

# Karate Training: The Samurai Legacy And Modern Practice

## - Robin L. Rielly

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This book could actually be considered two books in one: a thorough history of Japanese karate-do and a profusely illustrated instruction manual for students of the martial art who have advanced beyond the beginning stages. Concerned about the misinterpretation of Japanese culture in general and karate in particular by many Western practitioners of karate, the author sets out in Part One of his book to trace the history of karate from its probable origins in India (or perhaps Greece) and its transmission in successively more developed forms to China, Okinawa, and then Japan. Relevant aspects of the history of Japan and influences-the samurai ethos, bushido, and Zen Buddhism-on its martial arts are then pointed out. Finally, the author discusses the changes made on the karate brought in from Okinawa due to these influences. Even with all this martial background, however, it is stressed that current karate-do is different in form and philosophy from the early traditions in that modern practice emphasizes karate as a sport, a means of self-defense, or even a way of life, but not as a means of dispatching an opponent. In Part Two the author first demonstrates important points of etiquette to be used in the karate dojo. He follows with well-illustrated instructions of kumite (sparring drills), including those involving two practitioners and those such as the doubleline drill and the circle drill which give practice in facing a number of opponents. Descriptions of many of these are not readily found in other English-language publications. The final chapter presents nine kata, introductory the advanced kata, Sochin and Nijushiho, are rarely seen in print in English. Often de-emphasized in the modern Western practice of karate, the important place of kata in the martial arts as well as their application to self-defense is here stressed. Further features include a history of karate in the United States, an Appendix listing rank requirements in Shotokan karate, and a recommended reading list. All in all, this book will prove to be an excellent source for martial arts historians and practitioners alike.

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