

FANTASY & WEAPONRY

By Kurt Saxon

*A pistol for the bedroom,
A shotgun over the door,
A 30-06 for reaching out;
You don't need any more.*

If an intruder makes it to your bedroom, shoot him with the pistol. If he's trying to break in, use the shotgun. If he is fifty yards or more away and shooting at you, pick him off with the 30-06.

This is the real Survivalist's arsenal; basic, inexpensive, effective. So why all the promotion of rapid-fire weapons? If you aim at a man and don't hit him, he's going to move, and probably shoot you. Banging away in the same general direction is just a senseless waste of ammo. You need practice, not rapid-fire. You also need a realistic attitude, not a fantasy.

But fantasy sells. There is big money in Macho. The more awesome your weapon looks and sounds, the tougher and sexier you look. Girls get off on rapid-fire. It's the Freudian part of the package.

The Rambo Survivalist image being sold to neurotics is making weapons dealers rich. It is also showing the profound ignorance of weapons among the general public.

To know guns, you must understand the three basic methods of shooting; sweeping, pointing and aiming.

Sweeping is with rapid-fire. Its main purpose is to dispatch several enemies before one can shoot you. Such confrontations are unlikely in any actual civil conflict. Raiders don't bunch up. There would be no point to it. Of course, if you are the raider you would have a better chance wiping out a couple and two or three children if you have a rapid fire weapon.

Sweeping is also anticipated in cases of moving targets. Proficiency with the shotgun will do more damage to the moving target than expert use of rapid-fire.

There is a psychological disadvantage to dependency on a rapid-fire weapon. One tends to sweep or just bang away ineffectually. It is the nature of the weapon and a case of the weapon controlling the man.

An example is a commercial for a TV crime story. One of the heroes bursts into the room and says, "I just had an Uzi emptied on me outside". Obviously, the character with the Uzi swept, did not aim or even point. At least 20 shots and nothing. Of course, it was fiction. But that kind of shooting is becoming acceptable.

If an automatic weapon is shifted one and a half feet, in 20 or more yards, the bullets are spaced several feet apart. You could empty a clip on several people and not hit one. The nut who unloaded several clips of an AK-47 at a crowd of 35 children in Stockton only killed five. What if

he had had a rifle and had to aim? What if he had had a shotgun and had to point? Couldn't he see his sweeps were ineffective?

He was crazy but he wasn't blind! He knew how to operate the weapon. But he was psyched up with the glamor image of that weapon. He was not controlling that weapon; it was controlling him.

Another TV segment was on the Gulf. Here were all these troops practicing, banging away at a dune, fully automatic, as usual. I only hope the Iraqis are on full-auto. I wouldn't want anyone to get hurt.

Yet another segment was at a California shooting range. It told how the state had 300,000 assault weapons owners but only 15,000 had registered as ordered.

There were about ten men banging away on semi-auto, as fast as they could shoot. They were all pointing, as they were shooting too fast to correct aim.

I suppose they were all wealthy, as ammo costs a lot. Whatever practicality there might be in such weapons, only the wealthy can afford them.

Watching those men, I could see that their practice was ineffective. The targets were only 10 to 15 yards away. No proficiency can be gained by simply banging away at a stationary target from a distance at which one only has to point.

Watching them reminded me of the reason for the arming of all the American forces with rapid-fire weapons. During the Korean War it was found that only one in nineteen soldiers would fire his rifle. They were mostly uniformed civilians in a no-win war and didn't want to get killed. So they would just hunker down and try to ignore the Chinese. Having Garands, which demanded aiming, put them at risk of getting a bullet in the face.

So by the time the Vietnam fiasco rolled around the boys all had the confidence-giving, noise-making M-16s. They were effective enough for jungle fighting where one could not aim anyway, even if he knew how to shoot. It didn't matter, however, since the other side had AK-47s; just as worthless. Of course, there were plenty enough bombs and napalm to keep the VC's numbers manageable and most U.S. losses were due to booby-traps. So a rifleman was about as useful as nipples on a boar.

I know it is hard to believe that glamor weapons with all their sound and fury, are more hype than effect. However, if one of their proud owners has it out with any practiced hunter with any rifle, the hunter will win.

Now we come to pointing. Apart from shooting at flying ducks, the shotgun is mainly for pointing. Man-killing shot is from #4 to 00 buckshot. (Single 0 buckshot has 12 .30 caliber pellets per round). The best killing range is up to 50 yards.

The 12 gauge shotgun is the most devastating hand-held weapon. Few people realize how really terrible the shotgun is. The Geneva Convention bans its use in war but police use it. It was also preferred in Vietnam over regulation arms, even though a soldier's family had to send it to him.

A buckshot pellet does not have the penetrative force of any bullet of equal diameter because it is round and not as heavy as the longer bullet. Buckshot is also fired at lower velocities than bullets.

But they still inflict wounds of maximum size, induce considerable shock and hemorrhage. Also, when two or more pellets hit, their total effect on the victim is as the square of the number of hits, not just an additive progression; that is, two hits equal four times the effect of one hit, three hits equal nine times that effect, and so on. If the victim is hit by three Single 0 buckshot pellets it is the same as if he had been hit by nine .30 caliber Carbine rounds.

For the combat shotgun, it is best to take a hacksaw and cut the barrel down to the legal 18 inches. This gives it a slightly wider shot pattern and makes it a little more maneuverable.

Rapid-fire, semi-auto from an assault weapon has no greater killing range than does the shotgun. And since the shotgun must be pointed, and the shot pattern is wider, multiple hits per target are surer than with any assault weapon.

Next in pointing, is the pistol. Beyond a few feet you want a shotgun or a rifle. Aiming a pistol is possible, but only with practice. Practice, however, has made some pistol shooters as deadly at long range as shot gunners or riflemen.

The American Rifleman article, "Debunking The Debunkers", reprinted in US MILITIA Issue 1, tells what can be done with a pistol. Read it. For the most part, the pistol is for close quarters.

You ought to own a pistol and it should be a .38 Police Special with a six inch barrel. I recommend a revolver over an automatic, since the revolver has fewer parts to malfunction. And if you don't think the .38 has stopping power, you just don't realize what you can do when you practice. You may have been fantasizing over glory guns, the most popular of which is the .45 automatic. Read the aforementioned article.

Several years ago I was in a Los Angeles gun shop. A plain-clothes officer was at the counter talking to the dealer. The dealer stepped back into an alcove and reached up to a shelf. A shot rang out. The gun the dealer had reached for had fallen butt-first and discharged. Before the sound registered with me the officer had his pistol drawn. Naturally, there was no threat. His action was pure reflex. That cop was fast!

In the same time period, there was a funeral for a police officer fallen in the line of duty. The media covered the funeral and some dummy exploded a bomb outside the funeral home as the attending officers were assembling. The newspaper featured the frame of the newsreel of the explosion. In it was an officer with his revolver half-way drawn out of his holster! Both the accidental discharge and the explosion caught on film showed the reflexes of these men to be a tiny fraction of a second each. So you can believe the examples of speed in the article.

Also, if you practice and so become as proficient as those two officers, both in speed and instinct aiming, you can be sure of a fatal hit before your opponent can even touch his own weapon.

For the .38 revolver, I recommend the six inch barrel over the two or four inch. This is because of the barrel's rifling. The rifling gives the bullet its spin, which keeps it on course. The longer the barrel, the more the rifling and hence the more spin. The more spin, the greater the accuracy. A six inch barrel gives enough spin to guarantee about as much accuracy as you will need when using your pistol.

The glamor weapon among pistols is the automatic, especially the .45. It is heavier, bulkier and more than twice as expensive as the .38. Its main claim to fame is its stopping power. But a well-placed bullet is a greater guarantee of stopping power than a bullet's size. And as the article shows, speed comes with practice. Reliance in mechanics over skill leads to overconfidence. Many glamor gun fantasizers are going to die when they confront a foe who has mastered his weapon.

You may know of whole police departments adopting .357 Magnums or automatics. Maybe their chief watched too much TV. Again, skill with a basic weapon is better than reliance on mechanics or power. The punk spraying lead is no match for a cop skilled with his .38.

Now for aiming. The reason for aiming is to hit the target at a greater distance than is practical for pointing. A rifleman hits everything he aims at. A macho fool just bangs away with a lot of sound and fury signifying nothing; except the deserved death of the ignorant.

Unfortunately, few people aim today. They have mistaken multiple loud reports for damage. One has but to watch newsreels of Arab-Christian conflicts in Lebanon, closeup coverage of the fire fights in Vietnam, the results of drive-by shootings in Los Angeles, etc., to see that moderns simply are not learning to shoot accurately. The discrepancy between shots fired and clean kills is appalling. Our honored WW II dead are spinning in their graves!

Aside from a shotgun or pistol, one should not own a gun not designed for aimed hits. Anyone who advertises such a gun should be boycotted as a traitor to his country. Those who decry the deaths of little children should shame the incompetents but not spare the sellers of weapons which flatter such ineptitude.

I got a laugh from a news report some time ago. A character named T. J. Johnston in California, an anti-gun-registration-protester, was burning his order to register his assault weapon. His cronies were banging away at some targets ten yards away with more assault weapons. No rifleman would waste ammo shooting at a target that close.

If he goes to jail he might have time to reflect that one rifleman with an M1 30-06 Garand could wipe out his whole flock. He might also reflect that a well-regulated militia made up of private citizens proficient in the use of real weapons would have no fear of gun confiscation.

Have you ever heard of Sergeant Alvin York? You have probably seen the movie, starring Gary Cooper. York was a conscientious objector. But when his friends were dropping like flies he reacted. A hillbilly, he was a trained hunter from childhood.

He first worked his way around the enemy's flank. He was armed with a 1903 30-06 bolt-action Springfield and a pistol. He killed 20 Germans and captured 132. Of course, few of those captured knew it was a one-man job. The point is, he could shoot! He killed 20 men with one well-placed bullet each. He had no need for rapid-fire. He knew that every time he aimed and fired a man was dead.

Most American and German soldiers at that time, with their bolt-action Springfields and Mausers could also shoot. They had to work those bolts and correct every time they fired. And there were men actually trying to kill them all the while! There was no getting around their having to know how to aim and shoot. No room for fantasy.

Among the best combat rifles ever made is the WW II U.S. M1 30-06 Garand. It is a semi-auto with a 1,000 yard effective killing range. It holds only eight rounds so there is no tendency to bang away at a single target.

However, don't discount the bolt-action rifle. After aiming and firing, the bolt is worked as the gun is reaimed, so no time is lost. Most good military and hunting rifles are bolt-action anyway.

You might be tempted to buy the most expensive rifle. But it is best to buy the most common, the tried and true, the least flashy.

Pause a minute to reflect; if you were driving cross-country on a very important trip, would you choose a common car or a sports model? Of course, you would look grand in the sportster. But if getting there were the only important consideration, you would want the reliability, and serviceability of your dependable standard model over the object of your fantasies.

The same goes for civilian combat. You may fantasize owning an expensive rapid-fire gun, mowing down raiders with ten slugs in each. It looks great in the movies, but why use 10 bullets where one would do? Besides, raiders won't bunch up and charge. They will fan out, using what cover is available, and you will have to pick them off one by one.

Now, if in your fantasies, you used a 30-06, preferably an M1 Garand, and could shoot, you could make your fantasies pay off. Then, with practice in making every bullet count, you could defend your territory against any number of predators.

So if you must fantasize about weapons, fantasize being a better shot than any thieving parasite. Fantasize putting one well-placed bullet into every looter with the stupidity to set foot in your community.