



詠春

The Jeet Kune Do – Wing Chun Connection

Bruce Lee started his training in Wing Chun in the 1950's in Hong Kong as a youth, where he trained under Yip Man, head of the Wing Chun clan. Bruce fell in love with this art and its principles of "economy of motion" and "simultaneous attack and defense." These principles appealed to him highly because of their effectiveness in the mean streets of Hong Kong.

In 1958, Bruce left Hong Kong to reside in the USA and was unable to finish his training in the Wing Chun system. At that time, his knowledge of the Wing Chun system was limited to the first two forms of this style and a couple of wooden dummy techniques. He continued his training on his own, but his views on the Wing Chun system changed dramatically after he had an altercation

in Oakland in the mid-1960's with a martial artist who trained in an other style. Bruce realized that Wing Chun was a great style in handling an incoming opponent, but was very limited against an opponent who kept his distance or, in this case, was running away. After he researched other Martial Arts, the human anatomy, physiology and kinesiology, he developed what he called Jeet Kune Do, his own expression of the martial way.

Jeet Kune Do is strongly influenced by Wing Chun, and Bruce adopted many of the Wing Chun principles and techniques in his Jeet Kune Do. However, it is important to know that Wing Chun is not the "trapping phase" of Jeet Kune Do. This article will focus on the similarities and differences between both arts.

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Principles

The "centerline principle": the centerline is the imaginary line running from the top of the head of a person between the eyes down to the feet. The most vulnerable parts of the body are located on, or around, the centerline. When practicing Jeet Kune Do and Wing Chun, the practitioner tries to guard his own centerline and at the same time tries to attack the centerline of the opponent.

The "simultaneous attack and defense principle": in many Martial Arts the process of defending oneself is always done in two steps: step one, the attack of the opponent is blocked; step two, the opponent is attacked. In both Jeet Kune Do and Wing Chun, the process is reduced to one action. One arm, for instance, is used to divert the attack and at the same moment the other arm is used to initiate an attack to the centerline of the opponent.

The "economy of motion principle": with a minimum of effort, both the Jeet Kune Do and Wing Chun practitioner try to gain a maximum result. For instance, when someone is grabbed, many Martial Arts systems teach to first try to release the hold of the attacker, maybe then apply a wrist lock, and then do the final move. When a Jeet Kune Do or a Wing Chun practitioner is grabbed, most likely

he would release a punch to the face, or a finger jab to the eyes of the opponent. A simple action with a maximum result!

The "immovable elbow": in both Jeet Kune Do and Wing Chun, it is advised always to keep the elbow about three inches in front of the body. The hand and the forearm can move in any direction, but the elbow stays stationary, protecting the body at all times.

The foundation

Wing Chun has three basic stances: the front stance, the neutral stance and the neutral side stance. Jeet Kune Do only uses one stance: the on-guard position. All basic techniques in both arts flow from the basic stance. The most evident difference is that the Jeet Kune Do practitioner stands with his strongest side forward, because Jeet Kune Do strongly advocates the 80/20 rule. This means that the lead hand (and foot), the strongest, is used for 80% of all hand attacks and the rear hand, the weakest, does at most 20% of all attacks. (However, Bruce taught that both right and left sides should both be cultivated for combat).

Wing Chun strongly advocates ambidexterity and therefore the Wing Chun practitioner stands squarer, enabling him to use both hands without

any difference for attack and defense. Wing Chun is mainly a "passive art," which means that you are reacting more to what your opponent does when he comes into your range. Because of this, Wing Chun's stance is more "static." Jeet Kune Do, on the other hand, advocates a "phasic" stance, meaning that you are moving more to attack, counter-attack or defend, and therefore become a more elusive target.

Footwork

Both Jeet Kune Do and Wing Chun use advancing steps and retreating steps, as well as side steps and pivot steps (circling steps). Besides these steps, Jeet Kune Do also uses shuffle steps, in which you first move your rear leg and then your lead leg to advance, or the opposite way to retreat. Jeet Kune Do also uses the so-called pendulum steps in which the upper part of the body remains almost stationary while the lower part swings either forward or backwards (mainly used against low attacks).

Hand techniques

Since Wing Chun is one of the three pillars of Jeet Kune Do (the other two being Western Boxing and Fencing), a lot of techniques that are found in Wing