

// WHAT IS BJJ? //

THE MARTIAL ART WE TEACH IS **GRACIE JIU-JITSU**, OFTEN CALLED **BRAZILIAN JIU-JITSU** OR SIMPLY **BJJ**. GRACIE JIU-JITSU TEACHES HOW A SMALLER, WEAKER PERSON CAN DEFEND THEMSELVES AGAINST AND DEFEAT A LARGER, STRONGER OPPONENT WITH THE PROPER USE OF LEVERAGE AND TECHNIQUE, MOST NOTABLY THROUGH THE APPLICATION OF GROUND GRAPPLING TECHNIQUES, JOINT LOCKS, AND CHOKE HOLDS.

GRACIE JIU-JITSU WAS DEVELOPED IN THE EARLY PART OF THE 20TH CENTURY BY CARLOS AND HELIO GRACIE, AMONG OTHERS, BASED ON THE TECHNIQUES AND PRINCIPLES TAUGHT TO CARLOS GRACIE BY MITSUYO MAEDA, A JUDOKA (PRACTITIONER OF JUDO) AND STUDENT OF TSUNEJIRO TOMITA, INSTRUCTOR UNDER JIGORO KANO, THE FOUNDER OF JUDO. EVENTUALLY THE ADAPTATIONS MADE BY THE GRACIE FAMILY TO THE CORE ART CAME TO DEFINE THE GRACIE STYLE OF JUDO/JIU-JITSU AS DISTINCT FROM THE ORIGINAL ART ESPOUSED BY KANO (AMONG OTHER DIFFERENCES, THE GRACIE STYLE PLACES GREATER EMPHASIS ON THE GROUND GRAPPLING TECHNIQUES, WHILE JUDO IS KNOWN PRIMARILY FOR ITS THROWS AND TAKEDOWNS).

MANY IN AMERICA FIRST BECAME AWARE OF GRACIE JIU-JITSU IN THE EARLY 90S, WHEN THE SLIGHT AND UNIMPOSING ROYCE GRACIE—SON OF HELIO GRACIE—STEPPED INTO THE OCTAGON IN THE FIRST EVER ULTIMATE FIGHTING CHAMPIONSHIP. WINNING THE EIGHT-MAN TOURNAMENT, ROYCE SHOCKED THE MARTIAL ARTS WORLD AND PROVED TO FANS IN ATTENDANCE AND WATCHING AT HOME THE EFFECTIVENESS OF HIS FAMILY'S ART.

TODAY BRAZILIAN JIU-JITSU IS MORE POPULAR THAN EVER, AND IT IS NOT UNCOMMON FOR EXPONENTS OF OTHER STYLES TO CLAIM THAT THEY TOO TEACH "JIU-JITSU," "MMA," AND/OR "BJJ" IN A CRASS AND DISHONEST PLOY TO ATTRACT AND IMPRESS THE UNINFORMED. AT THE FIGHT GYM WE ARE PROUD TO TRACE OUR LINEAGE DIRECTLY BACK TO BRAZIL AND JAPAN, WITH RANK CERTIFIED BY STEVE MAXWELL (FIRST AMERICAN TO EARN A BLACK BELT IN GRACIE JIU-JITSU FROM RELSON GRACIE, SON OF HELIO GRAICE), RICKSON GRACIE (SON OF HELIO GRACIE), THE UNITED STATES JUDO FEDERATION, AND THE KODOKAN JUDO INSTITUTE (MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR STAFF AND THEIR CREDENTIALS IS AVAILABLE THROUGH THE **TEACHING STAFF** TAB).

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO LEARN MORE, NAVIGATE TO THE APPROPRIATE OPTION ON THE **CONTACT** TAB TO BEGIN YOUR JIU-JITSU JOURNEY AT THE FIGHT GYM!