The Violences of Everyday Life

The Multiple Forms
and Dynamics of Social Violence

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> [Y]ou take what comes, when it comes, you do not struggle against the war, or against life, or against death, you pretend, and the only master of this world is time.
>
> SEBASTIAN JAPRISOT,
> *A Very Long Engagement*

THE PROBLEM

Students of *political violence* have extended the concept from wars between states and civil conflicts to include the oppressive practices of governments. In a recent publication, my colleagues Veena Das, Margaret Lock, and I have argued that *social suffering* is the result of "the devastating injuries that social force inflicts on human experience" (Kleinman, Das, and Lock 1996). Suffering, in this anthropological perspective, is the effect of the *social violence* that social orders—local, national, global—bring to bear on people. Diseases and premature death are unjustly distributed; institutions protect some while exposing others to the brutal vectors of economic and political power; everyday life, principally for the poor but also for other classes, does violence to the body and to moral experience; the immense cultural power of the media in the world order enables appropriation of images of violence as "infotainment" to feed global commercialism, while at the same time it normalizes suffering and turns empathic viewing into voyeurism—a violence is done to the moral order. But social suffering is also seen in the response to human problems by the institutions of social policy and programs that are in principle organized to ameliorate the problem.

In this paper, I examine four instances of social violence: the institutional and political economic abuses that fostered the AIDS epidemic among hemophilia patients; the local effects of Maoist totalitarian control over the lives of ordinary Chinese people; the structural violence in middle-class and

inner-city American society; and the cultural violence of appropriated and naturalized images in the media. I seek to show that social violence has multiple forms and dynamics. I take the implication of this anthropological demonstration to be that current taxonomies of violence—public versus domestic, ordinary as against extreme political violence—are inadequate to understand either the uses of violence in the social world or the multiplicity of its effects in experiences of suffering, collective and individual. The ethnography of social violence also implicates the social dynamics of everyday practices as the appropriate site to understand how larger orders of social force come together with micro-contexts of local power to shape human problems in ways that are resistant to the standard approaches of policies and intervention programs.

The term *structural violence* has been used to designate people who experience violence (and violation) owing to extreme poverty. That violence includes the highest rates of disease and death, unemployment, homelessness, lack of education, powerlessness, a shared fate of misery, and the day-by-day violence of hunger, thirst, and bodily pain (Farmer 1992, 1996; Scheper-Hughes 1992). The World Health Organization (1995) estimates that 20 percent of the world's population lives in extreme poverty. Authors writing about this population, especially ethnographers, use the phrase "the violence of everyday life" to indicate the violence such structural deprivation does to people (Scheper-Hughes 1992; Bourdieu 1993).

The examples are myriad. The hidden injuries of class, the wounding of the self under racialism, the spoiling of identity due to stigmatizing social conditions, the variety of forms of normative violence toward women: all are salient. One of the most inclusive of ethnographic accounts of the *violence* of everyday life is offered by Das (1995) in her studies of the experience of communal violence in India. In that impressive work, Das shows that even in the setting of obvious political violence—say, the old Delhi streets where Hindus killed Sikhs after the assassination of Indira Ghandi or the case of the thousands killed and the hundred thousand women abducted during the Partition—there are differences not only in the dynamics of violence, but in its forms as well. Explosions of communal violence, mobilized for political purposes, are intensified or diminished by differences of gender and geography; they are built up out of structural violence, and, in extending from one unfolding event to another, deepen it. They leave in their wake deep existential fractures for the survivors.

Those breaks in physical bodies and social bodies are further intensified by violence done to female survivors by their own community, by their families, by the patriarchal ideology, and not least by their own inner conflicts between personal desire and transpersonal duty. Thus there is a cascade of violence and its effects along the social fault lines of society.

I prefer to discuss this subject with a slight change in the wording to the

phrase "the *violences* of everyday life." But this is a difference, I believe, that makes a difference, because structural violence occurs in a variety of ways that affect people throughout the social order. I do not contest that social force grinds most brutally on the poor. Yet the violent consequences of social power also affect other social groups in ways that are often not so visible, perhaps because they are also not so direct and also, not surprisingly, less likely to be labeled "violence," as we shall see below.

Here I will advert to examples from my field notes and from other ethnographic experiences to deepen this appreciation of the multiplicity of the social forms and dynamics of violences of everyday life in order to look anew at why policies and programs aimed at relieving the suffering that results from such violences so regularly fail.

VIOLENCES OF EVERYDAY LIFE: BOURGEOIS VARIETIES

In an influential account of liberation theology, Rebecca Chopp (1986) observes that while liberation theologians make suffering the core of moral practice and teleology, not all suffering, for them, counts. "Against the bourgeois subject, liberation theology listens to a new subject who suffers: these are the subjects on the underside, on the margins, in death itself" (121). Liberation theology privileges the oppressed, especially those living under the degrading conditions of extreme poverty. Like liberation theologians, orthodox Marxists privilege the suffering of the poor, and like both liberation theologians and Marxist commentators, many anthropologists of suffering and violence (including the author of this paper) work under the presumption that the object of inquiry of societal violence is those who belong to the lowest social strata: those who cannot resist power and out of whose struggles power itself is created by oppressors. While there is overwhelming evidence, as I have already noted, that the poorest poor indeed live under the greatest social pressure and do regularly experience the most violence, have the weakest resources and the worst (health and social) outcomes, violence (and suffering more generally) affects members of all social strata.[1] The lion's share of ethnographic description has dealt with the violence of everyday life almost as if that form of violence were equivalent with the social experience in shantytowns and slums in poor countries or in the poorest inner-city ghettos of wealthy nations. But the *violences* of everyday life also include other kinds of violence in the social order; and it is one of these other kinds of violences in the social reality of everyday life that I will now describe, as I search for a plural subject.

Jane Huffberg stands as a bourgeois protagonist of a fairly common narrative of everyday violence in middle-class North America, albeit one that is not labeled as such. I am drawn to the analogy because of something Jane Huffberg, forty-two, daughter of a Holocaust survivor, guidance counselor

in an African-American, inner-city school, and sufferer from chronic pain and exhaustion, said to me after concluding one of our many conversations during the course of a research project on the social experience of chronic illness. "You know, it's strange to say, but in a way, I think my problem is violence too, just like the violence these kids I work with have to go through. I'm not talking about street violence. You know, they are the victims of a violence our society does to them, and so really am I. Only a different kind really."

For seven years, since her divorce from a physically abusive man, Jane has visited doctors in the suburban North American town where she lives because of pains in various parts of her body, exhaustion, and weakness. She has been diagnosed as suffering from a variety of problems: fibromyalgia, chronic pain syndrome, chronic fatigue, immunodeficiency syndrome, depressive disorder, anxiety disorder. She has been treated with an equally wide spectrum of therapies: medicines, psychotherapy, physiotherapy, acupuncture, therapeutic massage, and relaxation, among others. Yet her complaints persist.

> Sometimes, you know, I think . . . I mean life is a violence. It does violence, kind of. You know, family, work, things you got to live with, yourself really. I'm not talking big stuff, but that too; I mean the whole damn thing. All the things! I've got teenage girls; you really, you know, you can't say to them. They couldn't get it, you know. . . . But that's how I feel it is, you know: violent.

The way Jane tells the story, whatever causes her complaints, they are made worse by bad days at school and pressure from her three teenage daughters, who are angry about the divorce, about Jane's boyfriend, and about the amount of time she devotes to her work. But once she gets going, Jane doesn't stop with these issues. She transfers fluidly from complaining about pain and exhaustion to complaining about her former husband, who was an alcoholic who beat her and threatened the children when he was drunk. She also rails against incompetent supervisors at work as well as at the unwillingness of her current boyfriend to commit himself to marriage. Occasionally she talks about her father, a Holocaust survivor, and her mother, a chronic complainer, as Jane describes her. The family lived in near poverty during her childhood. She feels bitter about that. The metaphoric range of her bodily complaints, then, extends deep within the social world.

Her home is a modest, two-story house on a pleasant, if overbuilt, suburban street. When I visited, I discovered that her daughters are almost constantly angry at her; it seemed largely because of the lack of attention they feel. They are hostile to her friend, Brian, and openly negative about their mother's work. In the face of such hostility, Jane hardly defends herself.

I learned that Jane works an extremely long and demanding week.

Driving to and from school takes close to two hours; school is an eight-hour day, but often Jane stays for another hour or two to work with problem students. Once a week there is an evening meeting with students' parents; more at certain times of the academic year. Several times over the past few years, in order to enhance her professional credentials, Jane has herself taken evening courses. On the weekend Jane shops for her family and for her parents, with whom she has a Sunday meal. Because of greatly different schedules, Jane eats most of her dinners alone, her daughters eat earlier, and Brian works until 9:00 P.M. On Saturday nights, Brian expects Jane to go out with him; sometimes Sunday nights too.

Jane describes herself as like her father: quiet, "a workhorse," persistent, a survivor. "I can cope with anything, you know," she observes sadly more than boastfully. "I don't show my anger. I let people get angry at me. But really, you know, I think I'm angry all the time. I'm angry at life, I think. Really, I am. It gets to you. It's too much, really—life is!"

While the hidden meanings of Jane Huffberg's bodily complaints could be analyzed with respect to the hidden psychodynamics of anger, I am more impressed by what her story has to say about the more overt sociodynamics of the everyday violences of middle-class life. There are many middle-class traumas—the "death of a salesman," "falling from grace," "success at any cost," "betrayal of ideals," are among other examples so well known they have become the main material for TV sitcoms and soap operas (see, for example, Newman 1989). Jane Huffberg's interpretation suggests another kind: the violence of oversubscribed time. She has no time to spare; she experiences the loss of time and the pressure of time with exhaustion and anger. The demands of external time usurping the priorities of inner time—this is the violence the social order holds for her. Life is also painful because of how one must cope, what and how much one must do, in order to succeed. Jane Huffberg experiences her life as the trauma done to her by the constraints of social life, which are fierce and have dangerous effects. This *apercu*, that the force of social pressures inflicts wounds, some of which are part of one's defensive resistance to force, describes a core thread in middle-class social experience in North America. That thread in popular culture is often described by the word "stress." As Jane herself puts it: we can cope with anything, adjust to even inhuman regimens. That too, she insists (and I concur), is a form of everyday violence. It is the violence of what "stress" does to us, even as we cope with it.

This sociosomatic way of putting things runs against several related global ideologies: psychologization (attributing social problems to mental states) and personal responsibility/self-help ("Don't blame us, we'll blame you"). Talking about the everyday violence of social reality when physical violence to the person is not the issue may seem a distraction. I choose to focus on it because the societal violence I am personifying through Jane Huffberg's story is widespread, can be devastating, too often goes unrecog-

nized, and can be a major barrier to human flourishing. It offers, moreover, a cultural critique of the normal as well as of the normative social order.

VIOLENCE OF IMAGES

A second form of the violences of everyday life is the violence of images. In several recent publications Joan Kleinman and I (1996, 1997, 1999) have explored how the appropriation of images of violence by the media in turn performs social violence—moral, aesthetic, and experiential.

I take an example literally from today's newspaper. The topic will probably come to stand as one of the three great icons of political violence of the twentieth century's fin de siècle: Bosnia. In the *New York Times* of Tuesday, 18 July 1995, the International Rescue Committee (founded by Albert Einstein in 1933) has taken a full-page advertisement to appeal for funds (p. A9). The top half of the page contains two black-and-white photos placed parallel to each other. In the left panel there is an image labeled "Ethnic cleansing, 1943": armed soldiers are forcing families, apparently Jews, out of a dilapidated ghetto residence. The civilians are dressed in coats and hats. Their hands are raised in the air. In the foreground, a young boy of eight or ten in a coat, short pants, long socks, and woolen cap, his hands in the air, stands before the camera: his eyes are lowered. He appears so anguished you can almost smell his fear. To his left (our right), a woman, also with raised hands, looks back over the boy toward a soldier whose gun is pointed almost casually at their legs. Emerging from the building, out of the darkness into the light, is the shining helmet of a Nazi officer, who is behind another woman and man with raised hands; a cloth tied around the arm of the woman, the reader must presume, is a star of David.

The picture is an icon of Nazi savagery, probably the forced removal of Eastern European Jews from one of the large Jewish ghettos to the death camps. In the panel next to it is a picture captioned, "Ethnic cleansing, 1995." The picture is of a Bosnian woman, her face a grimace of fear and shock; she is clutching tightly her little girl, probably her daughter, who also seems frightened. Though their cheeks are pressed together, the overall effect of the artistry of the photojournalist (Anthony Suau of Liason International) is to evoke extreme tension, as caught in the tightness of the mother's hand gripping hard onto her child, the intense terror and shock expressed by her eyes, and the tightly controlled grimace around her mouth.

The words below the pictures give voice to the serious problem of Bosnian refugees after the fall of Srebrenica. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) makes clear that while Sarajevo may be next, and the UN may pull out its forces altogether, the IRC will stay as long as it is possible to offer assistance. At the lower side of the advertisement is a form that can be cut out and mailed in with a financial contribution.

The pictures, with great artistry, have captured the traumatic effects of

political violence. The connection is made between the Bosnian civil war and the Holocaust. That connection cannot stand up on historical grounds, of course. (Nor, to be sure, can the analogy drawn by hemophilia-AIDS families that I discuss below.) For the Nazis, the "final solution" of the Jewish problem—the destruction of all of European Jewry—was a systematic policy, a war waged on a people to the death. The Jews were not uprooted to become refugees; they were uprooted to be killed; and that killing was bureaucratized by the machinery of the state as institutional extermination. But the pictures placed side by side enable the use of the analogy in spite of historical difference: the horror of Bosnia is the horror of the Holocaust. The appeal that follows in powerful prose about Bosnia simply allows the logical conclusion to be drawn about the comparison with the Holocaust. There was no help for the Jews in the 1940s, and they were exterminated; therefore, the reader must act now to assure that this fate does not await the Bosnian Muslims.

It is an enormously effective appeal. One can only hope that it was successful. I have no reason to doubt the sincerity of commitment of the IRC or the usefulness of their humanitarian assistance. And yet the pictures, so visually arresting, also tell us about the crucial mediatization of violence and trauma in the global moral economy of our times. As Joan Kleinman and I have shown (1996), the mediatization of violence and suffering creates a form of inauthentic social experience: witnessing at a distance, a kind of voyeurism in which nothing is acutely at stake for the observer. Perhaps the deep advertising principle behind the IRC advertisement is that by sending money to the sponsor we don't so much feel good about helping refugees as we feel a reduction in the guilt of not being there. They (the refugees) are present as a "hyperreality" in our world; but we are an unreality, a silence in theirs.

The moral implications of violence at a distance are even more disturbing when we consider the change in social experience that is occurring in society. The appeal of experiences of suffering to mobilize solidarity and social action are transformed via the media into a dismay of images. We are outside the field of responsibility; we need feel nothing, risk nothing, lose nothing. We can change the channel, or turn the TV off, or (in the instance cited) turn the page. When we don't, we are caught up in a confusing and morally dangerous process of commodification and consumption of trauma. We require ever more detail of hurt and suffering to authenticate the reality. Over time, as this experience of representations of human misery becomes normative, we alter the social experience of witnessing from a moral engagement to a (visual) consumer experience. We consume images for the trauma they represent, the pain they hold (and give?). The implications of that change are deeply compromising to the very idea of existential responses to human conditions, such as witnessing.

Images are an absence of presence (Shapiro 1988: xii). The artistry of the photojournalist personifies collective violence as the trauma felt by mother and child. What is left out is the politics, political economy, institutionalization, and moral economy of the Bosnian disaster. The image materializes complex problems in the simplifying picture of mother and daughter and the "natural" shock of the comparison piece. This is part of the process of essentializing trauma, providing it with a normative space and normal appropriations in the global order. Yet what fails to project into the photo is precisely the specifics of the social context that make this historical situation distinctive. It is the danger of normalizing images of violence that is the matter; for that process transmogrifies moral experience, appropriating it for new uses—commercial, political—and for purposes of cultural control.

FEAR AND HATRED:
THE TOTALITARIAN STATE'S LEGACY OF VIOLENCE

From 1949 until the present, China has been ruled by an oppressive dictatorship, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Although most attention from critics has focused upon the spectacular periodic public convulsions—Mao's vicious dispatching of a million landlords, the Anti-Rightist Campaign so devastating to China's intellectuals, the enormous policy catastrophe of the Great Leap Forward, which produced the world's most destructive famine, the near total turmoil of the Cultural Revolution, and Deng's Tiananmen Massacre—the toll the CCP has extracted from China's 1.2 billion people includes the equally infamous yet humdrum terror of the police state, especially the use of the threat of violence to silence potential critics and to prevent moral recrimination for the CCP's widespread and extreme failings. While police brutality and diffused oppression in work-units and block committees are now less widespread and extreme, though still present, during this phase of economic reforms, the legacy of the recent past haunts the present in widely diffused sentiments of fear and hatred together with political alienation.

From 1978 until the present I have conducted field research in China—field research that was also haunted by the traumas of recent history. To illustrate the routinization of political violence as a social violence of the everyday, I draw upon my field notes for an evocative instance.

It was gray, hot and humid. There were moments of darkness and sometimes light, but mostly things looked gray. The two of us walked slowly through the winding streets of our section of town. The year was 1980; the place a city in the interior of China. I was there to conduct research. He was a member of the hospital staff. We had gotten to know each other over the months of my visit. Ever the diplomat, I thought he had never taken my research project seriously

enough to inquire into the details of the interviews with victims of the Cultural Revolution, or rather by not inquiring he protected himself from the consequences if I created any serious difficulty. After five months there had been no serious difficulty, save for my precarious health, and he had nothing further to fear, I thought. Nonetheless, I was surprised when he asked me to walk with him. After ten minutes and the usual clichéd pleasantries, he turned to me and said, "You ask all these patients about their experiences of the bad years, but you don't ask me. Well, I'm going to tell you, once."

Then he launched into a narrative of his bourgeois background, the chaos of the year of liberation which separated him from the rest of his family, who escaped abroad, and so on. When he came to talk of China in the 1950s and 1960s, he stopped speaking about his own life. As we turned a corner, he asked me to look at a large building. He said that during the past he would never have dared look at the building directly. Even now he felt troubled doing so. Each place we passed, he recounted a story about its recent history: Party office where campaigns had been launched, prison, police station, home for the disabled, including those whose bodies and health were broken by political movements, a work unit where something bad had happened.

I didn't get it, at first. Then slowly I began to understand that he was describing to me (through its social location) the core emotion of those decades, and by extension, I assumed, the present. He spoke in hushed tones, often looking around to assure we were not overheard. When I tried to ask questions or interpret what I thought I had heard, he changed the subject. I was seeing fear, pure fear, sedimented in his furtive movements and haggard, wary face.

I understand now that he was giving me a farewell gift. He was showing me what the moral universe of China in the hold of Maoism was like, what the effect of having to endure oppression meant. The ordinary ethos was fear—pervasive, unappeased, based in terrible realities, yet amplified from a relatively small number of events into an emotion close to terror that was present every day. And terror experienced, not far below the surface of the ordinary, on a daily basis created cowardice, betrayal, and abiding rage.

Suddenly, the quiet, hesitant tones hardened into something else. We passed a small gray building. "In there," he said, "we knew the cadres had their special store. They could buy things we couldn't. I hated that! Their special stores, their special schools, I hated that! They had privileges, and we didn't. But we were all supposed to be equal. It was a lie. I hated that!"

Hatred at masters whose hypocritical words extolled the egalitarianism and collectivism of Communism at the very same time that Party members had access to prestige, and power, and things unavailable to ordinary people. He was most upset by the special stores and schools. "They lied to us!" he exploded, shaking his head hard in bitter resentment.

In totalitarian states, complete control of the expression of criticism leads over time to what Chinese refer to as "eating bitterness." You are "deaf and dumb," you "can't speak out," you "eat the seeds of the bitter melon." The suppression of criticism and dissent leads to a deep reservoir of rancor, bitter resentment, and fantasies of revenge.

This same friend explained to me what it was like to live in work units side

by side with those who had attacked you politically and physically. You had to get along. There was no time at work for recrimination; yet in your dreams you planned revenge.

This man, my friend of eighteen years, is generally mild-mannered and easy to get along with. He has an excellent way with senior colleagues, though he is somewhat stern and authoritarian to those who are younger. But periodically he would become explosively enraged. At such moments, it was not always immediately clear what had set him off. Thinking about a co-worker or superior who had oppressed him was one cause that he recognized.

Elsewhere Joan Kleinman and I (1994) have argued that the collective experience of fear and hatred among Chinese is part of a profound delegitimation crisis that has shaken not only engagement with the ideology of Communism but even the traditional moral orientations of Chinese culture. The violent consequences of this crisis have not yet been played out. The legacy of burning revenge and unappeased recrimination can be seen in other former Communist states after the breakdown of the totalitarian political order. People feel misled, cheated, betrayed; they deeply resent the social dynamic that brought into being a cluster of violence, terror, deception, capitulation, and secret histories of silent resistance—a cluster that still haunts China.

This too is part of the multiplicity of violences of everyday life. Possessing different histories, sustained by different social dynamics, we assume, nonetheless, that the outcome in trauma and suffering is the same. But why should that be? Why shouldn't the trauma and suffering be as different as a different form of violence or its sources are? And if trauma and violence are different, don't they require different responses? Isn't the implication of multiplicity that policies and intervention programs also must be different? The problem may be global, but the intervention needs to be oriented to a local world.

THE AIDS AND HEMOPHILIA TESTIMONIES

Hemophilia patients in North America in the early days of the AIDS epidemic claim that they were routinely exposed to infected blood products.[2] Thousands have died from AIDS in what patients and families call a "Holocaust." They assert that concern to avoid corporate losses led the blood products industry as well as the government agency responsible for assuring their safety to disregard scientific evidence and led their physicians to bypass the requirement for informed consent. Patients and family members (including foreign ones given U.S. blood products) say that they were not told at the early stage of the epidemic that by using certain blood products to control their bleeding disorder they were at very high risk for HIV

infection; nor, many hold, were they informed that safer products existed. Thousands of hemophilia patients not only were unknowingly infected, but infected their spouses, who in turn gave birth to children with AIDS (Keshavjee, Weiser, and Kleinman forthcoming).

A controversy swirls around this little-appreciated corner of the epidemic. Those with hemophilia who were infected by contaminated blood and their family members contend that the U.S. Government's Centers for Disease Control as well as individual health scientists had warned in the early 1980s that the blood supply was potentially unsafe, yet the industry responsible for blood products chose to disregard warnings and continued to provide products that were later recognized to contain HIV. They argue that the industry refused to clear the shelves of blood that was likely to be contaminated because of the economic cost. Doctors, in turn, routinely prescribed these products for their hemophiliac patients without fully appreciating the consequences and without recommending forms of blood products that were safer, condemning almost an entire age cohort of hemophiliacs to being infected by the virus that causes AIDS. Patients and families blame the relevant government agencies for massive negligence in overseeing the blood supply. This position is hotly disputed by the blood products industry, which claims that the scientific data were unclear, that they simply didn't know that they were fostering the epidemic among hemophiliacs by providing blood that had not been tested for the virus. In response the hemophilia-AIDS community acrimoniously contests that industry chose profits over safety and that government and doctors abetted them.

In the course of charge and countercharge, lawsuit and countersuit, the Department of Health and Human Services of the U.S. Government funded a study by the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences that was charged to sort out what had actually occurred. The committee that organized the study held a hearing at which, among others, members of the hemophilia community spoke about their experience with HIV and about their efforts to determine what had happened to them. Two students and I were invited by the Committee to summarize the testimony offered by those who participated in the hearing.

Our analysis documented that those with HIV and hemophilia who testified held a common perspective on what had happened to them. AIDS-infected hemophilia patients and family members came to define themselves as innocent victims of a system of negligence; their sense of innocence betrayed is a collective experience of explicit identification with the Holocaust. They charge collusion among commercial and bureaucratic interests as the source of their suffering. Their narratives turn on anger, intense anger at the government agency responsible for the blood supply, the companies that produce the blood products they require, and the doctors who advised them. They are also angry with themselves for having accepted an overly dependent relationship with medicine and industry. And

they are angry as well because of their sense that they have been "forsaken" without recourse to justice or retribution for preventable suffering that, in their collective story, results from valuing profits over human lives.[3]

The testimonies by persons with hemophilia and AIDS, their family members, and scientists and medical experts working with them are enormously powerful. They brought the Institute of Medicine's panel of experts frequently to tears. They are difficult to listen to because of the extreme suffering and the deepening repetition of a collective memory. That memory is told, not unlike experiences of those who have undergone ethnic violence, war, and atrocity, in order to commemorate but also to provoke social action. These survivors say that they will not forget or allow others to forget that their reliance on biomedicine, the blood industry, and the government was betrayed, and that something must be done to bring those responsible for the catastrophe to justice, to compensate those who are its victims, and to protect others in future.

Repeated in these analytic terms, the collective narrative sounds overly simple. Nothing could be further from the reality. The testimonies must be understood within a context of AIDS in America, in which those with hemophilia and AIDS feel that their story has not received (indeed cannot receive) the attention it deserves. To gain that attention (and also to express their own existential reality) they use the idea of "innocence"—a powerful metaphor in America—to separate their own group of AIDS sufferers from those whose AIDS is blamed, in the popular culture, on personal behavior (unsafe sex, IV drug abuse, etc.). By doing so, the hemophilia-AIDS community seeks to open a moral space separate from the stigmatized space of AIDS. From that moral space, these sufferers further seek to project a critical perspective on professional authority, the commodification of health and health care, and power and powerlessness in American society. Their experience of suffering is explicitly seen as an extreme and systematic social violence done to them by the American political economic order. The legal battle now underway can be understood as a struggle over moral, legal, and political representation of this catastrophe. In one view it is the result of the nature of risk: no one bears responsibility (see Gigerenzer et al. 1989: 37, 236, 270, 288); on the other, it is a routinized violence of everyday life experienced by those unprotected from abuses of the social dynamics of power.

CONCLUSION: SOCIAL THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE VIOLENCES OF EVERYDAY LIFE

In a recent review of Nancy Scheper-Hughes's (1992) moving and important ethnography of structural violence in a disintegrated *favela* in a city in the Northeast of Brazil, I pointed out that anthropology lacks a social theory for framing comparisons of everyday violence in local worlds (Kleinman 1996). This is a subject that still calls out for theoretical elaboration. What

then are the theoretical implications of the case I have been making in this paper? That case rests on an appreciation of the *violence of everyday life* as *multiple,* as *normative* (and normal), as the outcome of the interaction of changing cultural representations, social experience, and individual subjectivity.

Phenomenological accounts of everyday life experience show that social experience involves overarching requirements of relevance and exigency (Kleinman and Kleinman 1991). Wheresoever power orients practices—and that is everywhere—there is violence. That is to say, social power is responsible for (and responds to) relevance and exigency. Hierarchy and inequality, which are so fundamental to social structures, normalize violence. Violence is what lends to culture its authoritativeness. Violence creates (and reemerges from) fear, anger, and loss—what might be called the infrapolitical emotions. Violence, in this perspective, is the vector of cultural processes that work through the salient images, structures, and engagements of everyday life to shape local worlds. Violence, thus, is crucial to cultural processes of routinization, legitimation, essentialism, normalization, and simplification through which the social world orders the flow of experience within and between body-selves.

Such social (or cultural) violence is most clearly seen in the brutal deprivations and predations found in settings of extreme poverty (Bourdieu 1993; Farmer 1996; Bourgeois 1996). But as the phrase "the *violences* of everyday life" is meant to indicate, this is only one kind of social violence, albeit the most degrading and destructive of local worlds. The violence of images and the violence in middle-class life under the regime of disordering capitalism, the violence of social institutional practices, such as that experienced by the hemophilia community in the time of AIDS, and the violences that oppressive political structures do to local moral economies in the production of resentment and resistance—all are forms of social and cultural violence that shape (and are shaped by) social experience. Through violence in social experience, as mediated by cultural representations, social formations are not just replicated, but the ordinary lives of individuals are also shaped, and all-too-often twisted, bent, even broken.

Perhaps when compared to the extremes of political violence—the Holocaust, World Wars I and II, the uprooting of entire populations due to so-called low-intensity warfare—cultural and social violence may seem like another order altogether of violent events and their traumatic effects. And indeed such violence is distinctive. Yet, for this very reason, the study of the violences of everyday life is significant, because it offers an alternative view of human conditions that may give access to fundamental, if deeply disturbing, processes of social organization.

These processes interfuse the social body and the lived body (Turner 1992). They are sociosomatic interconnections between local moral worlds and people living in those worlds. Everyday violence occurs in collective experience *and* in the subjectivity of personal experience. Large-scale politi-

cal and economic forces—war, economic restructuring, displacement—
have the power to break through the constraints of local contexts, to over-
whelm local power relations, to make whole classes of people victims. To
some extent, local worlds (communities, networks, families) can modify
these effects: here dampening them, there intensifying the outcomes. A
political movement encouraging communal violence may be a national or
regional phenomenon; but determining who to attack, whether to protect
neighbors, when to turn on friends is a local process that emerges from con-
texts of relationships (Das 1995; Tambiah 1997). Out of this interplay of
national/international and local forces, both the trauma and resilience of
persons emerges as a narratized fate and an experienced agency. Massive
political violence must work through local worlds in which social and cultural
violence is already a routine part of day-to-day living. And in its aftermath, the
response of a community, or a neighborhood, or a family to short-term hor-
ror is inseparable from that humdrum background of violence as usual.

Rather than view violence, then, simply as a set of discrete events, which
quite obviously it also can be, the perspective I am advancing seeks to
unearth those entrenched processes of ordering the social world and mak-
ing (or realizing) culture that themselves are forms of violence: violence
that is multiple, mundane, and perhaps all the more fundamental because
it is the hidden or secret violence out of which images of people are shaped,
experiences of groups are coerced, and agency itself is engendered.
Because the cultural prefiguring and normative social workings of violence
shape its consequences as forms of suffering and means of coping, such vio-
lence must also be at work in the institutions that authorize response and in
the ordinary practices of engagement. Policies and programs participate in
the very violence they seek to respond to and control. Bureaucratic indif-
ference, for example, can deepen and intensify human misery by applying
legal, medical, and other technical categories that further burden social and
individual experience (see Das 1995; Herzfeld 1992).

The violences of everyday life are what create the "existential." In this
view, the existential is not the result of a uniform human nature but rather
emerges out of the inherent multiplicities, ironies, and instabilities of
human conditions (shared and particular) in local moral worlds. It is this
instructive process of the *naturalization* of social experience and individual
agency that must become the object of inquiry of ethnographies of the vio-
lences of everyday life.

NOTES

1. Violence among the near poor, the working class, and the middle class
includes street violence, domestic violence, and violence related to state terror,
forced uprooting, and other traumatic consequences of civil conflict. But as I illus-
trate in the case of Jane Huffberg, there are also the social violences associated with

work and the brutalizing compression of space and time under the regime of disordering capitalism. These include the negative health effects of sociosomatic pressures and problems such as the psychosomatic effects of joblessness, underemployment, downsizing, inadequate retirement support, downward social mobility, and a host of other forms of social violence. The delegitimation of the moral order, which includes alienation at interpersonal and subjective levels, is yet another example of such social trauma.

2. The materials for this analysis come from testimony given by hemophilia patients and their family members, including those with AIDS, on a public panel organized by a Committee of the Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Sciences, on 12 September 1994 that was charged with the responsibility for studying the questions concerning the U.S. blood supply in the era of HIV. Estimates are that between 1981 and 1985 over half of the hemophilia patients in the United States were infected by HIV via contaminated blood products, with more than three thousand developing AIDS.

3. There are active lawsuits litigating this charge. Although the issue has been settled in Japan and a number of European countries with court victories on behalf of hemophilia patients with AIDS and their families that include financial awards and also jail sentences for officials held responsible for negligence, this has not happened in the United States. In America, it is still an open question as to whether the hemophilia community will prevail in its quest for justice and compensation.

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