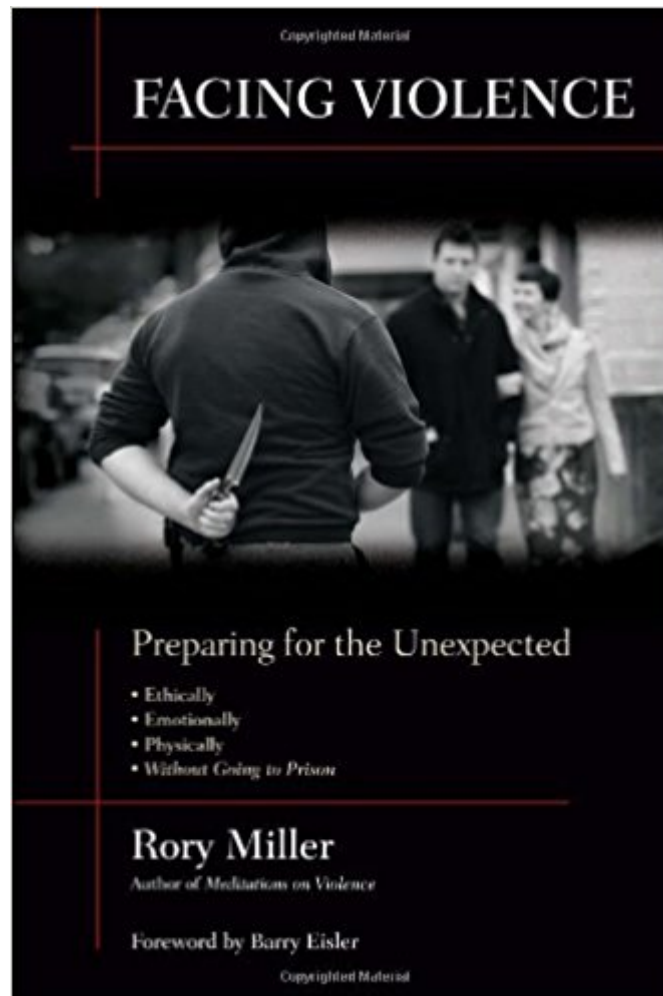




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Facing Violence: Preparing For The Unexpected



Synopsis

Gold Winner - 2012 eLit Award
Finalist - 2012 USA Best Books Award
Honorable Mention - 2012 Eric Hoffer Award

Seven Steps to Legal, Emotional and Physical Preparation

This book stands alone as an introduction to the context of self-defense. There are seven elements that must be addressed to bring self-defense training to something approaching a 'complete.' Any training that dismisses any of these areas leaves you vulnerable.

1. Legal and ethical implications. A student learning self-defense must learn force law. Otherwise it is possible to train to go to prison. Side by side with the legal rules, every student must explore his or her own ethical limitations. Most do not really know where this ethical line lies within them.
2. Violence dynamics. Self-defense must teach how attacks happen. Students must be able to recognize an attack before it happens and know what kind they are facing.
3. Avoidance. Students need to learn and practice not fighting. Learning includes escape and evasion, verbal de-escalation, and also pure-not-be there avoidance.
4. Counter-ambush. If the student didn't see the precursors or couldn't successfully avoid the encounter he or she will need a handful of actions trained to reflex level for a sudden violent attack.
5. Breaking the freeze. Freezing is almost universal in a sudden attack. Students must learn to recognize a freeze and break out of one.
6. The fight itself. Most martial arts and self-defense instructors concentrate their time right here. What is taught just needs to be in line with how violence happens in the world.
7. The aftermath. There are potential legal, psychological, and medical effects of engaging in violence no matter how justified. Advanced preparation is critical.

Any teacher or student of self-defense, anyone interested in self-defense, and any person who desires a deeper understanding of violence needs to read this book.

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Customer Reviews

A while back, I wrote a short facebook status that said "Finished my first read through of Rory Miller's Facing Violence last night. Will be starting a second read through before reviewing it. Short version: if you teach or train self-defense, read this book."Upon a second reading, my views have not changed substantively. Facing Violence is an extremely important book, and anyone who has any reason to want to understand how to deal with violence should read it. Martial artists and self-defense instructors will get the most value out of it, but it has ideas that are useful for LEO and Military Combatives trainers as well. Facing Violence is broken into seven chapters: 1. Legal and ethical implications. 2. Violence dynamics. 3. Avoidance. 4. Counter-ambush. 5. Breaking the freeze. 6. The fight itself. 7. The aftermath. The astute out there will notice that the book takes three chapters to even get to any kind of physical assault, and another two dealing with what is essentially the first micro second of the fight (the ambush moment). There is only a single chapter about the fight itself, despite the fact that that single chapter is where most martial artists spend the vast majority of their training time. Think about how backwards that is for a minute. Maybe longer. The chapter on legal and ethical implications of violence is interesting. The legal advice is, by necessity, a bit generic, and Rory advises readers to check up on their local statutes. "A book I read by a guy from the Wet Coast said this was okay" is not a valid legal defense.

And I really do mean EVERYONE. Not just martial artists or self-defense instructors, although they should DEFINITELY read this book. In fact, anyone who teaches self-defense who doesn't read this book is doing their students a huge, and potentially dangerous, disservice. The material held within is a game changer, and if a martial arts instructor is not covering these seven topics, they need to either (a) figure out a way to incorporate them into their curriculum or (b) remove the phrases "self-defense" and "self-protection" from all of their marketing material. But that's just from the instructors' side. As I said, everyone should read this book. Why? Because only the smallest bit of self-protection is actually the physical skills that people think of when they consider the martial arts. Going through the book's chapters, there is (1) Legal and Ethical, (2) Violence Dynamics, (3) Avoidance, (4) Counter-Ambush, (5) The Freeze, (6) The Fight, and (7) After. Note that only two or three of these involve any traditional, "fighting" skills. In addition, if someone is good at the first three, the odds of ever making it to (4) are markedly reduced. To play on an old cliché, that's the true power of this book - the knowledge that it gives to the reader. Anyone, and I mean anyone, who

reads this book will gain practical knowledge and easy-to-implement tips and behaviors that will make them MUCH safer. (And to all of you guys out there, get your significant other to read this book. I realize that it might be a hard sell, but it may well be the single most important thing you can do to enhance their safety. Remember, you aren't necessarily going to be around when bad things happen.

I am not an attorney, and none of the following is an offer of legal advice. This is a great book. I would recommend it with the very same eagerness with books that I give the best score. Now, there is a reason why I only gave it 3 stars. The readers need to know what this book is and what it is not. The cover where a two peaceful couple is confronted by a person armed with a knife is kind of misleading, as you'll find that the book is not really about street crime avoidance guide (more on this later). It's more of a study of mental aspects of violence, and a pretty introspective one at that. You will find the author taking a lot of space to describe a process of two or more parties getting into a conflict and mutually escalating it to physical violence because of their ego. He calls the process "monkey dance." That starts from the part that explains dynamics of violence, but it extends well into avoidance section of the book, and is a recurring theme thorough out the book. I find mainly two problems with the way author handles the "monkey dance." First problem is that considering the weight the author is giving it, it does not help anyone who is trying to seek a way to avoid crime that happens as no fault of their own. Someone saying "Don't get into fights because of your ego" won't help someone trying to avoid a robbery or kidnapping (which is why I find the cover picture kind of misleading, but the picture was probably not the author's idea). Now, the author does offer other guides to avoid such crimes. But, although I did learn a few tips that helps with my insight about criminals, it was kind of generic for the most part. The second problem is that the author's definition of "monkey dance" is overly broad.

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