



The Liar the Cheat and the Thief: Deception and the Art of Sword Play

Maija Soderholm

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You don't fight bodies you fight minds.

In this slender volume, Maija Soderholm of Sonny Umpad's Visayan Style Corto Kadena and Larga Mano system presents the details of one of the most important and least understood aspects of personal combat. How to control the opponent's mind.

The Liar, The Cheat, and The Thief explores the drills and the mindset of one of the last modern duelists. As Sun Tzu said "All warfare is deception".

On the surface, this is a book about learning to deceive one's opponent in the fighting arts. And it would be a great addition to the canon if that were all it managed to be. Yet, a closer read suggests that this book is pretending to be less than it is to conceal some deeper lessons. We should hardly be surprised by this. Just as Musashi and others have taught us, the sword is a vehicle for understanding other things. In truth, what Ms. Soderholm has provided us is a guide not merely to reading one's opponent, but to writing him. The advantages of that having that ability are limited only by one's imagination, whether the context is the ring, the battlefield, or the boardroom. These are deep waters, and the tools provided are powerful — to be used cautiously and wisely.

Rob Crowley, former MAJ, US Army Special Forces

My focus, for many years, has been on surviving violent encounters. I don't duel. I don't square off and try to keep things fair. So why am I excited about a book on dueling, using weapons I don't even carry from a culture not my own? Because there are principles underlying all things, and sometimes the principles are easier to see if you force yourself to shift perspective. There are three things that the long blade teaches better than any other medium: distance, timing and deception. Maija Soderholm understands these nuances deeply. I've been waiting for this book for a long time. It will make me better in my totally unrelated field.

Rory Miller, author of Meditations on Violence, Facing Violence and ConCom – Conflict Communications: A new paradigm in Conscious Communication

After 35 years studying the Filipino martial arts, I thought I knew what 'flow' was until I met Maija; flashing smile hiding the glint of steel. To improve your art, watch, in the videos, how her feet and torso turn in different directions and the hands deliver the attack on a third line. Deception within deception.

P.H. (Mac) McRedmond, Deputy Sheriff, Retired and 50 year martial arts student and instructor

There are teachers and there are teachers. Rarely do you find the ability to both DO and TEACH at a high level of skill within the same person. I have seen Maija Soderholm's skill in technique and teaching ability firsthand, flowed with her on many occasions and been the recipient of embarrassing lessons in humility. As

a 28 year practitioner of the martial arts, that's not an easy thing to bring about.

Maija's Art of Deception is the brass ring. There's no holding back, nor is there any mystification - you can't simply let your mind relax, the game is more mental than it is physical and learning to integrate the two has been the stumbling block of many teachers. Maija's art isn't a *system* per se, but the essence of every martial art on the planet; It's a living, evolving manual of motion you can return to for years, and get something new every time. Maija never lets you relax in a drill, she constantly reminds you (sometimes painfully) that higher martial arts demands deeper concentration.

No matter what art you train in or from what country, The Art of Deception is applicable across the board in a way few other methods even address. These are the "secrets" that most martial art masters hold close to the vest, and Maija puts them on display for everyone.

Bobbe Edmonds, teacher, author, student, curry thief.

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Elizabeth Pipkin:

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William McClanahan:

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Roger Patrick:

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