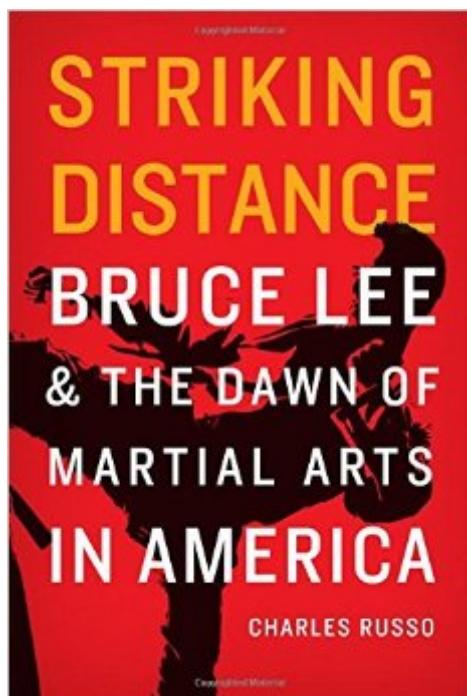


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# Striking Distance: Bruce Lee And The Dawn Of Martial Arts In America



## Synopsis

In the spring of 1959, eighteen-year-old Bruce Lee returned to San Francisco, the city of his birth, and quickly inserted himself into the West Coast's fledgling martial arts culture. Even though Asian fighting styles were widely unknown to mainstream America, Bruce encountered a robust fight culture in a San Francisco Bay area that was populated with talented and trailblazing practitioners such as Lau Bun, Chinatown's aging kung fu patriarch; Wally Jay, the innovative Hawaiian jujitsu master; and James Lee, the no-nonsense Oakland street fighter. Regarded by some as a brash loudmouth and by others as a dynamic visionary, Bruce spent his first few years back in America advocating a more modern approach to the martial arts and showing little regard for the damaged egos left in his wake. In the Chinese calendar, 1964 was the Year of the Green Dragon. It would be a challenging and eventful year for Bruce. He would broadcast his dissenting view before the first great international martial arts gathering and then defend it by facing down Chinatown's young ace kung fu practitioner in a legendary behind-closed-doors high noon "style" showdown. The Year of the Green Dragon saw the dawn of martial arts in America and the rise of an icon. Drawing on more than one hundred original interviews and an eclectic array of sources, *Striking Distance* is an engrossing narrative chronicling San Francisco Bay's pioneering martial arts scene as it thrived in the early 1960s and offers an in-depth look at a widely unknown chapter of Bruce Lee's iconic life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This. I have been waiting so long for THIS book because...1) This rocks as a piece of long form journalism. It's informative but reads cinematically, like you're watching a movie. As a journalist colleague who's had the great pleasure of working with Russo, I've gotten to see him dive into incredible depths to surface remarkable insights about the martial arts circles of the Bay Area since the book's first stirrings. He pounded the pavement and put in countless of hours into hundreds of original interviews and research to bring to light one of the biggest pop culture icons of our era. It's rewarding to see how he pulled this together in a completely engrossing narrative.2) It brings to life the San Francisco Bay Area in a larger than life way. The book sheds fresh light on familiar scenes and attaches them to eye-opening, colorful history. I will never be able to stroll through San Francisco Chinatown alleys or Oakland without saying, "THAT happened HERE?" For example, I've had dim-sum countless times practically across the street from where Bruce Lee was born. This would be a great travel companion if you're interested in touring the Bay Area in a really unique way.3) One of my primary occupations is contemplating the participation of Asian Americans in pop culture and media at large. It's no secret that Asian Americans have been under- or misrepresented, so it's inspiring to see how Bruce Lee busted onto the scene and took his career into his own hands and overcame challenges in the book.

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