Aggression II: Harm with Malice

Three Kinds of Aggression:
1. Harm without malice (obedience to authority, as in Milgram experiment)
2. Aggression between individuals within a group
3. Aggression between groups

Two views of human violence:
- 1. Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679)

So that in the nature of man, we find three principal causes of quarrel. First, competition; secondly, diffidence; thirdly, glory. The first maketh men invade for gain; the second, for safety; and the third, for reputation. The first use violence, to make themselves masters of other men’s persons, wives, children, and cattle; the second, to defend them; the third, for trifles, as a word, a smile, a different opinion, and any other sign of undervalue, either direct in their persons or by reflection in their kindred, their friends, their nation, their profession, or their name.
Hereby it is manifest that during the time men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called war; and such a war as is of every man against every man. ... In such condition there is no place for industry, because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently no culture of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea; no commodious building; no instruments of moving and removing such things as require much force; no knowledge of the face of the earth; no account of time; no arts; no letters; no society; and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.

--Hobbes, Leviathan, 1651

Hobbes’s solution: Leviathan

Two Views of Human Violence, cont.:

• 1. Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778):

So many authors have hastily concluded that man is naturally cruel, and requires a regular system of police to be reclaimed; whereas nothing can be more gentle than him in his primitive state, when placed by nature at an equal distance from the stupidity of brutes and the pernicious good sense of civilized man ... The more we reflect on this state, the more convinced we shall be that it was the least subject of any to revolutions, the best for man, and that nothing could have drawn him out of it but some fatal accident, which, for the public good, should never have happened. The example of the savages, most of whom have been found in this condition, seems to confirm that mankind was formed ever to remain in it, that this condition is the real youth of the world, and that all ulterior improvements have been so many steps, in appearance towards the perfection of individuals, but in fact towards the decrepitness of the species.
The current popularity of the doctrine of the noble savage:

The Myth of the Peaceful Savage

- The Yanomamö ("The Fierce People"): 

The Myth of the Peaceful Savage, cont.:

- Napoleon Chagnon on Yanomamo warfare:
  - 70% of adults have lost a family member to violence
  - 30% of men killed by other men
  - 44% of men have killed someone
The Myth of the Peaceful Savage, Cont.:

- Keeley on primitive warfare in general:
  - Mobilization more complete
  - Battles more frequent
  - Casualties higher
  - Prisoners fewer
  - Weapons more damaging

Aggression in Animals

- Individual aggression: common
- Collective aggression: rare, except:
  - Dolphins, chimpanzees.
  - Jane Goodall: Kasekela versus Kahama chimps

Why is Collective Aggression So Rare Among Animals?

- Cognitive problem of collective aggression: cheater(coward)-detection.
- Genetic factors: coalitions of related males.
- Common chimpanzees vs. Pygmy chimpanzees (bonobos)
Why do Organisms Hurt Each Other?

Hobbes’s three reasons:
1. Competition (gain)
2. Diffidence (safety)
3. Glory (reputation, honor)

What do Tribal Warriors Fight Over?

• Largely: women
  – Abduction; revenge for past abductions, adultery, default on betrothed daughters.
  – Chagnon: Killers had 2 X wives; 2 X children.
• Also: Avenge prior killings, abductions.
• Blood feuds
• Competition for food, land less important.

1. Competition

• Darwinian competition over resources: food, territory, mates (especially males)
• Daly & Wilson:
  – “Killing one’s adversary is the ultimate conflict resolution technique, and our ancestors discovered it long before they were human.”

2. Diffidence (safety)

• The “Hobbesian trap”:
  “Let’s do it to them before they do it to us”
  “The best defense is a good offense”
• Examples:
  – the burglar in the basement
  – tribal warfare
  – modern wars (WWI, Six-Day War, etc.)
  – the fear of surprise nuclear attack and the implications for nuclear weapons
3. Glory (Honor)


- Altercation of relatively trivial origin; insult, curse, jostling, etc. 35%
- Domestic quarrel 14%
- Jealousy 12%
- Altercation over money 11%
- Robbery 7%
- Revenge 5%
- Accidental 4%
- Self defense 1%
- Halting of felon 1%
- Escaping arrest 1%
- Concealing birth 1%
- Other 3%
- Unknown 5%
The Problem with Deterrence: The possibility of *bluffing*

- Solution: Make the punishment *involuntary*
  
  - Physical constraints:
    - The hijacker and the explosives
    - The protestors and the train
    - How to win at “Chicken”
  
  - Emotional constraints:
    - Be known as a hothead

"Honor" & thirst for revenge as guarantees against bluff calling

Martin Daly & Margo Wilson, *Homicide*:
“Men are known by their fellows as ‘the sort who can be pushed around’ and ‘the sort who won't take any shit,’ as people whose word means action or people who are full of hot air, as guys whose girlfriends you can chat up with impunity or guys you don't want to mess with.”

- Explanation for male-male dueling and other violent defenses of "honor"
- Partial explanation for male violence against women: deterrent against infidelity. (“He’s crazy enough to kill me.”)
Aggression Among Groups

- The other side of kin selection (nepotism):
  - Collective aggression among related males
  - Collective revenge (blood feuds)
  - “Cultures of honor”
- Ethnic groups
  - like extended families?
  - like groups of reciprocators?
  - in-group / out-group psychology

Hatred Between Groups

Group Aggression Observed Experimentally:
The Robber’s Cave Study (Sherif)

- Competition, dissimilarity, delinquency as triggers of aggression?
- 22 Subjects:
  - 11 year old WASP boys
  - above-average IQ
  - well-adjusted; never in trouble

Phase I: Intra-Group Dynamics

- Randomly divided into matched groups
- Lived separately for 1 week.
- Rattlers: tough, cursing.
- Eagles: praying, nude swimming
- Rattlers heard Eagles playing in distance, wanted to "run them off."
  "They better not be in our swimming hole." "They're using our diamond again!"
- Wanted to compete.
Phase II: Competition

• "Grand Tournament": 10 sporting events, skits & songs, neatness. Trophy, medals, prizes.
• Day 1: Rattlers won at baseball. Eagles tore down banner and burned it. Fistfights.
• Eagles won tug-of-war. Rattlers raided cabin at night: overturned beds, ripped mosquito netting, stole clothing.

Phase II: Competition, continued

• Eagles retaliated with raid on Rattler cabin; armed with bats & sticks. Entrenched selves in own cabin with rocks-in-socks.
• Rattlers raided Eagle cabin & stole medals and prizes. "You can have them back if you get down on your bellies and crawl for them."
• Friendships: within group. Favored own group.

Phase III: Conflict Resolution

• Bring groups together in noncompetitive situations?
  – Fill out questionnaires together: Rattlers refused to use "Eagle" brand pencils.
  – Movies, firecrackers: separate groups, traded insults.
  – Eat in dining hall at the same time ....

Phase III: Conflict Resolution, continued

• Superordinate goal (and implied enemy).
  – Water supply broken (from vandals?); inspect pipeline.
  – Truck broke down, had to be pulled together.
  – Tenuous truce.
• Boys’, parents’ reaction afterward.
Henri Tajfel: What Does it Take to Create Prejudice?

- Control condition: "Minimal Groups"
- Dot underestimators vs. Dot overestimators.
- "Klee fans" versus "Kandinsky fans."

- Task: Choose how to divide up money
- Possible distributions:
  - Fairness (split 50-50)
  - Generosity (give other group more)
  - Group favoritism (give own group more)
  - Maximal joint profit (get most for both groups)

- Question: What’s more important, getting as much money as possible for your group, or making sure that the other group doesn’t get as much as yours does?

| TABLE 15-1. Payoff Matrices Permitting In-Group Favoritism, Fairness, or Generosity |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| These numbers are rewards for: | These numbers are rewards for: |
| Member No. 74 of Klee group    | Member No. 44 of Kandinsky group |
| Please select one box:         | Please select one box:         |
| 11  14  1  5  6  7  8  9  10  11 12  | 11  15  1  4  5  6  7  8  9  11 12 |
| 14 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | 14 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 |
| Maximal in-group favoritism for a member of the Klee group: |
| 14 ; 1 |
| Maximal fairness for a member of the Klee group: |
| 7 ; 8 |
| Maximal generosity for a member of the Klee group: |
| 1 ; 14 |

| TABLE 15-2. Payoff Matrices Permitting Maximal Joint Profit and Maximal Group Difference |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| These numbers are rewards for: | These numbers are rewards for: |
| Member No. 74 of Klee group    | Member No. 44 of Kandinsky group |
| Please select one box:         | Please select one box:         |
| 11  14  1  5  6  7  8  9  10  11 12  | 11  15  1  4  5  6  7  8  9  11 12 |
| 14 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 | 14 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 |
| Maximal joint profit for a member of either group: |
| 19 ; 25 |
| Maximum in-group difference for a member of the Klee group: |
| 7 ; 1 |
• Ratings of likability, fairness, quality of work, etc.
• Replication with coin flip.
• Relevance for job discrimination by race, sex

Are Prejudice, Hatred, and War Inevitable?

• Outbreaks of peace throughout history.
• Modern societies: more peaceful than tribal, medieval societies
• External enforcement (a democratic Leviathan)
• Insight? Perspective from:
  – Game-theoretic thinking (Prisoner's Dilemma)
  – History
  – Psychology