

## Week #1 – Intimate Violence in the Modern and Early Modern Periods

### Introduction

- EVERY ACT OF VIOLENCE HAS A HISTORY; we all have a propensity towards violence → that is not to say we are all inherently violent
- A focus on **Western perpetrators of violence**; often exercised upon people who live outside the West → this is a limitation of the subject

### The Modern Period c. 1800 – the present

- Opens with the first **Industrial Revolution** in Britain; extending to Western Europe and the USA (energy, transportation, communication)
- **Increasing role of science and technology**
- **Urbanisation** (new patterns of human sociability and economic organisation)
- **Political rights and representative democracy** (political upheavals, revolutions in France, Haiti, USA at the beginning of this period had global ramifications)
- **Globalisation** (intensifying; easier to transport peoples, information, goods; mass literacy and media)
- Late modern period? → distinctive era where the Western world looks a lot like today, but progression isn't linear

### The Early Modern Period c. 1450 -1700

- **European maritime expansion** (New World, Cape of Good Hope, circumnavigation → violence in the Americas, Africa, Asia)
- **Print revolution** (explosion of books, pamphlets, etc → increased literacy, oral culture develops)
- **Reformation and Counter-Reformation** (religious upheaval; split in Western Christianity → Protestant and Catholic violence)
- **Endemic warfare** (common experience; widespread phenomenon)
- Heading towards **Political centralisation and consolidation** → state-building; shift to powerful individual rulers which underpinned most warfare

### What is violence?

- WHO definition 2002: “The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation” → is this limited?
1. **Subjective violence** (visible)
  2. **Structural or systemic violence** (invisible)
  3. **Symbolic violence** (ideology; ‘a show of force and demonstration of power’, instrument of social control to maintain existing social order)

### Key Subject Question: Are we less violent than we were in the past?

- Pinker, a psychologist from Harvard, publishes *The Better Angels of Our Nature* splits historians of violence
- Argues that modern society less violent than predecessors primarily because of the Enlightenment

- Highly criticised → he suffers from a reductive vision of what it means to be 'violence' (ecological, economic inequalities, coercive working conditions etc are excluded), ahistorical (Pinker believes in the comparison of events without historical context)

### **Intimate Violence in the Modern Era**

- Familial gendered violence; within families/spouses
- A national shame in Australia
- Extremely under-reported
- Destroy the Joint → 64 women killed by violence in Australia in 2023

### **A History of Domestic Violence**

- Until the 1850s, most legal systems accepted wife beating as a valid exercise of a husband's authority (disciplinarian and protector of all that the men is responsible for in the domestic sphere)
- Victims became more dependent on courts, police, law (not necessarily helpful) as processes of urbanisation and industrialisation occur → ensuing feminism movements strive for legal independence from men, higher state intervention into the domestic sphere
- Continued low prosecution of perpetrators of domestic violence
- Feminism targets familial violence as a key societal problem → shelters for battered women proliferate

### **Intimate Violence in the Early Modern Period**

#### Sixteenth century German lands: rising convictions and rising reports

- Infanticide
- Domestic violence
- Child murder
- **Do we react differently to images in different media and from different periods?**
- Sensationalism, extremity in visual culture in new print media during the sixteenth century → family annihilation case
- Confronting sources, then and now
- New convergence of public and private in print culture
- Is there a new appetite for violence as entertainment ? or a sign of the times characterised by war, physical environment, heard-heartedness, new religious moral scrutiny?

## Week #2 – Modern War: Hiroshima and Technologies of War

### Introduction

- Threat of aerial bombardment; though hasn't replicated the atomic bomb it has been equally discriminate → drones, military personnel can wreak havoc with no personal risk in Palestine, Afghanistan etc
- Experience of civilians on the receiving end
- **Violence and perceptions of violence are mediated by time and place.**
- Emphasis on the individual + family unit in US foreign policy to defend themselves from Atomic attacks post-war → building personal bomb shelters, hoarding non-perishable foods → importance of preparation; transferring of responsibility to the individual/community → *It was as if the Americans had suffered an atomic attack ...*

The advent of nuclear weapons had a profound impact even on the victors ...the us paranoia surrounding the cold war (1949, USSR begins nuclear testing)

### Where do nuclear weapons fit in the story of the 'progress' of military technology?

- Disruption of military technological progress
- Biggest weapons, guns, armies are the victors historically
- Atomic or nuclear weapons means there is no relaxation → Victors have a sense of uncertainty and fear post WW2 (survival isn't not ensured)

### **Strategic bombing (air raids)**

- Early 20<sup>th</sup> century; introduced in WW1
- Diminishes distinction between military and civilian casualties
- First instance → German bombing of Paris kills 3
- Spread fear and alarm by targeting civilians → a way to mitigate trench warfare
  
- Aerial bombardment in WW2 → used by all major combatants with high civilian casualties (Dresden, London, Chongqing etc) → extreme damage to the fabric of the city
- Tens of thousands can die in limited time

### **Hiroshima and Military Technology**

- Why was the atom bomb so different → didn't require multiple planes; only 3 were used in Hiroshima (chase plane, weather plane, bomb plane) and the later devastating impacts of radiation
  
- US acquires this power by German science (Otto Hahn and Fritz Strassman split the uranium atom and discover 'nuclear fission' on 2 August 1939) → fears of Nazi acquisition; Einstein urges US to undertake their own research
- Roosevelt authorise intense research following Pearl Harbour attack; Manhattan project begins