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### Violence in schools: Expanding the dialogue

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- The psychology of violence and the violence of psychology. (pp. 177-210).
- When the smoke clears: Revisualizing responses to violence in schools. (pp. 229-259).

Introduction

Violence in schools: Expanding the dialogue  
Stephanie Urso Spina

- A new handgun is sold every thirteen seconds in the United States.<sup>1</sup>
- Every half hour a child is killed or wounded by a bullet.<sup>2</sup>
- Every six hours in America a child between ten and nineteen years old commits suicide with a handgun.<sup>3</sup>
- Each day, almost two thousand children, or one child every thirteen seconds, is reported as abused or neglected.<sup>4</sup>
- Three million crimes occur on or near schools every year; sixteen thousand per school day, or one every six seconds.<sup>5</sup>
- For school-age youth, the chances of being a victim of a violent crime are greater than being hurt in a car accident.<sup>6</sup>
- Between twenty-five and thirty-five thousand murders are committed in this country each year—over ten thousand are the result of domestic violence.<sup>7</sup>
- Homicide is the leading cause of death for African American and Latino males under age twenty-five, and the second leading cause of death nationally for all youth under age twenty-five.<sup>8</sup>
- In 1993, more African American children under age nine died from gun violence than police officers or American soldiers killed in the line of duty during the same twelve months.<sup>9</sup>

- Recent research finds that one-third of urban children interviewed had witnessed a violent death<sup>10</sup> and almost three-quarters knew someone who had been shot.<sup>11</sup>
- About three million violent crimes are reported in the United States each year.<sup>12</sup>
- Every year, 2,000 deaths, 1,412,700 serious injuries, and 18,000 serious disabilities are known to result from child abuse.<sup>13</sup>
- A woman is battered every fifteen seconds.<sup>14</sup>
- There are, at minimum, 150,000 rapes of women and children reported annually in the United States; more than 400 each day, 17 every hour, or 1 every three-and-a-half minutes. Estimates that include unreported rapes conservatively estimate the annual figure to be closer to 630,000.<sup>15</sup>

These statistics are not offered to sensationalize the issues, to obscure the brutality they enumerate, or to numb one into hopelessness or apathy, but rather to underscore the devastatingly high number of children, teens, parents, families, and communities who must live with the reality of what these numbers represent in human terms. Yet, while we read and hear about rampant rape, robberies, drugs, and shootings, many of us have become desensitized to their human dimensions and underlying messages. Like much of the general public, social scientists, educators, and others who work with youth often have great difficulty understanding the lives of disenfranchised students. Many of us, in part because we are professionals, have not been subject to the powerful subcultures that seduce our students with false promises and futile dreams in a world that makes their fruition improbable if not impossible. Similarly, many of us are unaware of the insidious level of violence that is poverty, of the despair and nihilism that is informed, shaped, and reproduced by the very fabric of our society—a situation that demands that we go beyond simply condemning violence and blaming schools.

#### Censuring Schools

Schools have long been the scapegoat<sup>16</sup> for society's ills,

while, at the same time, school systems in the inner city are hardest hit by the ills of society. This is not meant to absolve schools from responsibility nor to underestimate the critical value of the school's role in children's lives, but to recognize the interdependence between schooling and the sociocultural and political reality of the society within which schools exist. Americans tend to view public schools as agencies of socialization as well as education. Public schooling, as we now know it, along with imprisoning "juvenile delinquents," was a response to the rapid rise of industrialization and the first waves of mass immigration at the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>17</sup> At that time, the established prototype for all human service institutions was the asylum,<sup>18</sup> and the paragon of progress and productivity was the factory. Schools purposely combined the model of the factory with those institutions designed to house the sick, the indigent, and convicted criminals in order to better assimilate the diverse population<sup>19</sup> into their "proper" places in the hegemonic social order.<sup>20</sup> This "social efficiency" model lingers today in the design of school buildings and curricula as well as in the widespread assumption that it is the schools' responsibility to solve social problems.

The endurance of this model and its effects contribute to the absurdity that, while schools are supposedly part of the solution, our educational model itself fosters practices that may themselves be a form of violence.<sup>21</sup> Even "normalized" school practices intended to improve academic performance may actually harm overwhelmingly poor minority students.<sup>22</sup> These include tracking,<sup>23</sup> style of pedagogy, curricular and testing biases, and other "literacies of power."<sup>24</sup> For example, Jean Anyon's work demonstrates how textbooks are often microcosms of white, middle-class interests and situations even when minority characters are featured.<sup>25</sup> Yet these alienating texts are the bases for learning and evaluation. The National Curriculum Standards epitomizes the enforcement of dominant cultural values and practices that view difference as a problem to be cured, especially in vilified "disordered" or "violent" spaces like inner city schools.<sup>26</sup> Inconsistent or unfair enforcement of

arbitrary or oppressive rules, overcrowded classes, and the retention of uncaring or hostile teachers are other ways schools harm students.<sup>27</sup> Labeling, stereotyping, and similar stigmatizing wonts may also promote divisions along racial, ethnic, linguistic, and economic lines as well as precipitate school-specific violence.<sup>28</sup>

Division by oversimplified, oppositionally constructed taxonomies are a common strategy or means of ideological control.<sup>29</sup> Foucault argues that such "dividing practices" objectify the individual by labeling him in oppositional terms that reflect societal assessments of intellect, health, and criminality (e.g., dangerous/harmless, normal/abnormal, us/them, straight/gay, white/black).<sup>30</sup> As a nation, we "learn" to use such discursive "violence" to simultaneously discount and spectacularize violence and victims by virtue of their age, sex, color, income, or language. They are devalued by a system that manipulates public sentiment via "spin doctors" who employ euphemistic doublespeak to divert responsibility from the perpetrator to the victim. Politicians thrive on campaigns built around the imagery of juvenile and racialized crime. They drive the bandwagon that demonizes youth,<sup>31</sup> that makes a spectacle of students,<sup>32</sup> that violates basic human rights.

All of these discourses are based on surveillance techniques and practices that divide students as a group as well as individuals. The legacy of social control, not education, dominates the agenda of schools. Schools generally respond to an upsurge in violence through the use of symbols of control and authority. The omnipresence of metal detectors, guards, "security" cameras, and the like promote both a relentless awareness of possible danger and a false sense of safety. School officials claim the huge number of confiscated weapons indicates they are reducing violence when, in fact, even the \$28 million expenditure to install metal detectors in New York City public schools in the 1980s has done nothing to curtail the problem<sup>33</sup> and has contributed to the creation of an even more insidious gendered form of violence. Jennifer McCormick describes how hand-held metal detectors pass over teenage bodies as students

are required to stand with their legs apart and their hands outstretched.<sup>34</sup> She illustrates how this routine becomes explicitly sexual when the students are female and male security guards are present. One girl McCormick interviewed in a New York City public high school describes the experience this way:

I hate it. I don't feel right....I have to put my hands out (she places her hand on the table in front of us, fingers are stretched apart). I have to stand straight for a few minutes, legs apart, my hands outstretched in front of me. I have to take my bracelets off, take everything out of my pockets. It's very uncomfortable, I feel embarrassed amongst everybody else. It's not good. It's not a productive way to start off school. I hate it. I don't feel right. I feel out of my element. In a way they are trying to take my shield away because with the scanning, they are looking for something I may have concealed....I feel like they are trying to know my body....I hear the comments or I see the looks from the guards to other girls. And through that and through the scanning, they get closer than they can ever get in a normal way....I'm sure they're getting off on it....I just don't like it. I don't like it. I don't like it.<sup>35</sup>

Yet, despite the humiliation and invasiveness of metal detectors and electronic scanners, students express the desire for security, often enduring psychic and emotional pain in exchange for what they believe to be protection from more physical and fatal forms of violence.

In truth, and contrary to what news reports and political propaganda would have us think, schools themselves are comparatively safe havens. In 1998, for example, there were approximately 20 million middle- and high-school students in the United States. Fewer than a dozen of these students killed someone at school. Nationally, youth violence comprises only 13 percent of the violent crime and 8 percent of murders reported by the FBI. This is not to downplay the tragedy of these events or to minimize the expectation that schools should be absolutely, not relatively, safe, but to underscore how

disproportionate the level of fear and resources surrounding this "epidemic" of "violence in schools" is when viewed in light of the larger picture.

Consider, for example, a 1994 national survey of hospital emergency rooms which reported treating a total of 900,000 injuries resulting from violent crime. These injuries were eight times more likely (410,000) to occur in the home and five times more likely (246,000) to occur in the workplace than in schools (55,000).<sup>36</sup> Consider that of the two to three thousand children and youths murdered each year, 90 percent are under age twelve and 30 percent are aged twelve through seventeen.<sup>37</sup> Three out of every four are killed by parents or caretakers, not by other juveniles. In comparison, forty-two percent of childhood deaths are caused by car crashes and other accidents.<sup>38</sup> We should not ignore the threat to youth from drinking, driving, and unprotected sex because it does not provoke national outrage, because it does not threaten our collective unconscious, because it does not provide emotional jolts on the 6:00 news. Yet, from the executive branch to the local level, from *The New York Times* to CNN, shootings by students are what attract attention and serve to camouflage far greater acts of violence.

The omission of such disturbing data from the discourse on violence misleadingly supports those who, like President Clinton, assert that today's grown-ups "confront a younger generation desensitized to brutality by its own 'culture' of violent media and seemingly unable or unwilling to take responsibility for their actions."<sup>39</sup> Legislation is another ploy used to detract attention from adult malfeasance. In 1997, for example, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill to "crack down" on juvenile crime by rewarding states that prosecute more underage perpetrators as adults.<sup>40</sup> As this volume illustrates, it is the dominant adult society, with its elected officials casting the most stones, that commits the most crimes against the most people and refuses to take responsibility for them. It is safer to blame youths who can't vote and whose voices remain unheard.

Policy makers reinforce and promote this delusional

perspective. For example, the sixth National Education Goal called for every school in America to be free of drugs and violence by the year 2000.<sup>41</sup> The Safe Schools Act of 1994 allocated \$20 million in twenty one-year grants to reinforce existing school safety programs. However, there is little if any evidence that such violence prevention programs work and some have actually worsened the very situation they were implemented to improve.<sup>42</sup> Rather than increasing security or technology, more fundamental issues need to be addressed—issues that lie at the very core of our society.

American schools, like American cities, are segregated racially, politically, and economically. Ethnic and racial minorities have always been disproportionately represented in the incidence and depiction of violence. It is not a coincidence that this is the case when one examines these data in the context of social, and cultural factors.

#### Socioeconomic Factors

We are increasingly a nation with sharpening divisions between the "haves" and "have-nots." The top 5 percent of our citizens control over 20 percent of the country's wealth, while the 20 percent at the bottom of the economic ladder struggle to survive on less than 4 percent. The richest 1 percent of households own 48 percent of the nation's wealth.<sup>43</sup> As of the mid-1990s, the income of those in the top 20 percent of U. S. families was more than eleven times as much as the bottom 20 percent. During 1997, the Census Bureau reported that more than 35.5 million Americans lived in poverty, meaning they earned less than \$8,183 a year if they were single, or \$16,400 for a family of four. Another 12 million had annual earnings 25 percent above the poverty threshold.<sup>44</sup>

Even more striking is the stark inequality in the economic condition of America's children.<sup>45</sup> At over 20 percent and climbing, the child poverty rate in the United States is far higher than in other countries (e.g., below 4 percent in Sweden, Belgium, Denmark, and Finland)—even relatively poor ones (e.g., Ireland has about a 12 percent child poverty rate). The closest figures are from Canada and Australia, at about 14 percent,



which, not insignificantly, also accompany rates of lethal violence comparatively higher than Europe, though still substantially lower than the United States.<sup>46</sup> In 1976, about 28 percent of American children lived in families with income *less than half* the poverty level. By 1994, 44 percent did, including well over half of poor black children.<sup>47</sup> On any given night, approximately 200,000 children are homeless. Children under three are consistently worse off than older children and far worse off in the United States than in any other country. (For example, the U.S. poverty rate for the youngest children is almost 50 percent higher than the next highest rates in Britain and Canada and about three times as high as Germany, four times as high as France and Sweden, and almost eleven times as high as the Netherlands.<sup>48</sup> Nor, despite pointed political posturing, does this represent a lack of effort on the part of the parental poor. Sixty percent of all poor children under the age of three have at least one employed parent. This includes 70 percent of poor white children, 60 percent of poor Hispanic children, and 50 percent of poor black children.<sup>49</sup> More than 40 percent of single mothers with a child under the age of three work full- or part-time. But these jobs do not provide a living wage and are further limited by a lack of benefits and available community support services such as child and health care. Repeated failures to pass federal initiatives that would support the needs and rights of children, while spending tax dollars on incentives to help the rich get richer or to support ludicrous and vindictive personal attacks against one's political opponents, starkly dramatizes the U.S. government's neglect of its neediest citizens.<sup>50</sup>

Virtually every other post industrial nation provides some form of child care for three- to five-year-olds as well as paid leaves for parents.<sup>51</sup> The United States is the only postindustrial nation without a national health system to deliver accessible, high quality preventive and prenatal health care. Infant mortality rates in the United States have been steadily increasing over the past thirty years. The United States now has the fourth highest infant mortality rate of all

industrialized countries (ranking below all except Greece, Portugal, and Turkey).<sup>52</sup>

The situation is exacerbated by basic principles of our Darwinian market economy. Capitalist values of avarice and egocentricity undermine social cohesion by promoting individual competition and consumption over community values and productive work. In market societies, strong labor movements or truly democratic political representation are nonexistent. People who need it most are deprived of the conceptual framework, the collective consciousness, the cultural capital<sup>53</sup> to challenge the forces of violence.<sup>54</sup>

Thirty years ago, one in five city residents lived below poverty level. Ten years ago it was more than one-third and growing.<sup>55</sup> By 1991, the population of major U.S. cities averaged 70 percent racial ethnic minorities and over 43 percent of all American poor, including 80 percent of all African American poor.<sup>56</sup> Yet, adjusting for inflation, federal aid to cities was cut 60 percent between 1980 and 1992.<sup>57</sup> The mass exodus of businesses from cities leaves urban areas with only a minimal number of highly stratified low-wage, temporary jobs without benefits and highly technological top-level professional jobs accessible only to an elite population.<sup>58</sup>

#### Politics, Race, and Class

The inequities noted in the previous section are not surprising when one considers their political context. Suburbanites, who include less than 10 percent minorities,<sup>59</sup> cast the majority of votes in local and national elections, so predominantly minority inner-city residents elect fewer state and national legislators to represent their interests. It is not that minorities do not care, or do not vote. It is a function of our electoral process. The increasingly homogeneous two-party system, geographically defined districting, and gerrymandering, are only a few ways minority voters are discouraged from participating in the political process and excluded from democracy. Although they begin as strong participants in the electoral system, minorities soon learn that their vote does not carry the same weight as a white vote in "winner-take-all majority rule."<sup>60</sup> Because of

these and other injustices, Lani Guinier, in her book, *The Tyranny of the Majority*,<sup>61</sup> argues forcefully for a change to cumulative voting, which is not biased like the present system is:

It [cumulative voting] gives each voter the same number of votes as there are seats or options to vote for, and they can distribute their votes in any combination to reflect their preferences...it allows voters to organize themselves on whatever basis they wish.<sup>62</sup>

In this way, everyone's preferences would be counted equally. Voting would focus on political interests rather than geographical location and it would become far more difficult to maintain the gross inequities of race-conscious districting.

In contrast to the 90 percent white suburban schools, over three-quarters of students in inner-city schools are African American or Latino.<sup>63</sup> Yet, although the need for resources is greater than in the more affluent suburbs, urban school budgets across the nation are one-tenth those of suburban schools.<sup>64</sup> School buildings are literally falling apart and supplies are few.<sup>65</sup> This is not a recent development. James B. Conant, in his 1961 book, *Slums and Suburbs: A Commentary on Schools in Metropolitan Areas*, raised similar issues.<sup>66</sup> Thirty years later, Jonathan Kozol's best-selling book, *Savage Inequalities*, brought national attention to even more severe economic and educational disparities.<sup>67</sup> Not coincidentally, urban schools continue to deteriorate as the minority population increases.

Recent research confirms that instruction in inner-city schools is frequently substandard.<sup>68</sup> In New York City alone, 66 percent of all students who attend high school fail to graduate. For Latino students the rate is 80 percent, for African Americans, 72 percent, for whites, 50 percent. Statistics from other cities are equally grim.<sup>69</sup> Teachers, "low standards," and/or lack of discipline are not to blame. (See the last chapter of this volume, for a discussion of those issues). Social class is the greatest predictor of who drops out—or gets "pushed out" of school. The failure of schools and society to recognize that this behavior is not just reactive but proactive

guarantees that these problems will continue. As Willis's<sup>70</sup> classic study with British youth showed, delinquency is not a mechanical response to social disadvantage but active resistance to the dominant tradition by the production of alternative or oppositional practices. This resistance is rooted in the social relationships of the students' communities and is not necessarily reducible to capitalist pressures and processes.<sup>71</sup> Dropping out is not merely the result of alienation but is an assertive rejection of the system and what it represents.<sup>72</sup>

One reason rejection of the system takes forms of responses like not voting and dropping out of school instead of a more openly aggressive stand (possibly even taking steps toward a popular revolution), is because mechanisms of the class system have "always been buffered by an even more discriminatory caste system (of whites vs. blacks)."<sup>73</sup> Although there are more than three times as many non-African American, largely white poor than there are African American poor, poverty is generally not considered quite as damaging and demoralizing to poor whites because "blacks have always been there to occupy a position lower in the social scale than even the poorest whites."<sup>74</sup> There is

a vested interest on the part of both rich and poor whites to maintain the caste system of discrimination against blacks, For the rich, it has been a cheap way (both financially and morally) to continue to possess and control a disproportionate share of the national wealth and income. And poor American whites have let themselves be distracted from paying attention to how badly they are being discriminated against by the class system, by the fact that there is always a group they can look down upon...that in turn buys peace for the rich, who can continue to monopolize most of the nation's wealth and income without having to be bothered by any significant threats to their privileges." <sup>75</sup>

Racism is the "weapon of choice" used by the ruling class to keep the working class divided.<sup>76</sup> The unity of the working class across color lines is "feared more than almost

anything else by Corporate America which uses every form of coercion, manipulation, and violence" to keep the working class from joining forces to fight their common enemy.<sup>77</sup> Even Malcolm X, after a pilgrimage to Mecca near the end of his life, realized that "it isn't the American white man who is a racist, but it's the American political, economic, and social atmosphere that automatically nourishes a racist psychology in the white man."<sup>78</sup> It has been argued by many that racism is so deeply internalized that [most] whites are not even aware of its existence or how far they will go to keep it that way.<sup>79</sup> As Spina and Tai explain:

Not seeing race is predicated on not seeing White as a race....Ignoring the racial construction of Whiteness reinscribes its centrality and reinforces its privileged and oppressive position as normative. Thus, Whiteness becomes a non-race, invisible to those that would seek to analyze race and racism, thereby giving it more power, more privilege, and more impunity. The non-racialization of Whiteness restricts the ability of minorities to point out racism and gives the dominant White culture more freedom from criticism in the practice of racism.<sup>80</sup>

Racism is so normalized in this country that in surveys,<sup>81</sup> newspapers, and on national television,<sup>82</sup> white Americans, and some (more affluent) black Americans, repeatedly express the belief that racism is no longer a problem in the United States. Why is this view, so at odds with reality, gaining support?

Perhaps one contributing factor is what Americans are not allowed to know.<sup>83</sup> The U.S. government has selectively repressed data which would reveal the blatantly racist "nature, location, and dimensions of violence in this country."<sup>84</sup> Since 1960, for example, when the U.S. Public Health Service began to calculate age-adjusted death rates separately for blacks and whites, the death rate for blacks has been consistently about 280 more deaths per 100,000 than whites.<sup>85</sup> In comparison, the national homicide rate is about 10 per 100,000.<sup>86</sup> Yet, the latter is positioned as a "national emergency, over which presidential elections are won and lost,"<sup>87</sup> and the former remains buried in

relatively obscure government publications. If this is not "proof" enough,

Any doubt that the excess death rate among blacks is a function of the social and economic structure of our society is put to rest by epidemiological studies. Several investigations<sup>88</sup> have shown that high blood pressure, for example, is common among American, West Indian, South African, and other urbanized African blacks, but infrequent among rural Africans (that is, those least exposed to the social and economic structure of colonialism and white domination).<sup>89</sup>

Furthermore, some suggest that contemporary conservative politicians are systematically encouraging whites to blame immigrants and poor ethnic minorities for economic difficulties.<sup>90</sup> As Kristeva explains, such exclusionist discourse, where violence is turned against the "foreigner," the "refugee," the "immigrant," the "other," normalizes a system based on one group against all external others; i.e., a pervasive and violent form of racism.<sup>91</sup> Using rhetoric that blames affirmative action for the loss of "white" jobs and fosters a belief that "the deterioration of society is the fault of immigrants and people of color," conservatives both divert attention from the increasing inequality reflected in the widening gap between the upper socioeconomic groups and the rest of the populace and simultaneously divided traditional coalitions of labor, ethnic minorities, and women."<sup>92</sup> President Clinton has publicly blamed the victims of poverty and racism for their situation, saying that if they would "pull themselves up by the bootstraps" and "put an end to crime in their own communities," things would get better.<sup>93</sup> With much patriotic flourish, an ethos of callousness is legitimized under the rubric of competition, survival of the fittest, and the "American" way.

Despite invoking ideals of democracy, traditional "American" values are selectively and strategically applied by those in power, especially when defining criminality.<sup>94</sup> James Gilligan

offers one of the most telling examples of this bias:

It is remarkable to me how seldom people recognize the extent to which many of the criminals today are contemporary versions of our own ancestors. For example...I vary between being amused and bemused by the moral indignation with which some politicians who happen to be Boston Brahmins denounce the scandalous behavior of young male drug dealers. These young men are, of course, classic examples of capitalist entrepreneurs, whom one would think would be extolled by these Bostonians as role models for their peers. They are, after all, making fortunes by their business activities, with tremendous returns on relatively small investments, and they often manage to save and invest their considerable earnings as conscientiously as did the Brahmins' own ancestors. The fact is that the ancestors of the latter group made the fortunes on which their descendants are now living (comfortably enough that they do not need to deal drugs) by means of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century equivalents of drug-dealing such as slave-trafficking, opium-smuggling, rum-running, and killing.<sup>95</sup>

Gilligan is careful to point out that this is not meant to trivialize the devastation of illicit drug abuse but to put the construction of criminality in perspective. A Washington, D.C., high school student, reacting to the simplistic "Just Say No to Drugs" campaign, gives us an even harder dose of reality: "I make a hundred bucks an hour selling drugs. What does the President want me to do, work at McDonald's for the minimum wage?"<sup>96</sup>

Similarly, present-day upper-class economic crimes such as embezzlement, price fixing, fraud, professional and business malpractice, and corruption (not to mention the legalized crime of tax benefits for the wealthy at the expense of the vast majority of Americans), far outweigh the economic costs of lower-class crimes. Yet, white-collar criminals constitute only a small fraction of the prison population. Penal sanctions are primarily applied against crimes of need, not crimes of greed.

This situation is sarcastically summarized by Anatole France:  
"The law, in its majestic equality, forbids the rich as well as the poor to sleep under bridges, to beg in the streets, and to steal bread."<sup>97</sup>

### Street Gangs

Another way the American aristocracy feeds off the marginalized is manifested in the paradoxes of gang culture.<sup>98</sup> Although gangs each have distinctive identities, they tend to be treated as a homogeneous "problem" in ways reminiscent of the stereotyping of certain racial and ethnic groups.

What images come to mind when you think of a gang? The typical picture is a group of dark-skinned male minority youths, dressed in similar clothing, swaggering together down school corridors or neighborhood streets and perceived as threatening to "outsiders." AS Cummings and Monti point out:

We would have more difficulty conceiving of gangs as young men strutting through high school corridors while dressed out in identical team jackets or a set of college students being formally initiated with secret rituals into a group dedicated to a "brotherhood," carousing, and intermittent outbursts of vandalism. Fraternities and football teams are not "gangs" in the commonly accepted sense of that term; but they do exhibit certain traits that frequently are associated with gangs.<sup>99</sup>

The difference is that crimes condemning gangs are considered merely "boys will be boys" antics when committed by higher-class "gangs" sporting Greek letters or football team mascots as their colors. This is not meant to excuse gang violence (of any type) or to argue that we should dismiss violent behavior as a ritual of male bonding (which we most definitely should not),<sup>100</sup> but to underscore the variations in our attributions of culpability both across and within these groups.

Similarly, the intolerance of personal disrespect that is part of the "street code" has been highly publicized and widely condemned. Yet the gentlemen's "code of honor" that dominated the mannered culture of the antebellum South was considered a respectable way to respond to insults. When John Dickinson, a



Nashville lawyer, made offensive comments about Andrew Jackson's wife, Jackson, the future president, shot and killed the man (who also happened to be his political opponent). And every student of American history learns about the famous duel between Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr. When practiced by those at the top of the Southern caste system, revenge in the form of ritualized and cold-blooded killing has always been an accepted way to solve problems.

It is important to realize, despite media-manipulated perceptions, even among the most "violent" street gangs, violent behavior is relatively rare.<sup>101</sup> The gangs Padilla works with, for example, "participate in a violent world," but "view what they're doing as expressions of resistance, freedom, and election" and "as superior to the way of life and occupational choices of their 'conformist peers' or 'straight youth.'"<sup>102</sup> Gang leaders share profits with other gang members and all see their economic welfare as tied to the gang.<sup>103</sup> Sullivan's research also highlights gang members' awareness and positioning of crime vis-à-vis the exigencies of a market economy. He writes that the young men in these studies<sup>104</sup> ironically

spoke of their criminal activities as "getting over" and "getting paid," terms that refer directly...to economic motivation and reflect the perception of a social structure of restricted opportunity. "Getting paid" equates crime with work. "Getting over" means beating the system, a rigged system in which one is unlikely to succeed by competing according to the rules.<sup>105</sup>

Besides being blamed for increased crime, gangs also take the rap for crimes of commodification that play both sides against them. For example, on one hand, antigraffiti campaigns criminalize those who use the walls of the projects to communicate<sup>106</sup> while, on the other hand, downtown gallery owners get rich from the work of those few graffiti artists they charitably "rescue" to paint in lofts instead of gutters, providing trendy decor for their upscale patrons to signal their financial status and cultural savvy. The co-optation of street gang symbols by fashion, music, and media also add a capitalist

cachet to gang symbols and legends while separating them from contextual economic and social conditions. They become either superficial, disposable possessions of wealthier youth who can afford them or an attempt to gain, by association, some of the adult recognition and fear, if not respect, of one of the few groups in their age cohort that has managed to do that. The use of gang symbols by upper classes can trivialize gang culture and further marginalize gangs.<sup>107</sup> But it can also speak to the tenuous position of all young people in the social order.

#### Gendered Violence

High levels of violence are not confined to urban schools with predominantly African American and Latino/a populations. Violence is also increasing in suburban and rural schools, especially among white male students. Although not necessarily economically disadvantaged, white male students can be marginalized in other ways. Those who do not conform to accepted roles and expectations are often alienated from the dominant culture and at the bottom of the social hierarchy of schools (nerds, geeks, fags, etc.). These "minority" students are indoctrinated with almost the same message as inner-city students: pretty girls, strong boys, thin, rich, smart kids are the ones who matter.<sup>108</sup> Add "white" to the list and it's the urban version.

Shooting sprees by middle-class white teenage males in small towns and suburbs in twenty-five states captured national and international headlines during the 1997-98 and 1998-99 school years.<sup>109</sup> In contrast, killers and victims of color and/or from the inner cities garner no such media interest. No specially trained counselors are sent to help the predominantly African American and Latino/a students in inner-city schools cope with their trauma. No emergency crews arrive with spackle and paint to remove bullet holes and other signs of violence from city schools. In fact, after the 1999 shooting at Colorado's 98 percent white Columbine High School, newspapers featured short biographies about each of the twelve white students who had been murdered. The one African American student who had been killed was not eulogized. Instead, the papers printed a much shorter

story about how angry his father was. Although all parents of these victims must have been understandably angry, only the black male parent's rage was displayed in the press, while his dead son was not memorialized like the white victims were.<sup>110</sup> This exploitive construction of their identities (or erasing of identity, in the case of the son) as (negatively) different from or "other" than those of the white victims and their families was not accidental, although it may not have been conscious. It was representative of the more pervasive, insidious discourses of structural racism and implies that the dominant white culture and experience is the norm.

Although racism dominates the American subconscious, sexual harassment and improprieties dominate the American consciousness. Try, as O'Toole and Schiffman urge us, to "think about the most consuming events of the last decade, those that grabbed the attention of the public through news headlines and court television and dominated daily conversation."<sup>111</sup> Think about the O. J. Simpson trial;<sup>112</sup> "ethnic cleansing" and other atrocities committed by the Serbs against Albanians in Bosnia;<sup>113</sup> the rape of a twelve-year-old Okinawa schoolgirl by three U.S. servicemen. All of these acts of violence share a common link: They were perpetrated by males, acting individually or in groups, "for whom violence and violation are rational solutions to perceived problems ranging from the need to inflate one's sexual self-esteem to denigrating rivals in war to boosting a country's GNP."<sup>114</sup> Our culture rewards men for practicing violence "in virtually any sphere of activity by money, admiration, recognition, respect, and the genuflection of others honoring their sacred and proven masculinity. In male culture, police are heroic and so are outlaws; males who enforce standards are heroic and so are those who violate them."<sup>115</sup>

Brutal acts by American sports heroes and foreign armies dominate the landscape of gendered violence in the media, but they represent only the smallest fraction of violent acts against women and of the dangers women face on a daily basis.<sup>116</sup> Even the language used to describe violence against women contributes to its perpetuity. The term "battered woman," for

example, is deceptive because the harm done to her becomes an adjective, which implies it is an attribute of the woman and not something someone did to her.<sup>117</sup> This is particularly distressing because battering is the leading cause of injury to women in the United States. Similarly, using the term "domestic" violence to denote family violence minimizes its cruelty and masks the gender bias of what used to be known as "wife beating," or, in the words of Frances Power Cobbe, an Irish reformer and feminist of the late 1800s, "wife torture."<sup>118</sup> Cobbe's words, as Ann Jones notes, remind us of scenes from Charles Dickens and Thomas Hardy; from D. H. Lawrence, Dostoevsky, and Émile Zola; from Doris Lessing, Toni Morrison, Alice Munro, and Alice Walker; Wife torture

conjure(s) the scenes between beatings: the sullen husband, withdrawn and sulking, or angry and intimidating, dumping dinner on the floor, throwing the cat against the wall, screaming, twisting a child's arm, needling, nagging, manipulating, criticizing the bitch, the cunt who never does anything right, who's ugly and stupid, who should keep her mouth shut, who should spread her legs now, who should be dead, who will be if she's not careful.<sup>119</sup>

"Domestic violence," it may be argued, is a more comprehensive term that is not only neutral in terms of gender but also sexual preference. That assumes violence in homosexual couples is the same thing as in heterosexual relationships. It is not. Our culture clearly supports, if not encourages, wife beating. This gives it a legitimacy that differentiates it from abuse within gay and lesbian relationships. On the other hand, the marginalization of homosexuals trivializes violence in their communities and ignores its victims, despite the fact that an estimated 25 percent of all gay men and women in intimate relationships are victims of "domestic" abuse. Using gender-neutral terminology, despite the real problem of "domestic" violence committed by women against women, women against men, and men against men, the assailant in almost all cases of violence, heterosexual and homosexual, is a man.<sup>120</sup>

The term "domestic violence" ostensibly includes children,

but they are often its forgotten victims. Aside from the increased danger of children being physically abused in violent homes, they are almost always psychologically and emotionally abused. A reported minimum of 3.3 million children a year witness violent parental abuse ranging from hitting or slapping to murder. (Because family violence is underreported, the actual figure is much higher.)<sup>121</sup> The problem is compounded because the combination of inadequate job opportunities and lack of outside financial and child care support trap women (and their children) in abusive relationships. Sexual harassment, battering, rape, murder, sexual abuse of women and children, and other forms of gender violence are not random events or practices perpetrated by "other" political regimes and a few celebrities. They are intrinsic components of America's heritage and culture.

#### The Role of Religion

Although separation of church and state is a fundamental cornerstone of U.S. government, religion has always been in collusion with politics and vice versa. Martín-Baró,<sup>122</sup> makes a useful and appropriate distinction between vertical religiosity, which leads to alienation and oppression, and horizontal religiosity, which leads to empowering critical consciousness and social liberation. Both can exist individually or in combination with other religious practices, but the direction taken reflects its ideological dimension.

Martín-Baró, a Jesuit priest and critical psychologist, conducted a series of studies in El Salvador which confirmed that there was a clear connection between religious beliefs and sociopolitical choices. His analysis found that even though religion has individual meaning, the ideological milieu provides the context for how one interprets one's beliefs. The dominant western European Christian tradition is one of vertical religiosity and that, not horizontal religiosity,<sup>123</sup> is the "religion" discussed below.

Historically, when the shift from goddess worship to patriarchal religions replaced the reciprocal relationship of nature and humanity with the superiority of man over nature (and women), the cultural sanction of violence as an expression of

power and control became the norm.<sup>124</sup> Sexism, classism, and racism are replete in religious texts such as the Torah, Qur'an, and New Testament. The use of violence was both official and individual. In the seventh century B.C.E., Josiah ordered the annihilation of every non-Hebrew Canaanite in order to eradicate lingering remnants of goddess worship. At "God's command," Joshua led the Hebrews to conquer Palestine by killing every man, woman and child they encountered.<sup>125</sup> Catholic "holy" wars or crusades sanctioned murder, rape, and other atrocities in the name of God and church coffers. The 14th-century Roman Catholic Church authorized the notorious torture of the Inquisition as warnings to others who might question the authority of the Church and thereby weaken her political power.

It was also seen as a duty to colonize and Christianize the "savages" of the world. Ships were sent to the colonies with armies and missionaries and returned laden with slaves and treasures wrested from the conquered. Churches and governments grew rich on the backs of colonialized people by destroying their cultures, their economy, their spirits, their lives. Although conquered peoples were often seen as less-than-human, religions also fostered the belief that humans are inherently bad—and women even worse. In officially sanctioned versions of Biblical texts, Eve, after all, is responsible for tempting Adam to eat the forbidden fruit and thus for their (and our) expulsion from the Garden of Eden. The stigma of Eve's sin has marked all women as less-than-man. From Augustine to Aquinas (and Aristotle before them), the female is marked as too emotional and impulsive and thus not "rational" enough, fickle, weak, deceitful, and generally morally and intellectually inferior to men.<sup>126</sup>

Catholicism was the first Christian religion but by no means was it the most oppressive or influential.<sup>127</sup> The fundamental Calvinist tenet of predestination is perhaps the strongest contender for that title. Predestination refers to the belief that people are divided into two groups—the redeemed and the damned—before they are born and there is no way to change one's fate. Because success

grace, people work hard to achieve so they (and others) can be convinced they are among the saved.<sup>128</sup> Those at the top of the hierarchy can then tautologically justify their position and behavior by invoking this tenet. In addition to stressing the evil of idleness and human nature, the Calvinist tradition also opposed enjoyment and personal luxuries.

The late 17th-century Salem, Massachusetts, witch trials were but one embodiment of this dogmatic and misogynous heritage. As Weber has shown, the Calvinist form of radical individualism that questioned the religious value of poverty and forbearance became the foundation of capitalism and an oppressive, militant, self-righteous morality. Today, it is evident in efforts limiting reproductive rights, in bemoaning the break-up of the (presumably functional) nuclear family while forcing even single mothers to abandon their children so they can work, paying men higher salaries than women who do the same work, sanctioning injustices in our law enforcement system, and opposing social justice. In short, it is the agenda of the conservative government and the "religious" right. It is the hegemonic ideology.

The heritage of vertical religiosity is not oppressive only to women and children. It harms men in ways that are sometimes even more insidious and dangerous. Since male behavior is the norm, violence and war are not only accepted as normal, but they are elevated as noble, heroic events. This only makes it more difficult to see how qualities that define "manhood," like emotional detachment, competitiveness, and toughness, can be detrimental.<sup>129</sup> All that matters is winning—whether it means a hostile corporate takeover that puts thousands out of work, dropping an atomic bomb on innocent men, women, and children, or shooting an "enemy" with a handgun.

#### Guns and Poses

Firearms have figured prominently in U.S. history, and their continuing presence is often attributed to the country's strong cultural sense of its frontier heritage. As Gellert points out, other countries have a similar frontier tradition (e.g., Canada and Australia) but have only a fraction of America's rates of

gun ownership or gun-related homicide and violence. For example, the homicide rate among males aged fifteen to twenty-four in the United States is ten times higher than in Canada, and fifteen times higher than Australia.<sup>130</sup> Australia has one-seventh the proportionate private handgun ownership of the United States. Friedman and Fisher attribute this, not to a "frontier" legacy but, more accurately, to the varying historic dominance of market culture and institutions between countries such as the United States and Canada. They argue that it is not a coincidence that Canada has both more stringent controls over the sale of guns and a much more generous "welfare state" than the United States, or that Canada pioneered the kind of universal medical care system the United States has fiercely and effectively resisted in the name of a "free market."<sup>131</sup>

The United States has the highest rate of nonwar gun-related homicide in the world. The United States is also the only industrialized nation that does not effectively regulate private ownership of firearms,<sup>132</sup> even though there are currently more than 20,000 laws in the United States that deal with the sale, distribution, and use of firearms. Almost one-half of all American households have one or more firearms. Although accurate figures are not available, the American Medical Association estimates that there are approximately 210 million firearms in the United States, 60 million of which are handguns.<sup>133</sup>

The rhetoric that argues "if guns are criminalized only criminals will have guns" and law-abiding citizens will have no means to protect themselves is not supported by data. The majority of U.S. homicides are not committed by those with any criminal record. Most homicides are the result of a complex interaction of emotional and societal forces and are not associated with other felonies or a previous history of crime. Guns intended to protect against crime are forty-three times more likely to kill a family member, friend, or acquaintance than to kill an intruder in self-defense.<sup>134</sup> The risk of domestic homicide in families owning a gun doubles.<sup>135</sup> Adults whose parents owned a gun are twice as likely to own one



themselves.<sup>136</sup> Data also contradict the racist-based fear exploited by George Bush in his now infamous "Willie Horton" campaign commercial. The commercial used a mug shot of an African American with a voice-over that told how he had been furloughed in Massachusetts and subsequently beat and terrorized a man and raped his wife in another state. The commercial played on the common but mistaken belief that violent crime is disproportionately committed by blacks against white victims. Although whites are more likely to own guns than blacks, blacks are three times as likely as whites to be victims of a violent crime committed with a handgun. More than 90 percent of the victims of black violence are other blacks.<sup>137</sup>

The "Constitutional right" argument is similarly divorced from fact. Even though the second amendment says "the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed," all U.S. Supreme Court decisions have held that this does not protect an individual's right to private gun ownership, despite the belief to the contrary of 60 percent of Americans.<sup>138</sup> What about the right to *life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness* (emphasis added)? The fact is guns are a highly profitable, major American industry in a culture where money matters most. The National Rifle Association (NRA) is a powerful, well-funded contributor to select political campaigns and advocate of the gun industry. The problem—and most important discrepancy in the data—is that when it comes to firearms, profits are measured in dollars and costs are measured in lives.

#### Police Beat

Since July 1991 New York and other U.S. cities have been touting a downward trend in both violent and property crime. According to the FBI, national murder and robbery statistics for 1997 show a decline of 7 percent. However, as evidenced by a *Morning Edition* report on National Public Radio (NPR) on November 23, 1998, there is growing concern among the public, as well as among criminologists, that the figures merely indicate increased political pressure on police to keep crime rates low. On that program, Eric Westervelt reported that the New Orleans Office of Municipal Investigation found that dozens of crimes in

the city were altered or downgraded so that tourists would not be scared away. Westervelt tells of one woman who was stabbed twelve times while resisting rape by an intruder who attacked her in her own bed. According to FBI guidelines, the crime should have been reported as attempted rape and aggravated assault and battery—a major crime. But New Orleans police classified the attack simply as an aggravated burglary, avoiding mention of anything that might appear on the violent crime reports. In another attack, Westervelt reported, “a man ended up in the emergency room with stab wounds to his back during a robbery. That, too, was written up as an aggravated burglary.” This “creative crime counting” is not restricted to New Orleans or other favorite tourist destinations. Police commanders in New York, Boca Raton, Philadelphia, Atlanta, and several other cities were criticized, demoted, or transferred in 1998 for similar offenses.

Westervelt also interviewed Jim Fife, a criminologist and former New York City police officer, who said that crime statistics were the “worst official statistics in the U.S.” and that current practices were not without precedent. Pressure to manipulate statistics comes not only from cities looking to boost their images, but also because promotions and pay raises are largely based on crime statistics. According to Fife, downgrading was common practice when he joined the force in the early 1960s, and continues to this day. Westervelt reported that, in 1996 and 1997, the FBI “tossed out” the Philadelphia crime reports “because they were totally unreliable.” Although John Timmony, the Philadelphia police commissioner, called the majority of mistakes “stupid, careless, [or] lazy” unintentional miscodings, an investigation by the Philadelphia *Inquirer* found that statement contradicted by repeated examples of recent downgrading.

The problem is exacerbated, especially in inner cities, when citizens fail to report crimes. As Fife explained:

The suburbanite whose car is broken into is alarmed because this is the first time this has happened and he's paying enormous taxes and he expects the police to come out with a

fingerprint kit and solve the problem. The guy in the inner city to whom that happens knows it ain't gonna happen, so he doesn't bother reporting it. So almost certainly crime in the worst parts of the United States is very much underreported by citizens.

Not responding to alarms in "certain" neighborhoods represents more than dereliction of duty or a shortage of police officers. It is just one way the racial bias that pervades police departments across the country manifests itself. Other ways can be, unfortunately, far more serious.<sup>139</sup> Although all police officers are not racist, many police departments across the country tolerate prejudice in their ranks. Racism is the most blatantly displayed.

On Thursday, February 4, 1999, Amadou "Ahmed" Diallo, an unarmed twenty-two-year old West African man with no criminal record, was shot to death at 12:45 a.m. in the vestibule to his apartment. He was killed by four (white) officers assigned to an elite plainclothes unit trying to solve a series of rapes and robberies in the Bronx and Manhattan. Diallo was shot forty-one times. (The four members of the New York Police Department's Street Crime Unit were subsequently indicted on second-degree murder charges and acquitted.)

The institutionalized racism and brutality of the NYPD had reached international proportions. Thousands in Guinea, including top government officials, attended Diallo's funeral. The Diallo shooting became the catalyst for a national and international debate on U.S. police practices and the racial conflict between urban officers and the communities they patrol. The president of the United African Congress, Sidique Abubakarr Wai, charged New York City officials with flagrant disregard for African lives and condemned their failure to aggressively seek the murderers of "several dozen Senegalese cabdrivers who have been killed over the past decade or so."<sup>140</sup> Outraged citizens of all ages, colors, and incomes gathered daily in New York, in groups ranging in size from a handful to more than 10,000, to protest police racism and brutality. Demonstrations were also held in Washington, D.C., and other major cities. On Tuesday,

March 28, 1999, hundreds of police officers, nearly all of them white, marched in the Bronx in support of the four officers who shot Amadou Diallo, contending that the killing of Mr. Diallo was a tragedy but not a crime.

On February 25, 2000, a jury cleared the four police officers of murder, manslaughter, and lesser criminal charges in the slaying of Amadou Diallo. Public protests followed in Albany, the Bronx, and elsewhere. Amadou's father, Saikou Diallo called the change in trial venue from the Bronx to the state capitol "the second murder" of his son. As this book goes to press, the NAACP is demanding a federal investigation of the case and the Diallo family is planning a civil lawsuit against the city and the officers.<sup>141</sup>

The police do not deny that minorities are targeted as suspects. A manual used by the Public Agency Training Council in Indianapolis even suggests stopping all cars with "Jamaican paraphernalia, bumper stickers or slogans."<sup>142</sup> The police argue that they stop more blacks because there are more blacks in jail because blacks commit more crimes. But they fail to recognize the circularity of this reasoning. It doesn't occur to them that perhaps there are more blacks in jail because they are so targeted. They have no way of knowing how many more whites would be in jail today if they were also stopped or if criteria other than race were used.

The "profiling" controversy and the use of race and ethnicity as clues to criminality prompted state and federal investigations into police behavior across the country. However, three years earlier, in 1996, Amnesty International issued a report on "Police Brutality and Excessive Force in the New York City Police Department."<sup>143</sup> The human rights advocates documented the disproportionate number of people of color who were physically abused and sometimes killed, often by shots in the back, in situations that "did not warrant the use of lethal force" and were "in violation of police guidelines and international standards."<sup>144</sup>

Also in 1996, a New Jersey judge found state troopers

engaged in the illegal practice of targeting of minority drivers, creating a "stark" disparity in which blacks were almost five times more likely to be stopped than whites. After years of denial, in April, 1999 (shortly after the Diallo murder and the massive national public demonstrations against police bias and brutality that followed), New Jersey's Governor Christine Todd Whitman, most likely with an eye on the polls, finally acknowledged that state troopers have disproportionately and improperly stopped and searched black drivers on the New Jersey Turnpike in attempts to catch drug dealers and other criminals. More than 77 percent of all drivers so targeted were members of a minority group.<sup>145</sup> This blatant racism is not unique to the New York area. Comparable statistics have been found in other states. In Maryland, for example, the state police agreed as part of a court settlement to track the race of drivers that troopers stopped and searched on a stretch of I-95. Only 17 percent of the drivers on that road were black, but more than 70 percent of those searched in the first 20 months were African American. The "war against crime and drugs" is clearly a race war.<sup>146</sup>

The police, it should be noted, are in a difficult if not impossible position. Their job is to prevent crime, yet the conditions that are responsible for high crime rates are not part of the equation. At the core of our law enforcement system is a belief that people (and especially people of color) are innately violent and need external social controls to contain them. By some convoluted form of logic, this legitimizes the use of violence to "control" violence. The job of police, by definition, is to maintain order and control, typically through coercion. The model is one of professionalized "crime fighting," reflecting its military roots in history and imagery and contributing to a "bunker mentality" that feeds suspicions of "outsiders" and fosters secrecy that minimizes accountability.<sup>147</sup> It applies military concepts (criminals as enemies) and terminology (war on drugs) as well as solutions (punishment) to social, political, and economic problems. It is violence used to protect even greater violence. It is violence

for social control, not social good. It is violence that perpetuates a caste system reminiscent of discriminatory law interpretation, application, and enforcement in which blacks received decidedly harsher punishments, especially for crimes against whites.<sup>148</sup>

#### Behind Bars

The United States has a larger percentage of its population incarcerated than any other country. Between 1980 and 1994, the number of inmates in state and federal prisons and local jails increased three-fold, from 329,821 to more than 1.8 million,<sup>149</sup> including over 95,000 youths.<sup>150</sup> The overall American rate of imprisonment is now ten times as high as that of Japan. California has the largest prison system, larger than any single country in the Western industrialized world, and larger than that of France, Germany, Great Britain, Japan, Singapore, and the Netherlands combined.<sup>151</sup> For the past twenty years, California has imprisoned 450 out of every 100,000 juveniles—a higher percentage of its youth than any other state. Although whites are the largest racial group in the state, black and Latino youth are eight times as likely to be arrested as a white California teen. In Utah, where less than 1 percent of the state's residents are black, eight times more black youths are also held in detention. Half of the inmates in all American prisons are African American, yet blacks make up only about 10 percent of the total American population. One out of three young African American (ages eighteen to thirty-five) men in the United States are in prison or on parole. The percentage of black men in prison in this country is four times higher than in South Africa at the height of apartheid.<sup>152</sup> Of the 80,000 women now imprisoned, about 70 percent are nonviolent offenders and 75 percent have children. (Although women make up only a little more than 7 percent of all U.S. inmates, they are the fastest-growing segment of the prison population.)<sup>153</sup> More than one out of nine school-age children has one or both parents in prison. If present policies continue, this number will soon reach one out of four.<sup>154</sup> The National Center for Juvenile Justice reports that the number of youth age ten through seventeen who are

arrested and incarcerated for violent crimes could more than double by the year 2010 if current rates continue.

The exponentially growing prison population is largely due to four interrelated factors: (1) special interests, (2) the misguided "war on drugs," (3) the equally mistaken belief that "getting tough on crime" will suppress it, and (4) the market economy.

Firstly, despite the high cost of maintenance (about \$40,000 per inmate per year)<sup>155</sup> prison compounds have blurred the line between public and private interests. Politicians use them to scare up votes based on fear of crime. Impoverished rural areas reap financial benefits from the jobs created.<sup>156</sup> Private (and not so private) companies exploit the \$35 billion prison budget for substantial profits. UNICOR (the acronym-like name used by Federal Prison Industries), for example, is a government corporation/ manufacturing conglomerate created in 1934 by the U.S. Department of Justice with the Federal Bureau of Prisons. In federal fiscal year 1996, UNICOR employed 17,379 inmates and had \$495.4 million in sales, 61.6 percent of which went to the Department of Defense.<sup>157</sup> Workers are paid from \$.23 to \$1.15 per hour. A portion of these wages are applied to court-ordered fines, victim restitution, and other court-assessed obligations. Not a single cent of UNICOR's money goes for social security tax or any form of insurance. Nor does it help to defray the expenses of our vast prison system or the taxes we pay to support it.<sup>158</sup> The U.S. prison system has become a major bureaucratic, political, and economic resource, subject to all of the surreptitious dealings and injustice that go along with it.

Secondly, the percentage of inmates serving time for nonviolent drug offenses has more than doubled since the early 1980s, to 61 percent in the federal prison system and 30 percent in state systems. Some of these cases involve possession of only small amounts of marijuana or cocaine.<sup>159</sup> Yet, the average sentence for a first-time, nonviolent drug offender is longer than the average sentence for rape, child molestation, bank robbery, or manslaughter. Our prisons are not overcrowded

because of necessity but because hegemonic self-interests find it profitable to keep them that way. To further contextualize the situation, it is also necessary to realize that, despite the \$17 billion the United States is spending on the "war on drugs," the damage done by illicit drugs does not come close to that caused by legal drugs like alcohol and tobacco. In 1989 alone, tobacco killed 395,000 Americans and cocaine killed 3,618. A recent issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine* (1998) reported that properly prescribed legal drugs kill 106,000 Americans every year. That's twenty times more than are killed by illegal drugs.<sup>160</sup>

Thirdly, increased criminalization is simply not working. For example, a meta-analysis of systematic assessments of "tough" delinquency programs and institutionalization found that these types of programs, such as "shock incarceration" and "scared straight," produce higher, not lower, levels of recidivism.<sup>161</sup> California now gives youthful offenders tougher sentences than adults convicted of the same crime. According to the California Department of Corrections, juveniles convicted of murder serve an average of five years in prison, compared to adult murderers who serve an average of three-and-a-half years. Yet youth homicide rates went from 350, which was below the national average in 1970, to 1400, or double the national average, by 1992.<sup>162</sup> "Get tough" policies ignore the fact that the socialization of the prison system, where violence, extortion, and rape are routine, often promotes a career in crime and little else.<sup>163</sup>

Fourthly, the market economy requires a high percentage of persistent poverty, which has serious consequences for children, families, and society. As Friedman and Fisher explain:

Because a basic operating principle of market society is to keep the public sector small, individuals and families are forced to rely on individual efforts to secure some of the basics of healthy human development that less Darwinian societies, even poorer ones, provide much more reliably and accessibly. Poor but relatively generous societies, accordingly, are likely to do a better job at keeping



violent crime low than wealthy but mean-spirited ones.<sup>164</sup> Persistent poverty and the lack of opportunities for lucrative employment play a crucial role in crime, which is often a proactive result of complex and rational choices.<sup>165</sup> It is telling that Schwedinger and Schwedinger<sup>166</sup> report that over half of all U.S. prison inmates, in the year before their arrest, earned no income at all, and one-third had an income of less than \$2,000. Under- and unemployment, obstacles associated with racism (such as reducing federal aid to cities and poor families), and the deteriorating position of marginalized groups in the labor market have virtually eliminated the possibility of their obtaining funds in any legitimate way. All but the very top and lowest bottom rungs on the (albeit mythical) ladder of opportunity have been removed along with the social safety net. There is no way to climb out of poverty.

#### Conclusion

The previous pages have begun to illustrate some of the paradoxes and perversions of a system that condemns violence to garner votes, punishes victims in the name of justice, scapegoats schools to camouflage its own crimes, and promotes prejudice under the guise of fairness. However, the "problem" of violence, like its "solution," runs even deeper than these. It courses through the veins of our body politic. It is inseparable from the roots of violence in American society—a cultural icon inextricably linked with history, entertainment, and economics. We admire the vigilante, glorify the gangster, idolize the gunslinger. Unless we come to grips with our past we cannot understand our present and envision the possibilities for reclaiming our future.

Our country was built on transgressive acts of violence that continue to this day.<sup>167</sup> It is part of the "otherist,"<sup>168</sup> hegemonic American ideology to counter aggression with more aggression. The narratives of our violent past and present are turned into heroic epics, romanticizing danger and negating empathy, emotion, and pain. These myths create a deceptive fraternal nostalgia (sometimes called "patriotism") that reinscribes socially sanctioned sentiments as

history. From the minute Columbus set foot on Caribbean soil and the extermination of native populations began, through the savagery of slavery and its aftermath, the frequently forceful resistance to the labor movement and civil rights, and the continuing violence against immigrants and other minorities such as homosexuals, the archaic and barbaric colonial and capitalistic mindset that drives U.S. domestic and foreign policies and practices has taken us down the path of disparity, denial, and devastation.

The combination of this legacy with(in) the positivist paradigm, has led to the development of "interventions" in the "war(s) against fill-in-the-blank" (e.g., violence, guns, drugs). Although these proposed solutions may be well intentioned, violence, when viewed through the "scientific" or logical positivist paradigm and the dominant ideology (the two are intertwined), focuses on its prediction and control, which is often a thinly disguised effort to homogenize youth so they conform to hegemonic ideals.

Positivism refers to a paradigm, or belief system, that claims objectivity, truth, and certainty exist in science and that scientific knowledge is irrefutable and universal. Positivists, contrary to more critical thinkers, do not consider science a social construction that reflects a particular ideology.<sup>169</sup> Instead, positivism is deterministic, embracing control and prediction "[without taking] into account that human behavior is meaningful behavior that involves active agents with intentions and expectations and able to communicate with other equally active agents."<sup>170</sup> Positivism, by definition, rules out asking questions about domination and agency. Comte, who is often considered its founder, says the task of positivism is to maintain the status quo, to "imbue the people with the feeling that...no political change is of real importance."<sup>171</sup>

This "scientized" position, or embrace of positivistic objectivity and determinism, continues to dominate U.S. rhetoric and policy on violence, as exemplified in the popularity of "tough" deterrents (i.e., punishment) which promise solutions they cannot and do not deliver. (Positivism and the

scientization of the social sciences is further discussed in chapter 8.) Furthermore, ignoring the ideological and social processes of violence by relying on an ethos of capitalist individualism and penal sanctions, in effect, punishes the true victims of violence by targeting populations labeled "high crime risks," "dangerous," and "subversive." Not surprisingly, given this country's racist propensities, the majority of these groups are young, poor, and people of color.

Alternatively, the authors of this volume maintain that onto-historical concerns are central to developing understandings of social phenomena. An onto-historical focus on violence situates it within the relationship between self and society, agency and control, power and structure. It demythologizes scientism and argues for understanding knowledge as embedded in the social, cultural, historical, and political milieu in which it is produced. It is grounded in theory, not ideology.

This position is not popular. It has been disparagingly called idealistic, unrealistic, and, with echoes of McCarthyism and all that implies, communistic. It has been discredited in public discourse and policy about violence by Wilson<sup>172</sup> and others<sup>173</sup> who argue that locating the causes of crime in conditions of social and economic disadvantage has limited value and offers almost no possibility of "practical applications" for intervention. But their practical applications, many of which are discussed in the final chapter of this book, have proven useless. Despite decades of rhetoric and a variety of (superficial) interventions, violence and crime persist. They are using a coat of paint to repair a building with a faulty foundation. It is a cosmetic attempt, a diversion, an easy way out. Yet, these superficial "practical" solutions gain increasing support while approaches grounded in theoretical (as opposed to ideological) bases are dismissed as unimportant and criticized for being neither empirical nor practical when, to the contrary, theory is both empirical and practical, as well as necessary. Theory and practice are inextricably interwoven. Practice is the basis of theory and theory is the means of

changing practice.

Given this relationship, it becomes apparent why, as Stanley and Wise observe, "Most of us have been brought up to think of theory as something arcane, mysterious, and rather forbidden."<sup>174</sup> We think of theory as beyond our reach, unless "we" happen to be one of the elite (i.e., "intelligent," affluent, white, male). What we are not taught is that this way of thinking is a manifestation of ideology.<sup>175</sup> Ideology, following Marx, refers to the beliefs of the dominant class that are used to "rationalize" its vested interests and maintain the status quo.<sup>176</sup> Ideology has little, if any, systematic analysis of the actual socioeconomic, political, or cultural mechanisms prevalent in a society. It is a worldview that serves a normative function.

Theory, on the other hand, is thoroughly grounded in data. Without theory, data is incomprehensible. Theory explains the relationships among a set of concepts or phenomena in a meaningful way. It is defined as "explanation based on observation and reasoning" and as "principles." It can inform a more democratic, humanistic, and successful future practice instead of perpetuating present practices (based on ideology, not theory) that simply do not work.

Denial of theory allows the dominant ideology to obscure its role in practice both methodologically and in the generation of knowledge. This makes it difficult to question the status quo which keeps a majority of Americans at an unjust disadvantage. In other words, the causes of violence in our society elude many of us because those at the top do not want us to see them. They prefer to play the "blame game," making it appear that others are at fault. Opportunistic politicians have jumped on the ba[n]dwagon of perfidious sentiment, convincing many that violence is caused by (1) deterioration of the nuclear family (while they repeatedly vote down measures for child care, etc., that would help families), (2) teenage pregnancy (when evidence shows that teenage pregnancy rates have declined steadily since the 1950s<sup>177</sup> and that, in fact, the vast majority of fathers in "teen" pregnancies are older men, many of whom are guilty of

rape and transmitting AIDS),<sup>178</sup> (3) welfare dependency (these politicians have led many Americans to believe that welfare is a major part of the United States budget when, in fact, basic welfare programs combined [Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Supplemental Security Income, and Food Stamps] amount to only 3.4 percent of the federal budget),<sup>179</sup> and (4) moral decay (have they looked at the behavior of their own group lately?). It is not an accident that they divide and scapegoat vulnerable groups. These tactics assure that the tables of power are not turned by diverting attention from the sins of the powerful and laying them on the heads of groups whose access to recourse they prohibit. This book means to expose the ideological frameworks supporting these tables of power—not so they can be turned, but so they can be replaced with tables built of more democratic wood rooted in the solid theoretical ground of a socially just society.

Notes:

1. Peter McLaren, *Life in School*. (New York: Longman, 1994).
2. P. Cantor, "The Roots and Legacy of Violence," in *Suicidology*, ed. A. A. Leenaars (Northvale, N.J.: Aronson, 1993).
3. George A. Gellert, M.D., *Confronting Violence: Answers to Questions about the Epidemic Destroying America's Homes and Communities* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1997).
4. Gellert, *Confronting Violence*.
5. U.S. Department of Justice, *National Crime Survey*. (Washington, DC: 1993).
6. F. M. Hechinger, *Fateful Choices: Healthy Youth for the 21st Century*. (New York: Carnegie Corporation, 1992).
7. National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 1994.
8. R. T. Ammerman and M. Hersen, eds., *Assessment of Family Violence: A Clinical and Legal Sourcebook* (New York: Wiley, 1992); J. Garbarino, K. Kostelny, and N. Dubrow, "What Children Can Tell Us About Living in Danger," *American Psychologist* 46 (1991): 376– 383.

9. Children's Defense Fund, Children's Defense Fund News Release (May, 1996).
10. Cantor, "The Roots and Legacy of Violence."
11. R. L. Hampton and B. R. Young, "Violence in Communities of Color," in *Violence in America*, eds. R. L. Hampton, P. Jenkins, and T. P. Gulotta (Thousand Oaks, Cal.: Sage, 1996), 53-68.
12. U. S. Department of Justice, *Criminal Victimization in the United States, 1990* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1992).
13. Children's Defense Fund, 1996.
14. Susan Faludi, *Backlash: the Undeclared War Against American Women*. (New York: Crown, 1991).
15. National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 1994.
16. See C. Allen Carter, *Kenneth Burke and the Scapegoat Process* (Norman, Ok.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996) for an illuminating exegesis of this phenomenon.
17. It is not a coincidence that "delinquency" did not become a social problem until the Industrial Revolution. The first juvenile justice institutions were created at the turn of the last century (1899-1900) to house the young criminals, who included disproportionately large numbers of immigrant children. By 1928 all but two states had a juvenile court system. See A. Platt, *The Child Savers* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969).
18. See D. Rothman, *Discovery of the Asylum* (Boston: Little Brown, 1971); D. Tyack, *The One Best System*. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974).
19. S. D. Vestermark, Jr., "Critical Decisions, Critical Elements in an Effective School Security Program," in *Schools, Violence, and Society*, ed. A. M. Hoffman, (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1996), 101-121.
20. H. M. Kliebard, *The Struggle for the American Curriculum* (New York: Routledge, 1987).
21. For a thorough and accurate assessment of this situation see J. R. Epp and A. M. Watkinson, eds., *Systemic Violence in Education: Promises Broken* (New York: SUNY Press,

1997).

22. The term minority is used throughout this book. Although "minority" groups represent the majority student population of most U.S. cities, and will soon be the largest segment of the total U.S. population, these groups are still a minority in arenas of political and economic power. See Freire and Macedo, this volume.

23. Tracking is grouping students by "ability" into different curricular tracks, i.e., college preparation, vocational training, or general diplomas. Jeannie Oakes has shown the biases inherent in tracking and how it contributes to the perpetuation of social and economic inequalities. See "Keeping Track, Part 1: The Policy and Practice of Curriculum Inequality," *Phi Delta Kappan* (September, 1986).

24. See Donaldo Macedo, *Literacies of Power: What Americans Are Not Allowed to Know* (Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1994).

25. Jean Anyon, *Ghetto Schooling: A Political Economy of Urban Educational Reform* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1997).

26. See McLaren, Leonardo, and Allen, this volume.

27. Cantor, "The Roots and Legacy of Violence"; P. A. Noguera, "Preventing and Producing Violence: A Critical Analysis of Responses to School Violence," *Harvard Education Review*, 65 (1995), 189 - 212; G. M. Ingersoll, *Adolescents in School and Society* (Lexington: DC Heath, 1982); W. B. Miller, *Crime by Youth Gangs and Groups in the U.S.* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1992).

28. Padilla's study of Chicano gang members in Chicago revealed that negative behaviors on the part of teachers, such as labeling, name-calling, belittling the child's culture, humiliating the child in class, and not expecting the child to succeed, prompted some students to participate in violent activity as "retaliation" for how they have been treated. See F. M. Padilla, *The Gang as an American Enterprise* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1992). See also B. Hartoonian, "School Violence and Vandalism," in *Youth Violence: Programs and Prospects*, eds. S. J. Apter and A. P. Goldstein (New York:

Pergamon Press, 1986), 120–139.

29. See Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction : A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans. R. Nice (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987).

30. M. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Pantheon, 1977).

31. See Giroux, this volume.

32. Leslie Roman, "Spectacle in the Dark: Youth as Transgression, Display, and Repression," *Educational Theory* 46 (1996): 1–22.

33. P. A. Noguera, "The Critical State of Violence Prevention," *The School Administrator* 2 (1996).

34. J. Pastor, J. McCormick, and M. Fine, "Makin' Homes: An Urban Girl Thing," in *Urban Girls: Resisting Stereotypes, Creating Identities*, eds. B. J. R. Leadbeater and Niobe Way (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 15–34.

35. J. McCormick, "Aesthetic Safety Zones: Surveillance and Sanctuary in Poetry by Young Women," in *Construction Sites: Spaces for Urban Youth to Reimagine Social Possibility*, eds. L. Weiss and M. Fine (New York: Teachers College Press, 2000).

36. U.S. Department of Justice.

37. U.S. Advisory Board on Child Abuse and Neglect

38. Sheryl Gay Stolberg, "Science looks at Littleton, and shrugs its shoulders," *New York Times*, 9 May 1999, Sec. 4, pp. 1,4.

39. Mike Males, *Framing Youth: Ten Myths About the New Generation* (Common Courage Press, 1999).

40. J. Gray, "Bill to Combat Juvenile Crime Passes House," *New York Times*, 9 May 1997, A1, A32.

41. "Excerpts from the National Education Goals," *Education Week*, 31 Jan. 1990: 16–17.

42. See M. Posner, "Research raises troubling questions about violence prevention programs," *The Harvard Education Newsletter*, 10, no. 3 (1994): 1–4. and J. P. Comer, *Waiting for a Miracle: Why Schools Can't Solve Our Problems—And How We Can* (New York: Dutton, 1997).

43. Edward N. Wolff, *Top heavy: A study of the increasing*



*inequality of wealth in America* (New York: Twentieth Century Fund Press, 1996).

44. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, *Poverty and Income Trends, 1994* (Washington, D.C.: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 1996), 53, 64; Saul Friedman, "The Poor Still Get Poorer," *Newsday*, 12 Feb. 2000, B8.

45. Although this book focuses on violence and youth, it is important to realize that the elderly are also among the less visible victims of poverty and neglect. Abandonment of the elderly is already increasing. In twenty years the population over eighty-five years old will be five times what it is today. Out of this 15 million, it is estimated that 12 million will suffer from Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia, not to mention the other serious and chronic ailments that afflict the aged. For more on this topic see Fred C. Pampel, *Aging, Social Inequality, and Public Policy* (Newbury Park, Cal.: Pine Forge Press, 1998); Meredith Minkler and Carol L. Estes, eds., *Critical Perspectives on Aging: The Political and Moral Economy of Growing Old* (Amityville, N.Y.: Baywood Publishers, 1990); and Laura Katz Olson, ed., *The Graying of the World: Who Will Care for the Frail Elderly?* (Binghamton, N.Y.: Haworth Press, 1994).

46. Lee Rainwater and Timothy Smeeding, *Doing Poorly: The Real Income of American Children in a Comparative Perspective*. (Syracuse, N.Y.: Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, 1995).

47. Rainwater and Smeeding, *Doing Poorly*.

48. S. B. Kamerman and A. J. Kahn, *Starting Right: How America Neglects its Youngest Children* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

49. Kamerman and Kahn, *Starting Right*, 29.

50. For example, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act of 1996 abolished earlier safety nets such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children and JOBS, a work and training program. In 1996, the financial impact of this legislation through 2002 was projected to total \$23 billion cut from the food stamp program and nearly \$3 billion from child nutrition programs. In addition, changes in the

definition of childhood disability will deny 300,000 children Supplementary Security Income (SSI) and, according to Congressional Budget Office estimates, as many as 50,000 of these children will also lose their Medicaid benefits. Legal immigrants, including children, are no longer eligible for SSI or food stamps, and states are allowed to deny them welfare, social services, and nonemergency Medicaid, "saving" the government billions of dollars more. Work requirements were also increased by this measure, while child care assistance was decreased. However, President Clinton did manage to find \$112 billion to add to the military budget. See A. U. Rickel and E. Becker, *Keeping Children from Harm's Way: How National Policy Affects Psychological Development* (Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 1997). On Feb. 19, the Giuliani Administration in New York City announced it would implement a plan to compel the city's homeless to enroll in "workfare"—working as much as thirty-five hours a week for their welfare check and the "privilege" to stay in city shelters. This affects over 4600 families and 7000 single adults. There are no provisions for the children of single parents who must work, but children of families excluded from shelters would be placed in foster care.

51. See Kamerman and Kahn, *Starting Right*.

52. Kamerman and Kahn, *Starting Right*.

53. The concept of cultural capital comes from the work of Bourdieu and Passeron. They maintain that schools do not use the social and cultural resources of different groups evenly. For example, children from higher economic classes will be familiar with the language, authority, and behavior patterns of schooling while those from lower classes will not. Bourdieu argues that the cultural experiences of students from higher classes facilitate their adjustment to school and academic achievement, thereby transforming cultural resources into what he calls cultural capital. See Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (Newbury Park, Cal.: Sage, 1997); Pierre Bourdieu, "Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction" in *Power and Ideology in Education*, eds. J.

Karabel and A. Halsey (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 487-511.

54. Although this should not be construed as downplaying the seriousness of the failures of our market economy and capitalist ideology, this is one area where recent immigrants and other marginalized groups may have an advantage over other impoverished populations. Their cultural values stressing cooperation, community, family, and the dignity of hard work may provide some protection, at least for a while, from the devastating effects of market values, a fact which does not escape them and which frequently contradicts popular perceptions of minorities. See Lawrence M. Friedman and George Fisher, *The Crime Conundrum: Essays on Criminal Justice*, (Boulder: Westview, 1997).

55. J. D. Kasarda, "Cities as Places Where People Live and Work: Urban Change and Neighborhood Distress," in *Interwoven Destinies: Cities and the Nation*, ed. H. G. Cisneros (New York: Norton, 1993), 81-124.

56. Kasarda, "Cities as Places."

57. P. C. Brophy, *Emerging Approaches to Community Development*, in *Interwoven Destinies: Cities and the Nation*, 213-230.

58. Stanley Aronowitz and William DiFazio, *The Jobless Future: Sci-tech and the Dogma of Work* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994); Stanley Aronowitz and Jonathan Cutler, eds., *Post-work: The Wages of Cybernation* (New York and London: Routledge, 1998); S. Sassen, *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).; H. L. Gates and W. J. Wilson, "The Two Nations of Black America," PBS *Frontline* interview, Feb. 1998.

59. D. R. Judd and T. Swanstrom, *City Politics: Private Power and Public Policy* (New York: Harper Collins, 1994).

60. Psychological research lends empirical support to the importance of outcome expectancies in choice of behavior. That is, the belief that time and energy spent on a task will actually affect its consequences plays a significant role in persistence. (See P. Karoly, P. 1993, "Mechanisms of Self-

Regulation: A Systems View," in *Annual Review of Psychology*, vol. 44, eds. L. W. Porter and M. R. Rosenzweig (Palo Alto, Cal.: Annual Reviews, 1993), 23-52; J. B. Rotter, *Social learning and clinical psychology* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1954).

61. Lani Guinier, *The Tyranny of the Majority: Fundamental Fairness in Representative Democracy* (New York: Free Press, 1994).

62. Guinier, *The Tyranny of the Majority*, 15.

63. U.S. Department of Education, 1996

64. Educational Testing Service, 1991

65. Jeannie Oakes, *Making the Best of Schools : A Handbook for Parents, Teachers, and Policymakers* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990); Jonathan Kozol, *Savage Inequalities* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1991); Stephanie Urso Spina, "Worlds Together...Words Apart: Bridging Cognition and Communication for Second-Language Learners through Authentic Arts-Based Curriculum." *Language, Culture, and Curriculum*, 8 (1995): 231-247.

66. James B. Conant, *Slums and Suburbs: A Commentary on Schools in Metropolitan Areas* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1961).

67. Kozol, *Savage Inequalities*.

68. Jean Anyon, "In School Reform: Toward Useful Theory," *Urban Education*, 30 (1995): 56-70; Linda Darling-Hammond, "The Right to Learn and the Advancement of Teaching: Research, Policy, and Practice for Democratic Education," *Educational Researcher* 25 (1996): 5 - 17; Jeannie Oakes, *Making the Best of Schools*.

69. Peter McLaren, *Life in Schools* (New York: Longman, 1994).

70. Paul Willis, *Learning to Labour* (Farnborough, GB: Saxon House, 1977).

71. Michael W. Apple and Lois Weis, "Ideology and Practice in Schooling: a Political and Conceptual Introduction," in *Ideology and Practice in Schooling*, eds. Michael W. Apple and Lois Weis, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983).

72. Michelle Fine, *Framing Dropouts: Notes on the Politics*

*of an Urban Public High School* (New York: SUNY Press, 1991).

73. Historically, many other minority groups, such as Jews, Irish, German, and Italian immigrants at the turn of the century, have been discriminated against and, like African Americans, stigmatized as "violent," isolated in ghettos, and so on. Yet there remains a crucial difference. These cultural groups did not have their traditions and languages intentionally and forcibly stripped away by 500 years of slavery.

74. James Gilligan, *Violence: Reflections on a National Epidemic* (New York: Vintage Books, 1997), 199.

75. Gilligan *Violence: Reflections*, 199-200.

76. The acceptance of blacks into the middle and upper classes must also be seen within the context of white cultural oppression. The negative interpretations and denigration of less successful African Americans by the black bourgeoisie are attitudes developed in congruence with dominant racist ideology.

77. Gus Hall, "Capitalism causes violence," in *Violence: Opposing viewpoints*, eds. Scott Barbour and Karin Swisher (San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 1996), 120-127, quote on p. 123

78. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (New York: Grove Press, 1966), 371.

79. See, for example, Michelle Fine, Lois Weis, Linda C. Powell, and L. Mun Wong, eds., *Off White: Readings on Race, Power, and Society* (New York: Routledge, 1997); Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, eds., *Critical White Studies: Looking Behind the Mirror* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997); Mike Hill, ed., *Whiteness: A Critical Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 1997); George Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998).

80. Stephanie Spina and Robert H. Tai, "The Politics of Racial Identity: A Pedagogy of Invisibility," *Educational Researcher*, 27 (1998): p. 37.

81. We should be careful not lose sight of the fact that white is also a prefabricated pan-ethnicity, although structured to dominate, and that only by exposing it as such can we hope to engage with its implications. Just as the label "Hispanic"

glosses over, dilutes, and suppresses the much stronger national ethnicities of Chicanos and Puerto Ricans, obscuring the historic roots of their condition as oppressed people and conflating the cultural diversity of these groups into an "amorphous mass," so too, the label "white" robs individuals of this other "amorphous mass" of their claims to diverse European cultural heritages. (From Spina and Tai, *The Politics of Racial Identity*, p. 40)

82. e.g. a week-long series on race relations on *Nightline*, May 1996.

83. See Macedo, *Literacies of Power*.

84. Gilligan, *Violence: Reflections*, 194.

85. Gilligan, *Violence: Reflections*, 194.

86. Gilligan, *Violence: Reflections*, 194.

87. Gilligan, *Violence: Reflections*, 194.

88. See Gilligan, *Violence: Reflections*, 287, for a listing of relative studies.

89. Gilligan, *Violence: Reflections*, 195.

90. T. Edsall and M. Edsall, *Chain Reaction: The Impact of Race, Rights, and Taxes on American Politics* (New York: Norton, 1991); J. Freedman, *From Cradle to Grave: The Human Face of Poverty in America* (New York: Atheneum, 1993).

91. Julia Kristeva, *Nations Without Nationalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 3.

92. Rickel and Becker, *Keeping Children*, 156.

93. Gus Hall, "Capitalism Causes Violence," 120-127, Clinton quoted on p. 121.

94. Critical criminologists are among the minority of voices who define crime to include not only those acts deemed illegal by the state, but those acts committed by the state and other elite groups who are typically not held accountable for them. See, for example, Harold E. Pepinsky, *The Geometry of Violence and Democracy* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1991); J. Hanmer, J. Radford, and E. Stanko, *Women, Policing, and Male Violence* (New York: Routledge, 1989).

95. Gilligan, *Violence: Reflections*, 245-246.

96. Dash, quoted in Posner, "Research Raises Troubling

Questions," 4.

97. Quoted in Julia Schwedinger and Herman Schwedinger, "Rape, Sexual Inequality, and Levels of Violence," in *Crime and Capitalism: Readings in Marxist Criminology*, ed. David F. Greenberg (Philadelphia: Temple university Press, 1993).

98. See Donna Gaines, "America's Dead End Kids," this volume.

99. Scott Cummings and Daniel J. Monti, eds., *Gangs: The Origins and Impact of Contemporary Youth Gangs in the United States* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1993), viii.

100. See Klein and Chancer, "Masculinity Matters," this volume.

101. James Short, Jr., *Poverty, Ethnicity, and Violent Crime* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1997).

102. Padilla, *The Gang as an American Enterprise*, 7.

103. Padilla, *The Gang as an American Enterprise*.

104. Although the studies cited here were done with urban male gangs, females have always been involved in gangs and gangs are becoming an increasing presence in suburbia. Suburban gangs are a relatively recent phenomenon and an important area for future study. Because few researchers have focused on female gang membership and activity, and even fewer on exclusively girl gangs, information on females in gangs has also been scant and, until recently, stereotypical and sexist. Girls in gangs have been described as serving the needs of male gang members, fronting for drug pushers, or serving other auxiliary roles. Newer studies are beginning to provide an expanded view of female roles in and contributions to gang culture, but there is still a long way to go. See, for example, G. M. Ingersoll, *Adolescents in School and Society* (Lexington: D C Heath, 1982); J. W. Williams, "A Structural Subculture: Understanding How Youth Gangs Operate," *Corrections Today* (1992): 54, 86-88; A. Campbell, *The Girls in the Gang: A Report from New York City* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1984); A. Campbell, "Female Participation in Gangs," in *Gangs in America*, ed. R. Huff (Newbury Park, Cal.: Sage, 1990), 163-182; M. S. Jankowski, *Islands in the Street: Gangs and American Urban Society*

(Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); J. C. Oates, *Foxfire: Confessions of a girl gang* (New York: Dutton, 1993); Meda Chesney-Lind and John Hagedorn, eds., *Female Gangs in America : Essays on Girls, Gangs, and Gender* (Chicago: Lake View Press, 1999).

There is a similar dearth of research on violence in Native American and Asian populations. See Donna Gaines, "America's Dead End Kids," this volume; See also Robert Hampton, Pamela Jenkins, and Thomas P. Gullotta, eds., *Preventing Violence in America* (Thousand Oaks, Cal.: Sage, 1996) for a brief review of existing studies with these populations, as well those in rural areas and more affluent neighborhoods.

105. Mercer L. Sullivan, *Getting Paid: Youth, Crime, and Work in the Inner-City* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 2.

106. See Jeff Ferrell, *Crimes of Style: Urban Graffiti and the Politics of Criminality* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1993) for an in-depth look at the criminalization of graffiti art and artists in one community (Denver); See Lyman G. Chafee, *Political Protest and Street Art: Popular Tools for Democratization in Hispanic Countries* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1993), for a broader sociocultural view.

107. Donna Gaines, *Teenage Wasteland* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991/1998).

108. The implications of this for schooling are discussed in the final chapter of this book.

109. See Klein and Chancer, "Masculinity Matters," this volume.

110. See Klein and Chancer, "Masculinity Matters," this volume.

111. Laura L. O'Toole and Jessica R. Schiffman, eds. (New York: New York University Press, 1997), xi.

112. The Simpson trial was a double feature, adding archetypical racism to gendered violence. The subtext of the trial was the portrayal of black men as categorical perpetrators of sexual and domestic violence, particularly since the victim, Nicole Simpson, was white.



113. I have followed the accepted form of reference to this war, but wanted to note that this and similar situations should not be defined in terms of bounded groups. Such reductionist and exclusionist discourse is constructed to subsume multiple subjectivities into a singular, reified entity and should be problematized. (The same holds true of our classification of people in terms of gender, income, sexual preference, and a host of other oppositional categories.)

114. Andrea Dworkin, *Pornography: Men Possessing Women*, chap. 2 (1981).

115. Andrea Dworkin, *Pornography*, chap. 2.

116. This is not to ignore crimes against men, however, during an average year, women experience 600,000 violent physical attacks by an intimate, and men experience about 50,000. (Gellert, *Confronting Violence*).

117. Ann Jones, *"Next Time She'll Be Dead,"* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994).

118. In Jones, *"Next Time."*

119. Jones, *"Next Time,"* 81.

120. Jones, *"Next Time."*

121. Betsy McAllister Groves, Barry Zuckerman, Steven Marans, and Donald J. Cohen, "Silent Victims: Children Who Witness Violence," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 267 (Jan. 1993): 262-264

122. Ignacio Martín-Baró, *Writings for a Liberation Psychology* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), 143.

123. I want to reiterate that *horizontal religiosity* can be supportive and empowering. *Horizontal religiosity* refers to an individual and collective *spirituality*. It is not to be confused with the crimes of politicized, power brokering *vertical religiosity* discussed here.

124. See Dennis E. Fehr, "A Revised Survey of Western Civilization," in D. E. Fehr, *Dogs Playing Cards: Powerbrokers of Prejudice in Education, Art, and Culture*, (New York: Peter Lang, 1993): 1-95,; M. Stone, *When God Was a Woman* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978); M. Stone, *Ancient Mirrors of*

*Womanhood* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991); Ruane Eisler, *The Chalice and the Blade* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1987/88).

126. For example, in *Politics*, Aristotle describes women as by nature inferior to men. Augustine calls them "evil." Aquinas, in *Summa Theologica*, categorizes women (with children and the insane) as unable to give reliable evidence because they do not have the capacity for understanding.

127. Other religions are not exempt from male biases and violent practices. The focus here is on Christianity because that is the predominant and most influential tradition in American history.

128. Darwinian natural selection translates the same Protestant precepts into science.

129. See Klein and Chancer, "Masculinity Matters," this volume.

130. *World Health Statistics Annual* (Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization, 1994).

131. Friedman and Fisher, *The Crime Conundrum*, 36.

132. Gellert, *Confronting Violence*, 232.

133. American Medical Association, Council on Scientific Affairs, "Firearm Injuries and Deaths: A Critical Public Health Issue," *Public Health Report* 104 (1989): 111-117.

134. Gellert, *Confronting Violence*.

135. Gellert, *Confronting Violence*.

136. Gellert, *Confronting Violence*.

137. James Gilligan, *Violence: Reflections on a National Epidemic* (Vintage Books: 1997).

138. Gellert, *Confronting Violence*.

139. Racism is far from the only bias at work here. Biases against women, sexual orientation, disability, and ethnicity are also evident. They are also underreported.

In 1990, The Hate Crimes Statistics Act was passed, requiring the FBI to prepare an annual report on bias crimes. Compliance in reporting crimes to the FBI was voluntary. In 1997, only 32 of New York's 502 law enforcement agencies submitted any hate crime reports to the agency. Of the 100

largest cities in the United States, 10 did not participate at all. Nationwide, a total of 8,049 bias-motivated crimes were reported to the FBI in 1997. Of these, 4,179 were racially biased, 1,102 were bias crimes against sexual orientation, 836 were ethnically biased, and 12 were disability biased. Alabama recorded no hate crimes. But a study by the Southern Poverty Law Center in Montgomery detailed 20 hate-related incidents that year. A recent study by Donald Green found there were six times more hate-related incidents against gays in New York City from 1994 and 1995 than were counted by the police. Bias crimes often go unreported because victims are suspicious of the police and/or afraid of being deported (in the case of illegal immigrants). When the crimes are reported by victims, the police either don't want to bother with the paperwork and energy required of bias crimes, or they don't want to give their community a reputation of bias. See Sascha Brodsky, "Reality Behind the Statistics: Many Hate Crimes Go Unreported," *Newsday*, 8 July 1999: A6, A23.

140. Amy Waldman, "In a Quest for Peace and Opportunity, West Africans Find Anger," *The New York Times*, 6 Feb. 1999, B6.

141. Anthony De Stefano, "Despite Verdict, Cops' Fate Unclear," *Newsday*, 26 Feb. 2000, A5; Graham Rayman, Leonard Levitt, Zachary Dowdy, and Kara Blond, "Verdict: Not Guilty," *Newsday*, 26 Feb. 2000, A4.

142. John Crew, the attorney who runs the ACLU's police practices unit, quoted in Jodi Wilgoren, "Police Profiling Debate: Acting on Experience, or on Bias," *New York Times*, 9 April 1999.

143. New York: Amnesty International, June 1996.

144. New York: Amnesty International, June 1996, 11.

145. Iver Peterson, "Whitman Says Troopers Used Racial Profiling: Minority Groups Faced Bias on the Turnpike," *New York Times*, 21 Apr. 1999: 1, B8.

146. The report on the Diallo case was compiled from a variety of news sources including television and radio news broadcasts, the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* from March through May, 1999, and personal experience and communications

with involved citizens.

147. See Paul Chevigny, *The Edge of the Knife: Police Violence in the Americas* (New York, The New Press, 1995), for a history of police violence and corruption in the United States and other countries.

148. T. Sellin, *Slavery and the Penal System* (New York: Elsevier, 1976).

149. T. A. Kupers, "Trauma and its Sequelae in Male Prisoners: Effects of Confinement, Overcrowding, and Diminished Services," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 66 (1996): 189-196; Eric Schlosser "The Prison-Industrial Complex," *Atlantic Monthly*, 1998: 51-79.

150. Center for the Future of Children, 1994.

151. Schlosser, "The Prison-Industrial Complex."

152. *National Household Survey on Drug Abuse: Population Estimates 1996* (Rockville, Md.: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration); *National Household Survey on Drug Abuse*, p. 19, Table 2D; Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics 1996*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997): 382, Table 4.10, and 533, Table 6.36; Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Prisoners in 1996*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997): p. 10, Table 13.

153. Craig Lambert, "Chains of Violence: The Women of Cell Block B," *Harvard Magazine* (Sept.-Oct., 1999): 19.

154. Joseph Califano, *Behind Bars: Substance Abuse and America's Prison Population* (New York: The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, 1998).

155. John J. Donahue, "Some Perspective on Crime and Criminal Justice Policy," in Friedman and Fisher, *The Crime Conundrum*, 54-55.

156. Friedman and Fisher, *The Crime Conundrum*; Schlosser, *The Prison-Industrial Complex*.

157. David Martin, "Occupational Training or Slave Labor?" *City Times*, <<http://www.zolatimes.com/v2.13/FPI.html>> (accessed 8/25/99).

158. Martin, "Occupational Training."

159. Testimony of Kathleen M. Hawk, director of federal prisons, subcommittee on Intellectual Property and judicial Administration, U.S. House of Representatives, 12 May 1993.

160. Legal or illegal, no one asks why the use of substances is so prevalent. It seems that "special interests" play a major role here also, with our "leaders" once again opting for campaign contributions from corporate lobbying groups instead of the health and well-being of its citizens.

161. M. W. Lipsey, "Juvenile Delinquency Treatment: a Meta-Analytic Inquiry into the Variability of Effects," in *Meta-Analysis for Explanation: A Casebook*. (New York: Russel Sage Foundation, 1991); A. Nossiter, "As Boot Camps for Criminals Multiply, Skepticism Grows," *New York Times*, 18 December 18 1993: A1.

162. Mike Males, "Youths Are Unfairly Blamed for Violence," in *Violence: Opposing Viewpoints*: 52-59.

163. Schwedinger and Schwedinger, *Rape, Sexual Inequality, and Levels of Violence*; Friedman and Fisher, *The Crime Conundrum*; Schlosser, *The Prison-Industrial Complex*.

164. Friedman and Fisher, *The Crime Conundrum*, 30.

165. See Sullivan, *Getting Paid*.

166. Schwedinger and Schwedinger, *Living standards*.

167. Consider, for example, this illustration of the persistence and power of the mythology and ideology of the frontier West. In 1984, Bernhard Goetz, a young white man, shot four young Black men in a New York subway car. In the spirit of racist self-defense and with echoes of a frontier showdown, news media admiringly labeled him the "subway vigilante." The symbolic significance of this (as well as the inherent racism of the American hegemony) contributed to the outcome of Goetz's murder trial. He was acquitted. One wonders what the verdict would have been if Goetz had been Black or Latino and the victims White.

168. I use the term "otherist" to encompass all discriminatory "ists," like racist, sexist, classist, as well as additional biases against those considered "others" according to the dominant ideology. These include homophobia, bias against

sexual preference, the handicapped, the overweight, etc.

169. See Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar, *Laboratory Life: The Construction of Scientific Facts* (Princeton: Princeton University Press Reprint Edition, 1986). See also Stanley Aronowitz, *Science as Power: Discourse and Ideology in Modern Society* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988).

170. Jonathan Smith, Rom Harre, and Luk Van Lagenhove, *Rethinking psychology* (Newbury Park, Cal.: Sage, 1995), 15.

171. Cited in H. Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1960), 346.

172. James Q. Wilson, *Thinking about Crime* (New York: Basic Books, 1975).

173. E.g., Sen. Joseph R. Biden, Jr. argued for tougher laws and sentences in "Combating Violence in America," an address given to the Wilmington, Delaware, Rotary Club, 16 Dec. 1993; Patrick F. Fagan, in "The Real Root Cause of Violent Crime," published by the Heritage Foundation in *Backgrounder*, 17 March 1995, blames the break up of the American family (independent of context) for increased violence.

174. Liz Stanley and Sue Wise, *Breaking Out Again: Feminist Ontology and Epistemology*. Rev. ed. (New York and London: Routledge, 1993), 45.

175. What we are defining as ideology here has been called "Grand theory" by Stanley and Wise. I have used "ideology" because it is less confusing than "grand theory" when compared to "theory." Both terms refer to virtually the same phenomenon.

176. Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1929/36).

177. Pat Burdell, "Teen mothers in High School: Tracking Their Curriculum," in *Review of Research in Education*, vol. 21, ed. Michael W. Apple (Washington, D.C.: American Educational Research Association, 1996): 163-208

178. For example, over half of the fathers of babies born to girls under age fifteen are at least five or six years older than the mothers. In only 8 percent of all teenage births (which is 1 percent of all U. S. births) are both parents under eighteen years of age. As reported by public health

epidemiologist Jim Kent, nearly all heterosexually transmitted HIV among teens of both sexes are contracted from adult men. Many of those cases are the result of rape. When both heterosexual partners are teenagers, risk of AIDS infection is almost nonexistent. See D. L. Landry and J. D. Forrest, "How Old are U. S. Fathers?," *Family Planning Perspectives* 27 (1995): 159-161; J. Greene, "Sex Between Teens, Adults Growing Factor in AIDS Spread," *Oakland Michigan Press*, 7 Mar. 1994: A8; K. A. Moore, C. W. Nord, and J. Peterson, "Nonvoluntary Sexual Activity Among Adolescents," *Family Planning Perspectives* 21 (1989): 110-114; Alan Guttmacher Institute, *Sex and America's Teenagers*. (New York: Alan Guttmacher Institute, 1994).

179. Comer, *Waiting for a Miracle*.