



Why War?: An Inquiry into the Genetic and Social Foundations of Human Warfare

George R. Pitman

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Why War? An Inquiry into the Genetic and Social Sources of Human Warfare Humanity seems to be its own worst enemy. Why War? explores the biological and social imperatives for humans to wage war. From the most primitive societies to the most advanced nations, humans are driven by genetic, neurological and hormonal forces to kill their fellow humans in wars. They kill those who are not like them, whose skin is of a different color, who believe in a different religion than theirs, and those who are governed in a different way than they are. Only disease and old age kill more people than war.

Dr. Pitman brings that perspective to describe the evidence of a genetic basis of racial and ethnic xenophobia that has triggered many wars; why many soldiers find pleasure in war and are willing to risk their lives and sacrifice themselves for their county, religion or ethnic group; and why societies are willing to sacrifice their young men and women in war. Increasingly, nations, religious and ethnic groups have become caught up with the fever of war, ready to risk their existence to gain power and to right imagined wrongs. Today, peace seems more difficult to achieve than ever before.

George R. Pitman is retired from the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and the US State Department. He has devoted the last twelve years to studying the genetic, physiological and social bases of human warfare.

Pitman has been interested in why humans are so warlike since he was a child listening tp the radio announcements about the invasions of Czechoslovakia and Austria and the outbreak of World War II. He holds a PhD in physics, has studied international relations at UCLA, and evolutionary biology and the anthropology of war. Pitman has authored papers on the issues of war and peace, as well as writing Neither War nor Peace: A History of the Cold War and of Strategic Arms Control.

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