

There are different reasons why a person may act aggressively towards another human being. They may act that way because of their culture or the way they were brought up in their society. They do not, however, act this way based on instinct alone. Aggression is a molded, learned behavior. A human being must have both environmental and instinctual factors in order to display aggression. Some of a person's natural instincts are to desire food, reject certain things, escape from danger, fight when challenged, have sex desire, care for the young, seek to dominate, to accept inferior status.¹ The combination of instincts and environment determines a person's behavior. This is based on the theory that everything that a human being does would have had to learn from some other human beings.² Aggression must be learned rather than it just being there from birth. A person's behavior is taught to them rather than being an instinct that can not be controlled.

In order for an individual to display aggression it must be driven by an instinct interacting with that person's surroundings. McDougall defines the word "instinct" as "as an inherited or innate psycho-physical disposition which determines its possessor to perceive, and to pay attention to, objects of a certain class, to experience an emotional excitement, of a particular quality upon perceiving such an object, and to act in regard to its particular manner, or, at least, to experience an impulse to such action."³ This definition basically explains that people have different reactions for different stimuli. Therefore, an individual is prone to act a certain way when he is stimulated to do so from his surrounding environment. The Eskimo does not have an innate instinct that allows

¹ Anthropology and Human Nature, p. 26.

² Robert Audry, The Territorial Imperative, p. 289.

³ Charles Burke, Aggression in Man, p. 19.

them to survive in their climate. They are taught to work together in order to survive when they are young.⁴

When people are brought up in a society they learn certain customs and traditions. These customs are usually taught to them because its part of their society's way of life, even though some of the customs may seem cruel and repulsive to someone else. Cannibalism is abhorrent to us, but in some primitive cultures to eat an enemy is to gain his or her strength.⁵ This aggressive behavior was taught to the people of this culture and is the reason for its existence. People need to have exposure to aggressiveness in society in order to act aggressive. For example, there was a tribe in New Guinea who were fierce warriors that were always fighting and killing. The Children of these people learned this hostility from their parents and then acted in the same way.⁶ A parents methods of child rearing lay the base for aggression. The child rearing practices themselves are the overall design of a particular culture.(Agress man 47)

When a group of people are isolated their behavior does not change unless they ineract with other people. The Tasaday tribe is an example of a group of people who were completely isolated. They showed no signs of aggression due to the fact that they had no words for weapon, hostility, anger or war. The Tasaday were a food gathering tribe and had no use for weapons. The tribe only used knives and other things that might be classified as weapons as tools to gather food. They also rejected the spear and the bow and arrow because they could not use them to gather food.⁴ There could not have been anything in their genetic make up that made them act aggressive or peaceful.

⁴ Ibid., p. 34.

This was their way of life that was taught from generation to generation, and the tribe did what was needed to survive .