

Anger and Aggression

- tendency toward anger is a glandular apparatus (biological)
- Cultural values determine under what circumstances anger is turned on, so culture rules over when anger is released.
- Anger might be useful in defense of the group or one's self.
- A capacity for aggression and cooperation are the basis for both justice and punishment.
- Our capacity to be outraged by injustice is part of our biogram.
- Humans kill more of their own species than any other creatures do. Within a species of animals in nature, there is a way of submitting to each other rather than killing each other.
- Pseudospeciation (making others so different from us that in our minds, it's okay to kill them) can turn off cultural inhibitions and dehumanize people; this is used in war.
 - Ex. the Holocaust
- Us vs. them is related to cultural contact and ethnocentrism, not genetic similarities.
- An angerless world would not be human.
- Humans are not always nice.

The Hand as a Weapon

- the hand evolved as a tool for punishment
- Aggression as well as tool use shaped the hand
- A clenched fist explains hand proportions (short fingers and longer, stronger thumb than apes).
- Clenched fist protects fingers from bending and breaking (unlike a palm shape)
- Fist does greater damage than a slap.

Conflict

Small Scale Societies

Original social groups, hunter-gatherer, hundred people societies

- The household was the primary institutional structure.
- Power was widely dispersed in society and therefore those individuals in charge were highly responsible.
- equal access to wealth
- no professional armies or war leaders
- Poverty and powerlessness were not institutionalized.
- little to fight over, armies and such were unnecessary
- kin group settled most disputes which were usually over women, property, etc.

The State and Nature of Conflict (State Level Societies)

- Social stratification and specialization led to many having little control of their basic subsistence needs, began to see people not making their own food and instead caring for the leaders
- Real political power came to be monopolized by a few elites who forced others to provide labor and basic subsistence to elites.

-Religious ideology was often used to help control the masses by teaching acceptance. This was subject to frequent collapse due to civil wars, peasant revolts, ecological stress, foreign invasion, etc.

Global Culture and Conflict (Global Level Society)

Appeared after the industrial revolution

- great inequalities of wealth and power (The government exists only to make business safe.)
- Individual technology reduces the need for labor, making the welfare of millions of people irrelevant.
- Communication systems shape our thought and behavior making us passive as consumers, wage earners, voters (We don't fight what we are offered to buy, what we are offered as jobs or pay, nor do we fight the fact that many of us don't like any of the candidates available to vote on.).
- All this can threaten the security, stability, and peace of all states.

What is War?

- organized armed conflict between two **political** units
- War is not an innate desire. The capacity for aggression is innate but must be culturally shaped.
- States make war and war often creates states.

Reasons for War

- defense (including liberation)
- plunder, which still happens today over resources such as oil
- prestige
- political control
- all of the above

Military Sophistication's Influence on War

- does not deter war
- more sophistication may encourage some to use it more, to try it out
- today more politically centralized cultures have more war casualties
- "collateral casualties" are more prominent today, most are citizens

Environmental Effects of War

- directly damages the environment
- diverts funds and resources from other projects
 - Ex. Three hours of war is equivalent to more than the World Health Organization spends in one year

Vietnam:

- defoliated the jungle
- tropical wetlands replaced by bamboo
- severely damaged people's health

Persian Gulf (shallow):

- damaged fisheries
- beds of sea grass destroyed
- survival of species reduced
- oil well fires and pollution increased
- destroyed sewage and water systems, electricity generators, housing
- later sanctions on food and medicine, these killed civilians
- “Gulf War Syndrome” includes physical and mental problems due to the nuclear weapon usage

Racism’s Effect on War

- The poor serves as cannon fodder in war.
- Racism often dehumanizes the enemy and excuses brutality.
- The elite control the media affects perceptions of the enemy and nature of war. The media (and so effectively **the elite control how the entire war is perceived** by the public which can be geared away from reality.

Ex. In NE Ireland, had to speak to the people to know what was really going on

The Nature of Guerilla War

- war against the power structure
- their causes are often ignored or covered up (economics, politics, etc.)
- “Harvest of Violence” studied by Anthropology, Geography, Political Science
 - In Guatemala, studied the death squads
 - Torture, massacres, and disappearances
- found the guerilla violence was often selective, while government violence was often indiscriminant

Ethnic Conflict as Hatred

- too simplistic, trivializes and makes cultural differences a **threat** rather than a basis for organizing to **confront known problems**
- ignores competition for power and control of economic wealth waged among elites (who have used ethnic identities for political ends)
- may be the result of years of colonial divisions and exploitation with one group played off against others
- some cases involve racist analysis:
 - Bosnia was labeled as “ethnic conflict”
 - Rwanda was labeled as “tribal warfare” though it was also ethnic groups fighting
 - NE Ireland was labeled as “religious conflict” though this was again ethnic groups fighting
- The media today creates our images and understanding of conflict.
- One person’s terrorist is another’s freedom fighter.
- The media are controlled by corporations.