



Spring 4-11-2002

## Innovative Class Teaches Students the Art of "Acting" Violent

Marty Eich  
*Illinois Wesleyan University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/news>

---

### Recommended Citation

Eich, Marty, "Innovative Class Teaches Students the Art of "Acting" Violent" (2002). *News and Events*. 4714.

<https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/news/4714>

This Article is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Commons @ IWU with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this material in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/ or on the work itself. This material has been accepted for inclusion by faculty at Illinois Wesleyan University. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@iwu.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@iwu.edu).

©Copyright is owned by the author of this document.

April 11, 2002

**CONTACT:** Marty Eich

### ***Innovative Class Teaches Students the Art of “Acting” Violent***

BLOOMINGTON, Ill – A course at Illinois Wesleyan University is teaching prospective actors how to make staged violence appear real.

In *Rapier and Dagger*, taught by Jean MacFarland-Kerr, associate professor of theatre arts and stage movement, the goal is for the audience to believe that the fight is unscripted and for the fighters to be confident of every move that they make.

“Hundreds of years ago, a society’s fighting masters were also their dancing masters. We’re teaching the gentlemanly arts; dancing is fighting here,” Kerr says.

In stage fighting with weapons, communication is key. In fencing, the goal is to catch an opponent off-guard with a deft move of the sword. On the stage, however, the opponent needs to know exactly where the sword is aiming, so he/she can dodge it accordingly.

The final exam will involve a carefully choreographed fight scene in which the participants are judged on their movements.

Kerr explains, “The trick to stage fighting with rapier and dagger is to make the communication between actor so slight and so quick that the audience does not notice it, and believes that all the actions that they see are completely unrehearsed.”

To talk with Kerr and/or to see the course in action, contact Marty Eich or Ann Aubry at 309/556-3181.