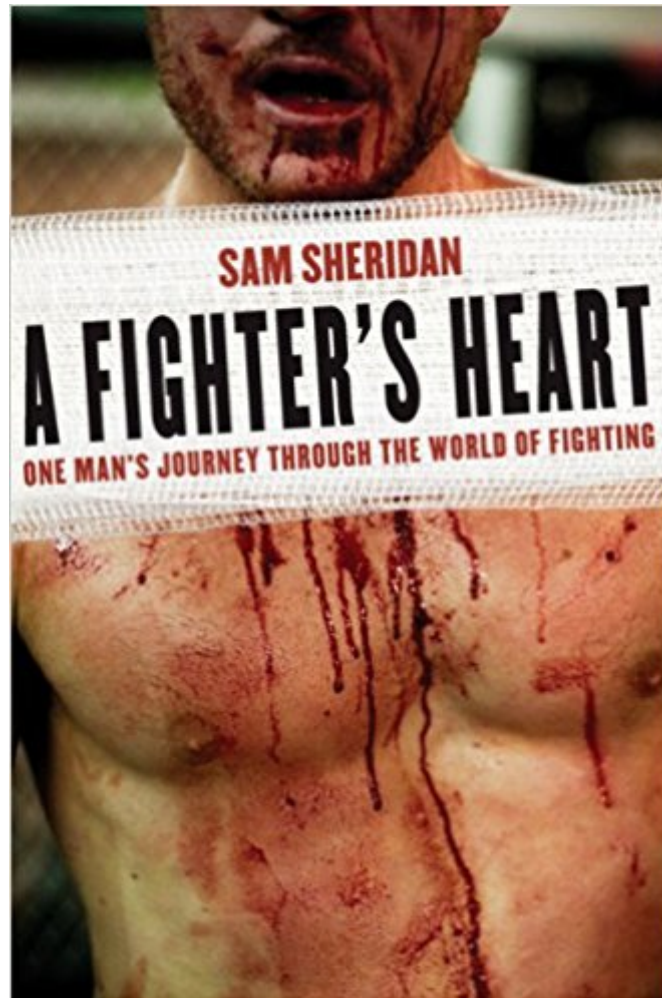




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A Fighter's Heart: One Man's Journey Through The World Of Fighting



Synopsis

In 1999, after a series of wildly adventurous jobs around the world, Sam Sheridan found himself in Australia, loaded with cash and intent on not working until heâ€™d spent it all. It occurred to him that, without distractions, he could finally indulge a long-dormant obsession: fighting. Within a year, he was in Bangkok training with the greatest fighter in muay Thai (Thai kickboxing) history and stepping through the ropes for a professional bout. That one fight wasnâ€™t enough. Sheridan set out to test himself on an epic journey into how and why we fight, facing Olympic boxers, Brazilian jiu-jitsu stars, and Ultimate Fighting champions. Along the way, Sheridan delivers an insightful look at violence as a career and a spectator sport, a behind-the-pageantry glimpse of athletes at the top of their terrifying game. An extraordinary combination of gonzo journalism and participatory sports writing, *A Fighterâ€™s Heart* is a dizzying first-hand account of what itâ€™s like to reach the peak of finely disciplined personal aggression, to hit and be hit.

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Customer Reviews

Sheridan joined the merchant marines after high school, eventually graduated from Harvard, and worked his way to Australia on a yacht. There, in 1999, he decided to indulge his fascination with fighting, hoping to test himself and explore what has become a mostly sublimated aspect of masculinity. After some months of training in Australia, he moved to Bangkok to train with a legendary Muay Thai (kickboxing) champion. That experience--and his first professional bout--expanded into a multiyear odyssey in which he trained with Olympic boxers, Brazilian jujitsu

champions, and Ultimate Fighting combatants. The magic in his account is in the telling detail--not only about how he suffers, trains, and fights but also about his reactions to his surroundings; the way, for example, he finds himself gradually becoming indifferent to the street orphans of Brazil, desensitized by their very omnipresence. It isn't Sheridan's toughness or fearlessness that makes this an involving excursion into a shadow world; it's his ability to re-create the textures of those shadows and to make us care about his oddly quixotic journey. Wes Lukowsky

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147;[An] excellent book. • "BoxingScene.com

Started out as a great read... then he veered off towards the end and got away from what I felt was the core of the book. I wish he'd continued more of the martial arts experiences, but then again, it seems as if every time he came close to actually fulfilling the experience, he got hurt, skipped out, or left town. I can sympathize with the physical hurt and inability to keep going, but sometimes it felt as if the author just got *this close* and decided, "nah, I'm done now."

An honest account without self-aggrandizement. Sheridan lets us know up front his trepidations about the journey he embarks on, and never poses beyond his real accomplishments. What he does accomplish is, nonetheless, considerable, and qualifies him as a fighter/martial artist far beyond the dabblers who spend years at the dojo and never take a real punch. As a writer, he provides real insight not just into the world of fighting but the world of men and why we go there. He is frank about his abilities and fears, and by the end of the narrative has come to a place of real humility and enlightenment. I highly recommend "A Fighter's Heart." I'm looking forward to his next adventure.

Sam does a great job exploring all the angles and boiling it down. I personally have never trained to fight other than high school wrestling. However like my my Dad, I have always been willing to fight and felt amazingly alive afterwards. My sons and grandsons have all been doing MMA training and have all fought in sanctioned fights. This book helped me understand why almost everyone enjoys watching a fight and some of us enjoy participating. I have often quoted a conversation I witnessed between my Dad and one of his older friends when they were discussing fighting and he said "George, I don't know what I enjoy more, making love or fighting". I was glad to read that is not so

strange as some would think,

I loved this book. This guy is kind of a hero to me. His story is inspiring from beginning to end. Here we have a man who saw his dreams and went for them, and never gave up no matter how much difficulty he faced. His determination and endurance seemed at times almost Herculean, even godlike. Sheridan is a good writer too, and manages to keep you engulfed in his story the whole time. This is the kind of book you read and when you are done, almost feel an inexplicable camaraderie with the author even though you've never met him. Or maybe it is just a deep respect. But whatever it is, it inspired me greatly to do more with my life... I can honestly say this man's story changed my life for the better. I owe a good bit of the positive in my life right now to the inspiration that this book provided for me. Have not gotten around to the sequel to this, *A Fighter's Mind*, but I will eventually. Not saying this book will change your life---chances are it just speaks to me on a personal level---but at the very least it will provide you with an interesting read when you've got nothing better to do.

This book is the story of a man's journey through various forms of combat and competition. The author, Sam, tells his story of travelling the world and investigating the culture of fighting posing questions like "Why do people fight?" while discovering things about himself and his own motivations along the way. Sam's adventures can be relevant even to those who are not particularly interested in martial arts and can appeal far beyond martial arts enthusiasts to anyone who has an interest in the human condition. From the perspective of the author as a student of numerous martial arts philosophies throughout the story, we learn the common denominator of all forms of combat in which humans play a part (even a few involving animals, like dog fighting). The author does not hide the grim reality of injuries that result from participating in these martial arts, as he receives a good deal of punishment in the course of learning, all of the events that transpire are in the spirit of exploration of the common denominator. Activities the author studies range from Tai Chi to Muay Thai to western boxing to Brazilian Jujitsu and beyond. When I began reading the book I was mildly interested in the author's experience studying Muay Thai abroad, my initial motivation for reading the book, but by the end I could appreciate in more depth the motivations of practitioners of violence from MMA fighters to pit bulls. There are several major appealing factors of this book. 1) It attempts to make hand-to-hand combat relevant even to the non-fighter 2) The sheer scope of styles covered can be a draw to anyone with a general interest in martial arts 3) Even those who do not condone physical combat can appreciate the honesty of the author in his quest for understanding the

fighting spirit4) The author is a great storyteller, and spins his yarn to engage and relate to the reader! I'm a poor reader, generally speaking, but I could not put this book down once I started reading it. I highly recommend it. I never too much interest in fighting before a couple months ago, but I recently started doing muay thai (kickboxing) and a friend told me about this book. If you're not a fighter, but have ever wondered why people make such a fuss over these brutal spectacles, this book will give you a peek into the mind of a fighter. If you are a practitioner of combative sports, I think you'll be able to relate to Sam, his questions, and his adventures all the more.

Sam takes us on a trip into an often seamy, corrupted world that few really understand. The crowd is critical and demanding. Very few among them have the heart of the lone fighter who gives of himself a high level of sacrifice and receives a mysterious reward for his effort. Sam has the courage to tell the truth about himself and the fighters world. A fascinating trip. I changed my mind about a lot of things I thought I knew. Well worth the a repeated read. Starting on a "Fighters Mind" now.

Great read, and this guy has some serious cojones

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