

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT THROUGH
MARTIAL ARTS

BY

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B.A., Citadel Military College, 1974

THESIS ABSTRACT

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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Urbana, Illinois

The main purpose of this thesis was to examine a specific leisure activity, Dan Zan ryu ju-jutsu, in terms of the character development ideals associated with it in martial arts philosophy. Specifically, an attempt was made to identify and define some of the major character development ideals associated with this activity, to determine if, in fact, those ideals were inculcated by the activity, and to determine the applicability of those ideals to general life situations. The specific qualities examined were self-discipline, humility, self-confidence, creativity, and inner tranquility. Because character development has different meanings in various martial perspectives, a discussion of the distinction between budō and bujutsu, with special attention to the role of a philosophy of death, was seen as fundamental to the identification of valued qualities of character and to their application in life situations. The method, a modified case study with a structured interview, was dictated both by the small number of available practitioners and by the interrelationship of the qualities under consideration. Essentially, the viewpoints and experiences of five seasoned practitioners of this art form the data base. The results of the interviews generally supported the hypothesis. Implications for a similar approach to research on other leisure activities were drawn. This thesis was viewed in a broader vein as a general contribution to evaluation research and leisure philosophy.

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This work is dedicated to my teacher, Pat Browne.

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Gary Lescak

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