

007 • 700



by Keith Pascal

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This book is a parody, a humorous attempt at providing entertainment for martial arts subscribers of Martial Arts Mastery. Within, there is no authoritative information with regard to James Bond or the martial arts. Call it a fun editorial only.

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The author and publisher are in no way connected with the James Bond franchise.

About the Cover

Keith Pascal here.

In 1982, I spent the summer studying in Northern Italy. My good buddy, Ken, and I shared an apartment room, and except for a Jazz poster that I bought of the Umbria Jazz Festival, the walls were blank.

I started drawing as fast as I could. It didn't matter that I wasn't an artist, just someone who had read the book *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain*. I wanted to cover the walls.

The James Bond drawing on the first page of this ebook was one of those attempts.

Welcome to the 700th Issue of Martial Arts Mastery ...

Introduction

In honor of the **700th issue of Martial Arts Mastery: A Tell-All of Tips, Tactics, and Techniques**, I have created this fun, little ebooklet for you. Call it a celebration of our time together!

So, why offer an overly-long article on the fictional character of James Bond, 007? After all, isn't this a newsletter on practical martial arts?

Well, it's important to have a some fun, at times. And since so many of you share similar interests with me, I thought I'd take a guess that you might be (or have once been) a James Bond fan.

True?

Did you read the books or were you strictly a movie fan?

Note: If you're not big on 007, don't worry.
When I say we'll take a fun look at Bond, James Bond, I mean we'll do a bit of teasing, too.

Even though my parents always had all the Ian Fleming books around the house, including his one children's fiction, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, I must admit that I'm much more familiar with the movies. (I've only read a few of the books ... including, Ian Fleming's *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* ... just had to throw in that tidbit.

Now, all these years later, I run hot and cold when it comes to Bond. Sometimes, the movies tire me, seeming to blend into all of the other blockbuster action flicks. Yet, with the promise of a new Bond film, my enthusiasm gets restored.

So, without further ado, let's take a 700th Issue look at 007....

You Don't Really Want to Be James Bond

When I was about six years old and adults asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up, I'd answer that I wanted to be James Bond.

Sometime during that period, my father explained to me that I couldn't be someone else, real or fictitious. So, I modified my desire — I wanted to be a secret agent. My folks even bought me a plastic, 007 briefcase with exploding caps and plastic, red bullets that fired. (Much too dangerous for the toys of today.)

As I grew up, my desire to become a spy faded, but my fascination with the James Bond character grew. I thought he was class incarnate ... the ultimate in cool. Specifically, the way he talked, how he managed to save the day, and how he fought with the latest martial arts.

As you are about to read, all three of those bubbles, over time, have been burst.

Fortunately, a wise man ... okay, Steve Golden ... taught me that instead of trying to be James Bond, or Bruce Lee for that matter, that it's infinitely better for me to strive to be Keith Pascal.

I no longer wish to be James Bond ... and neither should you.

Bond-Speak, Suave and Debonaire Or ...

I loved the way 007 talked, from his UK accent to his snarky remarks with double entendres. The way he knew exactly what to say, and he had the perfect pun or remark when a bad guy bit the dust.

As a man who speaks several languages and has spent a considerable amount of time with British friends, I can tell you:

* As a general rule, the stronger the accent, the lower class the individual

* Some Brits delight in their own pronunciation of words, especially words where they soften the “r” as in perfect (pawfect) and when they make a strong “o” as in process (proe-sess). Not all Uk-ers are guilty of this but some are.

* I have heard too many Englanders bastardize the pronunciation of Spanish and Italian. I'm not saying my accent in either language is the best, but even my second-year language students had more accurate pronunciation of the vowels in each romance language.

* And yes, the Bond characters have had equally bad pronunciation.

So, my delight a Bond's British (or Welsh) accent has faded.

And remember, from a self-defense point of view ... the closer you get to speaking in the vernacular of a possible attacker, more likely you'll be able to diffuse the situation before physical self-defense is needed.

It's more than just his accent that needs to be examined; what he says can be equally as annoying and not conducive to being a good secret agent.

I'm the first to admit that I delight in puns, and also that they are a fairly low form of humor. And even though I do pun, I also realize that a little goes a long way. If I were to pun or make snarky remarks as much as Bond does, I'd lose all social acceptability.

Talk about being the opposite of suave and debonaire!

In fact, James Bond spewing out encyclopedic information is downright boorish. Even "M," 007's boss, rolls his eyes after asking Bond what he knows about Faberge Eggs, diamonds, and so forth.

Sure, part of Bond's task is to stir up trouble in the bad guys' lair. So, some of his sarcastic wit is in order and very appropriate, but there are other times that he should *metaphorically* NOT:

* Poke the bear, verbally!

* Complain to the waiter before the food is served!

* Imply that his intellect is just the tip of the iceberg!

I get what the movie creators were trying to accomplish — design a hero who could speak several languages, had wikipedia-like responses, and served up a good dose of sharp wit ... all with the goal of providing humorous, action-filled entertainment.

I think it took me a while to discover that I like the true ideal of communication,

rather than a shallower, movie version. And I never want to lose sight of the fact that communication should be functional.

Is there a practical martial arts lesson to be had in the way we communicate?

You betcha'!!!

Let's just say that most fights could be avoided with a little better communication — negotiation, subtle persuasion, and rapport building, to start with. If you want to add to your martial arts repertoire, become a better communicator. Seriously.

Now, let's get to the *action* part of this overly-long “article.”

Blow It Up, Bond!

For all we love the climactic action scenes at the end of each Bond movie, when I think about them, there is something that bothers me with just about each and every one of them. Before I tell you what that element is, I do admit that 90% of my complaint is necessary to build suspense and get the adrenaline going.

So, what element disappoints me on a practical level?

It's 007's timing!

To build suspense for the movie, James has to barely escape in time ... each and every time.

Is there no such thing as job improvement?

As a teacher, I might have procrastinated to the last minute at report card time. I ended up spending a miserable, rushed weekend grading my heart out, but that only lasted 3-4 years. I improved, and learned to build in buffer time ... to start the catch-up grading early ... to stay caught up with entering grades in the computer, etc.

Have you noticed that, aside from cinematic suspense building, Bond cuts it too close, every time?

He gets out with ten seconds to spare, if that.

You'd think that over time, he'd improve in his career. You'd think.

The K.I.P. rule of thumb would be to go ahead and blow it up, but get out of there with plenty of time to spare.

Also, if you have read **How to End the Fight with One Hit or Control Your Fear: A Guide For Martial Artists** then you know my advice to overtrain. Be faster than you need to be. Be stronger than you need to be.

Play it safer than you need to.

Although ... if Bond were to truly overtrain, and he ended up that much better than his enemies, then we'd have no movie (or book).

He has to barely make it out in time.

He has to, but you don't.

007, The Fighter

At last, we come to Bond, James Bond, the fighter and martial artist.

Poor 007!

You might say that my martial arts progression paralleled various martial arts employed by the different actors portraying James Bond. I started with Judo, then learned just enough ju jitsu to get me in trouble, then went to Tae Kwon Do, and Karate.

Minus the TKD, that seems to be the way the movies switch martial styles, as well.

After Karate, I went to a JKD-based style and have been with it for over 30 years, also incorporating some Wing Chun Gung Fu, and some of the Filipino arts.

If you examine a James Bond fight scene, you'll know instantly that you're watching a movie fight:

* The fight lasts too long. Where is the efficiency?

- * Bond usually has a rough time of it. He needs more advanced training.
- * He gets bopped on the head a lot, leaving him unconscious. He should practice against multiple attackers.
- * He fights too fair. End the fight in one second by poking the henchman's eyes out. He shouldn't use up his energy before fighting the main dude.
- * Don't play the other guy's game. When someone hands you a sword, British chivalry be damned, shoot the sucker. If the enemy hands you a sword, it probably means he knows how to use it.

Conclusion

Wow! I just spent a lot of time ripping on James Bond. And I didn't even talk about the fact that as a secret agent, he's anything but secret.

It seems that almost every enemy learns about him ahead of time, even down to his beverage of choice, shaken not stirred.

And speaking of James Bond and alcohol, I recently read an article by Lecia Bushak, telling how you wouldn't want James Bond diffusing a nuclear bomb.

Some researchers added up all of the drink references in his first books, subtracted the days that Bond spent as a captive, and did some calculations to figure out that 007 was averaging 5+ drinks a day.

Maybe his snarky remarks and sloppy fighting came from constantly being buzzed on vodka??? Hmm.

Anyway, with all of the above, I'm still a Bond fan. He represents an ideal.

I have several movie 8 x 10s from different Bond flicks. I have a poster or two ... in Italian.

And I eagerly await the next time I'll see 007 woo the women, pun with the bad guys, and make it out just in the nick of time.

Way to go Bond!