

On Fighting Up Close
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Years ago, when I was in West Virginia writing a book about the white racial advocate William Pierce, something an aide of his, Bob Demarias, said to me has stuck with me since. “If you are going to be one of us,” Bob shared with me, “you are going to have to be willing to fight up close and get good at it.” What Bob was getting at is the people currently in power in America will attack anybody who comes down on the side of white people with all they have—not just public figures like Pierce, anybody. If you fall into this category in their eyes, they will do anything to you they can get away with, no holds barred.

These years, you can advocate for just any group of people you can name, with one exception: don’t let anybody catch you looking out for European heritage, white, people. You can be for black people or Asian people or Hispanic people or Jewish people, that’s fine—in fact, good for you, keep it going, do even more of it—but don’t show even a hint of respect and concern for white people. Or at least don’t go public with it; if you are dumb enough, and bad enough, to think anything along that line, at least keep it to yourself. Don’t be speaking out about white interests or white racial consciousness or a positive white identity where somebody might hear you or read what you have to say, don’t be bringing up the idea of white interests and solidarity and leadership and organization and collective action, or doing the least bit in that direction. That kind of thing is for other people, other groups, not for you and yours—can’t you get that through your thick head? If you even refer to yourself as white without putting yourself down you’re a racist, white supremacist, anti-Semite, hater, that’s what you are. You’re ignorant, malevolent, evil, out of sync in the enlightened and decent world we have created, you’re beyond the pale, nothing less than that. And you are going to pay. We’ll piss on you and make your life a living hell, and you can’t do a thing about it except take it and grovel at our feet in the hopes we might decide to let up on you some (which we won't).

To be sure, Bob has a point, being in the crosshairs of today’s totalitarians calls for learning how to fight up close if one is to be anything but a martyr. Bob didn’t elaborate on what he meant by

fighting up close, at least to me. He told me he was thinking about putting together a web site that asked people to contribute ideas about how to fight up close effectively, but as far as I know he never got around to doing it.

I like the phrase—fighting up close. It seems to me a good organizer for a consideration of how to get tough and battle effectively in contexts where people are attacking you and trying to do you in, and I'm going to give it a start in this thought. I'm using white racial activism as the example here because I've had some experience with it. Not only have I investigated the white racial movement and its proponents, I have engaged in some white analysis and advocacy myself--examples of which can be found on this web site--with predictable negative consequences. But it's important to keep in mind that we wouldn't have to be talking about white racial matters here. I can think of a lot of situations in life beyond taking shots for your racial outlook and activities in this land of the free where it would come in handy to be good at fighting up close.

I've decided to use boxers as a way to get into this discussion. I've followed boxing and done some boxing writing. Boxing, of course, is about fighting up close. I'll list some things boxers do to get good at fighting up close, going at it toe to toe with an opponent, to the finish, with the idea that it may apply to other areas in life, where for whatever reason the people in your world think it is justified to, at least metaphorically, beat you into a pulp, and where you want to go beyond enduring that attack and, if you will, winding up punch drunk; you'd like to defend yourself and land some shots of your own.

I'm not saying fighting up close, head on, punch for punch, is the way to go in every instance. It is but one tactic among many that are possible. Maybe the best thing to do in a particular situation is finesse them (for that matter, boxers do that, jab and move), or hide out, lay low, or engage in stealth attacks. I'm just offering that there are times in life when it comes down to, well, fighting up close, and it helps to have that capability in your repertoire. Even if you never actually do what could be called fighting up close, it is empowering just to know that it is within your capability and it's a possibility. To stay with the boxing metaphor, you are nobody's punching bag.

So, what do boxers who are good at fighting up close have going for them? Again, I'm coming at things indirectly here, so in every case, we're looking to see how whatever-it-is applies outside of an actual boxing ring.

- *They rigorously train for a fight.* They get their bodies in shape. They get lean and mean. They also train their minds; they take on a warrior mentality. They get fierce. They are capable of all-out attack. They are nobody's sacrificial lamb, that's their posture in life.

- *They study their craft.* They study the best boxers of their time and in the past and learn from them. They work with good trainers, who give them advice and guidance.

- *They study their opponent.* What's his style? What's he likely to do in various situations? What are his strengths, and the best ways to defend against them? What are his weaknesses, and what are the best ways to attack them? Especially, what does he really not like? A rabbit punch? A hit to the ear? A punch in his gut? A stare down? Disrespect? Contempt? Mockery? What?

- *They know themselves as boxers.* They know their individual strengths and weaknesses. They know how to best take advantage of their strengths, and to accommodate their weaknesses.

- *They have a purpose that drives them.* Winning the championship, piling up money, making their mother or wife or child proud of them; something beyond just winning that particular fight for its own sake.

- *When they are in a fight they FIGHT.* They aren't in a debating contest, it isn't a test of who's right or wrong or nicest or most decent. It's a boxing match. They are in a war. It's them or their opponent. They are willing to engage in all-out warfare, drop every bomb they have. They wipe the smiles off their faces, no nice-guying it. This is serious business. They are in a ring and somebody is trying to knock their heads off, and they are going to knock his head off.

- *They don't just defend.* They counterpunch. When their opponent goes at them, they fire back with all they have.
- *They are adaptable during the match.* If the jab isn't working, they double up on the hook. They use the tactics that work in this particular fight.
- *They take a punch.* They know they are going to hit, even get knocked down. But they shake it off and get back in the battle.
- *They are finishers.* They are cold, ruthless. If they have their opponent on the ropes, they don't back off; they keep punching, again and again and again, with all they have.
- *Whether they win or lose the match, they take it like a man.* They learn from it, and get right back into preparation for the next fight; losing a fight doesn't have to be the end of a career. Or, alternatively, they decide to end their boxing endeavors. They've taken enough punches; they don't want any more of it. They get a cabin by a river in Montana and live out their days with the wife and kids in peace.

I hope this has prompted you to think about fighting up close. What does it bring to mind?