The Political Economy of Predation

Manhunting and the Economics of Escape

Mehrdad Vahabi, Université de Paris VIII and Centre d’Économie de la Sorbonne

Still in early stages of development, conflict theory presents a growing interest in understanding the economic costs and benefits of conflicts. In this book, Mehrdad Vahabi analyses one type of conflict in particular: manhunting, or predation, in which a dominant power hunts down its prey and the goal of the prey is to escape and thus survive. This contrasts with traditional warfare, in which two (or more) powers enter into a conflict and the goal is to fight to win domination. The economics of escape casts light on costs and benefits of predatory activities, and explores the impact of violence as an impediment to developing countries with respect to assets structure. This book is unprecedented in its research and thought and develops a new theory of predation in economics that makes a significant contribution to the field.

Endorsements

“Standard economics has long assumed a society of free, contracting individuals with equal legal rights. Power and authority are understood in contractual terms. In his most powerful statement to date, Mehrdad Vahabi challenges all that. Violence and subjugation are brought back into the picture. We are forced to rethink everything.”
Geoffrey M. Hodgson, Hertfordshire Business School, University of Hertfordshire

“A fascinating and provocative analysis of predators and their prey. Mehrdad Vahabi’s book will stimulate the minds of all who have been intrigued by the political economy of coercion.”
Peter T. Leeson, Duncan Black Professor of Economics and Law, George Mason University

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Stergios Skaperdas, University of California, Irvine

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