Methodist Minister, Filmmaker, Fitness Coach, Martial Artist, and Founder of Wei Kuen Do. In the issue Leo being an avid boxing enthusiast and in fact in his younger days a very good boxer, talks about his thoughts on boxing, Let us start at the beginning and learn how Leo got into martial arts and how boxing became a part of his life and also a part of his art.

His martial arts journey began at the age of 7 years old on his first day of school. Being the only Asian in school, a group of students surrounded him at recess and began to sing racial slurs at him. When he returned home, his father asked him, "How was school?" Young Fong replied, "Great! Everybody likes me. They even sang to me." The father asked, "What did they sing?" He replied, "Ching-chong Chinaman." The father turned red in the face and said to Leo, "They don't like you. Don't you know they are making fun of your racial heritage?" Next day at recess, the playground teacher organized a softball game and Leo was designated to play first base. One of the kids hit a single and ended up on first base. He looked at Leo and remarked, "Chink!" Without hesitation Leo punched him in the nose, knocking him to the ground. The playground teacher grabbed Fong by the neck, spanked him and sent him to the office where he had to stand in the hall for two days while the other students taunted him.

Unlike his cousins who dropped out of school because of racial intimidation, Leo choose to remain in school and fight. As he encountered other bullies, Leo developed an affinity to fighting which landed him in the principal's office regularly. During this time, there were no martial arts schools in Arkansas so Leo sought out the American fighting style - Western Boxing. At the age of 12, he bought a boxing book, "The Fundamental

of Boxing" by Barney Ross, the former world welterweight champion.

Leo read the book from cover to cover and then he hung a pillow in his room as a punching bag and proceeded to follow the instructions in the book. The instructions he practiced from the Barney Ross book helped him refine his punching skills and he was able to defend himself quite effectively. He learned early on from the instructions in the book that the left jab and left hook were very effective punches. Bullies who came to him with racist attitude and aggressive wild swings were destined to be knocked out by jabs and hooks. He learned early that a left jab could set up for a left hook or a right cross and with those three punches Leo Fong prevailed against school ground bullies. He had his first formal boxing match at the age of 15 years old and while he lost a close decision, he learned much from fighting in front of an audience. After graduating from High School, Leo enrolled in Hendrix College in Conway, Arkansas to study for the ministry. It was at Hendrix he joined the boxing team and received his first formal boxing lessons from an old professional fighter by the name of Kirby "KO" Donoho. In his first year of competition Leo won 7 of his first 8 fights and he scored 5 first round knockouts - all with his left hook.

In his second year in college, Hendrix College decided to disband its boxing and wrestling programs but the local National

Guard Unit in Conway, Arkansas invited Leo to join their team. Leo won 5 fights that year with Company G, and also reached the Finals of the Arkansas State AAU Tournament. Leo scored one of the quickest knockouts of the tournament in his quarterfinal fight. He won the second fight by a decision and lost a close decision in the finals to a boxer he had beaten previously in college competition. After his 1950 AAU Tournament competition, Leo continued to compete in three other events; two college tournaments of which he won both by knockouts and the Southwestern AAU Tournament. At the Southwestern he scored a first round knockout, won on a forfeit and was knocked out in the finals. It was after the knockout that Leo decided to retire from competition. The following summer Leo was hired by the Dallas Board of City Missions of the United Methodist Church to work as an athletic director at Rankin Chapel in West Dallas, Texas. He developed a very strong boxing team at Rankin and some of the members won regional championships in their first year in competition even though none of the boxers had any boxing experiences before Leo's arrival at the center.

So now let us see what Leo has to say about some of the old time knockout puncher's in boxing and what he got from them and what he has developed personally and for his art of Wei Kuen Do.

Learn More About Leo T. Fong Visit: www.leotfong.com

Boxing's Knockout Punching *A Lethal Martial Art*

Many traditional purist martial artists do not consider Western Boxing a serious martial arts. I once had an in depth discussion about linear punching versus hooks and round house punches with a “die hard karate master”; he was very adamant about the ineffectiveness of hooks and round house punches. I anger him when I asked him if he had ever been hit by a good left hook. He believed that only linear punching was effective. He went on to explain you can snap your hips into the delivery of the punch adding more impact upon contact with intended target. By pulling the opposite arm to the side as you deliver the punch add unlimited power to the straight punch. I felt it was useless to argue with such rigid thinking. In my long martial arts journey, I studied the dynamics of hooks, jabs, uppercuts and crosses in depth and come to the conclusion these punches can be very lethal in terms of ending any confrontation. Using traditional Western Boxing as we see it in competition has its limits. However, modifying traditional Western Boxing where there are no rules and no limits, it can be a very effective self-defense, it not a deadly one. Can you imagine hitting an opponent with a left hook and follow through with a kick to the groin. Or vice-versa, hitting your opponent with a hook kick to the groin and follow with a left hook and right cross.

Western Boxing can be even more lethal when combined with pressure points.

Why is Western Boxing so effective you might ask? Boxing is the highest form of free fighting because the practitioners do not have to be bogged down with a lot of pre-arranged techniques. The training enhances a person's ability to express the punches, much like a person who is so articulate that they do not need a written manuscript to communicate one's message. Everything is expressed spontaneous without deliberation and advance planning. Many martial arts do not have the “expression quality”, or as Bruce Lee use to say: “Fighting is like a sound and an echo.” Boxing is an excellent way to open the gate to executing a grappling or a kicking move. Yet boxing on its own can be a finishing approach. MMA has become the rage in recent years and interest in MMA continues to grow. The competitors who do not have hitting skills is at a disadvantage. Those who win consistently today are those who can hit and kick as well as grapple. Fighters like George St. Pierre spend a

lot of time in a boxing gym. His consistent win record affirms the value of refined punching skills.

Western Boxing is simple in appearance, but very intricate in practice. What you see may not be what you get, unless you are a serious and dedicated practitioner. The ability to express one self within the context of fighting requires a lot of inner skills, which are developed through years of practice. Things like non-telegraphic moves, feinting in attack, relaxed focus, hitting and moving in angles, energy extension and breath projection in delivery of punches, creative adjustment and spontaneous adaptation in the heat of the battle are all mental, emotional, energy and spiritual based. It is not enough just to possess hundreds of techniques. It is important to put each technique through the process of refinement. One of the ways to do that is practice, practice, practice and more practice. More important each technique must have the inner-skilled qualities. Without emo-

tional, mental, energy and spiritual content, the technique will be void of power and substance. Every component of our being must be developed and brought into play if it is to be a completed technique with inner substance. Our being is composed of five elements: Body, Mind, Emotion, Energy and Spirit. These five elements must be in coordination with each other to form a single unit upon the execution of a punch.

Old time boxers teach us a lot about knockout punching. Boxers like Jim Corbett, Bob Fitzsimons, Kid Gavilan, Kid McCoy, Bob Foster, Joe Louis, Rocky Marciano, Sugar Ray Robinson, to name just a few, are worthy of us studying them in depth and learn what made them so proficient in their specialty. The information we can glean from these “old timers” can help us to acquire a degree of knockout skills.

For the sake of brevity I have chosen the following boxers to analyze in depth, Jim Corbett, Bob Fitzsimons, Kid Gavilan, Kid

McCoy, Bob Foster, Joe Louis, Rocky Marciano and Sugar Ray Robinson. There are many others we will discuss in future issues.

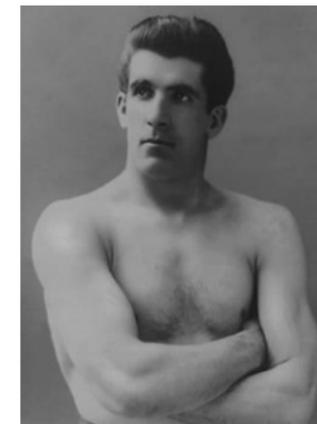
Boxing definitely has been a great influence in the development of Wei Kuen Do: The Way of the Integrated Fist. Just like Bruce Lee who started out with a Wing Chun base; Wei Kuen Do began with Western Boxing. Bruce Lee's

martial arts evolved from classical Wing Chun to the Jeet Kune Do stage, and was greatly influenced by Western Boxing, specifically, Muhammad Ali. The modernization of Jun Fan Gung-Fu to Jeet Kune Do was obvious in his famous fight with Chuck Norris in the movie “Way of the Dragon.”

Norris was getting the best of Bruce Lee at the first half of

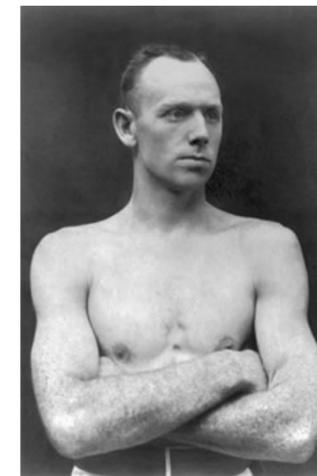
the fight; as the music changed, so did Bruce Lee's fighting approach. He began to deviate from the traditional into the eclectic. He started “to dance” as Ali use to say. Suddenly the spirit of the fight changed and Bruce Lee dominated the confrontation until Norris was defeated badly and “killed”.

James J. Corbett



James J. Corbett is best known for introducing scientific boxing to a rough and tumble world of bare knuckles. James J. Corbett was a bank clerk by trade. His entry into the world of boxing changed the sport forever. After a series of wins over tough opponents, he challenge the Great John L. Sullivan, known as the Boston Strong Boy, John L. was the reigning heavyweight champ for over a decade. It didn't seem like this 6 foot 1 inch, white collar worker would be a threat to the Great John L. When he entered the ring to face the Boston Strong Boy, no one really gave him a chance. Once he went to work, with his left jab, his cleverness and ringmanship begin to shine. The raw power of the great John L. gave in to the scientific boxing skills of James J. Corbett and Corbett scored a knockout in the 21st round.

Bob Fritzsimmmons



Bob Fritzsimmmons was a physical freak he had powerful shoulders that were developed by years of pounding horse shoes as a black-smith. He had a 28-inch waist, propped up by very skinny legs. Some call Fritzsimmmons “a fighting machine on stilts.” It was not his looks that won him the heavyweight championship of the world with a knockout of James J. Corbett; it was his dynamite left hand. He had the ability to shift his feet and throw the left, leaving Corbett gasping for breathe. One writer called it “solar plexus punch.” This punch was considered the very first pure left hook in boxing history. During his 25 plus years as a fighter, he fought them all; big, tall, fast, strong and giants twice his size. His patent left hook always prevailed, although Fritzsimmmons weight no more than 170 pounds. The left hook took Fritzsimmmons to three titles: middleweight, heavyweight and light heavyweight. He won his last title at the age of 40. One historian said, “A good left hook is better than most heads.”

Kid Gavilan



Kid Gavilan is not considered an “old time” boxer, but his trademark “Bolo Punch” rate in my book as unique. He worked years in the sugar can fields of Cuba where he developed from swinging the blade.

His fame bolo punch was a cross between an uppercut and a softball pitcher’s underhanded delivery. Kid Gavilan, referred to as the “Keed” was the darling of Friday night television. As a teenager growing up in the 50’s, the familiar three-chime slogan, “Look Sharp, Feel Sharp, Be Sharp,” was signal for us to gather around our black and white television set and watch “The Cuban Hawk” who appeared more than 34 times on the Gillette Friday Night Fights. As a teenage amateur boxer, who was consumed with being a good boxer, I lived for Friday nights. Little did I realized, those were the formative years for the development of Wei Kuen Do, or “Street Boxing.”

Kid McCoy



Boxing historians describe Kid McCoy as “the shrewdest boxer the ring has ever known.” His trademark punch was the “corkscrew” punch. The corkscrew punch gave Kid McCoy the ability to cut-up and slash his opponents. As I read about Kid McCoy, I thought about Bruce Lee. Both were innovators. Both had the cunning ability to work outside of the proverbial “box.” It was said, Kid McCoy got the inspiration for the corkscrew punch from watching his cat toying with a cloth ball.

He noticed that as the cat paw at the cloth ball, the cat came at the ball at an angle instead of in a straight line, punctuated by a twist at the end, similar to the spin given a bullet by the riffling in a barrel. To further refine his new discovery, Kid McCoy practiced his new punch on a bag of cement. He discovered that he could reduce the bag of cement into powder. One opponent who was on the receiving end of the corkscrew punch described the results in these words: “It felt like a telephone pole had been driven into my stomach sideways.”

Kid McCoy was never more than a middleweight, he took on people much heavier and bigger than him. He even took on James J. Corbett, Tom Sharkey, top heavyweight of the time. What he lacked in size, he made up in grace, courage and generalship.

Bob Foster



Although Bob Foster is not considered to be an “old timer”, his deadly left hook is a reason for admiration. He has always been a favorite of mine. Even though his two attempt to succeed as a heavyweight ending in knockout lost to Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier, I still consider him a great boxer with a lethal left hook. His knockout of Mike Quarry was a good example of what it was like to be on the receiving end of a Bob Foster left hook. Quarry was unconscious for over ten minutes with his foot twitching from the impact of the blow. I always believed the left hook to be a powerful punch, Bob Foster confirmed it for me. He defended his light heavyweight title successfully 14 times.

Joe Louis



Growing up in the 30’s and 40’s, Joe Louis was one of my favorite boxers. He fought them all and won, often by knockouts. It was sad to see him at the end of his career being defeat by upcoming heavyweights like Ezzard Charles and Rocky Marciano. Joe Louis was a boxer-puncher who could score knockouts with a jab, or a combination of punches. Most boxers favor one punch which they consider their “money” punch. But Joe Louis was just as skillful executing a jab, cross, uppercut or hook. He often knocked out his opponents with a combination of these punches. Muhammad Ali criticized the Joe Louis “shuffle”, saying it was just too slow. It worked for Louis. Also I noticed how relaxed he was as he shuffled around the ring stalking his opponents.

I believe his knockout power came from his “relaxed focus” as he caught up with his opponents. This was confirmed as I thought back to a book I bought, written by Joe Louis on “How To Box” back in the 40’s. In the book, I remembered him saying that when you punch, you should visualize yourself punching through and past your target. If you are jabbing, visualize the jab going all the

way through the head and coming out of the back of the head. He advocated this when punching the heavy bag. Hit and project your punches through the other side of the heavy punching bag. Joe Louis practiced what he preached. In watching his second fight with Max Schmeling, you could see the hard follow-through as he delivered each punch. Yet as he lambasted the punches into Schmeling, there were slight pauses in between combinations and a relaxed delivery of each punch. Every time a punch landed, Schmeling grimaced in pain.

Rocky Marciano



Marciano started boxing late in life. He was considered a professional quality baseball player. When his trainer Charlie Goldman saw Rocky for the first time he said, “Marciano was so awkward we just stood there and laughed. He didn’t stand right, he didn’t throw a punch right. He didn’t do anything right.”

Yet the “Rock” became one of the great heavyweights in modern boxing history. Through dedication and hard work under the tutelage of Charlie Goldman, Marciano became a champion. He fought the best and won. He knocked out the great Joe Louis, Archie Moore, Jersey Joe Walcott, Ezzard Charles and many others. He burst the bubbles of many undefeated heavyweights. Rex Layne won over 40 fights mostly by knockouts. When he entered the ring to face the “Rock”, he became a knockout victim. Roland La Starza was considered a great heavyweight contender, undefeated when he met Marciano. Like those before him he too became knockout casualty. One thing Charlie Goldman notice when

he was teaching Marciano the rudiment of footwork, jabbing, hooking and boxing mechanics; Marciano had raw knockout power. Goldman did not try to change any of that. He had a pulverizing right hand punch that he called the “Suzi Q” It was one of the most devastating weapons ever brought into a ring. Goldman made sure that this right hand would be preserved in all of its unadulterated purity, power and form.

When he faced Jersey Joe Walcott for the heavyweight championship of the world; the fight was close. Walcott even knocked down Marciano with a left hook in the early rounds, but in the 13th round,

Marciano had Walcott on the ropes, he unloaded the “Suzi Q” and caught Walcott on the chin, knocking him out cold. Not only could Marciano deliver a devastating punch, he could also take one. When Rocky Marciano retired, he had a perfect record of 49-0.

Just an added note: When he was preparing for Don Cockell of England for a fight at the San Francisco Cow Palace, one of his sparring partners was also my self-defense instructor by the name of Ed Ganucci. Ed was paid \$100 a round to spar with Marciano. This was in 1955. When asked why he did not go out to San

Francisco and sparred with Marciano more often so he could make some serious money. Ed replied, “he beats up my arms so bad, I cannot lift them the next day. I need at least two days rest to get back into the ring.” That said much about Marciano’s power.

Sugar Ray Robinson



Sugar Ray Robinson is still considered pound for pound one of the greatest boxers in the history of fisticuff. Bert Sugar the famous writer and boxing historian commented, “No single label for Robinson is adequate. He was boxing’s version of Rashomon; everyone saw something different. He could deliver a knockout blow going backward; he was seamless, with no fault lines; his left hand, held ever ready, was purity in motion, his footwork was superior to any that had been seen in boxing up to that time; his hand speed and leverage were unmatched; he was Hemingway’s “Grace under pressure.” Robinson was unbeaten and untied in his first 40 fights. Muhammad Ali and Sugar Ray Leonard are two great modern day boxers who patterned their footwork after Sugar Ray Robinson. Robinson left a legacy of great boxing mechanics and skills that other dare to imitate. His ability to move in angles and punch while moving backward,

forward and side to side, gave him formidability in every fight. These boxers, ancient and modern, offers us volumes of information that can improve our free fighting full-contact skills. Experience has taught us to keep it simple and not be overloaded with volumes and volumes of techniques. Boxing offers us depth with simplicity. Boxing challenges us to take “one technique and practice it 10,000 times, rather than 10.000 techniques and practice once.”

Wei Kuen Do

Wei Kuen Do has taken the essence of each fighter and integrated into it’s structure. WKD is not about imitating great fighters; it is about taking what is innately effective in each fighter and use those skills and small nuances as “seeds” to develop depth in the expression part of the art.

WKD is about integration and expression. One can only express a concept or a technique when it is innately personal. In other words you must find ways to “own” the technique that you have acquired from another source. This means to finds ways to personalize and internalize the technique so when you attempt to use it seriously, you will be able to express it like a “sound and an echo.” For that moment you are the technique. To internalize athletic skills requires dedication to hours and hours of repetitious training. There is much truth to the old saying; “practice makes perfect”. The more you practice the more natural you will become. In WKD we believe that knowing five different systems of martial arts does not guarantee you the competitive edge. In fact it may even confuse and impede your freedom of expression in a self-defense situation. We do believe as WKD practitioners that the measure of a technique lies in its ability to be effective in all situations and ranges. Take a left jab or a front hand jab for instance, you ask yourself, “How can I use this jab effectively against a grappler, a kicker or a puncher?” When each single technique can be applied effectively to counter all attacks, you do not need to be bogged down by multi-systems and styles. In WKD we have six punches; off of those six punches we have over 200 variables.



Wei Kuen Do: Beyond JKD - *Similar Concepts, Different Structure*

In 1973, Leo wrote the book “Wei Kuen Do: the Psycho-Dynamic Art of Free Fighting” and he shared with the world his discoveries on the martial arts path. The book explains his theories on spontaneous free fighting and expressing the tools of the totality of combat. Leo demonstrates boxing and kicking techniques that are integrated with chokes, takedowns and grappling. He also expounded on the theory and philosophy of “no way as the way” and finding your own truth. To this end, he includes a quote from writer and philosopher Khalil Gibran about a teacher “If he is indeed wise, he does not bid you to enter the house of his wisdom but rather lead(s) you to the threshold of your own mind.”

A new edition is coming out soon, updating the aspects of weiKuen Do.

Thoughts on Knockout Punching

A knockout in simple terms is a sudden shock to certain nerves in the brain that renders a temporary state of unconsciousness. A knockout can be scored either by a single blow, a series of blows, or just wearing down an opponent until his nerves are sensitive to any shock.

As easy as some knockouts look it is not difficult to conclude that developing a knockout punch is to merely develop the muscles of the arms, wrists, shoulders and back. Developing a knockout punch requires more than physical power. In addition to the physical development, the knockout fighter must develop other skills such as timing, distance, speed and velocity. He must understand the theory of power. He must become aware of the power line, the coordination between the punching arm and the rest of the body. He must practice this in training until it’s instinctive. Without, this necessary ingredients even though there is tremendous muscular development he will not be a knockout puncher.

Contrary to some beliefs that punchers are born, developing power punching ability is acquired through the refinement of timing, techniques, speed, and understanding the physics of power.

The secret of the knockout is to separate the myths from the truths. One of the common myths is to believe that the farther you bring your arms back before swinging, the more power you will generate. This belief no doubt gave birth to the haymaker swing.

Power punching need not travel more than six inches at the most. It is the rhythm and pacing that creates the conditions for a knockout. It is the right place at the right time. This is why some spectacular knockouts in boxing were not repeated in rematches.

It is the responsibility of the fighter to create a situation where it is conducive for the knockout. When it’s there, the sharp fighter will quickly take advantage of the situation. Responding to the right opportunity requires the developing of the following principles of power punching: timing, accuracy, penetration, velocity, and relaxed focus.

Accuracy

The first prerequisite for knockout punching is the ability to strike with accuracy. Without a thorough knowledge of target areas, striking and punching would be only an aimless exercise. There are at least three factors one must have knowledge about target areas:

1. Knowing where the target areas are.
2. To feel in ones psychic the vulnerable spots.
3. The ability to see the targets in ones mind's eye.

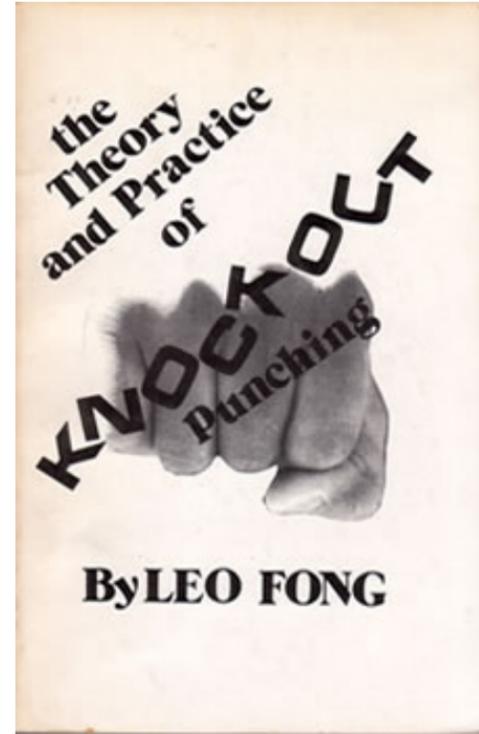
When a fighter can do those three things in the midst of combat, chances are he / she will score a knockout.

Learn more about the subject of Knockout Punching, purchase:

The Theory and Practice of Knockout Punching

There have been many articles and books written on developing a punch, however, very few have dealt in details with the mental and emotional aspects of power punching.

It is not the intentions of this volume to present a manual on physical training related to developing a punch. It is, however the intention to introduce to you as readers and practitioners the theory of power punching beyond physical training alone. It is to discuss in some details the guiding principles of knockout punching. Such components as timing, power line theory, gliding step, accuracy, speed and velocity, penetration, and center line theory are key ingredients to developing a knockout punch.



To execute that knockout punch, one must set up the opponent. Here are some examples.



Bil Jee Eye Jab Technique



Circular Fist-Hammer Combination



Hammer Fist - Backfist Combination

Right Cross - Left Uppercut Combination



Triple Combinations (Left Jab - Right Uppercut - Left Hook)

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The schools listed teach Filipino martial arts, either as the main curriculum or an added curriculum.

If you have a school that teaches Filipino martial arts, or you are an instructor that teaches, but does not have a school, list the school or style so individuals who wish to experience, learn and gain knowledge have the opportunity.

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We reserve the right to use any photo(s) as cover material or additional compensation. We also reserve the right to edit material and to crop photographs.

We reserve the right to use articles or parts of articles that are given and approved from time to time as needed to promote the Filipino martial arts and the Culture of the Philippines.

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We welcome your article, ideas and suggestions, and look forward to working with you in the future.