Metadata: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=whpUQYaXtSs
And now the question that needs to be asked, where do leg locks fit into that system? And where do they fit in? They don't. Well now, they don't. They don't, traditionally. Leg locks fit into the system in only one way. When the system has failed. When the system's not working, and you can't take your opponent down, you can't pass as guard, you can't maintain a dominant position, and you can't get the regular submissions to work, fuck it, try a leg lock. Leg locks were seen for generations as a signal of failure. When you couldn't get the system to work, you had to resort to leg locks. It meant you were a bad jiu-jitsu player. You couldn't impose the fundamental system of jiu-jitsu, and so you chickened out and you went to leg locks. That's why they were despised. That was the real reason why, for generations, leg locks were dismissed. You don't think it was because so many people were injured by them that they were... No, absolutely not. People get injured, the worst injuries in jiu-jitsu don't come from submission holds. The worst injuries in jiu-jitsu come from falling body weight, when people jump guard, when people accidentally or poorly perform takedowns, that's where you see catastrophic injuries in jiu-jitsu. That's where you see career-ending injuries. The joint lock submissions, you're out for a week, two weeks, you know, catastrophic injuries. As I said, go on YouTube and put in, guard pull gone wrong. You'll see catastrophic injuries. You'll see career-ending injuries there. You're not going to see it from arm bars, heel hooks, etc. You'll see people getting hurt, but it's a contact sport, you expect that, okay? No. There's a very simple, elegant system, Brazilian jiu-jitsu. We just saw one rendition of it, the four-step approach, and you clearly see leg locks don't fit comfortably into that system. What I did is I tried to find an avenue where they could come in, and the results were surprising. The first thing is, our four-step rendition of jiu-jitsu looked at jiu-jitsu from top position, where we took our opponent down to the ground and we were on top of them. But my study of jiu-jitsu didn't start from top position, it started from bottom position. If you look at my students in competition, you will notice that around 80% of their entries into leg locks come from bottom position or with their opponent behind them. In other words, from what are supposedly inferior positions. So for me, it was never a question of losing position when I went for leg locks, because I was already underneath my opponent. I started underneath. How can I end up on bottom by going for a leg lock? I'm already on bottom. So most of my early work in leg locks was how to get into leg locks from disadvantageous positions, from underneath or when someone is behind me. So I never felt this problem of, okay, I'm going to lose position if I go for leg locks. I could still play a conventional jiu-jitsu game and have a very, very strong leg lock entry. That was the first avenue of leg locking. But things became more interesting when I got further into the leg lock game and I started to realize that as you add leg locks into the game, you change the very nature of the sport. If you look at jiu-jitsu as it's ordinarily practiced, it's a single direction game. If someone is in front of me and I'm standing over them, jiu-jitsu is all about movement from the legs towards the head. I'm supposed to pass their guard, work my way up to chest to chest contact, and get my head next to their head, either in front of them or behind them, either mounted or rear mounted. So jiu-jitsu always goes in one direction. If you ever get stopped or you lose position, you just start the process over again. It's a mono-directional sport. It always goes from the legs to the head. Once you start adding leg locks into the game, jiu-jitsu becomes a two-directional sport where you can go from the head down to the legs. You can go in both directions. So if I'm passing someone's guard and I simply can't do it, I can fall back and go back into the legs. If I lose my control on someone and they start to recompose their guard, I can fall back into the legs. I'm going from their upper body down to their lower body. Traditional jiu-jitsu always goes from the lower body, directionally, up to the upper body so that you end up head to head with your opponent. But once you start adding leg locks, jiu-jitsu for the first time becomes a two-directional sport instead of a one-directional sport. And you can play your opponent's reactions between the threat of lower body and upper body in ways that opens up submissions so much more easily than the traditional

game. So if I take you back to the moment where Dean Lister says to you, why would you ignore 50% of the human body? You go back and think about this. And what is your next step? Do you just start looking at students and looking at what you're teaching and analyzing positions? And you're still rolling at the time. Yes, correct. The first thing that I started to look at is, okay, who out there is doing a good job of leg locking? And the honest answer was, there weren't a lot of people. What you would see is random success with leg locks. You'd see a guy wins a match here, a guy wins a match there. Most of the eminent leg lockers of that generation were actually coming out of Japan. You'd have people like Romina Sato, who had a decent heel hook for that time. Imanari. That was a little bit pre-Imanari. Imanari came slightly after Romina Sato. They fought each other in grappling matches. One was younger than the other. But they had some success. I believe even Sakuraba finished Newton with a knee bar. So the knowledge was there. But there was nothing systematic about it. There weren't people who were coming out and just systematically finishing people with one move. So there wasn't much in terms of people to study. So the first thing I started to ask is, what is the nature of leg locking? It seems to have some problems associated with it. It's not as controlling as the traditional methods of Jiu Jitsu. That was really the key word there, control. Why do people favor things like rear naked strangles so much? Because it's such a controlling position. Rear mount is an incredibly controlling position. Why do people favor things like Kata Gatame, the arm triangle? Because this too is a very inherently controlling position. All the most high percentage finishing holds in Jiu Jitsu all have control as their dominant feature. It's hard for people to work. As a result, one person can continue to use the same move with a large degree of success over time against a wide array of opponents. So every question I asked ultimately always came back to control. The one thing you would see with regards to the use of leg locks in the late 1990s and early 2000s was a lack of control. So all of my studies immediately went to the notion of control. Now there are many forms of leg lock, but the ones that interest me the most always come out of what the Japanese call Ashigurami. Ashigurami is a generic term. It just means tangled legs. There are many different forms of Ashigurami. Ashigurami is a mechanism by which I can use two of my legs to control my opponent's legs and hips. What I started to do was make a deep study of this notion of Ashigurami. How am I going to use my legs to control the real estate between my opponent's knee and his hips, preferably on both sides? Probably the single biggest cliché that you'll hear about Jiu-Jitsu is that it's position before submission. At the time I was primarily interested in the idea of control before submission. Control is a much deeper and wider concept than the basic point structure based position before submission model of Jiu-Jitsu. There's many ways to control people that have very little to do with position. For example, Ashigurami itself scores nothing in Jiu-Jitsu. But done well, it can control an opponent just as well as rear mount can. So I started to see that there are many forms of control that went outside of the traditional basic positional hierarchy of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. Ashigurami is one of them. Probably the single greatest key in the development of my leg lock system, again, came from a simple realization that the greatest mistake that people have made in leg lock work prior to the arrival of the squad was that they made no distinction between the mechanism of breaking and the mechanism of control. Ashigurami was the mechanism of control. The lock itself, whether it be a heel hook, an Achilles lock, a figure four toe hold, that was the mechanism of breaking. If you watch 99% of the people out there who claim to be experts in leg locking, they don't distinguish between the two. They see, for example, heel hooking as a single skill. There's the lock on the legs, the Ashigurami, or whatever term they use for it. And the lock itself, they're not distinguished. They're taught as a single skill. You can't differentiate the Ashigurami and the lock. And you'll see people teaching in this manner. What I did was to strongly distinguish between the two so that my students could all hold an Ashigurami position and switch from one Ashigurami to another and hold people for extended periods of time and inhibit movement. If I can inhibit movement for long periods of time, I can break you at will. I can take my time when I

come to break you because the control is there. The control is prior and the break is second. For most people, it's just throwing the Ashigurami and immediately go for the lock. They don't even distinguish. The Ashigurami is described as part of the heel hook. They don't distinguish between the two. Once I made that realization in the early 2000s, that's when the ball started rolling. That's when a significant amount of progress was made. I would say that your question was an interesting one. You had the insight. Lister gave you the insight. What started you going? It was making first a critical distinction between control and submission and in the case of leg locking, between the mechanism of control, Ashigurami, and the mechanism of breaking, which is the lock itself. In my case, the heel hook.