

10. War and Destruction



Theories about war



Consider the causes of war

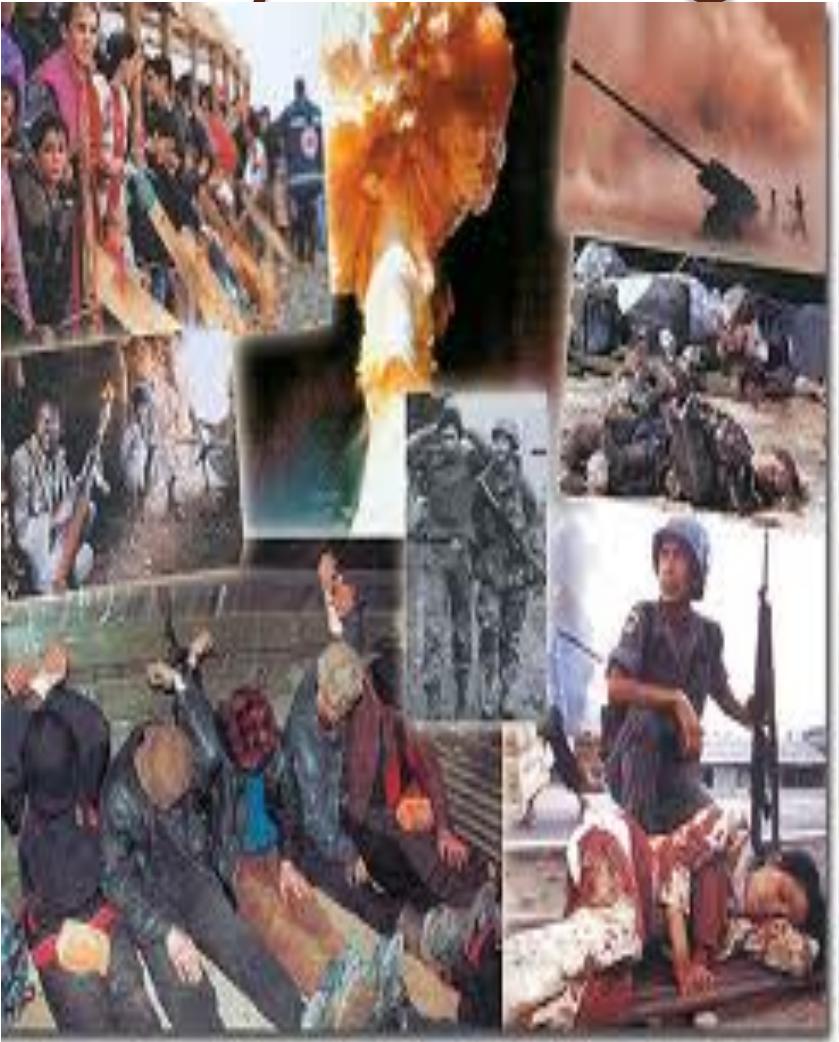
- One popular view is based on evolutionary psychology
 - sees war as a human extension of animal behaviour
 - territorial competition and violence is instinctive
- Another theory proposes that human beings are inherently violent
 - natural aggressive impulses are fuelled by repressed sexuality

Rulers and population pressures

- aggressive rulers play a key part in starting wars
- expanding populations and scarce resources also play a part (Malthus)
 - wars are more likely to occur in high-fertility, impoverished parts of the world



The youth bulge



- ‘youth bulge theory’ proposes that war originates when large young male cohorts lack job opportunities

Some use this theory to explain Islamic terrorism

- religions and ideologies are secondary factors that merely legitimate violence
- beliefs do not result in violence unless a youth bulge is present

Imperialistic capitalism

- Some wars begin with the pursuit of territory for natural resources and wealth
- Marxist theory proposes that all modern wars are caused by capitalist competition for resources and markets
- Capitalist profitmaking must always expand or else implode



Rationalism and irrationalism



- The rationalist theory views war as a strategy game with geopolitical goals under uncertain conditions
- However, rationalist explanations of war are poor at explaining non-strategic genocidal wars
- They ignore irrational prejudices, fears, hopes, and fantasies
- Also, they assume the state acts as a unitary individual
 - This only makes sense when analyzing dictatorships or monarchies

Civil wars: Why some people rebel

- rebels typically have a “grievance” against the state and the people who run it
- see violence as the only way to right the wrong inflicted on them

Grievances can include

- limited access to health care, education, or other public services;
- Rigid class hierarchies that prevent social mobility; or
- denial of human rights



Redistribution and punishment



- Support for rebellion increases when a government fails to redistribute resources
 - With redistribution, support for a rebellion may decline, regardless of the inequality
- Severe and violent punishments may discourage people from joining the rebels

However, punishments may backfire

- People may join the rebellion because they believe the government will punish them anyway
- To calm a rebellion, governments need to leave the non-rebel citizens alone
 - They need to assure non-rebels that they will have opportunities to get ahead if they remain loyal



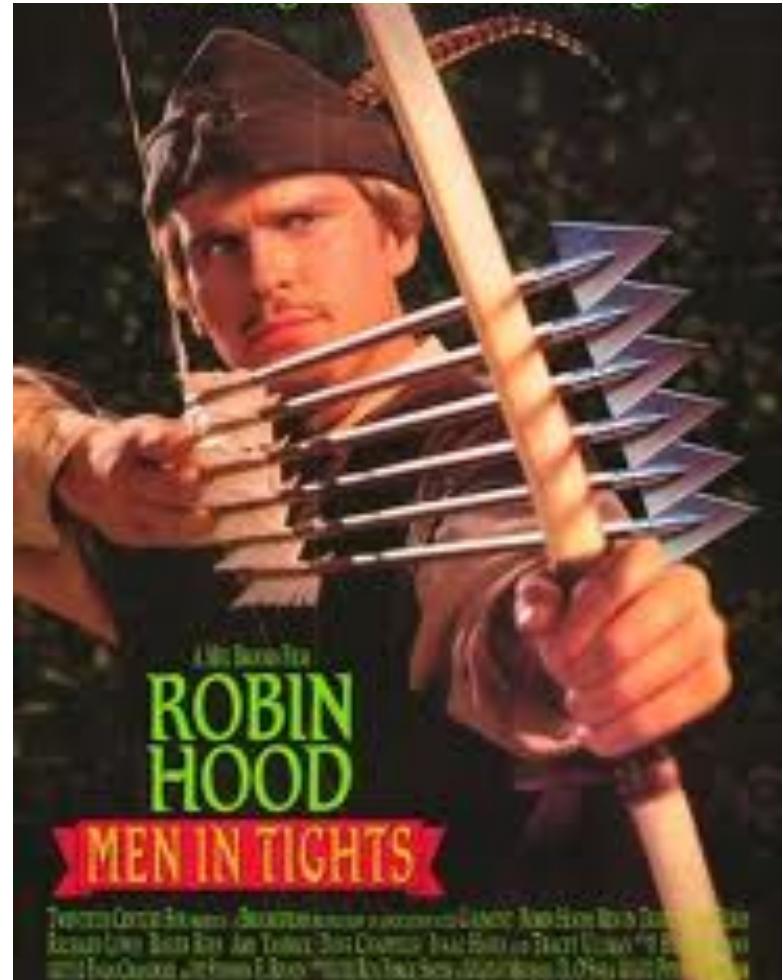
A cycle of violence and inequality



- Government brutality perpetuates violence and inequality
- A cycle of violence and inequality is created:
 - The oppressed use violence against inequality
 - those in power use violence to keep power
- protestors form communities to give one another support

Bandit communities

- Historian Eric Hobsbawm (1959) defines banditry as a “primitive” form of organized social protest
 - Occurs in pre-industrial (agricultural) societies, without a long-term political agenda
- Consider Robin Hood, who lived in Sherwood Forest: He...
 - received support and protection from the common people
 - stole from the rich and gave to the poor
 - only killed in self-defense or to avenge wrongs



Why banditry is “pre-political”



- Banditry is a pre-political phenomenon because
 - it does not lead to a stable political structure
 - it does not contest power within political institutions (such as Parliament)
 - It has no political program or agenda
- Once the bandit dies, his rebellion is over

Radical communities



- radical protest movements often are small, unstable, and cliquish
- E.g., the League for Socialist Action (LSA), a 1960s group that claimed leadership of the Canadian working class
- Members accepted Trotsky's idea of world revolution
- They felt reformist social democrats and trade-union bureaucrats propped up the capitalist system

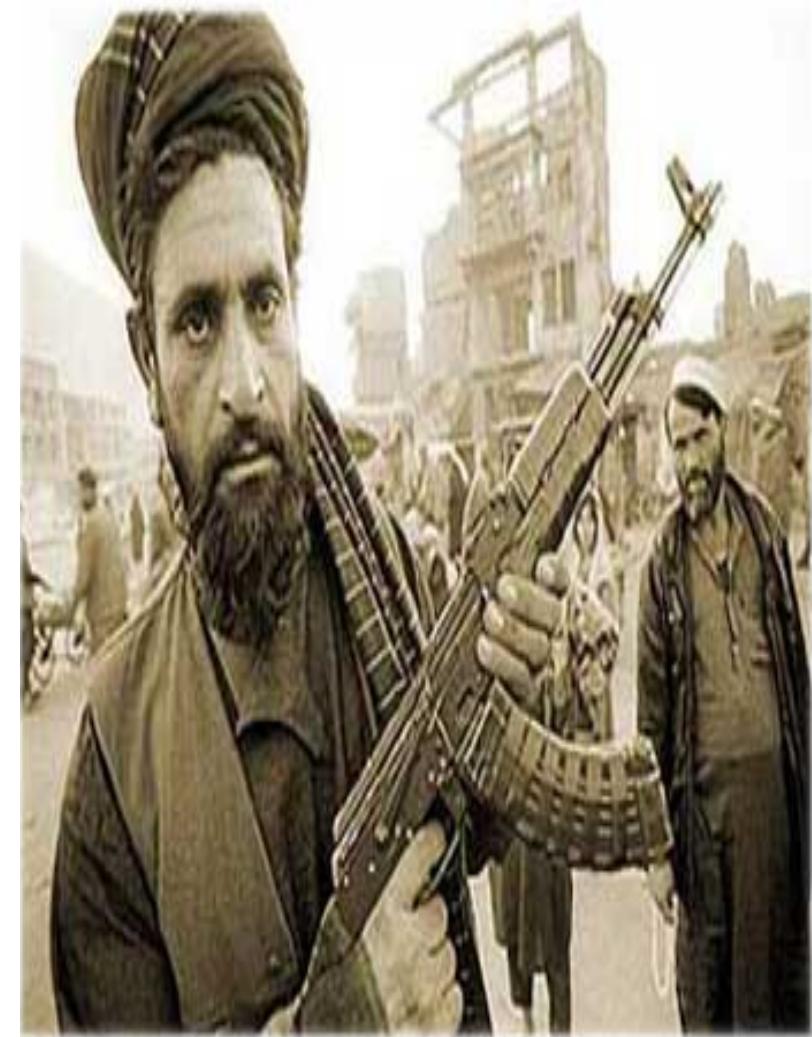
Institutional completeness again

- The LSA recruited members and maintained cohesion
 - through regular public forums, group meetings, poetry readings, and social gatherings
- frequent group activities kept members safe from capitalist propaganda.
- Had *institutional completeness*:
 - Satisfied needs for support and interaction



Guerilla Communities

- Guerrillas – another type of protest community -- are soldiers in civil wars
- They challenge the political order through violence against civilians
- Guerrillas work more openly than terrorists and use more focused methods of violence
- They also use propaganda and persuasion



Terrorists and terrorism

- *Terrorism = any act employing the unpredictable use of force to undermine the legitimate authority of a government and create fear in the general population*
- Usually rooted in religious, ethnic, nationalist, political, economic, and social inequalities
- social networks are important to ensure secrecy

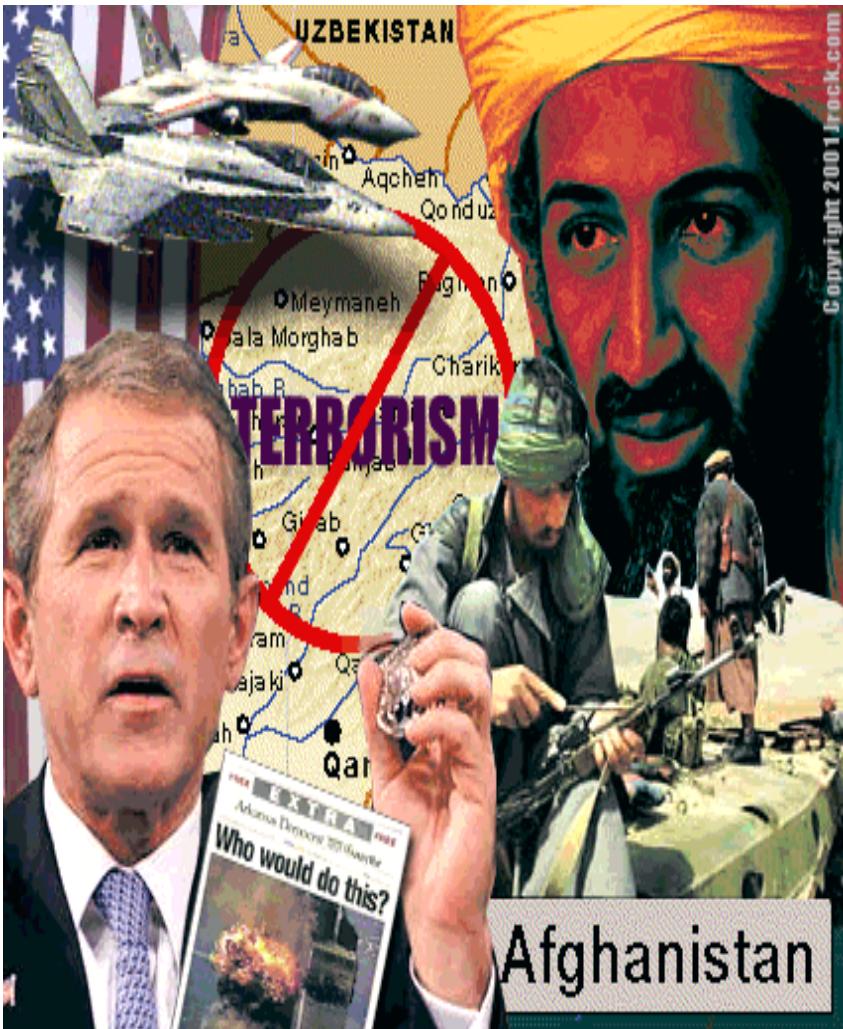


Terrorism defined



- Terrorism can be considered ‘The Common (or Poor) Man’s War’
- Uses unexpected, shocking, and unlawful violence against non-combatants and other symbolic targets
- The aim is to publicize a political or religious cause and coerce a government (or civilian population) into accepting demands on behalf of the cause

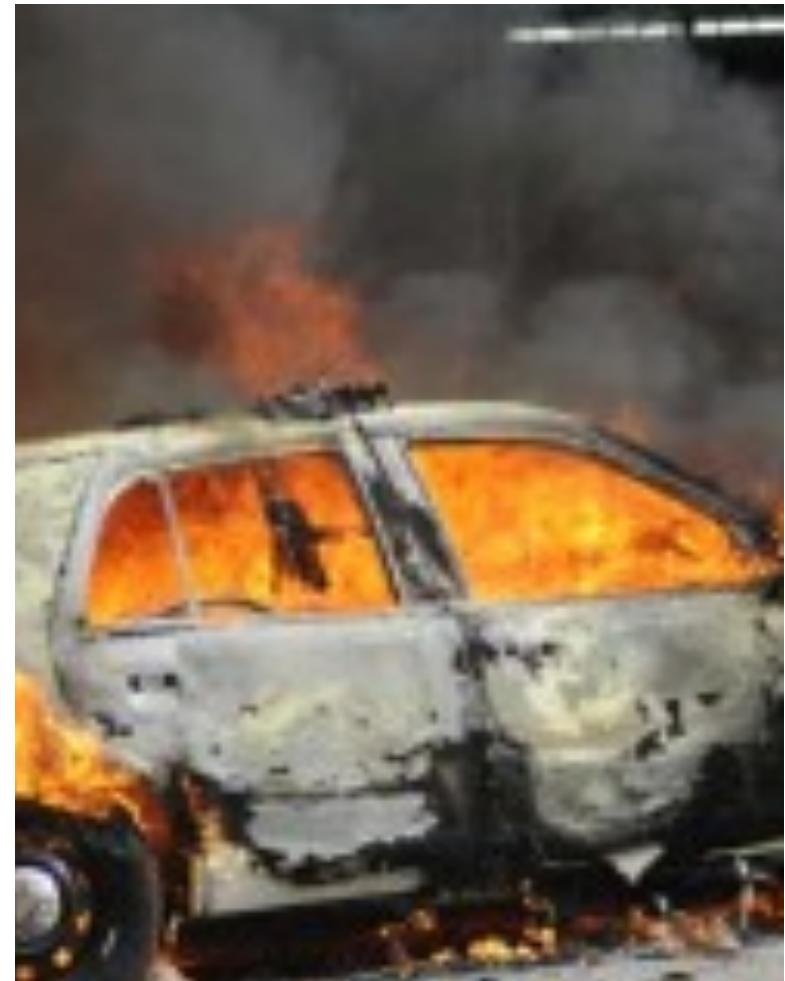
The poor man's war



- Terrorism is warfare with limited resources
- *State-sponsored terrorism* is the state-sanctioned use of terrorist groups to facilitate foreign policy objectives
- However, most terrorism opposes the government in power

The social background of terror

- Ironically, though terrorists are usually fighting against inequality, their leaders are usually men from middle to upper-class backgrounds
 - However, many of the followers are disadvantaged
- Terrorist groups are usually part of a religious or ethnic subpopulation that is discriminated against and feels victimized



What motivates terrorists?

Terrorists are usually struggling to

- promote an ideology
- struggle for control of religious expression
- overthrow an oppressive government



Other common motivations (cf. the youth bulge theory)

- Unable to find work or move up the social ladder in their own repressive society, feeling humiliation and anger, they search for an outlet
- Often, they blame their suffering on other (external) targets



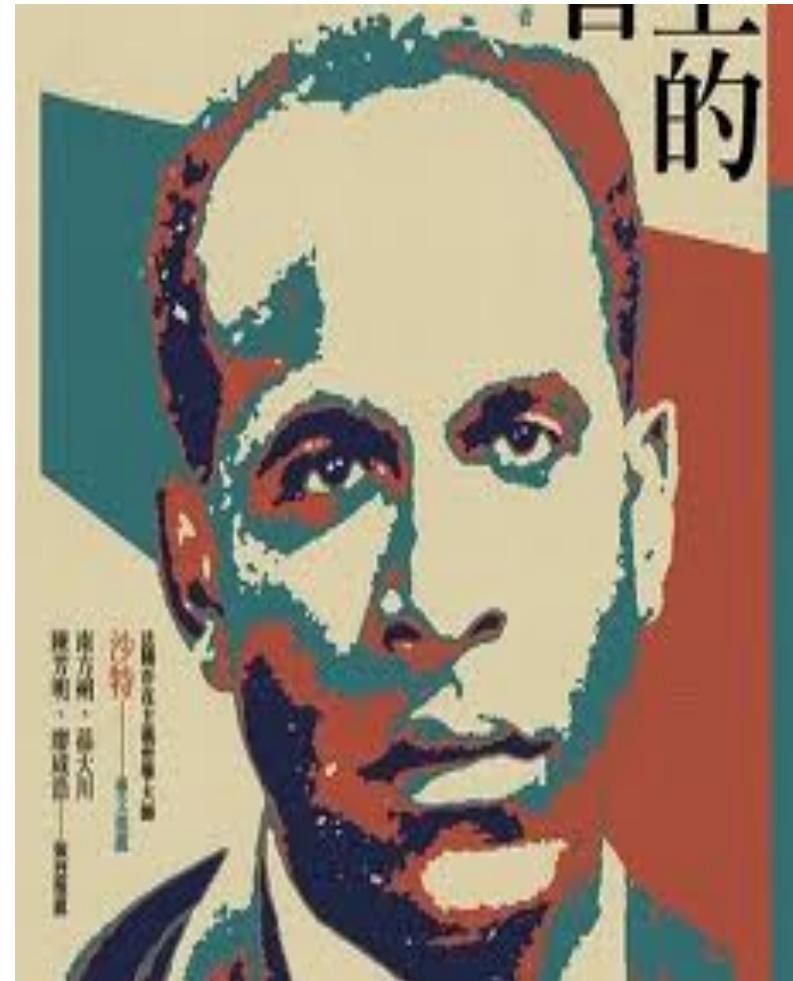
The healing use of terror



- Secret terrorist groups are particularly common in colonial societies, where people fight to remove the colonial power
- Frantz Fanon, in his classic work, *The Wretched of the Earth*, said that under conditions of colonial oppression, the identity and health of the colonized person is at stake
- Fanon, a psychiatrist, urged black and brown people to use violence against colonial masters, for their mental health

Violence and self-respect

- Fanon proposes that a *violent* uprising is the only way to end colonialism and the psychological pathologies it causes
- Dominated people internalize the views of the colonizers
- Gaining self-respect is a step towards liberation
- Violence, according to Fanon, is the only way to gain self-respect



Inequality in developing societies

- It is difficult to assess the relative importance of inequality in causing wars
- However, inequality is evidently important
- An Oxford University specialist on conflict in developing regions, Frances Stewart, highlights the link between inequality and war in
 - *War and Underdevelopment* (2001)



Other root causes of wars



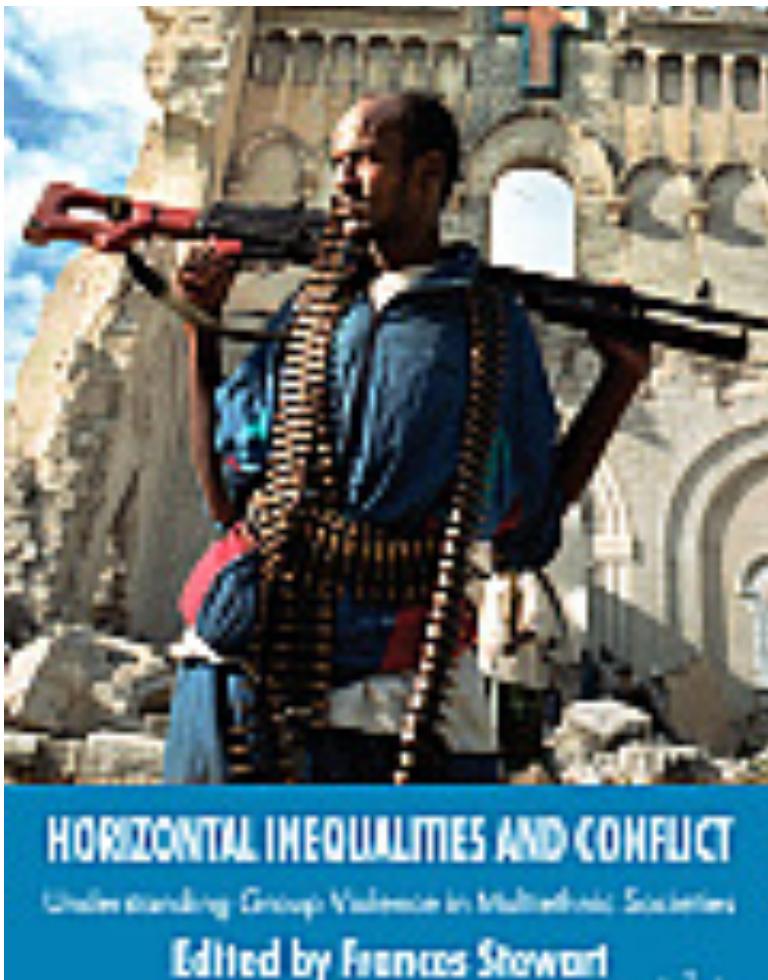
- all less developed countries are currently involved in wars, or have been very recently
- The root causes include
 - poverty
 - economic stagnation
 - lack of services
 - high unemployment
 - environmental degradation resulting in shortages of land, food, and water

The group motivation hypothesis

- If there are important differences between groups, especially in the distribution and exercise of political and economic power... deprived groups are likely to seek (or be persuaded by their leaders to seek) redress
- privileged groups may also be motivated to fight to protect their privileges against attack from deprived groups



Horizontal inequalities (HI)



- What Stewart calls *horizontal inequalities* —based on economic, social, or political differences – are most likely to cause conflict
- *Horizontal inequalities* are non-class inequalities: between genders, racial and ethnic groups, regions and nations

What are key causes of warfare

Stewart writes....

- reducing large horizontal inequalities is essential to eliminate a major source of conflict...
- Above all, there is a need to secure inclusive government
- and a flourishing economy so that all major groups and most people gain from participation in the normal economy



Social inequality vs economic inequality



- Social inequality reportedly has a stronger impact on civil unrest than economic inequality
 - E.g., educational inequality is more important than asset ownership in making an entire group resentful
 - That's because resources like education and citizenship are symbolic as well as practical resources

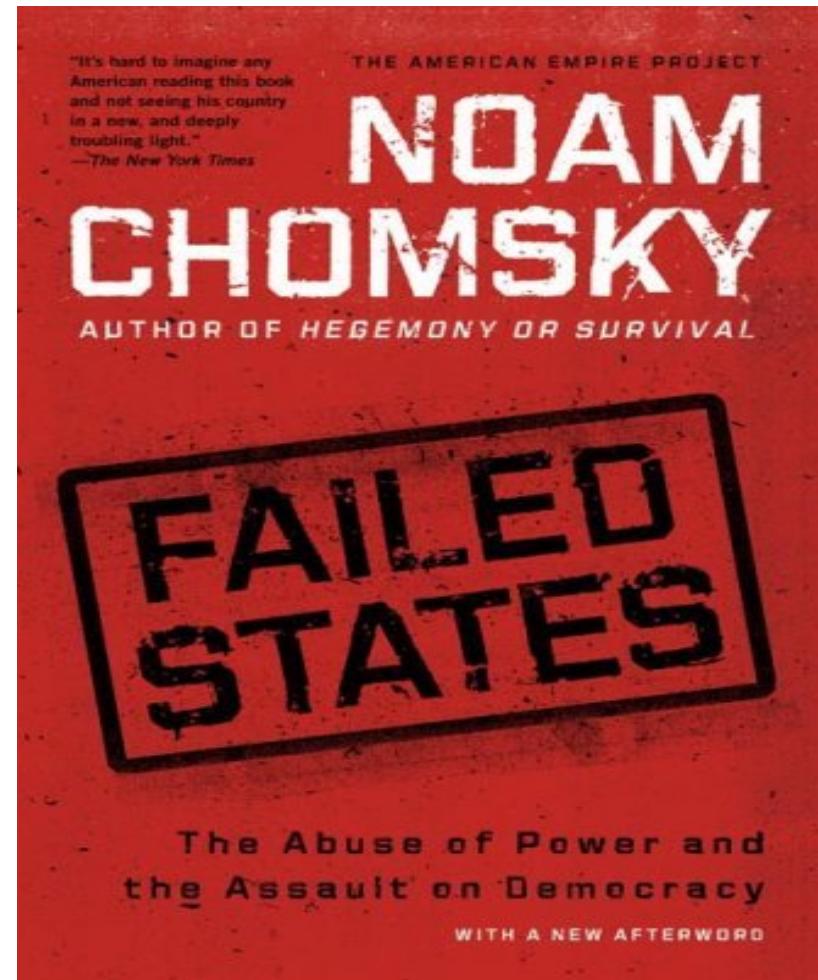
Failed states and violence

THE FAILED STATES INDEX 2009		
RANK	TOTAL	COUNTRY
1	114.7	Somalia
2	114	Zimbabwe
3	112.4	Sudan
4	112.2	Chad
5	108.7	Dem. Rep. of the Congo
6	108.6	Iraq
7	108.2	Afghanistan
8	105.4	Central African Republic
9	104.6	Guinea
10	104.1	Pakistan
11	102.5	Ivory Coast
12	101.8	Haiti
13	101.5	Burma
14	101.4	Kenya
15	99.8	Nigeria
16	98.9	Ethiopia
17	98.3	North Korea

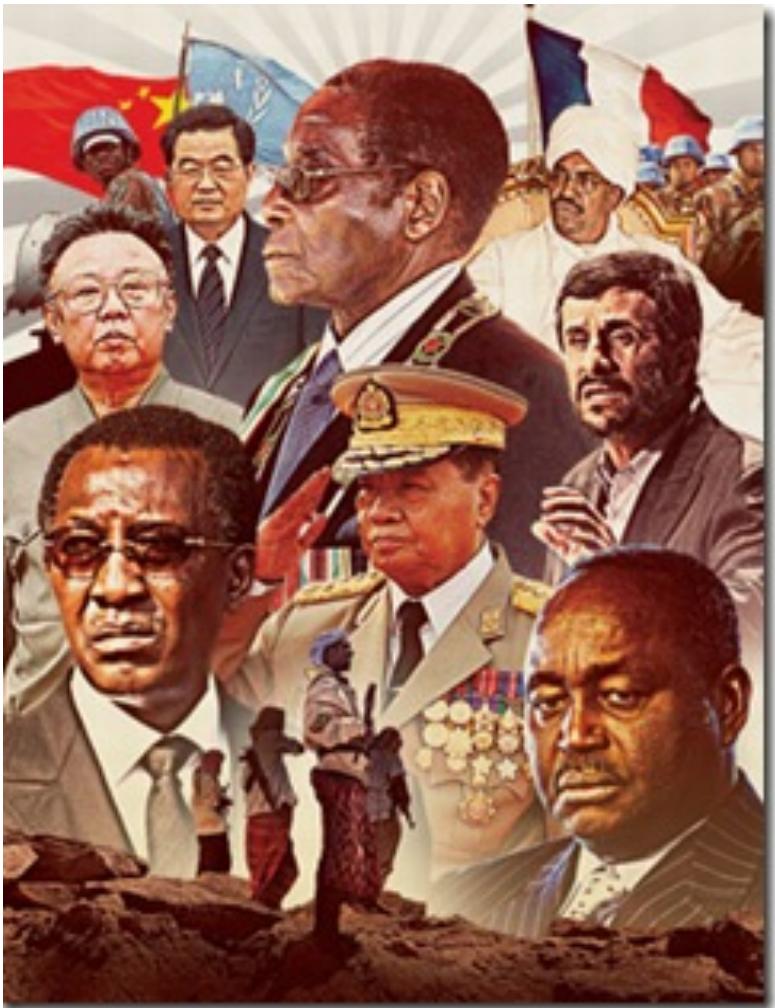
- Failed states are often the locus of civil war and promoters of wars in nearby countries
- At the top of the “failed states” list are Somalia, Zimbabwe, Sudan, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Guinea, and Pakistan
- At the top of the ‘sustainable (i.e., non-failed) states list are Norway, Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, Ireland, Denmark, New Zealand, Australia, Netherlands, and Austria
- Canada is just below this, alongside Luxemburg and Iceland

Failed states are more unequal

- The Failed State index measures the weakness, ineffectiveness, and illegitimacy of the government,
- Societies with high scores on the Failed State Index tend to have high degrees of warfare, ethnic inequality, and gender inequality
- Do failed states also have income inequality?
- Let's find out if income inequality is correlated with the Failed States index



What the data show



- Yes, failed states also have high income inequality
- Only *eight* out of the top 20 and bottom 20 failed states *do not* conform:
- Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, and Ethiopia have *lower levels* of income inequality than expected
- the US, UK, Portugal, and New Zealand have *higher levels* of income inequality than expected

Relative and absolute deprivation

- Along similar lines, a study of 71 developing countries found that high income inequality increases socio-political instability
- Other researchers have found that high Gini scores are related to the outbreak of civil violence
 - even under conditions of rapid economic growth
- *relative deprivation* proves to be more important for civil violence than *absolute deprivation*



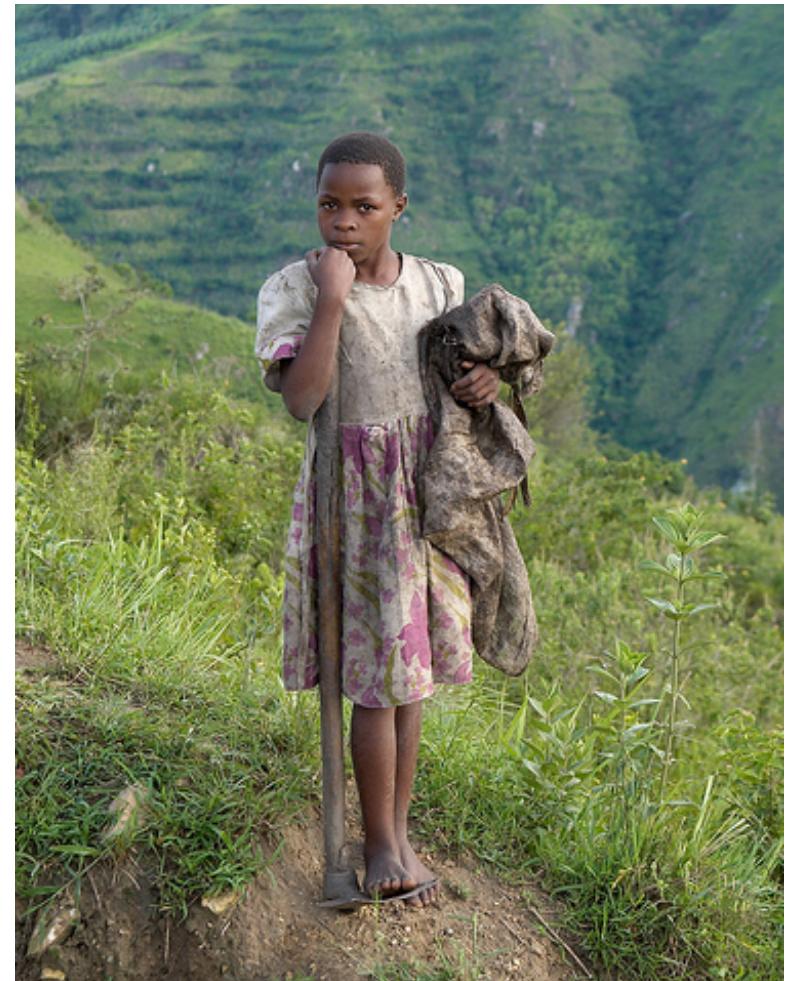
Relative deprivation theory



- Absolute deprivation creates apathy and indifference, not violence
What causes violence are the comparisons people make to others who are better off
- Thus, relative inequalities in socio-economic status are more important for civil unrest than absolute levels of poverty

The role of gender inequality

- Recall that warlike “failed states” are characterized by **gender inequality**
- Thus, like income inequality, gender inequality can cause violence on many levels
- One is violent crime against women, including rape and abuse
- Violence is one way that men maintain their power and control
- The patriarchal ideology affirms the weakness of women while rewarding the aggressiveness of men



Private violence and public violence



- The result is a culture that accepts or ignores violence against women
- numerous studies link high levels of domestic violence to high rates of violent conflict resolution in public
- a culture marked by gendered violence on an *individual* level is primed for other forms of violence including higher levels of both *inter-* and *intrastate* violence

The role of high fertility

- High fertility rates also point to gender inequality
- women within these societies have
 - more health problems
 - less access to education and jobs
 - lower occupational aspirations
 - more financial dependence on men



Gender inequality predicts war



- With fertility rates and female employment rates as measures of gender inequality, more gender inequality is directly related to
 - more political violence within a nation
 - more use of military force to resolve international conflicts

The role of hegemonic masculinity

- “Hegemonic masculinity” describes a culture of manhood characterized by courage, competitiveness, and aggression
- This outlook creates the sense that naturally superior men must defend naturally weaker women
- This imagery is often used to mobilize people through the use of stereotypes and gendered language (for example, “the motherland”)



Why don't women rebel?

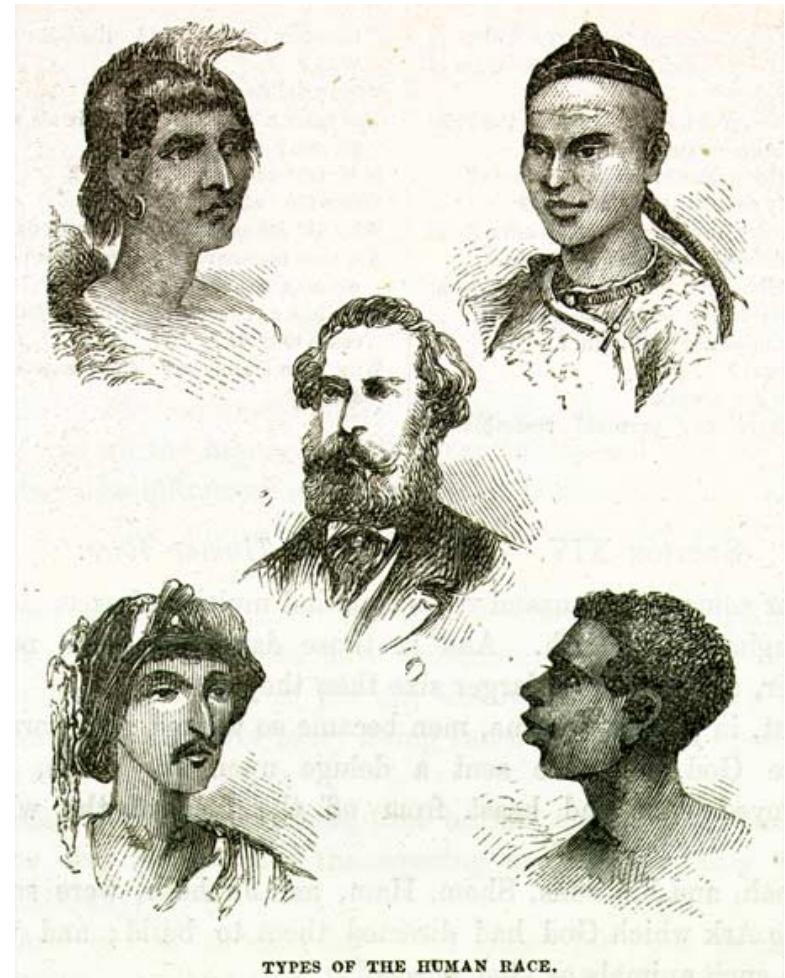


Women in high fertility, traditional societies...

- Are typically cast in the role of homemakers for their supposedly superior husbands
- Have little political or economic power
- Have restricted public lives that limit forming a common identity and gaining political efficacy

The role of ethnic inequality

- Ethnically based civil wars make up the vast majority of all recorded civil wars occurring since 1945
- These *internal* conflicts have resulted in over five times the number of deaths seen in *interstate* wars
- Consider how ethnic divisions can affect group identities and grievances ...



Fractionalization and polarization



- “fractionalization” results from an increase in the number of ethnic groups in a society
- “polarization” results when there are a few equally large groups.
- leaders often use ethnic *polarization* to whip up ethnic conflict
 - By creating narratives of shared grievances against other groups

Why is ethnic inequality important?

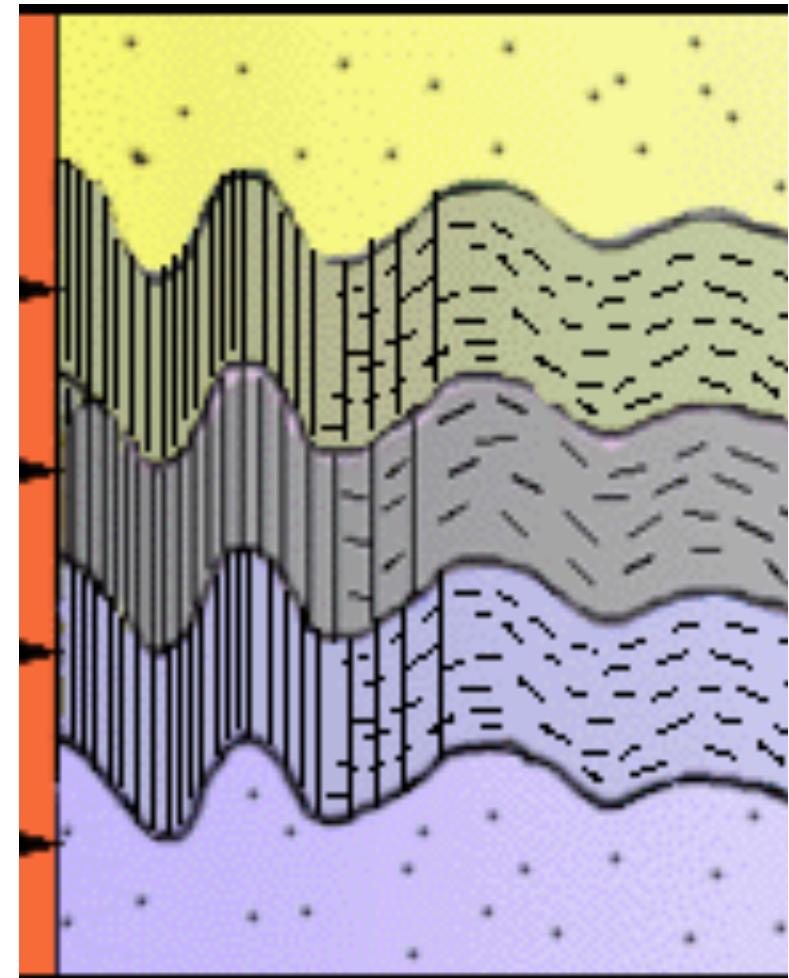
Ethnic inequalities help a rebel leader to mobilize a group:

- Common ethnicity promotes identification with group membership
- People with the same ethnicity often hold the same values and expectations
- With a common language, communication is easier.

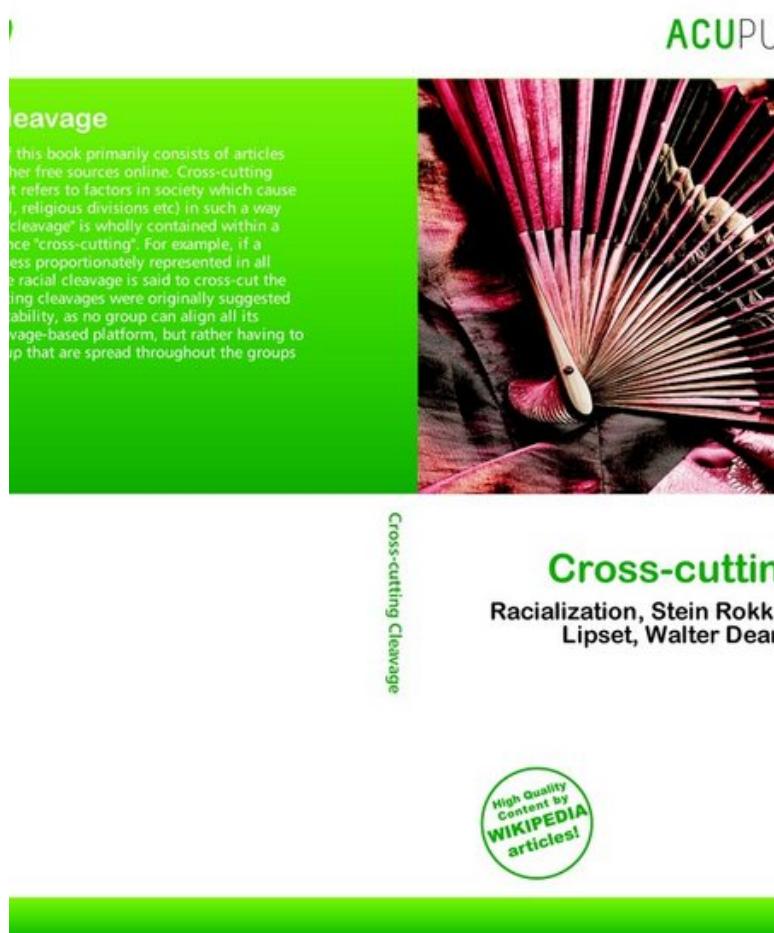


Why ethnic inequality doesn't always lead to violence

- Yet there are many ethnically diverse countries that do *not* experience civil wars
- To understand why, consider two ideas:
 - social cleavages
 - cross-cuttingness versus over-lappingness



There are social cleavages in a society when...



1. groups are divided along demographic or socioeconomic lines (e.g., class, ethnicity, religion) which separate them from other people
2. people on one side of a social divide are aware of the characteristic that unites them and willing to act in support of their group interests
3. institutions provide organizational support to those on their side of the social divide.

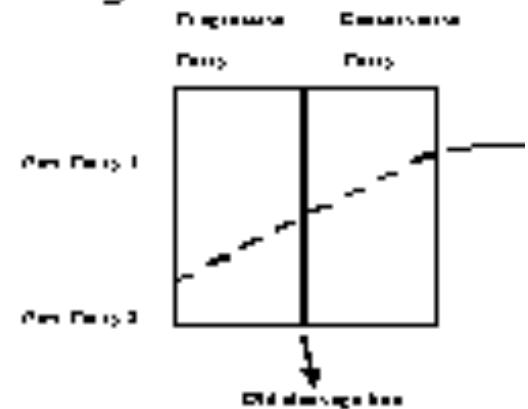
Lipset and Rokkan (1967) propose that deep social cleavages lead to patterns of regular political behavior – e.g., group voting, ethnic political parties

Cross-cuttingness

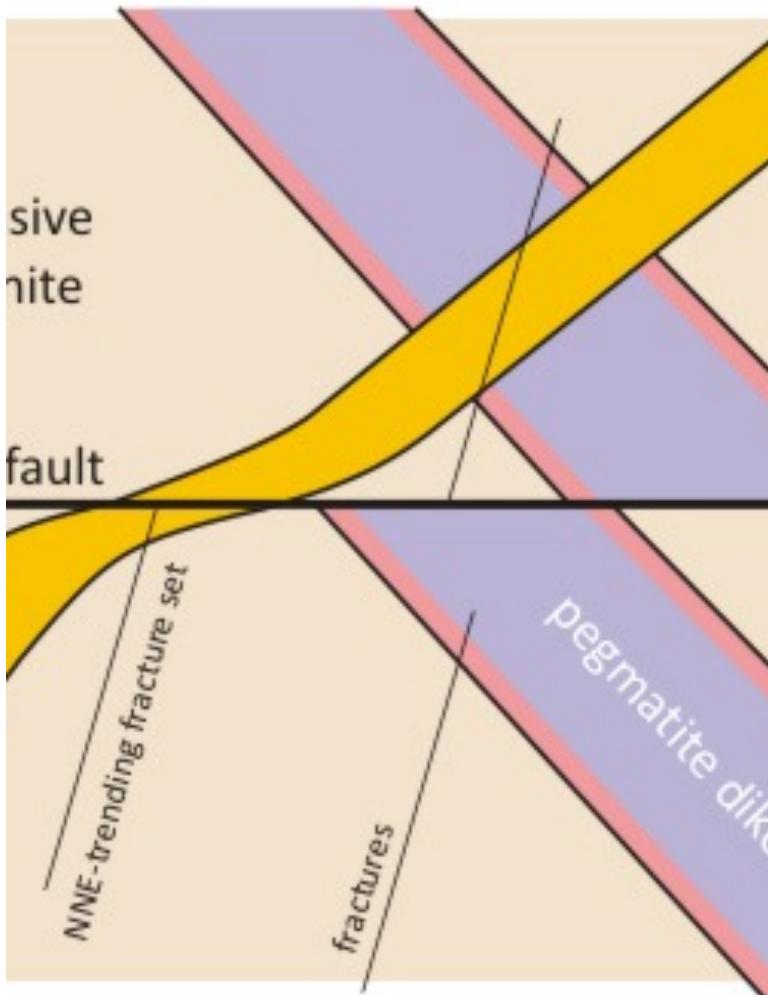
- Do cleavage lines overlap or cross-cut each other?
- With perfect cross-cuttingness, there is no correlation between an individual's memberships in various groups
 - E.g., knowing a person's ethnicity does not predict his social class
- People in societies with cross-cutting cleavages have weak loyalties to any particular group and more association with members of other groups

Cross-cutting Cleavages

- "To bring about a realignment, a new issue must be one that cuts across the existing line of cleavage."



For example....



- When ethnic identity is crosscut by additional social socioeconomic class, the likelihood of a rebellion drops
- But when ethnicity overlaps with class or region, revolts develop more easily
- Cross-cutting cleavages reduce the ability of a rebel leader to call on group loyalty and group institutions
- Rebel leaders are more successful in mobilizing an ethnic group that is *not* cross-cut by other social differences (e.g., Quebec)

More cross-cutting = more peace



- cross-cutting cleavages reduce in-group communication and increase communication with other groups
 - This “external” communication exposes people to alternate views
 - Remember Porter’s *Vertical Mosaic* (1965) – re ethnicity and class in Canada
- states with few cross-cutting cleavages (i.e., more overlapping cleavages) are more likely to experience civil war

Overlapping cleavages = war

- When ethnicity is reinforced by religion, socioeconomic class, and geographic region, rebel leaders are best able to mobilize group members
 - by appealing to economic and other grievances
 - by creating a clear justification for nationalistic goals
- Research finds civil war onset is twelve times more likely in countries with the least cross-cuttingness than in countries with the most



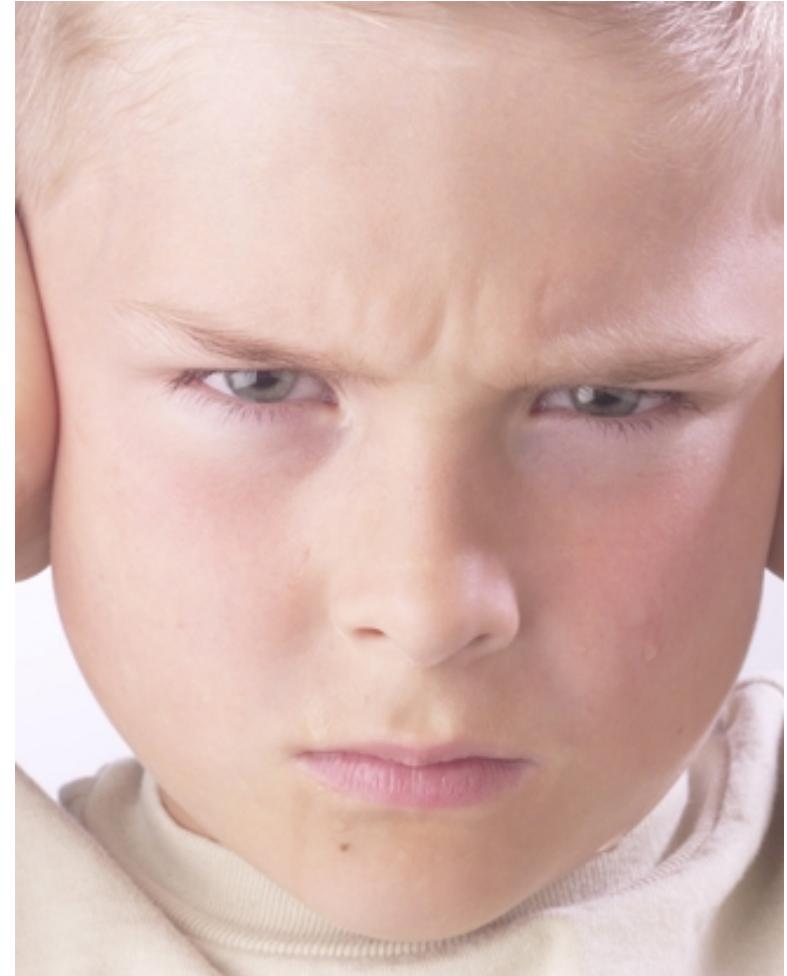
Inequality and Emotions



- Large reservoirs of emotions
—whether positive or negative
—influence people's perceptions of the society in which they live
- Disadvantaged people tend to experience more than average negative emotions
- Advantaged people experience more than average positive emotion, which tends to legitimate the system in their eyes

Negative emotions and war

- The storing of negative emotions can lead to behavioural pathologies such as individual addiction or crime
 - But stores of negative emotions can also lead to collective anger in a community or group.
- If people attribute the suffering to a fault of their own, they will experience personal ‘pathologies’.
 - But if they blame it on an outside influence, such as another group, they may turn against that group



What are some strategies for preventing all-out warfare?



- First, it may be possible to reduce the scale of wars, even if we cannot prevent them altogether.
- Second, it may be possible to reduce the availability and risks of weaponry.
 - An example of this is the Landmines Convention, which prohibits the use, stockpiling, production, and transfer of anti-personnel mines

International peace-keeping

- A third possibility is to increase the role of international peacekeeping bodies (e.g., under UN)
- In theory, peacekeepers can provide a physical and psychological barrier through their presence.
- In practice, however, peacekeeping does not always prevent bloodshed (for example, in Rwanda in the mid-1990s).



Give equality a chance



- A fourth possibility is the redistribution of wealth and privilege
- Of course, such redistribution will be hard to bring about
- Powerful groups will oppose significant redistribution
- Prosperous nations will resist redistribution to benefit poorer societies

How is Canada doing so far?

- Inequality cannot be eliminated, but we can reduce it to humanly acceptable levels
- Our standard of comparison should be other industrial nations that currently exist
- On this basis, Scandinavia – Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland – is doing best
- In general, northwestern Europe, Australia and New Zealand are also doing well

How much equality is possible? More study is needed.



- How close can humans come to achieving equality?
- Under what conditions can humans do this?
- What are the social and other costs of doing so?
- Do we have sociological theories to predict these outcomes?

Inequality can be reduced!

Gini indices, most recent year

Rank	Country	Value	Date of Info
39	United States	45.0	2007
43	Turkey	43.6	2003
49	Russia	42.3	2008
51	China	41.5	2007
59	Israel	39.2	2008
60	Macedonia	39.0	2003
61	Portugal	38.5	2007
62	Japan	38.1	2002
66	India	36.8	2004
68	New Zealand	36.2	1997
71	Poland	34.9	2005
74	United Kingdom	34.0	2005
75	Switzerland	33.7	2008
77	Greece	33.0	2005
79	France	32.7	2008
81	Canada	32.1	2005
82	Romania	32.0	2008
82	Spain	32.0	2005
82	Ireland	32.0	2005
82	Italy	32.0	2006
99	Norway	25.0	2008
99	Iceland	25.0	2005
100	Denmark	24.0	2005
101	Sweden	23.0	2005



Equality = political sustainability

Chart 2 Indices of Inequality and Failure/Sustainability, by country

Country	Gini Index(1)	XXXXXXXXX	Country	Sustainability Index (2)
Slovenia	23.6		Finland	19.7
Denmark	24.8		Norway	20.4
Norway	25.0		Sweden	22.8
Czech Republic	25.6		Switzerland	23.2
Slovak Republic	25.7		Denmark	23.8
Finland	25.9		New Zealand	24.8
Sweden	25.9		Ireland	25.3
Belgium	25.9		Luxembourg	26.1
Austria	26.1		Austria	27.3
Hungary	27.2		Canada	27.7
Luxembourg	28.8			
France	29.3			
Ireland	29.3		Australia	28.1
Netherlands	29.4		Netherlands	28.3
Germany	29.5		Iceland	30.1
Iceland	30.1		Japan	31.0
Switzerland	30.3		Portugal	32.3
Poland	30.5		Germany	33.9
Greece	30.7			
Estonia	31.5			



Equality = prosperity

Chart 3 Measures of per capita income, adjusted for purchasing power parity (PPP): GDP and GNI, respectively (\$) – *most recent years available*

Luxembourg	84,829	Luxembourg	63,950
Norway	53,376	Norway	57,100
Switzerland	43,508	Switzerland	48,960
Netherlands	42,330	Netherlands	42,610
Austria	41,805	Sweden	39,660
Sweden	40,613	Austria	39,390
Canada	40,457	Canada	37,280

We can do better. It's your life!

