



The Anthropology of War

Keith F. Otterbein

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Keith Otterbein, a long-time authority on anthropological studies of warfare, provides a rich synthesis of theory, literature, and findings developed by anthropologists and scholars from other disciplines. This in-depth--yet concise--look at warfare opens with two well-known ethnographic examples of warring peoples: the Dani and the Yanomamö. The origins and evolution of war, types of warfare, weapons and tactics, military organizations, and the social bases of war structure discussions within the text. Analyses of historical events and case studies inform readers of different perspectives about why people go to war, how societies can be identified as having war, the elements necessary for war, and how war might be avoided. Otterbein concludes the text by presenting the concept of "Positive Peace"--promoting peace as a goal of human existence--as a way for humans to eliminate the fatal consequences of war.

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