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TO DEHUMANIZE AND SLAUGHTER:
A NATURAL HISTORY MODEL OF MASSACRES

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INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of massacre appears as a blight on the history of mankind, and history is replete with numerous examples. Despite their apparent barbaric nature, however, massacres have probably been more common in the contemporary world. A concept of massacres is often evaluative, based principally on public perception. Newspaper headlines detailing the gore of My Lai and Sabra-Shatilla captivated and titillated readers throughout the world. Reported, but not documented, examples of "mass murder" in Cambodia, Uganda and Afghanistan also attested to its prevalence. What combination of factors - sociological, psychological, political, or economic - produce this extreme form of group behavior? What are the underlying causes of massacres? Do they follow a common pattern or is each unique? Providing answers to these questions will be the purpose of this paper.

MASSACRE DEFINED

Massacre can be defined as the indiscriminate killing of a sizeable number of members of one group by members of another more powerful group in a face-to-face situation within a relatively brief period of time. This definition restricts the general usage of the term and excludes such episodes as the "St. Valentine's Day Massacre," military defeats that are loosely labeled as massacres, and large-scale genocidal practices.

The most salient feature of a massacre is the indiscriminate killing of the victims. Massacres represent, in effect, an outburst of immoderate killings that exceed social prescriptions. The Battle of Little Big Horn (Custer's Last Stand), for instance, wouldn't fit the definition because it was simply a military confrontation between belligerents who were more or less following the prevailing rules of warfare. Although certain elements conform to our definition, the episode lacks the essential ingredient of senseless, indiscriminate killing.

Similarly, mass gangland slayings do not conform to the definition. They are more accurately depicted as a ritualized mass murder of one criminal element by another. Given the sometimes homicidal nature of the organized crime counter-culture, these episodes probably conform to nefarious norms.

Deliberate, broad-scale policies that are designed to annihilate members of a religious, racial, or ethnic group have also been excluded from consideration. Although heinous, and usually resulting in the deaths of thousands or millions of people, genocide programs are the result of contemplative policies by governments and are long-term in duration.

Massacres, by contrast, appear to be somewhat spontaneous and typically feature a loss of control on the part of members of the massacring group. Massacres tend to happen rather quickly and result from unanticipated, highly emotional behavior, in contrast to the methodical extermination practices of a society committing genocide against a minority group. Although not discussing the topic of massacre specifically, Lofland (1981) has identified similar patterns in his analysis of collective hostilities. Massacres would focus on the highest level of collective violence — that directed against other human beings (1981: 427-428).

Massacres possess seven distinguishing characteristics that tend to differentiate them from related events. First, massacres exhibit indiscriminate killing with casualties being inflicted on a cross-section of a population. Included among the victims are persons who are generally considered non-combatants, such as women, children, and the elderly. Generally protected by "rules of war," these relatively defenseless people are preyed upon by the massacring group.

Secondly, the perpetrators, within the massacre setting, have marked superiority over the victim group, either because of sheer numbers or technological superiority. When two groups are more or less evenly matched in terms of strength, a stalemate or stand-off is the likely result of confrontation; therefore, massacres are possible only when one group possesses a considerable advantage.

The third characteristic centers on excessive killing. All cultures have norms that prescribe rules about killing that specify acceptable victims and designate the circumstances under which killing is justified. Massacres exceed the normative boundaries and represent collective deviant behavior. The powerful group at some point in the confrontation "loses control" and proceeds to annihilate the victims.

A fourth feature of massacre centers on the victim group's incapability of offering resistance, either because of the massive superiority of the attackers or the defenseless nature of the non-combatants. That the defenseless group is then slaughtered illustrates unnecessary, excessive killing.

The fifth characteristic of a massacre is that it features face-to-face interaction. Massacres always involve combatants who are in close physical proximity. The dropping of a bomb which subsequently results in the destruction of an entire city would therefore not be considered a massacre even though it kills defenseless non-combatants. It does not involve the personal confrontation that takes place in a massacre. Massacres involve victims who can be seen and touched.

The sixth trait of massacre resides in its short duration. Massacre typically take place in one outburst. Most massacres, in fact, take only a few minutes and rarely exceed an hour in length. This is in contrast to long-term episodes of hostility (i.e. a sustained program of genocide) which may be characterized by repeated confrontations.

Finally, massacres always involve a sizable number of deaths. It is hard to draw a firm line between episodes of massacre and mass murder, but the former typically has scores of victims while the latter rarely exceeds a dozen. This distinction is not crucial to the definition, but the number of victims is always substantial in outbursts of massacre.

The preceding characteristics represent the essential ingredients of an episode of massacre. The operationalization of the definition was difficult because of the many types of similar phenomena in the history of human conflict. As with many investigations, it was necessary to delimit the scope of the research topic and to confine our observations to the episodes which conformed to seven characteristics. Although some characteristics do occur in related kinds of killing situations, in massacre all seven coalesce.

METHODOLOGY

The underlying assumption of this research rests with the validity and usefulness of the "natural history" approach. This approach is based on several preassumptions: 1) that reality contains certain regularities from which consistent patterns can be inferred (Abrahamson, 1978:98-99); 2) that a planned selection, abstraction and accentuation of a set of criteria derived from empirical referents and functions can be used as a basis of comparison of empirical cases (McKinney, 1966:3); and that recurrent tendencies that are present in the phenomenon under scrutiny can be identified. Data gathering for this investigation was based upon a method developed for the study of social protest by William Gamson (1975) in which he obtained a complete listing of all social protests that occurred in the United States between 1800 and 1945. He then randomly selected a sample of the protests for intensive study. He then, in effect, "interviewed" each to ascertain characteristics about the causes, characteristics and consequences of the protest groups. We began by examining the subject indexes of history and anthropology books for the key word "massacre". The results, unfortunately, were very limited because even though a sizable list of massacres was obtained, many did not conform to our operationalized definition, and others did not have readily obtainable documentation.

The availability of adequate documentation was critical. Many examples of massacre seemed to fall within the guidelines of the definition, but had only limited narratives. Either there wasn't sufficient detail in the narratives or some documentation appeared to be too biased to allow for objective analysis. These problems were particularly prevalent in the selection of examples from preliterate societies, but their inclusion was necessary to enhance the generalizing power of the model and to establish its validity and application in both a cross-cultural and historical context. Limited by these restrictions, the authors did select the following massacres for analysis:

1. My Lai, Vietnam

On March 16, 1968, infantrymen of the Americal Division assaulted a small hamlet called My Lai 4. Although expecting sizable resistance from a large group of Viet Cong, the American soldiers encountered no hostile fire. Despite this, the troops opened fire on the village's inhabitants: infants, children, women, and old men. As a result over 500 noncombatants were executed.

2. Wounded Knee, South Dakota

Early in the morning of December 29, 1890, soldiers of the Seventh U.S. Cavalry approached a band of Sioux under the leadership of Big Foot. The Indians had been ordered to the site along Wounded Knee Creek on the Pine Ridge Reservation. The soldiers were ordered to peacefully disarm the band; but during the ensuing search for weapons a scuffle broke out and the soldiers fired on the virtually defenseless Sioux. The deaths of over 200 persons, mostly children, women, and unarmed men resulted.

3. Sand Creek, Colorado

Beginning at first light on November 29, 1864, citizen-soldiers of the Third Colorado Volunteers under the leadership of Colonel John Chivington attacked a defenseless village of Cheyenne Indians. Although the Cheyenne had been promised

protection by government authorities, the troopers opened fire on the Indians without provocation. Accounts of the loss of life vary, but reliable estimates indicate that over 300 persons were killed and subsequently mutilated.

4. Elogeta River, New Guinea

On June 4, 1866, warriors of the Getelu Alliance of the Grand Valley Dugum Dani launched an attack on Dani neighbors. The attack lasted about an hour with nearly 125 men, women and children killed. The compounds were burned and the village looted.

5. Beirut, Lebanon

Members of the right-wing Christian Phalangists entered the largely defenseless Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatilla in the early evening hours of September 16, 1982. During their thirty-six hour stay it was estimated that they slaughtered from 700-800 inhabitants of the two camps. The victims were primarily older men, women, and children.

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF MASSACRE

The following five stage model is the result of extensive analysis of narratives that chronicled the selected episodes of massacre. All five massacres were broken down into detailed chronological listings of significant events that occurred in each of them. These listings were then compared and cross referenced with one another. Although no model perfectly depicts reality, the natural history model of massacre is composed of the common denominators that characterized selected massacres.

I. A History of Mutual Hostility

Massacres don't just happen; instead, they are the culmination of a relatively long period of hostility between two groups. The hostility may be the result of competition over scarce resources, such as land, or may stem from various power struggles. As usual, the opposing groups likely represent dissimilar cultures whose values and institutions differ markedly from one another. Cultural differences inevitably breed ethnocentrism which manifests itself as religious, racial, or ethnic prejudice. An ideology of prejudice usually develops over a considerable period of time and is nurtured and sustained by periodic confrontations and conflicts between the groups.

The hostility of whites toward Native Americans in this country, for example, evolved from over 300 years of mutual suspicion, distrust, and almost constant antagonism. The three centuries of conflict have featured policies of genocide, armed warfare, broken treaties, population transfer, and cultural destruction. As the history of conflict between groups turned increasingly bitter, reconciliation became a virtual impossibility. Both groups came to define the existence of the other as a constant threat to survival. Although the intensity of the conflict ebbed and flowed during various periods, there existed an unrelenting hostility. Conflicts about land claims and severe cultural differences in religion and technology constantly exacerbated tensions. Frontier white settlers summarized this feeling in the frequently voiced statement, "...the only good Injun is a dead Injun."

American soldiers in Vietnam harbored similar feelings. A favorite joke among American troops was the following plan to win the war (Hersh 1970:11):

The loyal Vietnamese should all be taken and put to sea in a raft. Everybody left in the country should then be killed, and the nation paved over with concrete, like a parking lot. Then the raft should be sunk.

The anti-Vietnamese sentiments expressed by U.S. soldiers during the Vietnam conflict, while relatively short-term in origin, were, in fact, simply a more recent version of a general anti-Asian prejudice that characterized American culture since the latter half of the 19th century. The pervasiveness of the "gook syndrome" among American forces in Vietnam tapped essentially the same "yellow peril" mentality that stigmatized the Japanese during World War II and the Chinese and Koreans during the Korean Conflict.

In the Grand Valley in the Central Highlands of New Guinea, the Dani, a small scale society of gardeners and pig raisers, have been involved in a millennia-long cycle of warfare that has been likened to minor skirmishes. These conflicts involve neighboring villages and have been linked to competition for arable land (Heider, 1970). The skirmishes begin as brawls, but frequently escalate into feuds between villages. As people take sides, alliances are formed. The skirmishes happen as one alliance challenges the other. Battle lines in a no-man's land form and exchanges of arrows and spears occur until a serious, probably fatal injury, occurs to a combatant. The fighting temporarily ceases, but if a death occurs, vengeance will be sought. If vengeance is not forthcoming, small raids continue in an attempt to exact a compensatory death from the opponent. On occasion, the deaths are very one-sided and tensions between groups mount to a higher level. The Getelu Alliance, named for their leader, had had several setbacks which had cost them prestige, including a failed pig feast and several unavenged deaths. Dutch and Indonesian government officials and missionaries settled near the enemies and tried to police the warfare cycle but experienced only limited success. The outsiders were also perceived to side consistently with the Alliance's enemy in the resolution process of inter-alliance conflicts. The result was that members of the Getelu Alliance viewed their neighbors near the Elogeta River with increasing anger and a haunting suspicion that their enemies were becoming like foreigners and as such, they were to be feared and mistrusted (Heider 1970:121).

Similarly the Christian Phalangists' hostility toward Palestinians, while relatively recent in origin, was especially virulent. The Lebanese Civil War broke out in 1975 and pitted Christian against Palestinian plus Lebanese Islamic forces. The Christians viewed the Palestinians as undesirable usurpers of power in Lebanon and wanted their country rid of them. Increasing pressure from the Israeli Defense Forces had pushed the Palestinians into Lebanon where they immediately challenged the indigenous Phalangist forces for control of the country. Fighting was particularly intense during the seven year power struggle with a loss of life estimated to have been over 100,000 persons. Internecine struggles of this type are often surprisingly brutal and both the Phalangists and Palestinians practiced indiscriminate warfare with civilian deaths easily outnumbering those among the armed forces. A "revenge mentality" typified the Phalangist forces (Kahan Commission; 1983:12) which tended to view all Palestinians, including women and children, as legitimate targets. The goal of Phalangist forces became to rid Lebanon completely of the unwanted Palestinians using any method possible.

Through socialization, members of opposing groups internalize bitter stereotypes and soon come to perceive members of the other group as something akin to sub-humans. This dehumanization process eventually can serve to justify any inhuman treatment of the other. Most cultures contain values that revere human life and prescribe tolerance in relations with one another. These are ideals. The realities of most cultures contain an incipient ethnocentrism that, on one hand, is necessary to group survival but on the other, is a precursor to racism. In an effort to reduce the cognitive dissonance between the ideal and real cultures, the members of the antagonistic group are classified as subhuman. This clarification allays any collective guilt that may appear and functions as a rationalization for malevolent treatment of an enemy. The savage treatment becomes sanctioned because members of the other group are not accorded the status of being human, but are slurred by such terms as "slopes" or "redskins."

II. CALL TO RALLY

This stage of massacre is characterized by an extreme buildup of emotion. The "call to rally" functions to rekindle hostility and presents a vivid picture of threat. Usually some inflammatory incident or series of incidents will transform latent hostility into manifest rage. The incidents dramatically reignite suspicions and mistrust. The actual precipitating event may be relatively insignificant, but its importance is amplified in the call to rally because it serves as a symbolic representation of the pre-existing hostility. The act that eventually triggers the massacre usually appears unexpectedly after a period of relative calm during which "peaceful" relations prevailed. It enflames old hatreds and destroys any hope of a peaceful resolution of the conflict by closing off negotiations.

The accounts of the actual precipitating incident that follow become more inflammatory as they are retold among the revenge-prone group. The heinous nature of the offending group is magnified, and the treacherous nature of the precipitating episode is similarly amplified through these exaggerated accounts that are quickly assimilated according to the predilections of the listeners. The untrustworthiness of the offending group is emphasized along with the necessity and urgency of reprisal.

The My Lai massacre offers an almost classic example of these behaviors. In a three-week period prior to the My Lai massacre, soldiers of the Americal Division had been victimized by booby traps and mines that inflicted many casualties. Rightly or wrongly, the responsibility for these losses was attributed to the Viet Cong and their sympathizers in the immediate area. Charlie Company, the unit that would be the most active at My Lai, had experienced an unusually high number of casualties during the two-week period immediately preceding My Lai. The death of a very popular sergeant a few days before the assault on My Lai seemed to rouse the surviving members of the company to an almost frenzied level of hatred. It was commonly believed that virtually all civilians in the area were Viet Cong sympathizers who would smile benignly at the Americans during the day and attempt to harass and kill them at night. During a memorial service for their sergeant the company captain spoke to the officers and stressed to them that there weren't going to be any innocent civilians in the village to be stormed the next morning. He further concluded that persons remaining in the village were undoubtedly the same ones responsible for the recent killing and maiming of U.S. soldiers (Hammer 1971:188). A revenge mentality was encouraged and created a rage reaction just waiting to be released. The attack on My Lai, scheduled for the next day, provided the direction.

In a similar fashion, the atmosphere between whites and Indians had also worsened immediately prior to Wounded Knee because of increased anti-white activity on the part of the Indians. The increased popularity of the Ghost Dance cult, which envisioned a complete destruction of whites and a return of ancestors, was perceived with increasing alarm by both local white settlers in Nebraska and South Dakota and the U.S. military. As the movement spread across the western states to the Sioux, uneasy settlers called for increased military protection. The Army was also especially anxious to put an end to the "Indian troubles" that had plagued them on the Plains for several decades.

Reports of Indians making sojourns off the reservations and numerous stories of cattle rustling, horse stealing, and raids on ranches produced further tension. Most were exaggerations, but they nonetheless instilled fear among white settlers. Protection was demanded and given by the Army whose mission was to return several Sioux bands to the reservation and disarm them. Newspaper coverage, often grossly exaggerated, exacerbated the already touchy situation.

A similar pattern developed with the Cheyenne near Sand Creek in Colorado where roving bands of warriors raided ranches and settlements at a time when whites believed inviolable treaties to be in effect. The treaties, which were for the most part unfair to the Indians, left the younger, more militant tribal members very discontented. Despite the fact that the overwhelming majority of Cheyenne were peaceful, a perception developed among whites that all Indians were savage beasts who would murder and pillage at the slightest provocation. To combat this hysteria, the local leaders in Colorado formed their own military unit under Colonel John Chivington. He promised to end the "Indian troubles" by military action that included the massacre of children because "nits grow into lice."

The call to rally for the Dani occurred as the result of the activities of the police. Shortly before the massacre, the police had moved in close to one of the villages. When the usual "ritual" cycle of warfare occurred, the police tended to intervene on the side of the eventual massacre victims: Getelu Alliance members grew uneasy. Both sides had scrupulously avoided asking the Dutch or Indonesian police for use of shotguns, which would be very effective for them in their fighting. They perhaps realized that acquisition of such powerful weapons by one group would have shifted the balance of power dramatically. The members of the Getelu Alliance perceived that, because the enemy was so "close" to the police, the police would naturally give them shotguns before the Getelu received them. The policy had previously given the enemy steel bush knives shortly before Getelu's followers got them. Even a short lag between the time the enemy and the Alliance got shotguns would have been perceived as extraordinarily dangerous for Alliance survival.

In Lebanon, the call to rally can be traced to the assassination of president-elect Bashir Jemayel on September 14, 1982. Although no concrete proof of Palestinian culpability was ever forthcoming, the Christian Phalangists were convinced of PLO guilt. It served as a cause celebre' and intensified the Phalangists' predispositions toward vengeance (Kahan, 1983:27). At about the same time, the Israeli Defense Force made what was later to prove a regrettable decision. They had been coming under increasing criticism at home not only for their prolonged stay in Lebanon but also for not allowing the Christian militias an opportunity to do their own fighting. As a result, the Phalangists/Lebanese Army was given the responsibility for searching and mopping up the four Palestinian refugee camps in West Beirut (Kahan, 1983:13-14). Although the IDF commanders warned the Christian militia not to harm any civilians, the militia subsequently ignored the order and launched a surprise sweep of the camps.

III. SURPRISE ATTACK

Surprise is a necessary element in the development of a massacre. The unexpected nature of the attack catches the victims completely by surprise and establishes an initial superiority that is never overcome by the victims. That the attack is totally unanticipated is indicated by the absence of a defensive posture. Typically no guards are posted and no weapons are readily at hand. Frequently, the group of victims includes few, if any, capable defenders. This may not always be the result of chance, but at times may well be a key factor in the timing of the attack.

In My Lai, the young and middle-aged males were not present. It is doubtful that American soldiers knew this, though other previous exercises had noted similar absences. The superiority in technology, weaponry, and sheer numbers that the Americans enjoyed were simply compounded by the absences of armed male villagers. The village was caught completely unaware because an attack by American military forces was unimaginable. The actual attack at My Lai began early in the morning when helicopters landed and troops immediately began firing. The landing zone was designated as "hot" with the enemy entrenched around the village firing at the troops as they landed. Because of this belief, the Americans were told that My Lai 4 could be considered a "free fire zone" in which all persons in the vicinity should be considered enemies.

The Sand Creek massacre developed in a similar manner. Based upon recent raids and minor skirmishes, the civilian soldiers believed they were attacking a hot-bed of Indian militancy. The "rally cry" asked them to remember their previously murdered wives and children. The Colorado Volunteers attacked without warning at dawn. The fact that the village warriors were on a hunt and that village residents were almost completely noncombatants foretold the result: Incapable of mounting a defense, the Indians were completely overwhelmed.

The Wounded Knee massacre exhibited a somewhat different pattern. Big Foot's band of Sioux were to be disarmed and confined to the reservation. The next morning they found themselves surrounded by troopers of the 7th Cavalry (Custer's defeated unit at Little Bighorn) despite the fact that white flag had been raised over the camp. The soldiers were under orders to search for and confiscate any remaining weapons. After a pile of nearly 40 rifles had been turned in by the Sioux, trouble began when young warriors, resenting the harassment, resisted. A medicine man moved through the group exhorting them not to cooperate. A scuffle ensued and a shot was fired. The actual source was unknown, but it was attributed to a young Indian. This single shot triggered a massive response. The soldiers, whose guns had been trained on the central band of warriors, fired into the group, killing or wounding most of them within a few seconds. Hotchkiss guns trained on the camp opened up a few seconds later indiscriminately killing women and children.

In the case of the Dani, the massacre occurred on the morning of June 4, 1966. Although details are somewhat unclear, the raid was carefully planned by either Getelu or a group of his younger leaders. The warriors crept through ground fog at dawn. Other alliances nearby heard about the raid and joined in. The attack caught the men at the target village completely by surprise. Their perceived allies, the Dutch and Indonesian police had gone from the area for a short time. Though the victims were able to mount an harassing counterattack, they eventually had to fall back to banks of the Elogeta River where they were slaughtered.

The Sabra and Shatilla refugee camp were suspected of containing munition dumps for Palestinian guerrillas and harboring hard-core terrorists who had escaped the Israeli dragnet. In fact, the camps were largely defenseless. Most able-bodied men had been forcefully evacuated as part of a settlement with

Israel. In addition, the multi-national peace-keeping forces, including U.S. Marines, had been withdrawn shortly after the earlier evacuation. Expecting opposition and eager to avenge the death of their leader, the Phalangists entered the camps about 6:00 PM on Thursday, September 16, 1982. Initially their entrance was quiet. Within a short period of time, however, sporadic shooting could be heard by the Israeli units who patrolled the outskirts of the camps. Darkness quickly enveloped the camps and the Israelis, for all practical purposes, lost contact with the Phalangist militia until they emerged early Saturday morning after what was later proved to be a night of promiscuous killing.

IV. INDISCRIMINATE SLAUGHTER

The most significant feature of massacres is found at this stage. Massacres are characterized by excessive killing. The murders that occur in a massacre transcend the cultural norms that define acceptable forms of homicide.

Because of a combination of long-term stress and the frenzied, emotional build-up resulting from the recent friction, a reservoir of hate is released that becomes virtually uncontrollable. Heinous acts serve as emergent norms for persons in the attacking group. Behavior that borders on the psychopathological becomes commonplace. Members of the attacking group lose control and imitate one another's acts, which in normal times would be labeled as unspeakably cruel. The massacre may assume the form of a cathartic release of the intense emotional stress. Individuals seem to lose critical faculties and experience the process of deindividualization; the net result is the adoption of behaviors of nearly indescribable atrocity.

In My Lai the shooting that began immediately upon landing was described as "starting a chain reaction" (Hersh 1970:51). The promiscuous shooting of civilians tended to increase as more individual soldiers cast aside their personal reservations and joined in the slaughter. Their justification, no doubt, resided in the perception that "...everybody was doing it; therefore it must be right." During the height of the attack soldiers injudiciously threw hand grenades into "hootches" or set fire to the structures and shot women and children as they fled. There were also instances where groups of villagers were rounded up, methodically executed, and their bodies thrown into a nearby ditch. Others were herded into the ditches and shot where they cringed. That some of the soldiers "got carried away" was witnessed by one of the more active participants, Corporal Paul Meadlo, who was reported to have sobbed uncontrollably while methodically shooting villagers. Although an accurate count of the number slain was impossible to ascertain, most reliable estimates place the number at 400-500, nearly all of them infants, children, women and older men.

The Sand Creek episode featured similar carnage as the Colorado Volunteers attacked the peaceful Cheyenne encampment as their leader reminded them to "...remember the murdered women and children on the Platte" (Dunn 1961:147). The soldiers opened fire with both carbines and artillery. They had been warned to expect heavy resistance, but little was encountered. Despite this, the soldiers increased the intensity of the attack. The chief, Black Kettle, and some of his followers cloaked themselves in the American flag thinking this would offer protection from the onslaught. Unfortunately this attempt to surrender proved futile as the soldiers fired at the huddled Indians. The few Cheyenne capable of offering resistance attempted to establish a defensive line across the creek, but this was easily destroyed by artillery fire. Soldiers quickly surrounded a group of about 100 villagers and proceeded to shoot into the group until none remained standing. The great majority of this group were

defenseless women and children. With the village routed, the rest of the massacre consisted of riding down people attempting to escape and killing them one or two at a time. Reliable estimates of the carnage range from 200-500 killed and wounded. Eye witness accounts report that over 2/3 of the victims were non-combatants.

The Wounded Knee massacre was precipitated in a manner somewhat different from the others. The barrage of firing by members of the 7th Cavalry was prompted by a single gunshot, which sparked a massive fusillade of return fire from the soldiers' carbines and two Hotchkiss (artillery) guns. The indiscriminate killing followed immediately (U.S. Bureau of American Ethnology 1892:855). The camp members quickly fled to avoid the soldiers, but the soldiers "...shot us like we were buffalo" (Brown 1970:417). Although a few of the Sioux were armed, most victims were either unarmed non-combatants or carried only knives or clubs. The token resistance was quickly overpowered, and the "hunt" continued with scattered women and children killed over 2-3 miles from the battle site. The final death toll is unknown because many of the wounded crawled away from the camp or were carried away before being included in the army's count. The most reliable figures placed the final death toll at 200-250 persons, most of whom were women and children.

Little is known of the precise details of the Eloquentia River massacre. Some speculate that the leader, Getelu, may have planned the event. Others suggest that some of his younger leaders might have handed it to him as a *fait accompli*. When the discovery was made that all the police except one were going to distant Wamena for a few days, the attack was launched. Men crept at dawn through the fog. The attack lasted only an hour or so, but the deaths of 125 men, women and children occurred. Steel bush knives were used instead of the usual bows and arrows. The bodies were hastily cremated on mass pyres without ceremony.

The massacre in the Sabra and Shatilla camps is not as well documented because there exists little first-hand testimony with respect to the behavior of the Phalangists during their thirty-six hour stay. Although the Phalangist commanders promised not to harm civilians and even went so far as to make their men take an oath to that effect, it was apparent that they exercised little control over their men (Kahan, 1983:46). No direct orders were given to slaughter camp residents, but those who entered the camps "were steeped in hatred for the Palestinians... longing for revenge" (Kahan, 1983:55). Soldiers of the Israeli Defense Forces heard of rumors that indicated that Phalangists were "running wild" and had killed some civilians. When asked why they were killing civilians, Phalangists responded by stating that "...pregnant women will give birth to terrorists and children will grow up to be terrorists" (Kahan, 1983:35). Similarly, an Israeli officer overheard a radio transmission in which a Phalangist soldier in the camps asked his superior what was to be done with prisoners. The reply instructed that he "...do the will of God." Another question was answered by the following statement: "This is the last time you're going to ask me a question like that, you know exactly what to do." The reply was followed by laughter (Kahan, 1983:22). Phalangists initially denied responsibility for the mass killings by claiming that the dead represented the inevitable civilian casualties that always occur during armed combat. The post-massacre investigation, however, provided irrefutable proof that Phalangist forces had waged an indiscriminate slaughter of camp residents despite efforts to cover their actions.

V. DESTRUCTION OF THE MASSACRE SITE

Participation in massacres is probably accompanied by guilt feelings on the part of the perpetrators. This undoubtedly stems from their monstrous behavior

and the eventual realization of the enormity of the atrocities committed. The initial killings of innocent persons give rise to doubts and feelings of guilt that in turn create more anxiety and hostility which are also displaced onto the victims. A vicious cycle results, which culminates in an apparently reasonless and barbaric behavior toward a group that was guilty only of being objects of the initial hostility (Dollard 1938:18).

In massacre this behavior manifests itself in the form of a complete destruction of the site. From a psychological perspective, it is possible the attackers wish to destroy all evidence and thereby expiate their collective guilt. It may also serve as a cover-up in an effort to destroy all evidence that could at some future date be used against them. My Lai was completely razed by American soldiers. As well as burning all structures, livestock found in the village was also destroyed. The encampment at Sand Creek was similarly destroyed. Sand Creek was also characterized by mutilation of corpses. Genitals of both men and women were cut out as trophies by soldiers of the 3rd Colorado Volunteers. A possible motive for the mutilation of corpses lies in its symbolic degradation of the massacred group. This may also account for the looting that occurred in all episodes.

The extent of the destruction seems to be related to three factors: 1) the degree of rage; 2) the amount of time available; and 3) the technological means to destroy. If the behavioral loss of control is extensive, time constraints are not a factor, and technological means are at their disposal, then destruction by the attacking group will be extensive. With flame throwers, explosives and other devices at My Lai, the damage was complete. The short time period at Wounded Knee and an impending snowstorm probably acted to limit the soldiers' propensities for destruction and limited the damage. In the case of the Elogeta River, bodies were quickly burned en masse on pyres, compounds were completely burned and village pigs were stolen.

The destruction and razing of the physical setting was severely limited in the Beirut Massacre, apparently because the limited time-frame under which the massacring Phalangists operated. They were abruptly ordered out of the camps on Saturday morning and had little time to raze the site after the slaughter had subsided. In testimony given to the Kahan Commission, witnesses reported bulldozers in the camps during the massacre. The machinery was used to dig mass graves or to push rubble over the corpses. There were also reports that Phalangist soldiers piled bodies of victims into trucks and took the remains with them as they departed. These acts appear to have been motivated by the desire to cover up the magnitude of their carnage.

This stage of massacre appears to be the natural termination of an episode in which uncontrolled behavior has already been extensively exhibited. The motivation to obliterate the site may stem from the desire to warn survivors what awaits them should they persist in their offending behavior. In this context, the devastation of the site would perhaps function as a deterrent to possible retaliatory behavior from survivors. Another possible motive for destruction may be the collective desire to purge one's conscience. This would involve the desire to eradicate all evidence and thereby serve as a symbolic form of denial. The elimination of evidence, including mass graves of the victims as at Wounded Knee, could also be related to the desire to prevent future punishment for the massacre.

In some cases there appeared to be a reaction to the massacre. This could be termed the retribution and punishment stage. If powerful elements of social control exist in the massacring group upon which pressure can be brought to bear, then it is conceivable that punishments could be meted out to those responsible. Courts of inquiry were formed in the aftermath of My Lai, Sand Creek, Wounded Knee and Sabra-Shatilla. The findings of these boards were used

to censure or condemn and, in rare instances, imprison persons found guilty of reprehensible behavior during the episode of massacre. The general tendency, however, is to disavow responsibility for the massacre and hand out only token punishments. It is also common that authorities must be forced to action. Pressure groups and various forms of media may function in such a capacity.

SUMMARY

From the preceding analysis, it is apparent that the validity of the model is generally supported by the narrative evidence of actual massacres, although five is recognized to be a small sample. That each episode of massacre was preceded by a history of conflict between the groups is almost self-evident; but it is important to document the underlying causes of the massacre itself. Many groups exist in conflict situations without massacres occurring. A massacre will occur only when the conflict is of a particularly virulent type. Moreover, the conflict festers over generations until a peaceful reconciliation becomes an impossibility. With antagonism so ingrained in the two parties, especially in the massaging group, a collective preoccupation or obsession with destruction of the other group becomes pervasive among its members. Members of the stronger group perceive the other group as a persistent threat to their own achievement of goals or survival.

The call to rally or a period of intensification of emotion was also found to occur immediately prior to the episode of massacre. This appears to be a necessary stage to "hype up" or "bring to boil" hostility that has been seething for a long time. The call to rally vividly reinforces the fiendish nature of the opponents and proposes a way of dealing with the enemy once and for all. This stage is usually caused by a recent incident that confirms and dramatizes the menacing nature of the enemy.

A surprise attack is the usual mode of launching a massacre. The attack not only establishes initial advantage, but also represents an unfair "way of fighting". Striking without warning, however, is justified by the intense hostility toward the other group. A sneak attack "is what they deserve."

That indiscriminate slaughter is found in massacre may seem tautological. By this definition, the authors included only episodes where this was found. What was hoped to be stressed by discussing this stage were the elements of loss of control and pattern of needless killing. Massacres develop when average people lose control. Mobs that commit massacres are not composed exclusively of pathological individuals, though demagogues are sometimes found in leadership positions. Instead, groups represent cross-sections of a society that, because of emotional exigencies, get carried away. Massacres illustrate the key descriptive elements of collective behavior-aroused emotion and loss of critical abilities. The behavior in massacres seems to feed upon and reinforce itself. Questionable behavior, including murdering women and children, when repeated by others tends to become legitimized. This pattern has been termed circular reaction (Blumer 1975:26). A similar process occurs when one person's behavior becomes a model for others in the situation:

When a person sees that his or her behavior is being imitated by others, he or she is stimulated to even higher levels of activity and excitement. The imitators correspondingly increase their own levels of activity and simultaneously serve as behavioral models for still more people (Perry and Fugh 1978:31).

Site destruction seems to provide a closure to the episode. This may be quite variable in form but seems to be characterized by intensity and urgency. It appears to function as a release of stress, expiation of guilt, or, in some instances, the beginning of a coverup.

Most massacres are initially seen as a great victory. After Wounded Knee no less than 18 soldiers were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for their actions (Mattes 1960:9), Charlie Company was commended for its actions at My Lai, and Chivington's men were hailed as heroes. As time passes, however, and the enormity of the tragedy comes to light, the distressing nature of the event becomes clear. The word massacre is attached or is used to replace the word battle when the episode is discussed. In the case of the three massacres involving Americans, revisionist histories were written and those responsible were vilified. Such is not always the case in other cultures.

As a final note, histories of massacre are largely written from the perspective of the "victors"; the personal tragedies of the victims are forever lost, as their humanity was stripped from them in death. Their stories or perceptions would likely be very different from those of the perpetrators, and certainly different from those of scientists who construct models. To know how, and perhaps, why massacres occur can probably not prevent them from happening; but insights into the processes of dehumanization and slaughter can be observed and recorded.

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