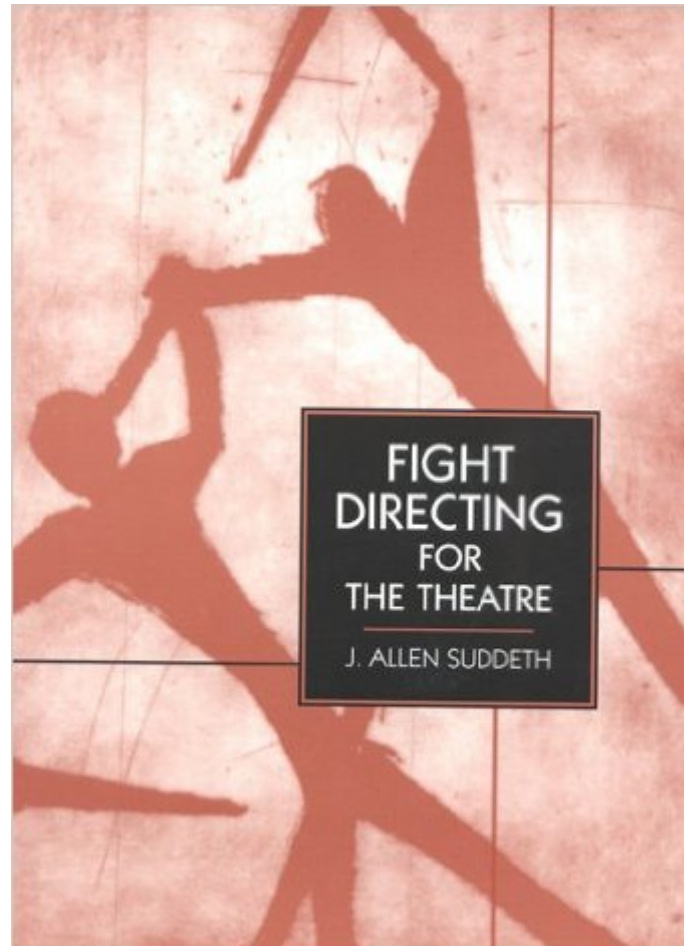


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# Fight Directing For The Theatre



## Synopsis

In this book, J. Allen Suddeth will guide you through the complex and dangerous process of staging theatrical violence. A how-to of thrilling swordfights and modern brawls, this unique book analyzes fight directing from pre-production to opening night, and shows how a scene of violence can always be safe for performers, exciting for the audience, and organic to the concept of the play.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I bought Allen's book two years ago as an actor/stage-combatant and referred to it in my first fight directing work last year. The book is a valuable tool as an actor, stage combatant or in any capacity within the theater. Allen's book will bring in an insightful, realistic and enjoyable look at what is stage-combat. The art of fight-directing is as valuable to staged violence as a dance choreographer is to dance, as music-directing to musicals (choreographers and music-directors should also read the book). Allen, kudos for such a great piece of reading and research material. Get out there and buy this book!!Ray Rodriguez

I bought Mr. Suddeth's book a year or so ago simply looking for some pointers on choreographing a fight. What I found was an invaluable guide to directing, not just a fight, but the entire scene in which it was contained. I also found that FdftT had much to offer for experienced fight directors and novice stage combatants alike. The language was clear, the writing engaging and the content comprehensive. The issues addressed in this book transcend the mere basics of staged violence

and focus instead on the scene and its integral relationship with the fight. If you are looking to "brush-up" on stage combat technique I would suggest that you get out and enroll in a stage combat class, not try to hone a hard earned skill by reading a book. If you are looking for insights on how to go about safely and effeciently directing a scene or play that contains staged violence, put up your feet, relax and open *Fight Directing for the Theatre* by J. Allen Suddeth.

This book is an excellent guide to what the Society of American Fight Directors preach--Safety! Fight Master Suddeth details the many traps and common practices that put actors in harms way, then shows us the safe alternatives. It is a guide that should be kept in every theater as a reference for actors, stage managers, directors, etc. It doesn't pretend to teach you how to direct fights--this only comes with intense training--but rather teach you how to protect yourself and fellow artists. Included are details of weaponry and how to maintain them, tips, pointers, tricks, etc. With decades of experience under his belt, this book is an extremely valuable tool if you are participating in any form of staged violence. Don't leave your safety to trial & error.

Mr. Suddeth's work serves as an excellent companion piece to William Hobbs' "Fight Direction". The emphasis here is not on the physical technology of stage combat (go to the gym!) but on the creative process of designing, staging, rehearsing and maintaining safe and effective fight sequences. Mr. Suddeth describes the entire process with wisdom, clarity and humour: his book deserves a place on every performing arts book shelf.

I am only on page 100, and I am already inspired to direct again. I have directed several fights, all without using an exact formula or precise method. This book has given me the formula and the method which, I am sure, will have a positive impact on my fights. Anyone remotely interested in fight directing, directing, producing, or acting on the stage must read this book. It supplies the tools necessary for safe and efective combat, and that's just in the first 100 pages!

I did a review for this book many years ago and I just need to say that *Fight Directing for the Theatre* is still the best work of its kind out there. It should grace the shelves of any choreographer, performer, director or artistic director out there who even thinks they will ever deal with staged violence (this means pretty much everyone!). Filled with a wide array of practical information from one of the dozen or so Fight Masters in the country. Still five stars!

For those of us who practice the art of theatrical mayhem, with a side order of swashing and buckling, this is an invaluable resource. You will read about safety measures or techniques you hadn't thought of before; you may get a great idea for your next piece of choreography (borrowing a great idea shows you have good artistic judgement) or you may simply reinforce some of the combat wisdom you have assimilated over various workshops and productions. Suddeth speaks plainly, to the point and makes major emphasis of safety issues. A great fight is not a great fight unless it is safe and repeatable, within the abilities of the performers. Don't choreograph beyond their physical talents or you may end up with real violence on stage instead of the illusory type you are working hard to create. This is a terrific reference manual for all of us who strive to create credible, safe fight sequences for the stage. This is an easy read and well thought out. He takes you through the logic of the Fight Director's job, working styles, weapons history, all the while letting us know this is more fun than a barrel of rapiers. I highly recommend this book. Buy it, or I'll punch you! (Safely, of course). Paul Ugalde

Mr. Suddeth's book is a must have for any actor, director, designer, playwright or stage manager. The chapters on blood effects and firearm safety are worth the price of the book. As a professional actor (25 years) and a professional fight director and stage combat teacher (16 years), I heartily recommend all practitioners of the theatre have this volume on the shelf withing easy reach at all times!

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