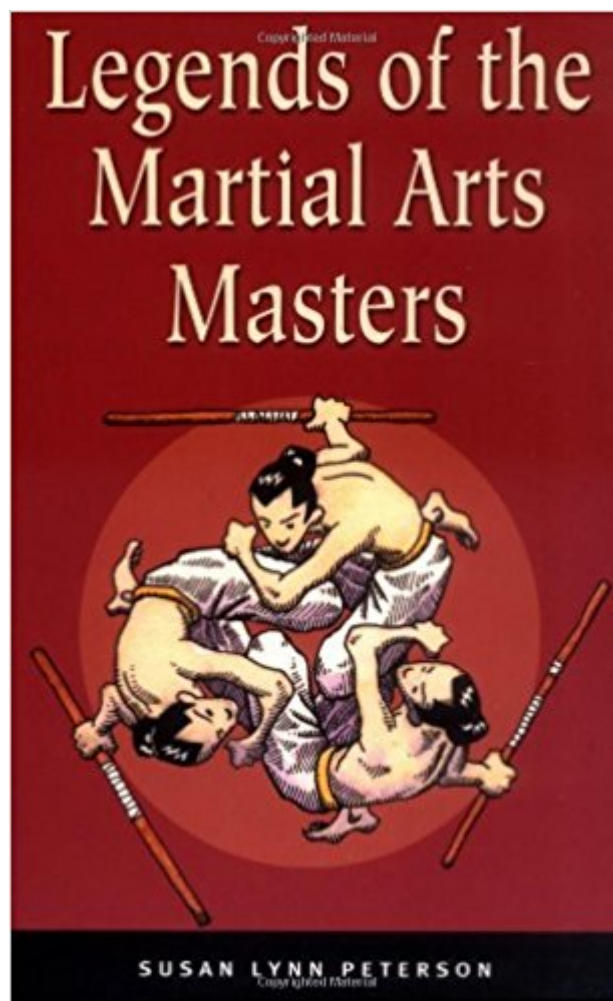


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# Legends Of The Martial Arts Masters



## Synopsis

Whether you're an inspiring black belt or just a fan of martial arts action, you'll enjoy this collection of twenty exciting stories about the great heroes of the martial arts. The stories include dramatic victories, wily strategies, and triumphs over long odds— from the great Tsukahara Bokuden's cunning defeat of a troublemaking samurai to Wing Chun's brave self-defense against a brutish warlord. Children can read about Robert Trias, known as the "father of American karate" and Miyamoto Musashi, known as the "greatest sword fighter in history" and the author of the bestselling Book of Five Rings. Filled with action and amazing feats of martial arts wizardry, Legends of the Martial Arts Masters will inspire readers with stories of courage, combat, and self-discovery. Stories include: The General Fights a Bull The Great Wave The Hard Way to Find a Teacher The Three Sons The Style of No Sword A Bully Changes His Ways The Ballad of Mu-lan Twelve Warriors of Burma Wing Chun The Eighteen Hands And many more—

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Susan Lynn Peterson is a professional writer and Gold Medallion Book Award finalist. She holds a third-degree black belt in Okinawan Shuri-ryu karate and is a USA Karate Federation national champion. She has studied karate, kobudo, Shaolin Chuan Fa, and Tai Chi Chuan, and has taught karate and kobudo at KoSho Karate San in Tucson Arizona. Her magazine articles have appeared in Black Belt, New Body, and Fighting Woman News.

This book consists of 21 short stories from the lives of martial arts masters: some modern, some historical, and some anonymous folktales with unknown origins. The majority of the stories are about Japanese or Okinawan martial artists, but Chinese, Thai, American, and Koreans are also represented. These stories can be roughly grouped by theme (though they aren't organized in that way in the book and some stories cut across more than one of the themes.) The first theme is peacefulness, non-violence, or minimization of violence. This idea is central to the stories featuring Tsukahara Bokuden and his school of "no sword," Yasutsune Itosu who invites an attacker for tea, Hisamori Takenouchi who is taught the folly of war by an old man, and Gichin Funokoshi who gives robbers cake. The second theme is the power of an immovable mindset. This can be seen in the story of the sumo wrestler Onami who had to overcome a stint of choking, the parable of the tea master who is challenged to a duel and is advised by a swordsmanship teacher to take up the sword with the mindset with which he takes up his tea utensils, and the tale of the unbreakable prisoner Gogen Yamaguchi. There are also stories about the ability to win by preventing the opponent from achieving this mindset. This was most famously achieved by Miyamoto Musashi (on several occasions,) but it's also seen in the story about an archer who is unable to make a shot from a perilous position even though the shot wouldn't be a hard one for him from stable ground. The third theme is the importance of the student/teacher relationship and the value of a teacher's wisdom. This can be seen in the stories about American Karate founder Robert Trias and his experience with the master who wanted to trade him Hsing-I lessons for his own boxing lessons, about Morihei Ueshiba's demystification of mysteries that perplexed his students, and about Chatan Yara's reversal of a would-be student's tactic. The final story theme deals with the virtue of being diligent in one's training. These include the amazing feats of the likes of Sokon Matsumura (an Okinawan fighter who fought a bull), Nai Khanom Tom (a Muay Thai legend who defeated twelve of Burma's best fighters in rapid succession), and Mas Oyama who sentenced himself to training exile for what most would consider a minute infraction. There are other tales in this category such as how Duk Ki Song and other Korean students practiced secretly under a martial arts prohibition or how Yim Wing Chun got out of an arranged marriage to a cad through her diligent training. This is a short book (about 120 pages) and most stories are only 4 to 6 pages. If you are a long-time practitioner of martial arts, you'll probably have heard some of these stories, but you're also likely to come across something new. There are obscure tales intertwined with one so popular it's been made into multiple movies (e.g. Mu-lan.) It

should be noted that this is more of a collection of morality tales than historical accounts. One shouldn't take these stories as established history as opposed to mythology or folktales. To her credit, Peterson leaves tales like the parable of the tea master and the tale of the three sons anonymous. Famous martial artists, like Miyamoto Musashi, are often cast into these stories either because people read a fictional account that borrowed from folktales, to lend more power to the story, or because the facts have become muddled in retelling. However, for example, the chapter on the Bodhidharma is most likely wrong. (The consensus view among historians is that Bodhidharma didn't introduce martial arts to the Shaolin temple as is popularly thought, and that the popular myth is the result of revisionist history.) That doesn't mean the story doesn't have virtue—it's got great hang time for some reason. I'd recommend this book for martial artists who are interested in the philosophy and ethos of the martial arts. It's a quick and easy read.

I did not realize this book was aimed at young adults when I purchased it from . However, I think anyone interested in martial art legends and myths will enjoy this book. Being a lifetime student of the martial arts (more than 45 years as a student and teacher) I was familiar with almost all of these stories. Nevertheless, I still found them interesting to read again from this particular writer's point of view. The author has the ability to make each story easy to read and follow. There are twenty one short stories about various martial art masters. Some of these include legends about Kano, Funakoshi, Ueshiba, Oyama and Yamagushi. In conclusion, this little book is an excellent resource of anyone involved in the martial arts and desires to learn about the ancient masters. Rating: 4 Stars. Joseph J. Truncale (Author: Martial Art Myths-Cafe Press).

Being a children's martial arts author myself and great collector of all genres of martial arts literature, I purchased this delightful little book to further swell my bursting book shelves and to check out the competition, of course! So often these days the emphasis of many karate/martial arts instructors is the acquisition of medals, international athletes and glory for club, association and self. The "way's" ethos of physical, mental and spiritual gain for all; through hard work, probable heart-breaking failure, and more, even harder work, with the ultimate aim of improving the human condition, has been eroded over recent decades in the quest for glory. Susan L. Peterson has compiled a beautiful collection of short stories portraying the wonderful tales of legendary martial artists of old and, quite uniquely, of more recent times. These wonderfully descriptive tales outline

and emphasise the power of a strong human spirit, built through martial arts, to conquer fears and adversity no matter size, gender or age. Whether or not you or your children are or potentially are martial artists, these beautifully descriptive stories will brighten your day and inspire your soul to strive hard for whatever it is you want from life. If they don't; well at least you've had an extremely enjoyable reading experience.

Difficult reading.

Not just for children - I am a few decades older and really enjoyed this book after having studied several different martial arts. It is a series of short stories that are good parables for dealing with life's difficulties. My favorite was the one about the monk who was ordered to fight a bull and how he prepared for it (and won) - great story and a good one to remember .

Legends of the Martial Arts Masters by Susan Lynn Peterson is a collection of short stories about famous martial artists. Some of the stories, particularly the ancient ones, are rather fantastic and no one really knows if they happened or not. The stories are very short and interesting. This is a great book for anyone studying martial arts.

Short stories about assorted Masters (some mythical, some factual) of the MAs that get young readers (and yes, the older ones too) excited and thinking about the significance of the Arts they practice. Thank you, Susan Peterson Ph D!

very good

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