

RETRIEVING PSYCHOSOCIAL SIGNS OF STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE IN (POST)COLONIAL JAMAICA

Deanne Bell*

Physical and psychological assaults on group life wound not only community wellbeing but also individual subject formation, altering the way people think, feel, and act. In this paper, reference is made to an emblematic human rights violation in (post)colonial Jamaica in which at least 76 civilians were killed by the state. In an oral history project, 26 inner city community residents who survived state violence and endured collective trauma memorialize loved ones lost but they do not break historical silences about the meaning of the event. In order to retrieve psychosocial signs of structural violence I use diacritical hermeneutics as an analytic tool and interpretive method to describe possible meanings of oral history participants' speech and silences. This approach is proposed as a method through which community psychologists may, along with participants, mobilize unarticulated experiences and latent meanings of social suffering. Knowledge generated by such interpretive methodologies may support diagnoses of social suffering leading to the development of praxes that promote healing and, ultimately, the restoration of community wellbeing.

Keywords: structural violence, psychosocial studies, critical community psychology, diacritical hermeneutics, subjectivity, dominative silence, postcolonial Jamaica

1. Introduction

From the radical edges of community psychology the impact of social injustice on the lives of the oppressed comes forward, into fuller view. Here, we analyze how oppression structures psychosocial worlds and, alongside communities, act to change human experience. But rarely do we apply insights from psychoanalytic social theory, depth psychology, postcolonial thought, and liberation psychology together to reflect on how structural violence sustains itself, thwarting our efforts to transform social suffering. This paper attempts to use understandings from these various perspectives to interrogate marks left on the psyche by social suffering. By interpreting psychosocial signs of structural violence on members of the Tivoli Gardens community in Jamaica it is hoped that a deideolization process can begin amongst community members, or

* Antioch College, Yellow Springs, OH, USA ✉

rather resume (post the independence movement and a period in the 1970s when deideologization played a role in community formation), leading to the development of critical consciousness.

2. A Brief History of The Labour Day War

More than a third of the population living in Kingston, Jamaica lives in poverty (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 2012). The urban poor are the primary victims of high rates of crime and deadly violence, high unemployment, and inadequate housing, police protection, education, and health services. The demeaned endure omnipresent danger, vulnerability, defenselessness, terror, and insecurity. State neglect and the absence of effective social responses quarantine the underprivileged in inner city neighborhoods putting them at risk to be controlled by criminal gangs who deploy ruthless violence as part of transnational organized crime activities.

Some inner city communities are governed by criminal enterprises that enjoy economic prosperity based on their loyalty to and protection from either of the two main political parties (the Jamaica Labour Party and the People's National Party). These neighborhoods, or "garrison communities," function as geographically and politically enclosed spaces with local systems of justice and governance. The police force and army are rarely permitted entry into these autonomous zones.

Beginning on Labour Day, May 24, 2010, the security forces, under a state of emergency, launched an attack on Tivoli Gardens, a Jamaica Labour Party garrison community in Kingston. In what became known as *The Labour Day War* the 4,405 member (Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 2001) inner city community and stronghold of a known drug lord, Christopher 'Dudus' Coke, was held under siege by state forces. 'Dudus' (or 'The President' as he is affectionately called by residents of the Tivoli Gardens community) was wanted by the United States government on extradition charges for drug and arms trafficking offenses. The four day long violent confrontation between the armed forces and the Tivoli Gardens community resulted in the death of at least 76 civilians (Office of the Public Defender, 2013). During this phase of the operation 'Dudus' was not found in Tivoli Gardens. Reports are that he abandoned the community in search of safety.

In 2014, in response to pressure from local and international human rights actors the Jamaican government established the West Kingston Commission of Enquiry. The commission completed its inquiry based on "a search for truth" (Ministry of Justice, 2016, p. 6) in 2016. In the introduction to its findings the Commission notes, "an apparent code of silence among both the residents of West Kingston and some members of the security forces bore directly on our search for the truth" (p. 9). This paper examines the culture of silence that both produces and is produced by structural violence in the (post)colonial. It also attempts to go beyond, or rather down into the silence, via an interpretation of what the silence could mean in order for us to understand its role in people's lives. Finally, it proposes a process community psychologists could engage in when working with communities in which a culture of silence exists—a process that may instigate the articulation of voice leading to the development of critical consciousness.

3. Interrogating the Dynamics of Domination

In 2013, I began a collaborative oral history project with two other researchers in order to create a platform for members of the Tivoli Gardens community to memorialize loved ones lost in *The Labour Day War*, and also to rupture historical silences. To date, 26 members of the community have come forward and told us stories about this catastrophe. These interviews have been videorecorded in order to create an archive from which a multimedia arts installation and a filmic interpretation of their experience is being created. What marks participants' narratives are memories of events that occurred between May 24—27, 2010 when the community was besieged by the army and police force.

Elsewhere, I have explored this catastrophic experience in terms of collective trauma theory and transgressive and transformational possibilities of survivors' experience within the framework of community psychology praxis (Bell, in press). On reflection however, that analysis falls short of what I saw. Looking back, I did not critique the idea of "unspeakability" proposed in trauma theory to account for the voicelessness of traumatic experience. I failed to do this despite my knowledge that much of trauma theory does not account for the effects of coloniality on the psyche and is therefore also incomplete. I made this omission despite my understanding that in the (post)colonial there are, in addition to struggles to represent traumatic experience in language, compounding reasons for a lack of speech. These reasons can be understood as psychosocial (i.e., contiguously interior and exterior), inextricable psychic and social dimensions of people's lives.

In this paper I return to Tivoli Gardens trauma narratives in an attempt to expand my analysis of their experience given Johan Galtung's (1969) conceptualization of structural violence as a breach not only of the physical body but also a continual rupture in social relationships with harmful psychological effects. By including the set of social arrangements through which political and ideological power systematically assaults the lives and possibilities of the underprivileged, I examine the relationship between colonial styled power and voice. The idea of structural violence, revealing as it does the damaging effects of discrimination, creates an analytical framework through which political and psychological life may be examined simultaneously. It holds the potential of broadening our definition of injury, widening the aperture through which we can examine the effects of colonially produced trauma on individual and community life.

3.1 Coloniality, Subjectivity & Psychic Life

And, while the coloniality of power referred to the interrelation among modern forms of exploitation and domination (power), and the coloniality of knowledge had to do with impact of colonization on the different areas of knowledge production, coloniality of being would make primary reference to the lived experience of colonization and its impact on language (Maldonado-Torres, 2007, p. 242).

In psychological theories on subjectivity, the experience of selfhood, the quality of personhood, subjectivity or a 'me,' provides individuals with "a sense of life as real and meaningful" (Mitchell & Black, 1996, p. 126). Developed internally but in response to affirming dialogic relationships imbued with empathy, a sense of 'I' emerges as a measure of personal

experience and desire. The self, known to itself, vitalized in and through relationships with others, generates capacities to feel, think, and act in purposeful ways.

Based on interpersonal developmental trajectories, subjectivities evolve out of particular historic, sociopolitical, economic, and cultural contexts (Teo, 2015). Critical views of subjectivity argue that personhood is the psychic manifestation of the subject's lifeworld. From this perspective, the self is formed not within an isolated ego but as a result of interacting with the environment in which the embodied ego exists since "social conditions become the conditions of possibility for psychic life and subject formation" (Oliver, 2004, p. xiv).

Becoming a subject and developing subjectivity is an intersubjective process. For the defiled, it includes experiences of social injustice, which hinder the creation of subjectivity shattering the sense of self and its articulating capacities. "Oppression and subordination render individuals or groups of people as other by objectifying them. Objectification undermines subjectivity" (Oliver, 2001, p. 7). Additionally, inequalities in social conditions in which individuals develop subjectivity become internalized and unconscious, resisting interrogation, leaving them unexamined (Fanon, 1967).

In *On the Coloniality of Being* Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2007) argues that the cursed, racialized other's belonging in and to the world is erased by coloniality. Enduring arrangements of power traceable to and as a consequence of colonialism seize and structure political economy, culture, ways of knowing, and intersubjectivity. In the (post)colonial oppressed experience is predetermined and constructed by social images, representations, and language that have already negated the oppressed self and weakened its self-articulating ability.

Violences against personhood alienate subjects from self-awareness and self-understanding limiting their capacity to vocalize experience. In this environment the ability to express the meaning of experience through language fades, replaced by numbing silence. Critical social discourse is further limited by the acceptance of social lies. Subjects become not only alienated from themselves, but also experience a form of psychosocial alienation characterized by a lack of social space in which to speak their subjectivity (Oliver, 2004). "Social acceptance and support are necessary for psychic life, specifically sublimation, which is essential not only for creativity but also for meaning, both the meaning of language and the meaning of life" (p. 89). Blocking the full formation of subjectivity results therefore in the obstruction of the oppressed's faculty to fully experience and express the meaningfulness of their lives. Structural violence triumphs psychologically by normalizing restrictive psychosocial space in which, for the oppressed, their subjectivity is struggling to come into being.

3.2 *Sensing Something More: Diacritical Hermeneutics and the Interpretation of Silence*

Oppressed peoples both have and lose access to their voice in social space. Taylor, Gilligan, and Sullivan (1995) observe that oppressed subjects have been narratively isolated in the absence of listeners who valorize their voice. It becomes imperative therefore, that community psychologists who engage in fieldwork with oppressed communities witness people's voices and their silences. Such acts may reverse the harmful effects of overlooking emerging subjectivities of historically marginalized people.

But what kind of analytic tools can resolve the contradiction of research participants coming forward to tell their stories whilst maintaining rules of silence? How can what we sense contribute to our knowledge of the psychosocial?

Understanding ways in which individuals and communities suffer under systems of oppression broadens the epistemological basis of community psychology increasing the possibilities of the work we can do with people whose subjectivities are omitted from social space. But in order to do so effectively we need analytic tools with which to listen to and make meaning of social silences. Richard Kearney's (2012) "diacritical hermeneutics" is an interpretive methodology through which the meaning of what has been excluded and made other is brought into closer relationship with what is known and familiar.

In this method critically interrogating "race, class, gender, power and the unconscious" (Kearney, 2011, p. 78) allows us to be suspicious of interpretations based solely on what is literally said encouraging us to go below the surface of understandings based on conventional discourse. Possible other meanings "as well as the critical exposure of "masked" truth and power in the name of liberation and justice" (p. 78) become available to consciousness by reading the "differences between spoken words and felt meaning" (p. 79).

In establishing rules for unveiling plural meanings Kearney (2011) underscores the need to differentiate between small "silent, discreet signs" (p. 79) embedded in discourse as signifiers "helping us differentiate between distinct meanings" (p. 79). Subtle inflections of voice and accents placed on particular words hint at meanings not obviously proposed in literal speech. Unexpressed thought is also understood to be embodied in nonverbal gestures. Micro-readings of others expose possible meanings buried in subjects' vocalizations (Kearney, 2012) and, I would argue, bring us closer to psychic content and structures that often go unnoticed prior to looking beyond opaque speech. Reading between the lines, engaging in multilayered interpretation, and sensing alterity are required in order to hear what has been made latent.

Critical discrimination between speech and perceptions of signification rely on our "faculty of sensing invisible words" (Kearney, 2011, p. 76). Here, interpretation depends on listeners being attuned to their own and others' thought, affect, and images that emerge based on associations, memory, and the feeling of the other's expression. Critical explorations into the effects of countertransference, including being emotionally moved by the other, may generate interpretations not available in the absence of acknowledging that unconscious material aids understanding of meaning. Kearney writes, "We are concerned here, in short, with a multilayered sensing which goes all the way up and down—like Jacob's ladder—from thought to touch and back again" (p. 79). In addition to being open to reading articulated thought and affect, diacritics discern meaning by interpreting the body as a register that holds and signifies memory, knowledge, and understanding.

3.3 What I Bring to Interpreting Dominative Silence

Prior to engaging in this oral history project and on hearing that residents of Tivoli Gardens had flooded a mental health hotline in the aftermath of *The Labour Day War* I wrote the following entry in my journal:

Seventy-five people were reportedly killed during The Labour Day War in Jamaica. No, 76. The security forces name one man they murdered, Keith Clarke, a resident of an Upper St. Andrew suburb. The militia gives an official apology for the error of his death. A memorial service is held for his life. Some of the 75 residents of a ghetto are buried in mass graves, on the outskirts of Kingston. Their bodies are not all identified; they are not all properly laid to rest.

Official statistics for 2010 report 309 civilians killed by the police force. No, 309 plus 75 plus one person die at the hand of the state but for some reason they omit 76.

2010 was, in Jamaica, a time before awareness and widespread humaneness. A period when people did not see what needed to be seen, when people did not speak about what mattered most. An age crowing the horror of slavery and its replacement, postcolonial independence. A terrible year in the reign of coloniality. Questions should have been asked about violence against 385 people. Something should have been said about these 75 others, but wasn't. The wrong words came. Sounds reminiscent of those who disbelieved the holocaust. Evidence of willful ignorance, indifference, numbness. The conversations were never had. The conversations that would bear witness to understanding how some others come to be killed, systematically, and how some of us turn away, routinely¹.

Once I began to listen to community members stories I was seized by two questions, “how can community members remain silent about the conditions which structure their lives?” and “how can people who have endured this experience not revolt?”

These questions are based on my social and ideological commitments to the liberation of being. My subjectivity arises in response to, amongst other influences, liberation psychology, a critical community psychology approach to social injustice in which what has been excluded and marginalized in psychosocial experience is given voice (Martín-Baró, 1996). From a liberation psychology standpoint the social constructs that produce suffering—poverty, social injustice, censorship, repression, direct and structural violences—are explored in order to develop praxes that can lead to social transformation and community wellbeing.

In addition to knowledge of theory and research praxes, events and relationships have also shaped my awareness of discrimination and domination. I understand oppression from a dichotomous social location through my body's relationship to sociality. I am a Jamaican who knows privilege as a middle class ‘browning’ when in Jamaica where my mixed race heritage has opened social, educational, job, income earning, and wealth creation opportunities that are not available, in equal measure, to residents of Tivoli Gardens. My social status also allows me access to state security and legal rights that members of garrison constituencies do not readily enjoy. This same embodiment in the United States, where I currently live, evokes discrimination. Here my experience and access to an affirming social world inverts. Based on a history of racial profiling, neither the police force nor the judicial system are reliable sources of protection for me as a black person in America.

Experiencing two different lifeworlds based on the hegemony of racialized power allows me to distinguish between forces that open and ones that foreclose upon being. I am attuned to the

¹ I include this entry here since it reveals pre-understandings I bring to psychosocial dynamics in postcolonial Jamaica

experience of being that emerges or is obliterated by social dynamics that either aid its ascension or destroy it.

My awareness of the alienation and emancipation of being, based on sociohistoric and political determinants, animates my desire to understand how oppression goes unnoticed when its contours are visible. How do we overlook disproportional physical and structural violence against the poor, people of color, people marginalized by gender and sexual orientation, and people of various religious faiths?

I am also concerned with the negation of unconscious aspects of human experience that have agency in our lives. Since we are not transparent to ourselves how can we increase our understanding of dynamic mental processes occurring outside our awareness? I believe accounting for the psyche, as both individual and collective mental forces that animate our lives, is imperative for perceiving social realities and social relations and for transforming their harms.

Being faithful to research paradigms with emancipatory aims I am committed to bringing historically marginalized voices to the center of dialogue because their voices have been excluded, their knowledge omitted from creating a humane world. Yet, in this paper, rather than foreground voices I have heard in the field, I turn toward my interpretation of community member's experiences in order to make sense of the psychological impact gross inequities have on under resourced people. I make this move for particular epistemological reasons. Hidden elements of ourselves often surface in relationship, through dialogue, in the tonal qualities of speech, ellipses, affect, and our bodies. That unspoken meanings go unsaid by the speaker, are available for articulation by the listener, and might awaken consciousness in both researcher and research participants is a transformative possibility; one that I believe could be further utilized in the field of community psychology.

I turned to diacritical hermeneutics as an interpretive method based on material community members provided. This included video recordings of interviews with community members, subsequent conversations, member check interviews, photographs youth in the community took during a photo workshop we held and the significance of one participant lending me his copy of the book *Born Fi' Dead: A Journey Through The Jamaican Posse Underworld* (Gunst, 1996) and his request for me to watch *The Road to Tivoli* (Laymen For Religious Liberty Ministries, 2011). These texts counter the narratives of dominant discourse that maintain a unipolar image of the Jamaican black, urban poor as brutes. They attempt to situate the defiled within the web of multiple violences in which they live their lives. The community member who suggested I explore these texts did so after we had concluded a week of interviews explaining that I would understand what "is really going on" if I read and watched, which I did. I understood this gesture to be his way of saying that there were things he could not say yet he wished his experience to be understood more fully.

In and through relational engagement with community members I drew closer to the felt sense of what participants' speech and presence imply. I listened for the dialectic between subjectivity and the weight of sociopolitical power on autonomous speech. In participants' voices I heard plain speech, metaphoric speech, shifts in voice, and witnessed nonverbal gestures including ellipses and affective underscores (e.g., sighs, laughter, visible tightness in the body, and somber mood). I also witnessed dissonance between what participants said and their affect. I used the ability to interpret human experience through multimodal active listening skills and the ability to track movement in the psyche honed as a psychotherapist. Through empathic connection, vulnerability to participants' interior life, the ethos of diacritical hermeneutics,

theoretical and experiential knowledge of the historic, social and psychological conditions that shape the lives of this community, new horizons of meaning opened.

I came to understand diacritical hermeneutics as a process of retrieval, one in which knowledge of the other's experience is sensed through perception that exceeds cognition. For the purpose of this work, I use diacritical hermeneutics to read the signs of the destructive power of structural violence on the psyche of 26 survivors of collective trauma in Tivoli Gardens, Jamaica. I believe this form of analysis strengthens inquiry into the consequences of structural violence and its harms on the psychosocial.

4. Internalizing Silence

Participants in this project described state forces taking their loved ones away prior to killing them. They also spoke of the fear of losing their own lives. One man recalled the dread community members wore on their faces in the days leading up to the state of emergency being declared. He remembered being terrified because of the constant sense of danger that characterized the four days. It was "a terrible feeling" he recalled, "a hard pain to control." A form of suffering so excessive "you cannot hold it." When he learnt that one of his close friends had been murdered he wanted to leave his house to go to his friend's family. But residents of the community were confined to their homes, barred from moving around in their community. Of his experience of entrapment he said, "I just had to stay in and bear di pain."

He spoke about what it felt like to be captive in his own home while the terrifying military operation took place outside. "A traumatizing emotion and I, I felt like I lost my life. I cry inside" he said, "but you know, you cannot . . . you just have to help yourself an . . ."

Throughout the telling of his story he paused on several occasions seeming to search for words to describe aspects of his experience. But something halted the completion of his narrative. Repeatedly, he omitted articulating his understanding of the events in the context of his affective state.

"The pain" explained this young man, "was over your body actually and your mind . . . you couldn't control it, you just have to express it." We invited him to elaborate on how he expressed himself in those moments; to encourage what Lacan (2004) calls "full speech" (p. 48) through which consciousness can emerge more repletely and authentically via language sourced from the unconscious as opposed to the "empty speech" (p. 46) of conventional discourse. Derek Hook (2013), following Lacan, distinguishes between speech associated with an ego identity in contrast "to the disruptive truth-potential of 'full speech' in which the enunciating subject surprises themselves in a symbolic moment in which they say more than they had intended" (p. 105). Empty speech, notes Hook, is a defense, shielding the ego against "disturbing or painful truths, and it operates to generate effects of closure, wholeness, understanding, and above all, to give a semblance of *identity*" (p. 105). By communicating in this way subjects hope to be understood but, Hook adds, "it is nonetheless an insufficient basis for attaining truly transformative truths" (p. 105).

Despite the development of some trust this community member did not expand his speech. At the edge of his subjective knowing, defensively and protectively, he pulled back and began to describe the military operation in general terms, alienating himself from the felt sense of his experience. Distracted by recounting objective events, no longer speaking with affective

reflexivity, his subjective voice receded, his personality faded. What arose in its place was the effects of coloniality, the exclusion of his knowledge, being, and meaning. In this mode of communicating, voice conceals rather than reveals meaningful experiences to the other. Taylor et al. (1995) explain that silenced voices—voices that are inhibited, abandoned, and relinquished—arise as patterns of speech out of fear that what they have to say may be dismissed in the social world.

When we asked another community member why residents of Tivoli Gardens do not readily talk about their understanding of the events she replied:

No, people . . . we don't really like to talk about it much because it just makes you feel really sad . . . and its better not to talk about it sometimes, and to just keep ha [she stumbled on the word 'happy'] . . . just to keep happy . . . and try to forget it and [grimaces] cos, it's the past, so, just keep it at that . . .

The melancholia that permeated her affect, tone of voice, and composure betrayed her wish that the catastrophe has been sufficiently metabolized allowing her and others in the community to move on. Efforts to forget a painful past that has claims on the present seemed to keep the desire to experience pleasure at bay. Much, it seemed, remained unsaid about her relationship to events that she did not believe would be acceptable in social space. It is possible that this unspokenness, this silence, contributes to ongoing psychological distress in the community.

In the interest of beginning to understand the meaning of the gaps embedded in participants' speech and with a desire to eliminate the ignorance silenced voices produce, I describe my tentative understandings of the effects of the forces of domination on what I witnessed. I do so believing that illuminating meanings of linguistic voids may expand discursive space through which social transformation becomes a possibility.

5. Signs of Structural Violence on the Psyche: My Interpretation

I interpreted structural violence to have two primary effects on the (post)colonial psyche.

5.1 Dominative Silence—Distortions, Deception and the Social Lie

Members of garrison communities who are not criminal elite live in fear, intimidated by both state and local forms of discipline that govern their lives. In this environment defenses against anxiety suppress and repress speech, muting people's intelligence. Terror triumphs by silencing and disempowering the resourceless. The Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (ICHR) (2012) observes that in Jamaica:

Fear of civil punishment can be equally or more intimidating and inhibiting to the exercise of freedom of expression than criminal punishment, and clearly leads to the harmful outcome of self-censorship, both for the affected party and for other potential critics (p. 120).

Multiple tiers of intimidation suppress the ability to analyze violations and formulate responses capable of transforming oppression. Victims of systems that produce violence withhold evidence since their lack of political and social power makes them vulnerable to retributive punishment, including loss of life, since speaking out and testifying increases the risk of death. The absence of witnesses' testimony also contributes to dysfunctions in the justice system. Successive failures of the justice system confirm the underclass's social disadvantage dissuading the poor from participating in formal civic life. These conditions drive the impoverished into protective silence.

What is known yet refused entry into civil discourse forms part of "public secrets" (Taussig, 1999, p. 5). Knowledge the public keeps from itself solidifies the ideological power of the status quo ensuring its values remain intact. Knowledge of the truth, kept secret, enables self-deception eroding a coherent sense of self, weakening subjectivity.

Assaults on the poor and "war," writes Ignacio Martín-Baró, "can be described in three words: violence, polarization, and lies" (1996, p. 112). In order for coloniality to sustain itself it must rhetoricize current political and social arrangements as beyond colonialism. It must construct an image of itself as successfully leaving racism and classism behind enabling the possibility of people's aspirations to manifest themselves in an open society. And the society, including its disenfranchised, must believe in this lie.

Martín-Baró described the "social lie" (1996, p. 188) as a range of violations including fictional discourse in which individuals conceal their thinking in response to a distrustful interpersonal environment, deceptive public discourse, and corrupt institutions. Rather than ensure safety, justice, and a flourishing community life the security forces, judicial system, and community elite polarize people, corroding social harmony. The common discrepancy between people's experience and the falsehood in which they live structures the social lie as a collective experience making it more difficult to contest. Additionally, the ease with which institutional failures are accepted fuels the social lie, preserving its force as it shrinks collective consciousness.

For these social arrangements to become internalized, for this episteme to take root, requires the oppressed to lay down the struggle for a new reality, to look the other way denying knowledge of their experience of suffering and their dependence on a system of despots. Fearing their own truth, the oppressed become increasingly alienated from themselves normalizing and internalizing violence, distortions, and degraded patterns of social relationships (Martín-Baró, 1996).

Analyzing the social lie in the context of the Salvadoran society, Martín-Baró (1996) identifies three of its effects. He writes, "the country's most serious problems have been systematically hidden from view; the social interests and forces at play have been distorted; and people have internalized the alienating discourse as part of their personal and social identity" (p.188). This description accurately describes the consequences of structuring social worlds on reticence silencing knowledge of the experience of the marginalized in (post)colonial societies such as Jamaica.

5.2. *An Abject Model of Humanity*

But almost always, during the initial stage of the struggle, the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend themselves to become oppressors, or “sub-oppressors.” The very structure of their thought has been conditioned by the contradictions of the concrete, existential situation by which they were shaped. Their ideal is to be men; but for them, to be men is to be oppressors. This is their model of humanity. This phenomenon derives from the fact that the oppressed, at a certain moment of their existential experience, adopt an attitude of “adhesion” to the oppressor. Under these circumstances they cannot “consider” him sufficiently clearly to objectivize him – to discover him “outside” themselves. This does not necessarily mean that the oppressed are unaware that they are downtrodden. But their perception of themselves as oppressed is impaired by their submersion in the reality of oppression. At this level, their perception of themselves as opposite of the oppressor does not yet signify engagement in a struggle to overcome the contradiction; the one pole aspires not to liberation, but to identification with its opposite pole (Freire, 1970, p. 45).

Within garrison communities structural violence operates through the interlocking relationship between national and local systems of deprecation. Local criminal enterprises emerged in the vacuum of underdevelopment that characterizes a politically independent Jamaica. Organized crime has solidified its place among the oppressed by providing financial assistance, conflict resolution, justice mechanisms, and, on occasion, cultural events that provide a sense of community cohesion. But the “model of humanity” (Freire, 1970, p. 45) pursued sustains the binary inherent in social inequality. It is built on retention of power in the patron. It includes maintaining an order in which subservient others undergird the national and community elite’s self-esteem.

The symbiotic relationship between the criminal and political elite in garrison communities restrains the oppressed psychosocially. Together, this two-tiered system of domination crushes the sense of self the oppressed is capable of developing in its absence. And the dearth of material and psychological resources the oppressed experiences, under the weight of the joint oppressive action of the national and local regimes, cinches their imagination. No longer do they experience *joie de vivre* (a sense of wellbeing) that would enable them to imagine alternative living arrangements free from dependence on either of the two structures that independently and exponentially exploit and dominate their being. Rather, their dreams of creating a social situation in which they experience economic, social, physical, and mental freedom disappear.

Members of garrison communities are therefore twice betrayed. They have been abandoned by the possibilities political independence from Britain held for their nation and they have been forsaken by the emergence of sub-oppressors in their midst. Trapped by the Sisyphean task of living as the dejected in a world in which there are only either oppressors or oppressed, the oppressed’s personhood becomes submerged under acceptance.

6. Concluding Thoughts: Creating a Dialogic Diacritical Hermeneutics

Coloniality, expressed through direct and structural violence against personhood, silences the oppressed. It produces an erasure of being that erodes subjectivity weakening the ability to self-

articulate. In the (post)colonial, dominative silence produces a loss in self-awareness and self-understanding impairing the ability to mobilize consciousness about traumatic experience, reducing conscientization possibilities community psychologists rely on to co-produce meaningful social action. But these challenges can be addressed if community psychologists attend to what has been made invisible by the forces of oppression. By producing tentative interpretations of the meaning of participants' experiences, community psychologists may co-create new modes of action research.

Maritza Montero (personal communication, 2016) suggested that, having produced my interpretation of Tivoli Gardens community members' experience of *The Labour Day War*, related events and relationships, I should return to the community, inviting members to critique my analysis. And, she further suggested, I write or co-author a paper for publication based on their response. This idea has two merits. It opens up the possibility of co-authoring research with research participants through an iterative process that we (researchers and research participants) all participate in. It also creates an opportunity to explore the potential of developing Dialogic Diacritical Hermeneutics in which researchers and research participants enter into a dialogic relationship, post the interview phase, one that transforms traditional research relationships and through which we collaboratively struggle to create plural meanings of lived experience.

I imagine Dialogic Diacritical Hermeneutics as a collective interpretative method incorporating multiple modes of analysis based on critical engagement with theory, lived experience, and a transformed researcher-participant relationship. In such a method participants would learn about the analytic frameworks that researchers bring to research relationships, and through critical self-reflection and engagement with theory, participants would co-produce scholarship reflective of their new self-understandings.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Maritza Montero, Christopher Sonn, Deborah Thomas, Burger Vaughan and Junior 'Gabu' Wedderburn for giving me invaluable feedback on an earlier version of this paper.

References

- Bell, D. (in press). Researching to transgress and transform. In Melling, A. & Pilkington, R. (Eds.), *Paulo Freire and transformative education: Changing lives and transforming communities*. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Fanon, F. (1967). *Black skins, white masks*. (R. Philcox, Trans.). New York, NY: Grove Press.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Continuum International.
- Galtung, J. (1969). Violence, peace, and peace research. *Journal of Peace Research*. 6(3). 167-191.
- Gunst, L. (1996). *Born fi' dead: A journey through the Jamaican posse underworld*. New York, NY: Holt Paperbacks.
- Hook, D. (2013). *(Post)apartheid conditions: Psychoanalysis and social formations*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

-
- Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. (2012). *Report on the situation of human rights in Jamaica*. Washington, DC: Organization of American States. <http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/docs/pdf/Jamaica2012eng.pdf>
- Kearney, R. (2011). Eros, diacritical hermeneutics, and the maybe. *Philosophy Today*, 55, 75-85.
- Kearney, R. (2012). Diacritical hermeneutics. In M.L. Portocarrero, L.U. Umbelino & A. Wierciński (Eds.). *Hermeneutic rationality. La rationalité herméneutique* (pp. 179-196). Berlin, Germany: LIT Verlag.
- Lacan, J. (2004). *Ecrits: A selection*. (B. Fink, Trans.). New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Laymen for Religious Liberty Ministries (2011). *The road to Tivoli* [Video file]. Retrieved on May 22, 2016, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cX9pWgzW_Bc
- Maldonado-Torres, N. (2007). On the coloniality of being. *Cultural Studies*, 21(2), 240-270. doi: 10.1080/09502380601162548
- Martín-Baró, I. (1996). *Writings for a liberation psychology*. Boston, MA: Harvard.
- Ministry of Justice. (2016). *Report Western Kingston Commission of Enquiry 2016*. Retrieved on August 8, 2016, from <http://moj.gov.jm/content/report-western-kingston-commission-enquiry-2016>
- Mitchell, S. & Black, M. (1996). *Freud and beyond: A history of modern psychoanalytic thought*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Office of the Public Defender. (2013). *Interim report to parliament concerning investigations into the conduct of the security forces during the state of emergency declared May, 2010 – West Kingston/Tivoli Gardens ‘incursion’ – the killing of Mr. Keith Oxford Clarke and related matters*. Retrieved on August 6, 2016, from <http://www.opd.gov.jm/images/articles/pdf/tivoli/Tivoli%20Interim%20Report%20and%20Bundles%20of%20Appendices%202010.pdf>
- Oliver, K. (2001). *Witnessing: Beyond recognition*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota.
- Oliver, K. (2004). *The colonization of psychic space*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota.
- Statistical Institute of Jamaica (2001). *Communities maps*. Kingston: Statistical Institute of Jamaica. <http://statinja.gov.jm/Maps/Communities%20Maps.pdf>
- Taussig, M. (1999). *Defacement: Public secrecy and the labor of the negative*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Taylor, J. M., Gilligan, C., & Sullivan, A.M. (1995). *Between voice and silence: Women and girls, race and relationship*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Teo, T. (2015). Theoretical psychology: A critical-philosophical outline of core issues. In I. Parker (Eds.), *Handbook of Critical Psychology* (pp. 117-126). London, UK: Routledge.