



Episode 479 — Martial Arts Radio Live (Episode 5) | whistlekickMartialArtsRadio.com



Jeremy Lesniak:

Hello everybody and welcome! This is martial arts radio live number 5. BOOM! We've made it through 4. We're going to see how we do today. There's a slim chance but maybe you don't know who I am. I'm Jeremy Lesniak. I'm your host for martial arts radio, founder of whistlekick. I'm the guy who loves martial arts and I produce a lot of content as part of my job here at whistlekick. That's part of the things that we do once a month. The first Tuesday of the month we come back to you live. It's enough opportunity to engage, interact and it's a lot of fun. What do we do at whistlekick? We support the traditional martial arts. We support in as many ways as we can and if you want to know more, you can go to whistlekick.com. This is what I do for podcasts. I have this intro and you get to see behind the scenes. I've shown you how this all works. If you go to whistlekick.com, that's our online home and it's where you learn about everything that we're doing. You got the store over there. If you use the code PODCAST15, you get 15% off everything we make. We got new shirts going in all the time and actually, I'm going to show you. I've saved this aside. Let's see if I can find it quickly enough. No, that's a game I was playing. Check out this shirt. This is one of the newer shirts that we did. You can load anytime. Apparently, I'm using all the bandwidth for this thing that we're doing here. I'll show you that in a moment but use the code PODCAST15, save 15%.

Martial arts radio, this show, whistlekickmartialartsradio.com. We give you 2 episodes a week and sometimes we do some extra stuff like this and why do we do what we do? To connect, educate, entertain martial artists throughout the world. There we go, here's that shirt. Come on, boom! Can you



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see this? The delay has been reduced greatly. This will be much more effective. So, it's a crown. Zooming in, zooming in. I think that works. Come on, come on, Jeremy. Slightly, in the future, cool. Check it out, there's all kinds of stuff at whistlekick.com. Don't forget the Patreon, Patreon.com/whistlekick. You can consider supporting us via purchase or anything like that so, let's get into this stuff. Let's do it.

I want to thank everybody who's joining us in the chat. All of your support, as always, is greatly appreciated. Highlights from episode 4, we talked a lot last time about martial artist handbook. Oh! Let me show you the new cover. Stay right there, don't go. There's so much going on at [whistlekick](http://whistlekick.com) that I forget how many [whistlekick](http://whistlekick.com) things are in my house. Boom! New cover, the martial artist handbook. We got past the collector's edition knowing that we got this fancy cover, it's the only chance so if you bought the collector's edition cover, yes, you should buy this one too. I'm just kidding. If you want to, go for it but here it is and it's been selling well. That book has been sold in 5 countries already. We've used it great. I'm loving it. So, we talked about it last time. Thanks, Furnace.

The other thing that we talked about last time that is worth bringing up is that myth that you have to register your hands as deadly weapons. It started as a publicity stunt from boxer, Joe Lewis, not kickboxer Joe Lewis but Joe Lewis, the boxer. He'd bring the police to his pre-fight pressconferences in order to intimidate his opponent by having the police register his hands as deadly weapons and he's a professional fighter for 17 years, from '34 to '51. Good stuff.

One of the things we want to do this time, let us know where you're listening from. We'll shout you out. Drop something in the chat now, later. I don't mind. We're doing this for an hour. Some of you may pop in and out but let me know where you're listening from. So far, I think, a 100% of people in the chat have been guests on the show so that's kind of cool. What else? We're going to do that topic in a moment. I don't want to start with that.

From the last episode, someone mentioned that they solved a Rubik's cube as part of their testing, their rank testing? What's something non-martial arts related that you think should be a part of a rank test? For me, the only thing that I've had to do that might be a little bit out of the ordinary is writing a paper. I had to write a paper for my greenbelt test and I had to write a paper and there's another one in there. Black belt test? Taekwondo black belt test, I think. I'm not a 100% sure, I don't remember. It's been a while but that brings it back so I think I did that.

What do we got? We got Russia and Oregon. We got Keene, New Hampshire. Shout out to Andrew who raced home from class to this and hasn't even showered yet. I have mixed feelings about Andrew. Thank you for your support. Andrew, of course, was our guest on martial arts radio. It was a great episode. Check that out. [06:04] and Waterville, Maine. We got people. We got people in the chat. Good times! We've got Frank in there.

I like the idea of testing incorporating things that are a little bit beyond the things that happen in class. Why? Because I think proper martial arts training allows you to integrate your training into life. The way



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you approach certain things. So, let's take the example of the Rubik's cube. Let's say you've never tried to solve a Rubik's cube. Maybe it's frustrating. What are you going to do in testing? Well, if you've been training a while, you're probably going to be more patient. You're probably going to approach it methodically. You will probably not throw it across the room. You might do something creative like take the stickers off and rearrange them to solve it which is the only way I've solved a Rubik's cube. I like that creativity. My original black belt test involved some martial arts weapons that I've never even seen before and I had to pick them up and figure them out and because my martial arts education up to that point have been fairly broad, not as broad as it has been today but I was able to figure stuff out. Don't hold it by the blade. There's a lot of common sense that's going on with weapons.

Other than having to register your hands as deadly weapons, are there other martial arts myths you're aware of? The general public seems to think that martial arts involves a lot more kind of mystical stuff. Meditation and things like that are actually done. I appreciate the synergy between meditation and martial arts but based on my experience, most schools don't do that. I think that, you know those Facebook memes that they're usually 6 panels and what my friends think I do and what the world thinks I do? What do my parents think I do and that final one in the bottom right, what I actually do? I think we could really take a lot of truth from those. The world seems to think a lot of things about martial arts that are very untrue and it shifts very dramatically from person to person. I don't see a lot of universal myths but people tend to think that we're either far more violent than we are or far more regimented than we are and there are violent schools and there are, or I should say, intense schools, is probably a better way to put it and there are very regimented schools but, like anything else, the truth is somewhere in the middle.

Gabe saying his black belt test involved eating something gross, kimchi. I had seen black belt tests involve at the end drinking sake or eating really hot peppers or what else? With the exempt of food and gross, I've seen that in a few schools. The pepper, I've only seen at one school but the sake, I've seen a few and I find that really interesting.

I don't know if it's bad that there are myths. If everybody knew exactly what was going on in martial arts, would they be as interesting? Would it have the mystique? I think the mystique probably keeps some people out but it draws people in. I think it's a net positive for us as an industry to not have everyone fully understand what we do. I think they've got the high points. I think, overall, people got the martial arts in a positive light. Not everybody but I think, the majority of people have a mostly positive view of martial arts and I think that's pretty good. That's what we want.

Craig says that I just saw a video that says you can't let your belt touch the floor. I was raised in karate that your belt does not touch the floor unless it is on you and I have seen that mirrored in other martial arts schools. I don't know if it's an old Japanese tradition. I don't know where it comes from but I liked it as a tradition. Maybe inconvenient when I started training but I think it facilitated this really interesting duality in the way we look at our belts. On the one hand, they are respected, revered and you treat them with a lot of value there but on the flipside, you don't wash it, you don't clean it. It gets frayed, it



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gets beat up, it gets bloody. I think what I like about that is that it's a true indicator of your time, whatever you put in your training goes into your belt. The sweat, the spit, the blood, the time and I think that's pretty great. Gabe says on the other hand, I've seen schools that placed their belt on the floor to signify the end of each class. Yeah, I've heard of that. I've not participated. That's good. They keep us thinking. They give us stuff to talk about when you find out other martial artists at a party. You get a drink, you're in the back corner and you're comparing notes, let everyone wonder.

Couple things to mention in case you're not in the newsletter list, we did get a shipment of black and white sparring gear and that's available at whistlekick.com. There is some on the road right now to amazon, grab that and I showed you that shirt earlier. One thing that's happened since our last episode, all of the apparel at whistlekick.com, this is a thing that we're doing moving forward, everything is limited edition. It's not based on quantity but it's based on time so you can see the expiration date right there in the title. Once it's gone, it's gone. We might bring back similar things but it will not be just like that ever again so you should probably keep that in mind.

Frank says they don't even use belts in Muay Thai. We all do it differently and that's ok and I like how discussion can arise in the sharing of ideas over the differences as long as we don't get locked in to those differences and tribalistic that we can't accept that somebody could do it, could be doing something differently and that we're just as ok, just as right, right. Did an episode on why there's no right way as others.

Right, February, Black History month and so I've got a question here, who are some of the most influential African-American martial artists? So, first off, I want to express why I struggle with this subject and not Black History month, any subject where we're creating division. On the one hand, I recognize that there is need to foster, what's the right word, there's a need to feature the accomplishments of groups of people because historically, not everyone has received equal treatment. My personal difficulty with that is that I don't see groups of people in that way. It would be a really long conversation for me to kind of express where I come from and why I feel that way but in the end, I'm waving this question and that means something so let's move on. Maybe, I shouldn't even say but I did and it's live. I can't take it back!

So, here's what we got for names. Now, I've got a few. We've already got some names popping in here. Andrew is saying Jim Kelly. Absolutely! Probably best known for being in Enter the Dragon. I have 3 names down here. People that I respect and look up to. First one was Victor Moore who, somehow, I was fortunate enough to talk to in Episode 20 of martial arts radio. Goes way, way back and he told a very long story and quite the narrative of his time and his life coming up as a martial artist at a point in US history when, I think the best anecdote that I took was, him talking about being the defending champion in competitions and he's made to use the back door of the gymnasium which absolutely blew my mind and then, the other 2 names.



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Sadly, both have passed away and despite recent attempts to get them on the show, it did not happen. Steve Nasty Anderson and Kevin Thompson, 2 names that I knew from my early days of competition that I've looked up to and respected for a long time and 2 men that, their accomplishments absolutely speak for themselves. Phenomenal martial artists, phenomenal competition careers. So, [17:09] is saying John Jenkins which is a name all of you might not know but I certainly, excuse me, I certainly heard that name and I heard impressive stories about Mr. Jenkins. Have I met him? I don't think I did.

One of the things that I like about martial arts radio is that we get to feature people everywhere. Conducting an interview today and the guest in another country that we have not had a guest from this country yet. She is the first one and I loved that and I love how we get to tell these stories. We're sharing these stories, people are telling their own stories, people from all over the world and for me, martial arts is something that unifies us. It's something that brings us together. Doesn't matter whether you're from Saudi Arabia or Brazil or Canada or Australia. The body moves in the same ways. Shotokan karate in one of those countries is going to be pretty darn close to Shotokan karate in one of the others. One of the reasons that Olympic taekwondo has spread so effectively is that there was a concerted effort from the Korean government to spread it globally and that's why it's in the Olympics and you can make all the commentary that you want but it is in the Olympics and it is something that people participate in to my knowledge just about every country on earth and I think that's really cool. There's martial arts everywhere. I love that. It's something that makes me happy.

Here's a good one: how does being in an actual street fight change the way you train, teach or your view of either? I'm not going to have to speculate. One of my proudest accomplishments is having diffused every almost fight. I'm 40 years old, I've never been, in what I would term, a real fight. Had there been exchanges? Yes. Had there been almost? Quite a few but I'm proud that I haven't had to go there. Does that mean I'm a great person to teach self-defense? No but I think I'm a pretty good person to teach you how to not get into a fight. I think that experience speaks for itself.

When we talk about how real life combat impacts the way we view martial arts, it's a conversation that's going on a lot right now. There are quite a few people who are advocating for separate curriculums around self-defense, separate conversations and I agree. I agree, it's something that needs to be handled a little bit differently because while self-defense can be martial arts and martial arts can be self-defense, they're not necessarily the same thing. I can teach you self-defense without having ever taught you martial arts, I can also teach you martial arts without ever having taught you self-defense. I feel that a good martial arts curriculum includes a real self-defense curriculum. I think that's important but if the school does not include that, I'm not going to say they're wrong because, well, we're not going to get into the because. I've talked about that bit in the past and I don't like rehashing things too often but I think the number 1 thing that we're finally starting to talk about and it's been a long time, discussing the psychology.

The psychology of everything that leads up to that first punch, whether to punch or not. The psychology of what's effectively being a bully or substance-altered perspective when someone's strong or whatever.



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There's a lot to talk about there and my advice to anyone who cares, it's the same advice I've always had. Observe people. Go to places and observe people. Go to a place, go to a bar and bring a couple friends and sit in the corner and observe. Watch the way people conduct themselves. The better you understand people, the better you're going to be prepared, the better you're able to draw correlations and make educated guesses on how people work and the better you can bring to any kind of self-defense or martial arts curriculum. I think that there are, what do I call it, there are elements that you can bring in.

They're saying verbal self-defense is as important as the physical. I would say it's more important but I think this would be, I don't think I've done this on this show or any show. I'm going to show you. Here are the things that I carry in my pocket all the time. I have a knife. This is my favorite knife of the moment. It's a Kershaw Leek, half-serrated, keep it pretty darn sharp and this stays in my pockets. Knives are really useful. I use this thing almost every day. I've never stabbed anyone. I've never pulled out any of my knives in a potential self-defense need but I know it's there if I need it. Have I trained with it extensively? No. Have I trained with it extensively? No. Have I trained with it a little bit? Barely but I'd rather have it than not have it.

Here are the other two things that I carry and this is something that I don't hear too many people talking about. The first thing is a flash light, just a little \$5, \$6 thing I picked up on Amazon. It's metal. It's pretty bright, takes a AAA battery and I use this several times per week walking to the car when I close up coaching CrossFit. Having this light is really handy, better than having my phone and trying to use that because sometimes I have gloves on and I don't want drop my phone but what I also like about this is that it's metal. I can hold this and I can use this as a weapon. I can bang somebody in the head with it and it's going to hurt. It will hurt more than when I hit them with my hand.

The other thing, I will tell you what these 2 things have in common in a moment, pen. Just a decent, cheap metal pen. It's just a pen. I use this several times a week because it's a pen. It's a pen in my pocket and I can scribble and I can write. I can write when it's upside down, it's a space pen. I never tried that. Maybe I should but here's what I like about these 2 things. Cannot bring on a plane. Can bring on a plane. These are not weapons. They're not sold as weapons. I can deploy them as weapons and I like having them. What's the other one? I don't have it on me right now, a belt. I can deploy that belt anytime and the reason I bring these things up as we're talking about actual street fight and these ideas of real life combat, if your life is at risk, if your wellbeing is at risk, you do what you have to do and you use what you have at your disposal whether that's a belt or a shoe or a water bottle or stick or your 3-year old son. Yes, I was deployed as a weapon against a goose once. I'm not even close to making that up. Very traumatic experience for me. You do what you got to do but having things available to you that you know you can deploy if need be, I guess, is pretty important.

Have I trained with my belt? Yeah because it's the thing that I feel, tell you what, you have this knife? I will use my belt. Let's see which one of us comes out on top. Maybe you've got a lot more experience



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with your knife but that belt, with a big heavy buckle and this much extra range, I'll take that. I'll take that every time.

Couple of comments coming in, great knife and these items will make a great kubaton. So, if you're not familiar with kubaton, the idea that you can strike or joint manipulation you get as a lever point. Good stuff. I'm not saying you should carry any of these things. I'm not saying you have to. I'm saying you should think about it and it should be a choice. I choose to or I choose not to. It shouldn't be an accident.

What's the difference between training for self-defense and dealing with bullies? How are they the same or different? There's a lot of similarities. Self-defense usually involves bullies who were not checked as children who grew up to continue to be bullies. Unfortunately, I deal with bullies periodically. There are people in my life that are, in and out of martial arts, who are bullies and I won't lie, there are nights I lie in bed and dream about punching them in the throat. I don't want to but that's how I process that frustration. How does that change what we teach? Depends on the circumstances and this is one of the, I think, difficult parts in teaching self-defense, in teaching martial arts, is that how to handle certain situations isn't something you can just come up with a simple decision tree for. If the bully says this, then you have to punch them in the throat. If the bully says this, then you walk away. It's not that easy and the longer you get trading with someone, the more time you have with them, the easier it is to teach them, the better it is to help them understand. At the end of the day, that person needs to make that decision for themselves. I think the difference between someone being a bully and the traditional definition and someone bringing into a self-defense scenario is based on intent.

A bully's intent is to assert themselves over you using the minimal amount of force necessary to make themselves feel better. If you escalate things, they will escalate with you but if you back down, probably not going to be too bad but a self-defense situation, it's when the intent exceeds what is necessary to express that assertion, that dominance over someone. The bully makes verbal threats; self-defense is assault from moment one. Is that overly simplified? Yes but it's my show so I can really simplify it if I want to. There's no easy way to define it.

We can have dictionary definition of self-defense, we can get surveys, we can talk to people, we can talk about bullying and how it relates to self-defense but there's a lot of overlap and there are situations that are one and not the other and it's really hard to define them but we could probably all sit there and say that's self-defense and we'll probably agree about 80% of them.

Training for those 2 situations, because that's the harder question, training for self-defense and dealing with bullies, training for self-defense requires a suspension of logic so, I said earlier, I'm really proud I've been able to deescalate everything that's come at me. I would, thus, define everything that I've experienced as some form of bullying. If someone is intent on harming me, it is less likely, not completely unlikely, not impossible but far less likely that I'm going to be able to defuse that simply with words and when you train for self-defense, you have to be ready for that rapid escalation, that coming



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out of left field punch to the face that you might not know why it's coming because there might not be a reason. Violence isn't always logical. Life isn't always logical so we prepare and these are things that we instinctively do quite often that's why we train.

The best example, the cliché example, sitting with your back to the wall in a restaurant watching the door, the sheepdog idea. That was just page one! We're half hour in, man. A lot going on here.

If you were attacked right now, and this goes for everybody watching or listening, what's the closest thing you grab to defend yourself? I have this pen. It feels like cheating because I have these things. If I was not showing them to you, they would not have been on my desk. This table, makeshift desk so I would have a pen, I would have some paper, I would have this book. There's a couple of books under there. I would have this clipboard. I would probably prefer this clipboard over the pen only because of range and because it's different enough that it's going to confuse people. Someone punches at me with this, it's a cheap clipboard. It's going to break but it's going to throw people off. Ok, come at me! I've got a clipboard! That might confuse them enough that might get them confused. It's like an advantage. What else is within range? There's a whole desk of weapons and scissors that I can't reach so clearly that one will do it. I could also do something with these plant hangers. You can see some of the plants on this shelving unit. Here we go, some weighted training gloves. I can punch someone in the face with that but I probably don't have time to put it on. I like playing that game. Not the what would you do if game because I think sometimes people take that a little too far but how can you use this game? That's a lot of fun. I've done that in my Kenpō jujitsu class. We've done everything from used newspapers, water bottles and we definitely use belts, sneakers. Now, I'll tell you what, I will take almost anything over nothing.

I can't think of anything that would be worse than nothing, even this, I'm not going to unplug this because it's charging the phone right now but this cable. This cable is 6 feet long, I would take that because you're going to be a little distracted if I'm trying to whip you in the face with a USB cable, not going to feel good. Play that game. If you live with a martial artist or maybe you do a self-defense night and say, you know what, everybody, go into your pants pockets and take everything out. Go to your jacket pocket, go to your gloves, go out to the car. What are the weirdest things that we can experiment with right now? it's ok to experiment. What's nearby that might be weird and different that people have not trained with. I'm looking around my kitchen. There's a plant stand. Garbage can! How about a garbage can? I've never done any self-defense involving a garbage can. I'm going to guess every martial arts school has a garbage can, take the bag out, how would you defend yourself with that?

The more you're thinking about these stuff, the more you're involving your mind there, words matter and that makes you a better martial artist. Being able to take your training and apply it and think through it, I think is important, more relevant. Randy Craig says the metal pot behind you can do some damage. Absolutely! That's a heavy aluminum pot I put in the stove and put some water. They go back in there. That will absolutely mess your face up. I have no idea how old that thing is. It's probably an antique. I don't fully know the history on that would do a number on it. Laptop cord, Frank says, laptop



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cord will probably do something. Gabe says my 3-year old son, jar of animal cookies. All perfectly acceptable options. You do what you got to do.

Here's something. Speaking of young children, I don't know if we've ever posted on any whistlekick stuff, this is on, I guess that's throwing us, it's making a lot of noises. This is me, not 100% sure when but based on a few things in the picture, roughly aged 6 or 7, should not be as old as 8, absolutely oldest is 8, youngest is 6, somewhere there. I keep this around to remind me, I've been doing it. I've been doing it for a while and I've come a wrong way and also, that I used to have a lot of hair that I do not have any anymore.

When you're performing a form, does it help you to think what the movements mean, in Japanese bunkai, or just what the movements are? There are layers to forms. First, it's, and I suggest it being taught in this way, first you got to do the moves. You got to roughly get the moves down. You have to have enough of a foundation to be able to correct it and I see people teaching forms and they go way too deep and you get 4 moves in and you're trying to give people all these depth on the movement and they don't have anywhere close to the experience to understand what you're saying. How about to start with them being able to do the pattern and I take that term from taekwondo if they are often called patterns. It's a sequence of movements. How about we start with these pre-arranged thing and let's give the person a victory being able to remember it and then let's start refining the movements, lets teach what the movements are at that point, you're blocking here, you're punching here and then let's talk about the application and how that might work out.

Understanding how a bunch of movements could work without being able to remember them is kind of silly. There's an order that has to be followed so follow the order and recognize that not everybody cares about application and that's ok. Maybe it's part of curriculum that you have to understand some of that, maybe even memorize some of that but like everything else in martial arts, there are aspects of what we really like and there are going to be things that we don't like and that's ok.

Oh, Andrew has drumsticks nearby. Drumsticks would be great. in fact, Andrew, if you are not training with your drumsticks as a martial arts weapon, I'm going to say that you're robbing if you haven't listened to, was it just yesterday that aired? Yesterday's episode with Mr. Adams. You should. Drumming is a big part of his life. We've been talking about the intersection between drumming and rhythm music and martial arts. Those are fun conversations.

When I'm doing a form, I'm thinking about it in different ways depending on what I'm working on. There are times when I'm working on remembering the movements or making an adjustment to some of those movements. I am not thinking about application during that time. It is silly for me to focus on application when the priority is I keep screwing up this stance and I got to get the stance right. It's like everything else in martial arts. You've got your foundation, the basics. The basics of a form is being able to do the movements in the right order, more or less and then, from there, it's in understanding of what those



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movements are and then it's an understanding of how you apply those movements. Are there times that I train thinking a lot about application? Yes. I think that's really fun. I love thinking about that.

You give me any form that I know, give me bunch of people and I will figure out a way to apply it and I will learn a ton about that form. That's so great and I love bunkai application being done in a freeform way once you reach higher ranks. The idea that there's only one way to apply it is silly. I disagree with that strongly and if your school teaches that there's only one right way to interpret that form, application, I think that's sad because you're robbing students of the opportunity of figuring things out for themselves because, when it comes time for them to teach, when it comes time for them to defend themselves, if all they know what to do is parrot back what their instructors taught them, there not going to be as good in that position.

Next, oh, so there's a great example and if you've never seen this movie, this is a great movie, this is my favorite thing about this movie. Michael Jai White, Never Back Down, No Surrender of Michael Jai White. I'm going to possibly butcher this name, Eoin O'Brien and the movie cuts back and forth between Michael Jai White doing his form and then showing the application. Those movements are super cool if you're at all a forms nerd, you'll probably dig that if you've not seen it and you can search the effectiveness of traditional karate on YouTube to find that fight scene. Good times, good stuff!

If we can have a martial arts-themed halftime show at the Super bowl, who or what would you want to see? My suggestion, it's weird to be quoted in a list of notes that I have for a show that I'm doing but I commented that, most of you have probably seen that, it was a few months ago, that very high flying taekwondo demo. They were doing some crazy cool stuff, I think there was breaking involved. I just remember the cheerleading-esque throws and jumps that were really cool. I think it would have to be based on that and [00:43:26] says it would have to be something like this. Nothing else is flashy enough. I think we could really have something pretty cool there and I hope that martial arts demo teams will continue pushing those boundaries because the more of that we get, the more it will be featured in mainstream media, the more it will bring people in the martial arts and we can repeat that cycle. It doesn't just have to be forms application. There are so many ways to apply martial arts and some really well and I will fight for that.

WKF style team forms with the application of bunkai, that will show both the gracefulness and the action that people would attract to. That and the high flying taekwondo and some throws of judo and all and I could see that. I think there's a way to do application that would be really neat. In fact, I could imagine, imagine you have team forms which I often see is 3 people doing the form and then, you essentially have 3 groups doing the application so 3 sets of attackers, 3 sets of people doing the form and the application and then showing that synchronicity, I think that would be really, really cool because you'd be dumping bodies hopefully in the same way and the falls would be synchronized everywhere.

Andrew, one of the things that I loved in the Olympic ceremony in Beijing was the incredible timing done by hundreds of people at the same time. Yes, that was phenomenal. If you haven't checked that out, do



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it! It wasn't martial arts related per se but watching people in perfect sync is impressive. To that end, a huge group of people all doing kata together like perfectly together, that would be impressive. I enjoy watching people do forms together. The more people you have doing them together that are in lockstep, it becomes exponentially more impressive. 2 people are great. 3 is better. 5, if you watch 5 people perfectly doing a form together, blows my mind! I don't know if non-practitioners understand how much time goes into that but I absolutely love it.

One of my favorite things, so here's a fun story, we'll get to that. What is a snowman's favorite drink? Frank, our resident jokester, frosty from Wendy's? Wendy's Frosty, that's my guest. I'll tell the story in a minute. Let's see what's Frank's answer is. Any other answers there? Those are the incentives of the half time show question and if you didn't watch the Super bowl, you missed a wonderful combat. I did not have a preference for either team. I grew up as a 49ers fan but I haven't really followed football intensely and a few years ago, I decided that the Patriots needed to be my team because I've lived in New England my entire life and I need 1 New England team that I like because the Celtics and the Red Sox are not my teams and the Bruins are not because I don't really follow hockey. The answer? What is a snowman's favorite drink? Iced tea. Good stuff.

So, here's a fun story. You might've caught a few months ago, a couple months ago, a little over the summer, I interviewed one of my original karate instructors, Shihan Beth Bielat. We went 20 years without doing any forms together and forms are her thing, forms have always been my thing, loved them tremendously and when it came to forms, I was probably, I don't remember describing them that way, but I always kind of saw myself as, hey! Looks like we're back! I have no idea where we're at.

We'll see where the delay is. I'm going to wave my hand and we'll see how long it takes for that to show up. We skipped some things, it's really blurry and it got really bad, looks like it buffered, ok, and we're back! Cool! So, I don't know what's going on in all that. I live in the woods. I live 3 miles up dirt roads, plural, this is what we got. I do the best I can so thanks for your patience so you may have missed that story but at the same time, based on what I just saw, I'm guessing it did come through so I'm not going to tell it again and if you missed it, then you missed it.

Alright! Got some good stuff we're going to end on 10 minutes. I would like to say a couple of things as we get into the last block of the show. I feel like I'm doing a better job with this material. Gabe is doing a significantly better job. I'm going to change that wording because it sounds like he's doing a bad job. Gabe continues to improve on the type of content that I do best with so shout out to him for just killing it. I've got more than enough material. With what I have here on this last page, I could probably stretch another 20 to 30 minutes so nice job, Gabe and if we have some leftover, we'll use it next month.

What was a light bulb moment for you in your training and for those of you watching, I would love to hear this from you. Light bulb moment, I'm very quickly scanning through the years. There were a few. The first one I'm thinking of is in sparring. The idea that I could take a step without throwing a kick. That I could just have footwork that I didn't have to kick it every time I wanted to change position. That was



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pretty big. Another one was that movement, how do I express this? Movement didn't have to be a block or a punch. It could be a setup or a, think of like a fake but it isn't necessarily that, so in Kenpō, the idea of this knocking the hand away before you block it to get it off line is great. I really like that. That was an eyeopener for me and, I think, the 3rd one, as I started to understand that you don't have to look that hard at technique to find biomechanical advantages and that if you understand the human body and how it works, it can help you get into better position that is not counter to traditional technique but actually better traditional technique and in some aspects, it's things that are kind of, in some schools, is kind of forgotten and the best example I'll give of that is the idea of a vertical punch.

Some people would talk about why would I do this versus this? There are some arguments there but I'll tell you what. If you take that punch and drop it down a little bit and you can use your lap muscles and punch and maybe that hand even turn slightly to get a little more recruitment there? Incredibly powerful and I've played with punching heavy bags with that stuff and I think that's one of the best values of bags. You can even start to experiment with position but there's 3 kind of eyeopeners for me over the years.

What percentage of material should be taught before and after black belt? Depends on so many things. Depends on how much material there is. It depends on the relative difficulty of the material. I've known schools that teach everything before black belt but there's nothing blackbelt that is new. It's just further refinement. I've also known schools where there's so much material that you get roughly half of it before black belt. It depends. Depends on the philosophy of the school, depends on so many other things. I don't have an overall preference. I will say there are some schools that have so much material that it can be difficult to really fully understand it because you spend so much time learning material that it doesn't give you the opportunity to go back and really delve deep into all the material.

Some programs start weapon early, some after black belt, some not at all. What's your take on weapons and empty hand style? Weapons enhance your understanding of empty hand technique. Example, I don't have a stick anywhere, I can't really show you a bō. Take a bō and I've seen all kinds of different ways, different style of using a staff so I'm not going to say there's a right way or wrong way but try striking with any kind of power without balancing forward action and retraction. Doesn't work. You end up with a weird thing like this or a weird thing like this. If you have a hard time understanding that when you punch, you retract that hand using a staff will help you understand that concept. If you know tonfa, where are they? I think they might be in the closet. If you are someone who has terrible high blocks or rising blocks [00:54:26] whatever you want to call it, you hold a tonfa, which looks like a knight stick for those of you who may not know, the handle's here and then you've got a block of wood here, strike comes down, bam! You're going to hit on the stick. If you're someone who does this or maybe you're hand goes out here, oh!

One of the jokes I make when I teach kids is what part of your head do you block on a head block? Part of your head that you want to keep. I think weapons are great. I grew up with bō being the first weapon in our curriculum. If I had the chance to redesign a martial arts curriculum, I would probably take a stick



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rather than a staff as the first weapon because that is the easiest thing to pick up. I can take a sneaker and the concepts that are going to be useful in a single stick will apply to that sneaker or that knife or that clipboard and so, the applicability, I think, is some pretty good stuff.

How much can a person really learn from online instruction? I want to save that for next time because I want to go deep on that because that is a nuanced conversation and I don't want to do it in 3 minutes.

Do public demos really spread the message of the martial arts? Is there a better way to attract...lets save both of those because I'm looking at 2 minutes left on the clock and so, Gabe, we're going to save both of those for episode 6 and lets close up. Let me give you a couple things in First Cup tradition, to those of you who don't watch First Cup, every weekday, 6:30 AM eastern only on YouTube, I give homework and so I'm going to give a little bit of homework but what I do, it's the very last thing so you, I just dropped a picture of me on the floor, awfully foreboding. Don't know how it fell. It really was fully on the table. But in the tradition of First Cup, I'm going to give you homework in a minute and you're going to listen to my outro and we're going to go from there.

We do this show, martial arts radio, Mondays and Thursdays. I would love to get a few more guest suggestions. We've got a lot of people in the mix. Some of those people are proving to be a little more difficult to book so if you email me, jeremy@whistlekick.com, or fill out, I think the form is still up on the website; anyway, get to me, jeremy@whistlekick.com with your guest suggestions. We'll pass it over to Leslie, shout out to Leslie who is killing it on the backend of the show. I love the guests we are getting. Absolutely phenomenal but I want to build up our buffer. Our buffer is not quite working a bit so I would love some help with that.

Thursday, Thursday shows are all over the place. What are they? They're not interviews and if you have feedback for a topic or something like that, I want to hear it. We're going to take the audio from this, this is going to be out in the feed so maybe you're listening to this later on, hey, if you like it, cool! If you want to have some say over future episodes, I want to hear it. It is important to me that everything about whistlekick has input from our community. I've got my fancy sheets. Go to whistlekickmartialartsradio.com, sign up to the newsletter, find everything that's going on, whistlekick.com for shirts. PODCAST15 to save 15% and if you want to help us out beyond or instead of making a purchase, you got a few ways.

Share an episode, follow us on social media, repost something, tell a friend or support the Patreon, Patreon.com/whistlekick. You spend 5 bucks a month, you get even more stuff. We give you almost everything for free, there's a little bit that if you contribute, we'll give you more. Keep that in mind and alright, homework.

We talked a lot today about weapons and self-defense. We talked about what was in pockets, we talked about how to think about self-defense and curriculum and things like that. This will be the ideal thing, take your phone and set an alarm for every, we'll say 2 hour tomorrow, obviously waking hours and



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whenever that alarm goes off, you have to stop and look around you and if something went down, if there was a real scenario, what would you use? How would you get yourself an advantage in terms of terrain or location, weapons? How can you exist? All of it. I want you to think about that so there's your homework and if you do your homework, I want to hear about it. I want to hear what you do with that. Now, I got to go to bed because I got to get up and do another show tomorrow morning because First Cup, I think we're coming up on 2 years of 5+ days a week because I used to do it 7 days a week.

I want to thank you for coming by. This show is a lot of fun for me. I enjoy the interaction and the engagement with all of you so until next time, train hard, smile and have a good night!