

Christie, D. J., Wagner, R. V., & Winter, D. A. (Eds.). (2001). ***Peace, Conflict, and Violence: Peace Psychology for the 21st Century***. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Note: Copyright reverted to editors (2007). Permission is granted for downloading and copying.

CHAPTER 13

GLOBALISM AND STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

Marc Pilisuk¹

Sometimes in history we witness so dramatic a change in the way human beings live that it affects almost every aspect of how we define what it means to be human. Globalism is such a phenomena. I have chosen the term *globalism* to emphasize the condition of a highly interdependent planet. One aspect of globalism refers to a global culture in which all people are exposed to similar ideas through the media. Globalism leads people to wear Western-style clothing, seek greater consumption regardless of what they already have, and to work hard to get money. Under globalism's influence, people learn to equate the process of holding elections, however biased, with democracy, and equate corporate expansion and technological development with progress. As I shall argue in this paper, globalism is a pernicious form of structural violence which creates poverty, diminishes the human sense of agency or control, and harms the environment.

The chapter begins with a review of one of the most vital of human characteristics, our ca-

¹ The author wishes to express thanks to Jennifer Tennant, Jan Arnow, and Jolaine Beal for assistance with documentation and research.

capacity for making attachments to other people and to the settings where we live. I show first how the capacity for human bonding, essential to human development, has evolved historically and how the settings for such development have changed. I then focus upon those aspects of globalization that have the most profound effects on us, including structural violence in the workplace, in women's health, and in domestic terrorism. Finally, I point to the striking resiliency of people trying to retain and protect the values of caring for each and for their planet in a growing global community.

To understand globalism, it is useful to examine the opposite condition of localism. For most of human history, meaningful social interactions occurred in a limited geographic area among a small local band. People in these groups were typically linked to each other by kinship, but also economically, socially, and spiritually (Demos, 1970). People valued the lives of others and the ecology in which they lived because they were directly sustained by kin and local resources. Connection to other people and to a special place produces a sense of identity and of security (Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1995; Winter, 1998). The mechanism that assured fulfillment of their ties was *caring* (Pilisuk & Parks, 1986). Families and local communities created norms limiting violence that might undermine their continuity. These pre-industrialized groups should not be romanticized. These societies were often rigid, highly stratified, and characterized by the exploitation of the majority for the few. Close living and scarce resources sometimes resulted in some anger and violence. Local units often preclude privacy and demand conformity from their members. Those who found themselves in oppressive families or communities often had no way to leave or to improve their lot. Some families did not survive. But those kinship groupings that best provided for the care and safety of their members were able to endure and pass on their

methods of assuring supportive behavior.

As corporations become the social group commanding major portions of the waking day, the mechanism that assures interactive behavior is not *caring*, but rather *marketability*. Individual identities are no longer created solely in small units. Increasingly, identities and measures of success become the ability to sell oneself to a large corporate entity. Although family and community life are still retained outside of the corporation, participation in the marketplace often weakens the feeling of belonging and meaning (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985; Pilisuk & Parks, 1986). One anthropologist writing in 1936 expressed the hope that growing industrialization would not further transform society into a collection of rootless individuals searching in vain for the bands they had lost (Linton, 1936).

HUMAN COSTS OF GLOBALIZATION

The weakening of ties to special people and places has produced more than a nostalgia for simpler times. First, globalization has come with serious violence to health and well-being. The change from caring to marketability is harmful first because it has increased poverty and social marginality. The poor are at a greater risk for every form of affront to physical health and mental well-being (Browne & Bassuk, 1997; Syme & Berkman, 1976).

Second, globalization harms us psychologically. The cultural capacities that evolved to provide people with particular human identities and attachments to other people were developed and passed on largely in direct, face-to-face contacts. The study of how people learn to make bonding attachments is one of the major themes both of developmental psychology (Ainsworth, 1982; Bowlby, 1973) and of feminist theories of psychological identity (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger,

& Tarule, 1986). Appreciation of special people and of special places is still a human need, but such needs are increasingly met by what corporations will sell us for recreation, leisure, and escape. These alternatives cater to a basic narcissism, or seeking of pleasure for oneself (Kanner & Gomes, 1995). For most people, these marketed outlets are not sufficient. They provide only temporary respite from the pressured activity of the competitive workplace, and they fail to address the need for intimate social ties, or for finding creativity in the activities of everyday life.

Third, globalization devastates the natural environment. While global corporations require growth, the resources of the earth are finite. Corporate growth and the consumption patterns create harmful accumulations of waste, jeopardizing health and local communities. For example, toxic wastes from more than 40 countries are shipped to a single company, Chemical Waste Management in Emelle, Alabama, where the contamination takes a toll on the mostly Afro-American and extremely poor citizens who live in the area. (Political Ecology Group, 1994). While contaminated environments have been most harsh for impoverished people of color, problems of ozone depletion, global warming, depletion of rainforests, loss of fish and other wildlife, diminished access to clean water, and the presence of airborne contaminants are problems affecting all people. Solutions to these environmental dangers are no longer possible within a single country.

POVERTY: ITS PSYCHOLOGY AND ITS DISTRIBUTION

The global market has created winners and losers, a polarization of income greater than at any time since records have been kept. In 1997, the world's 477 billionaires (up from 358 the year before) had combined earnings greater than the poorer half of the entire world's population (Korten, 1999). Corporate growth increased 11 percent, and CEOs from the major corporations in-

creased their incomes by 50 percent. Of the 100 largest economies in the world, 51 are now corporations rather than nation-states (Hacker, 1997; Korten, 1995). Between 1950 and 1997, the world economy grew six-fold, to a total of \$29 trillion. Yet each year, twelve million children under five years of age die—33,000 per day—the overwhelming majority from preventable illnesses. An equal number survive with permanent disabilities that could have been prevented (U.N. Development Programme, 1997).

Wealthy nations like the United States are not immune from devastating economic polarization. In 1996, the top 5 percent of U.S. households collected 21.4 percent of the national income, the highest level ever recorded. The income of the lowest 20 percent decreased by 11 percent (Hacker, 1997; U.S. Census, 1997a). In that time period, approximately 20 million Americans did not have enough to eat—a 50 percent rise since 1985 (U.S. Census, 1997b). Twenty-one million people used food banks or soup kitchens, but 70,000 people were turned away when supplies ran out (Alaimo, Briefel, Frongillo, & Olson, 1988; Lamison-White, 1997). Close to 2 million people become homeless each year (Fagan, 1998).

Limited material resources are not the only plight of poor people. Poverty inflicts psychological scars as well; it is an experience of scarcity amidst affluence. For many reasons, such as those discussed by Opatow (this volume), poverty produces the scorn of others and the internalized scorn of oneself. Indigence is not just about money, roads, or TVs, but also about the power to determine how local resources will be used to give meaning to lives. The power of global corporations in local communities forces people to depend on benefits from afar. Projected images of the good life help reduce different cultural values to the one global value of money. Meanwhile, money becomes concentrated in fewer hands. The world is dividing into a small group of

“haves” and a growing group of paupers. This division of wealth inflicts a level of structural violence that kills many more persons than have died by all direct acts of violence and by war.

STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

Modern trade agreements have released giant corporations to move where environmental restrictions are absent, taxes low, and labor cheap. As a result, workers suffer. For example, in an Indonesian factory contracting for Nike, the working conditions are hot and crowded, yet drinking water is rationed. A worker must get a permission slip to use the bathroom. She also has to come in when sick to get permission from the company doctor to stay home. If she cannot do so—even with a note from her own doctor—she is forced upon her return to undergo a two-hour public scolding. A worker of 28 is considered old for the work and can expect to be dismissed. The women suffer sexual harassment from guards touching their bodies to verify that they are not stealing shoe parts (Rhodes, 1997a). People who have no other alternative seek these jobs in Indonesia. Bad as the situation is, people suffer even more as these jobs are being lost to people who will work for even less in Vietnam, Haiti, China, and Pakistan.

For example, of the 1,000 employees of the Keyhinge Toys factory in Da Nang, Vietnam, 90 percent are women 17 to 20 years old. They make the giveaway toy characters from Disney films for McDonald’s “Happy Meals.” These workers are exposed to acetone fumes, while management refuses to pay health insurance. Women at Keyhinge received six to eight cents an hour in 1997. Wages failed to cover 20 percent of the daily food and travel costs for a single worker, let alone her family (Pilisuk, 1998). The CEO of Disney, by contrast, earned \$203 million in the same year (Rhodes, 1997b).

Like most of the countries permitting sweatshops, Indonesia forbids independent unions. The official government union, run by retired military officers, deducts dues from paychecks and suppresses workers who express grievances. When conditions become intolerable, massive walkouts occur. After the workers negotiate an agreement and return to work, the police interrogate suspected leaders. For example, Cicih, a young woman, worked at a Nike contractor factory in Indonesia. In 1992, she and several others led almost all of the 6,500 workers to strike over wages and working conditions. The normal work day was ten and a half hours with forced overtime three times a week. Pay was about \$2.10 a day in U.S. dollars (Bissel, 1997). These workers were fired and blacklisted so they cannot find further employment (Rhodes, 1997c).

The “neutral” position taken by Nike was to leave such matters to the Indonesian Supreme Court, meaning that Cicih may not live to see her case decided. In 1997, the Court ruled on only 24 cases out of 2,000. Nike claims to pay above the minimum wage. But to attract investment, Indonesia, like many other nations, sets the minimum wage below the poverty line (Rhodes, 1997c). Here, structural violence is appalling but insidious: The global corporations do not inflict the harsh treatment directly. They merely encourage harm by investing capital where such conditions bring the best returns.

Dehumanizing Work in Developed and Developing Countries

Free trade agreements affect community well-being on both sides of the U.S.-Mexican border. In 1997, U.S. President Clinton paid a visit to Mexico on Cinco de Mayo to promote the next phase of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). He spoke to thousands of Mexican businessmen about the success of free trade. Like the United States, Mexico has a new group of millionaires. Unemployment, however, has reached an all-time high.

The Mexican military needed massive numbers of soldiers to buttress police efforts in clearing out a protest that appeared immense enough to bring Mexico City, the largest city in the world, to a close. Military backup and virtual press blackouts are not surprising when one considers the corporate stakes on both sides of the border. Real wages in Mexico have dropped since the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs was signed in 1995. The number of workers, called “maquiladoras,” working just over the border has increased by 45 percent, while their average earnings have dropped from one dollar an hour to 70 cents. The extent of desperation leads to violence. Within the past decade, the peasants of Northern Tabasco organized a hunger strike until death, while the Zapatistas arose to rebel against harsh military suppression of displaced workers in Chiapas and Guerara (Harvey, 1998).

Meanwhile, the Alfred Angelo Company, founded in 1940 in Philadelphia, demonstrates the ugly brutality of structural violence produced by globalism. For generations, a skilled and dedicated workforce helped the Piccione family become a premiere bridal gown company, supplying the best-known labels and marketing through the J.C. Penney catalog. Annual sales for this company rose from \$45 million in 1985, when Piccione acquired the license to produce and market “Christian Dior” bridal gowns, to \$59 million in 1996. The company eliminated most of its U.S. jobs, including the 70 workers in the unionized Philadelphia-area cutting and handling center, and over 200 workers in shops in New York City (Rhodes, 1997d). Some of the gowns made with the Alfred Angelo label are being sewn in Guatemala and China. It is difficult to know the conditions under which the clothes were made in China. However, in April 1997, a survey of three factories in Guatemala producing for Alfred Angelo revealed widespread violations of that country’s laws, including use of child labor, illegal wage and hour schedules, and life-threatening

safety conditions. Fourteen- and 15-year-olds worked ten and eleven hours a day, earning less than minimum wage. Some worked until 2:00 A.M. and had to return at 7:00 A.M. the same day for a full shift. This schedule violated Alfred Angelo's own code of conduct for foreign vendors as well as Guatemalan laws requiring time off for children to go to school. Two years earlier, workers in one factory attempted to organize and there were mass firings (Rhodes, 1997d).

The company claimed "business reasons" to explain its elimination of jobs in the United States. The reason is similar to that offered by Phillips Van Heusen (PVH), a major producer of apparel for export, for choosing to close the only factory in Guatemala that had finally secured a collective bargaining agreement after a six-year struggle. PVH is the leading U.S. marketer of men's shirts, and owns not only the Van Heusen label but also Izod, Gant, Geoffrey Beene, Bass, and others. In neither the PVH nor the Angelo case were the labor cuts needed to stay in business. The cuts were made because the companies could make more profit through contractors and because their competition could be expected to do the same. The PVH situation has resulted in protests across the United States. Some of the Philadelphia community rallied behind the Alfred Angelo workers. Local newspapers have written editorials in support of the workers' fight to save their jobs. In speeches and rallies, Alfred Angelo employees have allied themselves with the exploited workers in Guatemala and China, demanding an end to exploitation of workers in sewing factories in the United States and abroad.

But the people of Philadelphia will not be able to find legal support for economic pressure to keep their jobs when restrictions on trade are eliminated. The rights of municipalities to engage in boycotts, like those which helped to end apartheid in South Africa, or which oppose brutal dictatorial practices in Burma, are currently being viewed as restrictions on trade. The Multilateral

Agreement on Investments is soon likely to make nations and local governments liable for any restrictions upon foreign investments that might result from such protective regulations as environmental safety or living wage requirements (Campaign for Labor Rights, 1998; Rauber, 1998).

GLOBALIZATION'S STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE ON WOMEN'S HEALTH

Wherever the global economy expands into poor areas and replaces the means for local livelihood, HIV spreads among poor women (Daily, Farmer, Rhatigan, Katz, & Furin, 1995). Lacking decent legal employment, the women become involved with drug traffickers and prostitution. Prostitution is an outgrowth of structural violence. The United Nations estimates that in 1997, there were 57 million women and child prostitutes. Thirty thousand "hospitality girls" are registered in the Philippines, but the actual number of prostitutes is about 75,000 (Rosenfeld, 1997). Originally, these prostitutes served two large American military bases, welcomed in the Philippines under the dictatorial regime of Ferdinand Marcos. After Marcos was forced from power, Subic Air Force Base was turned into a free-trade zone, bringing in 150 large corporations (Barry, 1995; Rosenfeld, 1997). The AsiaPacific Economic Forum considered the Philippines the best place for investment among ten Asian Pacific countries. The benefits, however, have not reached the women, who continue to sell their bodies even with the increased risk of HIV infection.

Meanwhile, the Ukraine has surpassed Thailand as the center of the global business in trafficking women. Young European women are in demand, and the Ukraine, economically devastated by its entrance into the global economy, has provided the supply. Thirty applicants compete for every job in the Ukraine. The average salary today is less than thirty dollars a month, but only

half that in the small towns where criminal gangs recruit women with promises of employment in other countries (Specter, 1998).

In Southeast Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, and U.S. cities, the livelihood choices open to poor women are restricted. The HIV epidemic is spreading rapidly among poor women of color. The incidence is high wherever the global economy replaces the means for local livelihood (Daily et al., 1995). The increase is combined with minimal access to treatment, which is also limited by the low tax base needed to lure global capital.

“Since 1987, AIDS has been the leading cause of death among 15–45-year-old Black and Latina women in NYC” (Simmons, Farmer, & Schoepf, 1995, pp. 42–43). Between seven and ten thousand American children are orphaned each year when their mothers die from AIDS (Gardner & Preator, 1996).

GLOBAL FACTORS IN DOMESTIC TERRORISM

When decent working-class jobs move from the United States to countries with cheap labor and less environmental regulation, displaced workers seek scapegoats. This loss has led to acts of terrorism. People like Timothy McVeigh, charged with the 1995 bombing of a U.S. Federal Building in Oklahoma, and bombers of Black churches, are depicted by the media as deranged. This portrayal conceals similarities in their ideologies and in their options. Many of these former workers blame the government’s affinity for racial minorities and immigrants, who are getting jobs deserved by “true Americans.” One common view is that wealthy Jewish bankers control government policies in a conspiratorial effort to create a world government that would prevent people from defending themselves (Abanes, 1996; Lamy, 1996). But for the fact that some of

these extremists have guns and military training, one might dismiss them as sociopaths unable to find a useful purpose. There is, however, no useful purpose open to them.

Half the U.S. working population has suffered falling or stagnant wages for about 20 years. The media tell us that the good life can be purchased on credit. But millions lack the education to participate in a global economy. Former Labor Secretary Robert Reich confronted the inability of government to provide such education. However, his “Putting People First,” the populist plan to train people for skilled jobs, has been sacrificed. Balancing the budget, setting interest rates to satisfy Wall Street, and reducing trade barriers are policies that require cutting the safety net (Reich, 1997a; 1997b). In many cases, corporation lobbyists write legislation, manage press releases, and establish as much access as can be bought in Washington (Domhoff, 1971; Seager, 1994; Silverstein, 1998). Hence we can see why the Senate has yet to ratify the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, a worldwide treaty that has been ratified by 136 other countries, including the G-7 nations. The treaty outlines a range of civil and human rights principles, including “fair wages,” “right to work,” and nondiscrimination—all constraints upon economic expansion (Rauber, 1998). Corporation-friendly laws do not reflect an evil scheme. They are consequences of the limited place left for government in a global economy.

A GLOBAL MONOCULTURE OF THE MIND

Perhaps the greatest challenge posed by globalism is how to retain the vital diversity of human voices and communities. Factory piece-workers do the same assembly work the world over. One can buy identical products from similar chain stores around the globe. Uniform standards for people and products increase profitability. Standardization yields low overhead costs, less customer service, and greater profits. The benefits of this efficiency are not well-distributed. Three-

quarters of the money spent locally for a universally marketed fast food hamburger will leave the community, subsidizing global corporations with local resources (Gour & Gunn, 1991; Hanauer, 1998).

Centralized control of the media contributes to skepticism that local voices can be heard (Pilisuk, Parks, & Hawkes, 1987). Similar global economic factors are considered important in explaining the lack of involvement by adolescents in social issues (Damon, 1998). Under globalization, the opportunity for distinctive voices to be heard is reduced, yet the voices of local residents are needed to address issues raised by global expansion.

ANOTHER GLOBAL SOCIETY EMERGING TO PREVENT GLOBAL STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

Fortunately, an international global network of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and local groups has risen dramatically in the nineties. NGOs are creating another global society based upon hearing local community voices (Pilisuk, McAllister, & Rothman, 1996). For example, near San Francisco, California, the voice of Tri-Valley Citizens (TVC) Against a Radioactive Environment exemplifies a spirit of local participation that refuses to give in to forces of the global economy. TVC resides in the community built around the nearby Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories, one of the centers of research on nuclear weapons and nuclear energy. A contract between the Department of Energy and the University of California provides a screen of legitimacy for highly paid scientists to do secret classified work perpetuating the development of nuclear weapons. Major corporations such as Bechtel, Westinghouse, Raytheon, and General Electric have been beneficiaries of nuclear weapons contracts and secrecy protects their work. TVC was organized in the apartment of one of the local residents to address concerns about risks to

health and safety from the work at Livermore. These local citizens were concerned as well with the laboratory's mission of creating nuclear weapons. By leafleting and talking to neighbors, TVC gained support, including some assistance secretly provided by Livermore employees. Through diligent efforts, the group uncovered numerous violations of health and safety standards. They testified at various legally mandated hearings called by the Department of Health, the Department of Energy, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Demonstrating the increasingly effective networking of NGO groups, TVC joined the Livermore Environment and Peace Association, a coalition consisting of approximately 20 Bay Area peace and environmental groups who help with press releases, demonstrations, and legal actions. TVC is also part of the Military Production Network, a national coalition providing information for each the 18 nuclear weapons facilities in the United States. TVC has also maintained contact with an international network of nuclear weapons survivors, from Kazakhstan to islands in the South Pacific, including veterans groups and down-winders from Utah and Nevada. Several of the laboratory's more dangerous projects have been delayed or canceled, and the dissenting actions have brought an end to the incineration of radioactive wastes. The director of the laboratory was fired. TVC's objective of converting the giant laboratory to a center for environmental and medical research has not yet been achieved, but the group has reached many people and has demonstrated the possibility of thinking globally and acting locally (Pilisuk, 1996).

The Borneo Project offers another creative response to the global economy. Borneo's indigenous communities have cared for their home in the world's oldest rainforest for thousands of years. In return, the forest has provided the communities with resources needed to survive. These well-established but fragile relationships are now in jeopardy. Ignoring land claims by native peo-

ples, logging companies and oil palm plantations are clear-cutting the forest. It is impossible to guess the costs to future generations from the depletion of the earth's oxygen and extinction of medicinal plant species and other genetic resources. Immediate costs to communities are, however, apparent. Rivers have been contaminated and forests eroded. The abundant resource base upon which a people have depended for the past millennium is diminishing (Pilisuk, 1998).

The village of Uma Bawang, in Malaysian Borneo, has become a center of attempts to bring social and environmental justice to their region. In 1991, Berkeley, California and Uma Bawang became sister communities and launched the nonprofit Borneo Project. The project's volunteers use citizen diplomacy, direct assistance, and cultural exchange. The project enables local villages to secure traditional land claims, network with international NGOs, and monitor violations of human and land rights. The project also educates the public on these issues. Finally, the group raises funds that go directly to support the Uma Bawang Residents Association (Earth Island Institute, 1997). If the project succeeds in saving some of the rainforest, it will become a model for communities everywhere. A tribal leader in Sarawak explained the importance of this approach:

...in our race to modernize we must respect the ancient cultures and traditions of our peoples. We must not blindly follow that model of progress invented by European wealth; we must not forget that this wealth was bought at a very high price. The rich world suffers from so much stress, pollution, violence, poverty, and spiritual emptiness. The wealth of the indigenous communities lies not in money or commodities, but in community, tradition, and a sense of belonging to a special place. (Earth Island Institute, 1997, p. 3)

CONCLUSION

The Sarawak example not only demonstrates the increasing effectiveness of global activism to reduce structural violence, but also brings us back to the initial distinction between caring and marketability. Markets are the primary arena for economic entrepreneurship and technical innovation. They do not, however, instruct people with large incomes to consume only their rightful share of natural resources. Markets do not prevent retailers from selling guns to children or require producers to recycle their waste. They give no priority for the allocation of resources to meet basic needs of those in poverty before providing luxuries for those with great wealth. Civil societies create governments to establish and maintain rules that might restrict the forces of the market and permit the expression of caring (Makhijani, 1992).

The Sarawak example has important implications for psychology. Globalization, with its complex demands upon the individual psyche, is upon us. Our Western psychology has long focused on finding logical answers to specific questions, often based upon understanding the rewards to individuals for specific behaviors. But this analysis shows that we will need to reestablish the human community's capacity for caring. This transformation will require the best of our discipline. Vaclav Havel notes that "without a global revolution in consciousness, nothing will change for the better in the sphere of our being as humans, and the catastrophe toward which we are headed...will be unavoidable" (as cited in Lasley, 1994, p. 3).

Surely a psychology that is more global in its understanding and better able to appreciate the contributions from non-Western and from indigenous thought is needed (Marsella, 1998). The current condition of globalism presents a challenge. We live with the threat of biological or nuclear terrorism (see Britton, this volume). Much of the world has experienced interminable intra-state or regional wars that stem from unequal access to resources, water scarcity, endless waves

of refugees, and overcrowded cities at risk for dangerous epidemics (see Winter, Christie, Wagner, & Boston, this volume).

But the process of globalization has also come with unprecedented opportunities for communication, an increase of contact among different cultures, and a growth of nongovernmental international structures that monitor and regulate the consequences of our changed world. Globalism has also brought to the fore the need for universal protections of basic human rights, and an awareness of the values of cultural and environmental diversity. These potentials for healthy psychological and social development in a global community are illustrated in the Borneo and Livermore Projects and in thousands of others like them. Hopefully, our new global opportunities for contact with people and places can provide openings for informed action in constraining structural violence and redirecting the powerful forces of globalism.