CHAPTER 1

Violence in Perspective

It is most difficult, if not impossible, to fully grasp or actually locate violence "in perspective" because much of it remains hidden from or invisible to public eyes. On the other hand, much of it is overplayed, distorted, or sensationalized. Media commentators, for example, in the United States, Great Britain, and elsewhere depict their societies as engulfed in ever-rising tides of violence, chaos, and destruction. Anxieties of the modern and postmodern age are often contrasted with romantic notions of the good old days of "law and order." Historians, however, are quick to point out the relative continuities both in patterns of violent behavior and in society's responses to violence over time, acknowledging that the Middle Ages were more violent than our own contemporary period. At the same time, attitudes about violence may remain the same or change with the ages: stranger violence (violence perpetrated by strangers) has always been portrayed as a menace to society; while domestic and sexual violence, especially between intimates and acquaintances, has been viewed ambivalently to say the least.

As a substitute for knowing the factual extent and seriousness of violence in America or elsewhere, most scholars and other students rely on criminally classified violent behavior and on officially counted numbers from those designated categories reported to their governments. Although such data is woefully incomplete, it can nevertheless provide a useful calibration of some of the most obvious forms of violent behavior, especially when evaluated in combination with victimization and self-report surveys. Accordingly, with an eye focused on bringing forth the missing material of violence, this chapter begins by presenting a general idea of some of the recent trends in officially reported violent crime in the United States. It then moves to expand the discussion of "violence in perspective" through an overview of various historical and comparative sources of information.

Violent crimes as recorded by the police dropped in 2000 for the ninth consecutive year, representing the longest-running decline in violent crime since the Federal Bureau of Investigation began keeping records in 1960. In 1999, for example, homicides, rapes, robberies, and aggravated assaults fell a combined 7%, with slightly steeper declines in homicides and robberies than in rapes and assaults ("Serious crimes," 2000). In virtually every demographic category considered from 1993 to 1998, when almost half of all violent victimizations were reported to the police, violent victimization decreased (Rennison, 1999). During this

period, for example, male violent victimization rates fell 39%, and black violent victimization rates fell 38%. In 1998, about half of the violent crime victims knew their offenders, more than 70% of rape or sexual assault victims knew their aggressors, and 50% of aggravated assault victims knew their perpetrators. In the same year, weapons were used in about a quarter of all violent victimizations, including about 2 out of 5 robberies and fewer than 1 in 10 rape or sexual assaults.

Variations in rates of violent crime are more generally influenced by the size of the community (e.g., big cities, rural areas, suburbs); the region of the country (e.g., West, Midwest, Northeast, South); and class, ethnicity, gender, and age compositions. For example, the F.B.I. reported that in 1999, homicide rates were down across the nation: 2% in cities over 500,000, 7% to 14% in smaller cities, 12% in the suburbs, and 17% in rural areas. In the same year, serious crime (which includes both property and violent crime) dropped 10% in the West, 8% in the Midwest, 7% in the Northeast, and 4% in the South ("Serious crimes," 2000). Perhaps more important, the nation's murder rate had, by 1998, reached its lowest level in three decades (6.3 per 100,000 people, compared to 4.5 per 100,000 in 1963), having peaked at just over 10 murders per 100,000 people in 1980 and again in the early 1990s, when gun homicides by teenagers and young adults were also peaking. Since 1993, teen homicides have fallen, as have the overall rates for murder. In cities with populations of more than 1 million, for example, the overall homicide rate fell from 35.5 per 100,000 inhabitants in 1991 to 16.1 per 100,000 in 1998 (Fox & Zawitz, 2000).

In a 1-year period, 1997 to 1998, the number of violent crimes per 1,000 persons age 12 or older declined demographically as follows: from 45.8 to 43.1 for males and from 33.0 to 30.4 for females; from 38.3 to 36.3 for whites, from 43.1 to 32.8 for Hispanics, and from 49.0 to 41.7 for blacks (Rennison, 1999). On average, between 1992 and 1997, for every 1,000 persons, those age 65 or older experienced about 5 violent crimes, those between 64 and 50 experienced about 18, those between 49 and 25 experienced about 48, and those younger than age 25 experienced over 100 (Klaus, 2000).

The tide in lowered homicide rates, however, had started to turn by the late 1990s. From 1997 to 1999, for example, the decrease in homicides was already slowing in the nation's largest cities—which is precisely where trends usually begin to rise and fall. These slowing trends in murder suggested to a number of experts that it would not be long before the rates leveled off and then reversed, going up. In fact, in New York City, the number of reported homicides had actually risen slightly by 1999, up to 671 from 633 the previous year ("Serious crimes," 2000). As of fall, 2001, trends in violent homicide overall had not reversed direction.

Unfortunately, these rates of officially reported violent crimes, as well as the actual numbers of recorded homicides, do not provide a perspective for grasping the relative seriousness either of violence in general or of any particular associated problem, such as family violence and child neglect. Nor do homicide rates and numbers by themselves provide any contexts necessary for making sense out of the reproduction of or reduction in violence, or for drawing any inferences about the reciprocal relationships between the pathways to violence and nonviolence. The biannual reports made available by the F.B.I. to the public on the "state" of crime and violence in America exclude a whole panoply of related and unrelated behaviors of interconnected expressions of violence.

Sanctioned and unsanctioned acts of violence are carried out by an assortment of individuals, groups, collectivities, institutions, and nation-states. Furthermore, the existing classification schemes for measuring some forms of violence ignore altogether the structural forms of violence that are part and parcel of the way in which societies, past and present, have been organized and stratified both locally and globally. When mediated attention is focused almost exclusively on the violence of the relatively powerless and away from the violence of the relatively powerful, a picture of violence emerges that is, at best, incomplete, and at worst, distorted and misguided.

Even if all the different measures and statistics on violence were in place, they would not begin to touch the human tragedy that violence is for both its victims and victimizers alike. To reemphasize, violence classification schemes do not provide much insight into the causes of violence and the ways it can be prevented, nor do they shed any light on the connections between the visible and invisible forms of violence—interpersonal, familial, institutional, and global. In short, a full-fledged study of violence calls for an alternative model of violence that includes both its sanctioned and unsanctioned forms.

SANCTIONED AND UNSANCTIONED VIOLENCE: AN ALTERNATIVE PERSPECTIVE

In *Violence, Inequality, and Human Freedom,* Iadicola and Shupe (1998) provide a conceptualization of violence that affords a comprehensive examination and dissection of violence in any society. These authors have divided the world of violence into three interacting spheres, domains, or contexts: (a) *interpersonal violence*—what happens between people acting in their private lives, without regard to occupational roles or formal institutions; (b) *institutional violence*—what happens within an institutional context vis-à-vis the action of institutional agents and others; and (c) *structural violence*—what happens within the context of establishing, maintaining, extending, and/or resisting hierarchy, privilege, and inequality (see Figure 1.1).

What follows is a nonexhaustive listing of examples of violence from each of the three fields.

INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE

- Assault and battery
- Corporal punishment
- Homicide and murder
- Kidnapping
- Rape and sexual assault
- Robbery
- Suicide
- Verbal abuse, threat, and intimidation

INSTITUTIONAL VIOLENCE

- Family: child and elder abuse (i.e., physical, sexual, neglect), spousal abuse (i.e., battering, emotional taunting, marital rape)
- Economic: corporate and workplace abuse (i.e., distributing defective products, subjecting workers to unsafe or unhealthy conditions)
- Military: ranging from petty hazing of recruits to war crimes (i.e., torture and murder of civilian or noncivilian enemy populations)
- Religious: abuse in the name of religious organizations, sects, or beliefs (i.e., cultism, witch hunts, heresy persecutions, religion-based terrorism)
- State: abuse by authority (including criminal justice) of fundamental human rights (i.e., assassinations, discrimination, enslavement, genocide, state-supported terrorism)

STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

The term *structural violence* refers to at least two kinds of group violence that are
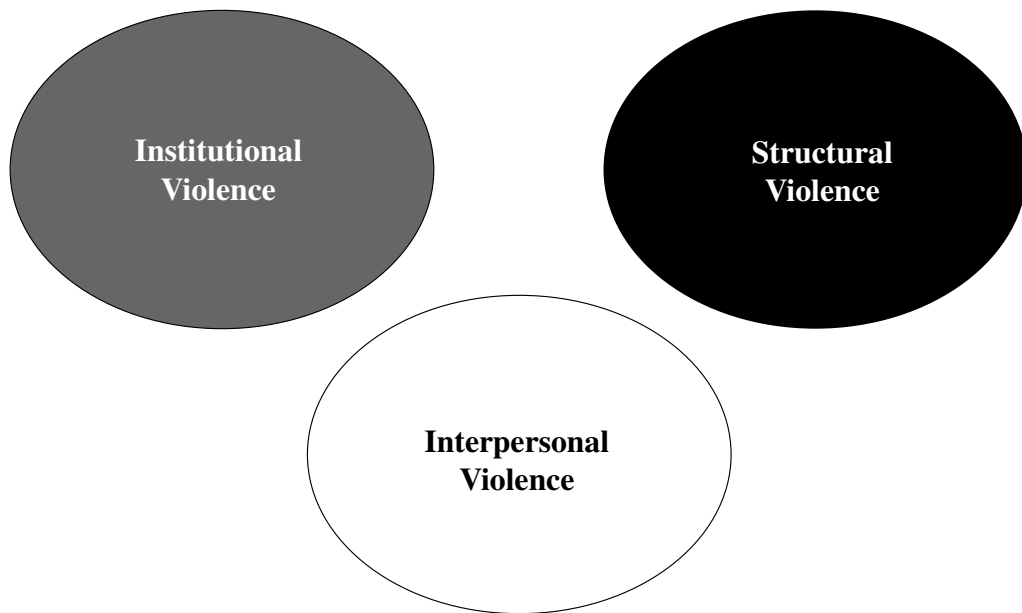
Figure 1.1   Three Contexts or Interactional Spheres of Violence

socially stirred in relation to the political and economic status quo.

1. One is allegedly for the purposes of establishing, defending, and/or extending hierarchy and inequality by the beating, exploiting, harassing, killing, and torturing of persons based on their age, class, ethnicity, gender, and/or sexual orientation (i.e., lynching, hate crime, terrorism).

2. The other is allegedly for the purposes of decreasing privilege and increasing liberty by resisting, protesting, and attacking those persons, symbols, or things that represent the established order, or "Establishment" (i.e., demonstrations, riots, terrorism).

At the same time, the domains of institutional and structural violence, in addition to the interpersonal forms of violence, overlap with and extend the boundaries of illegally or officially defined violence. Many definitions of and most inquiries into the study of

violence, unfortunately, are limited to legalistically narrow definitions that focus almost exclusively on the intent of the actions of individuals, ignoring altogether the latent consequences of institutionalized activities and policies that may or may not have reproduced the conditions of structural violence. For example, domestic violence, in its totality, is constituted by the interactions of (a) emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse inflicted on at least one person by another person with whom he or she cohabitates, (b) the actions or nonactions of human service organizations (i.e., criminal justice and social welfare systems) responding to at least two parties in the cultural context of "private" and "public" relations, and (c) the structural arrangements of inequality and privilege as these shape or influence the familial experiences of children and adults.

Some definitions of violence even consciously exclude references to specific forms of violence. For example, "violence refers to
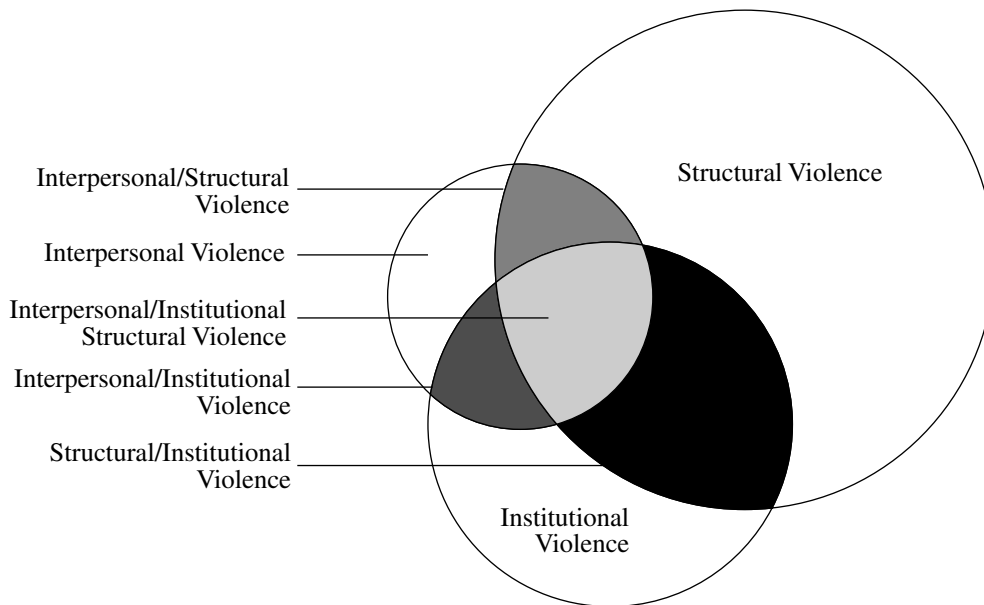
Figure 1.2   Intersections of the Three Spheres of Violence

the actual or threatened, knowing or intentional application of statutorily impermissible physical force by one person directly against one or more other persons outside the contexts both of formal institutional or organizational structures and of civil or otherwise collective disorders and movements for the purpose of securing some end against the will or without the consent of the other person or persons" (Weiner, 1989, pp. 37-38). Such definitions, of course, provide license, permission, or sanction for justifying and engaging in certain forms of "acceptable" violence.

These kinds of restrictive definitions of violence exclude not only the institutional and structural spheres of violence and violence-generating behavior, but even some of the interpersonal forms of violence, such as those inflicted by intimidation and emotional abuse. Similarly, there are other quasilegalistic formulations of violence that suggest a broader and more inclusive definition: "the threat, attempt, or use of physical force by one or more persons that results in physical or

nonphysical harm to one or more persons" (Weiner, Zahn, & Sagi, 1990, p. xiii). Although this definition is an improvement on the one in the previous paragraph and expands the examination of interpersonal violence to include activities of groups and collectivities, there still remains the tendency to disregard structural forms of violence.

In most analyses of violence, only "deviant" or illegally defined forms of violence are considered violent. Violent perpetrators are too often represented as individuals who act alone or act as part of a marginal group, not as organizational functionaries, public or private, that act according to the accepted customs of various regimes of political and economic order. In short, "violence" typically refers to actions of individuals assaulting other individuals and the state; not to assaults of (our) government or of (our) corporations on citizens, consumers, or workers, and not to the overlapping realities of interpersonal, institutional, and structural forms of violence (see Figure 1.2).

In an attempt to be conceptually inclusive and to not exclude any of the forms and expressions of violence, I have adopted Iadicola and Shupe's (1998) simple definition of violence, which takes into account the full range of harms associated with a variety of interpersonal, institutional, and structural relationships and behaviors: "Violence is any action or structural arrangement that results in physical or nonphysical harm to one or more persons" (p. 26). In sum, the discourse of violence used here can refer to individual acts, institutional policies, and structural conditions. The various violent forms may or may not be against the law, criminal or civil. In either case, the injuries from these multifarious harms are no less (and often are more) painful and tragic to their victims (and victimizers) than those acts that have been defined as "illegally violent." Many differences between legitimate and illegitimate forms of violence are ideologically or morally constructed. They have more to do with variations in the extent of social outrage and in political denial or awareness of these and other forms of violence, harm, and victimization.

The rest of this chapter accomplishes three things: First, it characterizes violence in historical and contemporary America. Second, it situates the violence of the United States within a cross-cultural and global perspective. Third, it provides a rationale for a reciprocal approach to the study of violence and society.

VIOLENCE AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF AMERICAN LIFE

H. "Rap" Brown has been repeatedly quoted for having said in 1966, "Violence is necessary; it is as American as cherry pie." This statement reflects the violent realities and myths associated with this nation's birth and development. Born from two violent revolutions—the American War of Independence to overthrow colonialism and the Civil War to overthrow slavery—the early history of the United States is ripe with affirmative episodes of violence. In conjunction with an ideology of Manifest Destiny and a westward expansion achieved through force and frontier warfare and vigilantism, there is also a large amount of folklore populated with the celebrated outlaws of the Old West. Historically, violence has not been a matter of negativity alone. In fact, violence has been an American norm and a behavioral theme with positive as well as negative meanings.

On a daily basis, citizens of this country are exposed to violence in many forms, from contact sports to mass killings. Whether reading newspapers or magazines, listening to the radio or watching television, or going out to the movies, consumers find in violence a staple of both information and entertainment. Even globally, popular culture, East and West, certainly seems of late to cater to America's fascination with violence. This is not a new or recent development, however. Historically, most nations' art, media, and literature have been preoccupied with images and narratives of violence. Depictions of a violent United States in particular have always had an important presence in the American psyche. Similarly, it is relatively safe to claim that around the world violence has always been central to most peoples' psyches, especially when consciousness contemplates, fantasizes, and/or acts out certain forms of aggression and sexuality.

Today, however, because of the rapid fire of news coverage and instant telecommunication, lethal violence in particular seems to be pervading all settings all of the time. Despite America's declining rates in weapon assaults and homicides, mediated gunfire and bloodshed is simultaneously exploding everywhere, from inner city ghettos to rural school yards, from fast-food restaurants to postal office corridors. It is not a coincidence or a surprise that most people have a

distorted, if not superficial, view of American violence. For the most part, this is because the average person lacks both historical and contemporary perspective. It is also the case because the average person lacks a comparative perspective.

AMERICAN VIOLENCE IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

For the purposes of this brief historical overview of violence in America, broad brush strokes are used to characterize the very loose patterns and trends in interpersonal violence, group violence, and institutionalized violence. Over the past two centuries, the trends have been toward lower levels of violence. As Ted Gurr (1990) has argued, to the extent that North America, from settlement to industrialization, was an extension of British culture and society, the underlying movement in violence has been downward. However, in culturally heterogeneous societies like the United States, "trends and cycles of interpersonal violence are instructive only about how disorderly society is, not about the social behavior of its constituent groups" (Gurr, 1990, p. 20).

The sparse availability of evidence shows for the most part that the Old West, or frontier America, was devoid of most forms of interpersonal violence, contrary to the many myths and images of television and motion pictures (McGrath, 1984). For example, bank robberies, rape, racial violence, and juvenile violence were virtually nonexistent. Armed robberies, burglaries, and thefts were infrequent and typically fewer in the frontier than in Eastern urban areas during the 19th century. On the other hand, homicides, especially shootings and shoot-outs among gamblers, bad men, and miners were fairly common events. Warfare between Native Americans and whites saw cruelty and savagery on both sides, and suicide rates among women were extraordinarily high. As McGrath (1984) concludes in his study of the mining towns around the Sierra Nevada, the lawlessness and violence took special forms and did not directly affect all activities or all people: "The old, the young, the unwilling, the weak, and the female—with the notable exception of the prostitute—were, for the most part, safe from harm" (p. 247).

The long downslope of interpersonal violence in the United States with respect to robberies, assaults, and homicides is irregular, and some of the irregularities have formed three sharp and sustained periods of increasing violence. These upsurges, or peaks, of violent crime have paralleled three distinct periods of American warfare: during the Civil War, the decade following World War I, and at the onset of the Vietnam War (Gurr, 1990). The most recent rise in interpersonal violence, experienced during the late 1980s and early 1990s, was not associated with any kind of sustained period of American warfare. After all, the Gulf War lasted only a few weeks. At the same time, one consequence of that conflict abroad and certain conflicts at home involving federal law enforcement agents, not the least of which were the incidents at Ruby Ridge, Idaho, and Waco, Texas, was the spawning of the likes of Timothy McVeigh and his infamous bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City.

Over the past couple of decades, the historical record of group or collective violence in the United States has been fairly calm, with a few notable exceptions such as racially inspired protests and riots in reaction to the police use of deadly force in Los Angeles, Miami, New York, and Cincinnati. Until the recent period, political violence had been a staple of American society—from the Revolutionary War period to the rebellious days of the 1960s and 1970s. For example, New York City between 1788 and 1834 was disrupted by more than 70 political, ethnic, and labor clashes. Most of these mob attacks

were relatively minor affairs. However, there were more than a dozen major riots over political and communal issues during that period that involved many hundreds of participants; some of those riots persisted for days at a time (Gurr, 1989).

With the exception of the Northeast, from the 1760s through the first decade of the 19th century, there were as many as 500 vigilante movements organized by local citizens in newly settled areas across the United States. These vigilantes dispensed a violent justice to renegades, horse thieves, claim jumpers, gunmen, and other rule breakers. In the South, during the decade after the abolishment of slavery, there were some 80 riots by whites against freed slaves and their Northern supporters. The establishment of white supremacy was also reinforced by the lynching of blacks in the South and elsewhere. The peak years of lynching, 1891 to 1901, saw more than 100 victims killed each year. In terms of the United States' bloody and violent labor history, hundreds of clashes between workers and employers occurred each decade from the 1870s to the 1930s.

One staple of interpersonal, institutional, and structural violence in American history, although marginally so, has been the constant presence of "hate crimes," whether directed at religious and ethnic minorities, political radicals, gays and lesbians, wife beaters, or others. From the postbellum period up to the 1960s, there were vigilante-like movements of social regulation, involving such groups as the Ku Klux Klan, the White Cappers, and the Black Legion, who performed whippings, arsons, bombings, and murders to instill fear and terror into the hearts and minds of their victims. This violent extremism of the "right" is still marginally alive in terms of its anti-Semitic and racist posturing and behavior today. Contemporary neo-Nazi groups include, for example, the Posse Comitatus and the Aryan

Nation. The goals of these and other like-minded groups have been to protect the way of life threatened by marginal Others.

On the other hand, most of the violent extremism from the "left" as well as from ethnically motivated activists was essentially confined to the protests of the 1960s and 1970s that were associated with issues of free speech, the Vietnam war, and racial and gender equality. For example, there were more than 500 race riots or rebellions that occurred in inner cities across the nation in the decade of the 1960s. At the same time, hundreds of antiwar demonstrations erupted on and off American university campuses. In the decade of the 1970s, acts of political terrorism by black militants, antiwar radicals, Puerto Rican nationalists, and a multitude of other groups peaked at more than 100 per year (Gurr, 1989). The goals of these and other groups were primarily about political empowerment and the expansion of rights to people traditionally denied them.

Other forms of interpersonal, institutional, and structural violence related to questions of inequality and privilege have also been part and parcel of the American experience. Although there are no actual lists, those populations which have been the most oppressed and dominated in this nation have always endured higher levels of violence than their "nonoppressed" middle-class constituent counterparts. In the past, there were the enslaved and indentured persons of colonial and early American history, as well as the victims of oppression throughout the antebellum period and later periods of "separate but equal" in the South and elsewhere. In the contemporary era, there is the higher rate of infant mortality among black and brown Americans—more than twice the rate for whites. There are also the significantly higher rates of disease, hunger, homelessness, murder, and incarceration for marginal peoples, accompanied by lower rates of longevity and development of physical,

spiritual, and intellectual potential (Barak, 1991b; Barak, Flavin, & Leighton, 2001).

AMERICAN VIOLENCE IN CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVE

The following depictions are meant to be representative and not exhaustive of the various forms of violence in contemporary America. For example, interpersonal descriptions include suicide and homicide; institutional descriptions include domestic and workplace violence; and structural descriptions include corporate, hate, and state violence.

Suicide

Suicide, a growing social problem in the United States, is one of those hidden and rarely talked about forms of violence. It has been argued that today's high annual rates of suicide represent a public health crisis about which the public is in a state of conspicuous denial. In fact, suicide ranks second in causes of death for college students (after accidents), and it is the third leading cause of death (after homicides and accidents) for young people generally. In 1997, more young people died from suicide than from AIDS, cancer, stroke, pneumonia, influenza, birth defects, and heart disease combined; including 4,186 deaths among those 15 to 24 years old and 5,075 among those 25 to 34 years old (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1997).

Half a million Americans are taken to hospitals every year because of suicide attempts, and the rate of suicide is climbing steadily. One study found that the likelihood in the 1990s of a young man committing suicide was 260% higher than in the 1950s. Another study found that half of those who have been diagnosed with manic-depressive illness will make a suicide attempt, and that 1 out of 5

people with major depression will do the same (Jamison, 1999). It has also been shown that the most successful method for killing oneself, especially among teenagers, is with a handgun (Putnam, 2000). Related to the self-inflicted violence of suicide is "self-mutilation" (i.e., cutting, burning), practiced by an estimated 1.5 to 2.0 million people, especially adolescent middle-class white girls, as a way of expressing their anguish and anger ("Hidden addictions," 2000).

Class, Ethnicity, and Gender Violence

Contemporary interpersonal violence involving two or many persons more generally expresses itself in a variety of forms not limited to street, domestic, youth, gender, or racial violence. It is often difficult to separate the overlapping relations of these forms of violence (see Box 3.1). Overall, as already noted, violent crime rates, inclusive of rape, robbery, aggravated and simple assault, and homicide declined generally in the 1990s. However, when differentiated by gender, race, or class, official rates of these forms of violence have varied from a little to a lot. For example, the approximate 31% decrease in serious, violent crime between 1994 and 1998 affected men much more than women. Not only was the decline in the victimization rate for women less than 15% during this period, it remained slightly higher than the levels of the 1970s.

When it came to intimate homicide (see Box 2.6), men continued to kill their partners at about the same rate as they did a quarter of a century ago, although it did appear that a downward trend for women as victims began around 1994. On the other hand, the long-term downward shift in the number of men killed by their intimate partners was much steeper (Chaiken, 2000). In sum, U.S. homicides of intimates by gender for the years 1976 through 1997 revealed that the

number of men killed declined from a little over 1,400 to below 500 per year, while the number of women killed declined from about 1,600 to around 1,250 (Fox & Zawitz, 1999).

Kandel Englander (1997) reports that there were 1,848,520 cases of assault recorded by the National Crime Survey for 1992 and 24,526 murders reported in the 1993 Uniform Crime Report. About 15% of those murders involved people who did not know each other: The vast majority of the victims were killed by family members rather than by strangers. The National Crime Survey data on behavioral assault, however, confound the beliefs of most criminologists and other students of violence.

Two thirds of the assault victims canvassed during the 1992 National Crime Survey reported that they did not know their perpetrator. About half of these victims were women. This contradicts most of the research on victimization, which discloses that most assaults occur between people who know each other and that most of the victims are men. The National Crime Survey numbers would thus seem to suggest that many victims of domestic assault were either unable or unwilling to report the assault to the interviewers from the National Institute of Justice. If not that, then these women did not consider or conceptualize their domestic abuses or victimizations to have been cases of criminal assault. Whatever the reality, the number of officially reported cases of stranger assault extrapolated for 1992 was ½ of 1% of the U.S. population. Further, most of these occurrences were considered to be simple rather than aggravated assault (Kandel Englander, 1997).

The images of violence associated with weapons and great physical harm portrayed in contemporary media also appear to be exaggerated, as a small percentage of people are actually injured, let alone seriously injured, through typical incidents of assault.

According to a 1993 publication of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), of all the violent crimes reported in one study, less than a third involved a weapon of any kind. Similarly, relatively few violent victimizations resulted in serious injury (4%) and fewer than 25% of the victims received injuries of any kind. In short, "less than about 3 out of every 1,000 violent crime victims [were] shot, about 12 [were] wounded by a knife, and about 20 or so [had] broken bones or teeth knocked out. . . . only 9 percent of all victims of violent crime lost any time from work, and only 10 percent incurred medical expenses" of any kind (Kappeler, Blumberg, & Potter, 1996, p. 46).

Turning to interpersonal cases of sexual, gender, and domestic violence, it is most difficult to arrive at more than rudimentary figures for these acts. Few would disagree that acts of harassment, battering, and rape continue to be among the types of assaults least likely to be reported, especially among women in their teens or early 20s. For example, when the BJS compared the results of the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) with the more sophisticated methods used in surveys conducted by the National Institute of Justice, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and other BJS research, it became clear that many crimes of harassment, battering, and rape remained uncounted by the NCVS (Chaiken, 2000). Moreover, it is highly unlikely that any of these surveys include those thousands of young people, especially runaway girls, who are subject to verbal abuses, physical beatings, and rapes annually by "pimps, players, and johns" (Hodgson, 1997).

Nevertheless, according to the more sophisticated surveys, rape rates in the United States from 1973 to 1998, for an adjusted victimization rate per 1,000 people 12 years old and older, officially declined from 2.5 to .08. Such figures, however, unless they are broken down by subpopulations of women, can be

highly misleading. As Chaiken (2000) has underscored,

> When we examine particular population subgroups, we find some categories of women who are more likely than men to be victims of crime. Women college students, for example, are at greater risk of victimization than women who are not in college. On the whole, the victimization of college women by crimes other than sexual assault is approximately the same as that for men, but women are in addition the primary victims of sexual assault. (p. 13)

Similarly, poor women and women of color are more likely than middle or upper class white women to become victims of violence.

For example, a 1999 study by the U.S. Department of Justice found that rates of sexual abuse against Native American women were the highest in the nation (Greenfeld & Smith, 1999). Seven Native American women out of 1,000 had been victims of rape or sexual assaults annually, compared with 3 blacks and 2 whites per 1,000. One of the most interesting findings from this study was that 9 out of 10 of the incidents of rape or sexual assault against Native American women were committed by non-Indians. Comparatively, this finding differs radically with the sexual attacks of white women, who were victimized 70% of the time by white men, and for black women, who were victimized 81% of the time by black men.

Domestic Violence

What does the picture look like when we focus more specifically on the institutionalized forms of domestic or gendered violence? In these domains, violence usually occurs within the family and/or dating relationships. These forms of violence typically include child abuse, date abuse, and marital (spouse) abuse. Each of these forms of abuse is neither separate nor isolated from the others. Within, between, and over generations, these forms of violent behavior blend, overlap, and develop in relation to one another. At the same time, these forms of interpersonal and institutional violence cannot be disconnected from their cultural and structural roots of privilege and inequality, expressed through the social arrangements of private property and patriarchy both inside and outside the United States.

Child abuse generally refers to four kinds of abuse: physical, sexual, emotional (including verbal and psychological), and neglect. As with other forms of intimate or private abuse such as spousal rape, adequate estimates are difficult to come by, as many, if not a majority, of these acts of violence never come to the attention of authorities or researchers. Furthermore, with the exception of sexual abuse, there is often a lack of consensus and disagreement over the meaning of child abuse. For example, most people exclude corporal punishment from child physical abuse, removing "discipline" from abuse, by (usually) distinguishing among the objects (e.g., an open hand, a belt) used for inflicting pain and the type of physical injuries (e.g., broken arms versus minor bruises or cuts) incurred.

Probably what ties these forms of abuse together most is the emotional maltreatment and trauma, stemming from both the relative powerlessness and the associated degradation and humiliation of these victim experiences. Estimates for neglect (which appear to parallel poverty) and for emotional abuse are pretty much nonexistent. Estimates for the physical abuse of children in the 1980s and 1990s, depending on how physical violence was defined, ranged from 1.5 to 6.9 million per annum (Kandel Englander, 1997; Straus & Gelles, 1990). With respect to child sexual abuse, 25% to 33% of women and approximately 10% of men have recalled being

sexually molested as children (Finkelhor, 1988; Russell, 1983). In general, compared to the victimization of adults, that of juveniles is underreported, with the exception of sexual victimization. Although there are more than a few reasons for this under-reporting of physical violence, Finkelhor and Ormrod (1999) have concluded that "there is a cultural predisposition, shared by parents, youth, and the police, to view nonsexual assaults against juveniles" as something other than acts or crimes of violence; less offensive language is preferred, such as "fights, scuffles, or child maltreatment" (p. 5).

Youth Violence

This normalization of violence for youth, along with the presence of corporal punishment in the socialization experiences of many American children, suggests that there may be a connection here to the higher rates of antisocial behavior for these children. Five longitudinal studies (Straus, 1994; Straus, Sugarman, & Giles-Sims, 1997) have found that when parents used corporal punishment to reduce antisocial behavior, the long-term effects tended to be the opposite. Conversely, it was also found that avoiding corporal punishment resulted in enhanced cognitive development, less disruptive behavior, and less violence perpetrated against dating partners by teenagers. In general, despite the rapid decline of the use of corporal punishment by parents on their children after the age of 5 years, from a peak of 94% at 3 and 4 years to just over half by the time the children are 12 years old, a third at 14 years, and 13% at 17 years, it was found that parents who hit teenage children did so on an average of about six times per year. Moreover, severity, as measured by hitting the child with a belt or a paddle, was greatest for children 5 to 12 years old (at a rate of 28%). It was also found that corporal punishment was more prevalent among African American parents

and parents of low socioeconomic status, in the South, for boys, and by mothers (Straus & Stewart, 1999).

With respect to gendered violence and youth, one study using longitudinal data from more than 4,500 high school seniors and dropouts from California and Oregon revealed a commonness of violence among youth generally: More than half the sample had engaged in some kind of violence, and 1 in 4 had committed predatory violence. Although boys were more likely to engage in all types of violence and in violence outside the home, both boys and girls were equally prone to violence within the family. Violent teenagers, especially boys, were generally more likely than nonviolent youths to have experienced additional emotional and behavioral problems, such as poor mental health, use of drugs, school dropout, and commission of other nonviolent felonies (Ellickson, Saner, & McGuigan, 1997).

Placing juvenile violence into some kind of general or contemporary perspective is not easy. For example, between 1984 and 1992, the number of juveniles arrested for homicide who were under 15 years old increased by 50%, and youths 10 to 17 years old, who accounted for 11% of the U.S. population during this time, were responsible for 16% of violent felonies (Greenwood, 1995). Consistent with these figures, the 1998 National Youth Gang Survey reported that in randomly selected samples from large, small, medium, urban, rural, and suburban police and sheriff departments, 48% of the respondents reported active youth gangs in their jurisdiction, compared with 51% in 1997 and 53% in 1996 (Moore & Cook, 1999). On the other hand, in 1994, when officially recorded juvenile crimes were at their highest and when 3 to 4 out of every 10 boys growing up in urban America were being arrested (Greenwood, 1995), "94 percent of the approximately 69 million youth under the age of 18 had never been arrested" (p. 92).

Additionally, "less than 10 percent of delinquents commit violent crime," and "five out of six youth referred to juvenile court for violent crime do not commit a subsequent violent offense" ("An evolving," 1999, pp. 7-8).

The seriousness of school violence is also difficult to evaluate (see Boxes 2.11 and 2.12). During the 1990s, there was a wave of gun violence in junior and senior high schools across the nation that included the killings of students, teachers, and parents: Peal, Mississippi (October 1, 1997); West Paducah, Kentucky (December 1, 1997); Jonesboro, Arkansas (March 24, 1998); Edinboro, Pennsylvania (April 24, 1998); Springfield, Oregon (May 21, 1998); and Littleton, Colorado (April 21, 1999). All totaled, there were 25 dead in 1997, 42 dead in 1998, and 24 in 1999 as a result of these incidents (Hinkle & Henry, 2000). Preliminary results of a study reported by the National School-Associated Violent Death Study Group indicated that between 1994 and 1998, approximately 200 school-associated violent deaths were identified, broken down as follows: 83% were homicides, 13% were suicides, and 4% were combination homicides/suicides (Hammond, 1999).

As it turned out, the number of school-associated violent deaths in the 1990s had reached an all-time high. A national victimization survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Justice (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1998) reported a 25% increase in violent victimization of high school students between 1989 and 1995; however, a national self-report survey of high school students between 1991 and 1997 found a 20% decrease in the number of students injured in fights, as well as decreased involvement in fighting and weapon-carrying behavior (Brener, Simon, Krug, & Lowry, 1999). So although lethal violence was up during this period, it appears that nonlethal violence was down.

Gun Violence

Opponents of gun control are quick to point out that "guns don't kill, people do." Criminologists are not so quick to speak. However, upon reflection, most would say that "people don't kill, events do." In other words, when it comes to gun violence, criminologists will point out that this type of violence, like many other forms, is usually part of some kind of event or interactional transition involving specific contexts (e.g., "hot spots" such as liquor clubs or bars), attempted crimes gone wrong (e.g., drug deals or robberies), and objects (e.g., cheating spouses caught in the act; drug or alcohol abuse) frequently associated or correlated with situations of violence. Guns, too, are actually objects; they are not types of violence per se. At the same time, in a recently published study, Wells and Horney (2002) found "evidence of weapons effects that exist[ed] regardless of individual differences among assailants and regardless of a person's situation-specific intent to do harm" (p. 292).

Guns are also about expressive or instrumental violence. Surveys from incarcerated felons disclose that their primary purpose for carrying a weapon was to expedite the offense, to escape, or both. The most frequent reasons given for using a gun were to scare the victims (54%), for protection (30%), to kill the victim (14%), and to get away (12%) (Reidel & Welsh, 2002). Most of these felons had acquired their guns from nonretail sources, such as from their families, illegal markets, or thefts (Wright & Rossi, 1985).

For some sort of perspective on gun violence, one needs at a minimum to have a sense of the size of the problem. According to the NCVS, some 670,500 victims of serious violent crimes faced an offender with a firearm in 1998 (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2000a). Of the 2.9 million violent crimes of rape and sexual assault, robbery, and

aggravated assault for that year, 23% of the victimizations occurred with a firearm. Yet, the U.S. Department of Justice (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2000b) found that the number of crimes committed with firearms declined dramatically from 1993 to 1998, falling to levels last experienced in the mid-1980s. At the same time, Uniform Crime Report data from 1997 revealed that two thirds (68%) of the 18,209 murders that occurred that year were committed with a firearm. Likewise, in 1998, "about 65 percent of all murders, 32 percent of all robberies, and 19 percent of all aggravated assaults reported to the police were committed with a firearm" (Reidel & Welsh, 2002, p. 297).

In repeated surveys, juveniles report having easy access to guns. Weapons arrest rates back them up. Per 100,000 population, the highest arrest rates are for teens, males, and blacks (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2000a). Juvenile arrests for weapons-law violations doubled between 1987 and 1993. During the same period, gun homicides by juveniles in the United States tripled, although homicides involving other weapons declined. "From 1983 through 1995, the proportion of homicides in which a juvenile used a gun increased from 55 percent to 80 percent" (Reidel & Welsh, 2002, p. 300).

Sexual Violence

Dating, cohabitating, and marital violence typically refer to both physical and sexual abuse. In terms of violence in dating relationships, for example, about 20% of college students surveyed admitted to some kind of physical victimization (Kandel Englander, 1997); approximately 20% to 28% of college women surveyed admitted to having been forced into some sort of sexual encounter against their will, but only 5% to 15% of college males admitted to such behavior (Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987).

As for wife-to-husband abuse and husband-to-wife abuse, the 1985 National Family Victimization Survey revealed that 3.4% of couples could be characterized as "wife beating" and that 4.8% of couples could be characterized as "husband beating," meaning that at least 1.8 million women and 2.6 million men were assaulted by their intimates in 1985. This does not address the severity of beatings or types of injuries inflicted.

Men's assaults tended to be more offensive than defensive; women's tended to be more defensive than offensive. Injuries sustained by women were also greater than those sustained by men (Kander Englander, 1997). It is difficult to obtain reliable figures for marital rape. Nevertheless, using extrapolated data from Russell's (1983) study on the percentages of women experiencing a completed or attempted rape (ranging from 25% to 35%) with Kilpatrick's (1993) data, which suggested that some 40% of all rapes were perpetrated by husbands or other male live-in companions, Kandel Englander (1997) estimated that some 14.4 million women were victims of marital rape each year out of an overall, estimated total figure of 36 million rapes. These figures were significantly higher than the average number of sexual assaults, 840,000, reported to official law enforcement agencies during those same years.

Violence Against the Elderly

Data on violent acts committed against the elderly by non–family members is both easier to come by and more accurate than data regarding violence perpetrated by family members. U.S. rates of nonfatal violence against persons 65 years old or older declined from 1973 to 1997, as did rates of murder after 1976. These declines paralleled similar declines for all age groups, except for that group between 12 and 24 years old, for which

the rates of murder fluctuated. In general, the elderly were much less susceptible to violence than were people younger than 65 years old. For example, from 1992 to 1997, violent crime rates for the elderly were about a 10th (5.3 acts per 1,000) the rate for persons younger than 65 years old. Among elderly victims during this period, men experienced lethal and nonlethal violence at rates that were about twice the level for women; blacks experienced higher rates than whites; and Hispanics experienced higher rates than non-Hispanics. In terms of homicide, about 3 per 100,000 persons 65 years old or older were murdered, making them one fifth and one third as likely, respectively, to be murdered as persons 12 to 24 and 25 to 49 years old. With respect to violence in the family, there were annually about 500 deaths and 36,000 injuries inflicted on elderly persons either by a relative, an intimate, or a close acquaintance (Klaus, 2000). An earlier survey of older Americans conducted in the late 1980s yielded a much higher estimate of around 1 million cases of elder abuse per year (Pillemer & Finkelhor, 1988).

Workplace Violence

If getting a handle on some of the already reviewed forms of violence is difficult, the situation regarding workplace violence is even more so. The relations and interactions involving daily life and workplace violence are complex. To begin with, there are several kinds of social activities that constitute violence in the workplace. Fundamentally, there are three definitions of workplace violence that correspond with the interpersonal, institutional, and structural fields of violence. As Brownstein (2000) points out:

> Workplace violence could be the product of what workers do, as in the case of workers who physically assault coworkers or consumers. Or workplace violence could be

what happens to workers at their workplace, such as accidents that are the result of intentional negligence by management. Or workplace violence could be viewed in terms of the impact on workers, consumers, or the public generally as a result of corporate decisions and actions, such as death or disease related to the intentional dumping of toxic waste. (p. 157)

The problem with measuring workplace violence is that most discussions ignore the institutional and structural meanings of worker violence, focusing mostly, if not exclusively, on the interpersonal meanings, which may or may not have anything to do with the workplace. For example, the Bureau of Labor Statistics conducts an annual Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries that is used to arrive at the number of workplace homicides committed each year in the United States. In 1995, 1,024 workplace homicides were reported. Seventy-one percent of those involved a robbery or other crime, and only 11% (113 persons killed) involved a conflictive relationship between work associates. Of the total number of homicides reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 80% involved wage and salary workers, 76% involved males, 65% involved whites, and 74% involved shootings (Brownstein, 2000).

In terms of a mass psychology of workplace violence as interpersonal, the *Los Angeles Times* reported in November 1999 that "more than half of American companies have experienced at least one incident of workplace violence in the past three years" ("Survey: Companies," 1999). According to the Society for Human Resource Management, which surveyed 651 companies, shootings and stabbings accounted for 2% of all incidents of workplace violence in these companies, pushing and shoving 19%, and verbal threats 41%. Of all reported incidents in these companies, 55% involved "personality conflicts," and only 8% were directed by an employee against a supervisor.

The findings also revealed that 76% of the aggressors were men and 45% of the victims were women. Finally, firings had occurred in 18% of the cases, and 24% were attributed to work-related stress.

In his analysis of homicide in the American workplace from 1980 to 1989, Kellecher (1996) concluded that of all fatalities in the workplace, homicide accounted for only 12%; automobile accidents accounted for 24%. In terms of the numbers of workers who have experienced nonlethal violence in the workplace, the BJS, using data from the NCVS, concluded that for the period 1992 to 1996 there were about 1.5 million simple assaults and 396,000 aggravated assaults (Warchol, 1998). In combining rates of lethal and nonlethal violence in the workplace, the BJS also concluded that these assaults represented only about 15% of all violent victimization reports that it receives annually (Bachman, 1994).

By comparison, the number of victims of interpersonal, intentional workplace violence is small in relation to the number of institutional and "ostensibly unintentional deaths and injuries involving people simply doing their jobs in the workplace" (Brownstein, 2000, p. 159). According to the National Safety Council (1997), more than 126 million workers in all industries suffered unintentional injuries at work in 1996, including 4,800 who died and 3.9 million who suffered a disabling injury. In sum, there were 1,024 intentional (interpersonal) and 4,800 unintentional (institutional) deaths and 1.5 million interpersonal (intentional) and 126 million institutional (unintentional) injuries in the workplace in 1996.

Corporate, Hate, and State Violence

The social activities that constitute corporate violence represent a structural form of violence because they are organizationally based and intended to benefit the corporation at the physical expense of the employees, consumers, and general public. The result of deliberate decision making by corporate executives, these harms accrue from the production of "unreasonable risks" and from negligent and willful violations of health, safety, and environmental laws in the quest for profits at any cost (Hills, 1987; Kramer, 1983). Estimates of actual and potential harms and injuries from the "faulty" engineering and/or testing associated with the Ford Pinto gas tank, Three-Mile Island, the Challenger disaster, or the Bhopal incident suggest that the risk and dangers from corporate-structural violence may, in fact, be greater than those from other forms of workplace violence.

I will briefly review two other forms of structural violence, hate violence and state violence, before trying to place violence in the United States in a cross-cultural, comparative perspective.

True to the nature of structural violence, the injuries and harms that result from both hate and state violence are primarily the product of efforts to maintain order, privilege, and inequality. During the 1980s and 1990s, bias-motivated violent acts became legally recognized as "hate crimes," transforming previous injuries perpetrated by select private groups into public issues of justice, punishment, and compensation. Specifically selected for "bias crimes" victim status were people who had been consistently subjected to violence and bigotry based on their race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or sexual orientation: people of color, Jews, immigrants, women, gays and lesbians, and people with disabilities (Jenness & Broad, 1997).

Based on data from the Uniform Crime Report, preliminary figures for 1995 revealed 7,947 hate crime incidents, 10,469 victims, and 8,433 known offenders. Of the known offenders, 59% were white and 27% were black; the remaining 14% of offenders

were of "other" or multiracial groups. Sixty-one percent of the incidents were motivated by racial bias, 16% by religious bias, 13% by bias against sexual orientation, and 10% by bias against ethnicity or national origin. Crimes against persons accounted for 72% of hate crimes reported, almost half of which were for the crime of intimidation. Eighteen percent were for simple assaults, and 13% were for aggravated assaults. For the year, there were 20 murders and 12 forcible rapes attributable to hate violence (U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Criminal Justice Information Services Division, 1995).

State violence refers generally to the abuse of power by the government or by its authorized or unauthorized agents against domestic citizens or citizens of other countries. State violence usually assumes the forms of assaults, intimidations, kidnappings, tortures, and assassinations (Barak, 1991a). Typically, such actions are carried out in violation of the democratic rule of law by the police, the courts, or institutions of penal sanction and reform. In the United States, although there have been several high-profile police beatings and killings, as well as numerous complaints against the abuse of force by various law enforcement agencies, the actual frequency of these episodes is rare (Kappeler et al., 1996). With respect to wrongful prosecutions, convictions, and state executions, the estimated numbers have also been quite small. Since 1973, when the death penalty was reinstated by the U.S. Supreme Court, 87 death-row inmates have been freed or exonerated (Johnson, 2000). The victimization and violence experienced by inmates may be of more significance.

Prisoners, in addition to the usual "pains of imprisonment" (Sykes, 1958), have been commonly subjected to psychological victimization in the forms of intimidation, sexual extortion, robbery, and blackmail, mostly at the hands of other inmates, but also at the hands, directly and indirectly, of some guards and staff members. Data in these areas have been extremely unreliable, as researchers have found, for example, that only 3% of prison sexual assaults are ever officially reported. Consequently, some criminologists have concluded that there are very few acts of sexual coercion in prison (Kappeler et al., 1996). However, there are a number of penologists who have been a bit closer to prison environments, and they have maintained that there are very few male inmates who have not been involved in some kind of involuntary sexual behavior behind bars, either as perpetrators or as victims (Cotton & Groth, 1984; Dumond, 1992; Rideau & Wikberg, 1992). Either way, the high levels of violence in American penal institutions may be attributed—aside from the obvious presence of a high percentage of dangerous persons—to heterosexual deprivation, inadequate supervision by correctional staff, and systems of control that promote rather than inhibit inmate exploitation.

In a similar vein, inmates have experienced social victimization, especially in the form of physical assaults, for belonging to various ethnic, racial, religious, and gang-related groups. Although statistics are not kept on this kind of prison violence, some researchers have estimated that inmates are 20 times more likely to be assaulted annually than are those persons living outside of prisons (Klofas, 1992). In addition, over the last couple of decades, the majority of states have experienced severe overcrowding in their institutions, a situation widely considered to contribute to the high levels of prison violence.

AMERICAN VIOLENCE IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Cross-cultural and comparative analyses reveal similarities as well as dissimilarities within and between developing and

developed nation-states. For example, the incidents and trends of violence in the United States are not the same as those in seemingly comparable developed states, such as Germany, Japan, or Italy (Barak, 2000). Because the histories of these countries and their peoples are not one and the same, there are differences in the dynamics of their social and political relations that are linked to the varying levels of violence within and across societies. Making reference to these relations of social and cultural difference in violence does not simplify matters, however.

Cultures are, after all, far more elusive than anthropological concepts would suggest. First, because of the tendency to generalize when talking about cultures, observed descriptions rarely capture the accuracy and depth of intricacy that is required to get at the nuances of individuals and subgroups. Second, because the boundaries between cultural, cross-cultural, and other social influences on individual and collective behavior are frequently imprecise and overlapping, it is often difficult to disentangle the personal from the communal (Cottrol, 1998). The details of such influences, as well as the associated issues raised by questions of nature and nurture, for example, on mediated and real violence or on sexuality and aggression, will be examined in Chapters 6 and 7. In this section, the objective is restricted to situating homicide and the American experience with this form of lethal violence within the limited cross-national and global context of interpersonal violence.

It is now regularly assumed by most scholars that interpersonal violence in the Western world has essentially declined over the past 500 years. As the editors of *The Civilization of Crime: Violence in Town and Country since the Middle Ages* (Johnson & Monkkonen, 1996) concluded:

(1) Violent crime has decreased over the last five centuries; (2) violence was a common and often tolerated, if not fully accepted, form of dispute settlement in the rural areas and villages that dominated premodern society; (3) a major drop in violent crime in most countries took place in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; (4) this drop was associated with a "civilizing process" whereby dispute settlement was gradually worked out in court more often than in potentially deadly brawls in taverns and street corners—the growth of the state's power and monopoly over violence helped to retard interpersonal violence [even if it did contribute to an expansion of state violence]; (5) throughout the centuries as today, women have been far less prone to violence than men, but urban women have been more often involved in violence than have rural women, suggesting that their behavior has been quite different from that of men, whose violent acts were a more common feature of the countryside than of the town; (6) cities have not usually had exceptionally high crime rates in most societies in the past. (p. 13)

Of course, the United States came of age as a nation-state in the 19th century, well after the "civilizing process" was thought to have occurred in Europe. In terms of support for the general thesis of declining violence, the homicide rates in this country were already comparatively smaller (i.e., 4.0 and 2.2 per 100,000 in Philadelphia in the 1850s and 1890s, respectively) than what they had been in Europe only a century before. In New York City, the relatively high homicide rates dropped from 14 per 100,000 in 1860 to 4 in 1960 (Butterfield, 1994). However, these official homicide rates "naturally" ignore or exclude the unofficial rates of institutional and structural lethal violence of the period. These "homicides," in the forms of genocide, slavery, and lynching, were perpetrated against Native Americans, African Americans, Chinese Americans, and others.

Moreover, the rates (20 per 100,000) of homicide in late Medieval England and

France were about 2.5 times higher than the average rates of 8 per 100,000 in the United States during the 1990s. This was at a time when America's homicide rates were from 2.5 to more than 7 times higher than those of most developed democracies worldwide (Messner & Rosenfeld, 1993). In Mexico in 1992 and in Russia in 1993, the homicide rates were 16.2 and 19.5 per 100,000, respectively (Cottrol, 1998). At the beginning of the 21st century, the homicide rates in Western Europe hovered around 2.0 per 100,000. In some Eastern European countries, by contrast, rates were often in the teens (Barak, 2000). U.S. homicide rates, by comparison, were about 6 per 100,000 population.

These national comparisons, however, do not take into account the ethnic, racial, regional, or microcultural variations that exist despite the same set of dominant values or codes of behavior. For example, during most of the second half of the 20th century, homicide rates for blacks were from six to seven times higher than those of whites; although it was not until around 1910 that black homicide rates exceeded white homicide rates. In the mid-1990s, there was also great variability in homicide rates by geographic region and within microcultural groups (e.g., black females, Asian males, Hispanic boys). Even within similar groupings, wide variations in the levels of homicide can exist. In 1995, for instance, the white male homicide rate in Minnesota was 2.8, in Mississippi it was 15.5, and nationwide it was at 8.5 (Cottrol, 1998).

When one comparatively examines rates for other officially recorded forms of violence (e.g., assault, rape), one finds that by the turn of this century the U.S. rates for nonlethal violence were not any higher than they were in most other postindustrial developed nations, and they were certainly lower than in developing nations (Barak, 2000). And although national rates of lethal violence (e.g., homicide, suicide) were higher in America than they were in other advanced democratic states, this does not mean that men and women, people of color, old and young, gay and straight, and so on and so forth, experience the same rates or odds of violence. For Americans in general, the risks of most forms of violence, including homicide, are no greater than in any other part of the world. The overall rates of violence in America are still too high and undesirable, especially because of the ways in which these illegal and legal forms of violence differentially affect neighborhoods and communities.

From a comparative perspective, then, the history of American violence, domestic and international, is a relative phenomenon, subject both to the definitions of violence and to the personal situations, social experiences, and power relations of status interaction. Individually and collectively, these historical sites of violent interaction break down the national experience into microcultural occurrences, reflective of such factors as age, class, race and ethnicity, gender, and religion. Located in these differential contexts are the links to various types of interpersonal, institutional, and structural forms of violence.

A RECIPROCAL APPROACH TO STUDYING VIOLENCE

Since violence takes many forms—individual, interpersonal, family, group, mass, collective, organizational, bureaucratic, institutional, regional, national, international, and structural—it makes sense to study the interrelations and interactions between these. Most analyses of violence, however, tend to focus on one particular form of violence without much, if any, reflection on the other forms. In turn, these fragmented and isolated analyses seek to explain the workings of a given form of violence without trying to understand the common threads or roots

that may link various forms of violence together. Furthermore, many of these "unreflexive" analyses of violence have also adopted a commonsense view, shared in the United States and in virtually all contemporary advanced societies, that makes ethical distinctions between "positive" and "negative" violence, "acceptable" and "unacceptable" violence, and "legitimate and illegitimate" violence.

These dichotomies, for example between "legal" and "illegal" violence or between "private" and "public" violence, are based on systems of morality and politics rather than on systems of science and knowledge (Gilligan, 1997). What are required are studies of violence and nonviolence that are not only inclusive but appreciative of the reciprocal influences between the various spheres, domains, or contexts of violence. As used in this book, *reciprocal influences* refers to (a) determinants that move alternately forward and backward between nonviolence and violence, (b) mutually responsive and inversely corresponding pathways of violence and nonviolence, and (c) crossroads that are equivalent for both violence and nonviolence. In different words, integrative and reciprocal kinds of analyses of violence and nonviolence recognize the interactive, accumulative, and synergistic natures of these levels of social engagement. These analyses also seek out the mutual, parallel, and interdependent connections between the varieties of violence and the types of political economy as a way to minimize violence and maximize nonviolence in the future.

For example, there are interconnections between unorganized, direct, microlevel violence involving nuclear families and the organized, indirect, macrolevel violence involving poverty and economic inequality (Brock-Utne, 1997). Similarly, there are links between battering women and battering nations (McWilliams, 1998; Tifft & Markham, 1991). In each of these illustrations of

violence, there are relations between force-backed domination in the "public" sphere (e.g., the state) and force-backed domination in the "private" sphere (e.g., the home). In her examination of violence against women in societies under stress, such as Bosnia, Rwanda, and Northern Ireland, McWilliams (1998) concluded that distinctions between the different forms of violence did not make a whole lot of sense: "In situations of conflict, categorization of violent acts in the context of the family, the community, and the state may be even less appropriate, because the locus for the abuse is not tied to any single category but instead becomes a pervasive and interactive system for legitimizing violence" (p. 113).

Likewise, in her discussion of the links between force-backed domination in the state and force-backed domination in gender and parent-child relations, Eisler (1997) has remarked that "throughout history regimes noted for their human rights violations, such as Hitler's Germany, Khomeini's Iran, Stalin's Soviet Union, and Zia's Pakistan, have made the return of women to their traditional (or subservient) place in a male-headed family a priority" (p. 165). She continues that this connection

> between rigid male domination in the family and despotism in the state also helps explain the Muslim fundamentalist custom found in chronically violent areas—where terrorism continues to be seen as legitimate and honorable—of not bringing men to trial for the "honor" killings of their wives, sisters, and daughters for any suspected sexual independence. For it is through the rule of terror in the family that both women and men learn to accept rule by terror as normal, be it in their own societies or against other tribes or nations. (p. 165)

Despite the early and recent efforts of some social thinkers to develop broad theories of violence and nonviolence capable of

connecting the links between the spheres of violence and nonviolence and the causes and ways of preventing violence and nonviolence (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950; Arendt, 1969; Aron, 1975; Galtung, 1997; Gandhi, 1940; Gilligan, 1997; Iadicola & Shupe, 1998), most analysts have focused their attention on specialized forms of violence or nonviolence. As a consequence, the studies of both violence and nonviolence have become overly fragmented. Rarely are there any scholars or students studying both violence and nonviolence.

In addition, when it comes to the etiology of violence, the conceptual approaches taken by the behavioral and social sciences tend to divide up between (a) biological theories that argue that humans behave violently because of instincts, genes, or physiological abnormalities; (b) physical anthropology theories that argue that evolution produced naturally aggressive human beings; (c) psychological theories, which are more diverse, ranging from psychoanalytical explanations that argue on behalf of the "return of the repressed" or the effects of humiliation and shame on autonomy and identity to social-psychological theories that argue on behalf of learning and attachment, to psychiatric theories that argue on behalf of antisocial personality disorders; and (d) sociological and cultural anthropology theories that argue that hostility and aggression are a result of the influences of culture and social structure interaction, inclusive of institutional and stratified relations as these intersect with individuals, groups, and/or the nation-state.

From a holistic and reciprocal perspective on violence and nonviolence causation and prevention, there are sound reasons for putting the social and behavioral science of "Humpty-Dumpty" back together again. Integrative analyses, such as the one presented here, are necessary because "violence is caused not simply by individual psychological factors, biological impulses, or social-structural factors alone but by a web of causal connections between personal-level and global-level structures, processes, and behaviors" (Kurtz & Turpin, 1997, p. 207). The same, of course, is true of nonviolence. Today, however, the few "web" analyses of violence and nonviolence are overshadowed by the disconnected and disjointed analyses of violence and nonviolence that predominate in academe.

SUMMARY

The domestic policy arena in the United States is, in 2003, still dominated by individualistically oriented solutions to violence that primarily ignore the larger institutional and structural relations of violence and nonviolence. As a result, American policy for responding to violence has consisted of essentially three related "mock-ups" or representations. The first, "peace through strength," or law and order models, emphasize the differences between "good" and "bad" people. The second, "peace through therapy," or pathological models, emphasize the differences between "sick" and "well" people. The third, "peace through restoration," or conflict resolution models, emphasize the similarities between victimizers and victims. The limitation of these models, alone or together, is that they have helped to reproduce in the United States a culture of violent solutions rather than what could be called, in contrast, a culture of nonviolent solutions. As one alternative to the conventional wisdom of reducing violence with violence, Robert Elias (1997) and others have called for the establishment of nonviolence and for peace through cooperation rather than peace through war and conflict.

Finally, by addressing the interdependent relations of the various forms of violence and nonviolence, reciprocal models emphasize

both the adversarial forces of individual, national, and global violence and the mutualistic needs of the earth's peoples for security, peace, and justice. These common security or peace models of nonviolence emphasize the building of institutions that mitigate the causes or sources of violence and strive to facilitate mutual cooperation and altruism among all people. These latter themes will be fully developed in the last part of this book.

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REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference between sanctioned and unsanctioned forms of violence, and why is it important to study both?

2. Define interpersonal, institutional, and structural violence. Provide at least two examples of each of these three fundamental forms of violence.

3. Compare and contrast violence in 19th- and 20th-century America.

4. From a cross-cultural perspective, how would you characterize American violence in relation both to other developed nations and to developing nations?

5. What are some of the advantages of a reciprocal over a nonreciprocal approach to the study of violence and nonviolence?