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Robert Lemelson · Annie Tucker

Widening the Frame with Visual Psychological Anthropology

Perspectives on Trauma, Gendered Violence, and Stigma in Indonesia

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To the memory of Dorothy Lemelson, with the deepest love, admiration, and respect.

Blessed is the righteous judge.

Series Editor's Preface

Robert Lemelson and Annie Tucker's book is a textual ethnography of ethnographic films. The films discussed inquire into central inter-related issues in the anthropology of suffering—traumas and their effects, gendered violence, and stigmatization. They were all produced based on Lemelson's long-term fieldwork in Indonesia. *40 Years of Silence* (2009) documents political and psychological traumas of the mass killings in 1965–1966; *Bitter Honey* (2015) follows familial violence that comes with polygamous marriages; and *Standing on the Edge of a Thorn* (2012) presents family dynamics around poverty, mental illness, and gendered ethics of marriage and sexuality. The films—to be watched before and alongside reading the book—use various cinematic techniques and genres. Yet, the topics selected and the methods used underline core paradigmatic stances of psychological anthropology—closely following individuals' experiences and doing so within their social contexts, cultural logics, and political milieus. Indeed, the authors suggest that through making and watching them, ethnographic films become crucial vehicles to reflect upon, inquire into and teach about personal lives as experienced in their broader contexts. By describing, interpreting, and analyzing

the diverse contexts and deliberations through which these films were produced and outlining their theoretical significance, *Visual Psychological Anthropology* (VPA), as the authors call this unique field, receives new depths. Hence, the book offers fruitful paths for future collaborations between visual and psychological anthropology beyond accompanying the films. In particular, theorizing the process of visually translating human intimacy is achieved by offering four layers: Interpreting the films' *contents*, documenting the *fieldwork*, discussing the *editorial work*, and deliberating *epistemological and moral concerns*.

First, interpreting the various personal and interpersonal experiences documented in the films within the politics, social dynamics, culture logics, and history of modern Indonesia. Violence, traumas, stigmatization, and de-stigmatization, the authors argue, are tied up with political oppression that echoes social discrimination. The films' broader context is thus linked with poverty and suffering within families and their losses, conflicts, and the subjugation of women. Individual emotional responses, like shame (*malu*) or anger (*marah*), are deeply gendered forms. Further, local religiosities shape ethics of surrender, patience, helping others, resilience and activism.

Second, introducing the complicated research and the in-depth, person-centered interviews and conversations that allow the production of such films. This aspect lies at the base of an ethnography of ethnographic films—inviting readers to thorough visits behind the scenes. The authors share how the research unfolded and how longitudinal collaborations and relationships with participants and advisors were evolving. They also discuss the personal interactions in the field and local notions about sharing (or not) painful experiences in public and the downplaying of conflicts and negative feelings.

Third, explaining the complicated process of choosing specific parts of the fieldwork and footage and arranging them in particular ways and timelines. The authors elaborate on their emotional, cognitive, and narrative considerations and the "voice" of the narrator and how they incorporated additional materials like archival contents, art, imagery, and music. They also discuss how possible responses shape the editorial process and the role of participants' considerations about their real-life and their

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Fourth, outlining epistemological and ethical deliberations that determine the cinematic outcomes—reflecting on cultural gaps in emotional expression and how to bridge such gaps or indicate them. In particular, the authors reflect on moral concerns in filming human suffering in Indonesia from a privileged subject position of Western actors. *Informed consent,* they argue, should be rethought and recalibrated when exposing individuals and trying to eliminate harm to participants, families and communities throughout the entire process of creating the films and distributing them.

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Preface

This book is one outcome of long-term fieldwork engagements with psychological and visual anthropology, Indonesia, and with making psychologically oriented ethnographic films. The three films discussed in the book were all shot over the course of many years. The methodology used to make them was decades in development, spanning back over a previous film series and prior monograph. The collaborative relationships with colleagues and film participants reach back just as long, and continue through the present day. These all are united in a career-long endeavor to promote the power of visual methods to investigate, illuminate, and communicate central areas of inquiry in the field of psychological anthropology.

The book is written to complement three ethnographic films. *40 Years of Silence* is scaffolded around the long-term effects of childhood political trauma for four Indonesian families during and in the decades after the mass killings of 1965. *Bitter Honey* addresses cultural frameworks for gendered violence as experienced in three Balinese polygamous marriages. *Standing on the Edge of a Thorn* considers the intersectional vulnerabilities and processes of stigmatization that render one rural

Javanese girl vulnerable to sex trafficking. While discussing the content of these films, the volume intends to "widen the frame" for them in three significant ways.

We do this first by exploring the broader ethnography involved in research, fieldwork, and filmmaking not included in the films proper. What ends up in a film is a tiny fraction of fieldwork done and footage recorded. Given the longitudinal nature of our work, we also have maintained relationships with film participants long after the films are released, following the course of their lives. This book gives a fuller account of the range of fieldwork material—observations, interviews, et cetera—that exceeds what was eventually incorporated into the final films.

The book widens the frame again by mining the connections between the films. Despite the disparate topics they cover and distinct themes they explore, we see these projects as theoretically and ethnographically linked. We delve into the issues in psychological anthropology relevant to all and examine how they are interconnected within Indonesian history, society, and culture—and further, how all of these permeate participant subjectivity.

Thirdly and finally, we widen the frame to account for what goes on outside the limits of the camera lens. Just as most film footage ends up on the proverbial cutting room floor, any footage recorded is still just a sliver of the encounter and the overarching project, which encompasses evolving social relationships, production strategies, ethical considerations, and more. Exploring filmmaking *as process* allows us to reflect on the experience and its impact on our participants. It also allows us to discuss the unique ways in which visual and psychological anthropology are united in our methodology.

This methodology, which we call "visual psychological anthropology" (VPA) adapts person-centered ethnography for film and integrates it with visual anthropology and other cinematic elements of more mainstream film genres. We first outlined VPA in our monograph, *Afflictions: Steps Towards a Visual Psychological Anthropology.* That book was based on the six case-study films of our *Afflictions* series, which addressed interconnections between culture, mental illness, and neuropsychiatric disorder in Bali and Java via various significant aspects of the illness experience.

This volume is fundamentally connected to that book and can to a certain extent be considered an extension of it in terms of concept, structure, theory, and method, audience and goal. It is similarly designed to supplement a group of ethnographic films shot according to VPA tenets. It equally champions VPA as a way to go beyond given etic categories to reach a holistic understanding of an issue via a subjectivity-oriented, person-centered approach. Furthermore, the roots of the film projects discussed in this book can be traced back to ethnographic research for *Afflictions*, and the work and thought behind them overlap with *Afflictions* and with each other. This is evident as all the films circle around similar issues at stake, most notably stigmatization and trauma, but also family dynamics, village life, presentation of self, life course development, and more.

In VPA, longitudinality is central in determining how the psychological experiences of participants come to be understood and represented. It depends, then, on the long-term engagement of authors and research collaborators. The origins of my interest in the variable contexts and long-term outcomes of trauma, violence, and stigmatization date back to my undergraduate thesis at Hampshire College for which I conducted fieldwork with the newly-arrived Cambodian refugee community in Seattle. Their stories of trauma and survival brought home to me, as a young scholar, the importance of understanding the multiple contexts for trauma, violence, and oppression. After graduation, while pursuing a degree in clinical psychology, I worked as a clinician in a variety of mental health settings. Here I found the hegemonic clinical approach to mental health issues meant the structural origins or contexts of familial and individual suffering and "dysfunction", such as poverty, anomie and alienation, racism, and economic devolution, were rarely discussed or included in treatment provider's theoretical or clinical formulations. But it also gave me experience in long term, compassionate interviewing, albeit in a clinical setting with a focus on alleviating suffering, rather than an ethnographic one focused on understanding individual experience in a cultural context. My desire to find alternate ways of understanding these challenges of linking these disparate domains brought me back to anthropology to pursue graduate study at UCLA.

Given my long-term interest in the relationship of culture to mental illness, after taking a seminar with esteemed psychological anthropologist Robert Edgerton on schizophrenia and culture, for my dissertation I settled on the "outcome paradox" in cultural psychiatry. This research, highlighted in our *Afflictions* monograph, explored the question of differential, and better, outcome for people living with psychotic illness in the developing world. After several exploratory field visits to Indonesia in the early 1990, I received a 1996–1997 Fulbright grant to study this issue in Bali, and while doing fieldwork there, also received a WHO grant to investigate the Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorders associated with Streptococcus Infections (or PANDAS) hypothesis. During this research I did case findings for individuals with neuropsychiatric disorders, such as Tourette Syndrome and Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and explored their lives in a clinical ethnography. It was during this extended fieldwork that I began, in collaboration with an ethnographic filmmaker colleague, filming some of my research. When I returned to Los Angeles and began teaching at UCLA, I began to edit this footage; I became captivated by the process and founded an ethnographic film production company, Elemental Productions. Elemental has now made over 15 films on a range of topics. Many of these films address concerns that have endured throughout my career, including trauma, mental illness, personal experience, and the sociocultural and structural contexts of suffering.

This work was only made possible by deep collaborations with Indonesian colleagues. An early and central collaboration was with the cartoonist and essayist Wayan Sadha. As a Balinese man with a deep understanding of local village life, he was a central informant about the multiple domains that impacted the lives of my participants, and a dear friend. When he became increasingly ill after about 2012, I began working with his daughter, Ni Luh Gede Sri Pratiwi, and have continued to collaborate with her after Sadha's death in 2015.

I was introduced to psychiatrist Mahar Agusno and his wife psychologist Ninik Supartini by a mutual acquaintance. Both joined my WHO project on neuropsychiatric disorders in Indonesia, collecting clinical, ethnographic, and visual data on individuals living with OCD and related neuropsychiatric conditions. This initial project began a 20-year

collaboration that spans the length and breadth of almost all of my subsequent visual psychological anthropology projects in Indonesia. They have found and evaluated potential cases, organized and produced aspects of ethnographic film shoots, transcribed and translated interviews, maintained positive and productive relationships with participants, and have been full and equal collaborators.

I first met Degung Santikarma when I invited him to speak at a conference on culture, the brain, and posttraumatic stress disorder, held at UCLA in 2002. Degung is an anthropologist and writer, who was a research assistant for Hildred Geertz at Princeton. He is married to an American anthropologist and lives much of the time in the USA but was born in Bali and maintains deep and extensive connections there. Both he and several members of his extended family were key collaborators in a number of projects, most importantly *40 Years of Silence*, where he is also one of the four main participants. In addition, he was a collaborating consultant on *Bitter Honey*, for which he also served as an expert in the film itself commenting on different aspects of polygamy, culture, and personal experience.

I met psychologist Livia Iskandar in 2005 when I organized a conference on trauma and social violence in Yogyakarta. Livia established the first gender-based violence treatment program in Jakarta, Pulih (meaning recovery). We have worked together on several projects, including *Bitter Honey*. Livia has extensive experience evaluating and treating women who have endured a range of violent and abusive life circumstances, and so she was the most fitting collaborator to explore aspects of this difficult domain.

Finally, I met Annie Tucker when she was in the early years of her doctoral program in culture and performance at UCLA and she worked as a research assistant for the *40 Years of Silence project*. She had completed an undergraduate capstone ethnography on *ludruk waria*, transgender performers in the East Javanese comedic theater genre at Barnard and was beginning her thesis research. This culminated in a dissertation on the interpretation and treatment of autism in Java. These projects familiarized her with Javanese habitus and dynamics of stigmatization and resilience in Javanese contexts, which she has applied for over a decade working as researcher and writer for Elemental Productions.

While she has contributed from Los Angeles rather than joining me in the field, our collaboration in research and writing, and our friendship, has made this work possible.

Given these fertile collaborations, the book alternates between the use of "I" and "we" throughout. Here, "I" refers to my own personal thoughts, ideas, and experiences, as founder of Elemental, anthropologist, and film director. "We" refers to processes undertaken, decisions made, experiences had, and insights reached by the team as a collective, which includes the collaborators mentioned here and others, as I have also worked with a fluctuating team of film professionals from Los Angeles and Indonesia.

The book advocates for the value of ethnographic film for psychological anthropology. As such, it is primarily oriented to those who have a specialty or interest in the fields of visual and/or psychological anthropology and are curious about how a VPA approach might complement or extend their research. Many anthropologists already incorporate some filmic elements into their ethnographic research, perhaps as an addendum or insert, to provide local color or context, as a pneumonic, or a way to gather data for later analysis. Others may be approaching their footage with a plan to edit it into an ethnographic film; this is a common but rarely actualized interest among psychological anthropologists, but it is precisely what we espouse and aim to encourage.

An edited film can be a powerful tool in translational realms. Much of the thought in psychological anthropology has importance for a wide swathe of contemporary concerns and current events, and yet anthropologists are often just talking to each other. Our discipline, like many others, uses dense, specialized, and even obscure written discourse which creates numerous barriers to access and understanding; this means we miss the opportunity to reach a larger public, both here in the United States and in our field sites, and demonstrate the relevance of our theory and methods. We believe the emergent synthesis of psychological and visual anthropology modeled in this project has the promise to extend the reach of anthropological research to a wider range of audiences than is typical.

We have discovered through our own work that often, the most responsive audience to a film is one we hadn't anticipated. The three

films in this book have been used in concert with human rights advo-
cacy, included in training for psychologists and psychiatrists, and shared
widely on Indonesian media platforms. This has been affirming but has
also come with some unanticipated outcomes, which we will discuss.

At the same time visual psychological anthropology is an approach to
educate and engage more typical student and scholarly audiences who
are suddenly in great need of remote and asynchronous learning options.
As I sit here writing this, in January 2021, the coronavirus pandemic is a
wildfire ravaging the world. Even before learning was forced to go mostly,
if not entirely online, some educators were increasingly positioning film
as equivalent to texts to generate critical discussion. Now the era of
"Zoom classrooms" has introduced many more faculty to the valuable
instructional use of visual and multimodal materials. During this time,
I have received numerous requests for assistance in recommending and
incorporating visual materials and approaches to teaching virtually. This
pandemic has thus offered an unexpected assist to the status and rele-
vance a range of visual approaches that, before the pandemic, were often
seen as secondary to the teaching of anthropology. Now instructors are
hungry for visual materials that go beyond the standard university class-
room fare of straight lecture and PowerPoint slides to keep their students
engaged. Why not take this opportunity to branch out creatively, to build
our skills as filmmakers, anthropologists, and educators, and to try new
and diverse forms of presentation and explanation?

Once discovered, this use of visual materials is likely to endure. Now
more than ever, visual and translational models point the way to a
future of psychological anthropology that extends its reach and brings
its illuminating and productive findings into a new era of learning—that
"widens the frame" for the field. There is a need for pedagogical mate-
rials that integrate the theory and practice of anthropology with visual,
multimodal, and other novel approaches to research, teaching, and
presentation. Ultimately, we hope this book can contribute to the devel-
opment of a shared knowledge and practice that has the capacity to
extend the reach and impact of psychological anthropology for both new
and familiar audiences.

We assume that readers will be selecting this book or certain book
chapters because they have watched one or more of these films. While

watching the three films is not a firm prerequisite, many of the references and discussions throughout the book will make the most sense to the degree a reader can mentally reference particular scenes and or people described. To this end we have released all three films on YouTube to make them accessible to our readers (https://tinyurl.com/wideningthef ramevpa).

Pacific Palisades, USA   Robert Lemelson

Acknowledgments

This book, and the filming and research underlying it, was decades in the making and as such there were many friends, collaborators, colleagues and most especially participants who contributed and made this possible.

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To my friends in Los Angeles (and elsewhere), but especially to Sam Nichols, Brian Maeda, Mark Shelton, David Yoshimaru, David and Laura Hertz, Stewart Norman, Ed Stern, and Mike Massey for enduring friendship.

My wonderful, talented and remarkable mother Dorothy Lemelson passed away while this manuscript was under review, and this book is dedicated to her memory. I also want to thank my brother Eric, nephew

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To the memory of Myint Thein and Art Ellis. May their memory be a blessing.

To my children Noah and Zoe, the treasures of my life. And to my most loved new member of the family Bessy Liao.

To my wonderful, beautiful, brilliant, and always helpful and supportive wife Seinenu Thein, without whom this book would not have been written.

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Annie Tucker would like to thank co-author Robert Lemelson for his friendship, and for the opportunity to explore all these issues further—after more than a decade working together, there are always new things to think about and discuss! She would also like to thank colleagues Chisako Yokoyama, Constance Cummings, Yee Ie, Mamie Wong, and Briana Young for their invaluable assistance during the preparation of this book. Finally, she would like to thank Tommy, Leona, and Joni for their love and support.

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Contents

Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
BH	*Bitter Honey*
CAVR	Timor-Leste's Commission for Reception, Truth, and Reconciliation
CIPDH	International Center for the Promotion of Human Rights
DER	Documentary Educational Resources
DSM	*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*
G30S	30 September Movement
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ITN	Independent Television News
LBH Apik	Lemba Bantuan Hukum Asosiasi Perempuan Indonesia untuk Keadilan (trans. Indonesian Women's Association Legal Aid Institute for Justice)—Balinese NGO working in the area of women's empowerment and protection
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer or Questioning
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCD	Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
PANDAS	Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorders Associated with Streptococcal Infections

PCE	Person-Centered Ethnography
PKI	Partai Komunis Indonesia—Indonesian Communist Party
PNI	Indonesian Nationalist Party
PTSD	Posttraumatic Stress Disorder
STDs	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
TGBVS	Trauma, Gender-Based Violence, and Stigma
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VPA	Visual Psychological Anthropology
WHO	World Health Organization

List of Figures

xxxiii

CULTURE, MIND, AND SOCIETY

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Contents

Part I: Introduction

1. Filming Trauma, Gendered Violence, and Stigmatization --- 3

The Films Not Made
The Origins of a Visual Psychological Anthropology
Trauma, Gendered Violence, and Stigma Onscreen
Trauma
Gendered Violence
Stigma
Filming Human Suffering: Questions Raised
What Visual Psychological Anthropology Can Contribute
Sensory, Aesthetic, Emotional Representation/ Experience
Longitudinal, Inductive, Person-Centered, Reflexive
Collaborative
Multimodal
Book Outline and Summary
References

Part II: The Films

2. *40 Years of Silence*: Generational Effects of Political Violence and Childhood Trauma in Indonesia --- 47

Baskara T. Wardaya, **Robert Lemelson** and **Annie Tucker**

Theorizing Trauma and PTSD
The Historical Context
The Film
Participants' Histories
Budi and His Family
Lanny
Degung
Kereta
Participants' Experiences and Responses
Conclusion: Diversity of Responses to Fear-Based Experiences
References

3. *Bitter Honey*: Culture, Polygamy, and Gendered Violence in Bali An Ecological Perspective on Gendered Domestic Violence in Bali --- 93

Stigmatization
Structural Violence
Family Loss, Separation, and Abandonment
Reactions to Loss
Widening the Frame: Cultural Schemas and Psychocultural
Themes
References

6. Additional Psychocultural Themes --- 217

Shame *(Malu)*
Gendered Malu; A Feminist Reading of Shame in Indonesia
Malu in Participant Experience
Anger (Marah)
Anger in Participant Experience
Resilience
Resilience in Participant Experience
Conclusion: Film Participation and Participant Experience
References

Part IV: A VPA Approach to Film as Process

7. Visual Psychological Anthropology in the Field --- 269

Adapted PCE Interviews as Primary Field Method
The Nature of "Truth" in VPA Interview Material
Indonesian Psychocultural Factors in PCE: Minimizing
Conflict and Maintaining Harmony
Psychological Truth: Memory, Self-Protection, and Paradox
Defense Mechanisms
Leaving, Returning, and the Benefits of Longitudinality
Emphasizing Shared Human Experience
Performative Disclosures
Considering the Interviewer
Narrative Templates
Curhat
Reflexive Considerations
Anthropologist Subjectivity and Response
Relationship to the Camera and Staging the Interview
Depicting the Ethnographic Encounter
References

8. Crafting Stories Using a VPA Approach --- 313

9. Ethical Issues in Visual Psychological Anthropology --- 351

2. *40 Years of Silence*: Generational Effects of Political Violence and Childhood Trauma in Indonesia

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40 Years of Silence: An Indonesian Tragedy (Lemelson, 2009) is a feature length film presenting personal stories of the mass killings that followed a purported coup attempt in 1965 and the ensuing decades of imprisonment, repression, and surveillance. The film investigates the intersection of fear exposure, personal experience, and historical and political processes.

The participants' stories center in part around the psychological trauma resulting from the mass killings. Although the symptoms that some participants reported could be categorized as PTSD within the Western psychiatric model, in general, the participants show a diversity of responses to political violence and its decades-long aftermath. These are influenced not only by their personal biographies, temperaments, and personalities, but also their positioning vis-à-vis Indonesian society, as well as such factors as ethnicity, economic status, gender, age, religion, and local culture (Fassin & Rechtman, 2007/2009). *40 Years* also

explores the multigenerational effects of the mass killings – specifically, the developmental impact of childhood exposure to fear, violence, and oppression in the years that followed – by focusing on four individuals, three who were children during the events of '65 and one who grew from a child to an adolescent over the course of filming. Multiple factors – including life circumstances and local histories – profoundly affected each individual's understanding, interpretation, and adaptation to the socially oppressive and sometimes fatally violent events that all four experienced in relation to 1965. As these events were persistently fear-inducing for survivors, they had the power to deeply influence individual subjectivity and indeed individual psychobiology. The inscription of these experiences on the bodies and minds of the characters, and the structural forces that enabled and supported these inscriptions, is at the heart of this film.

Theorizing Trauma and PTSD
The heuristic most commonly used to explore the experience and aftermath of an intensely frightening episode is "trauma" and, more particularly, trauma as understood through the clinical lens of PTSD. According to the fifth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Psychiatric Disorders* (DSM-5)*,* PTSD is a diagnostic construct that encompasses a cluster of symptoms – including intrusive memories, recurrent nightmares, avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma, detachment, irritability, and anger (American Psychiatric Association, 2013) – linked to one or more foundational events. These responses are persistent over time, involving a range of forms of suffering and social and occupational dysfunctions. PTSD, in essence, sees these symptoms as a dysregulation of an otherwise adaptive and self-protective response to the traumatic event(s) (Konner, 2007; Shalev, 2007; Silove, 2007).

While useful as a clinical diagnosis, one significant critique of the trauma and/as PTSD model for understanding reactions to intense fear is that, despite being posited as evidence of a damaged "universal" neurobiological process, aspects of this process are culturally and historically situated and not necessarily transferable in other cultural settings (Kirmayer, 1989; Kleinman, 1987; Silove, 2005). Despite some clear phenomenological trans-historic and trans-cultural resemblances, interpreting the sequelae of exposure to fearful incidents and contexts, on both an individual and cultural level, remains a complex and contested endeavor. Critics have pointed out that a psychiatric model focused largely on individual responses to trauma, even with awareness of cultural shaping as described in DSM-5, can be misleading. Instead, some argue that a national trauma is better interpreted and understood through processes of individual and collective memory and commemoration (Good & Hinton, 2016; Hamburger, 2018). In that case, trauma is dependent on the subjective experience of perception and memory, within the national, historical, and cultural contexts that shaped the triggering experiences and their reception by contemporaries (Micale, 2007), and the expression of symptoms. In other words, a diagnosis risks decontextualizing trauma and traumatization from its social, familial, communal, or cultural milieus (Alarcón et al., 2002; Silove, 2007), all of which may differ significantly from those that have shaped the understanding of trauma in the US.

Furthermore, it cannot be assumed that Westernized ideas about the correct clinical, social, or collective responses to and treatment of trauma will be shared, and there is a wide range

of culturally mediated strategies for coping with the dilemmas posed by traumatic events. Another critique of PTSD can be found in its very name: The model, built in part out of the experiences of Vietnam veterans (Young, 1996), assumes that the traumatic exposure has an endpoint, that something singular has happened to an individual who afterward cannot "get past" it. This assumption fails to address how discrete episodes of violence might be part of broader, ongoing patterns of structural disempowerment. In this and other ways, the clinical focus of PTSD theory is too narrow and doesn't necessarily align well with the lived experience of many trauma survivors. Classic symptomatology may be of minor individual importance compared to experiences of social and structural violence, lack of recognition of these, and humiliation because of loss of status and independence. In short, what is at stake for survivors may not necessarily be what clinicians, and by extension neuroscientists, have studied. Seeking a unique traumatic "cause" for subsequent struggles or suffering, or presenting a particular traumatic event as the "reason" for such suffering, risks diminishing or eliding the multiple factors that infuse and shape subjective experience of fear and its aftermath (Micale & Lerner, 2001; Young, 1996).

An anthropological lens can help address these critiques, by putting traumatic experience in context with long-term, contextualized data gleaned through field observation, as opposed to psychiatric practice, which typically relies on retrospective individual accounts from people decontextualized from their social worlds. Anthropological fieldwork gets detailed information on the lived experience of fear and the interwoven cultural, biological, and neurological components of suffering – and recovering – from exposure (Good & Hinton, 2016; Hinton & Lewis-Fernández, 2010; Kirmayer et al., 2007; Lende & Downey, 2012; Robben & Suárez-Orozco, 2000). Furthermore, anthropology can complement the psychiatric model of trauma, widening its focus on the relationship of traumatic exposure to and disturbances of processes of memory and emotion with a contextual frame of issues such as status, kinship, and stigma, to discover what is truly "at stake" for people. The task of the anthropologist interested in gathering a holistic and complex account of an individual's subjectivity in relation to trauma's multiple levels of influence and meaning is not just to connect the original fear exposure to the expected and rather narrow range of discrete traumatic responses that are diagnosable and explainable to the mental health professionals. It is also to situate the impact and influence of these experiences in relation to the wider concerns that overflow the quite narrow boundaries of diagnosed traumatic response.

We discuss anthropological approaches to trauma in Part III, and its mobilization as a term and explanatory model in Indonesia, as we draw together the three films and widen their theoretical frames to account for structural violence. Here, we describe how *40 Years* depicts the ways in which survivors of the traumatic events of 1965 articulate their experiences of ongoing trauma, and how they respond, each in their own way, and each with different religious, social, and cultural resources.

The Historical Context
G30S, the Mass Killings and Suharto's New Order

Indonesia declared independence in 1945, after battling the Japanese occupation during World War II. After a brutal attempt by the Dutch to reinstate sovereignty, Indonesia

achieved full independence in 1949. In the 17 years that followed, under the leadership of President Sukarno, numerous political parties gained strength as Indonesians enthusiastically strove to shape and govern their young nation. By 1965, one of the largest parties was the Indonesian Communist Party (the PKI, or *Partai Komunis Indonesia*), the third largest communist party in the world, which fought for land reform and women's rights, among other platforms (Hearman, 2018; Hefner, 2000; Parahita & Yulianto, 2020).

On the evening of September 30, 1965, seven high-ranking military officers were kidnapped and murdered in the outskirts of Jakarta. Before it was clear who the culprits were, Suharto, then a Major General commander in the military, accused the PKI of masterminding the event and launched a campaign of media censorship and propaganda. Indonesians were urged to counter "the PKI's coup attempt" and to purge members of the communist party "down to the very roots" (Robinson, 2017). Three weeks later, the Indonesian army launched nationwide military campaigns against the PKI, which were in part backed by the CIA (Robinson, 1995, p. 282; 2018). The campaigns were carried out by military personnel and anti-communist civilian groups. Members of the communist party, from the top leadership down to rank-and-file members, were hunted down throughout the nation.

Anyone with purported connections to the communist party was targeted. The most heavily affected areas were the provinces of Central Java, East Java, and the Island of Bali, where PKI membership was strong (Cribb, 2001; Taylor, 2003). Many of those targeted were cruelly summoned, arrested, interrogated, tortured, and summarily killed. As a result, between 500,000 and one million suspected communists perished, and many more were imprisoned and exiled (Pohlman, 2016; Robinson, 2018).

General Suharto gradually maneuvered to take power from President Sukarno. In 1967, he declared himself the President of Indonesia, instated the *Orde Baru*, or "The New Order" government, and Indonesia descended into authoritarian rule for the next thirty years. As part of this, his government monopolized the narratives of the 1965 anti-communist violence (Cribb, 2010), published books intended to justify the violence and killings of 1965 (Robinson, 2018; Woodward, 2011), and sponsored the production of a propaganda film, *Pengkhianatan G30S/PKI* (literally, "The Treachery of the September 30th Movement of the PKI"; Farram, 2010; Noer, 1984; Zurbuchen, 2002). Produced in 1982, the film depicts the PKI conspiring and launching a coup while antagonizing Indonesian army and Muslim communities. Demonizing the PKI and the affiliated women's movement, *Gerakan Wanitia Indonesia* (shortened to *Gerwani*), the film depicts these groups as causing political instability and social disruption, both enforcing a particular version of history and conveying a sense of threat to those who took issue with it. From 1984 until the end of Suharto's rule in 1998, every September 30th Indonesia social life ground to a halt as Indonesians were obliged to watch this 4-hour film.

Throughout Suharto's rule, survivors of the 1965 violence and their families were subject to widespread discrimination and stigmatization (Leksana et al., 2019). Slogans such as "beware of the latent danger of communism" and an "unclean environment" (referring to alleged members or affiliates of the PKI) supported the government's firm control over the nation (Cribb, 2001). Students, community leaders, and local politicians attended 100 hours

of a compulsory government re-education program (Ward, 2010). Intellectuals, artists, and journalists were also targeted for violence and imprisonment – most famously, the novelist Pramoedya Ananta Toer was held for decades on the gulag on Buru Island. One of the last prisoners to be released in 1979, he was then held under house arrest until Suharto's fall two decades later (Robinson, 2018).

The Era of Reform

In the wake of the Asian economic crisis and under the pressures of a student-launched protest movement called *Reformasi* (Reformation), General Suharto resigned in May 1998. A period of relative freedom and openness concerning 1965 followed. Forums were held and research and advocacy efforts undertaken. Civil organizations for survivors formed, such as SekBer '65 ("Joint Secretariat on the 1965 Tragedy"), to help connect survivors throughout Central Java to one another and to health and aid services (Pohlman, 2013). Abdurrahman Wahid (aka Gus Dur), who became president in 1999, formally apologized for the mass killings and halted the annual showings of the *Pengkhianatan* film and the New Order government's indoctrination program (Fealy & McGregor, 2010). These policies were met with heated backlash and communism quickly became "politically sensitive" once again. Today, activities seeking to redress the violence of 1965 or commemorate those lost are still disturbed, pressured, attacked, and closely surveilled by government agents as well as by elements within Indonesian civil society.

Although overt anti-communist training is no longer officially conducted, the specter of communism as a "dangerous ghost" remains a tool of social control. The formal education curriculum on '65 has not changed much, still framing the New Order as "saving" the country from communist violence during a time of crisis (Eickhoff et al., 2017). "Communism" has become less a term for political platforms and more a catchall to justify the surveillance or discipline of anyone who speaks out against hegemonic ideals, political powers, or moneyed interests (Budiawan, 2012; Robinson, 2018). Respondents in our research recounted being labeled "communist" by local law enforcement for: not wearing standardized attire at temple, not praying, participating in a peaceful political demonstration, or wearing a Che Guevara shirt at the mall. In Bali, those critical of tourism development, which has been detrimental to the environment, or those participating in leftist movements trying to organize for equal rights, can be tarred with the brush of "communist" and their arguments thereby discounted (Kuwado, 2016; Lamb, 2017). During the 2014 and 2019 presidential election campaigns, candidate (and then President) Joko Widodo faced accusations of being the son of a communist. Communism fears linger, as Indonesians say, "like a fire in the rice husks."

Therefore, while there was the catalyzing event in '65, and immediately afterward several months of intense terror when many people were murdered or disappeared, it would be difficult to say that the climate of fear ever really came to an end. Furthermore, Robinson (1995, 2018) argues outbreaks of aggression such as that surrounding G30S should be viewed not as anomalous, but as part of the cyclical violence that has recurred throughout Indonesian history, where local politics determine how and against whom state-sanctioned violence is carried out.

This ongoing climate of suspicion complicates efforts toward a formal truth and reconciliation process, such as have been undertaken in other countries (Fletcher et al., 2009; McGregor et al., 2018; Robinson, 2018; Setiawan, 2019; Sub, 2016). Everyday life is still rife with cues that might reactivate embodied memories of fear experienced during the period of widespread political violence. In addition to appearing in political or governmental avenues, these are enacted through ongoing social dynamics and interpersonal interactions. Survivors may be subject to stigma or new episodes of community violence. It is not uncommon for Indonesians to live in close proximity to those who tormented them or their family, compelled by cultural norms and political mandate to behave deferentially in daily interactions. In some cases, the demarcation of who was a "perpetrator" and who a "victim" may not even feel clear, as some carried out violence under the threat of their own death, and others took the lives of family members to ensure a more dignified passing. While the official line is that the events of '65 are past and resolved, and that people prefer not to talk about it, for some survivors nothing has "returned to normal," problems persist, and the quest for justice remains a driving force in their lives.

There are some efforts toward public memorialization. A well-known choir composed of women survivors has been touring Java for several years. In 2015, after overcoming resistance from local authorities, a small memorial was erected in Plumbon, near Semarang, Central Java, on a mass grave site and, in 2019, the memorial was acknowledged by the International Center for the Promotion of Human Rights (CIPDH) under the auspices of UNESCO. In Degung Santikarma's natal house compound, there is a "'65 Park" that hosts art exhibits around issues relating to the violence of 1965 and its aftermath, discussed in more detail below.

Over the past decade, there has been enthusiasm in the general public to learn about 1965. This enthusiasm rose dramatically when Joshua Oppenheimer and his anonymous Indonesian collaborator(s) released documentaries about 1965, *The Act of Killing* (Oppenheimer et al., 2012), followed by *The Look of Silence* (Oppenheimer, 2014). Despite government bans, the films were screened in hundreds of locations across Indonesia, opening up discourse and changing many people's views on 1965. Indonesian journalists, artists, writers, and musicians are increasingly addressing this chapter in their work for national and international audiences (e.g., E. A., 2014/2017; Kurniawan, 2002/2015; Mardzoeki, 2014; Mulyani, 2017–2018; Seringai, 2018; Team Laporan Khusus Tempo, 2013). For young, liberal, activist, middle-class intelligentsia, Indonesia's troubled history of violence and oppression related to 1965 has become a popular topic of discussion and action, alongside environmentalism and class empowerment (Stoler, 2002).

The Film
The idea for this film grew out of my research on mental health in Indonesia (Lemelson & Suryani, 2006; Lemelson & Tucker, 2017). A number of respondents for that project were old enough to have lived through the events of 1965, yet the issue rarely came up. If it was mentioned, it was rapidly suppressed by whoever was in the room, be they clinicians, family members, or interviewees. The one extended discussion about '65 I did ultimately have was with Kereta, a Balinese rice farmer who suffered social anxiety and withdrawal, and sustained relationships with invisible spirit beings. During my last field interview with

Kereta in 1997, before I was to return home, he told his story in hushed tones. He had witnessed the brutal murder of his father and many other villagers at the hands of militia and local neighbors. This was not just the first time he was telling me – it was the first time he was telling anyone (Lemelson & Suryani, 2006). As I pursued other research, his story stayed with me. In 2002, I organized an interdisciplinary conference on trauma, culture, and the brain, which included trauma survivors and two of my Indonesian colleagues, Luh Ketut Suryani, a prominent Balinese psychiatrist, and Degung Santikarma, a Balinese anthropologist and activist, who had lived through the period of violence in 1965. It became clear that trauma narratives were contextualized for survivors not in terms of posttraumatic symptoms per se, but in terms of issues of identity,
status, and politics. I began to consider making a film on the relationship between childhood development, traumatic "exposure" and experience in Indonesia in 1965, and its relation to adult outcome. Crucially, the downfall of President Suharto's New Order regime in 1998 and the subsequent birth of the *Reformasi* movement in Indonesia with its glimmerings of political and social freedom allowed me to imagine such a project.

In collaboration with a group of Indonesian human rights activists, researchers, and clinicians, I thus began a multi-year visual psychological anthropology (VPA, although we weren't using the term yet) project. We knew we wanted to investigate how childhood trauma shaped emotions, developmental processes, life histories, health and illness, political subjectivity, and any other experience-near domains at stake for the subjects. We needed to find compelling characters and stories, and, in order to communicate clearly and situate their experiences, we planned to conduct interviews with and follow the lives of the main participants over a number of years, and then contextualize this "history through biography" approach with other voices and perspectives.

We began with those with whom I had an established relationship, either as subjects, colleagues, or friends, including Degung whom I met when he participated in the 2002 Trauma, Culture and the Brain conference I organized. In 2003, we began exploratory interviews and filming, starting with Kereta and a few other participants in my psychosis research, along with members of their families and communities. Over the next three years, we returned to Indonesia half a dozen times and searched for others who had experienced the violence of 1965 and the ensuing oppression and surveillance of New Order regime. We interviewed local political leaders and individuals in positions of social significance, such as puppeteers and healers, historians, ex-communist party members, former political leaders, and others.

Editing and post-production took place from 2006 to 2009, when *40 Years of Silence* was released. After an initial blacklist by the Indonesian government, the film began screening internationally and continues to circulate via digital distribution. Through outlets such as YouTube and Facebook, the film has been viewed hundreds of thousands of times in Indonesia, where it continues to spur discussion and debate. *40 Years* follows the testimonies of four participants and their families from Central Java and Bali, framed by historians' commentary, archival footage, photos, and recreations. We picked these families because they represented the diversity of the victims of the 1965 violence and its aftermath, in terms of ethnicity, social class, gender, religion, and age. In Bali, Kereta, the rice farmer, witnessed

his father's betrayal and execution during a village massacre, and, for the length of the New Order, withdrew into a world populated by Balinese spirits and gods. Degung, the son of high-caste intellectuals who were local leaders of the PKI, was sent away following his father's death and his mother's imprisonment. He returned home as a teenager and eventually became a scholar and activist. In Central Java, Lanny, an educated ethnic Chinese woman, was a teenager when her house was surrounded by an angry mob and her father taken away. After years of anger, and a profound spiritual experience, she has dedicated herself to good works.

Budi was born decades after the killings of 1965, yet he was harassed, stigmatized, and traumatized by local villagers in Java due to his father's status as an ex-political prisoner; the other members of his family also experienced persecution, stigma, and trauma. In the film, each participant describes their experiences during the events of '65 and their aftermath, and reflects upon the stigmatization and brutalization they continued to endure on village and state levels, some up until the present. Their individual narratives and perspectives reveal overarching commonalities and the impact of familial, social, and national contexts on the direct experience of fear and loss, and the long-term effect of childhood trauma on an individual's life course.

The film opens with a montage of black and white newsreel footage of '65, visually referencing the history of deportation, imprisonment, chaos, and violence. It then introduces the four main characters in the present with a few representative statements from each. Next comes an archival sequence with commentary, primarily in voice-over, from three 1965 historians (Baskara Wardaya, Geoffrey Robinson, John Roosa) and myself. As a narrative device throughout the film, these voices illustrate the historical setting while orienting the viewer to the passage of time and key themes. Moving forward, the film is organized chronologically and thematically, moving between the characters while allowing each their own story.

"Before 1965: Memories of Childhood" provides historical background and establishes the relationship of childhood traumatic exposure to later developmental outcomes. Each participant looks back on their childhood and adolescence. Their generally pleasant and positive memories stand in stark contrast to later experiences of violence, oppression, stigma, and surveillance. The only character who does not have happy childhood memories is Budi, who grew up "the child of a communist." As he tells his story, the linkages between this stigmatized identity, brutal treatment at the hands of fellow villagers, intergenerational trauma, and troubling trauma symptoms become explicit. The second section, "The Violence of '65: Fear and Loss," focuses on significant political, economic, and cultural events underlying the massacres. The film describes the extrajudicial killings, illustrating the progression from community violence to arrests, detentions, and ultimately, mass killings. The third section covers the period of surveillance and social control under Suharto's autocratic regime. "The New Order: Suffering and Silence" illustrates what life was like for survivors, many of whom were stigmatized as communist party members or had communist party members in their family. The film notes, too, how this social sanction was imbued with gender politics and gendered violence via the targeting of Gerwani members. The final chapter, "Silence Receding, Voices Emerging: 1998 – Present," documents the beginnings of

a more open, democratic period in Indonesia's history, following the fall of the Suharto regime, regarding understanding and possible narratives of 1965.

Throughout the film, we privilege individual accounts of personal experience, life concerns, and life course. In these, we see how trauma is experienced differently in relation to its social context and individual character. We see also the long-term and multigenerational experiences of trauma and how ongoing structural violence and social conditions do not leave the trauma contained in a singular event or time.

Here, we now turn to a more detailed ethnographic account of each participant's narrative, gleaned directly from their testimony, some of which did not make it into the finished film. We first give their histories and then, later, discuss how they eventually came to live with, and in some ways resolve, those experiences. There are clear shared elements in their histories, and, to some extent, in the way they experience ongoing trauma. The ways in which they respond over the longer term, however, reflect meaningful differences in their lives. A note: Over the course of filmmaking, we came to consider Budi the "main character." While he did not himself experience the events of 1965, given his young age, he offered us the opportunity to witness processes of traumatization and resilience directly, rather than in retrospect, and so we lead with him both in the film and in the writing here.

Participants' Histories
Budi and His Family
I want to take revenge so that they realize what they did was wrong. Because ever since I was a child, my family has been outcast. I think my future is complicated. It's like it's disappearing before my eyes. Budi was not even born in '65 yet his life was deeply impacted by its events and effects. His story is really the story of his entire family. His mother, Mini, was a young girl at the time. Her father was accused of being a communist and was first sent to a Yogyakarta prison and then transferred four years later to an island prison off the southern coast of Java for another nine years. Mini's older sisters were expelled from school for being the "children of communists" and sent away to live with distant relatives. Mini was left behind with her two younger sisters; they barely escaped starvation. When she was 14, Mini went to work as a housemaid (Fig. 2.1).

Fig. 2.1 Mini, Budi, and Mudakir

Soon after, Mini's family arranged a marriage with Mudakir, which she adamantly opposed. Mudakir was 15 years her senior, at times violent with her, and Mini soon learned that he, like her father, had been imprisoned for being an alleged communist and was required to attend regular "rehabilitation" meetings.

For his part, Mudakir was struggling with life as an ex-political prisoner. He had grown up in a poor village on the outskirts of Yogyakarta and by high school was already supporting himself as a coffee salesman. Hot tempered, he often got into fights. He fell in love with a local woman and hoped to marry her, but the village headman's son was also courting her and, as the events of G30S unfolded, he denounced Mudakir as a communist. Mudakir later discovered the woman he loved had married the man who turned him in. Mudakir was arrested and imprisoned for 14 years, although he always denied he was a PKI member. As a "Category B" prisoner, defined as a PKI member, sympathizer, or a suspected participant in the aborted coup, he was sent to a series of jails and prisons, including the infamous Buru Island. Mudakir compared prison to a "cage of lions" and acknowledges that the recurrent beatings and subsequent possible cerebral trauma he suffered at the hands of his captors exacerbated his already quick temper, making it difficult for him to "think clearly." He

continues to struggle with emotional control and recognizes that this makes things more difficult for his wife and their two boys.

While Mini and Mudakir love their children – Kris, the oldest, and Budi, eight years younger – as working-class Javanese (B.I. *rakyat kecil*) branded with a politically denigrated label, their lives have been difficult. The family settled in a village where they were the only Christian family, among the poorest, and stigmatized for Mudakir's status as "ex-PKI." Mini suffered ongoing sexual harassment by male villagers, but when she reported the problem, local leaders threatened her. She was told "not to do anything stupid" or her husband would be sent back to prison. Villagers tormented the boys, calling them *anak PKI*, literally "children of the communist party." When he was young, a group took Kris down to the river, saying they were going to teach him how to swim, but instead tried to drown him. As he grew, he was often beaten by villagers – kicked in the head, pelted with stones. Villagers set the boys up to get in trouble. When Kris was 17, an older teenager invited him to join in stealing a bicycle that had been abandoned in a rice field. The villagers caught them in what Kris described as a setup. They let the other boy go, but in a form of customary law "justice," which prescribes severe punishment for suspected thievery, they beat Kris, stoned him, stripped him naked, and paraded him about while an angry crowd whipped and hit him. Even the local military police joined in.

Budi was nine years old at the time and witnessed the "punishment." Kris cried and called out for him, and Budi wanted to help, but he was dragged away and narrowly escaped a beating himself. Mini, unable to go to local authorities who had themselves participated in the violence, filed a lawsuit against the military police officers who had tortured Kris. Soon after, a sympathetic officer warned her that the local newspapers were going to publicize her case and urged her to leave the village for safety, as villagers would likely retaliate. The very next day, the family fled to Yogyakarta. For a while, they would return to their former house for upkeep, but after about a year, villagers demolished it.

Despite the move, Budi continued to suffer. He frequently fell victim to his father and older brother's violence, and was tormented by the memories of seeing his brother hurt. He had frequent nightmares that his brother was being murdered or tortured and daily flashbacks of the traumatic event: When he remembered how his brother had looked after the beating, his face grotesquely swollen, Budi would suffer somaticized symptoms, such as debilitating stomach cramps, autonomic arousal, and subsequent anxiety. He would start to feel out of breath, dizzy and hot, his heart pounding, his skin prickly. His fists would clench up and he would feel the urge to strike something or someone. He also suffered recurrent fainting spells.

Community members noticed his distress – and his family's dysfunction. Mini belonged to a Catholic organization, and some members suggested she place Budi in a nearby orphanage, where he might start to feel a bit more secure and socially self-assured away from what one nun called a "hostile environment," not to mention get a free education. At first, Mini, who was very close to Budi, refused; but she did pity Budi as the object of family and community aggression, and ultimately a local priest helped persuade her.

Budi ended up living at the orphanage on and off for over two years, but he struggled there as well. He had difficulty concentrating on his schoolwork and everyday tasks, and didn't get along with the other children. His nightmares and physical complaints continued. He had frequent suicidal ideation and was once found standing on the rim of a deep well, contemplating jumping. He was obsessed, too, with revenge fantasies and watched violent, revenge-themed movies. The nuns at the orphanage worried that he seemed lost in his daydreams, which, as an Indonesian idiom of distress, indicates vulnerability to spirit possession or mental breakdown, and so they referred him for psychiatric counseling with Dr. Mahar. Budi told Dr. Mahar: After all these problems I do not know who I am anymore ... I now want to do evil things. For example, I want to assassinate, to torture them the way they tortured my family members ... I wanted to blow up their houses so that they experience the grief and pain my family and I have been suffering. Budi was given antipsychotic medication and, after finishing elementary school at the orphanage, received a scholarship at a nearby private junior high. But, still consumed with fears and fantasies of revenge, Budi fought with his peers, was expelled, and refused to return to school at all.

Lanny
What did not kill me could only strengthen me. I learned to be strong from my environment, although people avoided me as if I were a leper. According to me, the best step is for those people who are suffering to rise up. We can show the society that we are humans who are really incredible creatures. So, we take revenge on those who hurt us ... by way of something that is useful. Lanny was born into a wealthy and well-respected Chinese-Indonesian family in 1952, the third child out of eight. Her father, Alex, was a prominent community leader in the Chinese-Indonesian merchant community of Klaten, Central Java. He owned a successful bakery and a bicycle shop. At a time when almost nobody owned a car, he owned two. Out of all her siblings, Lanny was closest with her father. She saw him as her "hero" and loved when he would take her riding around town on one of his many motorcycles. She modeled herself after him, seeing herself as a hero, too (Fig. 2.2).

Fig. 2.2 Lanny

Chinese-Indonesians have historically been targets for long simmering resentments and social prejudice. The Dutch colonial regime had ghettoized Chinese communities while providing for some affluent and powerful positions as merchants and middlemen (Coppel, 2005; Sai & Hoon, 2012). These resentments found an outlet during the events of 1965: Although few were associated with the communist party, Chinese homes and businesses in the Yogyakarta area were burned and numerous people were arrested or "disappeared." A large mob gathered in front of Lanny's house at that time, hurling stones and axes and demanding Alex show his face. The family piled up sandbags and hid in terror as the violence escalated and shots were fired. Crouched down and fearing for her life, Lanny saw her father flee out the back, wearing nothing but his undershirt. She said, "At that moment, I remember, the image of him as a hero collapsed."

Several weeks later, Alex was captured and brought to a local internment camp. At first, the family was able to visit. Lanny remembers seeing her father through the iron bars of his prison cell: "I didn't want to cry … He said, 'Be good,' and then he took off his ring and gave it to me … That was a very, very maybe big trauma." After this, Alex was moved to another prison and never returned. Lanny said, "We were given news that Father wasn't there and

all his clothing was returned to us. Ah! I understood. He's dead. But that's it. What could we do? Only hatred was left."

Lanny began to suffer migraines. She couldn't stand loud noise and startled easily, her heart would race, and she would panic at the sight of vertical lines or men in uniform, which reminded her of the prison. She became forgetful, unable to recall even the name of her long-time school desk-mate. She had troubling episodes of mental "blankness": She once "came to" and found herself riding a motorcycle, not knowing when she had left or where she was going. She developed a nervous stomach that left her frequently nauseated, and she took up smoking, which was uncommon for women at the time.

Lanny was also saddled with new responsibilities. Alex's disappearance had created a crisis in her family. Her mother was distraught so Lanny, the eldest still at home, took over business operations and the daily care of her younger siblings. The bakery had to close, and soldiers frequently raided the bicycle shop. While Lanny has always envisioned herself as the tough heroine, her younger brother, Edy, saw the impact of their situation upon her. He explains, "My sister was Dad's golden child. She was absolutely at a loss at that time. So, as soon as Dad was taken away, she was devastated."

Instead of becoming a leader, Lanny became harsh, easily enraged, filled with a desire for revenge. She scolded anyone who showed sadness, seeing this as a sign of "weakness." She became further isolated, because as she said, "PKI children were like lepers. So, at school, I had no friends … Because at that time, it was very easy for people to say, "communist", then later tonight, you disappear and bye-bye.

I understood they didn't want to be friends with me because they were afraid." Lanny had her heart set on medical school and had been accepted. But the school demanded one million rupiah extra under the table (at that time, an astronomical sum) for Lanny to enroll. Her mother offered half but was denied. Lanny became an English major instead.

Lanny describes her life: "I got too angry with God. I was so angry with the government. Even my footsteps expressed anger. The tension between life and death, also the tension between what's going to happen tomorrow. Will we eat? I became very fierce." Then, in 1978, when Lanny was 26, she had her first spiritual awakening: So maybe, hatred made me live. But also, at the same time, it killed me. Spiritually, I was very, very disappointed. I would sit outside and say, "Why? Where is God? Why does he let this happen?" And some priest would come and he would say, "Oh, please don't doubt God's love. Let's pray and ask for forgiveness" and on and on … And I said, "Bullshit!" You know? … And when I started to really rebel against God, then I had this experience of seeing light. You know, very bright light. And I heard something like, "I am God." So, I still remember, I kneeled … knelt down and I said, "Okay, I now know that you are there," and then I said, "Use me for good things." … Then I felt peace in my heart – a feeling I had never had. Wonderful peace.

Twenty years later, after a life-changing Theravadin Buddhist Vipassana meditation course, Lanny became a practicing Buddhist and her discovery of meditation provided her profound insight into the nature of attachment and impermanence, which had so crippled her in the

wake of the loss of her father. While many of her symptoms still persist – such as the episodes of "blankness" – this insight has had lasting effects on her life. She founded a center for Buddhist meditation, which conducts good works. She has also written extensively about her experiences during 1965 and afterward (Anggawati, 2001), and with the self-understanding she has achieved, she has become an inspiring teacher.

Degung
The impact of the '65 tragedy was not limited to the disappearance of my father. It had an impact on me and on the fragmenting of the relationships in my family. The discrimination really resonates. And that is not allowed to happen to my children. And I promise to my children … that's something that I'll fight for until the end.

Degung Santikarma was born into a high-caste, educated, well-respected
and well-off Balinese family, the second of three children. His family was one of the first in the neighborhood to have a car. He also enjoyed products from abroad, such as a coveted pair of swimming trunks. He remembers a happy childhood (Fig. 2.3).
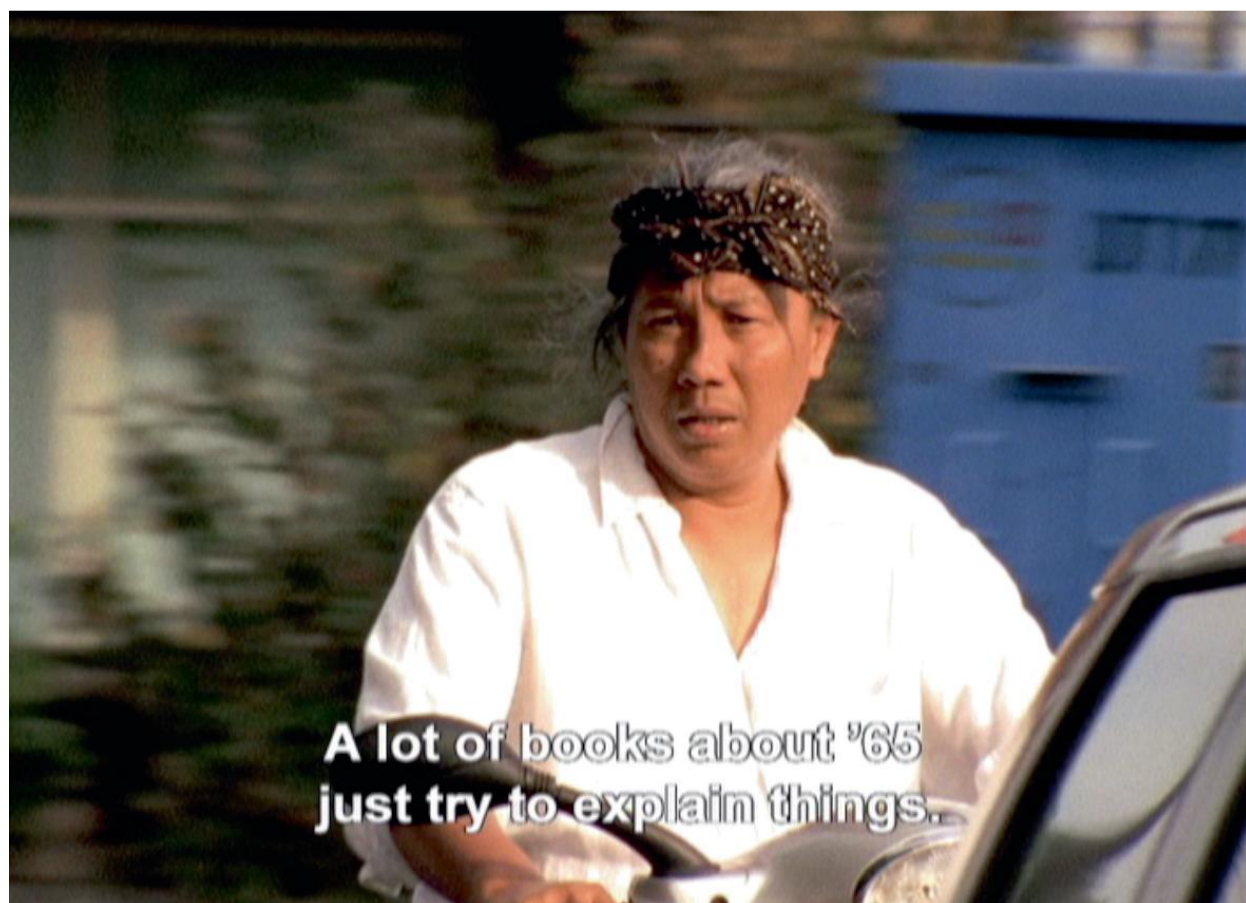
Fig. 2.3 Degung Santikarma

His parents had an arranged marriage and didn't get along well, but both were politically active, often travelling outside the country for conferences. Degung describes his father as

"an important person" who spoke English, taught Sanskrit, and held a Bachelor's degree. He was connected to the communist party and was a founder of the Parisadha, a Hindu institution putting forth the controversial idea of rationalizing and streamlining rituals. Degung's mother was renowned in the village for being a typist, which was associated with writing – a potentially subversive act in volatile times. She worked as an administrator in the Department of Public Health and was a member of Gerwani, the women's movement associated with the PKI. Their family compound was known for being a "center of culture."

Degung was five years old in 1965. When the violence and chaos first reached his village, he was too young to understand its implications; in fact, he remembers the thrill of houses burning and people crowded in the streets, and the novelty of being awake in the middle of the night or hiding out in the temple. Gradually, fear and horror took the place of excitement, as a beloved neighborhood doctor was killed and as Degung witnessed corpses piling up on the streets and riverbanks of his village.

They killed them in front of their houses, dragged their bodies. And they just buried them by the leaves. You know, I was just playing … And then when I walked with my Auntie, I thought, ew. We saw guts. It stopped being fun. They just killed people like *caru* [animal sacrifice]. Mutilated.

This violence soon devastated Degung's own immediate family. His parents' local renown as progressives, activists, and strong personalities made them targets of governmental violence and perhaps also village and even family jealousy. First, Degung's father was taken by paramilitary members affiliated with the PNI for interrogation.

Degung's sister remembers: He was taken from the jail, then paraded around the city, with them saying that my father was an evil person. "This is Mr. PKI." Like that. Paraded around the town square. Many people from
the family saw it but didn't dare … they just cried. I didn't see it myself at that time, I just heard the stories. Eventually, my father was taken for the very last time. We didn't know ourselves that he had died.

Soon after Degung's father's death, his mother was also imprisoned. While in jail, she developed a relationship with a guard. When the family found out, they were furious and accused her of being a prostitute. Shunned and threatened, and possibly because she had been raped in prison, Degung's mother married the prison guard and left Degung with his father's family. But members of Degung's extended family and the village ostracized him as well, avoiding or taunting him because of his communist connections. Degung felt deeply abandoned and rejected. He couldn't believe his own mother would leave him. "I hated my mother. I don't know why. Because I think she left me, because nobody took care of me."

Degung also had a hard time accepting the way people were treating each other in the wake of the mass killings and imprisonments. Friends, family, and respected community members had all shown themselves to be untrustworthy. There were deep divisions within their household and their temple, so bitter that the family built a literal wall between those who had been nationalists and those who had been communists. Degung calls his village the "most

fucked up village in the world." He and his siblings were brought up in an environment that Degung felt was "really, really, very, very, very, very unfair." Within the family and village, they were scapegoated and outcast. Hoping to remove him from this situation and help him reinvent himself without the stigma of being an *anak PKI*, Degung's paternal grandmother sent him to live with a distant paternal (*dadia*) uncle in Surabaya, in East Java. While temporarily sending unruly children to live with an extended family member for discipline is normative, with the idea that such an environment will be less indulgent than the typical natal family (Supartini, personal communication, 2010), this felt cruel to Degung, who was grieving the loss of his parents and felt he had done no wrong. Furthermore, the uncle was an exceedingly harsh disciplinarian, so Degung ran away and found refuge with a group of prostitutes in the Wonokromo neighborhood, who cared for him as best they could. While Degung continued to attend school, he also lived as a street kid, surviving on food he had stolen. He returned to Bali some years later as a "wild boy" but received some life-changing guidance from another *dadia* uncle there, who had been in high school in 1965 and had been imprisoned.

My uncle [came] back from jail and began to see me. "Degung, you can do everything as naughty as you can. One thing I beg you, don't give up education. If you give up education, I will never speak to you again in all your life." And then I become really smart in the class. Even I go to university. And then I started to study about human rights, and I turned into an activist.

Inspired by this uncle to value education, Degung aspired to be a professor, but was denied work as a lecturer due to his "unclean environment," a reference to his family's association with communism. Despite this, he became an academic, a journalist, and a human rights activist. He received a postgraduate degree from the University of Melbourne, was a research assistant at the prestigious Institute for Advanced Studies in the US, worked with Hildred Geertz at Princeton, and has taught at George Mason University. A significant part of his work is advocating for a more direct and open dialogue about the events of 1965, and about the flows of power in his country.

Kereta
I saw all of them who were stabbed, those who were beaten. I saw all of them … My thoughts can't return to what they used to be. It's like they give in to that fear. Every day, night or day, I was always afraid. I wanted to hide in a quiet place, but there were always creatures and sounds. There was an image of a black creature. The rice fields were full of voices.

We have written and published extensively on Kereta's story elsewhere (Lemelson, 2016; Lemelson & Suryani, 2006; Lemelson & Tucker, 2017), as well as devoted an entire film to his story (Lemelson, 2010) and refer readers to those materials. We feel his story was significant in our account of the traumas following 1965 and want to include it here, but we give a more minimal outline in order to devote space to those whose experiences we have not yet discussed at length. We do not return to Kereta in Parts III and IV of this volume (Fig. 2.4).

Fig. 2.4 Nyoman Kereta

Nyoman Kereta was born in 1942 in a rural Central Balinese village. His formal education ended after elementary school. He remembers a pleasant and uneventful childhood shaped by the rhythms of rice agriculture and the Balinese ritual calendar, punctuated by the excitement of playing the legong for local gamelan performances. In 1965, Kereta was twenty-one. Military and paramilitary forces entered his village looking for suspected

communists. Kereta's brother in-law was a police officer and asked that the family's lives be spared.

Still, as a known PKI sympathizer, Kereta was sure he was in mortal danger and fled to the trees to hide. From his perilous perch, he witnessed a massacre of villagers in which both killers and victims were personal acquaintances. After they were done beating people, they buried them, only there were those who were still screaming. You could hear their screams coming up from the earth, "Oh!" ... The people were still breathing. After that, they were just buried and those who had done it left. They disappeared, all of them disappeared. Then, soon after, he witnessed his patrilineal cousin take part in the brutal assassination of his own father, luring him outside the family compound to be killed. He said, "I saw my father when he was being beaten. They had gouged out his eyes ... I didn't dare look at that. That was too brutal."

Kereta's brother, Rarad, says that for years afterward, Kereta lived in a state of perpetual fear, thinking, "Will I be killed today or tomorrow?" Surviving PKI members or sympathizers were photographed for surveillance. The family re-registered as loyal to Golkar, Suharto's political party, for safety. Kereta believes his constant terror in the wake of these killings weakened his life force. For months after the massacre, he had difficulty eating and became very thin and withdrawn. He was easily startled and could feel his heart beating rapidly. His mind often went blank and an "inner pressure" weighed him down. He had difficulty falling asleep and was frequently awakened by nightmares of being chased or people being butchered.

Kereta had been deeply scarred by the killings and his continuing suffering remained visible to those around him. Ten years later, Kereta ate some eels he had caught in an irrigation ditch, not knowing that they had been recently sprayed with the powerful and since banned insecticide, Endrin. He was sick for months with vomiting and dizziness, further exacerbating his already vulnerable condition. After his recovery, in 1980, his family arranged a marriage for him. His wife to-be was less than half his age – not quite sixteen – and although quite reluctant at first, succumbed to the families' wishes. For the first few months of their marriage, she didn't talk to Kereta and even returned to her family home for a year. But his siblings begged her to return, she accepted her fate, and they reunited. Slowly, the relationship grew warm. They had a son. Then, in 1984, they had a daughter, who died soon after being delivered. For Kereta, the grief of this event triggered memories of all that he had lost in '65. He wept uncontrollably. He started seeing and talking to spirits known as *wong samar*, who he soon feared wanted to possess him. When he became so withdrawn that he would not leave his bedroom, his family sought treatment from traditional healers and a psychiatrist. Using a combination of local medicine and biomedical drugs, he would move through bouts of recovery and relapse, as he "still remembered the things that hurt."

This back-and-forth has continued to the time of writing. Kereta says he has been living in two worlds for the past thirty-some years, the world of his family and community and the world of the spirits. When Kereta is feeling well, he is active in neighborhood activities, such as playing in the local village gamelan orchestra. He is able to contribute to the family livelihood through farming, growing flowers, and making offerings to sell in the market. He

is treated fondly by his wife, sons, and brother. But when he is disturbed again by the spirits, he withdraws.

Participants' Experiences and Responses
Budi: Internalized Victimization, Eroded Trust, and Desire for Revenge

Over more than a decade of interviews, Budi has consistently framed his lived experience in terms of wrongful victimization and righteous revenge. As a child, structural factors may have left Budi feeling he had few other options. The intersection of Indonesian national politics and local hierarchies enabled his abuse. His socioeconomic positionality as the youngest in a poor, troubled family at the bottom of both maternal and paternal extended families; his lack of education; his religious identity as Catholic in a predominantly Muslim area; and, perhaps most importantly, his status as an *anak PKI* left him vulnerable. Many of the behavior conventions and restrictions that would typically protect a child from being so mistreated were lifted, and typical avenues for recourse were largely unavailable. Budi seemed all too aware of this, despite his young age, and saw violence as a more realistic – and perhaps more satisfying – response.

When he was a pre-teen, this desire for revenge manifested in violent fantasies and schemes. Budi taught himself to mix various poisons and build bombs. In addition to providing a cathartic outlet, the skills he gained offered him a self-image worthy of a respect he had not previously gotten from peers or teachers. He boasted: My former school principal called me the "insane professor" because of my vast knowledge in the field of explosives, and … poisons. I was satisfied because although I was slow in schoolwork, none of the children my age at that time [had] that…

As Budi matured, his desire for "revenge" slowly evolved into a desire for "justice." He found himself drawn to martial arts and, in 2006, began training in a classic Javanese form of *pencak silat*. The breathing and meditation exercises and physical improvisation of the "free fight" gave Budi a bodily, spiritual, and psychological outlet for calming himself and channeling his emotions at times of difficulty. Budi seemed to feel increasingly stable and brave (B.I. *berani*). He felt emboldened enough to return to his old village and stand up to past tormentors. He now wanted to help others, saying, "I will see what kind of problems they have, and if the problems are like mine, then I will use my own experiences to help them without any reservation."

It is quite likely that, in addition to his own cognitive development and personal growth, Budi's new courage was fostered by significant shifts in the sociopolitical climate regarding the legacy of 1965. Some of the worst abuses Budi's family suffered occurred during widespread national unrest in the late 1990s and early 2000s, after the Asian economic crisis and Suharto's fall. Conflicts, often violent, flared up between ethnic and religious groups, but alleged ex-PKI members were often scapegoated by communities reeling from the economic downturn and primed by years of dehumanizing anti-Communist political propaganda (Robinson, 2018). As our interviews went on, the political unrest abated somewhat, and public forums on 1965 became more common. The shift in the public discourse around 1965 offered Budi a glimpse of what justice might look like. Now, Budi could say to a former bully,

"If you want to continue torturing me, fine, but it will be added to my brother's (legal) case ... Now there is law" (Fig. 2.5).

Fig. 2.5 Budi's growing strength

In addition to more formal legal changes, the stories of other survivors were starting to circulate more widely, though often in secret. Budi and his family read some of these, and hesitantly showed the research team a worn, photocopied volume filled with survivor accounts. These helped build a shared counternarrative against the shame of the hegemonic state narrative of '65 and its aftermath, highlighting instead survivor innocence and resilience.

However, a decade after the film's release, it has become clear that for Budi, basic trust in others is difficult after an early life filled with stigmatization, violence, and family disintegration. In adulthood, Budi has had significant difficulty moving past a narrative in which he is victimized, taken advantage of, or wronged. This template for relationships often plunges him into a cycle of paranoia and fear, contending that people are slandering (B.I *memfitnah*), tricking, and mocking him behind his back. He admits he frequently fights with his peers and superiors, and told us a representative anecdote: Having lost his dog, he then suspected an acquaintance had stolen it, fantasized about killing that person's dog, and even

kicked the dog in real life. This embattled orientation toward the world has made it difficult for Budi to find steady work. Budi is interested in electronics and computers, but jobs, first as a sound technician and then installing surveillance cameras, both ended quickly due to workplace conflicts.

Then, after making a connection with Lanny through the film, Budi was hired to work at her school, first in a janitorial capacity and then inputting library information into a database and repairing computers throughout the campus. This job also came to an end: Spyware was discovered on all the school computers and Budi may or may not have engaged in hacking to do things like print vouchers for luxury hotels where he could stay for free. Budi admitted to making such vouchers, but denied purposefully installing any spyware. Afraid that Budi would access bank account or other sensitive information, Lanny let him go. Most recently, Budi found work with a hospital cleaning service and quickly climbed the ranks to team leader, but remains dissatisfied and unhappy.

Mini, Mudakir, Kris: Endurance Through Ongoing Suffering
Since the film's release, Budi's family has continued to struggle financially and socially. Like many with a marked identity card as the daughter of a political prisoner, it has been difficult for Mini to find formal work, so she gets by nannying and sewing and receives government assistance. With Mudakir and Budi, Mini moved back to her hometown, where she feels less social stigma. Her husband, however, remains estranged; while people are not outright rude Mudakir is sure they are avoiding and privately judging him, and says they often short him for his tailoring work. After many years spent as a busker, Kris found work as a security guard at a local storehouse, but struggles to make ends meet. He is married and lives with his wife and young son nearby (Fig. 2.6).

Fig. 2.6 Kris and his friends singing "Destiny of My Nation"

Mini's suffering persists. She has recurring dreams rife with symbolism of struggle and loneliness, where she is carrying her children through rising toxic floodwaters, or finds herself alone in vast, abandoned cemeteries (Wardaya, 2011/2013). Still, she has found comfort in her Catholic faith, attending evening prayer meetings and identifying with the suffering of Jesus. The meaningful surrender to suffering harmonizes with the Javanese idioms of acceptance (B.I. *nerima*), surrender to God (B.I. *pasrah*), and trust in the divine plan (B.I.*sumarah*) (Supartini et al., 2019), a syncretism encapsulated in her statement: "This is the life I have to live. I'm a puppet and God is the Great Puppeteer". According to Supartini et al. (2019), these notions of surrender must not be misconstrued as weakness, powerlessness, or hopelessness, rather a culturally syntonic (Subandrijo, 2000) process of personal spiritual contemplation, interpretation, and constructive response. Mini also joined a group called the Friends of Mother Theresa, with whom she shares her grief and conducts good works.

Like Budi, Mini has found support from the growing survivor movement in Indonesia. Once the family had fled their former village and their house was destroyed, she had given up hope of ever regaining the property. But, through filming activities, she connected with a Muslim Indonesian organization dedicated to seeking justice for survivors of the 1965 political violence. This group worked with her toward re-establishing legal ownership of the land.

This advocacy, and again the feeling of finally being heard and responded to, made her feel as though she were, as she said, "no longer trash."

Lanny: Moving Past Anger Through Buddhist Detachment and Pragmatic Action

Lanny's method of coping with the lingering traumas of 1965 combines Javanese and Buddhist philosophies of skillful living with a tough, pragmatic personal attitude. Lanny compares herself to the Srikandi character in the Mahabharata; this character is born a woman but is raised as a man, prefers warfare to domestic arts, and bears great responsibility for defending the kingdom. In some ways, this warriorlike personality is evident in Lanny's response to the trials she has faced.

Lanny says that her proactive orientation toward hardship was an adaptive survival mechanism learned from her family, which tended to be "hard rather than sentimental." Expressions of grief in the family were met with black humor; they focused instead on what could be done. A favorite Chinese proverb of hers is, "Instead of weeping, why don't you just sweep the floor; at least your room will be clean." In *40 Years*, Lanny does share her experiences of great grief, loss, disillusionment, and panic. After her father's arrest, people she had once considered her friends, "treated her like rubbish," and avoided her. At that time, she was terribly hurt and decided that to maintain her own dignity, she would never seek sympathy ever again. In her mind, this would be demeaning, like "begging for money."

Lanny equates prolonged grief or other symptoms of lingering trauma to self-indulgence or self-absorption – when you realize the scope of other people's loss, it seems almost shameful to acquiesce to your own feelings of loss or helplessness. As she says, "You get sad you lost your shoes, but someone else lost their legs! Just keep going." A number of Lanny's friends had terrifying experiences during 1965, including a woman who was electrocuted in her vagina with an iron prod during torture, and a man who, when seeking a private place to defecate, was accused of trying to escape and forced at gunpoint to eat his own excrement. These experiences were instructive to Lanny about the nature of human beings. In them, she sees both their capacity for sadistic behavior and, more importantly, for resilience. These friends have survived. They have shared their experience with Lanny, but she says she won't "let [them] cry about it" because to cry about it would be weak and "if you are weak, you are dead." Lanny advocates channeling grief into anger, which she sees as a protective emotion – "when [survivors] are angry, they're OK" – and then using that anger to fuel positive action. "To hell with the past, let's do something good." She seems to think that this is a matter of self-control and free will – "choosing" grief, hopelessness, depression, or existential doubt regarding past trauma is to "foolishly" get "pulled into the circles of useless things."

She has embraced the Buddhist principle that life is suffering, to deal with '65 and its legacy. Lanny in no way thinks that the troubles she and her family experienced were their fault. But, whether their suffering was "deserved" or not, the art of life is to face this suffering while striving not to create more for oneself or others. Lanny even says she believes the lessons of '65 gave her a "gift": "I understand that if I can stand tall now, it's because of suffering in the

past." Lanny believes this orientation toward suffering has allowed her to live without lingering effects of trauma, while others remain deeply affected.

As one of the victims of G30S/PKI, I have often been asked: "How did you get out of the trauma?" My answer is simple: "I was fed up with suffering. I have had enough. No more!" In giving that answer, I want to say to those who still have trauma, hatred, grudge over what happened a decade longer than half a century ago (1965): "Why do you still enjoy being in suffering?" Of course they will deny, saying that nobody likes to suffer. "Only insane people enjoy suffering." They are right. Most of us are insane ... Maybe I am also insane in thinking that actually I am the captain of my own "ship".

I have been to several meetings with G30S victims. It was interesting to see how the atmosphere was thick with negativities: anger, sadness, wanting attention, wanting help, wanting justice ... I could not help wondering how much they had suffered all those years. How many months, days, hours, minutes, seconds they had wasted in suffering ... I do not understand why psychologists usually ask depressed people to tell their life stories, and so the patients relive (readily and happily) the suffering they have memorized so far – thus make it stronger. I think it is cruel to do so! They should ask, "What do you do hour by hour?" ... MAKE THE BEST OF WHATEVER WE HAVE. Do something useful physically: making the bed, sweeping the floor, rearrange the wardrobe; do physical
exercises, take children to school, teach nieces and nephews, do social work ... And STOP FEELING WE ARE THE MOST MISERABLE PEOPLE IN THE WHOLE PLANET! Insane ....
(Anggawati, personal communication, January 20, 2020) In addition to reclaiming control over her personal narrative of trauma, Lanny tries to live her life according to the Buddhist/Javanese principle of karma. She strongly believes what you put into the world in terms of selfless good deeds and generosity, will flow back to you. Through traditional Javanese asceticism, she pursues moral conduct and has renounced worldly pleasures.

After the film, Lanny founded a K–12 school, Putra Bangsa ("Child of the Nation"), now ranked in the top three schools in the province of Central Java. She is a savvy networker and fundraiser. She also has a reputation for being strict – students with classes on the fourth floor are not allowed to take the elevator but must use the stairs to "build character" – but she is also deeply sympathetic. As part of the school's mission, Lanny takes at-risk students under her wing. She has worked with recovering addicts, students with histories of sex work, and those with major mental illness. While Budi was not a student, she hired him in the same spirit.

She has chosen to remain single and celibate and lives with four other practicing Buddhists who teach or work at the school. In her free time, she translates Buddhist texts. As she ages, she has begun to teach at local university and is slowly stepping back from leadership roles in her school and temple, preparing successors to take her place.

Degung: Advocating for Critical Dialogue
Degung has also turned outward in some ways, dedicating his life to taking a public, vocal, and productively critical approach toward Balinese society. After pursuing a graduate degree

in Australia, he became a cultural anthropologist and is a prominent scholar of Balinese culture with interests in violence, gender, post-conflict social life, transitional justice, and the politics of memory and identity. He has authored chapters and books, and lead activist events, discussions, and workshops and been called a "maverick" for his writing and public speaking, which challenge stereotypes about Balinese life and boldly question the status quo. He was for many years the editor-in-chief of the magazine *Latitudes*, about Balinese culture, news, and arts, which published serious investigative journalism, humor pieces, and other contributions. He has also been called upon by Indonesian and global news sources, such as the New York Times, as an expert commentator on Balinese life and culture. He married American anthropologist Leslie Dwyer, and together, they have taught and published research articles and books on political violence in Bali (2007a, 2007b; Dwyer & Santikarma, 2003). Degung also continued to work with the Elemental Productions team as a collaborator, anthropologist, researcher, interviewer for years after *40 Years*, and had a vital role in the research and production of *Bitter Honey* (Lemelson, 2015).

The heartbreaking experience of feeling abandoned by his mother gradually developed for Degung into an understanding that she may had to make difficult choices to ensure both her own survival and his, and may have been pressured into leaving him. He has also come to terms with the fact that his grandmother was marginalized by her status as related to communists and, therefore, having an "unclean" family environment and did what she thought best for him when she sent him to live, unhappily, in Surabaya. He has come to connect his experiences to that of an entire cohort:

A lot of my generation grew up like that. They ended up just quitting school because the society give them a hard time – or, you just become like a scapegoat for everything [that] happened to other kids. ... I remember, since I was a kid, if other kids were naughty, that [was] because of me. I influence other kids. It just become like, you know, black sheep. ... Sometimes, if you're not strong enough to bear it, usually you just quit, frustrated, not go to school, become a drinker, or become a cockfighter. A lot of my friends are like that, in my village. ... That's the ironic side of it. They sent me to Java, I meet the same kind of environment. But up there, because the society is more like an in-and-out kind of community ... there's nobody asking you really who you are. Once you're there, you know, you're just busy how to survive. It doesn't matter. Identity is no longer an issue. Just surviving, survive, survive.

In trying to understand the choices that faced not only the members of his family but many more like them during the events of 1965, with a career's worth of experience in facilitating similar discussions, Degung has initiated conversations with fellow villagers about 1965, including alleged perpetrators, despite the strong disapproval of his family. *40 Years* captures Degung confronting his neighbor, Ketut, about his role in targeting villagers, including Degung's own family members, for imprisonment and execution. In a chilling exchange, this alleged perpetrator managed to formally deny any wrongdoing while, in veiled terms, reassert power over Degung's kin and insinuate that he could and would do the same thing again. In that moment onscreen, which carried culturally mandated norms of politeness and politically entrenched patterns of impunity, Degung was left speechless (Fig. 2.7).

Fig. 2.7 Degung reacts to Ketut's veiled threat

But undeterred by the complexities of confrontation, Degung continues to engage issues of culture, power, and domination in contemporary Indonesia, presents his activist and scholarly work nationally and internationally, and conducts public conversations and debates with other journalists and academics. He researches *Gerwani*, to which his mother belonged. Some of his work explores how globalized forms of commerce and international relationships perpetuate silence around 1965. For example, Degung connects the mandates of a tourist economy, and its demands of presenting Bali as a peaceful paradise with smiling inhabitants, with an enforced amnesia about past and present violence, unrest, or discontent on the island. For Degung, addressing his personal experiences of grief occurs in concert with political engagement.

Degung continues to work to create a space for dialogue about '65 beyond the state control of the narrative, to open family and neighborhood discussion and truth telling, to push back against stigmatization of the *anak PKI* label, and foster local reconciliation between youth coming from families of perpetrators and victims. He and his wife have a goal of creating a research and training institute around '65 dialogue. Some family members who wanted to memorialize the survivor experience built "The 65 Park", which is located inside the family compound. It is dedicated as a public community safe space to talk about '65 and other topics

of importance, as well as hold events such as independent film screenings or music performances. Degung's brother, Alit, envisioned the park as an exemplary space of openness and reconciliation, saying since victims and perpetrators already live together and pray together, that they should dare to talk about their painful history together. But half of the family was so angry about it that, calling Degung and his brother provocateurs, they boycotted Degung's grandmother's funeral.

Kereta: Withdrawal from Society

Kereta's problems with fear and social withdrawal that began soon after witnessing his father's murder and the village massacre persisted for decades. These were likely exacerbated by enduring contact with neighbors and family members who participated in the violence he witnessed in 1965 yet framed *him*, as a past PKI member, as guilty. Kereta's Balinese psychiatrist, Dr. Suryani, states that Kereta has experienced pervasive and ongoing traumatization because: [H]e doesn't talk things out and keeps everything to himself. It seems this trait played a significant role in his experience of trauma ... Because he held in his fear and he was a PKI partisan, he was terrified. So, basically, he has no release, no outlet. He doesn't have anyone to share his burden.

Kereta describes his illness as *ngeb*. For the Balinese, *ngeb* is an intentional mute exile in the wake of witnessing something horrific or bizarre (for further details and analysis, see Lemelson & Suryani, 2006). In Kereta's case, *ngeb* can be understood as both protest and self protection against a national political culture that, until the fall of Suharto, made the public expression of distress or memory a dangerous act where, as Kereta puts it, "You could die because of just one word." His relationships with spirit beings have gradually waned over time, although they do occasionally return. During Indonesia's first ever national democratic election campaigns in 2002–2003, these spirits asked Kereta to rejoin the Communist Party. He wore a camouflage jacket and military helmet to protect himself, and slept outside in his family temple courtyard until the visitations subsided. While strained during their early marriage, Kereta's relationship with his wife has over time grown into a source of great support and sustenance for him. With the accommodation and care of his family, Kereta seems to have gained a certain degree of peace with the shadows and illuminations that visit him.

Conclusion: Diversity of Responses to Fear-Based Experiences

A foundational goal in making *40 Years* was to document and explore the long-term responses to "traumatic exposure" in 1965 and the multiple ways it impacted lives of a diverse set of Indonesians. Preexisting neurobiological models of trauma informed the way we structured interviews and selected participants for inclusion in assemblies of the film. On the most basic level, an initial criterion for inclusion was that participants fit some of the basic contemporary clinical and diagnostic criteria for PTSD. It was evident in our initial interviews that all those who would become main characters had at least several, and in most cases multiple, symptoms of this diagnostic category. Although variably troubled by these symptoms, it soon became apparent that the participants clearly had many other pressing life concerns that fell outside the purview of the contemporary clinical model of PTSD. These

pressing life concerns significantly impacted the way they experienced and internalized their experiences of fear.

While not themselves the victims of direct political violence, as members of victims' families, Budi, Mini, Lanny, Degung, and Kereta all experienced both acute episodes of terror and chronic fear as a result of Indonesia's national political upheaval in 1965. All five witnessed beloved family members being beaten or taken away, and all experienced feelings of powerlessness in the face of this maltreatment. Their status as relatives of alleged communists has made them stigmatized targets for harassment, intimidation, violence, and discrimination within their communities and sometimes even their own extended families. Meanwhile, Mudakir's direct experiences of violence also left him wounded and vulnerable.

However, although their stories share these similarities, their different responses to these and long-term outcomes are each markedly unique. Even when certain aspects of their symptom configurations seem to overlap, the interpretation and response to these symptoms are quite different due to individual subjectivity. For example, both Budi and Lanny experienced problems with anger and rage: Lanny took this out on her siblings, trying to control their actions and emotions, while Budi sought to overcome his feelings of helplessness by fantasizing revenge where he could punish those villagers who caused him and his family to suffer so much. Over time, Lanny came to realize the negative effects this controlling anger was having on her life and her relationships. After she discovered a Buddhist meditation practice, she was able to confront her strong feelings of anger and also grief, and transform these into motivation toward empowerment, growth, and good works. A much younger Budi still struggles, often still subject to feelings of paranoia and retaliation for perceived ills.

These differences are in part due to individual factors, such as age, temperament, biology, biography, and embodied experience, but are also shaped by other differences. Lanny and Budi's different models of suffering and resilience are impacted by their different positions within Java's complex society; their ethnic identities, religious beliefs, socioeconomic backgrounds, levels of education, the knowledges and practices of cultural and social systems, and the resources available to them to help them cope with the violence and losses they suffered. In Bali, Degung and Kereta's strikingly different reactions to the violence visited upon their families also point to the difference caste and class made in their personal experience. Degung came from a high caste, educated, and activist family, and despite his family disintegration in the wake of this violence and numerous setbacks, he ultimately took a similar stance to turn outward and engage debate. Meanwhile Kereta, from the Sudra peasant caste, turned inward and to another realm, silencing himself in perhaps the only form of protest – and protection–he felt was available to him.

We further explore the ways in which the lives of these participants, and those in our other two films, are shaped by both local psychocultural models and the social, political, and cultural conditions of structural violence that pervade Indonesian society in Part III of this book (Fig. 2.8).

Fig. 2.8 Budi's hope for himself

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