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Malešević, Siniša (2022) *Why Humans Fight: The Social Dynamics of Close-Range Violence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 320 pp.

ISBN: 978-1-00-916281-4

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By analyzing the social dynamics of close-range fighting and its consequences, Malešević aims to scrutinize several underexplored nuanced questions related to the personal and objective reasons behind human engagement in physical violence: What circumstances increase the likelihood of fighting? What role does the interplay between individual and group preferences play in fighting behavior? How do micro-level violence dynamics interact with the macro-structural context? The central thesis, an essential social mechanism developed by Malešević throughout the book, is the dynamics of social pugnacity – a phenomenon created collectively by ideological frames, micro-interactive interactions, and institutions. In establishing his argument, Malešević begins with three sets of existing explanations for human violence. First, using medical and psychological research, he demonstrates that while physio- and neurological factors have an effect on fighting, they do not exclusively predetermine individual behavior. Second, Malešević disputes the idea of vested interest (in the standard economics sense) as the cornerstone of forceful aggression, drawing largely from the political science literature. Third, he argues that, although efficient in many ways, ideology cannot serve as an explanation *per se*. To support this argument in the second part of the book, Malešević relies heavily on an in-depth comparison of individual experiences within the Provisional Irish Republican Army and the Bosnian Serb Army. He also introduces case studies of the Croatian Army and the Bosnian Serb Army, both involved in the 1991–95 Yugoslav Wars. Two concluding chapters are devoted to exploring the interrelation of close-range violence and the respective emotions. Overall, this is a remarkable book that is accessible to a broad audience and simultaneously insightful for experienced readers, making it definitely worth reading.

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