

Brazilian jiu jitsu a modern martial art form history essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, the Gentle Art, is a relatively modern martial art. Its roots however stretch all the way back to the days of the samurai. How, you ask, did this system of fighting make its way to the other side of the world?

It all began with the founding of Judo, the precursor to Jiu Jitsu, in the 1880's. Jigoro Kano, the founder of Judo, had studied many ancient Japanese forms and techniques. In his new style he used only the most effective techniques from the indigenous Japanese arts; he called his creation Kodokan Judo. The difference between Kano's new style and the ancient styles was that it could also be used as self defense, because non-cooperative free training was highly emphasized. This new form of training not only prepared the body, but also the mind and it changed the martial arts world as a whole. It was Judo that began the wave on other styles relying more on effectiveness and free-sparring, than on flashy techniques that do not actually work.

In the late 1800's, Kano's Judo was put to the test at the Tokyo Police Tournament. There he fought many opponents and won all but two matches, which were declared a draw. His style was indeed the most effective of the time considering Jigoro Kano was smaller and weaker than the other practitioners. Judo remained undefeated for many years, until a master from a Japanese school teaching ancient fighting styles finally won. The loss came due to Kano's lack of experience at fighting on the ground, which was the opponent's focus in training. After this loss, the weakness of Judo was exposed, as new schools began challenging the Kodokan Judo and winning on the ground. From this moment on, ground fighting was trained extensively at the Kodokan.

A few years after ground fighting was implemented at the Kodokan, Esai Maeda began training at the school. He excelled far past his fellow students and went down in history as one of the greatest practitioners of Judo, or Judoka, in the world. He remained undefeated in his fighting career in Japan. In 1904 Professor Kano sent Maeda to the United States to help spread Judo. Throughout his travels, Maeda fought countless opponents; some say he even had over a thousand matches. He is credited as having a spotless record, with zero losses. All over the world, this new Judo was catching on, as the style proved more effective than others. At his retirement, Maeda was literally a human encyclopedia of Judo, and he wanted to share his knowledge.

In the early 1900's Maeda decided to move to Brazil with the wave of Japanese immigrants going there. He settled in Rio de Janeiro and established a Judo school there. One of his first students was the now famous, Carlos Gracie. Gracie excelled just as Maeda had years ago and eventually became the best student. Carlos eventually went on to open his own school. Throughout the years, Gracie and his brothers continued to teach and perfect their Judo. The youngest of the brothers, Helio, was not allowed to train because he was very weak and constantly ill. He took notes and gave tips on how to make moves more effective and helped his brothers develop their own style.

In 1928 Carlos Gracie and his brothers cannot teach a lesson at their school, so youngest brother Helio fills in for them. Even with his weak and frail body, he was able to maneuver and control his students. He had finally perfected the art of Judo; this new form of Judo became known as Gracie Jiu Jitsu, or <https://assignbuster.com/brazilian-jiu-jitsu-a-modern-martial-art-form-history-essay/>

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. The brothers were amazed at young Helio's incredible technique. What made him so good was that he used his opponents' weight and force against them. He was a smart man and used his knowledge in physics to help him by incorporating levers and momentum into his newly developed style. In 1931 the professional boxer, Antonio Portugal, was defeated by Helio, proving that with Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, a smaller and less athletic person could beat a larger and more athletic one. His goal was to provide anyone of any size the techniques in which you could defend yourself against any one of any size. This was only the first of countless victories that the Gracie family would see. In the 1940's Helio challenged Joe Louis, the professional heavyweight champion of boxing, to prove the superiority of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. The boxer, who looked like a giant next to Gracie, declined and the two never fought. The two actually became friends and taught one another their techniques.

Years later, at the peak of Helio's fighting days, he fought Masahiko Kimura who was considered to be the best Japanese fighter at the time. Kimura outweighed Gracie by over eighty pounds, and was much stronger. Helio fought for over thirteen minutes before he was caught in a shoulder lock that broke his shoulder. Still, he did not give up and continued to fight, until his brother threw in the towel to prevent any serious injury. Kimura was so impressed with the performance of Helio and his modified style that he invited him to teach it at schools in Japan.

The last of his memorable fights was the one against Waldemar Santana.

Santana was 20 years younger and heavier than Gracie, he also studied at

the Gracie Academy. The fight went on and on for about five hours, with <https://assignbuster.com/brazilian-jiu-jitsu-a-modern-martial-art-form-history-essay/>

Santana as the victor. Even though Helio lost, his style proved supreme. He was able to defend himself against a much younger and stronger assailant for hours at a time. It also proved to be effective in self defense, because the young challenger also knew the secrets of Jiu Jitsu, where an attacker on the street would probably not.

In the early 1980's Rorion Gracie, Helio's eldest son, moved to California to spread the family's Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. He was not welcomed at martial arts schools with his unorthodox methods and unusual fighting style. This eventually led to him inviting martial artists of all styles from around the world for a match against him. The event came to be known as the "Gracie Challenge." Gracie's Jiu Jitsu proved more effective than every challenger's martial art, including Kung Fu, wrestling, boxing, and karate. The challenge was made to prove that simple yet effective movements are crucial to self defense, rather than flashy and eye-catching techniques.

The Gracie family finally got their big break in 1994 when Rorion Gracie began the Ultimate Fighting Championship, or the UFC. In this competition martial styles were put up against one another without any restrictions or weight classes. Royce Gracie, the youngest of Rorion's brothers, was the first to compete. He ended up winning the entire competition, making opponents much larger than him submit. Once again, Brazilian Jiu Jitsu proved to be the most effective and realistic martial art. After the first few Ultimate Fighting Championships the popularity of Jiu Jitsu skyrocketed in the U. S.; everyone wanted to learn the art.

Around this time many of the other Gracie family members began to move to the United States and Japan. Rickson Gracie, considered by many to have been the greatest fighter in the world, revolutionized the sport. He combined all of the techniques his elders taught him, with those from practitioners around the world. He became a complete athlete when he began developing his strength and agility, which, when added to Jiu Jitsu, only made it easier for him to win. He went on to defeat many of the greatest fighters in the world. He eventually retired when his son died, with a record of only wins. “ Rickson Gracie founded the Rickson Gracie International Jiu-Jitsu Association in 1996 in order to provide a thorough and complete system in which Jiu-Jitsu students, for the first time, are presented with clearly defined standards of progression relating to proper Belt Ranking and Testing. Through the Association, the traditional, technical and philosophical aspects of Jiu-Jitsu can be shared with students around the world.” (rickson. com)

Nowadays, Brazilian Jiu Jitsu is everywhere, from various academies around the world, to police academies, and even the army. Throughout the years it has proved to be the most effective martial art as a whole. The ever-growing popularity of the UFC, and mixed martial arts in general, is associated with the boom in popularity of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. The championship has now reached its one hundred and fourteenth event. Every fighter currently fighting in the UFC, and any mixed martial arts tournament, has some knowledge of Jiu Jitsu, whether for defense or offense.

So even though Brazilian Jiu Jitsu originated from Judo, it has many differences, such as those of body mechanics.