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 Yesterday, 02:43 PM

#101

[George S. Ledyard](#) 

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?



Dojo: Aikido Eastside
 Location: Bellevue, WA
 Join Date: Jun 2000
 Posts: 2,407
 Offline

In my opinion, way back in 1987, the criminal justice system failed the victims of this man. To its credit, the Aikido community stood by them and did the "right thing". Not a single reason for having done so then doesn't exist now.


Back then there were folks who minimized the seriousness of what he did. There were this who felt that, since he didn't go to court, nothing should have been done. Some folks simply could not come to terms with the fact their their revered teacher, one of the pioneers of American Aikido, could so grievously fail as a human being and as a representative of an art that had such lofty ideals. Many people were really traumatized by this event, not just the direct victims of the abuse.

We see this every time old wrongs are brought up. "It was all a long time ago, It's better to let folks heal up rather than open old wounds. Sure the guy was a Nazi and killed thousands, but it was a long time ago. We've moved on.. better to move on and forget about it.. after all the guy is 95 now..."

I don't see how what was right then, isn't still right for exactly the same reasons. Klickstein's victims felt supported by the way the Aikido community came together on their behalf. I do not believe that it is any different now. One of the great tragedies of abuse can be that isolation, even guilt. When the community stands up and says that a) you are not alone and b) it was not your fault, it is a huge healing. We did that then and we need to do that again. If that isn't what Budo and Aikido is about then I don;t know what it's about at all.

George S. Ledyard
 Aikido Eastside
 Bellevue, WA
[Aikido Eastside](#)



 Yesterday, 02:49 PM

#102

[Marc Abrams](#)

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

Dojo: Aikido Arts of Shin Budo Kai/
 Bedford Hills, New York
 Location: New York
 Join Date: May 2006
 Posts: 905



Unfortunately, Mr. Witts' second e-mail to me was nothing less than closing the door to his involvement and passing on the responsibility to the organizers who have yet to respond back to me. Unfortunate.....

Marc Abrams

Offline

<http://www.aasbk.com>

Yesterday, 03:33 PM

#103

Brion Toss

Dojo: Aikido Port Townsend
 Location: Port Townsend, Wa.
 Join Date: Jul 2003
 Posts: 99
 Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

I am happy to see so many ethical, compassionate, respected-with-good-reason people on the side of Klickstein's victims. And appalled, at the illogic of those speaking in his defense.

Worried about the privacy of unnamed victims. They might want to look up the definition of the word "privacy".

Implying that the passage of time, or the vagueness of the details of the original ostracization somehow make it okay for Klickstein to show up, let alone teach, at a memorial for Mr. Saito. And strangest of all, the notion that, because he was not tried and convicted, the accusers must remain silent.

This last is unsupportable for at least a couple of reasons. The first, as someone has already noted, is that presumption of innocence applies specifically to the accused in a criminal trial. Although prudence urges us to withhold judgement in life, we are under no obligation to make any such presumption outside of a courtroom, and in fact must make many ad hoc decisions of guilt or innocence every day.

Further, even in the legal system, many cases never get to trial, let alone a verdict, for a variety of reasons. As an expert witness, I've been proudest of the cases I've worked on that never went to trial, because of information I've been able to provide that caused the aggrieved parties to reconsider, and settle. In some cases, such information can even prevent the filing of a suit. The system works best when good, solid information can cut through the emotions in a case.

In this instance we have quite a few people with direct access to the particulars of the case. These people have no ax to grind, and are noted for their probity and graciousness. If Messrs. Threadgill, Ledyard, and Amdur, together or separately, recommend a particular course of action, I would need a very good reason to consider any other course.

Finally, and maybe most importantly, Mr. Saito, unquestionably, would not want Mr. Klickstein starring at his memorial. It would be like Benedict Arnold heading up a memorial for George Washington. Only icky, because Mr. Arnold was an honorable man.

Last edited by Brion Toss : Yesterday at 03:37 PM.

Regards,


Brion Toss



Yesterday, 03:37 PM


#104

gregstec

Dojo: Aiki Kurabu
 Location: Elizabethtown, PA
 Join Date: Jun 2004
 Posts: 587

 Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

Quote:

Marc Abrams wrote: 
Unfortunately, Mr. Witts' second e-mail to me was nothing less than closing the door to his involvement and passing on the responsibility to the organizers who have yet to respond back to me. Unfortunate.....

Marc Abrams

Bill Witt and a couple of the other instructors for this event were all deshi of Saito in Iwama together at one time or another. I find it extremely hard to believe none of them has any depth of knowledge of the issues with BK. It appears to me that these folks are more interested in supporting their old friend than in acknowledging what this all means to the Aikido community in general and specifically how this may shed the Iwama group in an extremely bad light.

I used to have a very high opinion and a lot of respect for the Iwama group, but if this is an indication of where their leadership's mentality is, than that will be no

more.

Greg

"Lighten up people! - life is too short - have some fun when you can" 😊



Yesterday, 03:44 PM

#105

jimbaker

Dojo: Aikido of Norfolk/ Aikido Society of Memphis
Location: Norfolk, VA
Join Date: Jun 2000
Posts: 135
 Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

The Takemusu Aikido Association's web site still hosts a Bruce Klickstein page.
<http://www.takemusu.org/patsensei/ss/brucek.htm>

It seems to have been put up in 2008: "I am electing to reinstate this page to acknowledge his positive contributions to aikido. "

Jim Baker
Aikido of Norfolk



Yesterday, 04:13 PM

#106

Marc Abrams

Dojo: Aikido Arts of Shin Budo Kai/ Bedford Hills, New York
Location: New York
Join Date: May 2006
Posts: 905
 Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

Quote:

Jim Baker wrote: 🗨️
The Takemusu Aikido Association's web site still hosts a Bruce Klickstein page. <http://www.takemusu.org/patsensei/ss/brucek.htm>

It seems to have been put up in 2008: "I am electing to reinstate this page to acknowledge his positive contributions to aikido. "

Positive contributions to Aikido? This sheds a very, very poor light on this organization. Maybe the individual who elected to "reinstate" this page might want to have considered the victims. My respect for this organization has been reduced to material fit for a compose pile....

Marc Abrams

<http://www.aasbk.com>



Yesterday, 04:20 PM

#107

George S. Ledyard ✨



Dojo: Aikido Eastside
Location: Bellevue, WA
Join Date: Jun 2000
Posts: 2,407
Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

Quote:

Greg Steckel wrote: 🗨️
Bill Witt and a couple of the other instructors for this event were all deshi of Saito in Iwama together at one time or another. I find it extremely hard to believe none of them has any depth of knowledge of the issues with BK. It appears to me that these folks are more interested in supporting their old friend than in acknowledging what this all means to the Aikido community in general and specifically how this may shed the Iwama group in an extremely bad light.

I used to have a very high opinion and a lot of respect for the Iwama group, but if this is an indication of where their leadership's mentality is, than that will be no more.

Greg

Institutions have a certain inertia. No one wishes to be the guy who causes problems. Bill Witt Sensei is the American representative of an organization that has international connections. It is easy to see why he might choose to put it all on the Italians... it's their event, I am just a guest, we all need to get along, etc. Completely comprehensible and predictable.

This was one of the main reasons I opted for the "public" option in deciding how to handle this issue. It is too easy for each individual to simply put responsibility off on the other guys when all communications are private.

I told Witt Sensei that I had absolutely no desire to embarrass him or any of the other respected teachers slated to appear at that event nor do I wish to see the event hurt at all. I think it is an admirable event with a great cast of talent instructing. I did say however, that I would not stop until Klickstein was not in any official or quasi official way associated with the event.

If the participants in this event fail to take responsibility for their own actions regarding participation in the event, then any embarrassment that occurs will be their own. We'll see who steps up from within their group to say something, if anyone... It's easy for one of us who are not members of the Iwama group to say that that we are disappointed and have lost respect for their professed ideals... it will be quite another when it is their own members who stand up. If there isn't anyone within their group who is willing to do so, then I would say that nothing will change and they will go on regardless of what any of us thinks. How much they value their reputations outside their own circle remains to be seen.

I am not without hope. Usually these things take time to build. At first the folks involved typically try to minimize the whole issue. Then later, when they realize it won't go away, they start to waver. By the end, they end up maintaining that they had been against the whole thing from the start and it was the others guys who caused the problem.

This is where we get to see what leadership really is. Who is willing to make the difficult choice and stand up? Or do they go along, all the while hoping that someone else will take care of the problem so they don't have to be embarrassed.

Anyway, I would like to see this thing go as close to viral within the Aikido community as it could be. The larger the reaction, the more the top leaders will not feel able to ignore it.

George S. Ledyard
Aikido Eastside
Bellevue, WA
[Aikido Eastside](#)



Yesterday, 04:34 PM

#108

sorokod

Join Date: Sep 2008

Posts: 298



Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

A question to George Ledyard, you said:

Quote:

When the Aikido community was contacted by the parents, a meeting was held to discuss things and it turned out that there were a number of other victims, all mutually unaware of each other.

In which year did this happen? Fred Little thinks it was 87 or 88, can you narrow it down? Also was Bruce Klickstein present?

-- david



Yesterday, 04:40 PM

#109

gregstec

Dojo: Aiki Kurabu
 Location: Elizabethtown, PA
 Join Date: Jun 2004
 Posts: 587

 Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

Quote:

George S. Ledyard wrote: 🗨️

Institutions have a certain inertia. No one wishes to be the guy who causes problems. Bill Witt Sensei is the American representative of an organization that has international connections. It is easy to see why he might choose to put it all on the Italians... it's their event, I am just a guest, we all need to get along, etc. Completely comprehensible and predictable.

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Anyway, I would like to see this thing go as close to viral within the Aikido community as it could be. The larger the reaction, the more the top leaders will not feel able to ignore it.

I meant no disrespect to Bill Witt or anyone. However, I found the comment in Marc's post that he had a "*lack of depth of knowledge of Bruce's actions*" somewhat confusing considering his position in the Iwama community and closeness to BK at one time.

Anyway, my point was (and I am in agreement with you) that it is the responsibility of the organization's leadership, which Bill is a part of, to set the example of what will be tolerated and what the organization stands for ethically, morally, and professionally.

Greg

"Lighten up people! - life is too short - have some fun when you can" 😊



Yesterday, 04:49 PM

#110

Eric Winters

Dojo: Aikido of San Leandro and Berkeley
Location: Emeryville, CA
Join Date: Mar 2007
Posts: 55



Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

Hello,

I think if the people with the most information about the situation thought it was appropriate to kick BK out of the aikido community, then I think the decision should still be upheld. From what I understand, BK and M. Saito were very close and if M. Saito thought it was appropriate to hamon him then there should be no more discussion.

Eric



Yesterday, 04:52 PM

#111

Marc Abrams

Dojo: Aikido Arts of Shin Budo Kai/
Bedford Hills, New York
Location: New York
Join Date: May 2006
Posts: 905



Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

Quote:

Greg Steckel wrote: 🗨️

I meant no disrespect to Bill Witt or anyone. However, I found the comment in Marc's post that he had a "lack of depth of knowledge of Bruce's actions" somewhat confusing considering his position in the Iwama community and closeness to BK at one time.

Anyway, my point was (and I am in agreement with you) that it is the responsibility of the organization's leadership, which Bill is a part of, to set the example of what will be tolerated and what the organization stands for ethically, morally, and professionally.

Greg

Greg:

My positive, initial perception has certainly been dispelled since that organizations website seems to have undergone a whitewashing to the point where they want to recognize Klickstein's "postive contributions" with absolutely no balance as to the negatives, which far outweigh any "positive contributions." I am simply sad and disgusted and can only hope that some good people in that organization rise to this occasion and right this obvious wrong.

Marc Abrams

<http://www.aasbk.com>



Yesterday, 05:27 PM

#112

gregstec

Dojo: Aiki Kurabu
Location: Elizabethtown, PA
Join Date: Jun 2004
Posts: 587



Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

Quote:

Marc Abrams wrote: 🗨️

Greg:

My positive, initial perception has certainly been dispelled since that organizations website seems to have undergone a whitewashing to the point where they want to recognize Klickstein's "positive contributions" with absolutely no balance as to the negatives, which far outweigh any "positive contributions." I am simply sad and disgusted and can only hope that some good people in that organization rise to this occasion and right this obvious wrong.

Marc Abrams

Marc,

I am with you on this - I visited that web site earlier today and was disappointed in what I saw as well - it inspired me for my post 104 - hopefully someone in the leadership will wake up and do the right thing

Greg

"Lighten up people! - life is too short - have some fun when you can" 😊



Yesterday, 05:41 PM

Mark Murray

Join Date: Jan 2005

Posts: 1,677



Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

George,

I have a lot of respect for you. So, if this is something that is important to you (rhetorical as I know it is), then I will do my best to help you in any way that I can. Please feel free to let me know if there is something I can do for you.

Mark



Yesterday, 05:47 PM

crbateman ✨

Location: Orlando, FL

Join Date: Apr 2004

Posts: 1,349

Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

I was not going to weigh in on this, but I can't stand it... I would think that BK would have the good sense and modesty (read: embarrassment) to just stay home, rather than to raise everyone's ire and reopen old wounds, but apparently he does not. More's the pity. 🙄😞 He should bear the shame for what he did, and have enough respect for his teacher to bear the disgrace out of the sight of everyone. I'm disappointed.

Last edited by crbateman : Yesterday at 05:54 PM.



Yesterday, 06:20 PM

Richard Sanchez

Location: SE Asia

Join Date: Jan 2007

Posts: 21



Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

I was a member of an Iwama dojo when our Dojo Cho was contacted by Saito Sensei in regard to Klickstein. All Yudansha were informally advised that Klickstein was persona non grata and that Saito Sensei had 'excommunicated' him because of his behavior.

Several of the other Yudansha knew Klickstein personally and did not seem surprised. It is very difficult for me to believe that Bill Witt and the European Senseis were not contacted in the same way, They were all very close to Saito Sensei, as was my teacher.



Yesterday, 06:26 PM

#116

Keith Larman

Dojo: Aikido Institute of America,

HQ Seidokan Aikido

Location: California

Join Date: Apr 2005

Posts: 1,095



Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

Quote:

Greg Steckel wrote:

It appears to me that these folks are more interested in supporting their old friend than in acknowledging what this all means to the Aikido community in general and specifically how this may shed the lwama group in an extremely bad light.

I used to have a very high opinion and a lot of respect for the lwama group, but if this is an indication of where their leadership's mentality is, than that will be no more.

I am very sad to say I couldn't possibly agree more. So much for their founder's principled stand. Not expedient any more I guess.

Spit in the face of their founder and his decision. Spit in the faces of BK's victims.

Keith Larman

[Summerchild Polishing](#)

[ModernTosho Modern Japanese Swords](#)



Yesterday, 08:52 PM

#117

Gary David



Location: Long Beach, CA

Join Date: Jan 2006

Posts: 67



Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

In that note what I find interesting in all of this regarding Bruce Klickstein participation in this seminar in Italy is what appears the possible effort on the part of the Takemusu Aikido Association to get him back in the mix. The president and senior instructor of this organization will be one of the instructors at this seminar. It is hard to believe that Bruce Klickstein's inclusion was not approved at the highest level within this organization and did not have a least the tacit approval of the senior members of the organization. I can't imagine that the possible consequences to doing this were not considered and placed aside when the opportunity presented by a memorial seminar for the patriarch of this style was scheduled in a land far far away from California. The timing was right.

It is hard to believe that Bruce Klickstein has not continued to train over the years, could even of had private students. I would expect that some of his close friends and associates from back in the day have stayed in contact and may even have trained with him. If he is to teach in this seminar he can't just step on the mat after 20 years and carry on. I can't speak for the folks within the organization and if they want Bruce Klickstein back in there is not much we can do about it other than avoid the group in total.



Yesterday, 09:25 PM

#118

Keith Larman

Dojo: Aikido Institute of America,

HQ Seidokan Aikido

Location: California

Join Date: Apr 2005

Posts: 1,095



Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

Quote:

Gary Welborn wrote:

I can't speak for the folks within the organization and if they want Bruce Klickstein back in there is not much we can do about it other than avoid the group in total.

And we can point out how repugnant *THEIR* actions are today. Talk about adding insult to injury. Morally bankrupt.


Keith Larman
 Summerchild Polishing
 ModernTosho Modern Japanese Swords



Yesterday, 09:40 PM

#119

David Orange

Dojo: Aozora Dojo
 Location: Birmingham, AL
 Join Date: Feb 2006
 Posts: 1,122

 Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

Quote:

Marc Abrams wrote: 

Greg:

My positive, initial perception has certainly been dispelled since that organizations website seems to have undergone a whitewashing to the point where they want to recognize Klickstein's "postive contributions" with absolutely no balance as to the negatives, which far outweigh any "positive contributions." I am simply sad and disgusted and can only hope that some good people in that organization rise to this occasion and right this obvious wrong.

Marc Abrams

Seems like they've taken that page down again. The link posted above gets a "page not found" response.

I did write Bill Witt to express my disappointment at the inclusion of Klickstein in this memorial. It's one thing if he got in trouble and didn't actually get kicked out, but when Saito Sensei booted him, that should have been good enough for anyone on earth. The guy may have had a lot of talent, but he showed that he had no character.

I'm not one who believes that a "good character" is more important than good techniques (a belief usually espoused by those with crappy technique), but even excellent technique cannot support a really bad character. For someone to prey on his underage female students time after time and slip away with mealy-mouthed excuses time and again is nothing but crap for character.

I am truly humbled by the strong stand taken by Ledyard Sensei and the others who have stood firmly on this matter. And as others have said, I'm sure that any victim of Bruce Klickstein's who reads our comments will feel protected and uplifted.

I just want to say thanks to Ledyard Sensei for putting down an earth-cracking foot on this matter. I'd hate to get on his bad side. Aikido is lucky to have him. And you. And the many others who have shown the fiercely protective nature budo has for the people it is supposed to protect.

Best wishes.

David

"That which has no substance can enter where there is no room."
 Lao Tzu


"Eternity forever!"



Yesterday, 09:43 PM

#120

David Orange

Dojo: Aozora Dojo
 Location: Birmingham, AL
 Join Date: Feb 2006
 Posts: 1,122


Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

Quote:

Greg Steckel wrote: 

Marc,

Offline

I am with you on this - I visited that web site earlier today and was disappointed in what I saw as well - it inspired me for my post 104 - hopefully someone in the leadership will wake up and do the right thing

Greg

Looks like they've taken that page down already.

Maybe this effort is bearing fruit already!

Hats off to George Ledyard!

David

Last edited by David Orange : Yesterday at 09:48 PM.

"That which has no substance can enter where there is no room."
Lao Tzu

"Eternity forever!"



Yesterday, 09:44 PM

#121

jimbaker

Dojo: Aikido of Norfolk/ Aikido Society of Memphis
Location: Norfolk, VA
Join Date: Jun 2000
Posts: 135



Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

Well, someone is embarrassed!

<http://www.takemusu.org/patsensei/ss/brucek.htm> has been pulled from the Takemusu Aikido Association's web site within the last couple of hours.

Jim Baker
Aikido of Norfolk



Yesterday, 09:45 PM

#122

David Orange

Dojo: Aozora Dojo
Location: Birmingham, AL
Join Date: Feb 2006
Posts: 1,122



Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

Quote:

Keith Larman wrote: 🗨️

I am very sad to say I couldn't possibly agree more. So much for their founder's principled stand. Not expedient any more I guess.

Spit in the face of their founder and his decision. Spit in the faces of BK's victims.

And at an international memorial for Saito Sensei, of all places...

Unbelievable.

David

"That which has no substance can enter where there is no room."
Lao Tzu

"Eternity forever!"



Yesterday, 09:53 PM

#123

Fred Little

Dojo: NJIT Budokai
Location: State Line NJ/NY
Join Date: Apr 2001

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

Quote:

Posts: 506



Offline

Jim Baker wrote: 🗨️*Well, someone is embarrassed!**<http://www.takemusu.org/patsensei/ss/brucek.htm> has been pulled from the Takemusu Aikido Association's web site within the last couple of hours.*

As of this posting, the GOOGLE cache copy of the page is still available for those individuals who wish to preserve a record of its existence. They can walk it back as fast as they wish, but there's no sound reason to allow the digital tide to erase those footsteps on the sand.

Hope this helps.

FL

"Forget it Jake, it's the Kii Peninsula"



Yesterday, 09:54 PM

#124

Budd ✨

そこら辺の白人と
一緒にしないで
ください

Dojo: Taikyoku Aikido
Location: Williamsville, NY
Join Date: Aug 2003
Posts: 747



Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

Tangentially, related: The documentary I referenced in an earlier post featuring Robert Nadeau, Bill Witt, Frank Doran and Bruce Klickstein is on youtube in two parts.

Part one:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QIVNW...eature=related>

Part two:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qy6zA...eature=related>



Yesterday, 10:01 PM

#125

Toby Threadgill

Location: Evergreen, Colorado
Join Date: Oct 2006
Posts: 150



Offline

Re: Bruce Klickstein Teaching Again?

Quote:

David Orange wrote: 🗨️*Looks like they've taken that page down already.**Maybe this effort is bearing fruit already!**Hats off to George Ledyard!**David*

Well,

After the e-mail I sent them I'll bet they took it down! I haven't written many letters like that in my life.

Toby



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All times are GMT -6. The time now is 08:30 PM.

-- English (US)

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