

PreDefence

Self defense before SHTF

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Self defense lessons from war - Clausewitz

Categories : [Uncategorized](#), [Women's Self Defence](#)

Tagged as : [asocial violence](#), [monkey dance](#), [predator](#), [self defense](#), [social violence](#) [von Clausewitz](#)

Warfare, like self defense, is not just about the fighting. In fact, as Sun Tzu says:

The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting

So whether you've encountered a mugger or a pissed-off about-something-else-but-taking-it-out-on-you [Monkey Dance](#), getting home that night without having to fight is usually a good thing.

But what about the other times? What about the times when the hijacker isn't trying to get your family out the car? He just wants **you** out the car - the wife and kids he's going to keep.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5q3z4IP_nNU

Knowing what you're getting into

The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and commander has to make is to establish . . . the kind of war on which they are embarking.

- Von Clausewitz, On War

First, you need to face facts. If you're reading this, then **you** are the commander of your family. Whether you like it or not, whether it's fair or not, everybody you love is going to look at you if the shit hits the fan. Everybody will turn to you and follow your lead, and do what you tell them to do. And if you tell them nothing, or don't lead them, they will hold you responsible for what happens.

Second, we need to understand what Clausewitz was saying. What he did **not** mean is that the commander gets to choose what type of war he feels like embarking on. This isn't picking a dress for a dance where you get to choose what suits you best. This is recognising what type of war is thrust upon you.

And for you *interventionistas* out there - even if you're the one thrusting the war on someone else, they get a say in if the war stays the way you wanted it to.

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How does this relate to self defense?

(Before going on, comparing warfare with self defense is going to invoke various misconceptions like "[there are no rules in a streetfight](#)". I'm hoping we've all read enough [Rory Miller](#) and [Marc MacYoung](#) to have gotten past that BS.)

If we scale our thoughts down from warfare to self defense (basically 4th generation warfare on a very small scale) we find that violence is going to come at you in 2 general flavours. Social violence and Asocial violence. And just like in war, if you don't know which type you've gotten into, then your response can backfire. Badly.

Social violence

[Social violence](#), as Rory Miller explains it (IIRC) is violence that is good for the tribe. It might not be good for you, but it's good for the tribe. Oh, and it's not necessarily good for *your* tribe, or even *you*, but it's good for someone's tribe.

Two lions fighting for breeding rights over the lionesses might fight and hurt each other. There may be scratches, bites and blood, but usually both lions live, the damage isn't severe, and the pride is stronger for it (the stronger male wins - notice it stills sucks for the weaker male who's cast out. Never assume you can't end up in that role). This is social violence - painful, but mostly not deadly.

Probably the most common form of social violence is the bar fight or the schoolyard fight. A couple people (young guys) get into a shoving then punching match. There's a bit of blood, a few hurt feelings for a while, then all's forgotten.

While it's difficult to find hard and fast rules about violence, with social violence apologising, acting non-threatening (up to and including *you* being the one to back down), and running away, are good places to start when trying to defuse it. Removing the lionesses can help too. An audience provides the *social* part of social violence - the less social it is, the less likely social violence is to occur. This isn't to say you must magically make the audience disappear, but rather it's a diagnostic tool to help you decide if the violence you're facing is social violence.

(There are nuances though. Take bullying for instance. Running away is often a temporary solution. And does the fact that running away will you away from the audience explain why it works? And why it might only work temporarily? And with bullying, acting non-threatening can involve stuff like being a funny dude that everybody likes, and not getting emotionally involved. If "non-threatening" is just using submissive body language, then it can backfire.)

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Asocial violence

Now let's picture those cute cuddly lions again, but this time, picture them hunting. It's a totally different ballgame isn't it? When a lion is hunting food, there's no face to face posturing, no noisy shows. It's quiet, and it's as efficient as possible.

Asocial violence is hunting. This is the difference for humans too.

Asocial violence is when a human hunts another human. With most animals, they don't hunt their own species, they stick to social violence. Humans however are capable of hunting their own.

Why do lions hunt? To get something they need - i.e. food. Why do humans hunt? To get what they need. Only thing is humans have more diverse needs than lions. We need cellphones to sell for cash to get drugs. We need to hurt that guy to ease the pain of what our fathers did to us when we were young and powerless. We need sex and rape is the only thing we've ever seen or known, so that's how you go about getting sex.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3IPOPibi32Y>

Humans hunt to get **resources** or because they want the **process** of the hunt. You attack to get cash, or you attack because you want the pain it causes.

When doesn't a lion attack the antelope? When he deems it too risky. When he thinks he'll get badly hurt in the process. So how do you avoid asocial violence (a.k.a. predators)? By being a hard target that will cost too much pain and blood and legal trouble to be worth it.

The wrong response - i.e. know what type of war you're getting into

The problem comes in if you don't identify what you're facing. A response to social violence (looking non-threatening, apologising, backing away) can make you look like a safer target to an asocial predator.

Enforcing your boundaries to maintain distance, being loud and drawing attention to yourself can help make an asocial predator realise you might fight back. And that there are now witnesses to report his description to the cops. But in a social violence setting those witnesses are now an audience, so there's even more status at stake. To a social violence [Monkey Dancer](#), you enforcing your boundaries is just you getting more angry and shouting at him.

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So how do you tell the difference between social violence and asocial violence?

The most common factor is an audience. If there's an audience then it's most likely social violence. Except if that audience is all his friends crowded around you in a dark alley - that doesn't count as an audience.

There are other signs too. Social violence usually involves social settings (bars, parties, shops). Social violence usually does **not** involve the guy telling you to give him your wallet and phone. Social violence does **not** usually involve the guy trying to move you somewhere more private, or get you to do degrading things.

Von Clausewitz was right

You've got to know what you're facing, or your response will get you in trouble. Ask the French about the Maginot Line. Ask the Rangers about Mogadishu. Ask the guy who tried to [show a crowd how big a man](#) he was. Ask [the lady](#) who tried to "be nice" to the serial rapist who knocked on her door.