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CHAPTER 24

PSYCHOLOGIES FOR LIBERATION:

VIEWS FROM ELSEWHERE

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In this chapter, I will introduce some ideas that may not be familiar to those who have learned about psychology in modern Western societies. I will begin with an examination of the *ideology* that underpins both peace psychology and what I call *"mainstream" psychology*. Mainstream psychology is a body of knowledge that claims its truth value largely on the basis of its adherence to the research tradition of modern *empiricism,* the belief that sensory experience is the only valid source of knowledge. In addition to embracing empiricism, peace psychology has *liberal humanist* values, which emphasize democratic structures and individual freedom. At the core of both the philosophy of empiricism and the value of liberal humanism is the concept of the *autonomous individual*. I will demonstrate how coupling these two systems of ideas, emphasizing individualism and freedom, can lead to a form of *ideological violence* when peace psychologists seek to address direct and structural violence in parts of the world. Ideological violence occurs when the ideas and practices of a particular group are negated, and unfamiliar ideas and practices that are held to be superior are introduced.

The second half of this chapter will focus on liberation psychologies. Liberation psychologies (there are several approaches) developed independently of the peace psychology movement. They had their roots in the responses of mental health workers to freedom struggles in the politically repressive societies of Latin America, Africa, and the Pacific region. Working at both the individual and the larger group level, liberation psychologists have sought to assist survivors of structural and direct political violence. More radically, their psychological work has been linked to political activism that has social transformation as its goal. I will use the South African case as an example of one approach to liberation psychology that evolved in response to the structural violence of apartheid prior to the attainment of democracy in 1994.

PEACE PSYCHOLOGY, PEACEBUILDING, AND IDEOLOGY

Peace psychologists in the post–Cold-War period have begun to engage with a new agenda of peacebuilding. Their work potentially entails a more radical orientation, because it addresses the structural roots of episodic violence, and promotes social and institutional change as the route to lasting peace and social justice (Galtung, 1990; Comas-Díaz, Lykes, & Alarc”n, 1998; Mays, Bullock, Rosenzweig, & Wessells, 1998). Peacebuilding seeks to create a platform for the establishment of social justice by moving beyond interventions at the individual level to structural interventions that improve life conditions for all.

Some of the inspiration for peacebuilding initiatives is drawn from various declarations of rights by the United Nations (U.N.). The argument is that the advancement of respect for basic rights can redress many of the conditions that promote direct and structural violence. These principles reflect core values of liberal humanism that emerged in Europe in the period following Rousseau’s treatise on individual human rights. These values include the promotion of social jus-

tice founded on the principle of equality for all, a respect for individual self-determination (freedom of choice) and the protection of individual rights (Collins, 1992; Hayek, 1975). A central focus is on the *individual.*

In contrast, as Lykes points out in Chapter 14, many societies see the rights of the individual as subordinate to those of the community. For example, strict Hindu societies do not have the same views as North Americans on the natural rights of individual liberty and choice (Shweder, Mahapatra, & Miller, 1990). The life choices of the individual are circumscribed according to their gender and caste position. For example, a lower-caste person may not choose to marry a high-caste person. In such a case, the matter of individual freedoms does not even arise as a consideration. The choices of those involved are ignored in the interest of adhering to the natural law that informs caste practices. The Hindu system is seen as just because it is thought to be determined by natural law, driven as it were by an innate morality rather than civil law.

Another ideological element of peace psychology is the emphasis placed on *political rights*. In some communities that lack many basic resources such as adequate nutrition, one may argue that the satisfaction of these basic needs is a greater priority than civil liberties, which are political rights espoused in the West. These differences raise many challenges for peace psychologists informed and influenced by the political rights consciousness of the West.

A third ideological element intrinsic to peace psychology is the acceptance of the modern Western image of individuality, which underpins mainstream psychology, itself a product of the Enlightenment (Ingleby, 1995). The central point is that this individual is presented by psychology as *natural* and *universal,* and as *revealed* by a particular way of conducting scientific inquiry. In contrast, critics such as Ingleby maintain that this person (and her supposed psychologi-

cal mechanisms) is not universally representative. Rather, the psychology we have produced is mainly a description of the individual in a particular historical context, which is greatly influenced by the tenets of capitalism with its emphasis on individual freedom. This person has been *created* rather than revealed, and has been *misrepresented* as universal. The argument is that as psychologists, we are embedded in, rather than have, an existence independent of this ideological universe, so our subject matter and practice will reflect our ideology.

One version of psychology's image of the individual is evident in the work of theorists such as Carl Rogers (1973) and Abraham Maslow (1968). They present their personality theories as universally applicable. However an analysis of their constructs reveals that they have developed theories of the personality that are quite culture-bound. For example, they both stress the importance of the autonomy of the self for psychological health, and Maslow in particular sees self-actualization as an important drive and goal. The idea of the actualizing self embraces many of the values of modern Western societies including the idea of the psychologically autonomous individual, who can make her own informed decisions in life relatively unfettered by the demands of family and community (Jacoby, 1975).

Many communities do not share this view (Dawes & Cairns, 1998; Lykes, 1994). Some do not have a concept of the "the self" at least in the sense that Rogers uses the term. Instead, individual identity is seen as co-extensive with the natural environment, kin, and deceased ancestors (Honwana, 1997). Because of their more socio-centric, rather than individually-centered, orientation, they also have a different view of individual rights. Rights are seen as properties of social positions associated with ancestry, gender, and age. These structural arrangements are supported by cultural narratives that express shared beliefs that are very different from the Western narra-

tives where individual freedoms and rights are regarded as natural, no matter what social position the individual occupies. Conditions that peace psychologists would see as structurally violent are regarded in these communities as "normal" social arrangements.

For example, in many African communities, male elders have traditionally held considerable power over their communities. The chief allocates land to the people, the senior men adjudicate in disputes between individuals, and the rights of women are curtailed under patriarchal control. In South Africa, until 1998, women in African customary marriages (those which took place according to African custom and not through the civil courts) were regarded as the property of the husband and his family. In essence an adult woman had the status of a minor child (Bennett, 1991). If she did not live up to the expectations of her husband and his parents, she could be sent home to her family with no compensation or rights. Here the rights of the individual woman are clearly compromised by rules that confer fundamentally unequal power to men and women. While these patterns are changing with the globalization of rights conventions, at the community level they are often still regarded as normal and proper—particularly by the men whose interests they serve. A serious problem that arises under such conditions, is that when women are regarded as subordinate chattels, they frequently become victims of abuse, particularly under conditions of severe poverty and political oppression (Campbell, 1995).

Constructs of selfhood, values, and justice therefore vary across the world, and they do not always match those that underpin the activities of Western peace psychologists. If we impose Western approaches of psychological functioning and treatment on communities that have different ideologies of selfhood and rights, we commit *ideological violence*. There are many ways in which this can occur. For example, in African war zones it has been common for Western psy-

chologists to train local health workers in trauma work. There is sometimes little reflection by Western psychologists on the cultural relevance of the methods and concepts they are exporting. The very fact that the trainers are deployed to give skills to local workers rests on the assumption that the latter need to be skilled because their indigenous knowledge of trauma work is inadequate. Also, trainers have considerable power in providing jobs for local health workers in areas where the aftermath of war ensures that little work exists. If they are sensible, the trainees will be inclined to suppress their indigenous knowledge in favor of demonstrating their newly acquired skills (Dawes & Honwana, 1998). From this example, it is evident that nothing is directly forced upon the community. Rather a new set of ideas, which may or may not fit well with existing cosmologies, is introduced through the greater power of the psychologist to shape the discourse of distress and healing. Where the fit is not good, there is the risk that health workers' responses to trauma will not meet local needs (Dawes & Cairns, 1998).

Another example drawn from the work of Reynolds (1997) in Zimbabwe, touches more on issues of rights. Reynolds tells the story of the Zimbabwian *inyanga* (healer) who decided that an adolescent girl should be given in marriage to a father in compensation for the loss of his son during the liberation war. A member of the girl's family had been broken under torture, revealing the whereabouts of freedom fighters to the army. This led to the son's death and caused great tension in the village. The *inyanga* decided that harmony would be restored by the marriage, as the girl would bear sons to continue the line. Clearly from a Western perspective, the girl's *individual* rights were violated.

These examples raise complex issues, and easy answers are not readily available. While embracing the values of peace psychology, I have to be aware that my commitment to these values

is a function of my position as someone socialized in the ideological climate of the modern Western world. There are other possible social systems in which the individual has a different place for reasons that are understandable. It is therefore necessary to negotiate with the groups with whom we work, and this may mean suspending, or even altering, some of the constructs which normally inform our activities. This is why many in this field recognize the importance of *co-constructing change* with, rather than for, communities (Martín-Bar", 1989; Comas-Díaz, et al., 1998; Gilbert, 1997). Such a position does not imply capitulation to conditions of structural violence out of respect for local ways. Indeed direct confrontation may be appropriate as the examples of South Africa and Latin America illustrate. However, the co-construction of change does recognize the importance and role of different ideologies and psychologies as they influence social arrangements and individual functioning. Apart from being disrespectful, to ignore these differences is to reduce the possible success of one's intervention.

PEACEBUILDING AS LIBERATION PSYCHOLOGY: THE SOUTH AFRICAN CASE

As has been stressed throughout this volume, peace psychology seeks to develop theories and practices that elucidate the processes involved in the prevention and mitigation of direct and structural violence. Liberation psychology, as a form of peace psychology, may be construed as an approach that seeks to use psychological knowledge and practice to bring about change in structurally violent societies, and to address the psychological needs of oppressed individuals. Liberation psychology is overtly political, has a clear social emancipation agenda, and works in the interests of the politically and economically oppressed. The interests of the oppressed may vary but would commonly include a desire for political freedom, democracy and economic jus-

tice. Liberation is also used to refer to the psychological freeing of individuals from the negative conceptions of self and community that are common psychological correlates of oppression. An example is the negative own-group identification experienced by blacks in racist societies (Foster, 1994). Psychological liberation also involves freeing the oppressor from the psychological orientations toward those who he or she oppresses, or preventing the development of such orientations. Prejudice reduction and anti-racist education initiatives would be examples (Eyber, Dyer, Versfeld, Dawes, Finchilescu, & Soudien, 1997).

My particular consideration of liberation psychology will draw on the South African situation. I will begin with a brief consideration of structural violence on the African continent. Some of these conditions gave rise to the first anti-colonial libera-tion psychology developed by Frantz Fanon (1967a, 1967b). His work influenced Latin American liberation psychologists (see Lykes in this volume), as well as those in apartheid South Africa.

Some History

According to leading Africanists such as Davidson (1992) and Mamdani (1996), the political, ideological, and local cultural forces operating before and during the colonial period have played a major role in the production of structural and direct violence in modern Africa. Space restricts me to a few points, and I will draw principally on the work of these authors.

To untangle one of the roots of ethnic and political conflict, we need to go back to the slave trade. The practice not only caused immeasurable suffering, but played a role in shaping ethnic relations that remain apparent today. Davidson (1992) observes that responses by Africans to slavery included the development of kin-based participation in the trade as a form of resistance

to capture. Communities linked by language, clan, and kin connections would group together to form units that would participate in the subjugation of less powerful groups, who would then be captured and sold into slavery. In this way, some could resist being captured. With the advent of colonization, existing territorial boundaries of indigenous groups were ignored as states were created and new boundaries cut across ethno-linguistic communities. On many occasions, groups with a history of hostility were thrust together, or political arrangements during colonialism caused intergroup friction.

It was common for local cultural structures to be used by the colonial administrations to extend their control over the native people. Subnational ethnic identities and boundaries were further strengthened as a result. For example, the authorities would appoint chiefs to administer the local populace on their behalf. This was often to the advantage of these men (it was always men), who could entrench their power. Indigenous groups were therefore not entirely passive in these processes, with more powerful members benefiting as far as possible from their position as puppets of the colonial state, or in the case of South Africa, the white government.

After independence, arrangements such as these sometimes led to border disputes, as in the case of Eritrea and Ethiopia, or attempts at secession in the cases of Eritrea and Biafra (in southern Nigeria). In part, these conflicts were attempts to establish political autonomy based on ethno-linguistic commonality.

Additional threats to stability in African states include underdevelopment, desperate poverty, huge disparities in wealth, corruption, and foreign debt. In recent years, structural adjustment policies of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund aimed at cutting government spending in return for trade and aid, have been associated with reductions in social services, a

decline in health and literacy levels, and renewed political tensions (George, 1992).

Some Psychological Considerations

Intergroup Relations and Ethnicity. A common way for ordinary people involved in intergroup conflict to explain their situation is to construct the narrative in terms of ethnic identities. For them, ethnic division is experienced as real. Psychological aspects of ethnic identity construction are therefore important factors to consider when explaining the generation of conflict. Ethnic identity is a form of social identity. Once groups are formed, comparisons between people who are assigned to them become possible (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). Social identities clarify group boundaries, and normally involve groups being accorded differential status, which in turn makes it easier for the persecution of lower status ethnic groups to be justified. Ethnic groups typically share a sense of common cultural identity, symbols, language, and a narrative of origins (Thornton, 1988). Their collective ethnic memories usually contain images of heroism and violence, as well as the historic relations between one's own and other groups (Cairns & Darby, 1998; Mare, 1992). Ethnic identities also can be used as a basis for both structural and direct violence.

South Africa's apartheid system is an exemplary case of structural violence. The architects of the system both constructed and drew on existing ethnicities and used them for purposes of White political and economic domination. Race classification underpinned all practices. For example, impoverishment of those not classified as Whites was achieved by reserving 86 percent of the land for Whites and limiting educational and job opportunities for Blacks. Systematic efforts were made to construct and entrench ethnic histories and practices, so as to justify racial separation. These were sometimes taken up and used for personal power and ethnic mobilization by

ethnic chiefs appointed to oversee the Black population. The legacy of this project is evident in the Kwazulu-Natal region of South Africa, where Zulu traditionalist sentiment continues to be used to support violent acts against those who reject tribal authority (Mare, 1992).

Individual Subjectivity and Its Liberation. Frantz Fanon, a black psychiatrist who worked in Algeria, was the first African mental health worker to articulate a psychology of liberation which could inform revolutionary action against the structural violence of the French colonists (Fanon, 1967a; 1967b; 1968). Fanon's work is extensive and space precludes elaboration beyond a few central points.

He argued that individual psychological health was inseparable from political liberty, and that under conditions of structural violence, a situation of national psychological distress was present. For Fanon, the structural violence of colonization (and one could add apartheid), produces a *Manichean* psychological state, which is characterized by the defense mechanism of splitting. Internal psychological constructions of people and social groups are separated into distinct categories of good and bad. One of the key violences of colonization was the colonization of subjectivity, whereby the native takes on the subjectivity and values of the colonizer, and rejects his or her own heritage (and color). Splitting ensures that the worldview and cultural goods of the colonizer are viewed as positive, while those of the native are considered to be negative and to be denied.

To achieve both individual and national liberation, Fanon held that the colonized person had to challenge the colonizer both internally and externally. First the native had to purge her or his psychology of the destructive elements of mental colonization, and regain self-respect through the reversal of the internalized negative view of self and culture (see also Comas-Díaz et al.,

1998). This theme was also taken up within the liberation strategy of the *Black Consciousness Movement* (BCM) among African Americans (Burlew, et al., 1992), South African Blacks (Biko, 1978), and in Latin America. Fanon (and the other liberation psychologies to which I have referred), rejected psychotherapy as the route to restoring positive Black identity. There were several reasons, not the least of which was its elite connections, its unavailability to the masses, and its unlikely role in promoting revolution.

The second leg of Fanon's argument was his belief that the oppressed would be psychologically freed by confronting the colonizer with violence. This was because he argued that the latter relied on violence to rule, and did not understand reasoned arguments for liberation. In this regard, Bulhan remarks that:

"Experience (as a liberation fighter) led him to reformulate the problem and thesolution…The oppressed who were dehumanized by the violence of the oppresor. [They could] regain their identity, reclaim their history, reconstitute their bonding, and forge their future through violence. Through violence they remove the primary barrier to their humanity and they rehabilitate themselves." (Bulhan, 1985, p. 144).

This argument has been highly controversial. For example, Couve (1986), agrees with much of Fanon's position, but faults him on theoretical (psychoanalytic) grounds for his conclusion that a violent catharsis on the part of the colonized against the oppressor will be psychologically healing. Freud rejected the role of emotional catharsis as a key source of psychological recovery, which Fanon did not seem to recognize. Couve also mounts a materialist (Marxist) critique of Fanon for his overemphasis on a White master–Black subject dialectic as explaining oppressed subjectivity, and his neglect of the role of class forces in the production of the social arrange-

ments that underpin the shape of racial ideologies and individual psychology. Oppression is therefore not as color-coded as Fanon's psychological and classless analysis would have it. Nor is violent conduct therapeutic. Indeed, the recent continuing political repression and violence in Algeria (where Fanon worked) would suggest that the violent catharsis of the revolution did not lay to rest the hatred that had been bred under colonialism. Fanon's most lasting and useful contribution, which has made its mark in Latin America, South Africa, and the United States, is probably his writing on Black or indigenous identity, and the role of political resistance in its reclamation.

LIBERATION PSYCHOLOGY AND THE DISMANTLING OF APARTHEID

South Africa emerged from colonialism at the beginning of the twentieth century but it was not until 1994 that the country threw off the shackles of four centuries of White minority rule. This section of the chapter will outline the response of liberation psychologists in South Africa to the structural violence of their society. Sporadic and individual attempts to address the psychological impact of apartheid have taken place since the late 1940s. The work of MacCrone (1947) on attitudes, Manganyi (1973) on Black subjectivity, and Lambley (1980) on links between authoritarian personality structure and support for apartheid policy, are some examples. More collective and sustained efforts commenced in the early 1980s, and continued until the demise of apartheid in 1994. My commentary will reflect struggles with the issue of ethnicity, and ethical neutrality during what amounted to a low-level civil war. The full history of this time has not been told, but several commentaries exist (Flisher et al., 1993; Louw & van Hoorn, 1997; Louw, 1987; Cooper, Nicholas, Seedat, & Statman, 1990; Nicholas 1990; Seedat, 1997; Swartz, Gibson, & Swartz,

1990).

South African psychologists who identified with the need to liberate their country from racial oppression, drew on a variety of strategies common to peace psychology (see Wessells, Schwebel, and Anderson, in this volume). Theory and research were used to both understand and address conflict, as well as to attend to the needs of those who had suffered the consequences of oppression. In addition, a cornerstone of the work that often is not associated with peace psychology was the attempt to use psychological knowledge to inform political action (see Montiel's chapter in this volume). In the following sections, I outline how professional organizations, research programs, and direct interventions contributed to the reduction of structural violence during the apartheid era.

Prior to 1994, organized South African psychology was itself affected by the divisiveness of the political life of the country. Psychology was split into a majority conservative and a small progressive sector that was actively opposed to the apartheid regime. The conservative Psychological Association of South Africa never took a position on social transformation (Cooper, Nicholas, Seedat, & Statman, 1990). Rather, as Cooper and his colleagues note, organized psychology and its members were active in both the design of the apartheid system and in its later maintenance. Because the Association declared itself politically neutral, military officers and members of a police force were members.

In contrast, the small progressive sector (perhaps 15 percent of professional psychologists) was split along political/ideological lines; some psychologists aligned with the South African Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) and responded to apartheid as a Black group reclaiming its identity. A key feature of their position was the recognition that Black psychologists needed to

develop solidarity and a positive identity free from the limiting gaze of Whites who dominated the profession (Seedat, 1997). The link to the ideas of Fanon and South African Black Consciousness leader Steve Biko was evident here. A second faction of the progressive movement was known as the *Organization for Appropriate Social Services in South Africa* (*OASSSA*), which served to unite anti-apartheid mental health workers across professions and the color line. These mental health workers used their professional skills to challenge the regime. Both these factions can be termed liberation psychologies. Like Martín-Bar" in Latin America, both factions argued that the apartheid structure and the direct violence that kept it in place were damaging to the well-being of South Africans. It was therefore necessary to engage the mental health disciplines to fight for change and publicly take a political stand against the State.

Sections from the OASSSA Statement of Principles, formulated in 1983, are worth quoting (see italics below) as they illustrate several central features of a liberation psychology, similar to those developed in Latin America by Comas-Díaz et al. (1998):

> We are aware that in South Africa there are specific *economic and political structures which contribute to most social and personal problems*. Apartheid and economic exploitation provide the base for poor living conditions, work alienation, and race and sex discrimination which are antithetical to mental health. *Our commitment as social service workers demands that we continually expose the effects of these conditions and participate in efforts to change the structures that underlie them*. In order to properly serve our community, *we must work for the sharing of knowledge and skills with the community at large and, ultimately, for an economically just and democratic society*.

Unlike the Latin American progressive psychologists described by Comas-Díaz et al. (1998), the South Africans did not emphasize the role of cultural factors in responses to stress and healing under political repression. Instead, the policy of liberation movements in South Africa emphasized national unity so as to bind all South Africans to the struggle for a non-racial state, regardless of their ethnic identity. Progressive psychologists supported this position and used social identity theory (SIT) to inform their views of the situation (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). SIT and related research shows that if ethnic group identities are made highly salient and if groups are compared unfavorably with one another, the likelihood of intergroup conflict increases. Also, the simple practice of focusing on national sub-group identities, makes it more difficult for people to imagine themselves as part of one nation; hence, the emphasis on national identity.

Progressive psychologists were also influenced by prevailing socialist discourse which stressed the superiority of materialist (class) analyses over race relations theories in explaining the South African situation (Wolpe, 1988). The *materialist argument* was that apartheid policy had little to do with race relations but was based on a white capitalist strategy to control economic power. To achieve this aim, whites had to control the land, the natural resources, and the economy, which they succeeded in doing. Progressives therefore downplayed the role of culture because they had problems with its adequacy as an explanation of apartheid policy, and because they did not wish to reinforce the divisions and cultural racism of apartheid. The class argument was the subject of extensive debate in progressive mental health circles (Swartz & Foster, 1984).

Research

While not conducted under the auspices of a progressive movement, the work of Foster, Davis, and Sandler (1987) on political imprisonment and torture, stands as exemplary research in the

interests of justice. The work was conducted at a time when psychologists were being asked to give expert testimony in the courts on the admissibility of confessions made by captured members of anti-apartheid movements. Commonly these people were tortured and held in solitary confinement for long periods with no access to anyone other than their captors. The defendants claimed that their confessions were made under duress and were false. This defense was repeatedly rebutted by the State, on the grounds that there was no independent evidence of the allegations against the state (Foster et al., 1987).

Foster and his colleagues interviewed several hundred ex-detainees and obtained self-reports about their treatment in prison. If common findings of maltreatment and negative psychological sequellae were found, this evidence could be used to challenge the admissibility of confessions made under such conditions. In addition, the authors wished to draw public attention to the psychological harm caused by torture and solitary confinement, if the results supported such a conclusion. The study found overwhelming evidence of systematic and brutal maltreatment. When the study was released to the public, Foster was attacked by the government and right-wing social scientists. He also suffered attacks on his home by persons unknown—probably state hit squads.

The so-called "torture report" led to an increase in awareness among those members of the White public who were prepared to listen. The report also raised international pressure against South Africa. However, it had no significant impact on the legal process, because no court accepted the psychological claim that the South African version of solitary confinement was harmful. Also, the law continued to require the defendant to demonstrate ill-treatment, an impossible task when there were no witnesses to the events other than the security police. Nonetheless, Fos-

ter's work constitutes an example of thorough psychological research being put to work in an attempt to improve the delivery of justice, and also to challenge politically repressive practice.

Other projects, research findings, and clinical knowledge about the effects of police harassment, torture and imprisonment were published in popular form as pamphlets and handbooks written in local languages. The literature was disseminated free among communities affected by repression. One example was a self-help booklet on symptoms of stress and how to cope with them. Readers were informed in simple language about what symptoms to expect following torture and imprisonment so as to render their reactions less disturbing. They and their families were also given suggestions on techniques that could be employed to relieve distress, and who to contact for more assistance.

Direct Intervention. Direct intervention took the form of clinical consultations with individuals, families, and groups (Dawes & de Villiers, 1989; Dawes, 1992). Lay community members were also trained to offer basic supportive services under supervision (Swartz, Dowdall & Swartz, 1986). In the last case, interventions were similar to those described by Metreaux (1992) and Langer (1989) in Nicaragua, where professionals "multiplied" the effects of psychological interventions by training local lay therapists appointed by the community. Although the South Africans knew nothing of the Central American work until later, the two initiatives were driven by a wish to develop "appropriate" services for the politically oppressed and the poor (Flisher, Skinner, Lazarus, & Louw, 1993).

As in the work of the Latin Americans, progressive and "appropriate" services in South Africa often challenged many accepted clinical practices, such as ethical neutrality. For example, members of the South African security forces were deliberately excluded from services. As I

have discussed elsewhere (Dawes, 1992), there were two main reasons for this decision. The political reason was that we decided that offering services to the security forces would be tantamount to assisting "the enemy," thereby compromising the campaign to end the structural violence of apartheid. The practical reason was that in order to win the trust of people who had suffered at the hands of the security forces, and lived in fear of informers, clinicians had to make their opposition to the government clear. Therapists were sometimes asked to disclose their own political ideology, and if this served to facilitate the process of therapeutic engagement, then some therapists did so. But even disclosure was often not enough. Also necessary was being known in resistance circles as a member of a progressive organization and an activist against repression. The political and the psychological were thus quite closely interwoven, with members of progressive mental health groups defying bans on public gatherings, and speaking at rallies about the psychological effects of apartheid and repression.

While many interventions took place in clinics, others took place outside in informal settings. Dawes and de Villiers (1989), for example, report how they met to work with families and their teenage children (who had been sentenced to prison for public violence) in their homes, or in a supposedly safe room at the back of a cinema. Eventually, when the children went into prison, their therapists accompanied them and community members to the prison gates before all were chased away by the riot police.

CONCLUSIONS

The practices that developed during the South African liberation struggle raise many questions, not least, the ethical decision to work only for those involved in the liberation struggle. In our view at the time, the fundamental feature of the structural violence of South Africa was the ab-

sence of democracy for the majority of the people. The system within which they had to live was unjust and compromised their mental health. For these reasons, OASSSA mental health workers and those within the grouping of Black psychologists, aligned themselves with efforts to remove apartheid. As far as I can determine, no organized group of progressive psychologists ever took a public stance on the issue of violence against oppressors. That matter was left to individual conscience. However, as has been the case in other repressive contexts, such as the Philippines (Montiel, 1995), it was common to offer psychological assistance to people who had committed violence as part of the political struggle. In the case of South Africa, socialist language as well as materialist analysis was present in the rhetoric of the time (e.g. Couve, 1986; Dawes, 1986). Therefore, South African liberation psychology is probably best described as a broad anti-apartheid initiative with socialist leanings. An examination of documents such as the OASSSA Statement of Principles, indicates that there was a strong conviction that future economic policy should spread the wealth of the nation more evenly to reduce poverty, support public health, enhance welfare services, and increase the life chances of all.

While democracy has been achieved in South Africa, the goals of a redistribution of wealth and socialized public services have not. At the end of the 1990s, as is the case in the rest of Africa, the vast majority of South Africans remain impoverished. Tight macro-economic policies, which have led to limits on social spending, and South Africa's vulnerable economic position relative to the major industrial powers and currencies, are likely to ensure that poverty will remain a significant force for instability and episodic violence in the twenty-first century.

Political conflict between ethnic groups is not as marked in South Africa as elsewhere on the continent, where political parties and contesting groups have commonly had an ethnic base (e.g.

Nigeria, Zimbabwe, and Angola). A major reason for the lack of such conflict is probably the unifying approach of the largest and currently ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC). The ANC has never had a local ethnic base, and has a long established policy of stressing national unity in a context of cultural diversity. The party always mobilized around the common experience of Black political and economic oppression. Also, as du Preez (1997) argues, under apartheid it was not the practice to play one African ethnic group off against the other as was the case in Rwanda and elsewhere. However, people of mixed racial descent and Asians did hold more political and economic rights than members of African ethnic groups. In the post-apartheid situation, tensions between these groups and other Black South Africans are becoming evident (Finchilescu & Dawes, 1998). Racism is commonly accelerated under conditions of structural inequality, and because these conditions continue to prevail, racism will remain a major threat to peace.

Direct violence is perhaps the most prominent feature of the psychological legacy of apartheid, one of the most oppressive political designs of modern times. As I have noted, Fanon spoke of the *Manichean* psychologies of the colonies (and apartheid), that emphasized differences between rulers and indigenous groups. A further central component of apartheid ideology was the dehumanization of those deemed to be inferior. Apartheid made a banal art of the construction of differences between groups. Initially supposed racial characteristics and later cultural markers, were used to emphasize inferiority and difference (Nicholas, 1993). The dehumanization that formed part of this process legitimized the use of structural and direct violence in the pursuit of power, and "peace" (i.e. racial harmony through separation) [Foster, 1998; Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), 1998].

South Africa is awash with weapons, another legacy of the liberation struggle and regional wars that were sponsored by the apartheid regime (South African Institute of Race Relations, 1997). There is much talk of South Africa enduring a "culture of violence" in which violent responses to conflict have become normalized (Dawes, 1994). As much as it is present in the streets, gender oppression rooted in cultural practices of male hegemony in both Black and White communities ensures that violence is also present in the home. Poverty conditions and alcohol abuse contribute further to domestic violence, as unemployed men strike out against women in reaction to the loss of their status as patriarchs (Campbell, 1995).

It is now necessary to shape a post-apartheid psychology designed to liberate South Africans and meet these difficult challenges. That work has begun, and embraces elements of the progressive program of the 1980s. Among other projects, research is being conducted to address the impact of poverty and violence (Barbarin, Richter, de Wet, & Wachtel, 1998); the position of women (de la Rey & Owens, 1998; Finchilescu, 1995); mental health service transformation (Foster et al., 1997); culturally appropriate forms of intervention (Dawes & Cairns, 1998); and the promotion of intergroup tolerance (Eyber et al., 1997). Psychologists have also been active in the processes of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which was designed to uncover past abuses of human rights, and consider reparations for victims (de la Rey & Owens, 1998; also see de la Rey in this volume).

For an effective and committed liberation psychology to emerge in democratic South Africa, psychologists will have to highlight the impact of economic structural adjustment on individual lives. Psychological research on the impact of poverty will need to continue to be brought to the attention of policy makers, in support of the concerns of those who have few opportunities to

give voice to their difficulties. They will also have to confront the powerful with the risks their economic policies pose to the consolidation of a hard won democracy. As one individual commented recently at a forum on poverty: “We now have a Rainbow Nation (Nelson Mandela’s term for multi-cultural South Africa), but you can’t eat Rainbows!” In order for the people of Africa to be able to enjoy all that their rainbow nations have to offer, peace psychologists will need to become involved in promoting a social justice morality at local *and* international levels. For the peace of the poor nations of the world is intricately and structurally bound to the wealth of the rich.