

Typologies of violence:  
Micro and Macro  
Causes of Violence.  
The Cycle of Violence.

# Definition of Violence

❖ Violence is any action, inaction, or structural arrangement that results in physical, psychological, and social harm to one or more persons.

## Central Elements of the Definition

- ❖ Violence can be a result of action, inaction, or a structural arrangement.
- ❖ Violence must be willfully or deliberately committed or condoned by an actor or agents of the actor.
- ❖ Violence can be intended or unintended.
- ❖ Violence is violence whether it is justified or unjustified as defined by either the actors or the audience to the action.
- ❖ Violence and its harmful effects occur on both the physical, psychological, and social levels.
- ❖ Violence may be recognized or not recognized by both the recipient of the action and/or the actor.

# **Sociological Principles of Violence**

1. Violence and the threat of violence are ultimate forms of power.

## 2. Violence takes place within the context of the social forms or structures in which we live.

- ❖ Violence is a form of power that is an instrument for the maintenance of social structures in the society.
- ❖ Violence also occurs as an act of conscious rebellion or as an instrumental or expressive response to social structures.

### 3. Violence is more likely to occur in the context of hierarchical social forms or structures.

- ❖ In all hierarchical forms such as systems of stratification, violence occurs because hierarchical social structures are often fundamentally based on relationships of exploitation.
- ❖ An exploitative relationship by definition creates differential benefits and commitments of the actors involved.
- ❖ As a result of this inequality of benefits accrued from the relationship, there is ultimately a need for coercion to maintain them.
- ❖ A corollary to this third principle is that the more hierarchical structures exist within a society and the more intricate the hierarchical structures, the more violence will exist in that society as a means of preserving, adapting, or rebelling against these structures.

## 4. Violence as a form of power is learned.

- ❖ It is learned by the imitation of those who use violence to maintain power and control. In these cases we principally learn that power can be instrumental.
- ❖ Violence can also be learned as an imitation of those who are dominated or controlled. In this case, we learn that violence can be also expressive in that it is an "appropriate" response to anger or frustration.



5. Violence is defined as legitimate or illegitimate as it relates to whether it furthers or threatens the social structures of the society.

- ❖ Violence which threatens the hierarchical structures that form the foundation of the society is defined as illegitimate and the most serious forms of violence.
- ❖ Violence that furthers or strengthens the hierarchical structures are defined as legitimate and necessary.
- ❖ A corollary to this last principle is that those who are more powerful in the society have greater ability to commit violence and the violence they commit is more likely to be defined as legitimate, and thus non-problematic.

## 6. Violence takes place in the context of levels: interpersonal, institutional, and structural.

- ❖ Interpersonal violence - occurs between people acting outside of the roles prescribed within social institutions.
- ❖ Institutional violence occurs by the action of societal institutions and their agents.
- ❖ Structural violence occurs in the context of establishing, maintaining, extending, or reducing the hierarchical ordering of categories of people within and between societies.

# Examples of Interpersonal Violence

- ❖ The assault between strangers at a bar.
- ❖ A gang fight between rival gangs.
- ❖ A date rape.
- ❖ A lovers quarrel that leads to assault or homicide.

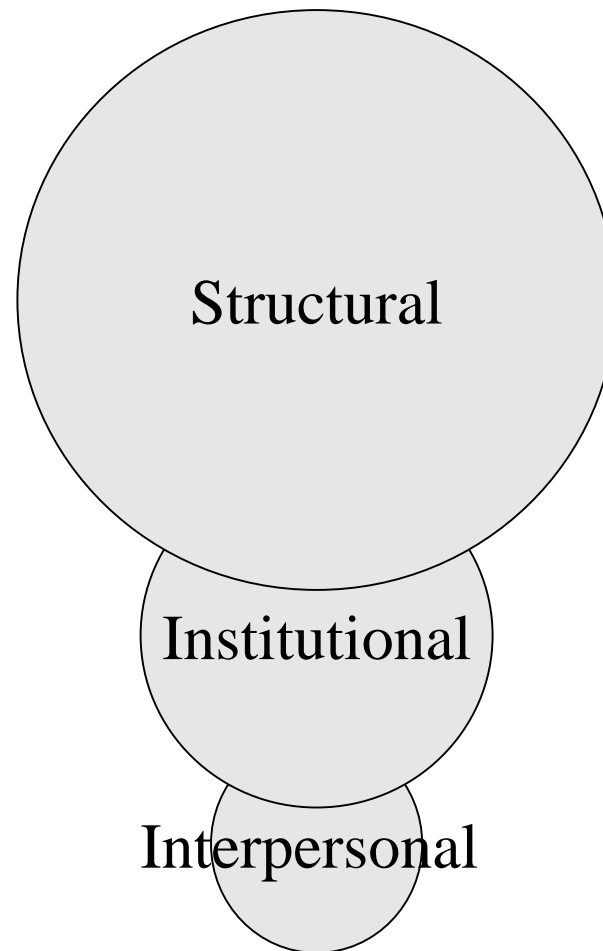
# Examples of Institutional Violence

- ❖ Economic Violence – product, production, and environmental violence.
- ❖ Family Violence – child, spouse, and elder abuse.
- ❖ Religious Violence - intersect violence, crusades, persecutions, and ritual sacrifices.
- ❖ State Violence – violence by police, military and private militia surrogates.

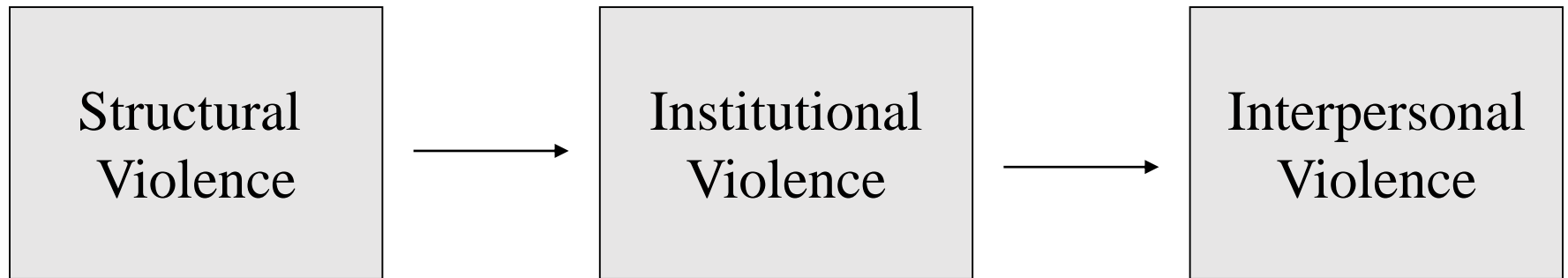
# Examples of Structural Violence

- ❖ Hate crimes - violence directed at a minority group that establishes, maintains, or extends the system of hierarchy.
- ❖ Differential mortality and morbidity rates between different positions within systems of stratification.
  - ❖ If you are born in Afghanistan you will live on the average thirty three less years than if you born in the United States.
  - ❖ In the country of Sweden 7 out of every 1,000 children die before they reach the age of 5, in Peru the rate is almost 25 times greater.

7. As we move from the interpersonal to institutional to structural the scale and scope of violence increases.



## 8. The Chain of Violence



- ❖ Most violence that occurs in a society is linked to the other contexts of violence.
- ❖ Violence begins at the structural level. What allows us to victimize others is our ability to think less of and separate ourselves from the others we victimize.
- ❖ Those who are victimized at the structural level, at birth, are more likely to be victimized at the institutional level in families, in schools, in the economy, and in the political system.
- ❖ Lastly, the violence manifest itself at the interpersonal level, in some cases directed at those who are perceived as victimizers at the higher levels, in most cases at those who also experience similar victimization at the structural and institutional levels.

# Micro Violence

❖ Confrontational tension

❖ Fear



# Typology of Micro Violence

1. Attacking the weak
2. Audience oriented staged and controlled fair fights
3. Confrontation-avoiding remote violence
4. Confrontation-avoiding by deception
5. Confrontation-avoiding by absorption in technique

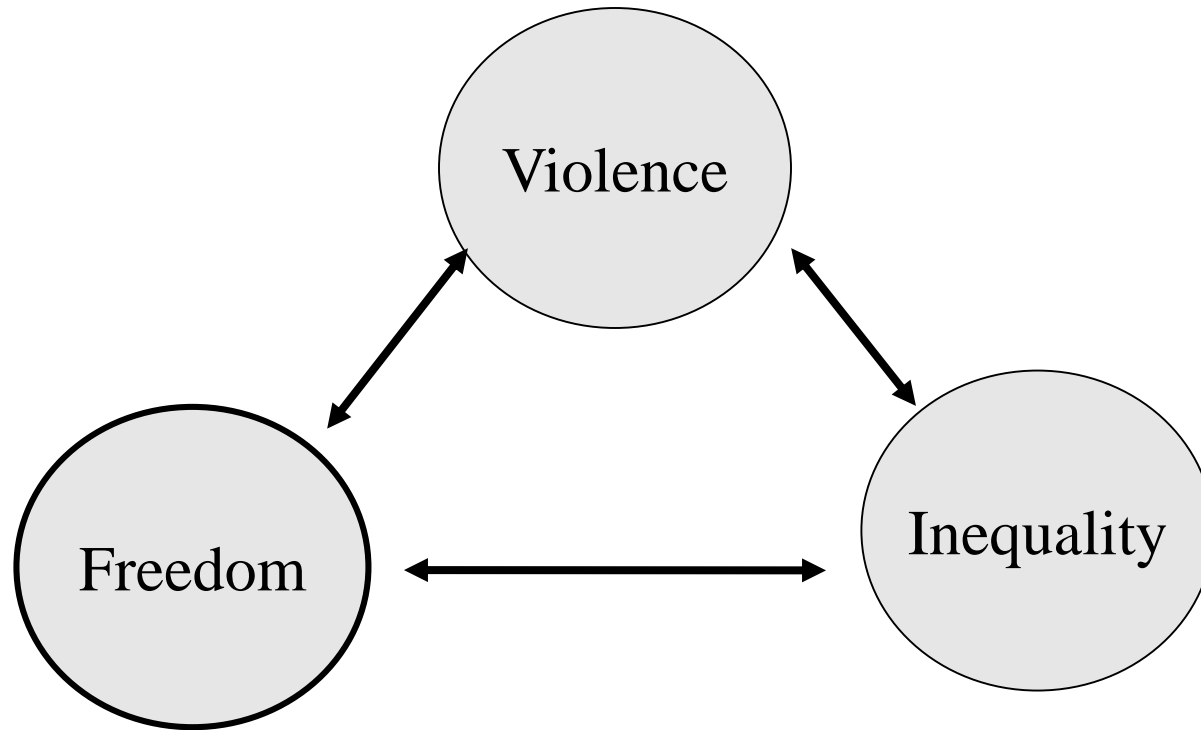
# The Cycle of Micro Violence

- 1. Trigger** – Anything that person experiences (not necessarily really be so) as a serious threat in relation to his life, body or property.
- 2. Escalation** - The body and mind of a person are prepared to fight and take a physical position that represents readiness for action. The growing intensity of violence.
- 3. Culmination** - Maximum of verbal and physical aggression.
- 4. Recovery** - Reducing the physical and psychological tension due to a person sees the final or at least a temporary end of the conflict.
- 5. Post-crisis depression** - As the mind and body back into balance, physical and emotional aspects of the crisis appear again, in the form of fatigue, depression and guilt.

# The return to normal condition

- At this stage, the person comes out of self-blame, and enters a state of their own emotional and physical balance.
- It is possible that this phase is **absent** and to begin a new round of violence due to the bad feelings (and possibly external stimuli) from the previous stage.

# The Cycle of Macro Violence



# Literature

- Collins, R: Micro and Macro Causes of Violence (2009) International Journal of Conflict and Violence. Vol.3 (1).
- [http://www.powershow.com/view2b/5797e6-MTI0N/Breaking\\_the\\_Cycle\\_of\\_Violence\\_powerpoint\\_ppt\\_presentation](http://www.powershow.com/view2b/5797e6-MTI0N/Breaking_the_Cycle_of_Violence_powerpoint_ppt_presentation)