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# Are Marines Going Internal?

A new Chinese martial arts system being offered to the Marines could help protect our soldiers overseas

BY J.W. CLAIBORNE AND L.R. GRAY



Who says internal training can't be used for external arts? Empty hands can easily be converted to weapons work.

**W**a-lu chuan and ng wing chun were blended to form the 10-point-based internal boxing system of sil lum ng wing chun kuen. The result of this compilation is *gonka*, the real killing internal boxing art for war and combat. The

foundation of this art begins with ng san lung-fa wing chun, a method much like tai chi in its soft approach.

The art stresses the contrast of relaxation and the explosion of projection in the areas of striking and kicking, while avoiding static movement caused by





*The newest options in battlefield self-defense may come from China's ancient martial arts.*

chambering and prefixed positions that rely on thrusts, stopping points and retractions. The result is an art that is superior in movement and fighting skills.

Keys to mastering the art include pressing and sticking in close-range positions to control and limit the opponent's options and advance; blocking and striking at will with economy of motion; and minimizing movement while maximizing the effect.

### A New System is Born

The birth of this new blend of ancient arts began during a five-day workshop featuring si-dai-gung Jack H. Lannom, senior grandmaster of sil lum ng wing chun kuen, and sigung L.R. Gray, second in command in the combined arts of wa-lu chuan and ng-san-lung-fa wing chun.

Phase one began with two sessions in the internal-based art of ng wing chun. Phase two, with si dai gung Lannom leading the way, involved six hours of action-packed training in the rarely seen art of wa-lu chuan. In phase three, Gray provided four hours of strong review and reinforcement of the ng wing chun system.

Rooting is one of the 10 most important concepts taught in wa-lu chuan. When Lannom practices wa-loo he roots down well below his normal height. Lannom demonstrates his concepts by punching phone books held by large men to demonstrate the chi power. Their reaction to absorbing the hit is far from pleasant: First, there's

that slightly delayed look of pain and helplessness; then there's a noticeable change in posture, like they just had the wind knocked out of them. Think of it as absorbing a gunshot, but all the impact of the bullet is being felt inside as it expands and bounces off your internal organs. Afterward, these men begin to understand why this technique is called "liquid steel."

### History

The system's original grandmaster Paka (pronounced *Pa-kay*), took sifu Christopher G. Casey as a closed-door disciple in the early 1970s. By the mid-1980s, Casey had developed two senior students, professor James Cravens of Chattanooga, Tenn., and sifu Manfred Steiner, who were entrusted with researching and developing energy-related styles of martial arts.

In 1981, Cravens picked five of his senior students to take part in the Kai-Sai Wa Lu Project, the goal of which was to introduce the wa-lu chuan system to the United States.

Lannom, one of five disciples, was the senior component of the project.

According to Cravens, Lannom's internal power and projection had surpassed that of anyone practicing the wa-lu chuan system. Lannom's move from Tennessee to Florida left just one black-sash-level student in Tennessee, sifu L.R. Gray.

Gray retained his long-distance relationship with Lannom and began training with Dr. Wing Lok Ng in Kentucky. This relationship led to the development of the family system and helped create one of the most developed training programs in the U.S. For nearly 30 years, Gray has been learning and developing the ng-san-lung-fa form of wing chun kuen from Dr. Ng.

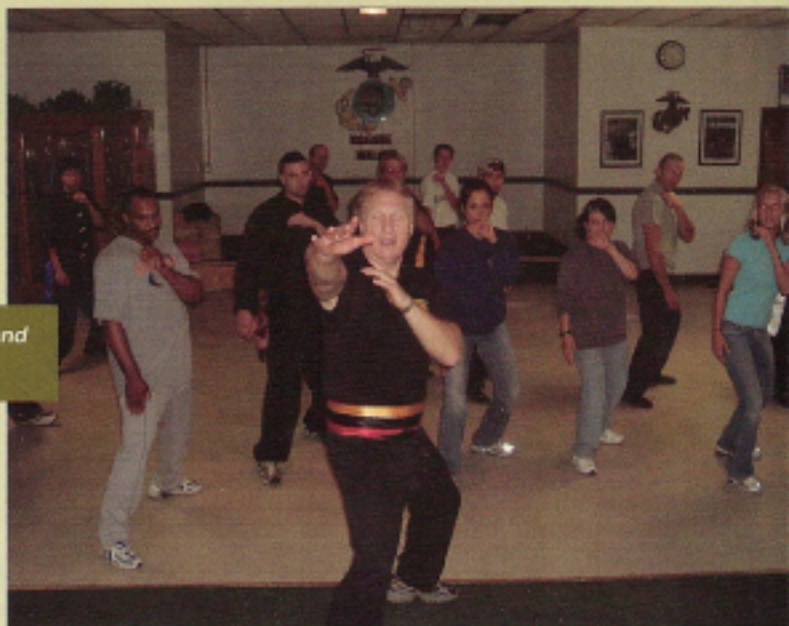
*The keys to mastering Lannom's art include pressing and sticking in close-range positions.*





# Are Marines Going Internal?

*Jack Lannom's art stresses the contrast of relaxation and the explosion of projection.*



**"It would well serve our military to consider the newest options in battlefield self-defense."**



*The true power of any punch comes not from the hand, but from the waist.*

## Learn from the Best

Dr. Ng ran the famed Four Seasons United Martial Arts School in Lexington, Ky., where he taught a variety of kung-fu styles, including a rare Mainland China style of wing chun. Dr. Ng gained great fame around the country for producing some of the top forms and weapons

performers on the open tournament circuit, including master John Dufresne, Kim Warner, Lester Doyle, master Mark Burgher, master Gary Dezarn, master Tom Phillips and master Michael O'Donnell.

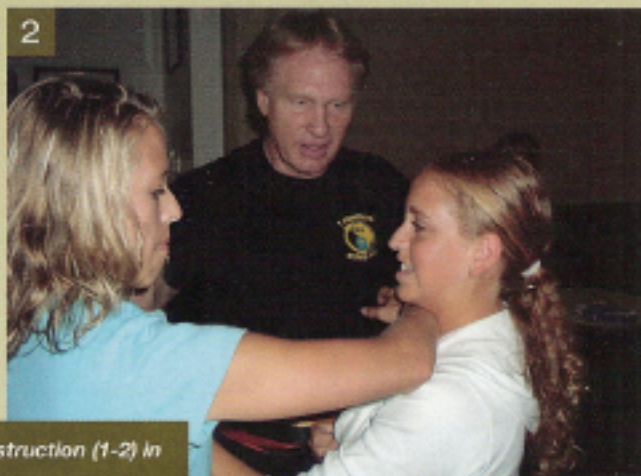
Lannom and Gray cross-trained and blended their arts to combine the sil-lum ng wing chun kuen (or the ng san lung fa

wing chun method). Dr. Ng explained that there were many strong common denominators between the Futshan, Fukien, hung gar, ng gor chor and sil-lum fut ga systems. He added that hung gar's tiger and crane form and wing





Female seminar attendees were given up-close-and-personal instruction (1-2) in how to counter an attack to the face.



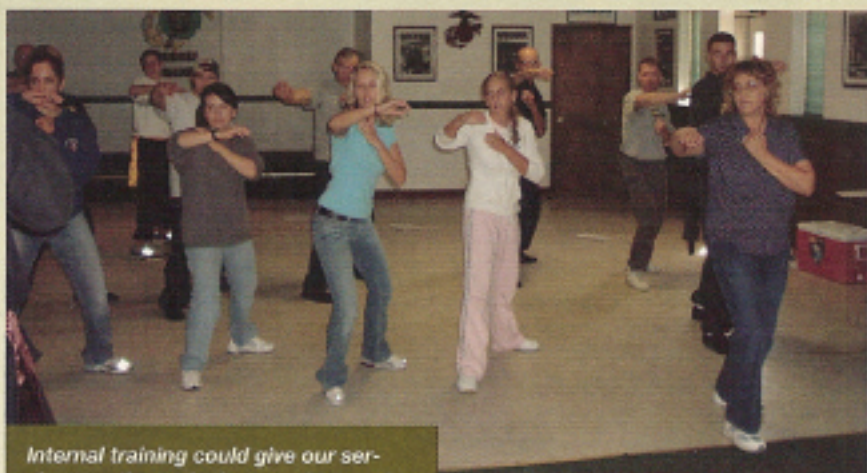
chun's bill gee techniques are similar in the first part of the pattern. Other forms such as lau gar and guan sau have trapping techniques that resemble familiar wing chun methods.

Collaborating on the creation of the old/new method are two of Dr. Ng's ninth levels—Gray and Dufresne. The exchange of Gray's wing chun and Dufresne's hsing-I, paqua and combat tai chi chuan, coupled with the blending of projection, sticking, trapping and full-cycle springing energy, has resulted in a more complete method of internal boxing and a much higher level of control in chi gung and internal energy usage in real combat.

The newly formed Gray Dragon Martial Arts Society lends itself to this type of innovation in the martial arts. Among its ranks are some of the world's top martial artists, including grandmaster Glenn C. Wilson, Pai lum tao; sigung Tom Par-due, ninth level; sigung Christophe Clark, ninth level; si-dai gung Sung Bae; senior master Johnny Tsai, eighth level; kempo master Jim Thompson, ninth level; sensei Fred Satterfield, fifth dan; sihan Hank Hewgley, eighth dan Okinawan te; sigung Bruce Linville, eighth level; sigung Jimmy Tarpley, seventh level; sigung Chuck Burnett, seventh level; sigung Mike Wurster, seventh level; sifu Carlton Rainey, sixth level; sifu David McClain, sixth level; sifu Joe Heaton, sixth level; sifu Marcus Vickers, sixth level; sifu William Lewis, sixth level; sifu Chris Beasley, fifth level; sifu Graig Jackson, fifth level; sifu Brian Seviars, fifth level; and simu Lourdes Radelat (Gra), fifth level.

The members of the Gray Dragon Martial Arts Society, led by Dr. Ng, Lannom, Gray and Dufresne, are working to

create innovation in the martial arts while promoting and educating the public. This goal is shared by sigung Jeff Claiborne, newly appointed president of the Gray Dragon Martial Arts Society, and simu Lourdes Radelat (Gra), vice president and director of the Gray Dragon Martial Arts Society.



Internal training could give our servicemen the tools they need to survive a hand-to-hand combat situation.

The association hopes to introduce the principles of kung-fu and internal boxing to the law enforcement and military communities. This aspect of the education process lies in the hands of Army veteran Brian Sevier, who is president of Sentinel Corporation and Combat Sciences and a junior master under Gray.

Introducing the military to this new martial arts system began during a recent seminar taught by Gray and Lannom. The seminar consisted of three outdoor workshops in sil lum ng wing chun, with Gray teaching the sil lum tao form and two-man drills. The first two days of the

seminar were held at Marine base Gieger Tiger in Jacksonville, N.C., where Lannom introduced his high-level martial arts energy to a group of practitioners, 14 of which were active Marines.

Lannom is the only certified 10th-level black sash in Dr. Ng's family system. Lannom and Gray are hoping this seminar

leads to more involvement with members of the U.S. Armed Forces. Lannom, who has officially proposed this program to the Marines, has offered to train America's fighting force overseas. With an ever-increasing demand for effective close-quarter combat, it would well serve our military to consider the newest options in battlefield self-defense. ☐

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