



UNIVERSITY OF
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This dissertation is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The Moral Ecology of South Africa's Township Youth

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Dedication

*To the phenomenal young men and women
who made this study possible,
and for whom the future has endless possibilities.
In partial repayment of an enormous debt,
from a beneficiary of injustice.*

Declaration

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except where specifically indicated in the text. The length does not exceed the word limit as given by the Degree Committee of the Faculty of Education.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sharlene Swartz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'S' at the end.

Sharlene Swartz
2 August 2007

Abstract

The voices of young people who live in a context of poverty are largely unheard in the study of morality. Instead moral debates are dominated by strictly bounded academic discourses, official calls for ‘moral regeneration’ and moral panics. In addition, the emphasis on individual moral development has neglected the socio-cultural contexts of young people’s moral formation. In contrast, this study offers a complex youth ethnography of the moral sphere that explores how young people living in a context of poverty understand the concept of morality and how this construction facilitates their processes of moral formation. In doing so, it aims to push forward the discipline of moral education by challenging researchers, educators and policy-makers to add a critical dimension to its study. Furthermore, it provides a conceptual framework for doing so by describing young people’s moral cultures, the interactions of different systems in a moral ecology and the ways in which morality, poverty and social reproduction may be related. Consequently, it contributes to a social psychology of morality and initiates (or reignites) a discussion about the sociology of morality and the sociology of moral education.

The study is located in Langa, a periurban township (*ikasi*) near Cape Town, South Africa, and follows 37 young men and women aged between 14 and 20, over the course of a year. The majority of these youth were in Grade 9 at the beginning of the study and attended a township school, while a small group attended a nearby suburban school. The research design combines the usual elements of ethnography (participant observation and interviewing) with multiple creative methods designed to engage youth over the course of a year. Included in these methods are the use of autophotography (photo-voice), free lists, mind maps and a rank ordering activity. Drawing on Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems framework, the study describes the conceptually valuable notion of a moral ecology, in which young people’s moral codes, positionings, processes and visual narratives of moral influence are considered in the light of their social, historical and political contexts. Moscovici’s social representations theory is also used to help distinguish between individual understandings of morality and the social representations that lie behind these.

The study produces findings in three main areas. On a descriptive level, it provides an account of the moral lives of vulnerable young people from within a context of partial-parenting, partial-schooling, pervasive poverty and inequality, and in the aftermath of the moral injustices of Apartheid. It shows how these young people exhibit conventional values (substance use, violence, crime) in some areas, contested values in others (money and sex) as well as postmodern values especially regarding authority and self-authorisation. It identifies young people’s social representations of morality as action (what you do), as embodied (who you are and who others are to you) and as located or inevitable (where you are i.e. in school, at home, off the streets, or simply in *ikasi*). Despite self-identifying much of their behaviour as ‘wrong’, young people locate themselves as overwhelming ‘good’ while positioning others as either ‘protected’, ‘right’, ‘gangster’ or ‘ikasi boy/girl’. While making it clear that they held themselves solely responsible for their moral behaviour (a kind of ‘moral meritocracy’), these Langa youth tended to identify moral influences as more inspirational than pedagogical, and more diversionary than exemplary. They also articulated less overt moral influence in faith, poverty and Apartheid, and instead elaborated on the role of employment, self and witches in their moral formation.

On a practical level, this study offers methodological, pedagogical and programmatic implications for moral education research, practice and community intervention. Amongst these are the notion of an ‘ethical ethnography’; moral education as Socratic mentoring aimed at critical consciousness; and a (re)consideration of the importance of mothers, friends and work as moral necessities and, in the case of work, as a basic human right in the lives of economically impoverished youth. Finally, on a critical level, drawing on Bourdieu’s notion of the forms of capital, this study explores the possibility of defining morality as a form of ‘capital’ with potential transferability to economic benefits amongst youth living in contexts of poverty.

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As much as a PhD dissertation is meant to be a substantial and original piece of work, it is never undertaken in isolation. I am blessed to have been able to have walked this (sometimes arduous) road in fantastic company. To some very special people who encouraged me to embark on this journey in the first place – at Harvard, Dr Charles Deutsch for believing in my abilities, Dr Kathleen Coll for inspiring me to be a participant observer and ethnographer, Dr Wendy Lutrell for deepening my understanding of the nuances of qualitative research, and Dr Sue Grant-Lewis for being a great mentor.

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Terminology, Glossary and Acronyms

TERMINOLOGY USED IN TEXT

- 'Racial' terms* Throughout this dissertation whenever I refer to an ethnic or 'racial' description I enclose the descriptor in inverted commas. I do so to indicate the artificiality of the concept of 'race' and the terms 'black', 'white', 'coloured' and 'Indian' that are not biologically fixed but rather refer to the legacy of the Apartheid system of racial classification as defined by the South African Population Registration Act of 1950. At the moment in South Africa, it is still standard practice to use these descriptors in order to redress inequalities (although some use 'African' instead of 'black', others 'black African', while some capitalise both terms). My use of these terms is for descriptive purposes and does not imply my endorsement of this classification. When I am quoting a source I leave the descriptor as found in the text. When I am quoting research respondents, I leave the descriptors unencapsulated.
- Currency* At the time of writing \$1 equalled R7.07 and £1 equalled R14.13.
- 'Township'* The term township refers to a 'black' residential area created by the segregationist policies of the former South African government (Japha & Hüchzermeyer, 1995, p. 1). It is roughly the equivalent of an inner-city urban ghetto in the USA, a *favela* in Rio De Janeiro, a slum in Calcutta or Nairobi, a *barrio* in Columbia or Mexico City, a *banlieue* on the outskirts of Paris, and a council estate in Glasgow or London. Although there are numerous kinds of dwellings in townships (one-roomed houses, larger houses, shacks, backyard shacks, flats), townships are generally characterised by small dwellings, densely packed within the community. Previously 'white' residential areas and middle-class areas are referred to as suburbs, while 'coloured' and 'Indian' areas are, somewhat derogatorily, simply called 'areas'. In colloquial terms a township is often referred to as *ikasi*.
- Township schools and suburban schools* As a legacy of Apartheid, South African communities and schools tend to be 'racially' divided with the majority of the population living and attending school in 'black' townships, while 'whites' and 'coloureds' live (mostly separately) in suburbs or 'areas' of varying wealth and status. More recently, as the 'black' middle-class has grown, suburbs are becoming increasingly mixed. Schools, too, are changing composition, although often due to young people commuting from the townships to the suburbs. In township schools, classes are large, subject choice limited and teaching quality uniformly poor (with some exceptions). Wealthy and better quality schools are located in the suburbs and provide smaller classes, higher quality education and more extramural resources depending on the means of parents who substantially subsidise school fees. These schools are 'racially' mixed to the extent that township youth can afford their high fees, and that middle-class 'black' people live in the area. Independent (or private) schools (many church-run) receive no state subsidy and are often elite establishments out of reach of even the middle-classes.
- 'Moral'* For the purposes of this dissertation I will rely largely on the Oxford English Dictionary's (2005) definition of the word 'moral' as relating to the distinction between 'good or bad... right and wrong, or good and evil' in human actions, and on Halstead and Taylor's (2000) description of moral values as 'the principles and fundamental convictions which act as general guides to behaviour, the standards by which particular actions are judged to be good or desirable' (p. 175), and which 'provide us with reasons for action' (Halstead & Taylor, 1996, p. 69).
- 'Moral formation'* The phrase 'moral formation' is used intentionally to highlight the complexity of intrapsychic, interpersonal, and sociological factors which make up the processes of

moral maturity. It is used in contrast to that of ‘moral development’, a term usually associated with psychology and one that emphasises the developmental nature of moral maturity. I sometimes use ‘moral growth’ and ‘moral maturity’ interchangeably with ‘moral formation’.

GLOSSARY OF SOUTH AFRICAN TERMS

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| <i>abakwetha</i> | Term for initiates while in the bush (isiXhosa). |
| <i>amagintsa</i> | Car hijackers (isiXhosa - colloquial). |
| <i>amajita</i> | Cool guys (isiXhosa - colloquial). |
| <i>ama-Outie</i> | Someone who is out on the streets, a <i>kasi</i> youth (isiXhosa - colloquial). |
| <i>amaXhosa</i> | Xhosa people (isiXhosa). Singular - <i>umXhosa</i> . |
| <i>baksteen</i> | Brick (Afrikaans). |
| <i>binnegoed</i> | Intestines of an animal (Afrikaans). |
| <i>braai</i> | Barbeque (Afrikaans). |
| <i>choochoo</i> | A girl who has a lot of sexual partners, not necessarily a prostitute (isiXhosa - colloquial). |
| <i>clapped</i> | To smack or hit (Afrikaans - colloquial). |
| <i>dagga</i> | Marijuana, <i>ganga</i> (Colloquial). |
| <i>dompas</i> | A pass required of ‘black’ South Africans during the Apartheid era in order to move from place to place (if permission were granted). Literally translated a ‘stupid passport’ (Afrikaans). |
| <i>elokshini</i> | Township, location (isiXhosa). |
| <i>gerook</i> | High, literally ‘smoked up’ (Afrikaans - colloquial). |
| <i>hlonipha</i> | Respect (isiXhosa). |
| <i>hokkie</i> | Shack (Afrikaans). |
| <i>ibari</i> | Someone newly arrived from a rural area, greenhorn, ‘out of style’, sometimes equivalent to ‘mommy’s baby’ (isiXhosa). Plural – <i>iibari</i> . |
| <i>igqirha</i> | Witchdoctor, traditional healer, Sangoma, spiritist, diviner (isiXhosa). |
| <i>igqwirha</i> | Witch (isiXhosa). Plural - <i>amagqwirha</i> . |
| <i>iKangatha</i> | The man who teaches young initiates what it means to be a man (isiXhosa). |
| <i>ikasi</i> | Township, location (similar to ‘the hood’, ‘ghetto’, ‘el barrio’, ‘council estates’, ‘banlieue’, ‘slum’, ‘favela’) (isiXhosa). Sometimes used interchangeably with <i>kasi</i> . |
| <i>ikhaya</i> | House, but also used to refer to structures youth build for themselves while in the bush during their <i>ulwaluko</i> ritual (isiXhosa). |
| <i>ikrwala</i> | Term for newly initiated young men, in the period while they are wearing their suits as a sign that they’ve just completed their <i>ulwaluko</i> ceremony (isiXhosa). |
| <i>indawo yokulala</i> | A place of sleep (isiXhosa). |
| <i>indoda</i> | A circumcised man, after <i>ulwaluko</i> (isiXhosa). |
| <i>inkwenkwe</i> | An uncircumcised boy (isiXhosa). |
| <i>ipilisi</i> | Mandrax, methaqualone (isiXhosa). |
| <i>isifebe</i> | Literally, a bitch, someone who likes men (isiXhosa). |
| <i>isishumani</i> | Shoemaker, colloquial for someone without a sexual partner, or with only one sexual partner over a long period of time (isiXhosa - colloquial). |
| <i>isiXhosa</i> | The language Xhosa (isiXhosa). |
| <i>ixhwele</i> | Traditional healer, herbalist (isiXhosa). |
| <i>iziyobisi</i> | Drugs (isiXhosa). |
| <i>jeh</i> | A little (isiXhosa). |
| <i>jol</i> | Party (Afrikaans). |
| <i>jukebox</i> | Alcohol establishment that also has a Jukebox, or where music is played (Colloquial). |
| <i>kaloku</i> | Because, whatever (isiXhosa - colloquial) |
| <i>kasi</i> | See <i>ikasi</i> . |
| <i>khangela</i> | To look around for a party or potential romantic/sexual partners (isiXhosa - colloquial). |
| <i>lobola</i> | Bride price (isiXhosa). |
| <i>location</i> | Apartheid term for township. |

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| <i>Mandrax</i> | A synthetically manufactured (illegal) drug, similar to methamphetamine but with the active ingredient methaqualone. |
| <i>marhosh</i> | Prostitute (isiXhosa). |
| <i>Matric</i> | Term for final year (Grade 12) students. |
| <i>mielie pap</i> | Maize porridge, <i>mielies</i> are maize or corn (Afrikaans). |
| <i>mlungu</i> | A white person (isiXhosa). |
| <i>moffie</i> | Gay, homosexual, sometimes equivalent of ‘mommy’s baby’ (Afrikaans - colloquial). |
| <i>mos</i> | The equivalent of English ‘like’ (Afrikaans - colloquial). |
| <i>mpintshi</i> | Friend (isiXhosa - colloquial). |
| <i>muti</i> | Amulets worn or medicine taken for protection or given to harm someone (isiXhosa). |
| <i>neh</i> | Interlocutory, asking a question, ‘you understand?’ (Afrikaans - colloquial). |
| <i>nton-nton</i> | Literally ‘What, what’, used when at a loss for words (isiXhosa). |
| <i>nyama</i> | Meat (isiXhosa). |
| <i>pleya</i> | A guy who has a lot of women, at the same time (isiXhosa - colloquial). |
| <i>qamatha</i> | Refers to ‘high god’ or ‘highest spirit’ often when speaking of ancestors (Mayer, 1971, p. 157) (isiXhosa). |
| <i>sangoma</i> | Witchdoctor, ixhwele or igqirha (isiZulu). |
| <i>shebeen</i> | Small tavern, informal, often unlicensed. |
| <i>skollie</i> | Synonymous with <i>tsotsi</i> - unkempt person who engages in antisocial behaviour such as petty crime and substance abuse, differentiated from gangsters who belong to formal gangs, terms are often used interchangeably however (Afrikaans - colloquial). |
| <i>smokolo</i> | Small tavern usually in someone’s house (isiXhosa, Afrikaans). |
| <i>spaza</i> | Shop that sells a number of basic household groceries, from a container or shack (isiXhosa). |
| <i>spidans</i> | Someone who, by the type of clothes s/he wears, likes to advertise themselves (isiXhosa). |
| <i>spot</i> | Tavern in informal settlements (Colloquial). |
| <i>stokvel</i> | Community savings club (Afrikaans). |
| <i>stout</i> | Naughty (Afrikaans). |
| <i>thakatha</i> | To bewitch (isiXhosa). |
| <i>tik</i> | Crystal meth, illegal substance, active ingredient methamphetamine plus various commonly available household substances (Afrikaans). |
| <i>tsotsi</i> | See <i>skollie</i> . |
| <i>ubuntu</i> | African philosophy of humanism (isiXhosa). |
| <i>ugqirha</i> | Doctor (isiXhosa). |
| <i>ulungile</i> | Right one (isiXhosa). |
| <i>ulungileyo</i> | A right person (isiXhosa). |
| <i>ulwaluko</i> | The initiation ceremony for Xhosa boys at around age 18, a requirement for entry into manhood, involves penile circumcision and a period of solitude in the bush (isiXhosa). |
| <i>uMfundisi</i> | Minister or pastor (isiXhosa). |
| <i>umqomboti</i> | Fermented traditional beer made of maize meal, yeast and sugar (isiXhosa). |
| <i>vetkoek</i> | A deep fried savoury doughnut with a filling (Afrikaans). |
| <i>yabona</i> | ‘You see?’, interrogative (isiXhosa). |

ACRONYMS USED IN THE TEXT

| | |
|------|--|
| ANC | African National Congress |
| GCIS | Government Communication Information Service |
| HSRC | Human Sciences Research Council |
| MRM | Moral Regeneration Movement |
| RVE | Race and Values in Education |
| TRC | Truth and Reconciliation Commission |
| FASD | Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder |
| MHS | Mandela High School (fictitious name for township school) |
| OHS | Oakridge High School (fictitious name for suburban school) |

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PART ONE

RESEARCHING YOUTH MORALITY IN SOCIAL CONTEXT

THE STUDY OF YOUTH MORALITY IN A CONTEXT OF POVERTY

Anglo-American ideology... [suggests that] the poor are not just immoral, alcoholic and degenerate, they are stupid, they lack intelligence (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 43).

This study focuses on how 14 to 20 year-old ‘black’ young people living in a context of pervasive poverty in a South African township comprehend the notion of morality, and how these constructions are useful in understanding their moral formation. Ultimately it interrogates ‘Anglo-American ideology’ on the relationship between poverty and morality in society. However, choosing to research poor young people’s understanding of morality is to invite multiple questions. Why a study of *morality*, why *youth* morality, and why in a context of *poverty*? This chapter aims to introduce this study by answering these questions while at the same time outlining the current status of the academic study of morality in general and moral education in particular. It then offers an analysis of the current intellectual debates amongst those concerned with the study of moral values and behaviour and reflects on the contemporary status of *sociological* theorising on morality. Finally, it considers the value and potential of a qualitative approach, the significance of locating the study in a *South African* township, and introduces the structure of the dissertation.

Why study youth morality?

Perhaps the most important reason for studying youth morality arises out of current perceptions that young people are responsible for the carjackings, gang-murders, robberies, drug-related violence, stabbings and shootings reported in the media. From the inner-city ‘black’ ghettos of Philadelphia, the *favelas* of Rio, the slums of Delhi, the *barrios* of Caracas, to the *banlieues* of Paris, council estates of Glasgow and the townships and shacklands of Cape Town, the lack of prosocial moral values amongst youth are blamed for

societal turmoil. Elijah Anderson, in *Code of the Streets* (1994; 1999) offers a sociological interpretation of this current state of affairs when he argues that

the inclination to violence springs from the circumstances of life among the ghetto poor – the lack of jobs that pay a living wage, the stigma of race, the fallout from rampant drug use and drug trafficking, and the resulting alienation and lack of hope for the future (Anderson, 1994, p. 81).

While this view might be common in the academy, it is media-mediated moral panics that tend to shape public consciousness. In the opening chapter of the book *Tough Fronts*, Janelle Dance (2002, p. 16-32) does a superb job of surveying the various ways in which ‘black’ urban youth in the USA have been represented in social science literature. She argues that they have been represented in five main ways: As essentially inferior, deviant and dysfunctional; as ‘mainstream’ or ‘decent’; as virtuous and central; as victims of historical and social structural forces; and as oppositional or antagonistic. She makes the point that these young people are seldom, if ever, seen as agents. Similarly, Griffin’s (1993; 2001) survey of British and European youth shows how young people have been represented as ‘troubled’ or ‘troubling’, and how this has contributed to the increasing marginalisation and pathologisation of youth. Although there is a less substantial body of academic writing about ‘black’ South African youth, these categories also apply. In light of South Africa’s recent turbulent past, South African youth have been variously described as ‘heroes’ or ‘villains’ (Seekings, 1993), the ‘lost generation’ (Seekings, 1996) and ‘marginalised youth’ (Perrow, 2004). Typically, however, township youth are described along a single dimension¹: they have been vilified as an amorphous violent criminal mass, their lives romanticised (especially in regard to the spectacular youth culture of kwaito²), or they are simply overlooked. In contrast, in his account of the prison gangs of the Cape Town, Jonny Steinberg (2004) asks ‘why generations of young black men lived violent lives under

¹ The film *Tsotsi* (Hood, Fudakowski, Chweneyagae *et al.*, 2006) and South African television series *Yizo Yizo* (Markgraaff, Gibson, Mahlatsi *et al.*, 2001) has begun to depict nuances in the lives of township youth.

² See Peterson (2003) and Steingo (2005) for an analysis of the spectacular youth culture that kwaito has become. There are elements of romanticising ‘black’ youth in both articles.

Apartheid, and why generations more will live violently under democracy' (p. 11). Anderson, Dance and Steinberg all point to the reason why young people's moral values are an important area of study. They suggest that young people may well possess a moral code, and that they could be conscious of right and wrong – despite appearing to live in a 'Lord of the Flies' (Golding, 1954) world where anything goes and personal autonomy and individual survival appear to be all that matters. In contexts of poverty, public vilification of youth may become ever more acute and so a study that considers young people's constructions of morality is an important task.

Of course, young people's moral values and moral development do receive academic attention. There are a plethora of studies³ that investigate values and aspects⁴ of moral development (as I will later describe). But what seems to be absent is a study of youth morality that treats young people as 'transcultural knowers'⁵, able to interpret morality and provide insight into society rather than only be objects of study whose values and psychological processes are investigated. Moral educators are particularly interested in young people's morality. Graeme Haydon (2000, p. 356) describes four current discourses of morality that inform the field. These are the 'lay' discourse (i.e. that of parents,

³ Studies from the Global North but excluding the USA and UK include Israel (Feuerverger, 1995), Russia (Abdullin, Persidskaia, Rogacheva *et al.*, 2002; Halstead, 1994; Vladimirov, 1999) and Singapore (Chew, Leu, & Tan, 1998). In the USA select studies include Barr (1971), Ginzberg (1961), Anderson (1999), and Pratt *et al* (2003). In the UK recent studies include Bohning *et al* (1998), Taylor (1996), Holland and Thomson (1999), McGrellis (2000), and Bromnick & Swallow (2001). Comparative studies of youth values (including moral values) have been undertaken comparing youth from England, Hong Kong and Australia (Feldman, Rosenthal, Mont-Reynaud *et al.*, 1991), Japanese, Japanese-American and Euro-American youth (Mizuno, 1999), and England, Israeli-Arab and Saudi Arabian youth (Simmons, Simmons, & Allah, 1994).

⁴ Studies linking values and smoking (Unger, Shakib, Gallaher *et al.*, 2006), and the effect of music (North & Hargreaves, 1999) and divorce (Francis & Evans, 1997) on youth's values have been undertaken. Smith (2005; 2003) has recently conducted a national study in the USA of youth values and their relationship to religion. Studies have also been done on the effect of parents' values on youth (White & Matawie, 2004), and youths' values on parents (Pinquart & Silbereisen, 2004). Empirical studies dealing with *aspects* of morality from the developing world include China (Kwong, 1994), Taiwan (Hwang, 1998), Lebanon (Faour, 1998), Trinidad (Zavalloni, 1968), India (Reddy, 1980), Botswana (Mmolai, 1999) and South Africa (Ferns & Thom, 2001; Hoelson, 1991; Maqsud, Muhammad, 1998; Reynolds, 2005; Rule & Mncwango, 2006; Smith, K. & Parekh, 1996).

⁵ Following Pratt (1992) and Butz & Besio (2004), whose conception of research aims 'to strategically alter the way an audience of dominant outsiders understands the subordinate group, and beyond that, to push back to some extent against the shove of domination' (p. 353), I use the notion of 'transcultural knower' to convey the agency that a research participant or informant brings to the research process.

religious groups, media and community members); the 'research' or academic discourse; the 'official' i.e. political and governmental discourse, and the 'professional' education discourse comprising teachers and administrators. A 'youth' discourse is conspicuously absent in his description, unless it is subsumed under the 'lay' discourse. Yet few, if any, researchers seem to be asking young people to reflect on the notion of morality as a concept, and on their own processes of moral formation, even though there is a growing trend towards national programmes of moral regeneration, and the development of moral and citizenship education programmes.

Foregrounding young people's voices is also relevant to the renewed movement to include young people as 'consumers worth consulting' (Rudduck & Flutter, 2000, p. 75) and 'expert witnesses in their learning' (p. 82)⁶. Like others researching students' perspective (Arnot, McIntyre, Pedder *et al.*, 2004; Dance, 2002; Giroux, 1999), Nieto (1994) found that young people were 'electrified' when asked what the obstacles to learning were. They were pleased to have been asked and gave meaningful answers. These studies indicate that young people possess the capacity to reflect on their lives and make worthwhile suggestions. It is a small leap from consulting students about their general learning to consulting them about their moral formation. However, youth input in curriculum creation can also be problematic since young people lack the life experience and the ability to articulate their needs. Torney-Purta (1990), for example, using survey evidence concludes that young people

habitually reason about everyday moral issues at relatively low levels and find it difficult to see connections between ethical principles and their own lives... [they] cannot focus easily on concepts outside their personal experience (p. 475).

⁶ Rudduck and Flutter (2000) in their survey of the history of 'the pupils' perspective' in education conclude that, besides some work done by those in the children's rights movement, very little consulting with young people has been done over the past fifty years. Those who oppose consulting learners have said that giving young people's opinions too much prominence would undermine their relationship with their parents and teachers, an observation echoed by South African school teachers (Porteus, Motala, Ruth *et al.*, 2002, p. 2). Rudduck and Flutter have found that this is not the case, rather, consulting young people results in a stronger commitment to learning.

Caution is clearly needed in this area. As Nieto (1994) points out, foregrounding young people's voices

is not meant to suggest that their ideas should be the final and conclusive word... to accept their words as the sole guide... is to accept a romantic view of students that is just as partial and condescending as excluding them completely from the discussions (p. 396).

The same caveat applies to this study. However, by adding a youth discourse to the many voices already influencing the ways in which society understands morality (and as educationalists attempt to turn this understanding into pedagogy), moral education has the potential to be significantly strengthened. How youth describe their moral codes and position themselves in relation to these codes, and how they understand their processes of decision-making and make meaning of their moral influences arguably cannot *not* be a matter for moral educators.

The academic study of morality

Young people's moral values, moral development, and moral education have long been the subject of numerous academic disciplines. Philosophers, for example, debate notions of the 'good life', argue over universal and particular values, absolutist and relativist views, and tend to emphasise logic and normativity. Educational philosophers are divided over whether and how morality ought to be taught, and what counts as moral values. Policy-makers tend to be concerned with moral renewal and are concerned with which values ought to be promoted. Theologians tend to assert the existence of a transcendent natural moral order that needs to be discovered rather than created, and explore the application of religious codes like the Sharia law of Islam, the Jewish Ten Commandments, or the Christian Sermon on the Mount. In contrast, anthropologists have argued for the diversity (and hence relativism) of human moral values emphasising the influence of culture on morality. However, it is psychology that makes the largest contribution to the academic study of morality and moral education. Psychologists are concerned with the various

cognitive processes of moral development, as well as with affect and social behaviour. Specific contributions from psychology to the study of young people's moral functioning include the role of *empathy* (Damon, 1999; Eisenberg, 2000; Hoffman, 2000), *intuition*⁷ (Narváez, Getz, Thoma *et al.*, 1999; Redford & McPherson, 1995), and the role of *emotional intelligence* in regulating moral emotions such as anger and shame (Goleman, 1995; Salovey & Sluyter, 1997). Psychological studies have also considered the importance of moral *motivation* (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Miller, 1995), moral *integrity* (Blasi, 1980, 1984), the role of *personality* in moral formation (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000; Damon, 1983; Glover, 2001; Matsuba & Walker, 2004; Walker, 1999; Zuckerman & Kuhlman, 2000), and the process of translating belief into action (Blasi, 1980; Damon, 1984; Walker, 2004).

Perhaps the most well-known of all psychological contributions to the study of young people's morality is the developmental work of Jean Piaget (1968) and Lawrence Kohlberg (1981; 1984). In particular, Kohlberg made the connection between increased levels of cognitive and psychosocial development and the ability to reason at increasing levels of moral complexity. He also elucidated three developmental levels of moral reasoning. For Kohlberg (1984, p. 174-176) moral reasoning based on the avoidance of punishment, consequences, self-interest, and personal benefit marks those at what he called the *Preconventional* level. Those reasoning at the *Conventional* stage are marked by concern for interpersonal relationships, relational influences, and social obligations. Finally, people reasoning at the *Postconventional* level are characterised by principled and impartial judgements made on the basis of a universally applicable social contract. For the past thirty years Kohlberg's work has dominated the field of moral development and materially influenced moral education. At least four broad approaches to moral education can be identified, some of which incorporate Kohlberg's approach, while other react to it. These may be divided into those having a primarily *cognitive* emphasis on moral development and

⁷ David Hume (1751) proposed that there existed a basis for moral judgment outside of revealed religion, and that this judgment could be said to be intuitive or instinctive, and that these intuitions incline people towards doing what is morally good. Whether automatic intuitive judgements are shaped and informed by prior education and experience (LeDoux, 1999; Pizarro & Bloom, 2003) or whether intuition itself trumps deliberate reasoning (Greene & Haidt, 2002; Haidt, 2003) is still under investigation.

judgement; those having an *affective* emphasis; those having an *activist* emphasis on learning through doing; and those having an emphasis on integrated *character*.

The focus on *cognitive development* could be said to have eclipsed the other three approaches. Cognitive developmentalists maintain that autonomous choice, evolving judgement, and critical reflection are most important when educating young people in the moral domain. For them, the aim of moral education is to stimulate cognitive development and thereby help youth to develop moral judgement. Much of their *modus operandi* includes the discussion of moral dilemmas⁸ which proponents have shown is an effective way to improve moral reasoning. Philosophically, cognitive developmentalists are aligned with the Socratic method of learning by questioning rather than the Aristotelian notion of virtues. At least three educational strategies have emerged from the academy with strong cognitive and developmental bases. These are so-called ‘values clarification’ (Raths, Harmin, & Simon, 1966), ‘philosophy for children’ (Lipman, 1991; Vardy & Grosch, 1994) and ‘social perspective-taking’ (Schultz, Barr, & Selman, 2001; Selman, 1971; 1980).

Critiques of developmental approaches to moral education centre on the elevation of the self to a sovereign position above that of the society in which the individual finds herself (Hunter, 2000, p. 185) and an undue emphasis on individualism⁹ (Smith, R. & Standish, 1997). But the central criticism of developmental approaches centres around Kohlberg’s work which have been challenged on numerous fronts: the use of fictitious dilemmas; the gap between moral reasoning and moral behaviour; the (disingenuous) way in which ‘white’ middle-class men seem to always score higher on Kohlberg’s scales than women or those from other cultures; the conclusion that autonomous and individualistic moral judgement (characteristic of the Postconventional level) is more advanced than a system of

⁸ Several techniques for measuring improved moral reasoning have been developed, including the Defining Issues Test (Rest, Narváez, Thoma *et al.*, 1999), the Konstanz method of moral judgement (Lind, Hartmann, & Wakenhut, 1985), and most famously, that Kohlberg’s six stages of moral reasoning (1984; 1983).

⁹ For Smith and Standish, individual choice in moral values is not about opinion – instead ‘values, and especially moral values, are not like that. *We do not choose to think this is right and that is wrong. Normally we cannot see things otherwise: their rightness or wrongness forces itself on us*’ (p. 141 emphasis mine).

moral reflection based on a collectivist or communitarian orientation (characteristic of the Conventional level); and how young people's moral reasoning has little relationship with their functioning as moral people¹⁰.

The use of fictitious moral dilemmas by cognitive developmentalist has been criticised because they are fictitious and already flagged as *moral* dilemmas. *Fictitious* dilemmas arguably bear little relationship to lived experience and do not measure participants' moral sensitivity since they have already been judged to be *moral* dilemmas (Walker, 2002, p. 355). Cognitive moral reasoning is significantly different when based on real rather than hypothetical dilemmas (Krebs & Denton, 1997; Myyry & Helkama, 2002). Moral dilemmas also reinforce the perception that moral issues are something which are on the periphery of human life, rather than central to it (Smith, R. & Standish, 1997, p. 141). Walker (2002, p. 354) adds that cognitive stimulation – the aim of moral dilemma discussion – is a simplistic approach to moral education. Research has also shown that talking about moral issues in the abstract is a poor predictor of what youth do in practice (Astington, 2004; Kuther & Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2000; Ostini & Ellerman, 1997).

Carol Gilligan (1982) has shown that young women judge 'conflicting responsibilities rather than... competing rights' (p. 19) and consider collective rather than individualistic orientations as more important in their moral reasoning processes. Similar conclusions have been drawn for youth outside Global North¹¹ cultures who privilege a collective over individual conscience (Ferns & Thom, 2001, p. 41; Snarey & Keljo, 1996). Not surprising therefore, women and collectivist cultures have been found to score lower on Kohlberg's scales. Ferns and Thom's (2001) study, for example, demonstrate how 'black' South African youth consistently score below 'white' youth on Kohlberg's scale of moral reasoning. However, in a more nuanced study (Smith, K. & Parekh, 1996) 'black' South African youth between the age of 10 and 12 scored *higher* on Kohlberg's schema than did

¹⁰ As a result people question the usefulness of Kohlberg's levels of moral reasoning.

¹¹ A term used to denote the wealthy and developed countries, most but not all of whom, reside in the Northern Hemisphere. So for example Australia, New Zealand and Chile are Southern Hemisphere countries but have a high Human Development Index on a par with Europe, the United States and Japan.

their ‘white’ counterparts, although *older* ‘black’ youth scored lower. Snarey and Keljo (1996, p. 1089) comment that this result seems to align with that of Gilligan’s study of young women, in that an initial ‘strong voice of courage and honesty... [is replaced] by a strained voice of niceness and conformity’. Like young women, the scores of marginalised and oppressed groups appear to deteriorate over time. Snarey and Keljo conclude that any form of oppression (sex, class, or ‘race’) contributes to stagnation in moral development¹². Of course an alternative explanation is that Kohlberg’s research instrument is biased¹³ by language or towards masculine responses. However much this bias may have been unintentional, Kohlberg’s work appears to have fuelled mistaken notions of inherent moral superiority.

The second contribution of psychology to moral education concerns how the *affective domain* or emotional life of an individual affects moral formation. Empathy helps us understand the emotional experiences of others, is incorporated in social perspective-taking, and is central in Hoffman’s (2000) theory of moral development. Other important moral emotions include guilt and shame (Eisenberg, 2000), disgust (Rozin, Haidt, & McCauley, 2000; Rozin & Lowery, 1999), anger, and hatred. Emotions such as love and compassion, while often motivating moral action, may also diminish rational judgement. The importance of rational judgement being translated into action by some means of affective motivation has been repeatedly highlighted (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Miller, 1995).

Warnock maintains that emotions can be ‘educated’ and that ‘moral education cannot afford to concentrate wholly on what people *do*... It must take into account equally what

¹² Possible reasons proposed for this difference includes poor education resulting in diminished levels of high-order abstract thinking (Ferns & Thom, 2001; Snarey & Keljo, 1996), the way in which discrimination and oppression lowers esteem and silences strong voices (Maqsud, Muhammad, 1998; Maqsud, Muhammad & Rouhani, 1990; Snarey & Keljo, 1996) and the role that authoritarian parenting – usually found in contexts of poverty (Elliott & Feldman, 1990, p. 489) rather than being related to ‘race’ or culture – seldom encourages autonomous thinking (Ferns & Thom, 2001, p. 44).

¹³ Ferns and Thoms (2001), for example do not use Kohlberg’s Moral Judgment Interview or Rest’s Defining Issues Test (based on Kohlberg’s schema) since it emerged (upon piloting) that the level of verbal proficiency required was unsuitable in a cross-cultural environment and that ‘research participants had difficulty in understanding the test items and often found them vague and unclear’ (p. 39).

people feel; and must recognise that *what* they feel can be crucially changed by education' (Warnock, 1986, p. 186). While not limited to an affective approach to moral education, the paradigm of 'care' (Noddings, 1984, 2002) and the use of literature (Bennett, 1993; Coles, 1989; Nussbaum, 1990, 2001) and personal narratives (Tappan & Brown, 1996; Tappan & Packer, 1991; Vitz, 1990) in moral education can harness affective insights. Young people are helped to develop a considerate approach, what Cox calls 'imaginative sympathy' (1997, p. 72) or 'moral imagination' (Coles, 1989). Halstead and Taylor (2000, p. 189) relate compelling anecdotes for the use of stories and personal narratives in teaching youth values, but note that little research has been done in testing their effectiveness.

The third contribution of psychology concerns the role of *activism*. Service towards others, involvement in social learning activities, mentoring, having relevant role models and moral exemplars have all been found to be important facets of moral formation. These are largely *behavioural* models of moral education (distinct from mere punishment and reward models) that emphasise the impact that serving others¹⁴ has on the growth of idealism and moral formation of young and old alike (Coles, 1993). A recent study by Matsuba and Walker (2004), during which eighty 18 to 30 year-old Canadian young adults were asked to select those of their peers who they regarded as moral exemplars, confirms the efficacy of this approach. The study found that those chosen as moral exemplars¹⁵

were nominated based on their extraordinary moral commitment towards various social organizations...[and] It was found that [these] moral exemplars, in contrast to comparison individuals, were more agreeable, more advanced in their faith and moral reasoning development, further along in forming an adult identity, and more willing to enter into close relationships (p. 413).

¹⁴ Coles (1993) strongly advocates mentoring to nurture the moral formation of youth. Mentoring programmes such as *Big Brother Big Sister* in the USA have been effective in helping reduce risk behaviour amongst vulnerable youth by providing them with role models of social and moral maturity (De Wit, Lipman, Manzano-Munguia *et al.*, 2007; Grossman & Tierney, 1998; Rhodes, Reddy, & Grossman, 2005).

¹⁵ Work done on the qualities of those singled out as moral exemplars and moral role models show consistent personality traits (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000; Damon, 1983; Glover, 2001; Matsuba & Walker, 2004; Walker, 1999; Zuckerman & Kuhlman, 2000).

Although the study does not provide conclusive evidence for a link between social service and moral maturity, the two do appear to be associated. Many more researchers present evidence for the positive role of active service in young people's moral growth (Damon & Gregory, 1997; Lickona, 1991; Scales, 1999; Scales & Taccogna, 2001; 1990; 2002a; 2002b; Youniss, Bales, Christmas-Best *et al.*, 2002; Youniss, McLellan, & Mazer, 2001; Youniss & Yates, 1999). In part, a focus on moral activism and behaviour are reactions to Kohlberg's descriptive morality.

The final approach to moral education, also emanating from within the discipline of psychology but favoured by religious communities, is *character education* (Lickona, 1991). What is termed character education is, in reality, a broad and eclectic set of approaches. Generally speaking, character education is an attempt to provide a value-filled education, based on the Aristotelian view of virtue from the *Nicomachean Ethics* (Aristotle, Ross, Urmson *et al.*, 1980). The range of approaches extends from a focus on conditioning, behaviourism, sermonising, and sometimes indoctrination, to an integrated attempt to combine all the best features of the cognitive, affective, and behavioural models described previously. Kirkpatrick (1992) represent one extreme of the spectrum when he rejects moral reasoning and stresses only the direct *inculcation* of specific character traits, while Thomas Lickona's 'head-hand-heart' model (1991, p. 47-63) of character education successfully integrates affective, cognitive and behavioural aspects of moral formation. In it, he asserts that good character consists of *knowing* the good, *desiring* the good, and *doing* the good – habits of the mind, habits of the heart, and habits of action¹⁶. Character education seems best suited to societies for whom shared tradition are important and education within that shared tradition is possible and desirable.

A common criticism of character education is the way in which it tends to be reduced to 'value-a-week' programmes or contrived motivational talks at the beginning or end of a school day on respect or responsibility. Nel Noddings' criticism is perhaps the most pointed and accurate. Her critique centres on her view that 'character education requires a

¹⁶ Lickona and those who follow his model of character education, organise their programmes around 'six pillars' or values (trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, citizenship, caring and fairness), which provide content to an integrated approach.

strong community but not necessarily a *good* one' (Noddings, 2002, p. xiii emphasis mine). Instead, she advocates an 'ethic of care' that establish 'the *conditions* and *relations* that support moral ways of life [rather than]... the *inculcation* of virtues in individuals' (ibid.). This move towards a *moral climate*¹⁷, is perhaps a fifth approach to moral education. Kohlberg himself, in recognising that 'moral discussion classes... are limited... because they have only a limited relation to the "real life" of the school and the child' (Kohlberg cited in Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg, 1989b, p. 20) proposed what he termed 'Just Community Schools' (Kohlberg & Modgil, 1986; Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg, 1989a; Power *et al.*, 1989b). These schools aimed to create a moral climate by democratically involving students in discipline and decision-making. While a good idea in principle, the practice of Just Community Schools has achieved little systemic success.

While this brief overview of the psychological contribution to moral education has showcased some of the innovations and debates in moral education, it has also highlighted some of its oversights. What is evident is the way in which the study of morality has tended to be divided along strict disciplinary lines in general, and along fragmented sub-topics of (mainly cognitive) psychology in particular. To be sure, the moral domain itself is vast, and there has been a need to examine each part by fragmenting it into manageable components. However, by neither proceeding to reconnect the parts nor looking at the contexts of moral formation is to perpetuate a practice of moral education that neither notices critical absences nor results in effective educational interventions.

¹⁷ Two other studies have shown that creating a moral climate at school is not only effective but also what young people want. Sara Lawrence Lightfoot (1983) found that students wanted 'visible rules that will keep them from hurting themselves and others... [and] relationships with faculty that underscore the teachers' adulthood' (p. 351) rather than teachers who act like peers. Jackson, Boostrom and Hansen (1993) have found that schools with an abundance of role models, that provide tangible examples of moral behaviour (including realism regarding the complexities, tensions and ambiguities of life in the moral sphere, and the weakness of human will in doing what is morally good) has been shown to exert a far greater influence on students than a simplistic, hypocritical or preached approach. In contrast, Lickona (1993) has argued that schools where learners are searched, locked in, and marched under security between classrooms are much less likely to develop an environment of trust and respect than those where they are encouraged, through mutually respectful relationships, to practice restraint.

The first of these critical absences concerns the relationship between moral knowledge and moral practice, alluded to earlier as a key critique of Kohlberg's work. Robert Coles sums up a prevailing view when he says:

The moral life is at once thought and action ... [I] struggle...[between] strong respect for the work of Jean Piaget, Lawrence Kohlberg, Carol Gilligan, and yet a perplexity that sometimes slides into pique as I compare their ideas about 'moral development' with the thoroughly complicated matter of moral... behaviour (Coles, 1986, p. 286).

This 'belief-behaviour' gap is one about which psychologists are increasingly writing (Bergman, 2002; Blasi, 1980; Damon & Colby, 1996; Lickona, 1976; Walker, 2004). Augusto Blasi (1980) addresses this gap by focusing on the development of a moral identity – the integration of self with a sense of responsibility and integrity. For Damon (1984), the task is to investigate the 'person's understanding of self in relation to these moral beliefs' (p. 110). While both contribute to understanding the dynamics involved in this gap, neither pays explicit attention to the role of context – the role of lived experience that occupies the space between moral belief and moral behaviour. This role of context is the second critical absence required to understand the moral formation of young people. And while it may be expected that social context is more properly the domain of sociology, sociologists have paid little attention to morality – either in theorising or in empirical study. If sociology, as Zygmunt Bauman describes it, is 'the informed, systematic commentary on the knowledge of daily life' (1990, p. 441) then sociological theorising and research on the everyday occurrences of morality is an un- (or under-) explored avenue of research.

Sociological theorising on morality

In contrast to the psychological discourse on morality, sociological theorising has been limited and sporadic, but perhaps holds the key to reintegrating the study of human lives. Classical sociologists such as Durkheim, Simmel, Weber and Marx have reflected on

morality, while more recently Bauman, Levinas and Habermas have offered contributions to what might be termed a 'sociology of morality'. Durkheim (1973a; 1973b), writing in the context of the social and moral crisis following the dictatorship of the Third Napoleonic Republic, understood *society* as the source¹⁸ of morality. For him, moral growth depends on the development of a sense of discipline learned from the social environment and reinforced through teaching altruism and the importance of collective interest. He advocated the teaching of moral education in schools especially given the increasing specialisation required of education to accommodate the increased division of labour. His suggested pedagogy was that which produced a critical consciousness in which justice was paramount rather than one based on moral maxims (Durkheim, 1973b, p. xl). For Durkheim 'morality begins... with attachment to something other than ourselves' (p. 151) and maintains that 'there is no moral act that does not imply a sacrifice' (p. 152). He believed that morality was social fact that needed to be investigated 'attentively' (p. xv).

Simmel (1971) speaks of morality as social norms which are internalised by individuals and act as a 'conscience', so that 'all that society asks of its members... the individual also asks of himself' (p. 118). The moral imperative therefore takes on a dual character – individual conscience plus solidarity with others. At a higher level of moral reasoning this norm is neither internal nor external but 'must be satisfied for its own sake' (p. 119). Where legal coercion is not permissible and individual morality is not reliable, customs develop and exist to enforce morality. Simmel speaks of the individual being confronted in him or herself by a 'second subject' (Simmel & Wolff, 1950).

However, while Durkheim and Simmel's work appears alive to morality, it does not appear to have translated into contemporary sociological theorising. Perhaps, since Karl Marx warned that all morality is merely the conventions of the ruling classes (Marx & Bender, 1988, p. 30), there is a scepticism about moral education amongst critical social theorists. Similarly, Weber saw social life as governed by rational interest (capital) and therefore morality as nothing more than self-interest. Consequently, he proposed the

¹⁸ 'The rules of morality are norms that have been elaborated by society; the obligatory character with which they are marked is nothing but the authority of society' (Durkheim, 1973b, p. 162).

individual as moral authority (Thiele, 1996, p. 7). Foucault (2000) extends Marx's analysis by showing how morality (and talk about morality) has been used in order to control people ideologically and socially, and is therefore inherently about power. Resistance, rather than conformity, to imposed moral codes seems to characterise sociological theorising.

This paucity of sociological theorising extends to empirical research. Pharo (2005) argues that since it is difficult for the social sciences to provide any objective description of morality, observing it empirically may seem impossible. In keeping with Bourdieu's notion of social and cultural reproduction (Bourdieu, 1997), Pharo argues that the notion of choice (often closely associated with conventional moral discourses) is foreign in sociological analysis since:

A large part of social settings do not depend on agents' decisions ...[but on] situations like scarcity of goods, lack of political liberty, sexual oppression, restriction of social perspectives (Pharo, 2005, no page numbers).

Pharo's argument for why sociologists steer clear of moral theorising and research does not mean that sociology cannot enrich other perspectives. Without considering political, economic, social and cultural contexts a full understanding of morality is impossible. Sociology is well-placed to studying these social determinants of morality. To do so is to reintegrate the intrapsychic study of moral processes with its lived reality.

This reintegration has been the focus of some contemporary sociologists. For example, Zygmund Bauman and Emmanuel Levinas (reflecting Durkheim and Simmel) have spoken of the importance of interpersonal relationships in ethics, or 'being for the other' (Levinas & Nemo, 1985, p. 52). They conclude that moral actions are not driven by normative theories such as utilitarianism or duty but rather by small, localised, interpersonal relationships – what Bauman calls 'the moral party of two' (Bauman, 1993, Chapter 4). Jürgen Habermas' concept of 'communicative rationality' and 'discourse ethics' maintains that universalisable morality is arrived at by rational and equal argument within

‘membership in an ideal communication community, a consciousness of irrevocable solidarity, [and] the certainty of intimate relatedness in a shared life context’ (Habermas, 1990, p. 246). Thomas Luckmann maintains that a reliance on internal and individual norms is no longer tenable since social life is increasingly embedded in institutional environments with *contradictory* normative requirements. He advocates a study of moral concepts (its change, renegotiation and production) through the observation and analysis of everyday life or ‘lifeworlds’ (Luckmann, 1983). Robert Bellah’s ([1985]1996) empirical research is a good example of a sociological consideration of the increasing individualisation¹⁹ of America society and its implications for civic life and human morality. Instead of people being concerned with what is right or wrong, Bellah asserts they have opted for ‘therapeutic contractualism’ i.e. what works for me (p. 129). Where people do care about others, Bellah discovered that it was within a small and immediate circle of concern for family and friends (p. 112).

Sociological theorising on human morality is especially strong in the study of ‘moral panics’ (Cohen, 1980; Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 1994; Jenkins, 1992; Springhall, 1998). Stanley Cohen (1980), for example, when referring to the public and media attention given to the ‘mods and rockers’ (youth cultures in the sixties), coined the term and showed how these spread through society²⁰. Moral panics have consequently come to be seen as commonplace in society (usually concerned with the behaviour of young people) and to young people being seen as delinquent, deviant, and any talk of their morality as deficient. Understanding certain social problems as moral panics has helped practitioners and policy makers to see beyond the hype, and to respond in a measured manner. However, besides these few examples, there has been relative silence regarding morality in the past decades of critical sociology. There is a case to be made for re-turning the sociological imagination

¹⁹ This is a theme Robert Putnam (2000) picks up a decade later in his treatise on (the disappearance of) social capital, *Bowling Alone: The collapse and revival of American community*.

²⁰ Critcher (2003, p. 17-18) explicates the stages of moral panics as follows: A form of behaviour comes to be perceived as a threat. The media elaborates – distorts, predicts and exaggerates. Groups or organisations take it upon themselves to pronounce remedies. So called ‘experts’ are interviewed. This is followed by coping and resolution – usually by increased legislation. Panic fades away, although it re-emerges from time to time. There is seldom a lasting legacy.

to the consideration of human morality. This is nowhere more evident than when considering the moral formation of those for whom social context, especially poverty, is a material factor.

There are numerous ways in which morality, poverty, and sociology are intertwined. Arguably, the way in which a nation spends its annual budget may be understood as a moral decision, especially if the welfare of the poor is neglected. The poor experience poverty not just as economic deprivation but as moral judgement – being poor is often associated with being ‘immoral, alcoholic and degenerate ...stupid’ (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 43). The poor are punished for their poverty: they are denied credit (or charged extortionate fees), and charged higher fees for electricity, telephones and other services for being ‘high risk’ customers and for not having a steady income upon which to secure cheaper long-term contracts. In addition, many presume to speak for the poor – often in paternalistic voices, robbing the poor of dignity – again a moral issue. The right to work, eloquently stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948, Article 23), becomes a moral issue when globalisation and modernisation has the effect of leaving the mass of people in contexts of poverty, un- or underemployed. When the International Labour Organisation, describes discouraged job seekers²¹ as ‘no longer economically active’, they are passing a moral judgement.

Andrew Sayer (2005) argues that the poor are discriminated against on multiple levels – and such discrimination is a moral issue, worthy of sociological consideration, as moral, not merely social phenomena. Sociology concerns itself with justice, and like other issues of justice – slavery²², sexism, racism, homophobia, discrimination in general, and environmental degradation – it is a moral concern. Sociologists, social movements, and social programmes have already placed these issues on the sociological agenda, but seem more reluctant to tackle these and other issues as *moral* issues. Furthermore, notions of

²¹ Those who have not actively looked for work in the past four weeks.

²² Jim Wallis (2005, p. 6) claims that ‘poverty is the new slavery – imprisoning bodies, minds, and souls, destroying hope and ending the future for a generation’.

‘moral regeneration’ are increasingly becoming a common phenomenon²³ amongst groups and nation-states adversely affected by conflict, upheaval, and genocide. Sociological analysis of these movements are currently limited.

Contemporary commentators are increasingly calling for a sociology of morality. Thiele, for example, asserts that ‘morality quarantines itself from sociological investigation’ because it places itself above social life. He advocates a sociology of morality that inquires into the

social genesis of the idea of moral authority... the types of moral authorities believed in, the sets of ideas linked to different authorities... the nature of disputes between groupings positing different moral authorities (Thiele, 1996, p. 7).

The time for a deeper inquiry into the nature of young people’s morality within a specific social context seems to have arrived.

Why a qualitative focus on South African township youth?

The nature of such a socially contextualised study of young people’s morality is of course a complex methodological matter. The complexity of youth moral constructions suggests that an encyclopaedic approach is required – one that looks at the overall lifeworlds of youth in as deep a way as possible, without atomising the study. Contemporary research on morality tends to be predominantly quantitative and positivist, and often fails, in my view, to address issues of young people’s lived morality. Before making any decisions about my own research I conducted a content analysis of all the articles published in the *Journal of*

²³ Apart from religious calls for moral regeneration, various official calls for the same have emerged throughout history. A key aspiration of the French revolution was moral regeneration (Quinlan, 2004); the Treaty of Versailles at the end of the first world war was conceived as a vehicle for moral regeneration (Lu, 2002); and more latterly in post-independence Kazakhstan (Rorlich, 2003) and South Africa (Government Communication and Information Services, 2000), moral regeneration is an explicit official and lay discourse.

*Moral Education*²⁴ between 1990 and 2005. The result revealed the extent of the bias and is summarised in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 *Key findings from the content analysis of the Journal of Moral Education 1990-2005*

| <i>Out of 387 articles reviewed</i> | <i>Number of articles</i> | <i>As a proportion of articles reviewed</i> |
|---|---------------------------|---|
| Nature of articles | | |
| Theoretical or philosophical (no empirical data) | 269 | 70.0% |
| With empirical data | 118 | 30.0% |
| Empirical articles that are qualitative (11% of all empirical studies) | 13 | 3.4% |
| Ethnographic qualitative articles (39% of all qualitative studies) | 5 | 1.3% |
| Empirical articles that are quantitative (89% of empirical studies) | 105 | 27.0% |
| Quantitative articles using tests/moral dilemmas (85% of quantitative articles) | 89 | 23.0% |
| Focus of articles | | |
| The Global North | 340 | 88.0% |
| Outside the Global North | 52 | 12.0% |
| Africa | 1 | 0.3% |
| Youth living in contexts of poverty | 10 | 2.6% |

Of the 387 articles I reviewed, 269 (70%) had no empirical data, and were theoretically or philosophically focussed. Of the 118 studies that were empirical in nature, 105 employed quantitative research methods most of which ‘test’ young people’s moral judgement rather than focussing on context or youth interpretation. Only 13 studies were *primarily* qualitative in nature, of which five²⁵ were ethnographic. In addition, as with most research studies, studies of youth morality were predominantly located in the Global North. Out of 387 articles, 52 (12%) were concerned with subjects outside of the Global North. Only one article (0.3%) concerned Africa, while ten articles dealt with or referred to youth living in broadly-defined contexts of poverty (2.6%). This mirrors other available literature on youth morality, with the majority of moral research emanating from the

²⁴ The *Journal of Moral Education* describes itself as providing ‘a unique interdisciplinary forum for consideration of all aspects of moral education and development across the lifespan. It contains philosophical analyses, reports of empirical research and evaluation of educational strategies which address a range of value issues and the process of valuing, not only in theory and practice, but also at the social and individual level’ (inside front cover).

²⁵ There are five ethnographies described in the JME. The first deals with the moral consciousness of groups of children 7 and 11 years old, (Russell, 2002), a second with the moral formation of Korean youth (Joh, 2002), a third deals with teacher relationships (Attanucci, 2004), a fourth with peace efforts in a Jewish/Arab village in Israel (Feuerverger, 1995), and the final one concerns the moral worlds of computer professionals (Rigoni & Lamagdeleine, 1998).

Global North, especially the USA and the UK²⁶. Those studies in the wider literature that do focus on Africa have also tended to be theoretical²⁷ although more recently, with the advent of AIDS in Africa, an increasing number of studies have begun to consider the sexual values of African youth as a moral phenomenon²⁸. An increasing number of these are qualitative in nature. This study aims to contribute to the corpus of youth moral research by focussing on context, by foregrounding youth voices, and doing so in a qualitative manner that aims at nuances of meaning and representation. It is also located in a country outside of the Global North as a corrective to the current geographical bias of research on morality.

South Africa is a country newly emerged from totalitarian oppression, has enormous disparities in wealth, social context and living conditions, and is in a state of political and social transformation. It shares these characteristics with other emerging democracies²⁹ for whom moral renewal is an important and explicit part of the national dialogue. Yet while South Africa's history and context are unique in their particularities, the transition from a totalitarian state to one that does not structurally support discrimination, indignity or foster violence are shared global phenomena. A study located in South Africa offers global resonance and important transferable insights.

My particular interest lies in the morality of township youth. South African *townships* (like ghettos, *favelas*, slums, *barrios*, *banlieues*, and council estates) are, by definition, *physical locations* of crowded housing and meagre services for the poor. They are also *symbols of past*

²⁶ See footnote 3 in this chapter for examples of these studies.

²⁷ Theoretical studies from Africa focus, for example, on such diverse topics as character education (de Klerk, 1998); the applicability of Kohlberg's developmental stages to African youth (Verhoef & Michel, 1997); the role of teachers and parents in providing moral guidance to young people (Dowling, 1999); educators' roles in nurturing democratic virtues (Green, 2004); religious and moral education in government-church partnerships (Stambach, 2004), the moral implications of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Verwoerd, 1999) and the contribution of African culture to moral education (Adeyinka & Ndwapi, 2002).

²⁸ Studies of these kind include Campbell *et al* (2006), Samuelsen (2006), Haram (2005), Dilger (2003), Mojapelo-Batka & Schoeman (2003), Varga (2002), Prazak (2001), D. J. Smith (2000), and Kaya & Mabetoa (1997).

²⁹ For example, Mozambique, Rwanda, Mongolia, Guatemala, Macedonia, Georgia, and El Salvador.

economic and social exclusion and inequality. Townships speak of ‘racial’ cleavage, separation, Apartheid, discrimination and the policing of bodies and social movement. They were the primary sites where Apartheid’s immoral laws were played out. In post-Apartheid South Africa, while retaining its physical character created under Apartheid, ‘township’ is also an *explanatory framework*. ‘Township-education’ is poor, ‘the township’ is dangerous, and ‘township men and women’ are unemployed. But for many of the young men and women who pass their time on township streets, in its taverns, schools and shacks, ‘township’ is also a *style*. Township style reflects the music, recreation, fashion, indulgences, and moral stances characteristic of township living. Townships are also *spectacular* sites – one in which violence, crime, gangsterism, substance abuse, poverty, and religious and cultural belief interact in producing complex moralities. Significantly, the (moral) lives of young people who inhabit these places remain little researched³⁰. In the process of social and political transformation, and the quest for *moral renewal*, these stories are significant. It is my expectation that they will resonate in the ghettos, *favelas*, slums, *barrios*, *banlieues*, and council estates all over the world, and contribute to how young people are viewed, and how moral education ought (or ought not!) to be done in these contexts.

Aims and structure of the dissertation

My aim in this study is to push forward the discipline of moral education by challenging researchers, educators and policy-makers to consider the moral formation of vulnerable young people through new lenses – ones that takes into account multiple contexts and collective representations of morality. Here I provide a youth-centred, ethnographic account of the social representations of morality from within a developing-world context. In so doing I hope to contribute to the fields of moral education, moral development, and to the sociologies of youth and poverty by addressing three critical absences in the vast literature on the subject. First, I offer a *socio-cultural* account of young people’s constructions of morality. Second, I focus on *vulnerable* young people in South Africa

³⁰ When studies are conducted, they usually focus on ‘black’ youth who attend multiracial schools (Dolby, 2001; Ramphela, 2002).

instead of on middle-class youth. Finally, I hope to add a ‘youth’ discourse to the four extant discourses of morality described by Haydon (2000).

I define my central research question as:

How do youth in a South African township understand the concept of morality, and how does this construction facilitate an understanding of their processes of moral formation?

This is the complex question which I sought to answer by working in Langa³¹, a typical township near Cape Town, South Africa. The account of this research and my findings is described in four parts. First, I introduce two theoretical frameworks that helped provide conceptual coherence to my investigations of youth morality and then elucidate how a creative ethnographic approach became the most suitable strategy for answering these research questions (Chapter 2). In Chapter 3, I elaborate the multiple methods and activities I employed to investigate young *amaXhosa*’s lives and moralities as ethically as I could.

In Part Two, I set the study in context by identifying the moral shifts that have occurred in the course of South Africa’s political and economic history (Chapter 4) and by describing young people’s social contexts based on ethnographic observation and current research (Chapter 5). In Part Three, I present young people’s constructions of morality in a number of ways. In Chapter 6, I provide an analysis of young people’s representations of right and wrong and offer insights into the nature of their moral distinctions and moral codes. Then I show how young people understand the notion of ‘goodness’ and how they position themselves and others within their codes and constructions (Chapter 7). In Chapter 8, I outline the ways in which these township youth reflect on their moral decision-making processes and how they describe the relationship between moral belief and moral behaviour. Chapter 9 focuses on how young people make meaning of overt and subtle

³¹ Although I have changed people’s names in this study for reasons of confidentiality, I have chosen to leave place names (except for names of schools) as they are. I do so since the geographic location of this study, with its varying economic and tribal differences, is important for future comparative studies.

moral influences. In each of these chapters I highlight the interaction between poverty and morality.

Part Four provides a theoretical and practical conclusion to the study. Drawing on Bourdieu's notion of the forms of capital, I suggest, in Chapter 10, a way in which morality, poverty and social reproduction may be connected. I explore the possibility of defining morality as a form of 'capital' with potential transferability to economic benefits. In Chapter 11, I offer a reflection on the value of this research, the questions it raises, and opportunities for further research. I recommend practical ways in which research practice amongst vulnerable youth can be enhanced, as well as ideas for the ways in which the practice of moral education may be enriched in communities and classrooms.

DESIGNING AN ECOLOGICAL STUDY OF YOUTH MORALITY

In this chapter I describe what I call ‘a moral ecology’ and show its epistemological and conceptual foundations derived from Moscovici’s theory of social representations (1984) and Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory (1979). While a notion of a moral ecology has allowed me to frame this study of township youth, I found that an ethnographic approach was the most suitable methodology for a study that addresses open-ended questions. These questions are: how do youth in a South African township construct and delineate the notion of morality or right and wrong?; how do they locate themselves within a moral framework and portray the morality of others?; how do they think about their own moral processes – both decision-making and translating belief into behaviour?; and finally how do they perceive and make meaning of their moral influences? From these questions, and theoretical and methodological frameworks, I developed a research design and ethical stance that I describe in the final section of the chapter.

A social ecological approach to research

Since the social context of youth living in poverty differs from that of their peers living in middle- and upper-middle class contexts, understanding morality within the social context of the township was an important feature of this study. Such a ‘social ecological’ approach to morality is uncommon and will be described in some detail. First, it derives its meaning from both the *collective* and *contextual*. The word *ecology* derives from the biological study of the interrelationships between organisms and their living and non-living environment (such as climate or soil structure). A *social* ecology is concerned with the web of human relationships as well as their environmental contexts. Thus a *social ecological analysis* in a field of study¹ or problem is an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach to the study

¹ Many contemporary fields of enquiry have employed social ecological perspectives. These include public health (Green & Kreuter, 1999; Jamner & Stokols, 2000; Stokols, 1977; Stokols & Altman, 1987),

of social issues and employs multiple levels and methods of analysis (Swanson, Spencer, Harpalani *et al.*, 2003, p. 750). Such a perspective is interested in both the physical environments and social² contexts of people's lives, and readily acknowledges that these contexts are complex and interact with each other as much as with the person located within the context. It is essentially an approach that recognises the *interdependence* of multiple systems. According to Alcalay and Bell (2000) the relationship between people and their environments are reciprocal:

People's actions are affected by the environment, ...but the environment can also be shaped by the actions of individuals and communities... People have different capacities for action in varying environments because environments differ in the resources they provide to individuals (p. 23).

The work of Urie Bronfenbrenner has perhaps most influenced my thinking as I came to conceptualise this study. I was initially drawn to Bronfenbrenner's work because of the geographical location from which he wrote (the former USSR), his comparative focus³, his focus on culture, and his alertness to the influence of poverty on child development (Bronfenbrenner, 1970). He defines the *ecology* of human development as

the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation, *throughout the life course*, between an active, growing human being, and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives, as this process is affected by the relations between these settings, and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded (Bronfenbrenner, 1992, p. 188 emphasis in original).

Bronfenbrenner described his theory of youth development in opposition to the (then contemporary) research practice of studying 'the strange behaviour of children in strange

educational inclusion (Singal, 2004), disability (Sontag, 1996) and most notably child/youth development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1992, 2005).

² Social environments include historical, cultural, and institutional environments.

³ Bronfenbrenner began his academic career studying Russian children in the communist era and comparing their development to children from the US (Bronfenbrenner, 1972).

situations with strange adults for the briefest possible periods of time' (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 19). He describes such narrowly focused laboratory and test-based research that ignores setting as 'ecologically invalid'⁴ (Bronfenbrenner, 1974, p. 3). Instead he proposed that development should be considered through a 'taxonomy consist[ing] of a hierarchy of systems at four levels moving from the most proximal to the most remote' (Bronfenbrenner, 1992, p. 226).

These four contexts are the *microsystem*, the *mesosystem*, the *exosystem*, and the *macrosystem*. Later Bronfenbrenner added a fifth context, that of the *chronosystem* (change over time). At the centre of this ecology is the developing individual young person – with all his or her 'cognitive competence, socio-emotional attributes, and context-relevant belief systems' (p. 228). I have called this the *endosystem*. The most immediate context for each individual is therefore the *microsystem* – 'a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by a developing person in a given face-to-face setting' (p. 227). The microsystem in this research study comprises the schools, homes, streets, and communities of young people living in a South African township. Included in these contexts are relationships young people have with teachers, peers, and other school staff (school); their mothers, fathers, siblings, own offspring, and extended and blended families (home); friends, peers, gangs, youth from other parts of the township, and romantic or sexual partners (streets); and neighbours, street committees, unrelated older peers, unrelated younger children, and religious establishments (community).

At the other extreme Bronfenbrenner describes various macrosystems, which comprise 'pattern[s]... characteristic of a given culture, subculture, or other broader social context, with particular reference to ...belief systems, resources, hazards, life styles, opportunity structures, life course options, and patterns of social interchange' (p. 228 emphasis in original). For the township youth in this study, the various macrosystems in which they find themselves include the political contexts of neoliberal fiscal policies, moral regeneration as an official

⁴ When Lawrence Kohlberg (1984) spoke of the moral development of young people he did so in a contextual vacuum. For him, and subsequent others, moral development was only about cognitive growth. More recently James Rest (2000) and Thomas Lickona (1991) have attempted to formulate more holistic conceptions of what moral formation is and how it is affected by setting. Neither has provided adequate accounts.

discourse, poverty, their strong *amaXhosa* culture, and various manifestations of structural injustice including gender and racial discrimination. Because a macrosystem refers to the prevailing *attitudes* and *ideologies* of a society, a communal culture of violence and corruption, school culture that includes quality and equality of access (especially surrounding language policies and other forms of exclusion), the presence or absence of a culture of human rights, and the religious culture of a society may all be regarded as forming the macrosystem of a young person.

Between microsystems and macrosystems lie two further systems in Bronfenbrenner's schema. The first is the mesosystem which describes the interrelationships between microsystems of which young people are a part. For these township youth, the mesosystem consists of interrelationships between home, school, streets, and community. In the South African township context, there is little contact between home and school, between home and streets, between school and streets, and between communities and schools. In township areas, while interactions between communities and streets are often antagonistic, those between home and community tend to be more established than those of the suburban middle-classes.

The second system lying between microsystems and macrosystems Bronfenbrenner calls the exosystem. The exosystem comprises *institutions* and *practices* of which the young person is not directly a part, but whose consequences s/he experiences (p. 227). In the context of township youth, the criminal justice system, law enforcement practices, local government policies, adults' general behaviour in society (alcohol, drugs, work ethic), parents' workplace conditions, the national economy itself, health, social and transportation services, and mass media (availability, broadcast policies, and the ways in which media consumption affects relationships) all form part of the exosystem⁵.

⁵ Bronfenbrenner describes further aspects of the exosystem as 'a host of other ecological circumstances and changes which determine with whom and how the child spends his time: for example, the fragmentation of the extended family, the separation of residential and business areas, the disappearance of neighbourhoods, zoning ordinances, geographic and social mobility, child labour laws, moonlighting, supermarkets, welfare policies, age segregation, the growth of single-parent families, the abolition of the apprentice system, consolidated schools, commuting, the working mother, the delegation of child care to specialists and others outside the home, urban renewal, or the existence and character of an explicit national policy on children and families' (Bronfenbrenner, 1974, p. 4).

Finally, Bronfenbrenner describes the chronosystem as ‘changes over time within the person and within the environment’ (Bronfenbrenner, 1986, p. 724) that alter the relationship between the person and the environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1992, p. 201). For these young people, besides obvious changes such as puberty and increasing cognitive sophistication (arguably covered in the endosystem), the chronosystem also includes the move from tribalism, colonialism, and Apartheid to living in a nascent democracy.

There have been various graphic depictions (usually of concentric circles) that attempt to capture Bronfenbrenner’s framework (see for example Cole and Cole (2001)). None portray adequately the inherent complexity of what Bronfenbrenner has attempted to convey – a series of more or less intimate, continually interacting contexts nested⁶ within each other and changing over time. Figure 2.1 provides my own graphic representation interpreted for the context of a young ‘black’ South African living in a township. It portrays not so much the nested contexts, as the dynamic interactions between them. The relevance of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory of youth development to this study has been to foreground the importance of young people’s multiple contexts when considering their constructions of morality. It forces us to consider the concept of morality beyond the narrow confines of individual choice or even the close influences of family, peers, school, and community. It compels us to expand our vision beyond the purely psychological focus of cognitive development and the macrosystem focus of the sociologist, to recognise broader sociocultural forces that interact at multiple levels with issues of morality.

This rich and complex social ecological lens has helped me to recognise the value of drawing upon the term ‘moral ecology’ to describe young people’s moral worlds. Most often, the term ‘moral ecology’ refers to fair trade or the pursuit of environmental concern as a moral imperative or as in the case of Eberly (1995) and Novak and Anderson (1999) without careful definition.

⁶ Bronfenbrenner chose the analogy of a series of Russian dolls ‘as a set of nested structures, each inside the next’ (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 22) to describe his model.

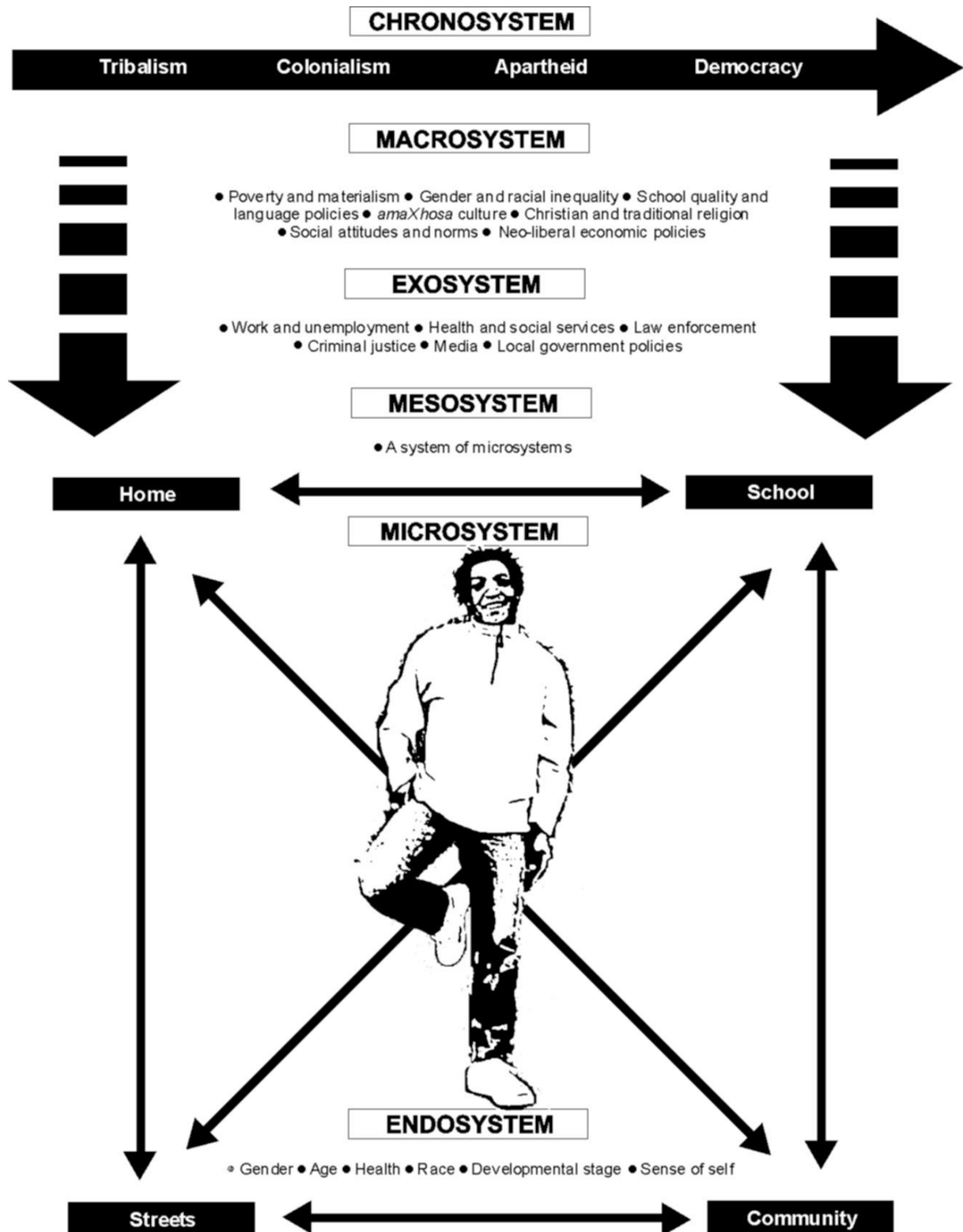


Figure 2.1 *Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems framework applied to the contexts of township youth*

Eberly refers to the ‘the moral ecology of society’ while Novak and Anderson use the term as a subtitle to their book *On Cultivating Liberty: Reflections on Moral Ecology* but without explication. Four scholars⁷ refer to ‘moral ecology’ in terms of the interconnectedness of humanity through their moral commitments to each other. Their definitions describe the desirable endpoint of moral commitment in a society, rather like a balanced ecosystem, but do not provide sufficient emphasis on the contexts in which human beings find themselves, nor on the interactions between aspects of these contexts, and their influence on moral formation. Drawing upon Bronfenbrenner’s emphasis on ecological systems, I suggest that the term ‘moral ecology’ best expresses (1) *Contexts* of moral formation, (2) Proximal and distal moral *influences* or *moral knowledges*, (3) *Social constructions* of right and wrong, and (4) Internal and *social processes* of moral decision-making. Hertzke’s (1998) conceptualisation of a moral ecology seems to get closer to this goal when he writes:

Societal mores, families, churches, mediating institutions, businesses, and the state constitute the soil, air, water, flora, and fauna of the moral ecosystem...The theory of moral ecology thus captures the combined interactive effects of normative depredations, where a weakening in one part of the system will affect the capacity of others to filter out moral toxins (p. 652).

And while not agreeing with Hertzke’s choice of emotive language (‘moral toxins’), his conception of a moral ecology is valuable for my study since it describes an individual in

⁷ The way in which each of these four scholars employ the term is provided in the following extracts:

‘Moral ecology: The web of moral understandings and commitments that tie people together in community’ (Bellah, 1996, p. 335).

‘The human world is most fruitfully conceived of as a *moral ecology*, that is, as a meaningful world that presents us with genuine moral demands and moral reasons for action’ (Brinkmann, 2004, p. 59).

‘A web of human relationships... that that joins each of us in responsibility to all the human beings with whom we share this planet. It parallels the biological ecology that binds us in responsibility to the planet itself... If any of us violates that web by holding human beings in slavery, raping or murdering or assaulting them, or even lying to them, we all pay’ (O’Malley, 1995, p.11).

‘A “moral ecology” embodies a social ethos, a consensus of the common good and notions of loyalty and responsibility to the community as a whole as well as a framework of wider beliefs and values providing (at least to some extent) a culture of “narrative coherence” as well as of “freedom” for lives’ (McLaughlin, 1992, p. 242).

constant interaction with multiple aspects of the environment. However, I would prefer to use the concept as more than mere metaphor. It needs to provide a meaningful way of talking about the moral formation of youth that goes beyond (but does not exclude) personal choices.

If we develop the term further, we can think of defining a moral ecology more broadly as the sum of the contexts of moral formation, the influences of moral knowledges, the constructions of right and wrong, and the processes of moral decision making, of an individual and of groups of people. These interactional effects are best understood as complex systems in which combined single effects contribute in unexpected ways to the larger system. The ways in which ecological systems produce, circulate, and reproduce moral behaviour sometimes independent of individual choice, points to the existence of commonly held social knowledges that lie behind them. Here Moscovici's theory of social representations helps focus attention on the construction of young people's moral universe as it occurs in youth culture, in identity formation, in the development and positioning of self, and in relationship to dominant societal values. Below I demonstrate the value of his theory for this project.

The theory of social representations

Talk of representations in social science research is a common phenomena (Coover, 2004; Griffin, 1993; Hall, 1997; Kamler & Threadgold, 2003). Actors are represented by others, and represent themselves in particular ways. In this study the ways in which young people represent themselves, morality itself, and themselves in relation to given views of morality are of central concern. In order to describe the moral ecology of a group of, in this case township youth, Serge Moscovici's theory (Moscovici, 1973, 1988; Moscovici & Duveen, 2000) of social representations is a helpful analytical tool. According to Moscovici a social representation is a 'collective elaboration' of a social object by a group of people (rather than an individual) for the purpose of organising, understanding, and communicating that group's reality. Social representations provide people with the resources to interpret and make sense of social situations. They are

a system of *values, ideas and practices* with a twofold function: first to establish an order which will enable individuals to orient themselves in their material and social world and to master it; and secondly, to enable communication to take place among the members of a community by providing them with a code for social exchange and a code for naming and classifying unambiguously the various aspects of their world and their individual and group history... They do not represent simply 'opinions about', 'images of' or 'attitudes towards', but 'theories' or 'branches of knowledge' in their own right, for the discovery and organization of reality (Moscovici, 1973, p. xiii).

Gerard Duveen (1990) has called social representations the *common-sense* knowledge that a group displays about a phenomenon. Moscovici elaborates that a social representation is a symbolic reality socially constructed by groups and individuals by at once *anchoring* the phenomena in the experiences of the past by connecting something strange to something familiar, and by *objectifying* it i.e. transforming a concept into an image, thereby turning something abstract into something tangible in order to integrate the phenomena into individual and group social reality (Farr & Moscovici, 1984, p. 24). Moscovici further claims that once a phenomenon is classified, it is then confined to a set of rules and behaviours. In other words representations 'command us' (Durkheim, 1973, p. 161) by stipulating what is permissible to the individuals within a group (Farr & Moscovici, 1984, p. 30). Once a phenomena is objectified, it is 'transformed such that the unfamiliar in one generation becomes familiar and natural in the next' (Purkhardt, 1993, p. 15).

Moscovici describes three ways in which representations can become social, namely *hegemonic, emancipated, or polemical*. Hegemonic representations are those 'shared by all the members of a highly structured group – a party, city or nation – without having been produced by the group'. They are 'uniform and coercive'. Emancipated representations are the 'outgrowth of the circulation of knowledge and ideas belonging to subgroups that are in more or less close contact. Each subgroup creates its own version and shares it with the others' (Moscovici, 1988, p. 221). Finally, polemical representations are 'generated in the

course of social conflict, social controversy and society as a whole does not share them' (ibid). Generally, in the South African context attitudes towards the death penalty (with the majority in favour of the death penalty (see Rule & Mncwango, 2006)) is evidence of a strong religious and perhaps nationalist hegemonic representation of morality. Young people's attitudes towards extra-marital and pre-marital sex are examples of emancipated values where young people disagree somewhat with society at large regarding the morality of sexual behaviour. An example of a polemical representation of morality during the Apartheid era is the limited acceptance of the practice of *necklacing*⁸ of suspected police informers. It arose in a situation of conflict, was practiced as part of the struggle against Apartheid, but was not shared as a legitimate practice by society as a whole.

But how are meanings, attitudes, social identities and social representations differentiated? Moscovici describes the difference between attitudes and social representations by asserting that attitudes have social representations as their precondition (Moscovici, 1988, p. 226-7). Lloyd and Duveen (1986) argue that social identities emerge as a way of organising meanings, and that social representations precede social identities as individuals attempt to 'situate themselves in their societies in relation to the social representations of their societies' (p. 220) So between the phenomenon itself and attitudes about it are social representations⁹. As young people articulate their own meanings and attitudes, and later also describe their own identities, and the moral identities they attribute to others, this data have the potential to reveal social representations of morality.

Why should a study of township youth employ the theory of social representations as part of its conceptual and analytical framework? The answer is that it provides a focus for analysis by looking for generally-held understandings within a group rather than only individual meanings. In this regard when reading data, it will be valuable to identify constructions that are held by the majority of my young research participants. This is not to

⁸ Placing a tyre filled with petrol around a person's neck and igniting it, which inevitably resulted in death.

⁹ This view is not uncontested. For example, Jaspars and Fraser (1984) maintain that there is no difference between social representations and social attitudes, while Potter and Edwards (1999) claim that discursive psychology provides a better explanation for the phenomena which social representations claim to describe.

say that individual meanings are not important, but this self-imposed boundary – limiting the study to dominant representations – provides a safeguard against allowing this study to become too unwieldy. In addition, dominant representations are the ones that are most likely to circulate within a culture, become hegemonic, and affect human behaviour.

The way in which social representations influence human behaviour is the second compelling reason for employing this theory for this study. Jaspars and Fraser (1984) explain that social representations ‘constitute a social reality which can influence human behaviour’ (p. 104). Scott (2000) contends that ‘how people represent the contemporary world is likely to have real consequences for what they believe and the way they act’ (p. 373). Lloyd and Duveen (1990) similarly contend that once representations are internalised, they *lead to action* based on the representation. They and others have shown empirically how this occurs, and it is these empirical studies¹⁰ (showing how social representations predict human behaviour) that provide the most compelling reason for using the theory of social representations in this study. A third reason for its use is that studies have suggested that social representations of a particular phenomenon (in this case morality) are likely to be distinctive for different generations (Farr & Moscovici, 1984, p. 37; Scott, 2000, p. 358). Understanding young people’s representations of morality is therefore likely to provide new insight into social change.

Social representations are found by examining the content, types, functions and images of the communication and narratives (Bauer & Gaskell, 1999, p. 172, 181) of segmented or ‘homogamic’ groups (groups who form around common opinions) (Wagner, Duveen, Farr *et al.*, 1999, p. 99). In this study, I planned therefore to ask youth to form their own groups for camps and outings, and asked to be introduced to friends, cousins, siblings and romantic partners outside of the school context. Coding for metaphors, images and symbols present in the transcribed text of youth interviews would be one way to identify

¹⁰ In their research on gender amongst pre-school children, Lloyd and Duveen (1992) found that children position themselves in relation to the social representations they encounter and reconstruct these representations for themselves (p. 179). In a classic study on the social representations of mental illness (Jodelet & Duveen, 1991) people suffering from mental illness are treated according to explicit labels given to them by fellow villagers. A further study conducted by Molinari and Emiliani (1990) showed that mothers treated their infants based on the social representations they had of them.

the ways in which youth anchor unfamiliar concepts and objectify them (Bauer & Gaskell, 1999, p. 172; Wagner et al., 1999, p. 98-9).

So far, this chapter has described the reasons for employing an ecological framework as a lens through which to observe the multiple dimensions of young people's lives, and for using the theory of social representations as an analytical framework. The next challenge I encountered was in deciding on a methodology and study design that would allow me to access young people's moral lifeworlds.

Research methodology and design

In order to do justice to a study that seeks to elicit young people's *moral ecology* and their *social representations* of morality, an approach that understands meanings as contextual (Hall, 1997, p. 22-24) and reality as 'socially constructed, complex, and ever changing' (Glesne, 1999, p. 5; Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 111) is a *sine qua non*. Applied to the study of morality, such a constructivist approach recognises that the moral domain is contested and that how people ought to behave, act or think towards others, self and the world around them is an area of debate and dispute. A constructivist approach to research therefore allows space, without judgement, for young people to describe their *own* constructions of what might be moral, immoral, or non-moral issues. It privileges young people's moral constructions rather than looking for what society (or a researcher) might consider to be moral behaviour. This is in contrast to Schwandt's (2000, p. 191-193) definition of an *interpretivist* paradigm, in which an emic understanding by the researcher is possible. I prefer to see research as a co-constituted reality in which the product is neither 'as it is' (a positivist paradigm), 'mine' (an interpretivist paradigm), nor 'theirs' (a naturalistic view), but 'ours' (a constructivist approach). The aim of this study was therefore to co-create with young people, a picture 'more like a painting than a photograph' (Charmaz, 2000, p. 522) of how, and in what manner they understand and represent morality. In other words, this study seeks to describe young people's moral ecology, replete with social contexts, influences and knowledges, the processes of moral decision making and behaviour, and the location of self within these constructions and representations.

Ethnography

It is to these understandings of social and moral processes that ethnography, ‘the study of groups and people as they go about their everyday lives’ (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995, p. 1), and with its sensitivity to the existence of ‘variation in cultural patterns’ (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995, p. 9) is most suited. Paul Willis¹¹ and Max Trondman (2000) describe ethnography as ‘a family of methods involving direct and sustained social contact with agents, and of richly writing up the encounter, respecting, recording, representing at least partly *in its own terms*, the irreducibility of human experience’ (p. 5 emphasis in the original). They maintain that for a study to be suited to ethnography, it ought to be paradigmatically concerned to portray an in-depth picture of the culture of the phenomena under investigation. This study aims to achieve these criteria, and is especially concerned with young people’s moral, youth and indigenous cultures. Ethnographic methods of observation and conversation provide the opportunity to *observe* how young people live as well as what they *say* about how they live. As a methodological approach, it is ‘particularly powerful in revealing the details of how people think and act *ethically* in everyday life’ (Haimes, 2002, p. 106 emphasis mine). An ethnographic study privileges young people’s voices but ought also to be ‘theoretically informed’ (Willis & Trondman, 2000, p. 6). It aims to enter the field without hypotheses or extant theories – although it may adopt a critical approach – and instead aims to allow theories to emerge from the ground. Willis’ landmark study *Learning to labour* ([1977] 1981) provides an example of a critical ethnography. Unlike Willis’s study that uses Marx’s theory of capital as a conceptual lens, this study views young people’s moral formation through Moscovici’s theory of social representations and Bronfenbrenner’s social ecological paradigm. While privileging ‘thick, rich description’ (Emerson *et al.*, 1995; Tedlock, 2000), a critical perspective is important to this study – one that is unavoidable since it is located amongst young people living in a context of poverty. The structural injustices under which township youth live feature prominently in my observations, discussions with young people, and

¹¹ Willis (2000, p. xiii) also writes: ‘Observation, interview and informal interaction... produces qualitative findings. Any one of the constitutive techniques of this ethnographic range of techniques can produce qualitative data, but it is only a combination of them over time that produces sufficient “quality” data to generate an *ethnographic* account of a social or cultural form’.

subsequent analysis. In the next chapter I will describe more fully the steps I have taken to ensure that this study is itself an *ethical ethnography* – one that does not exploit young people, essentialise them, and that attempts ‘to give something back’ (Cloke, Cooke, Cursons *et al.*, 2000, p. 137) rather than only take from research participants.

On numerous occasions while in the field I reminded myself of the usefulness of an ethnographic study over an extended period of time. In my fieldnotes, I recorded multiple occasions where only a lengthy period in the field could have produced the data I was able to capture. Amongst these were Ingwazi, a young man who told me he wanted to give up drinking but who was later stabbed in the head during a drunken brawl; Phumeza’s quietness at school that belied her *kasi* life of alcohol and numerous sexual partners; Andile’s struggle to tell me about the nature of his relationship with his father – preferring to fictionalise it for most of the year; Thembisa’s strong verbal opposition to premarital sex and her subsequent pregnancy; and Nzulu’s tough *pleya* persona at school compared with his regrets about having sex at an early age. On the final day of my research, Saturday 11th June 2005, I wrote:

An enormous advantage of having conducted my fieldwork over such a lengthy period of time has been the way in which I have *seen* young people’s progress (or regress) on the issues about which they had earlier spoken... I may have taken their words at face value in a simple interview or in a questionnaire but over the course of one year of constantly speaking to me and observing them, I saw firsthand many of their good intentions and resolutions evaporating and they were again drinking heavily or smoking *dagga*... It has been an interesting ethnographic anatomy of addictions and substance use.

Ethnography has provided a detailed and richly textured tapestry of social and individual¹² movements and nuances not available to studies based only on interviews or surveys. I experienced Tedlock’s (2000, p. 470) claim that ‘by entering into firsthand interaction

¹² Michelle Fine (2003) distinguishes between a sociological and an anthropological ethnography. In this study, by moving between the experiences of individuals and noting (often numerically) how groups of youth understand the phenomenon of morality, I have tried to do both at once.

with people in their everyday lives, ethnographers can reach a better understanding of the beliefs, motivations, and behaviours of their subjects than they can by using any other method’.

Design of the study

In the event I conducted a year-long ethnographic study which made use of multiple data collection methods that will be fully described in Chapter 3. The research was organised into three stages (see Figure 2.2 overleaf). In the first stage (nine months) I reviewed and critiqued literature in the broadly defined field of moral education and also tentatively designed the study. Since the ethnographic approach to qualitative research is an iterative processes, I was careful to keep methods as open-ended as possible, so as to allow the context and initial findings to shape their final form. During the second stage I chose and negotiated both formal and informal access into two schools, who will be known as Mandela High School and Oakridge High School. Mandela was a township school while Oakridge was a suburban school with a handful of township youth from Langa attending. I spent the entire 11 months at Mandela High and spent only the latter 6 months with young people from Oakridge. I concluded the data collection stage of my study and returned to Cambridge to begin the third stage of data analysis and writing-up. This process took a further 24 months and included a two month return trip to the field to conduct ‘member-checks’ (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 314).

Locating the study and negotiating access

The criteria I used for locating the study ranged from theoretical and ideological to issues of practicality and convenience. I had decided on South Africa as a research site not only because it is my home but also because studies of morality outside the Global North are rare. Second, studies focused on ‘black’ youth tend to choose research participants who are easily accessible through suburban rather than township schools. See for example Dolby (2001) and Ramphele (2002).

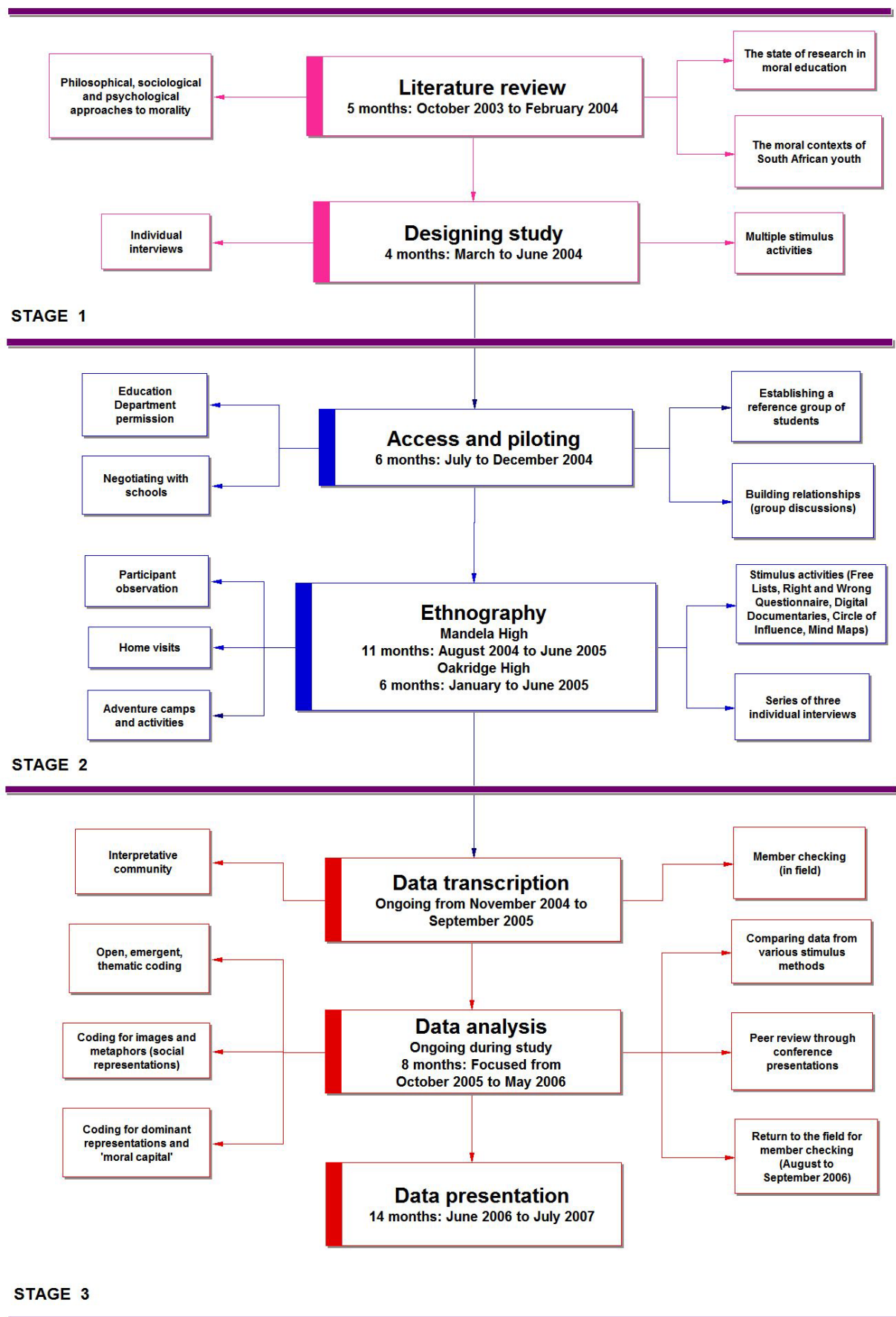


Figure 2.2 A graphic representation of the research design

Few studies focus on township youth, yet these 'black' youth comprise 79% of South African's total youth population¹³ (Statistics South Africa, 2001), and are under-researched and often vilified. Third, the Cape Province is often represented as having one of the best educational systems – based on the final school exit exam (Matric) pass rate – in South Africa, and I was interested in interviewing young people who were articulate and able to speak confidently about their moral lives. In choosing a specific township location I was motivated by further practical concerns: distance from my own home, ease of movement around the township, and safety. Out of the possible townships available to me (Khayelitsha, Gugulethu, Nyanga, Crossroads, Philippi, and Langa) I chose Langa as satisfying these practical requirements. Langa¹⁴ was 11km from my home, had a population of 50,000 (Statistics South Africa, 2001) (compared to Khayelitsha which has an estimated population of over two million people), had five high schools, and was easily navigable.

Once I had decided on a site for my research, I approached the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) to request formal permission for researching in a state school. Aware of the fact that many township youth commute to nearby suburbs for schooling (if their parents are able to afford it), I included three suburban high schools on my list of possible schools. I did so to ensure that should I would have a range of township youth in my study: those in a township school, in a suburban school, and through 'snowball sampling' (Goodman, 1961), some who were not in school at all. But I was also eager to ensure I had a backup plan in case I was not able to continue my research in a township

¹³ 'Coloured' youth comprise 8.9%, 'whites' 9.6%, and Indians/Asians 2.5% (Statistics South Africa, 2001).

¹⁴ Langa was established in 1901 as a 'black' area after the outbreak of Bubonic plague in the Cape, and again after the outbreak of Spanish flu in 1918. In 1927 it was officially designated a centre for 'black' migrant labourers, which it remained until the end of Apartheid. In keeping with the previous government's Apartheid policy of 'separate development', Langa, like other South African townships, retains the legacy of having been separated from other residential areas (a railway line separates it from the affluent suburb of Pinelands and a highway separates it from the 'coloured' area of Athlone). Langa has one large indoor sports centre where soccer matches, political meetings and public funerals are held, a sports field, a public library, six parks, and one public swimming pool. It has five high schools, seven primary schools, and eleven pre-primary schools. Community projects include an environmental centre, a cultural centre and a Lovelife Y-Centre, a multi-purpose facility run by the Planned Parenthood Association of South Africa providing reproductive health services and recreational opportunities for youth. There are various churches in Langa including Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Baptist and African Independent churches. There are no formal places of worship of other religious faiths.

school for reasons of safety. I would then be able to research township youth who attended suburban schools – an option I was hoping to avoid.

Having done preliminary work regarding seeking access to my intended sites while still in Cambridge (see Appendix 1.1 and 1.2 for correspondence), the process was quick and straightforward¹⁵. I spent the first month in South Africa meeting the requirements of formal access with Provincial authorities including negotiating access with local schools. Of the eight schools I had chosen, five were in Langa and three were in nearby suburban schools. I met with or held telephone conversations with school heads of five of the eight schools, most of whom (except one) were amenable to having research conducted in their school.

Since the township schools were relatively similar¹⁶, I chose Mandela High School because of ease of access (it was close to a main thoroughfare) and because the school head had been especially welcoming. I chose Oakridge High School in a nearby suburb for similar reasons, after I had ascertained that there were six learners from Langa in the year group in which I was interested. After negotiating the basis of my participation at each school for the coming year I confirmed our discussion in writing. One of these letters is provided in Appendix 1.3. Table 2.1 (overleaf) provides a basic comparison between Mandela and Oakridge. Further detailed description of school contexts will be provided in Chapter 5.

Sampling: Choosing a reference group and key informants

Almost immediately after access had been negotiated, I began participant observation at Mandela and began to pilot some of my stimulus instruments (see Chapter 3) with a group

¹⁵ The WCED website explained in detail what I needed to include in my application. I followed their instructions closely including sending them a copy of my methodology chapter and annexures. I received a reply by email within two weeks agreeing to my request. I had to sign an undertaking to seek separate permission from school heads, deposit a copy of my thesis with the Department, ensure I protected young people's confidentiality, and took precautions not to disturb their studies. Two weeks later I received final confirmation granting me permission to work in any of the eight schools I had listed.

¹⁶ According to the WCED website all five schools are 'ordinary public schools' i.e. state schools, although one school offered more technically-oriented subjects than others.

of six young women¹⁷ in Grade 11 (the focus of my research was on Grade 9 youth). This ‘reference’ group continued to be a sounding board for activities I later used with my target group of Grade 9 learners at Mandela and later at Oakridge. In total I spent eleven months in Mandela based with one Grade 9 class and six months at Oakridge where I invited the six Grade 10¹⁸ young people who lived in Langa to participate in the study.

Table 2.1 *A summary of the differences between Mandela High and Oakridge High*

| | Mandela High | Oakridge High |
|---|---|--|
| <i>Date school established</i> | 1999 | 1952 |
| <i>Number of successful Matrics (2004)</i> | 165 (2 with merit) | 183 (100 with merit or higher) |
| <i>School type</i> | Public Ordinary - General | Public Ordinary - General |
| <i>Language of teaching</i> | English (but <i>isiXhosa</i> in practice) | English |
| <i>Subjects offered</i> (in addition to the usual Accounting, <i>isiXhosa</i> , English, Afrikaans, Biology, History, Geography, Physical science, Mathematics, Business economics) | Agricultural Science, Biblical Studies, Home Economics, Physiology, Economics | Additional Mathematics, Art, Ceramics, Computer Studies, French 2nd Language, Home Economics, Music, Music Performance, Textiles, Travel and Tourism, Woodwork |
| <i>School size</i> | 1400 | 950 |
| <i>No. of Grade 10 learners</i> | 444 | 240 |
| <i>Computer facilities</i> | Yes | Yes |
| <i>Number of classrooms</i> | 32 | 29 |
| <i>Specialist classrooms/laboratories</i> | 5 | 10 |
| <i>Geographical location</i> | Township | Suburb |
| <i>Facilities</i> | Prefabricated hall | Hall, gymnasium, pool, four playing fields, five tennis and netball courts |
| <i>Student teacher ratio</i> | 1:40 | 1:22 |
| <i>Schools Fees</i> | R250 p.a. | R8,740 p.a. |
| <i>‘Racial’ demographic</i> | 100% ‘black’ | Approximately 10% ‘white’, 80% ‘coloured’, 10% ‘black’ |
| <i>% of Grade 9 failures/dropouts</i> | 63% | 1% |
| <i>Student deaths in 2004</i> | 12 | 0 |
| <i>Distance between schools</i> | 3.2km (as the crow flies) | |

In each school I followed different strategies in selecting a sample with which to work. I had previously decided that working with young people in Grade 9 was best for a number

¹⁷ I met these girls on the first day of my time at Mandela. We began talking about my study and before long they had volunteered their help. Data obtained from this reference group are included in the study.

¹⁸ The South African academic year follows the calendar year, and so young people who were in Grade 9 at the commencement of my study in August 2004 would (usually) have been in Grade 10 by January 2005. In the case of Oakridge this was the case, although at Mandela multiple young people failed the year.

of reasons. Middle adolescence¹⁹ is a time in which young people are mature enough (developmentally) to discuss abstract phenomena (Piaget, 1968), morality is ‘a dominant characteristic of self’ (Damon, 1984, p. 116) and so youth could be expected to communicate their views about morality increasingly independently of adult influence (Erikson, 1971). They ought also to have a level of life experience that sets them apart from their younger counterparts, and are more likely to be able to talk about morality reflectively, while at the same time lacking some of the cynicism I had come to expect from older youth. Practically, too, I was hoping for a group of youth who would not yet be too busy to be involved in such a study. In the South African schooling system young people move together in class cohorts between subjects until Grade 10 when subject differentiation begins. Focusing on Grade 9 students meant that if I were to locate myself in one class and accompany them throughout the year I would be reasonably assured of getting to know them well, since the group would be constant. At Mandela, to keep the process as free of bias as possible, after ensuring that Grade 9 classes (there were three) had been randomly assigned, I asked the Head to select one of the classes for me to accompany over the coming year. Grade 9C became the group out of which the majority of my key informants were to come.

At Oakridge, I had ascertained that there were only six young people who lived in Langa in Grade 10. My strategy therefore entailed selecting classes in which these young people were and observing them until such time as I had established enough of a relationship to invite them to join the study. After this initial period of participant observation, most of my interaction with Oakridge students took place after school since they had much less time available for informal conversations or haphazard social meetings during school time. We scheduled regular Thursday afternoon meetings, first as a group and then for individual interviews. This was in stark contrast to Mandela where contact was almost constant since teachers were often absent, and where students had little else with which to occupy themselves after school.

¹⁹ I had expected Grade 9 students to be fifteen years old. This was the case at Oakridge but at Mandela young people in Grade 9 ranged from 15 to 20 due to the exigencies of poverty (cycles of failures, dropping out and returning, and beginning school late). The members of my reference group ranged in age from 16 to 19.

This sampling strategy provides evidence that sampling within an ethnographic study is not a straightforward task. Richard Shweder (1996) writes humorously of how many students arrive in the field with ‘theoretically sophisticated and fashionable’ ideas about sampling and realise that ultimately they do not select their informants but that their informants select them based on little more than having had ‘nothing better to do’ (p. 16). So while an ethnographer ought to aim for a ‘purposeful’ sample (Maxwell, 1996, p. 70) or to conduct ‘purposive sampling’ (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 27) i.e. sampling that ensures various factors such as ‘race’, gender and socio-economic status are balanced, often s/he ends up with a volunteer sample. What is important though is that once the sample is obtained, that the researcher reflects on the strengths and limitations of such a sample.

In this study I had planned to include all the members of Grade 9C at Mandela and all six students who attended Oakridge and who lived in Langa. While the latter materialised, the former did not for a number of reasons. Of the 43 students listed as being in Grade 9C at Mandela, fewer than half showed up at school each day. So only the majority of *regular attendees* became part of my sample. In addition, those whose English was poorer excluded themselves. Of my ultimate sample of 37 young people who formally participated in the study, 16 were members of this initial class. Five came from other Grade 9 classes, 1 from Grade 10 (a cousin of a 9C member), one was not at school (also a cousin), and another two from a nearby high school (friends of 9C class members)²⁰. Six young people were from Oakridge and a further six began as members of my Mandela reference group. Table 2.2 (overleaf) provides a more detailed breakdown of the sample.

There was a relatively even split between young men and young women, while ages ranged between 14 and 20 (a median and an average age of 17). Young people came from a range of backgrounds most of whom would be described as poor, although some were poorer than others. Nearly half the sample lived in indigent conditions (one-roomed flats for a

²⁰ I was happy to employ ‘snowball sampling’ (Goodman, 1961) to include friends, partners, siblings and cousins so as to ensure homogamic groups, which according to Wagner *et al* (1999, p. 99) makes it easier to locate dominant social representations. The social and economic status (all relatively poor) and ‘racial’ make up of students at Mandela was homogenous. Students at Oakridge were financially better off than those at Mandela, but were arguably still not yet middle-class.

family, an informal settlement shack or in emergency relief shelters). The other half were equally divided between modest township brick homes and more middle-class township homes and modest suburban homes or flats outside of the township. This sample reflects the makeup of an average township (although I make no claims of statistical representativeness). If it is deficient, it is in the fact that it comprises more outgoing and

Table 2.2 *Summary of the composition of the research sample*

| | Young men | Young women | All |
|--|-----------|-------------|-----|
| Number in sample | 18 | 19 | 37 |
| Age (<i>as at 31 December 2004</i>) | | | |
| Fourteen | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Fifteen | 3 | 2 | 5 |
| Sixteen | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Seventeen | 1 | 6 | 7 |
| Eighteen | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| Nineteen | 6 | 6 | 12 |
| Twenty | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| School Grade | | | |
| Nine | 14 | 9 | 23 |
| Ten | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Eleven | 0 | 6 | 6 |
| Dropped out (during study) | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| Not in school | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Schooling | | | |
| Township-schooled | 14 | 16 | 30 |
| Suburban-schooled | 4 | 2 | 6 |

street-wise youth than those who are protected or sheltered²¹. Youth who were regular school attendees were also over-represented in my sample, although once young people were in the study they tended to attend school more regularly. Youth who had been excluded from school through failure or substance addiction were underrepresented as well. On reflection, although I had attempted to employ the principle of ‘saturation’ (Charmaz, 2000, p. 520) in selecting research participants, 37 was too large a sample. Data became unwieldy and repetitive. However, whilst in the field it was difficult to judge saturation, and it would have been damaging to exclude youth who had already been invited to join the study.

Enhancing the trustworthiness of this study

The final consideration in my study design was to provide ways in which this study could be deemed to be valid or reliable. While the term ‘validity’ belongs to the domain of quantitative research, in qualitative research, the term ‘trustworthiness’ is more

²¹ Young people who tended to be most protected or sheltered were often those who had recently arrived from the rural areas. These young people were also those who spoke very little, if any English.

appropriate when speaking of the reliability and credibility of a study. In constructivist research, it is not possible to verify figures, calculations, and coded data in a clinical fashion. This does not mean to say that it is not possible to conduct qualitative research in such a way as to make the 'quality of its craftsmanship' (Kvale, 1995, p. 26; Mills, 1959, p. 195) patently evident. According to Miles and Huberman (1994) to enhance the trustworthiness of qualitative research is to

analyse the many sources of potential biases that may invalidate qualitative observations and interpretations... [by] checking for representativeness and for researcher effects, triangulating, weighing the evidence... following up surprises, looking for negative evidence, making if-then tests, ruling out spurious relations, replicating a finding, checking out rival explanations, and getting feedback from informants (p. 263).

In addition to these steps, Sanjek (1990, p. 395ff) proposes 'three canons of validity' (or trustworthiness) for ethnographic research. In keeping with these canons, I have attempted to ensure that there is 'theoretical candour' in my research report (including an extended ethical reflection in Chapter 3), that the 'ethnographic path' is clearly visible, and that fieldnotes and primary data are adequately used throughout in support of analysis. But I have also employed several other methods to ensure that my data, and subsequent account of it, is trustworthy. By using several methods of data collection to answer each aspect of my research question, I have made methodological triangulation a prominent feature of this study (fully discussed in Chapter 3). Although the data is not always consistent, multiple methods have allowed me to provide a more nuanced account of young people's constructions, representations, and processes of morality. It has exposed contradictions and differences between aspirations and behaviour, and pinpointed the struggles inherent in a youth conception of morality.

Throughout this study I have sought feedback from a variety of 'interpretive communities' (Kvale, 1996, 246). Kvale describes three types of interpretive communities, namely the subjects of the research, the general public, and the scientific community. Each provides an

added dimension of reliability to a qualitative study, and I was able to employ all three in this study. Whilst in the field I met with a group of six friends²², all of whom had experience of working with young people in a community context (some in an academic context). We spoke regularly about my work as I related ‘tales of the field’ (Van Maanen, 1988) and had them read and reflect on some of my experiences that were puzzling or problematic. Their insights were invaluable. Later I presented a seminar to an expanded group of these friends whose interest, like others in the general public, was mainly in the application of my study. As I began the long task of analysing data and writing it up, I regularly presented discrete sections of my analysis at academic conferences (amongst these are Swartz, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c, 2005d, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c, 2006d, 2007). This ‘peer review’ (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 308) also proved invaluable in honing and refining my analysis.

However, it was in obtaining and incorporating feedback from my research participants, what some call ‘member checks’ (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 314), that provided the greatest sense of trustworthiness. If this study was truly to represent their voices, then their corroboration of the data and analyses was paramount. While still in the field, I invited participants to read through their own interview transcripts and to comment on my fieldnotes, checking for accuracy and providing their opinions on my developing analysis. In August/September 2006, fourteen months after I had left the field, I returned to South Africa and spent time with a group of my key informants. I asked them to read through my primary data chapters (Chapters 6 to 9) as well as Chapter 10 in which I theorise about ‘moral capital’. They did so eagerly and gave me individual feedback, as a group, and in the course of a symposium for a local community organisation. I asked them to tell me about their experience as research participants, and to feel free to tell me what they thought about my representation of their lives.

They had a lot to say. Overwhelmingly they were unhappy with the fact that I had captured their words verbatim – although I had learnt conversational *isiXhosa*, interviews were

²² I am grateful to Dr Wendy Lutrell for instilling in me the importance of conducting research within a ‘community of enquiry’ or ‘interpretive community’ during my time at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

conducted in English, since my language ability was not yet good enough. Young people were therefore speaking English in deference to me, and they said the verbatim transcriptions made them ‘look stupid, like we can’t speak English’. I explained that even for native English speakers the spoken word seldom looks eloquent when written down, and assured them that the audience would understand. They also made comments expanding or just reinforcing my analyses. For example, in Chapter 7 Andiswa helped me to rework my understanding of the *isiXhosa* terms for ‘moral’ which I then changed. Also in Chapter 7 Lekho, Andiswa, Thando, Thobane and Andile helped me to expand the rubrics of ‘mommy’s baby’, ‘right’, ‘kasi’ and ‘skollie’ to include a variety of other names under each broad heading, and explained some of the nuances to me (which I subsequently incorporated). In Chapter 9 Luxolo told me that I had not spoken strongly enough of the importance of money to young people, and how having money inspires you to be a good person. Luxolo also said I should speak more about how young people ‘try to be a good example for younger siblings’, and that even though some romantic relationships are good for you ‘not all the relationships are the same’. She said that although I spoke of ‘alcohol as fashion... for some it’s also about seeking for acceptance’. Finally, she commented:

Luxolo: You’re right Sharlene, with the support of your mother, financially and emotionally, a person could be successful’... [but] we can’t blame poverty for the things we do. When you are poor that’s when you need to get out the *kasi* and make something of yourself.

Young people also corrected a number of spelling mistakes in my *isiXhosa* (for which I was extremely grateful – those that remain are my own). A general consensus about the data chapters was that I had captured what they had told me ‘quite well’. Andile summed up the group’s sentiments: ‘It’s what we told you... we know all about our lives so it wasn’t too interesting reading about it again... What was missing is what *you think* [said with emphasis] about what we told you, what you think about our lives’. My reply was that many people needed to know about their lives, and don’t currently, but that I would add more of my own analysis later. Secretly I was gratified that they thought that my representations of their lives were authentic. But it was Chapter 10 that dealt with ‘moral capital’ that

received the most animated feedback. They told me they ‘loved’ that chapter. When I asked them why Andile said it was because it was inspiring and motivating, that amidst all that was bad in *ikasi*, I had seen the potential for ‘good’ in their lives. They also told me that the fact that I had asked them to read through my work made them ‘feel proud to be asked’ and ‘that I’ve achieved something by reading through a Cambridge PhD’.

Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to discuss the various factors influencing the choice of research approach and design. It began by charting the major theoretical influences of social representations and ecological systems theory that have informed this study. Then it provided a strong motivation for the use of an ethnographic methodology as the most fitting approach to a study that seeks to take seriously the ecological contexts in which young people find themselves.

I have also described the three stages of research from examining the literature, through to ethnographic fieldwork, and steps taken to ensure the study’s credibility. Despite limited formal piloting of this study, the use of a *reference group* in the field has been a helpful innovation. It has allowed my study design to unfold in the field, an important part of the ethnographic process. But I have been limited in extending this iterative process to the work of analysis. According to Creswell (1994), ethnography is a fluid process in which there ought to be constant ‘cycling back and forth from data collection and analysis to problem reformulation’ (p. 183). The fact that I was required to keep terms in Cambridge while conducting the study in Cape Town made this goal an impossibility. Finally, I have alluded to the importance of an *ethical ethnography*, especially when working amongst vulnerable youth, a concept that will be expanded in the following chapter.

Figure 2.3 (overleaf) provides a schematic summary of the conceptual design of this study. Informing my study theoretically and conceptually are Moscovici’s theory of social representations and Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory that I have elucidated in this chapter, and which encapsulate the diagram. In the outer circles of the diagram the

AN ETHICAL ETHNOGRAPHY OF MORALITY

Every study needs to be open and ethical but perhaps none more so than a study of those living in poverty and one which focuses on morality. Researching ‘morality’ is a difficult task and demands considerable reflection on the types of methods used. This chapter provides an exploration of the key research strategies and methods employed in order to give prominence to young people’s voices, and reflects on the multiple ethical choices that were made over the course of the study.

Using multiple methods in a research design is an important features of an ethnographic approach (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995, p. 6; Stewart, 1998) and of identifying hegemonic and emancipated social representations (Moscovici, 1973, 1988). It is also characteristic of emancipatory research when working with vulnerable youth to avoid deriving erroneous conclusions from single sources of data (Baker, Lynch, Cantillon *et al.*, 2004; Davis, 1998). Furthermore, Moscovici and Duveen (2000) and Bauer and Gaskell (1999) recommend that multi-methods of data collection are essential for finding social representations since by comparing different data one is able to ‘achieve the parallax of different perspectives’ (p. 177-8). An ethnography that comprises solely or mostly of participant observation would not capture the depth and perspective required of a study on moral culture, with its complex cognitive, social, and institutional components. In working with young people as a youth worker I also know that maintaining their interest in a year-long project demands creative strategies. For all these reasons, I chose methods that would be engaging, open-ended in order to foreground young people’s voices, and would provide sufficient depth to corroborate (or triangulate) findings. Participant observation, group interviews, a series of semi-structured interviews with individuals, and various stimulus activities¹ were all used to collect data. Each of the research instruments I used will be considered in the sequence in which it was used, including how data was collected,

¹ Since I needed to find out what youth classify as being in the moral domain, I intentionally avoided using imposed moral dilemmas, often used by cognitive psychologists (see Chapter 1 for a fuller discussion).

recorded, and analysed. Figure 3.1 offers a graphic depiction of the sequence in which methods were employed and the duration over which they were used.

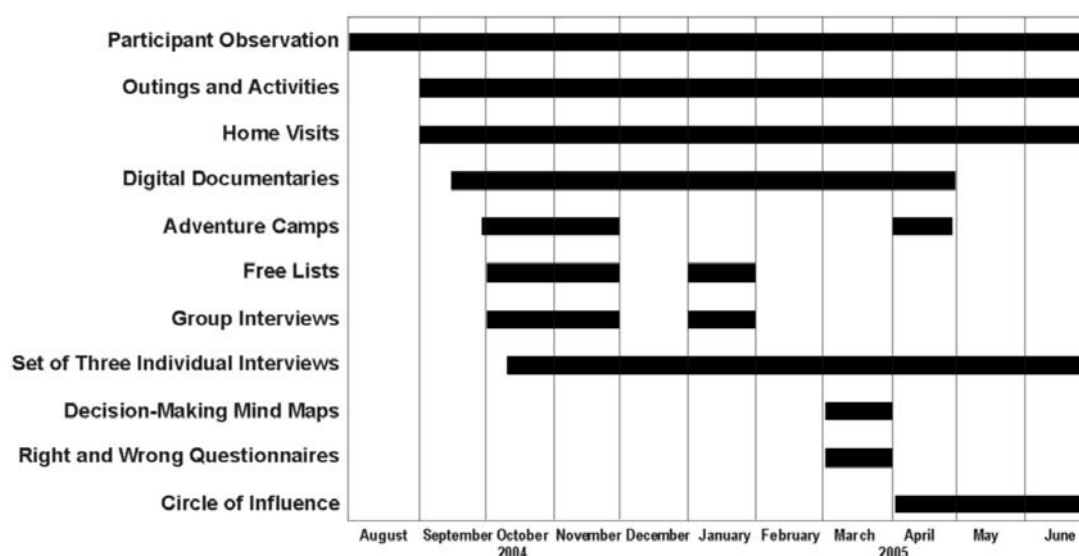


Figure 3.1 *The sequencing and duration of methods used in the study*

In describing each research instrument, I have specially focused on how the instrument elicited open-ended data on morality, encouraged emerging voices, and creatively engaged young people in Langa. As we can see in Table 3.1 data on the contexts of moral formation, the social constructions of right and wrong, moral influences and knowledges, processes of moral decision-making and the task of building trust were drawn from a number of different methods rather than just one instrument. I begin by describing what was probably the most important aspect of the study – that of building relationships.

Table 3.1 *The objective of each research method used*

| Research objective Method | Contexts of moral formation | Social constructions of right and wrong | Moral influences and knowledges | Processes of moral decision making | Building trust |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| Participant Observation | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Free Lists | | ✓ | | | |
| Group Interview | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Home Visits | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Decision-Making Mind Map | | | | ✓ | |
| Digital Documentaries | | | ✓ | | |
| Adventure Camp | | | | | ✓ |
| Right and Wrong Questionnaire | | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Set of Three Individual Interviews | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Circle of Influence | | | ✓ | | |

Building relationships, encouraging emerging voices

My first month at Mandela was rather difficult. I was a curiosity – the only ‘white’ person in a sea of ‘black’ faces. Most of the teaching staff greeted me politely but hardly spoke to me. Young people either ignored me, giggled when they saw me, or called me *mlungu* (‘white’ foreigner) as I walked by. I brazened it out. I arrived at school three times a week for the first month, and then began coming everyday. There was so much to learn. And if I was to encourage young people to speak to me, I would have to be intentional about building relationships across the ‘racial’ divide – and to do so I would need to be there everyday. Each day I sat at the back of the Grade 9C class, learnt names² and made copious notes to occupy my time while lessons went by – not a word of which I could understand. No-one spoke English. I had encountered my first dilemma in the field. I was mute and dumb. I could neither understand a word of what was going on, or communicate. This issue of language both impeded and facilitated my research. It provided young people an opportunity to engage me at their leisure and pleasure, and to *offer* me help in learning *isiXhosa*³, which ultimately contributed to my building an extraordinary relationship with them. By the end of the year the giggling had died down, and *mlungu*⁴ was replaced with ‘Sharlene’⁵, ‘My F’ (‘my friend’) or *mpintshi* (teenage slang for *friend*). I was delighted.

During the many free periods in the school day due to absent or busy teachers, I spoke to young people in small groups about the weather, school, movies, music, and sport. Many teased me, telling me wild fanciful stories⁶, and then burst out laughing when they saw I

² I learnt how to pronounce difficult *isiXhosa* names through word association, by offering to take the class register, and by asking young people to test me to see if I knew their names.

³ As I made an effort to learn *isiXhosa*, young people applauded my least efforts, became increasingly friendly and eager to speak to me – to practice their English and help me practice my *isiXhosa*.

⁴ Occasionally when I was called *mlungu*, I retaliated with *nyama* (an equally derogatory term literally translated as ‘meat’) amidst much laughter.

⁵ I was at pains to remind them to call me Sharlene so as to dissociate myself from the role of a teacher. I also dressed (with the permission of the school Head) less formally than the teaching staff.

⁶ Stories included having multiple children in crèche, about not going to visit Joe Slovo – the nearby informal settlement because I’ll ‘get my throat cut’, regaling me with tales of the many offers of marriage

was taking them seriously. I joined in. I was happy to be a source of entertainment for them for the moment, since I could see it was deepening our friendship. I knew I was not being perceived as a teacher when young people felt free to swear in front of me. During interviews young people asked if it was okay to use expletives and I said they should feel free. But few swore in front of me – often inadvertently. Once or twice when a young person swore in front of me, a peer would reprimand him or her. It showed me that I was not being perceived as an authority figure, hence their freedom, while at the same time receiving respect from them.

Towards the end of the first month at Mandela, a few of my key informants asked if we could do something together on Friday afternoon after school. I readily agreed and told them as long as they got permission from their parents and it did not cost any money. We ended up going to my flat for sandwiches, driving along the Table Mountain cableway road and then walking along the Sea Point beachfront – talking continuously. One day when we spoke about relationships, young people said they never had the opportunity to talk to adults about ‘these things’. I asked ‘Don’t I count – aren’t I an adult?’ to which the reply was ‘Yes, but you understand young people’s things’ and explained that it also helped that I was not *umXhosa* since it was a sign of disrespect in *amaXhosa* culture to talk about such matters. That day set the pattern for future outings. We would go out after school on Fridays (and later on weekends and in the holidays), talk, laugh, and then stop for a smoke break before I dropped them off at home, and was invited inside to meet their (usually) mothers⁷. In a few short months I had driven through more muddy and sandy roads into the heart of informal settlements and townships all over Cape Town, than most ‘white’ South Africans ever do.

Visiting young people in their homes and meeting mothers, siblings, and grandparents came to be an important component of my research, resulting in increased trust between

they had from rural men, and telling me they lived at the ‘Waterfront’ (which turned out to be a waterlogged informal settlement, rather than the upmarket residential and shopping precinct that it is).

⁷ I made a point of calling their mothers ‘Mrs So-and-So’ despite the fact that they often introduced themselves to me by their first (English rather than indigenous) names.

caregivers and myself, as well as providing greater insight into young people's personal biographies. I also believe that it communicated an ethic of care and interest in their lives that remaining aloof would not have. I was definitely outside my comfort zone. Shacks were often a great distance from main roads along dangerously potholed, muddy and glass strewn roads. Many times my fourteen year-old Toyota broke down or got stuck and I had to rely on the generosity of young people and their family members and neighbours to get it going again. But my own vulnerability, openness, and willingness to risk the 'dangers of the township' (as many teachers called it) served to allow me deeper access into their lives. Over the year my relationship with many mothers also changed from one where their first instinct was to ask whether I had any work for them to simply talking in general terms about their children. During the second month I began to tell young people more and more about my research⁸ and asked whether they'd be interested in going on an adventure camp⁹ over the September holidays. Young people were eager to participate and the resulting camps¹⁰ were an outstanding success. It fast-tracked the deepening of relationships, and provided young people with an opportunity to rock climb and abseil, hike, whale-watch, swim, eat well, and escape township life for four days. During these camps (I ran three in the course of the year with different groups of young people), I introduced one of the stimulus activities and conducted an introductory group discussion. By the time the summer holidays arrived towards the end of November I had established firm friendships with a number of young people and had been slowly inviting them to join the study on a more formal basis. Through showing up at school each day without fail I became part of the landscape. By laughing at their jokes, sometimes at my expense, and joking back I established myself as a youth researcher rather than a teacher. By making the effort to learn

⁸ My introduction to the school by the Head had been non-specific. Pupils were simply told that I'm here to do 'university work' and that I was 'not a stranger'. Initially, young people did not come and ask me about my work in their school, but later on they did in increasing numbers. My standard reply was to say I wanted to learn about young people's lives, and the influences in their lives.

⁹ In addition to my own previous experience as a youthworker in adventure camping, I was impressed with Ramphela's (2002) use of wilderness camps as a part of her research design in working with township youth who attended suburban schools.

¹⁰ I asked my key informants to invite ten students from 9C to the first camp. I had obtained sponsorship to cover accommodation, food and transport from a variety of sources and the school Head had suggested it should be an official school outing. The teacher in charge of the Grade 9s would accompany us – but would only join us for social activities and meals, leaving us free to have confidential conversations.

isiXhosa I earned respect (and sympathy). By insisting on them calling me ‘Sharlene’ and keeping promises made to take them on outings I became a friend. And by visiting their homes on every possible occasion, I established a rapport with parents that ensured my own safety¹¹ and added an element of transparency to my research.

As the year progressed, I began spending more and more time on young people’s turf, playing pool at local *jukeboxes*, and sitting on street corners or in dusty parks – talking, talking and talking some more. I was invited to watch young people play sport, sing in talent shows, parade in beauty contests, and DJ at community radio stations. We bought greasy *vetkoek*, drank Cokes on hot summer afternoons bought from *spaza* shops, and wiled away long summer days on the beach. They began asking me about my life: about my parents, whether I had a boyfriend, what I did to cope with ‘the boredom of living in a quiet suburb’, and listened to my CDs (loving some and hating others). They commented on the fact that I lived alone in a two-bedroomed apartment with a large garden. They told me, while they did not think I was rich, I was not ‘suffering’; that I had obviously ‘worked for my money’ to be able to stay in a place like this. When I asked why they thought I was not rich, Luxolo replied saying: ‘If you were rich like some people, maybe you wouldn’t be spending time with us. You’d be like going out having fun, doing – having fun with your friends or something’.

As each day passed, young people’s stories unfolded, and their voices strengthened. We often revisited stories told during these many informal conversations during later interviews, as they gathered courage to provide more details or confessed to untruths they had initially told. My fieldnotes of Monday 10th January 2005 record a conversation with Bongani who I had known for about three months at this stage. He tells me he had been wary with me about having been in prison because ‘he didn’t know me like he knows me now’ and that he will be ‘free’ with me now that he knows me better and knows what I’m

¹¹ Very soon after I began work at Mandela a few of the teachers had told me that if I got to know the mothers in the community I would be safe. Eventually many of the women in the streets in which my research participants lived got to know me and waved and called over fences to me as I passed by. One day when a young man tried to steal my cellphone, I deterred him by telling him I knew where he lived. One of the mothers had already warned me that he might try to steal my cellphone. He laughed and walked away. We later became friends.

doing. I'm the first *mlungu* he's had contact with he tells me. Luxolo was another instance where an extended period in the field was paramount for allowing her complex story to emerge. A month after I first met her, she told me she smoked Mandrax (methaqualone). Four months later she told me that she was homosexual, but it was another month before she wanted to talk about it, and introduced me to her partner. Three months after that she told me she had lived on the streets after running away from home, that her father did not want to know her, and only recently, that her mother was dying of AIDS. There were some things that needed time to emerge. Young people told me that they had needed time to consider whether they could trust me, whether they in fact wanted to tell me some things about their lives. Then they had to find both the words and the courage to do so. Building trust and deepening relationships cannot happen in a few weeks or even months, and so my study benefited materially from taking time to immerse myself in young people's lives. Uncovering their moral ecology could have been done in no other way.

Using and analysing multiple stimulus methods

The time spent building relationships with young people was very important for the more formal parts of this study. I already knew how unengaged young people were at school, and the difficulty teachers had in keeping their attention, even for what I thought were interesting lessons. Each of the methods that I describe below, including being a participant observer, introducing photography into the research process, asking youth to complete questionnaires, free lists, rank order activities and to participate in group discussions and individual interviews were facilitated by this intentional strategy of first building relationships.

Participant observation and fieldnotes

Besides the various activities such as adventure camps, home visits, activities and outings that I created for young people, I also spent much of my time as a participant observer in their daily lives. Participant observation is the creative and skilled 'deep hanging out' (Geertz, 1998, p. 69) of the researcher at a research site with the aim of getting 'close to

those studied as a way of understanding what their experiences mean to them' (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995, p. 12). Participant observation includes ongoing informal discussions: what Sanjek calls 'speech in action' (1990, p. 404). The use of participant observation is important in order to *observe* first hand rather than only rely on what young people tell about their lives. I conducted participant observation in all of the primary contexts (the microsystems of home, community, streets, and school) in which young people find themselves. Throughout the 11 months in the field and the subsequent period when I returned to the field a year later, I recorded copious field-jottings in a small notebook. I aimed to write these notes into a more coherent and detailed account within a few days and captured incidents, descriptions as well as notes on my methodology, emerging analysis, and personal reflexive notes¹². I have used the resulting 260 page single-spaced document as a constant reference while writing this report and coded it along with other data. More than just an aid to memory, it provides an audit trail through which I make my analysis explicit. The discipline of constantly writing fieldnotes also helped me to maintain some sort of objectivity when the lines between being a youth worker (intervening in the lives of young people) and a researcher blurred. While in the field, I spent time reading¹³ my fieldnotes to key informants and members of my reference group and asked for their comments, including help with clarifying details. In this way participant observation contributed materially to a co-constructed account of young people's lives.

Digital documentaries

Using (auto)photography as part of the research process has been done in the study of self, identity, and self-esteem (Clancy & Dollinger, 1993; Dollinger, Preston, O'Brien *et al.*, 1996; Jones, M. J., 2004), religious identity (Dollinger, 2001), classroom space and inclusion (Kaplan & Howes, 2004) and to explore conceptions of the physical environment (Armstrong, 2005; Dodman, 2003). To my knowledge, it has not been used in the study of

¹² Tedlock (2000) writes of the purpose of the researcher's commentary on fieldnotes as attempting to provide 'simultaneous emotional involvement and objective detachment' (p. 465).

¹³ I read fieldnotes to them since I had yet to anonymise the document by inserting young people's pseudonyms. Once I had done so I invited young people to read the fieldnotes themselves.

youth morality, and it has provided a wealth of rich and detailed data, seldom available to an academic audience. While fraught with ethical issues, especially around confidentiality and child protection (Emmison & Smith, 2000; Harper, 2000; Ziller, 1990), the use of photography in research has enormous potential. I provided young people with good quality¹⁴ Olympus digital cameras, showed them how to use the camera (including how to delete unwanted photographs) and asked them to take photographs of the ‘good’ and ‘bad’, ‘right’ and ‘wrong’¹⁵ influences in their lives. This was one of the ways I planned to answer that part of my research question concerned with understanding their portrayal of moral influences. On average young people kept their cameras for three weeks in order to complete their *Digital Documentaries*. Of the 37 young people in my research group, 35 produced photographic documentaries, each taking an average of forty photographs creating a data bank of 1,485 photographs. Each person was then invited to comment on their own photographs during a debriefing individual interview (the second in a series of three). Figure 3.2 (overleaf) illustrates a sample of the visual data I collected.

Asking young people to take digital photographs of the moral influences in their lives served a number of purposes. First, it provided a window into their lives not otherwise available to me as a researcher, ‘a mirror with a memory’ (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 635). Second, it created and sustained interest because of the novelty of having, and learning to use, a camera. It also empowered research participants to choose which aspects of their lives they would display to me and which they would conceal¹⁶.

¹⁴ I wanted young people to feel part of an important project, to feel that I was treating them with dignity and trust, and to learn a new skill on good quality equipment. I could not have achieved these aims by using disposable cameras. I only gave disposable cameras to those who especially requested them because they feared being robbed. I still taught these young people how to use the digital cameras, and had their photographs produced as digital images so that they could delete and organise their photographs like their peers.

¹⁵ Operationalising ‘moral influences’ as ‘right’, ‘wrong’, ‘good’, and ‘bad’ influences was a conscious choice given the difficulties of language (my poor *isiXhosa*, their poor English). The implications of this choice will be fully discussed in Chapter 6.

¹⁶ Mark Jones (2004), a researcher who has used autophotography to research young people’s sense of self, speaks of how autophotography provides young people the ‘freedom to pick and choose the people (i.e. their family, their friends, church, etc.) who are important... It is this immense freedom which the camera gives to participants which distinguishes it from traditional paper and pencil tests’ (p. 190).



Figure 3.2 Sample of photographs taken by young people

Finally, using photography helped young people to begin, what would often be, very difficult conversations about their lives. Talking about photographs took the focus off the struggles of language and facilitated self expression and dialogue. It ultimately provided young people with unique opportunities for having their lives heard, and forms a crucial part of this study.

Initially, I analysed photographs by sorting them into rudimentary themes of influence: individual people, groups of people, places, activities, and abstract categories. Subsequent visual readings lead to my coding photographs into themes obtained inductively from the data but informed by my understanding of ecological systems¹⁷. Later, based on young people's commentaries of each photograph I classified them into 'positive' influences, 'negative' influences, and those including both types of influence. These visual analyses are discussed in Chapter 9 and provide the main source of data in answering the research question: *How do youth make meaning of their moral influences?*

Free lists

Free Lists have commonly been used in social science research as an elicitation technique to measure informants' knowledge, opinions and associations of a subject (Ryan, Nolan, & Yoder, 2000). They are usually analysed quantitatively. At an early stage in fieldwork I asked young people to list in two separate columns on one side of a page, the things they thought were 'good/right' and 'wrong/bad'. On the other side they were asked to compile a list in two columns of the things they 'loved' and 'hated'. The primary reason for this task was to allow young people to present, in their own voices and language, the words they associate with morality (operationalised as 'right' and 'wrong'), as well as personal tastes, preferences and prejudices ('love' and 'hate'). The activity worked well with the majority of young people completing it during an adventure camp sitting on a rock or chair overlooking the ocean – an ideal space for reflection. Those who did not attend a camp completed the activity while waiting (often in my garden) for an interview.

¹⁷ Using Bronfenbrenner's understanding of the ecological systems that influence young people's lives were not 'prejudgements, forcing interpretation of the data into their mould, but are instead used as resources to make sense of the data' (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995, p. 210).

At this initial stage I was interested to learn about the moral distinctions and types of actions, beliefs and preferences youth associated with right and wrong; the differences and similarities between lists generated by young men and young women; the language used to describe moral issues; and what might be absent from their thinking about moral issues. *Free Lists* provided a good platform for understanding young people's constructions of morality. It also informed the compilation of the *Right and Wrong* questionnaire and served as a basis for designing individual interview questions. I analysed *Free Lists* by measuring the frequencies of words¹⁸ which occurred under each heading as well as the order in which words appeared (Ryan & Bernard, 2000, p. 770). I used this information to obtain a basic idea of *what* young people understand to be moral matters. These constructions are analysed in Chapter 6 (together with data from interviews and *Right and Wrong* questionnaires) and answer the research question: *How do these youth construct the moral domain?*

Group interviews

Although group interviews and focus groups are often a mainstay of qualitative research, my use of them was limited and for a narrow purpose. In the initial stages of meeting with a group of young people on a camp, a general discussion seemed to be the best way to break the ice and familiarise young people with interviews (including talking into a digital recorder). I conducted three group discussions: one with the first group of Mandela students attending an adventure camp, the second with my reference group of Grade 11 girls from Mandela, and the third with Grade 10 students from Oakridge (at a local McDonalds). I had prepared four questions¹⁹ about their personal goals, living in South Africa, what would prevent them from achieving their dreams, and a provocative statement about 'the problem with young people'. Although these discussions were

¹⁸ Each young person produced on average eight words under the category of 'right', nine under 'wrong', twelve under 'loved' and eleven under 'hated' with no variation by gender.

¹⁹ The four questions were: 'Tell me about one of the goals you have for your life'; 'What do you think about South Africa, what's it like to live here, do you love it, do you hate it, what do you think of the future of South Africa?'; 'What will stop you from achieving your dreams?'; 'A South African politician once said 'the young people of this country don't know the difference between right and wrong, and that's the problem with this country'. Do you agree or disagree?'

recorded, transcribed, and coded thematically, they do not appear extensively in data chapters²⁰ since their main purpose was in relationship-building. Appendix 2.1 provides a list of those young people (using pseudonyms) who participated in group discussions and individual interviews.

Set of three individual interviews

Irving Seidman (1998), in writing of the rationale behind conducting a series of three interviews, argues that:

People's behavior becomes meaningful and understandable when placed in the context of their lives and the lives of those around them... the first interview establishes the context of the participants' experience. The second allows participants to reconstruct the details of their experience within the context in which it occurs. And the third encourages the participants to reflect on the meaning their experience holds for them (p. 11).

After my first two months at Mandela, and while testing my original interview questions, I realised that conducting a series of three interviews, and making *life histories*²¹ a feature of these, was crucial to the success of my study. This first interview also included questions about right and wrong, role models, the role of adults in their lives, as well as religious beliefs and sexual values²². The average recorded length of these initial interviews was 50 minutes, excluding breaks. Life histories comprised between one third and one half of each

²⁰ Aspects of these discussions inform Chapter 5 where young people speak of their aspirations and feelings about living in South Africa.

²¹ I redesigned the study to include three interviews (instead of the intended two) and incorporated a question at the beginning the first interview asking young people to relate 'all the important things that have happened to you so far in your life' (in other words their biography or life history).

²² I designed initial questions on the basis of simplicity and open-endedness. Only after first and second interviews had been completed did I compile the schedule for the third interview.

first interview. The second interview²³ averaged 25 minutes in length and was a commentary on their *Digital Documentaries*. These interviews went very smoothly, and I noticed how much easier it was for young people to talk about their photographs than it was to answer interview questions.

The final interview was conducted after each young person had completed all the activities²⁴ described in this section since the interview explored issues that arose out of these activities. Young people then took a break and returned to answer questions related to their moral motivation, emotions associated with doing right and wrong, and their understanding of the relationship between poverty, Apartheid, culture and school on their moral behaviour. The interview concluded by asking them to reflect on their experience as a participant in the research process and often ended with an elaborate youth handshake (slapping palms, gripping fingers, and snapping thumbs), a hug, smiles, and occasionally tears. The average recorded length of this final interview was 60 minutes. Appendix 2.2 provides a schedule of questions used as a guide for each of the three interviews.

In conducting these series of individual interviews I made a number of strategic decisions. To allow relationships to develop, I waited until the third month in the field before inviting young people to participate in an interview. I conducted interviews at my home²⁵ after

²³ Young people sat next to me and spoke while looking at the screen of my laptop as we clicked our way through their photographs. I asked them to tell me what the photo was about, and why they had taken it i.e. whether it was a positive (good/right) or negative (wrong/bad) influence. When necessary I asked clarification questions.

²⁴ Prior to this final interview I prepared clarification questions by reading through previous transcripts and other activities and noting contradictions, anomalies, and issues which were essential for understanding their moral constructions, influences, and processes.

²⁵ Constant interruptions, lack of privacy, and high levels of noise made interviews impossible and recording inaudible. Before resorting to inviting young people to my home I explored possibilities of conducting interviews in their homes or in a public space near school, but to no avail. There are no coffee shops or MacDonalds in Langa, and taverns and jukeboxes seemed inappropriate (and noisy). Parks afforded little privacy. Homes were places to sleep rather than sit and talk, and with the number of people who shared a home in the township, privacy virtually impossible. Young people suggested we meet at my home. It turned out to be an ideal venue. Young people came home with me after school, usually in pairs (occasionally in groups of three or individually). Afterwards I dropped them off at their homes and went in to greet their (usually) mothers. We would make sandwiches and drink Coke before the interview. The person who was not being interviewed listened to music, surfed the internet, or did homework in the garden.

failed attempts with members of my reference group at school. Meeting in my home, away from the busy-ness of school and township life created an inviting and serious environment in which to talk about serious issues. Young people indicated that they enjoyed the experience of visiting my home, the food, music and respite from the township it supplied.

Interview data comprised a total of 108 complete interviews spanning eighty hours. Like group interviews, individual interviews were all digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. I employed four transcribers²⁶ who were asked to sign confidentiality agreements (see Appendix 2.3) and checked transcripts personally. I used a computer package designed for analysing qualitative data (Atlas.ti) to open-code data, finally ending up with 100 codes (see Appendix 2.4) as well as biographical data (Chapter 5) on each participant. (See Appendix 2.5 for the coding sheet I used to obtain this data from interview transcripts). I was at pains to allow the codes to emerge - what Lofland and Lofland (1995, p. 192) call 'emergently inductive activity' – so that 'the codes fit the data rather than the data fitting the codes' (Charmaz, 1983, 112). In an attempt at 'data reduction' (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 11), I then sorted these codes thematically, again informed by my ecological lens. I coded the data for a second time, this time keeping my research questions in mind, and using my interview schedules as a template. These codes are included in Appendix 2.6. Having been alerted to the existence of metaphors and images (Bauer & Gaskell, 1999, p. 172; Wagner, Duveen, Farr *et al.*, 1999, p. 98-9) in the data, and knowing that these pointed towards social representations, I devoted a subsequent reading just to them.

Concurrent with these various coding practices I wrote brief analytical memos (Emerson *et al.*, 1995, p. 164; Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 72) which helped me to refine themes and answer my research questions. Analytical memos also served as a placeholder for noting surprises, limitations of the study, and for experimenting with theoretical conclusions. This process of coding took seven months of sustained effort to complete, and even now I have not plumbed the depth of this data. In keeping with my commitment to privilege young people's voices, quotations from interviews are included at length, and feature in each of the data chapters.

²⁶ Transcribing took a total of 458 hours and filled 2,730 A4 pages.

Right and wrong questionnaire

As young people revealed moral issues (especially in *Free Lists* and *Digital Documentaries*) I began to compile questions that might be of use in further teasing out their moral constructions (and quantitatively measuring the extent to which these were dominant or minority viewpoints). I also planned to use the questionnaire as a basis for discussion in final interviews hoping to compare what youth *said* about various moral and social behaviours and what they *did* (based on my observations). As a strategy for engaging two of the older young men in Grade 9C at Mandela (Khaya and Xolile), I asked them to translate²⁷ the questionnaire into *isiXhosa*. Khaya and Xolile turned out to be important gatekeepers, encouraging other young people to speak to me, and in the case of Xolile, controlling them (telling them not to offend me by talking about Apartheid or stealing from me).

The questionnaire (see Appendix 3) ultimately comprised one hundred questions with four possible answers: 'always wrong', 'right', 'depends' and 'not about right and wrong' (During analysis, the latter two categories were combined and represented as 'ambivalent'.) I asked all of the research group to complete the questionnaire. Mandela students completed the questionnaire at a workshop I held in March 2005, Oakridge students at one of our regular weekly meetings in May 2005. However, the full potential of the questionnaire was never realised. The sample size²⁸ of 37 (and non-randomness of the

²⁷ Initially, I asked only my reference group to complete the questionnaire. After they had made their attempts we discussed it and they told me which questions they had trouble understanding and which questions they thought were duplicates or irrelevant. Then Khaya, Xolile and I met on a number of occasions to work on it. They worked separately on individual questions then discussed it to form a consensus. I paid them each a small sum of money (R20) and took them out for lunch at McDonalds, which also served to enhance our relationship. After these young men had completed their work on the questionnaire I had two *isiXhosa* speaking people check their work, translate it back into English, and then translate it back into *isiXhosa*. It took over six months to complete this process. Even then, it still had faults. Young people struggled to understand questions 57 and 86. The term pornographic (even when translated into *isiXhosa*) was unfamiliar to many. Young people used the term 'sex movies' and 'blue movies' to describe pornography, seldom differentiating between soft and hardcore pornography.

²⁸ Because youth attended school irregularly I decided against getting the whole Grade 9 year group to complete the questionnaire since it would have been virtually impossible to obtain informed consent. In order to obtain consent forms from those in the study, I had to visit homes to get parents to sign forms. It would have been impossible to do that for 300 youth.

sample) meant that findings are not generalisable. Also young people found it difficult to distinguish between their own personal beliefs and what they knew to be right or wrong. Often during our subsequent discussions they would tell me that while they believed something was wrong, it might be right for others and so they had ticked the ‘depends’ box. This was especially true of Mandela students. In contrast, Oakridge generally answered all the questions as ‘ambivalent’. Chapter 6 discusses these findings while Chapter 8 reflects on the *say-do* (or belief-behaviour) anomalies that the questionnaire began to reveal.

Decision-making mind map

In addition to completing the *Right and Wrong Questionnaire* during the March afternoon workshop, I also asked young people to create a mind map²⁹ that sets out how they make moral decisions. The instructions³⁰ given were as follows: ‘Please draw me one or two mind maps that shows me how you make decisions about right and wrong’. A total of 34 young people completed the activity (15 young men and 19 young women) and drew a total of 67 mind maps. The aim of the activity, besides serving as a basis for discussion in final interviews, was to determine the ways in which young people thought about moral decision-making. It served to answer the research question: *How do youth explain their processes of moral decision-making?*

I analysed mind maps by looking at the factors that young people included in their diagrams and found two main types of moral decision making which are presented in Chapter 8. Although the use of drawings (Coles, 1986a, 1986b, 1990) in social science research is fairly well known, they are seldom used with young adults. By changing the term ‘drawing’ or ‘picture’ to ‘diagram’ or ‘mind map’, the task becomes more age-appropriate and young people are happy to complete the task. Decision-making minds maps proved to be engaging, helped to overcome the language barrier, and also yielded unique information

²⁹ Mind maps featured regularly in their usual school work.

³⁰ No other tips, hints, or help was given except: ‘If it helps you to think of a specific good or bad decision you have made or might need to make in the future use that to help you draw your diagram’.

about metacognitive processes i.e. young people's ability to reflect on their own thought processes. Figure 3.3 provides an example of a mind map.

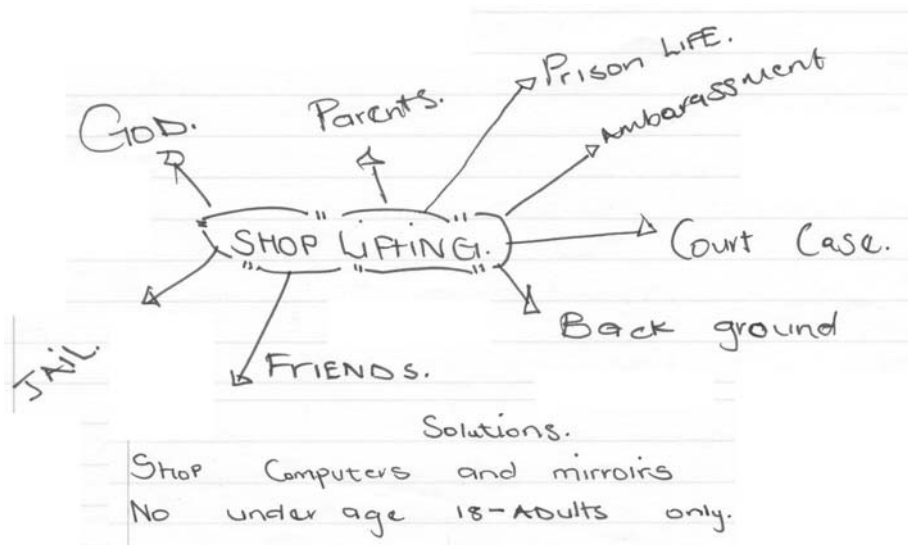


Figure 3.3 An example of a young woman's Mind Map

Circle of Influence

The final activity I asked young people to complete was a *Circle of Influence* – a modified rank ordering activity that I designed. I provided young people with a large poster consisting of a series of concentric circles with their name in the middle, and a set of labels I had constructed following an infield analysis of the themes that had emerged from *Digital Documentaries*. Also included were some blank labels. I asked them to set the labels around the circles so as to reflect which influences were strong (close to their name) and which were weak (furthest from their names). They were not compelled to use all of the labels and they could write out new labels if they wished. A total of 33 young people completed the activity (15 young men and 18 young women). In order to analyse data I took a photograph of the chart (see Figure 3.4), assigned a value³¹ to each label according to their position, and created a hierarchy of moral influences for the group (and by gender).

³¹ A label received a score of 5 if the label was placed in the inner most circle closest to their names, 4 in the next circle and so on. Labels placed in the outermost circle were given a rating of 1 indicating a very weak influence. Unused labels were given a score of 0.

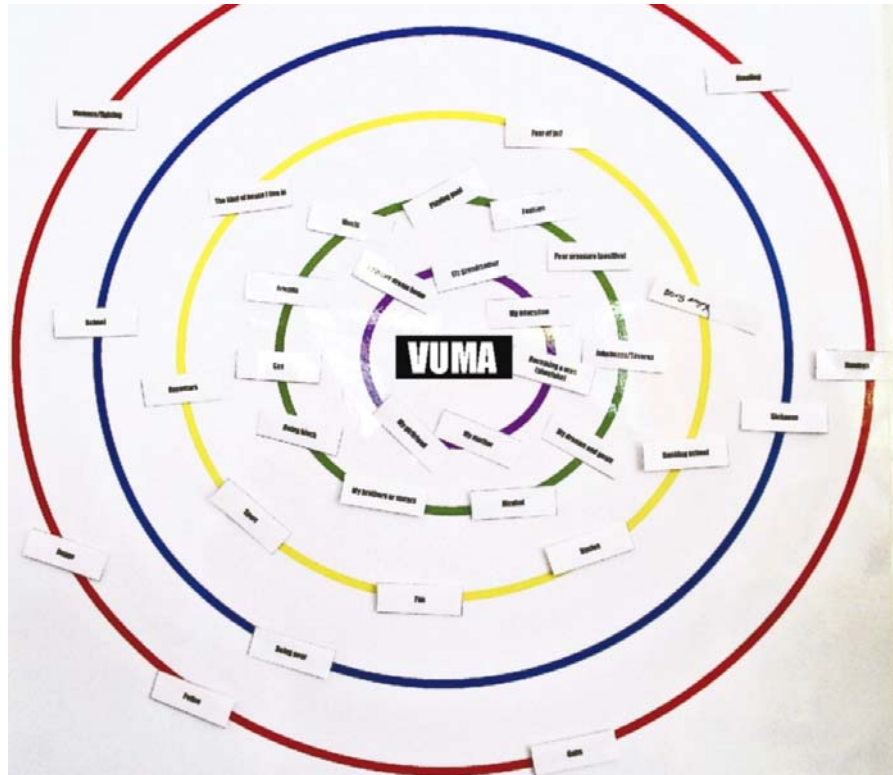


Figure 3.4 A photograph of one of the completed *Circle of Influence* activities

Although the activity did not differentiate which were positive and which were negative influences (merely strong or weak), it was easy to infer by comparing data from this activity with data from their interviews and *Digital Documentaries*. Together with data obtained from *Digital Documentaries*, data obtained from the *Circle of Influence* activity was used to answer the research question: *How do youth understand moral influences?* and is presented in Chapter 9.

Ethical reflections on researching amongst vulnerable youth

There are a multitude of ethical questions raised by building relationships as an intentional strategy, and in representing young people's voices through the use of the research methods described above. In addition, not only was the study conducted cross-culturally: a 'white' South African researcher investigating 'black' South African youth replete with the complexities of historical discrimination and current inequalities but it also took place amongst a vulnerable population – young people, most under the age of eighteen, who live in conditions of chronic and pervasive poverty. Also, the subject of the research – morality

– is a normative issue with subjective and contested interpretations. Each of these issues raise important questions about my own subjectivities and how issues of power and potential exploitation were navigated.

Cloke *et al* (2000, p. 136-7) describes the standard canons of research ethics as consisting of informed consent, confidentiality, protection (doing no harm), and ensuring there is no exploitation (and its corollary ‘to give something back’). These canons have been carefully considered in the design of this study. The young people who participated in the study were asked for their consent³² only after being given the opportunity to discuss the study and its potential implications on their lives (see Appendix 4.1). (Parents or caregivers were also asked for assent - see Appendix 4.2). Youth were assured of confidentiality during the process of research and in final research accounts. They chose their own pseudonyms³³ and were encouraged not to share them with others. However, ensuring that young people were protected was a more difficult aim. In consultation with the school Head and counsellor I developed a protocol for handling disclosures of abuse that included asking young people for permission to do so³⁴. I also reported back to the school Head about issues which placed young people at risk of harm – in general rather than specific terms – in order to maintain confidentiality. In addition, since interviews were conducted in my home, I ensured that young people attended in pairs, and that caregivers knew beforehand that young people were coming to my home. After interviews, when I dropped them off at home, I made a point of going inside to greet mothers and to provide a brief (although non-specific) account of the interview. While interviews were conducted at my home for

³² A similar strategy of treating ‘the securing of consent as a gradual and emerging process’ was adopted by Bray and Gooskens (2006, p. 47, 54) in their research amongst impoverished (and middle-class) youth in Cape Town. They argue that an ongoing awareness of the research process was a more ethical strategy than a one-time signing of a consent form.

³³ At least six youth came to me towards the end of the project to say that they would like their own names to be used. Lekho’s comment ‘you’re writing about my life not someone else’s, I want my name to be there’ is representative. I intend to revisit this issue with them in any further publications that result from this project because they have fundamental right to ownership of intellectual property especially interviews and photographs. For now however, to protect them (and honour my own undertaking) I have used pseudonyms throughout.

³⁴ A strategy recommended by Morrow and Richards (1996, p. 98) but also widely employed by youth workers.

practical reasons (privacy and a noise-free environment) and at the request³⁵ of young people themselves, it did change the dynamic of the research. It intensified the relational intimacy of the study – young people came to view me more and more as a friend. The boundaries between researcher and researched were blurred, and while this was beneficial to the depth of data young people revealed, I was left reflecting on whether this was an unfair strategy that led young people to say more than it might have been wise to say.

I also took seriously Cloke *et al*'s injunction that what is needed is an 'analytical scrutiny of the self' (reflexivity) in qualitative research, and Maori sociologist, Linda Tuhiwai-Smith's (1999) advice on how a researcher can best diminish the power differential between researcher and researched. I used four distinct strategies to address the issues of being a 'white' researcher investigating 'black' youth, working with a vulnerable population, and the normativity of the topic. The first was to make explicit my personal subjectivities through reflexive transparency; the second to minimise the power gradient by developing relationships of respect, mutuality and promise-keeping; the third to encourage emerging voices through careful attention to language and representation; and the fourth to encourage an explicit understanding of the ways in which research amongst (young) people living in conditions of poverty can (and ought to be) to be an intervention. Each will be considered in turn.

Researcher subjectivity

In qualitative research in general and in ethnographic research in particular, the researcher is the primary instrument (Hammersley, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It is therefore an important task of the researcher to locate herself within the research and to explicitly reflect on how personal subjectivities affect (even transform) research and research

³⁵ Young people told me it was '*only fair*' for them to come to my home, since I had frequently visited theirs. Many reminded me that they had never been inside a *mlungu's* home or had tea in a 'white' person's lounge as an equal. They engaged me on the dynamic of my wealth and their poverty, always politely. They asked me whether I lived alone in this '*big place*' – a two-bedroomed ground floor apartment in a wealthy suburb with a large communal garden. Later on when they asked me about the rent I paid and I told them, they were shocked – R3,600 a month compared to their R60 (for a backyard shack) or R200 for a house. '*No wonder you're not rich – all that money just for rent*' Suzeka commented.

relationships³⁶. I am a thirty-something, religiously-committed, English-speaking, 'white' South African woman and youth worker who has been academically trained in two elite international institutions³⁷. Each of these descriptors impact upon my research. My age resulted in young people coming to view me as a mixture between mother and friend (Andile and others began calling me *mommy-buddy*). The fact that I was a 'white' South African made me a former 'oppressor'. In spite of South Africa's new democracy this relationship was to prove complex, partly because young people viewed me as someone who had money and who could withhold or dispense it based on how they treated me and what they told me especially about racial and political issues. My Christian faith³⁸, although not overtly on display for youth to see, added a pastoral dimension to this research and heightened my awareness of the religious dynamics³⁹ at work in young people's lives. It also provided a strong motivation for critical and politically-alive research⁴⁰. There were times that I imposed my own values on youth in areas where to not have done so would have been to contravene my research aim of mutuality⁴¹ and out of a sense of responsibility towards young people. In my writing, I have been careful to distinguish between my own

³⁶ Delamont (1992) emphasises that researchers 'should not waste time trying to eliminate "investigator effects": instead she should concentrate on understanding those effects' (p. 8), and she should do this by permeating each aspect of the research process with a reflexiveness self-consciousness 'about her role, her interactions, and her theoretical and empirical material as it accumulates. As long as qualitative researchers are reflexive, making all their processes explicit, then issues of reliability and validity are served' (p. 9).

³⁷ I have a science degree from the University of the Witwatersrand, a theology degree from the University of Zululand (both in South Africa), and a Masters degree in education from Harvard. This study is being conducted at the University of Cambridge.

³⁸ The question has been raised (by my peers) about whether it is possible for a religiously committed person to investigate morality in any objective fashion. Would one's own moral schema not interfere with research objectivity? I have reflected seriously on this question throughout the study. I am satisfied that I took intentional steps to make this study about young people's moral ecology and not my own.

³⁹ In Mamphela Ramphele's *Steering By the Stars: Being young in South Africa* (2002), there is a conspicuous absence of the role of faith in the lives of young people.

⁴⁰ My faith formation was nurtured by a youth organisation that taught me to reflect and act on issues of social justice based on the biblical teachings of equality, dignity, and respect. Guba and Lincoln (2000) write about the role of spirituality in human inquiry and conclude that the two are not incommensurate since both concern themselves with 'liberation from oppression and freeing of the human spirit, both profoundly spiritual concerns' (p. 169).

⁴¹ Allowing young people to know me as a person rather than just as a researcher.

values and those young people revealed⁴². Throughout the study there are deliberate attempts to limit my vocabulary and instead use young people's words. I was also careful to hide my own tacit approval or disapproval of young people's opinions and behaviour (except on occasion where I considered silence to be unethical). Initially, I chose to conceal my own beliefs because I thought it might create a barrier to our conversations. No matter what young people told me I adopted a poker face. I interrogated their answers whether it agreed with my own value system or not – whatever they told me about abstinence, going to church, homosexuality, sex outside of marriage, multiple partners, hitting children, or substance use, I asked why they thought so, why they practiced these behaviours, how they decided it was right or wrong. As our relationship developed through the year, I became more open. I was gratified when young people disagreed with me over various issues. Our conversations were often not just about the issue, but what we thought about each other's views about the issues. On reflection, and in the chapters that follow, I believe that expressing my values encouraged rather than limited young people's frankness with me. To be sure, there were some topics they avoided, or offered placatory answers (for example, about 'race' and Apartheid), and others about which they were embarrassed (sex especially), but over the course of the year, as our relationship deepened, we spoke of these difficult issues too.

In turning the reflexive lens⁴³ on my fieldwork I have been forced to ask profound questions about what it means to be a 'white' South African living in the midst of 'savage inequalities' (Kozol, 1991); what place restitution ought to have in South Africa's future (Swartz, 2007), and how I might best invest my experience of elite academic training into the South African context. This reflexive gaze has been termed 'autoethnography' by Ellis

⁴² They, like my friends and family, were refused permission to smoke in my car. It did not stop them from smoking and I was happy to stop the car, at their request, for a 'smoke break'. Similarly with alcohol. I told them there was to be no alcohol on our outings (except for visits to taverns). Many of them were eighteen or over and legally allowed to drink. I told them that besides the fact that some were underage, I did not want alcohol to get in the way of our discussions or cause problems between me and their mothers or teachers. They readily agreed, although some surreptitiously brought a beer to the beach, or covertly drank my Christmas pudding brandy while waiting for an interview. I also made a conscious effort to treat discussions about church in the same way as those about clubbing, gang membership, and friends. I may have over-compensated – I never once attended a Sunday church service in their communities.

⁴³ Emerson, Fretz and Shaw assert that 'in training the reflexive lens on ourselves, we understand our own enterprise in much the same terms that we understand those we study' (1995, p. 216).

and Bochner (2000) in which the researcher becomes the subject within the research. My own journey throughout this process of research has in itself been formative (perhaps even redemptive). My fieldnotes abound with autoethnographic reflections (see Box 3.1).

Box 3.1 Researcher's Reflections on the Research Process

Sunday 19th September 2004

I have been surprised at my emotional response to this research... The poverty, poor standards of education, joblessness and fear with which these youth contend have been ethnography 'which breaks your heart' lending Behar's (1996) appellation... Daily youth ask me for money for lunch, shoes, transport... I am overwhelmed by all that I am experiencing, tears are seldom far off.

Tuesday 30th November 2004

These young people have little motivation to be morally good. They have little opportunity to reflect on their behaviour largely due to an absence of adult guidance (teachers and parents). For this reason the Moral Regeneration Movement is short sighted. These youth aren't bad – they are neglected. They have so little foundation for hope in the future, yet remain adamantly quixotic. What these kids need is adult care, supervision and mentoring, and restitution in terms of poverty relief, education, and work opportunities.

Friday 31st December 2004

It's the last day of the year and a good day for reflection. This research experience is changing my life, my critical abilities, and challenging my views on poverty, injustice, and 'goodness'. It has given a human face to poverty and injustice, as well as brought into stark focus the many lives that make up the 'township' youth of South Africa – each story different, each experience, and aspiration unique. In spite of their behaviour these youth remain good people – their behaviour toward me has been caring, protective, and honest... I keep forgetting how young people have so few adults to listen to their stories, and hear their cries. It's been an emotional tour de force. I struggle daily against my pastoral inclinations and my desire to rescue each kid.

Tuesday 22nd February 2005

I continue to find my work exciting and saddening – often rather emotionally draining. These young people's lives are complex and tough ...and I'm amazed at what they tell me. Sometimes I feel like a confessor. I am absolutely astounded that these young people are so open with me – of course I ask them to be 'free' but I really didn't expect so much freedom... Sometimes it's a bit too much. I vacillate between wanting to rescue them and wanting to have them locked up for life.

My emotional response is evident in these extracts, and I think I might have been concerned were it absent. My time in my field left me saying, as I am sure many others do, 'I had no idea...' about the lives of these young people. I expect that another researcher may have responded differently, and employed different research strategies. To that extent this study is not directly replicable. My own biography as youth worker and pastor has

formed an important part of this research. The data it has elicited is no less valuable because of it.

Diminishing power in research amongst vulnerable youth

Tuhiwai-Smith (1999, p. 120) describes the features that ought to characterise a researcher working in an indigenous (cross-cultural) context as respect for people, being present amongst the people, being slow to speak and eager to learn, not flaunting your knowledge, not trampling on people's dignity in the course of your research, being cautious, and being generous. She draws attention to the fact that there is an inherent power⁴⁴ differential between researcher and researched, especially in cross-cultural contexts, and that special care needs to be taken to ameliorate its effects. Bridges (2002) notes that researchers, especially outsiders, ought to think of themselves as the 'receiver of a gift' (p. 80) while Davis (1998) describes 'employing tools which offer ...[young people] the maximum opportunity to put forward their views' as ways in which the researcher can reduce power relations between researcher and young person (p. 329).

On Tuesday 20th September 2004, I recorded in my fieldnotes my surprise 'at the short amount of time it has taken to befriend young people and to be accepted into their lives, homes and confidences... which while positive for my research, seems to indicate some dysfunctionality in itself'. I was afraid that their openness⁴⁵ was perhaps because of a lack of

⁴⁴ 'Research in itself is a powerful intervention... which has traditionally benefited the researcher, and the knowledge base of the dominant group in society. When undertaking research, either across cultures or within a minority culture, it is critical that researchers recognize the power dynamic which is embedded in the relationship with their subjects. Researchers are in receipt of privileged information. They may interpret it within an overt theoretical framework, but also in terms of a covert ideological framework. They have the power to distort, to make invisible, to overlook, to exaggerate and to draw conclusions, based not on factual data, but on assumptions, hidden value judgements, and often downright misunderstandings. They have the potential to extend knowledge or to perpetuate ignorance' (Tuhaiwai-Smith, 1999, p. 176). See also Morrow and Richards (1996) for a full discussion on reducing the power relationships between researcher and young person.

⁴⁵ An exception to this initial openness was displayed by the six students from Oakridge who were much more reserved in answering my questions, until the individual interviews when they became more open. They, unlike their township-schooled counterparts, asked me plenty of questions before agreeing to participate in the study.

understanding on their part, or even worse because of their keenness for material benefit (outings, lunches, and use of digital cameras). We repeatedly spoke about my need for them to be open with me, as well as the need for me to protect their identity so that they would not get into trouble with parents, the law, or friends and romantic partners⁴⁶. As the research progressed many of the township-schooled youth asked me increasingly penetrating questions about my research including whether it would make me ‘famous’, ‘rich’, or get me a ‘good job’. I answered as truthfully as I could. Few asked what it would do for them, but I tried to explain my hopes for the ways in which this study may influence school practice, policy, community programmes and generally prick the conscience of privileged ‘white’ people. Many young people asked me whether I was also working with ‘white’ and ‘coloured’ youth. When I said I was not, they asked why and I explained that young ‘black’ South Africans are often overlooked in qualitative academic research because of the perceived difficulties of access, fears for safety, and the prevalence of existing stereotypes. What a group of youth representing the majority of South Africa’s population have to say is important for teachers, youth workers, and government officials to hear. Nevertheless, I was grateful for the level of freedom young people expressed in their discussions with me, and noted their repetitive use of the terms ‘open’ and ‘free’ in describing my rapport with them:

Tapelo: It’s like I am getting out something like I’ve never done, it’s a new experience in life. So. You are open to me and so that is why it makes me free to talk with you.

⁴⁶ There were many instances of disclosures that were potentially dangerous to young people. This dangerous data includes Vuma’s truck hijacking, a crime of which he had not been convicted; Siphos gang activities; Bongani’s housebreaking, car robberies, and involvement (although not directly) in a murder; Luxolo’s housebreaking; various stabbing incidents, and admissions to smoking *dagga*, Mandrax and using cocaine. Then there was data that would put them at risk amongst peers – Lekho, Khaya, Vuma and Xolile told me of multiple sexual partners all of whom did not know about each other; Ingwazi’s heart problem and how it might make him look weak and therefore an easy target to his peers; Luxolo’s secret homosexuality and the period of her life spent on the streets; and finally some of the young men’s disclosures of the details of initiation for which they could get fined by community elders. Except when ongoing harm would occur, as in the case of teachers soliciting sex from young women, I felt no compulsion to disclose any of this data to parents or police – I had guaranteed young people confidentiality.

Vuma: It's good to talk to you Sharlene – you are open, so everyone can be open when they talk to you, like we won't be scared of like 'oh man I didn't say this to my father or to my parents' you know? Like you are like a friend Sharlene. Yah.

Even more surprising is that these comments came from both younger and older youth. Vuma and Tapelo, both of whom were 19 at the time, had each had spells in jail. I searched to remember what had made them think I was open. Perhaps it was the lack of immediate judgement. Andiswa told me it was because I shared my life⁴⁷ with them. In my fieldnotes of Tuesday 3rd May 2005 we spoke some more about this unusual openness that characterised our relationship:

It was Andiswa's birthday today ... and so she, Luxolo and Andile and I sat around and chatted a bit at my house. Andile asked me 'Why do we tell you everything, Sharlene?' and I said that only he could tell me. He said he's been asking that question since he met me but hasn't come up with an answer. Andiswa said maybe it was because I told them things about my life too – so that she felt safe telling me about her life... Luxolo was very quiet. I asked her why she told me everything too. She said she didn't know. She said she did wonder what I thought about her drinking so much and her being gay... but she said she didn't dwell on it for long because it didn't seem to matter, because she already knew me so well, and it was obvious that we were friends and would be for a long time to come.

I was experiencing Berger's (2001) observation first hand: 'When researchers are open about their own personal stories, participants feel more comfortable sharing information, and the hierarchical gap between researchers and respondents formerly embraced in ethnographic work is closed' (p. 507). A year later when I returned to the field and Andiswa was answering the same question in front of a symposium audience, she said that it was because I was like a 'plant' or a 'dog' and explained:

⁴⁷ Young people accompanied me on errands on the way home, met my friends, and sometime just came to hang out at my flat.

Andiswa: A plant just sits there, as does a dog. You can pour your heart out to it and it does not betray your secrets or judge you. It just listens. It was good to have someone to listen to us for a change, so that's why we told her *everything* [with emphasis].

So while I readily accepted my role as a listener in these young people's lives, I had a nagging suspicion that I might be crossing privacy boundaries. I reminded young people that they ought also to be free *not* to talk to me about some aspects of their lives. They responded occasionally by telling me they did not want to continue the conversation⁴⁸. So in spite of the close relationships we had built young people felt free to not answer my persistent questions. This mutuality extended to my own safety⁴⁹ whilst in Langa. I did lose a cellphone, my watch, and two of the research cameras. But these were stolen by young people outside the research group (I think). When I asked some youth why they did not steal from me, Nomonde explained that they had spoken about it but decided that 'because you do for us everything. You take us to camp so now we can't steal your money'. Luxolo told me that when Ingwazi got stabbed in the head and I went to see him, 'It changed everything; we saw that you cared about us'. I don't think I was artificially friendly though. When my watch, cellphone, and cameras were stolen, I made a fuss. When young people failed to keep appointments, I complained. When disclosures were particularly disturbing I told young people how I felt. One afternoon during an interview Sipho told me that he

⁴⁸ Lekho didn't want to talk about her absent father, Thimna and Thulani both said they didn't want to talk about sex anymore, Ingwazi and Katlego told me they had had enough talking about witches, and Nomonde told me to stop pestering her about why she had gotten pregnant.

⁴⁹ The issue of personal safety for me was complex, but not insurmountable. I had to contend with a number of people (a school Head, friends, family, colleagues at the University of Cape Town, and even local women living in the township), asking me whether I felt safe in the townships. The truth was that except for the precautions I took like not wearing jewellery, carrying cash or a cellphone, I felt very safe. Most of the time I was accompanied by young people and when I was alone I saw people on the streets as people not potential criminals, something that I believe evaporates when outsiders begin to see in every person the crime statistics they hear. The three incidents I recorded in my fieldnotes of having a drunk man try to pull me out of the car to join a drinking session, a drunk teacher touch me inappropriately on the backside (efficiently dealt with by Andile, one of my key informants), and a young guy pop his head into my car saying he was 'shopping' for cellphones and wallets, made me more vigilant but never paranoid. I also tried to be warm and friendly wherever I went, stopping to speak to people, waving if people waved at me, and getting to know the mothers in the neighbourhood as I was advised to do. Of course I might have been hijacked, stabbed in a tavern or shot, like the many bystanders who are. But life in the townships was not the moral panic constantly portrayed in the media.

‘smacked lots of girls... beat her up yah like – [with a] bottle, rock and yah, anything’. Afterwards as I was driving him home, I told him I was horrified. He protested saying ‘You said I must be open, very open’. I thanked him for his openness but told him his story made me feel really sad. We drove home the rest of the way in silence. These incidents contributed to a mutual relationship, made us more equal and human to each other, and built up mutual respect, which served to engender trust.

Few if any research projects speak of the costs of research, and I do so here for the sake of transparency as well as for others who might pursue research amongst vulnerable youth in the future. Table 3.2 provides a basic

budget of research expenses whilst in the field for a year. Many of the expenses (like lunches⁵⁰, a farewell party, and money spent on outings and camps) were done in the pursuit of mutuality. I reflected often on how spending money on youth (even modest amounts) was different to transactional research or paying people for their participation which adds a further (sometimes problematic) dimension to

Table 3.2 *Research expenses incurred during fieldwork*

| Research expenditure (July 2004 to June 2005) | | |
|--|---------------|----------------|
| Fuel | £600 | R8,400 |
| Interview lunches | £278 | R3,892 |
| Activities and outings | £108 | R1,512 |
| 3 Adventure Camps | £500 | R7,000 |
| Workshop lunch | £17 | R238 |
| Farewell party | £33 | R462 |
| Batteries for cameras and recorder | £83 | R1,162 |
| Paper and printing | £25 | R350 |
| Disposable cameras | £23 | R322 |
| Digital cameras | £333 | R4,662 |
| School fees for 3 students | £44 | R750 |
| Gifts for key informants | £4 | R60 |
| Payment for youth translations | £3 | R40 |
| Total | £2,051 | R28,850 |
| <i>Cost per person</i> | <i>£55</i> | <i>R779</i> |

research. I concluded that generosity differs from transactional research since there was no agreement or expectation about activities or rewards. When I bought Andile, Andiswa, and Luxolo (who had been my key informants) small radios costing R20 each to say thank you, they were overjoyed. But it was simply a token of appreciation rather than a payment. They worked hard, ran errands, found young people for me, reminded them of appointments, did translations, taught me *isiXhosa*, were my guides, and generally were the

⁵⁰ I made a special effort for lunches to be modest – sandwiches, fruit, and cold drinks – with only the occasional takeaway. I was judicious with how I spent my money in young people’s presence because I did not want to be exploited or make a spectacle of my plenty in the face of their want. Fundiswa once chastised me, and told me to stop wasting my money when I wanted to stop and get takeaways. She asked why we don’t just go to my house and make sandwiches. On other occasions when we went on a special outing, young people were delighted but never expected a fancy outing. I was humbled.

prime facilitators of this research. I also discreetly paid three students' school fees because of their particularly dire family circumstances. These research expenses are modest and in keeping with Tuhiwai-Smith's challenge to those working cross-culturally to be generous, to treat people with dignity, and where possible to 'fix generators' (Tuhiwai-Smith, 1999, p. 10).

From the perspective of mutuality I am sure that I will ultimately benefit more from this research project than young people have done. However, my benefits have not just been academic. I gained a lot – extensive offers of car washing, drinks bought for me whenever I ventured into a tavern, extensive tutoring in *isiXhosa*, a unique insight into the lives of young people living in abject poverty who took the time to show and tell me of their lives without reservation, a whole new set of relationships with mothers, teachers and young people in a country still fairly divided by 'race', and no doubt in the future a new career built on the back of this study. Over lunch a year later, Andiswa poignantly asked me whether they would still be seeing me when I finished my PhD and returned home [to Cape Town] permanently. 'Or will you have new friends?' she asked cupping two fingers on each hand around the word 'friends'. I smiled and nodded. I was determined to stay in touch with these young people⁵¹.

Language and representation

Although the ways in which young people are represented is related to power, it requires separate consideration. Representing the lives of vulnerable youth, whose lives are somewhat spectacular, is fraught with difficulty. Besides their colourful stories, their expression as second- or third-language English speakers is often novel and amusing. It would be easy to represent these young people in ways which either 'orientalise' (Said, 1979, 1993) or exploit the emotions of readers through the injudicious use of quotations and hence representation. Nobel laureate, J.M. Coetzee points out the dangers inherent in

⁵¹ Given the distance between Cambridge and Cape Town, this has been difficult. Young people do not have computer access and phone calls are difficult and expensive. I have managed to stay in touch via messages sent through friends, texts and visiting when I am home. Upon my permanent return to Cape Town (in September 2007), I am looking forward to reconnecting with many of these young people.

‘white writing’ – ‘white’ people writing about ‘black’ lives. His criticisms even extend to respected author Alan Paton. Paton has one of his characters translate a passage ostensibly from Zulu to English and does so with an ‘artificial literalism [that] ...conveys ... a certain naiveté, even childishness, which reflects on the quality of mind of its speaker and of Zulu speakers in general’ (Coetzee, 1988, p. 127-8). Although Coetzee is speaking of fiction, to use verbatim quotations from research participants, most of whom struggle with English, is to unfairly recreate the impression that these young people are childish, unsophisticated, and perhaps even unintelligent. For this reason, although I have transcribed interviews verbatim, I have chosen to correct the frequently misused personal pronoun (he and she) by *isiXhosa* speakers and to elide long stammering associated with struggling to find the correct English word. I have left the hesitations and struggles in the text when these reflect emotional rather than grammatical struggles. (Differentiating between the two was surprisingly easy to discern in the context of conversation.) In all other respects quotations are verbatim and retain youth cultural expressions and styles.

My exchange with Phindiwe about the study represents young people’s evaluation of how language⁵² had affected our conversation:

- Phindiwe: No, no, no, it’s not been difficult – but English – [shakes her head]
- Sharlene: Would you have said a lot more to me if I could speak *isiXhosa* better?
- Phindiwe: I have said a lot to you now.

Thimna sums up the investment young people made in this study when she says: ‘To speak is easy [pause] but to take out the truth [pause] that has been hard’. Here she refers not to the language but to the act of disclosure itself. Lekho picks up the theme of the difficulty of language, but also hints at the benefit of talking to me (which will be taken up later):

⁵² We spoke English during interviews, since my *isiXhosa* was not good enough for interviews. Informally we spoke a mixture of *isiXhosa* and English.

Lekho: Everybody likes you. Yoh! but they hate the interviews most. Because you have to talk. Talking in English – [shakes her head]. I did enjoy talking with you... After I've talked to you I feel like, like there's something [pause] came out or – I am free.

The problem of representation, language and power is interconnected since 'our job is to represent our research subjects and that representing something inevitably establishes or enacts a power relationship' (Butz & Besio, 2004, p. 354). Ironically, language also provided a means to equalising this power imbalance. Young people weren't intimidated by a *mlungu* who was dependent on their generosity to teach her *isiXhosa* or remained deaf and dumb in their presence when they decided not to translate.

Allowing research participants to read through my fieldnotes and to read their own transcripts served as a further source of allowing young people to control representations. Often they would debate with me what they had said, or how I represented them in my fieldnotes. More often than not they would be shocked that I had captured a particular incident, or by the fact that my descriptions (in their opinions at least) were so detailed. One interaction I recorded in my fieldnotes of the 9th of March 2005 went like this:

Andile: Are you going to tell people in the UK all this?
Sharlene: Yes.
Luxolo: Well it's not very nice you know.
Sharlene: Yah, I know.
Andiswa: Maybe it's not very nice, *but it is true*.

As much as I tried to flatten this asymmetry of power, it emerged repeatedly especially regarding discussion of race and Apartheid. Andile told me that he had been kept from telling me what his views on Apartheid and South Africa because young people were aware of what their association could mean in terms of material rewards. My fieldnotes of Tuesday 25th January 2005 provide my reflection at the time:

We were at the Waterfront eating fish and chips and watching the seals play in the harbour after a trip to Robben Island. Andile said he's been angry about Apartheid for a very long time. He wanted to talk about it at Betty's Bay [on camp] when I asked the group how they felt about living in South Africa, about being 'black', who they blame for what's going on in their lives... [but] Xolile had kept cutting him off and had later told him not to talk about Apartheid in front of me because 'we mustn't offend you because you were being so nice to us and we didn't want it to stop'.

Andile and Xolile's appreciation of the dynamic at work between me as researcher and them as research subjects, I am certain, played out in many ways during the course of this research. Very early on in my research I began to understand the importance of having young people speak *in their own voices and on their own terms* if my aims of a youth discourse were to be realised. I desired a youth discourse, as far as possible unmediated by the 'ventriloquy'⁵³ (Bridges, 2002, p. 82) of an adult, academic discourse – one that dominates the literature. I was haunted by bell hooks' often quoted indictment of colonising discourses:

No need to hear your voice when I can talk about you better than you can speak about yourself... only tell me about your pain. I want to hear your story. And then I will tell it back to you in a new way... I am still author, authority. I am still the colonizer (cited in Fine, 1994, p. 70).

I was determined not to be the coloniser for a second time. The digital documentary⁵⁴ activity was one such way in which I handed power back to young people. According to

⁵³ Bridges (2002) describes ventriloquy as 'the using of the voice of the participant to give expression to the things which the researcher wants to say or to have said' (p. 82).

⁵⁴ From an ethics perspective, I obtained permission from young people to use their photographs in international forums and in my thesis. For local usage I agreed to protect their identity by anonymising any photographs in which they are identifiable. For any wider dissemination I have agreed to ask their permission individually for individual photographs.

Butz and Besio, this too is autoethnography⁵⁵, in which the ‘research participants’ projects of self-representation’ (2004, p. 358) are supported. In this way the research subject is more than an informant, s/he becomes the ‘transcultural knower’ (Butz & Besio, 2004, p. 355) I alluded to in the first chapter. To speak consciously of allowing young people to create autoethnographies is to employ a useful epistemological lens especially when cultures are crossed and a sincere attempt is being made to breach the usual hegemonies of knowing.

Research as intervention

Besides diminishing power and being careful with issues of representation, the final ethical consideration concerns the extent to which research participants ought to benefit from their participation in a research study. Besides the material rewards of participation I have already described, the ethical demands regarding research as intervention are contested. South African researchers Nosisana Nama and Leslie Swartz (2002), conducting research in the same geographical location as my own, warn of providing intervention to some while withholding it from others. Ultimately they conclude that when working in contexts of deprivation and poverty ‘the local ethics of immediate need’ ought to take pre-eminence over the ‘broader ethics of ...[research] design’ (p. 295).

More radical researchers, those who call their research ‘emancipatory’ (Baker *et al.*, 2004; Lynch, 1999), put forward a much stronger argument. They recognise that much research is in fact exploitative, and therefore demand that research, especially amongst vulnerable groups change rather than merely describe contexts and ‘counter the imbalance of benefit’ (Bridges, 2002, p. 79). For Lynch (1999), emancipatory research ought to ‘ensure that people know and understand their own oppressions more clearly so that they can work to

⁵⁵ Not the researcher’s self-reflection, but the research participants’ control of the research gaze, doing the research him- or herself. Other practices which can be called research participants’ autoethnography include asking research subjects to interview their peers without the presence of the researcher. On one occasion a researcher assisted youth to author and publish their own stories, the outcome of which *Our America* (Jones, L., Newman, Isay *et al.*, 1997), was a best seller.

change them' (p. 51)⁵⁶. While I do not describe this research study as a *de facto* exercise in emancipatory⁵⁷ research, I have attempted to incorporate within it the goals of emancipation for the young people with whom I have collaborated. As far as possible I attempted to include research activities that reveal 'the structural and relational conditions which generate inequality, injustice and marginalisation' (Lynch, 1999, p. 46). Although not explicitly planned, *listening* to young people was also a primary intervention. But so was overt advice-giving. Not to have done so would have been negligent and ethically inexcusable – tantamount to withholding life-saving information. I regularly encouraged young people (not oblivious to their circumstances) to give up dangerous behaviour especially regarding AIDS⁵⁸, excessive alcohol use and housebreaking⁵⁹. In addition to these direct interventions, there were times when I felt compelled to engage in a form of 'whistle-blowing' (McNamee, 2002) – speaking to the school Head about some of my findings⁶⁰ (without disclosing names).

⁵⁶ Not all researchers working amongst vulnerable groups subscribe to these views. Roger Jeffrey (2006, p. 101) argues that 'regarding only a combination of activism and research' as acceptable may be 'patronising' and that 'the poor are entitled to be treated as people who can give their opinions, or explain their lives to other people without requiring always to be given something tangible as a reward'.

⁵⁷ A primary feature of such emancipatory research would be to involve research participants in designing research and in defining those areas of study which would be most beneficial to them. This I have failed to do, despite involving research participants in 'constructing and validating meaning' (Lynch, 1999, p. 58).

⁵⁸ Nama and Swartz (2002) describe a number of occasions in which it becomes ethically necessary to intervene in the lives of people living in conditions of poverty – often because of low levels of functional literacy. AIDS is one such occasion.

⁵⁹ A clear example of such intervention occurred one afternoon sitting in a McDonalds eating ice-creams with Andile, Andiswa, Luxolo, and Khaya on Wednesday 9th March. Khaya started telling me about a new girlfriend (he had three simultaneously). Andiswa quipped 'Guys like you should be forced to wear HIV warning signs on your foreheads'. I said nothing but later I went up to him and spoke at length with him about the use of condoms and HIV testing. I also spoke regularly with Ingwazi, Xolile, Vuma, Tapelo, Andile, Luxolo, and Andiswa about their paralytic drinking bouts. Each had already experienced serious consequences of their behaviour (blackouts, being robbed or stabbed while drunk, injuring themselves). I also regularly discouraged Luxolo and Bongani from housebreaking, partly out of fear for the victimisation they would experience in correctional facilities.

⁶⁰ Examples of these incidents include male staff drinking at school events, sharing *dagga* with students, and soliciting sex from female students. On the last day of my research the school held a farewell lunch for me and I was invited to address the staff. I raised all these concerns again as well as praising the commitment I had seen in some teachers. I did it all without identifying victims or perpetrators. The male staff sat silent and sullen. The female staff applauded.

Besides these examples of direct intervention, what young people perceived as valuable was less formal. It was in the process of being listened to and being asked endless questions (in enjoyable environments) that young people spoke of experiencing the most benefit. I soon discovered that the majority of these young people do not have an adult with whom to talk, and so my attention was soaked up like rain after a long drought. This *talk-as-intervention* occurred over the course of three interviews, taking up not much more than three hours through an entire year, and in the many conversations that occurred on mountain walks, lazy beach afternoons, sitting on street corners, visiting each others' homes, and interacting during the school day. I am convinced that this sustained interest in their lives was the reason for the depth of data I received – their gift of disclosure to me, in return for my gift of time (and developmental activities⁶¹) to them.

Towards the end of the final interview I asked young people to reflect on their perceptions of the research experience. Their replies (see Box 3.2) as to how *they* perceived this research to be an intervention were illuminating.

Box 3.2 Research Participants' Reflections on the Research Process

Andiswa: Well, I think your way of working is very creative.... I was talking but at the same time I was thinking... even if I go home, I'm going to think 'hey, I was right there and there. I must just do this and do that yah or I was wrong there, I shouldn't take this lightly'.

Mandisa: Yah it's helped me – because if you have – like if you have something and then you keep it, it's going to eat you like – it's nice to share it with other people.

Amande: You help young people so that they can be, so that they can talk. Maybe similar to a counsellor yah, because some of us [pause] I can say things to you that I did not say to my friends.

Katlego: It's been challenging... talking about things that I don't talk about, even at home. Yah because I know if I told them at home, they would flip and like ...start shouting and screaming and yah, all that. So I don't tell them.

Thando: I always wanted someone to, to ask me this, how I felt, and how was school, and I feel like comfortable speaking to you... I feel cool... I feel light. It's the first time I've told someone my secrets.

⁶¹ Including activities such as camps, rock climbing, hiking, and trips to places of interest was an overt strategy. It both elicited data and provided young people with developmental opportunities, and made my research amongst these vulnerable young people more ethically defensible.

- Thulani: Because we talk about what is happening around here... [it has helped me] to know who I am – what I must do – when I grow up what I have to do to become a man – a good father. When we walked up the mountain we talked and talked and talked.
- Mane: It was like discovering who you are and stuff. Like knowing yourself a bit more.
- Khaya: It helped me... Just because – at the time I met you – before, I was always worrying what I am going to do in the future ... you are the one who showed us the way... where the key is to the future.
- Thandi: You asked me things that I've never thought [about] ...you asked me important things you know.
- Mhoza: It has helped. Because it has opened our minds – to think about our life.

Only Mathsufu spoke of the material benefits of the research (eating hamburgers and visiting a recording studio). Instead young people told me that speaking to me was a source of release, something they did not get the opportunity to do at home, or could not confide to friends. Surprisingly many young people (especially young men) spoke of tangible things they had learnt in spite of the fact that the interviews and activities had no specific instructional content, and merely asked questions.

Along similar lines, teachers often came to tell me of the academic improvement they had noticed in the lives of some of my key informants. Xolile was doing assignments, Luxolo was attending more regularly, and Andile seemed to be growing in confidence. Countless mothers would thank me for spending time with their children, telling me they appreciated my role in their son or daughter's life. A few young people who were not part of the sample came to me and asked to be in the research study because others had told them that it was good to talk to me even about 'the hard and personal things'. A few young people (like Thandi and Mhoza) alluded to the fact that I had introduced a critical consciousness into their lives.

A number of young people told me that I was the first 'white' person with whom they had ever interacted ('I haven't lived with white people or talked to them'). This latter revelation, of having helped them to see more clearly the issues of 'racial' difference (equal on one hand, but vastly differently-resourced on the other), does not leave me

unchallenged. I have a further ethical responsibility to ensure that this critical consciousness is channelled. Taken as a whole, this study has been ‘research as intervention’ in spite of the fact that it was not explicitly designed as such. On Sunday 20th March 2005 I reflected in my fieldnotes:

Did my presence in their lives have an effect on them? Undoubtedly so. Does it detract from the account that I have constructed? I don’t think so. Their moral ecology has become clear throughout the cycle of participant observation, interviews, curricula activities, adventure activities, and simply hanging out with them. The way their lives have changed has predominantly been a result of the reflection I have forced them to do. I have not run a programme of intervention – I have simply asked questions, but as I am beginning to realise it’s in the very process of asking questions that lives are transformed. It’s called mentoring!

Conclusion

This chapter has offered an extended account of the open-ended⁶² and engaging methods employed in a study designed to interrogate how young people in a South African township construct right and wrong, represent moral influences, and explain their moral processes. It has proposed that building relationships with vulnerable young people living in a context of poverty is ethical, an important (yet neglected) method in data collection, and an intentional research objective. By providing comprehensive ethical reflection, it has attempted to elucidate important markers in research amongst vulnerable youth, especially in a sensitive area such as morality. It has tried to show how research can – and ought to – be intervention without a formal programme of intervention, and without scuttling the research enterprise. It has also described the importance of reducing the power differential through respectful representations and mutuality in relationships. Finally, it has shown how

⁶² Regarding openness, I have taken great care in the *Right and Wrong Questionnaire* to allow youth to respond by saying ‘this is not a moral issue for me’. In the case of *Digital Documentaries* and *Free Lists* young people were free to include any influences or behaviour they judged to be good or bad, right or wrong. Similarly in interviews, young people were at liberty to frame their own understandings of what constitutes right and wrong when asked to speak of examples in their own lives.

fine is the line between instrumental (and exploitative) intimacy for the purpose of powerful data, and genuine human friendship, especially when working amongst vulnerable youth, and when the researcher is not only privileged, but a beneficiary of the injustices perpetrated against these same youth.

One effect of such a discursive account of the research process has been to make explicit how ethical boundary lines between researcher and researched are often blurred. Especially in a study that sets out to be intentionally relational and ethical, inevitable space is created for complex relationships as ‘participants are the teachers and we are their students’ (Kleinman & Copp, 1993, p. 29). In the course of this study I have also grappled with the concept of research space. Child protection concerns and researcher privacy had to be balanced with the problems of lack of space and place for confidential discussions. Ultimately inviting young people into my home contributed to the level of data I was able to elicit – on one hand exciting for the study, but not without ethical challenges.

In spite of the advantages of using multiple methods of data collection (enhancing relationships, building trust, overcoming language barriers, and obtaining a more nuanced understanding of issues), they also provided added challenges. Multiple sources of data exposes contradictions and differences between aspirations and behaviour, perceived importance and values-in-action, which often makes data difficult to analyse. In many instances, in an attempt to leave instruments open-ended I have been left with an unwieldy amount of data⁶³. The open-endedness of this study has also been one of its main strengths, but it has contributed to the difficulty of analysis. Along with the extended length of time spent in the field collecting data, and the return to the field to receive feedback from informants, this study has done all it could to be an ethical ethnography, privileging relationships and intentionally placing vulnerable young people’s voices in the centre of the study. The context and data chapters that follow will attempt to do justice to these Langa youths’ substantial contributions.

⁶³ I am not sure whether, given the opportunity to repeat the study, I would make instruments less open-ended, and ask young people, for example, only to take a limited number of photographs, or provide them with a limited number of labels in the *Circle of Influence* activity.

PART TWO

THE SOUTH AFRICAN MORAL CONTEXT

SOUTH AFRICA'S FRACTURED MORALITY: A YOUTH PERSPECTIVE

Antjie Krog, in her celebrated memoir documenting the proceedings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, describes the history¹ of South Africa as 'three centuries of fractured morality'² (Krog, 1999, p. 68). These three³ centuries include the importation of slaves to the Cape by Dutch traders in the seventeenth century, the arrival of European settlers with ensuing wars of colonisation and dispossession in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the violent *amaZulu* expansion of the early nineteenth century, and the systematic exclusion of ninety per cent of South Africa's people from political, civic and social rights under Apartheid for most of the twentieth century.

This chapter provides the context for today's township youth by considering how South Africa's turbulent history has contributed to their moral lives. The first section considers the history of tribalism, colonialism, Apartheid, the recent struggle against Apartheid, and the 'democratic settlement'. The second section maps the South African quest for moral renewal in the aftermath of Apartheid, focusing particularly on the role of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Moral Regeneration Movement, the Race and Values in Education report and the resurgence of the African philosophy of *ubuntu*⁴. In the last

¹ Others have described South Africa's history of colonisation, slavery, theft of natural resources by minority settlers, violence and Apartheid as 'one of the great evils of the modern era' (Crais, 2002, p. 4), a 'statutory evil' (Corder, 2000, p. 99), and 'a crime against humanity' (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 1999, Volume One p. 94-102).

² This theme is further expounded in the first volume of the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (1999, Volume One p. 25) when it locates Apartheid within a framework of historical and systemic violence.

³ More accurately, this should be four centuries since colonisation began in the seventeenth century with the arrival of the Dutch East India Company.

⁴ The word *ubuntu* is an *isiXhosa* or *isiZulu* word meaning 'humanity' or 'humanness', although it is often the phrase *umntu ngumntu ngabantu* translated as 'a person is a person through other people' which better summarises the philosophy.

section, I explore the likely influences of economic inequalities and injustices on young South Africans' moral lives.

Conquest, dispossession and domination

Little is known of the moral practices which characterised the lives of indigenous Khoisan and Bantu youth before the arrival of permanent 'white' settlers in 1652. Davenport and Saunders (2000, p. 57-76) describe the 'African Chiefdoms'⁵ of the day as largely hierarchical and stratified. Political life was structured under a king or chief, with a large number of commoners, but which sometimes included an under-class of incorporated aliens, servants or slaves. Tribal life for young people was governed by traditional custom. Young men were hunters, warriors, livestock tenders and traders while young women tended fields. Sometimes young people lived apart from the rest of the community, segregated by gender, in age regiments as part of their socialisation⁶. Chastity before marriage for girls was expected and prized. *AmaXhosa* young men passed through a rite of passage (*ulwaluko*) that included circumcision and a time of separation during which they learnt adult responsibilities. Polygamy was practiced, a bride price (*lobola*) was paid to the family of the woman by the prospective husband, and succession was mainly patrilineal. There were reports of bloody battles for succession, inter-tribal conflict, cannibalism, slavery, but also instances of censure of the chief, democratic decision-making and strong kinship and clan ties which regulated 'social relations and cultural obligations' (p. 70). These tribal youth would meet, co-inhabit with, and ultimately go to war against European settlers.

The discovery of diamonds in Kimberley in the 1860s and gold in Johannesburg in the 1870s heralded the beginning of the systematic exploitation of cheap 'black' labour, the

⁵ As they existed in the mid-nineteenth century, before incorporation into the Cape colony and Boer republics.

⁶ Davenport and Saunders (2000, p. 66) maintain that age-regiments were both a mechanism of control of large numbers of youth, effective organisation of a fighting regiment, and a way of harnessing labour for the group from young people between puberty and marriage.

practice of using indentured labourers (mostly Indian and Chinese⁷), and the ongoing conflict between Afrikaner⁸ and Brit (p. 96-98). Young people (of all 'races') were involved in wars between settlers themselves (the Anglo-Boer war), and between settlers and indigenous tribes.

From as early as 1856, legislation was being enacted that served to control indigenous people's labour (some may say 'enslave') and dispossess them of their land⁹. By the time the Union of South Africa¹⁰ was proclaimed in 1910, much of the Apartheid legislation that was to become more strongly codified by the National Party (who came to power in 1948) was already in effect. Table 4.1 provides a summary of the most important legislation that served to turn South Africa into a totalitarian Apartheid state, and turned 'black' youth into foreigners in their own country. Apartheid was undergirded by an interpretation of Christian¹¹ ideology (and morality), accompanied by relentless land and power acquisitiveness, and maintained by violence and brutal oppression. As Thabo Mbeki comments: 'A state founded on conquest had to be retained by the same means with which it was conquered' (cited in Krog, 1999, p. 441). The irony, Krog (p. 244) suggests, was

⁷ Indentured Chinese and Indian labourers were imported to work on the gold mines of the Witwatersrand and in the sugar cane fields of KwaZulu Natal, resulting in a need for the eventual construction of a fourth category of 'racial' classification, namely 'Indian' which arbitrarily included Chinese immigrants. South Africa's racial classification became 'White', 'Black', 'Coloured', and 'Indian/Asian'.

⁸ A collective term for non-British settlers.

⁹ Even prior to the proclamation of the Union of South Africa, 'black' people had been limited to owning only 8% of the country's land in order to ensure a 'black' work force. At the time the Glen Grey Land Act of 1894 was passed, 'black' farmers were producing more maize than 'white' farmers and therefore had no incentive to work for 'white' farmers or on the mines (Krog, 1999, p. 363).

¹⁰ Jan Smuts (erstwhile University of Cambridge chancellor) was the second Prime Minister of the Union, and leader of the South African Party. The South African Party – considered more moderate than the National Party who would later oust it – was nonetheless responsible for much of the discriminatory legislation upon which the National Party would build.

¹¹ The state church, the Dutch Reformed Church, actively supported Apartheid on the basis of a biblical interpretation of 'separate development' and the sinfulness of 'miscegenation' (Beukes, Vorster, Skriba *et al.*, 1974). A key feature of their so-called Biblical interpretation concerned the Genesis account of the separation of Noah's sons by colour, and the cursing of Shem, allegedly with 'black' skin (Goldenberg, 2003). The Dutch Reformed Church upheld this doctrine until 1986, before admitting its error.

that 'black' people were initially happy to share¹² with the settlers, but 'whites' did not want to share – they wanted it all.

Table 4.1 *Selected legislation enacted to legally entrench apartheid*

| Selected Apartheid Legislation, 1856 to 1959 |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cape Province Masters and Servants Act, No. 15 of 1856 attached criminal liability to breach of employment contracts between 'coloured' servants and 'white' masters. • The Glen Grey Land Act, No. 25 of 1894 restricted 'black' land ownership to eight per cent of the country's land in order to ensure a 'black' work force. • The Natives Land Act, No. 7 of 1913 and The Natives Urban Areas Act, No. 21 of 1923 reserved 90% of land for 'white' settlers and restricted 'black' people to certain types of jobs and areas. • The Population Registration Act, No. 30 of 1950 grouped people into one of four categories: 'White', 'Black' 'Coloured', and 'Indian/Asian'. • The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act, No. 55 of 1949 and the Immorality Act, No. 21 of 1950 prohibited sexual intercourse and marriage between people of different 'races'. • The Bantu Education Act, No. 47 of 1953 wrote into law the mandate of 'education for servitude' for 'black' children. • The Extension of University Education Act, No. 34 of 1959 excluded 'black' people from 'white' universities and created separate universities for various 'race' groups. • The Group Areas Act, No. 41 of 1950 limited various 'race' groups to particular areas, including removing people from 'white' areas by force and corralling 'black' people into 'homelands' or self governing Bantustans from which they could migrate for work with a <i>dompas</i> (Bantu Authorities Act, No. 68 of 1951, Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act, No. 46 of 1959, Natives Coordination of Documents Act, No. 67 of 1952 respectively). • The Suppression of Communism Act, No. 44 of 1950 denied 'black' people the right to mobilise politically. • Prohibition of Interdicts Act, No. 64 of 1956 denied people the right to appeal against forced removals or participate in labour action. • The Native Labour Act, No. 49 of 1953 effectively reserved certain jobs for 'whites' only. • The Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, No. 19 of 1954 declared parks, busses, beaches, benches, toilets etc. to be for 'whites' only. • The Separate Representation of Voters Act, No. 46 of 1951 (amended 1956) struck 'black' voters, who had never been given the vote in the interior provinces, off the Cape voters' roll. |
| Source: Truth and Reconciliation Commission (1999, Volume Five p. 450-477) |

¹² Roux (1948, p. 18) asserts that the Khoisan had no concept of individual land tenure. They were nomadic, and accepted gifts from settlers in exchange for the use of their pasture lands. They expected the use to be temporary and nomadic as was theirs.

Resistance to Apartheid began as early as 1912 with the founding of the African National Congress (ANC). Young people were involved in the struggle from its earliest days, and more formally with the founding of the ANC Youth League in 1944. Nelson Mandela was a founding member of the Youth league at age 25. The struggle remained non-violent until 1961¹³, when the armed wing of the ANC (*Umkhonto we Sizwe* or MK) was formed with Mandela as one of its founding members. Mostly 'black' young men and women began to leave the country to avoid detention, to seek international support for the liberation movement and to be trained in guerrilla warfare. Between 1966 and 1989 they would meet young 'white' conscripts fighting an ideological 'communist' foe in a protracted war¹⁴ on the borders of South Africa's neighbouring countries and on the streets of Apartheid-created 'black' townships.

The June 16th uprising of 1976, now commemorated as the symbolic turning point in the struggle for freedom, was a peaceful¹⁵ *youth* protest. 15,000 unarmed township school pupils, some as young as eleven¹⁶, protested against Afrikaans as the sole medium of instruction in their schools and with it 'white' domination. It is estimated that 575 young people lost their lives that day – shot by security police (many of whom were again young 'white' conscripts). Seekings (1993) estimates that one out of four 'black' youth were politically active in the struggle against Apartheid in any ideological sense, although many

¹³ After the Sharpeville Massacre in March 1960, during which police shot and killed 69 unarmed people, the ANC took up arms.

¹⁴ The South African Border War between 1966 and 1989 was fought on the borders of Angola and South West Africa (now Namibia) – with numerous excursions into neighbouring countries to either attack MK bases or to assist 'white' South Africa's allies. The war was portrayed as a defence against communism, since many of the groups against which South African security forces were fighting had Cuba and the USSR as allies. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission reports that 'the regions beyond South Africa's borders bore the brunt of the counter-revolutionary warfare waged by the South African security forces' (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2003, Volume Six, p. 182).

¹⁵ Glaser (1994) reports that youth were active in both violent and non-violent protests. At the heart of the struggle were 'black' 'high schools, with their core of intellectually inquisitive students and their ready-made network of extra-mural associations, [which] were receptive to the Black Consciousness ideology which filtered down from the Bantustan universities and Christian groups' (p. 4). In addition to armed resistance, youth were involved in 'making the townships ungovernable, policing boycotts and stay-aways, defying security forces at mass funerals and meetings, rooting out, isolating and punishing perceived collaborators' (p. 1).

¹⁶ A number of the young people's parents I met had been involved in similar protests in Langa in the 1970s and 1980s. One had been a member of *Umkhonto we Sizwe*.

more may have participated in mass action, stayaways and consumer boycotts. Those 'black' young people who were not training for combat were socialised on township streets, by peers rather than parents. Politically active young people became the *de facto* head of their homes by virtue of their political leadership roles. They led street committees and youth organisations whose purpose was to recruit 'young lions' for MK, rout out informers¹⁷, and discipline those who disregarded consumer boycotts, family members included. Glaser (1994) describes how these young people, often spoken of as the 'comrades' and 'shock troops of resistance' during the period 1976-1990, ranged from disciplined and educated activists through to criminal gangs and *tsotsis* (individual criminals). He reports that:

Floating between the activists and the hardcore gangs are the apolitical and apathetic who keep out of trouble, as well as the spontaneously and inconsistently political youth. There are also the politicised criminals known as the 'comtsotsis' (Glaser, 1994, p. 1).

Some characterised the *comrades* as a 'leaderless group of youth' forming 'vigilante groups' (Seekings, 1993), turning against the community and setting up their own moral order in the form of so-called 'kangaroo courts' to mete out instant 'justice', while others interpreted activists' behaviour in terms of changing and conflicting moral orders. Chabedi argues that:

Comrades... projected a transformative moral vision that shaped the discourses of townships in general, and which challenged the moral authority of older residents in particular... They developed a strong sense of their own moral righteousness, which at times slid into a less defensible ethical and moral position, where the ends justified the means... Excessive drunkenness, fornication, brawling, and other related recreations were frowned upon in the upright moral order of political life (Chabedi, 2003, p. 361-2).

¹⁷ The TRC has heard from large numbers of parents of those who were suspected of being informers and summarily executed by 'necklacing' (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2004).

Chabedi's claim that comrades were held to high moral standards is disputed. Given the physical and symbolic violence of Apartheid itself and the brutality of the war in which youth were mired, it was inevitable that Apartheid and the struggle against it would create an environment antithetical to moral well-being. Everatt summarises:

The Apartheid education system was premised on under-educating black South Africans, and on ejecting them from the education system very early. Outside that system, life for young black South Africans was marked by structural violence, including denial of decent employment, housing and family life. The lived experience which flowed from this structural violence has led to substance abuse, political violence, rape, teenage pregnancies and the other well-known consequences of this type of situation (Everatt, 1994, p. 3).

Eighteen years after the Soweto uprising, (in 1994) South Africa became a democracy, Nelson Mandela was elected president, and school children were being taught in their mother tongue (at primary school) and not merely for servitude (as Verwoerd's education policy proscribed). Despite Mandela's exemplary moral leadership and a relatively smooth transition to democracy, the past centuries of conquest, oppression, domination and struggle all resulted in a 'fractured morality' (Krog, 1999, p. 68). This is nowhere more evident than in the lives of township youth at the time of transition. Unemployment, under-education, and high degrees of militarization were some of the legacies of apartheid. Society was divided socially, 'racially' and economically with considerable implications for their moral behaviour. This fractured morality in the aftermath of Apartheid was amongst the first issues to be addressed by the new ANC-led government.

After Apartheid: The search for moral renewal

In 1995 the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established by the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act, No. 34 of 1995. The Commission began at once to speak of its mission as a *moral* one. The Minister of Justice, in the legislation which established the Commission, stated that its purpose was to

ensure that we put our country on a sound *moral* basis... [in order] to humanise our society we had to put across the idea of *moral responsibility* (Dullah Omar cited in Krog, 1999, p. 8 emphasis mine).

Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, current President Thabo Mbeki, Methodist Bishop Peter Storey, and special adviser to the President Frank Chikane, all noted the moral mission of the Commission and called for 'a new morality' (Krog, 1999, p. 390) in South Africa. Subsequently others (Du Toit, 2005; Lu, 2002; Verwoerd, 1999) have spelled out the 'genre' of truth commissions as *moral* and *restorative*, since such commissions tend to focus on victims rather than having punitive or retributivist aims. In particular, Lu argues:

The project of moral regeneration following war must seek to effect three aims: vindicate the *moral worth* of victims, affirm transgressed *moral truths*, and mend the broken *moral bond* among victims, perpetrators, and their communities (Lu, 2002, p. 22 emphasis mine).

This the Commission attempted to do through six¹⁸ years of public hearings, investigating human rights violations and judging amnesty applications¹⁹. Publicly broadcast, the Commission effected a growing (but short-lived) awareness amongst 'white' South Africans of the extent of the atrocities committed and of the role of current societal structures in perpetuating them. The Commission, however, was also controversial in that it placed itself in conflict with the ANC by insisting that people on *both* sides of the struggle apply for amnesty for perpetrating gross human rights violations. The final report of the Commission states that 'the ANC ...fought a "just war", but [that there is] ...a definite

¹⁸ The main business of investigating human rights violations took two years, while amnesty applications and hearings continued until 2001.

¹⁹ The mandate of the Commission was to break the silence of Apartheid, to lay bare the stories of suffering and dehumanisation endured by South Africa's 'black' people, and in so doing to restore the dignity of those who had been victimised. By taking a full two years to listen to 2,000 verbal testimonies and read 18,000 written submissions, the Commission were careful to fulfil this mandate. In addition, the Commission reviewed a total of 8,000 amnesty applications and granted amnesty if perpetrators demonstrated political motive, proportionality of action in keeping with their political objective, and gave a complete disclosure of the action for which they were seeking amnesty.

distinction between a “just war” and “unjust’ means” (Krog, 1999, p. 433). The Minister of Education succinctly expressed the government’s displeasure: ‘The Truth Commission will not be able to fulfil its implicit mandate to create a new moral order, if it does not make a distinction between those who fought against Apartheid and those who defended it’ (Kader Asmal cited in Krog, 1999, p. 87). The primary and more pervasive criticism however, was the manner in which the Commission was perceived to have sacrificed justice for truth²⁰. At the time, the criticism was answered by drawing attention to the ‘negotiated revolution’ (Kader Asmal cited in Hansard 1995, p. 1382-3) of which the Commission was a part, and that ‘a new morality’ could bring about greater good than punitive justice (Frank Chikane cited in Krog, 1999, p. 27). Hindsight confirms how those sentiments were necessary for beginning the process of transformation and reconciliation in South Africa. Some argue that the current conditions of chronic and pervasive poverty in which the majority of South Africans find themselves indicate that restorative justice without socio-economic justice may mean little (see for example, Bell & Ntsebeza, 2001; Gobodo-Madikizela, 2002). South African theologian, Puleng LenkaBula (2005, p. 114) summarises the argument tersely:

The righting of structural wrong, injustices or oppression and/or reconciliation requires both [*sic*] restorative, restitutive and redistributive, or socio-economic justice... the limitations of South African reconciliation... have been their overemphasis of forgiveness, truth and restorative justice, while they downplayed the role of economic (distributive) justice. If socio-economic justice is not taken as one of the core activities... society will remain polarised according to Apartheid hierarchy and designations... those who are disappointed by the lack of the radical transformation of Apartheid would seek revenge because they feel they have not been treated in a just manner.

For the young people involved in this study, the Commission is a dimly-remembered occurrence. Most were between 7 and 12 years of age at the time the Commission’s

²⁰ Few perpetrators of Apartheid crimes were punished; they instead received amnesty. Similarly, few victims were compensated, and only with a token amount. The hidden truth of Apartheid’s atrocities was exposed, but restitutive justice was absent.

findings were being broadcast. All still live with the remaining legacy of inequality, injustice and poverty.

Since the conclusion of the Commission's primary work, numerous other initiatives have sought to address issues of moral renewal – issues that include reconciliation, nation-building and citizenship²¹. Three of these that will be considered are the government-initiated (but now civic) Moral Regeneration Movement (MRM), the Race and Values in Education (RVE) initiative of the Department of Education, and the resurgence of the indigenous African philosophy of *ubuntu*. Each has potential implications for the moral formation of contemporary township youth.

In July 2000 the Deputy Minister of Education (supported by the Deputy President and Minister of Education) launched a Moral Regeneration Movement. Following a series of workshops, debates and rallies, a first report entitled *Freedom and Obligation* (Government Communication and Information Services, 2000) was produced. In it, the Movement maintained that its aim was to defend the gains made by the struggle against Apartheid by ensuring that South Africa 'does not degenerate into a moral slum' (ibid. Foreword). The proposed method to achieve this aim was to educate the public about the social values contained in the Constitution (Parliament, 1996, Chapter 2) and to encourage a national dialogue about them. According to the Report common manifestations of the moral crisis are murder, robbery, violence, abuse, rape, fraud and drug trafficking, while more subtle manifestations include the 'devaluation of people, racism, breakdown of family, the gap between the haves and have-nots, laziness, individualism and selfishness' (Government Communication and Information Services, 2000, Manifestations of the time-bomb). The Report maintained that promoting values that serve the common good rather than narrow 'pietistic values' (ibid. Preamble) was its aim – and therefore abstinence from 'drinking, smoking, premarital sexual relationships and such things' (ibid.) would not form part of the MRM's focus. No mention is made of issues such as abortion, same sex relationships, or

²¹ See Swartz (2006) for a detailed discussion of these moral renewal initiatives with implications for moral, citizenship and religious education.

the death sentence, which have moral values at their core and are hotly contested in South Africa²². The MRM stated that it would take as its brief the belief that:

The government was seen to be *the overarching custodian of the nation's morality* through the Constitution, legislation and policies... [that] draw parameters for a morally sound nation. The government is morally obliged to ensure that they do not inadvertently promote behaviour that is incompatible with the *agreed upon moral values of society* (Government Communication and Information Services, 2000, Public and private sector, emphasis mine).

Also prominent in the MRM was a call for a return to traditional/precolonial values (for example, *ubuntu* or human dignity) with a commensurate rejection of Western individualism and materialism. Initiatives of the MRM have included a government-business partnership in which closed circuit cameras in public spaces are funded by large corporations; the establishment of the South African History Project currently developing a library of primary sources from which it is reconstructing South African history and rewriting school textbooks; and more recently, a *Draft Charter of Positive Values* (Moral Regeneration Movement, 2005). This latest document (summarised in Table 4.2) has coincided with the relaunch of the MRM as a civil initiative (although its officers remain housed in government offices).

The *Draft Charter of Positive Moral Values*, supposedly drawing on the South African Constitution (Parliament of the Republic of South Africa, 1996), outlines eight imperatives which it maintains are 'minimal moral values to which all peaceful South Africans can aspire' (Moral Regeneration Movement, 2005, no page numbers - last page) and amplifies these. The eight values are: human dignity and equality; freedom, the rule of law and democracy; material well-being and economic justice; family and community values; loyalty, honesty and integrity; harmony in culture, belief and conscience; respect and

²² Surprisingly, the South African Social Attitudes Survey (Rule & Mncwango, 2006) collate just these into what they call a Morality Index (together with attitudes towards pre-marital sex). I would argue that calling such a limited index of values a 'morality index' perpetuates the view that moral issues are of a narrow rather than more broad nature that ought also to include issues of inequality, injustice, discrimination and the denial of basic human rights.

concern for all people; and justice, fairness and peaceful co-existence. Each comes with a comprehensive description, that clearly exceed the brief of the Constitution and the public consensus. (See for example, references to pornography and prostitution in ‘respect for human dignity’; non-discrimination against those living with HIV/AIDS (‘harmony’); and fidelity and fighting against the neglect of family responsibilities (‘enhancing family and community values’).

Table 4.2 *Summary and extracts from the text of the Draft Charter of Positive Values*

We have crossed the historic bridge from inequality and conflict to a society grounded in common citizenship and in pursuit of equality... We reflect on the diverse journeys and cultures that have brought us to liberation and democracy, and commit ourselves to those ideals and ethical values that unite us in our diversity... Committed to the spirit of ubuntu, which underlies our democracy and is embedded in our constitution, we dedicate ourselves as a nation to:

1. *Respect human dignity and equality:* Fighting against physical and sexual abuse, child labour, drug trafficking, pornography and prostitution.
 2. *Promote freedom, the rule of law and democracy:* Honesty, hard work, standards of ethical decency, opposing all forms of crime, corruption and violence.
 3. *Improve material well-being and economic justice:* Opposing greed, selfishness and undue self-enrichment, corruption, dishonesty, favouritism, and nepotism, and encouraging transparency in government and fair and representative employment practices (race and gender). ‘The socio-economic rights that are part of our constitution must be seen as more than inspirational rights’.
 4. *Enhance family and community values:* ‘Family and community are core socialising units that inspire and create the moral and ethical values in society’. A commitment to fidelity, respect for elders and nurturance of children, generosity and care; fighting against domestic violence and the neglect of family responsibilities.
 5. *Uphold loyalty, honesty and integrity:* Sincerity, trust, openness, ‘social coexistence across the historic divisions that characterise the past’ and using the ‘judicial system to punish all forms of theft, extortion, bribery, dishonesty and exploitation’ (as a response to vigilantism).
 6. *Ensure harmony in culture, belief and conscience:* Promoting independent critical thinking and a culture of participatory debate so that every citizen may give expression to his or her views without fear of censure or intimidation, and non-discrimination against disabled people or those living with HIV/AIDS.
 7. *Show respect and concern for all people:* Refraining from derogatory language and abusive labels.
 8. *Strive for justice, fairness and peaceful co-existence:* Mutual respect, countering aggressive and rude behaviour with respect and understanding, and opposing ‘individuals and groups that seek to disturb the peace, stability and security of the nation through prejudiced and/or undemocratic behaviour’, as well as providing social services in an impartial and unbiased way.
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Source: Moral Regeneration Movement (2005, no page numbers).

Response to the MRM has varied. The media provide the MRM with prominent news coverage. Numerous religious, business, and government workshops have been convened to promote the MRM agenda. The young people I spoke to in Langa have not heard of it,

and academics criticise it. The last group maintain that government should not be involved in promoting moral values at all (Carrim & Tshoane, 2000); that morality is the domain of the religious sector (ibid.); and that the MRM may be an uncritical instrument of nation-building (Coertze, 2001; Marx, 2002) which fails to identify other issues of moral decline (such as a lack of socio-economic justice).

The primary manner in which the MRM affected the lives of township youth was through the conscious effort made to make explicit the values that ought to govern public schools. In 2000, the Department of Education embarked on a consultative process entitled 'Race and Values in Education' (RVE). Broadly stated, the aim of RVE was to articulate common values that ought to be central to the new school curriculum (that was being written at the time) and to a proposed citizenship education programme for schools. RVE resulted in two reports: a draft report *Values in Education* (Department of Education, 2000) and a final report *A Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy* (Department of Education, 2001). On the final list of values advocated by the *Manifesto* were those of democracy; social justice and equity; equality; non-racism and non-sexism; *ubuntu* (human dignity); an open society; accountability and responsibility; rule of law; respect; and reconciliation. While these final values closely reflect Constitutional values, both reports of RVE also allude to values that exceed Constitutional values. For example, the reports speak of 'the regeneration of the ethical fibre of our society' (Department of Education, 2000, p. 3) and promote values such as honesty, integrity, compassion, altruism, justice, kindness and love. Despite exceeding these purely democratic (or Constitutional values), RVE has provided a set of foundational values for school ethos and curriculum in response to the legacy of Apartheid and Apartheid education:

The promotion of values is important ...to ensure that a national South African identity is built on values different from those that underpinned Apartheid education. The kind of learner envisaged is one who will be imbued with the values, and act in the interests, of a society based on respect for democracy, equality, human dignity, life and social justice... [with the] ability to participate in society as a critical and active citizen (Department of Education, 2002, p. 8).

As with many policy documents, the impact on local schools is slow to emerge. Ideologically, at least, South African schools have opted for an educational vision that includes personal moral renewal with public social values.

The final example of South Africa's quest for moral renewal is the resurgence of the concept of *ubuntu*, repeatedly encountered in the documents of MRM, RVE and other government documents²³ and public discourses. *Ubuntu* is essentially a South African iteration of the African²⁴ philosophy of humanism²⁵. As such, it served as a rule of conduct, a social ethic, and the moral and spiritual foundation for traditional African societies (Louw, 1998; Prinsloo, 1998; Teffo, 1998). It aimed to provide a unifying vision of community built upon compassionate, respectful, interdependent relationships, one in which responsibility is collective and in which others are treated as extended family or siblings (Broodryk, 1997).

A number of different response can be found to the concept. Coertze (2001, p. 116-7) for example, argues that *ubuntu* is used by government in a range of superficial ways. First, its inherent concept of sacrifice is utilised to promote reconciliation amongst divided South Africans (and places the onus upon 'black' people who understand the notion to be proactive in doing so). Second, it emphasises traditional values such as respect and loyalty to rulers to aid government with policies of modernisation (for example, current neo-liberal economic policies which necessarily delay the redistribution of economic resources). Third, the values of acceptance and harmony are useful in counteracting tribalism and in

²³ Besides MRM and RVE documents, the notion of *ubuntu* is also used in various government reports such as the education transformation policy (National Education Policy Act, No. 27 of 1996), the South African Constitution, the white paper for Social Welfare (Department of Social Development, 1997), and in sections of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report (especially regarding reparations and amnesty).

²⁴ Although not called *ubuntu* by other post-colonial leaders, African humanism has been described by Julius Nyerere (Tanzania), Jomo Kenyatta (Kenya), Kenneth Kaunda (Zambia), Milton Obote (Uganda) and Seretse Khama (Botswana) (Minogue & Molloy, 1974, 101-2, 131, 161, 164-5). More recently Dr Kaunda confirmed this in a conversation in Cambridge, although he added that '*ubuntu* seems to be dying these days in Africa' (Kaunda, 2005, personal communication).

²⁵ Calling *ubuntu* an African philosophy of humanism is perhaps misleading. There tends not to be the same separation of religion and philosophy in African thinking as there is in the Global North. I have chosen to use the term 'philosophy' to make it clear that *ubuntu* is a *traditional* rather than religious concept, although it does not exclude religious connotations.

celebrating cultural plurality. Finally, the communalistic ideology of *ubuntu* is a useful antidote to the anomie of increasing urban living.

German historian Christoph Marx (2002) goes further, arguing that *ubuntu* is used to vilify Western liberalism and individualism, encourages nationalist and Africanist tendencies by creating a fictionalised precolonial past with ‘reconstructed traditionalism’ (see also Minogue & Molloy, 1974, p. 4), and has the tendency to silence critics in the name of loyalty (Marx, 2002, p. 53, 63). It is this last criticism that seems to be the most telling in what it exposes. While *ubuntu* provides a basis for civic virtue, moral renewal and public-spiritedness, it conceals the need for redistributive justice and silences those who call attention to it – under the guise of public-spiritedness.

In contrast to Marx’s view, Archbishop Desmond Tutu (1999) has embraced the notion of *ubuntu* and links it to Christian theology²⁶. By doing so, according to Battle (1997, p. 5), he provides a basis whereby ‘black’ people can forgive ‘white’ people for the atrocities of apartheid based on transcendent authority. This ‘Christianisation’ of *ubuntu* enlarges upon the traditional tribal conception of *ubuntu* – which included only ‘black’ kinsmen and close family members, not ‘whites’ or erstwhile enemies²⁷. Were it not to be enlarged, it would be an insufficient basis for a new and reconciliatory order in South Africa. There is considerable debate about whether *ubuntu-as-theology* is a legitimate ethic for the future or whether, like *ubuntu-as-nation-building*, it simply obscures the need for critical engagement with the issues of justice (also an important part of Christian theology).

For my purposes it is important to note that each of these initiatives – the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Moral Regeneration Movement, Race and Values in Education and *ubuntu* – have contributed in some measure to the *discourses* around moral renewal and rebuilding in post-Apartheid South Africa. Their actual impact on moral behaviour is relatively unknown, and certainly un-investigated. In contrast, the daily reality

²⁶ Coertze (2001) shows how many of the qualities found in Galatians 5 and Colossians 3 of the Bible have found their way into the concept of *ubuntu* as ‘the Christian faith became part of the cultural heritage of many African individuals’ (p. 115).

²⁷ See Krog (1999, p. 392-9) and Coertze (2001, p. 113ff) for a fuller discussion.

of poverty and the sequelae of structural injustice as the ‘unfinished business’ of Apartheid (Bell & Ntsebeza, 2001) has received substantially more attention.

Poverty and structural injustice as ‘unfinished moral business’

Young people’s moral formation is clearly likely to have been shaped by the personal and structural violence of Apartheid. What is less clear is how their current *economic* context contributes to their moral realities. In the remainder of this chapter, I outline²⁸ some of the evidence from contemporary economic analyses of the effects and aftermath of Apartheid, and the implications²⁹ that systemic poverty and structural injustice would have had on young people’s morality first under Apartheid, and still have today.

The impoverishment of South African’s ‘black’ population under Apartheid was the result, according to Terreblanche (2002, p. 384), of four factors. These are ‘land deprivation... in order to institutionalise repressive black labour systems’; discriminatory measures to protect ‘white’ workers from competition from ‘black’ workers; official discrimination in social spending especially on education³⁰; and the ‘pauperisation’ of two thirds of the population due to stagflation (economic stagnation coupled with high levels of inflation). All but the last of these factors were intentional policies of Apartheid enacted through legislation, although stagflation may be interpreted as a *consequence* of Apartheid trade sanctions and embargoes. Despite the programme of redistributive justice embarked upon by the ANC government and its partners, this impoverishment³¹ of the majority of the population continues 13 years into South Africa’s new democracy. The South African government’s main measures to redress the inequalities of Apartheid, included affirmative

²⁸ For a detailed analysis see Terreblanche (2002) *A History of Inequality in South Africa, 1652-2002* and *Class, Race and Inequality in South Africa* (Seekings & Nattrass, 2005).

²⁹ In Chapter 5, I discuss young people’s experience of crime, violence, substance abuse, as well as their daily experience of school, home, streets and family life.

³⁰ In 1975 social spending (including spending on education) on ‘black’ South Africans was less than twelve per cent of that spent on ‘whites’ (Terreblanche, 2002, p. 389).

³¹ A number of analyses have shown how poverty and inequality (including unemployment) have increased in South Africa since 1993 (May & Meth, 2007; Seekings & Nattrass, 2005; Terreblanche, 2002).

action, land redistribution³² and increased social benefits. Table 4.3 summarises some of these strategies.

Table 4.3 *Examples of government's strategy to address poverty and inequality*

| Selected strategies and legislation to address poverty and inequality |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Reconstruction and Development Programme (1994-2000) was a rapid programme of providing housing, water and education to the impoverished, and equalising social spending (child grants, disability grants, pensions) amongst 'race' groups. • The Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) is a macroeconomic programme aimed at economic growth, and attracting foreign investment. It represents a neo-liberal, trade-liberalisation, 'trickle-down economics' approach to tackling inequalities. • Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998 is an affirmative action programme setting targets for businesses with over 50 employees regarding the 'racial' composition of its workers. • The Broad-based Black Economic Empower Act, No. 53 of 2003 provides for the direct empowerment of 'black' people through asset ownership, senior management, and employment equity. It also aims to generate indirect empowerment through preferential procurement, corporate social development and by financial encouragement of 'black' entrepreneurship. • The Restitution of Land Rights Act, No. 22 of 1994 underpins land reform by allowing people dispossessed of land under Apartheid to claim back original land (or receive compensation) from the government (who in turn compensates the current owner). Other legislation (the Land Reform Act, No. 3 of 1996 and the Extension of Security of Tenure Act, No. 62 of 1997) provides protection against arbitrary eviction, especially for people living in rural areas and on farms. • The Skills Development Act, No. 97 of 1998 aims to develop and improve the skills of the workforce by levying a small payroll tax (Skills Development Levy) on private companies that is then made available for training 'black' employees and providing work-related learnerships for 'black' people. |

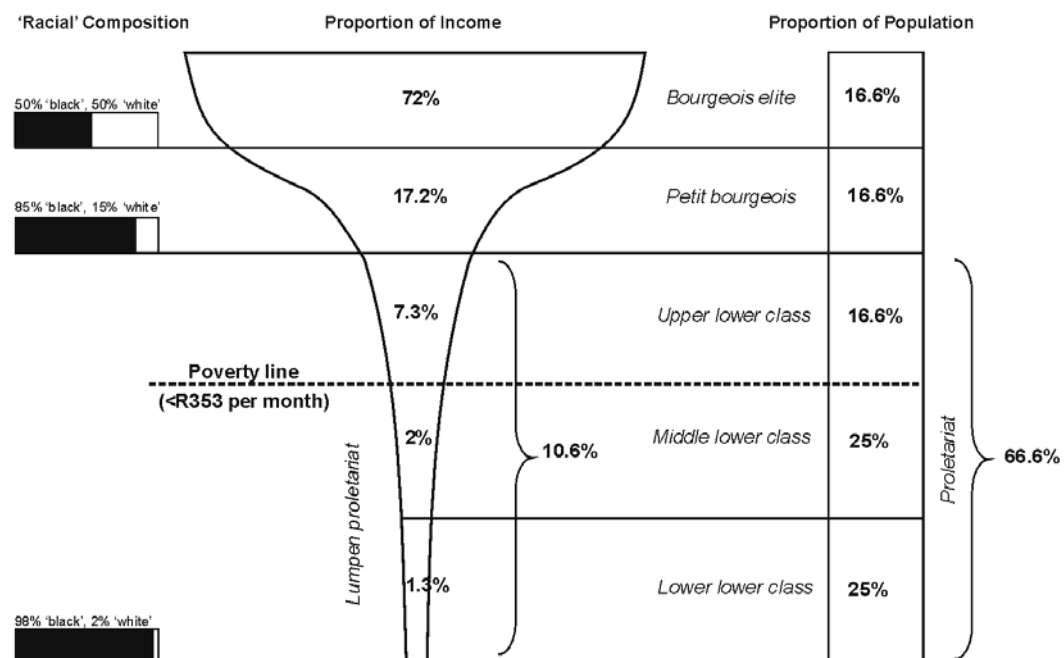
Yet these redistributive practices has created a new 'black' elite and a growing 'black' middle class, leaving 50%³³ of South Africans living below the poverty line. In 2002 seventeen per cent realise 72% of all income earned³⁴, while the poorest 50% realise only

³² 22,000 victims have been compensated with R30,000 each. Out of an estimated three million forced removals, the land claims court has processed 869,506 claims and plans to process a further 7,500 claims before its closure (Government Communication and Information Services, 2005, p. 103).

³³ Terreblanche (2002, p. 34) sites a R353 per person per month 'minimum living level' poverty line.

³⁴ At the most affluent levels 6% of the population realise 40% of all income earned (Human Sciences Research Council, 2004).

3.3%. The extent of this inequality³⁵ (stratified by ‘race’ and class) in South Africa is depicted graphically in Figure 4.1.



Source: Terreblanche, 2002, p. 36

Figure 4.1 The economic stratification of South Africa's population by 'race' and class

While class is an important feature of this stratification, it is equally significant to note that 'black' people alone (almost exclusively³⁶) live below the poverty line. It is estimated that 61% of South African children live below the poverty line, and that female-headed households are twice as likely to be impoverished as male-headed households (Terreblanche, 2002, p. 384)³⁷. Unemployment levels are also significantly high. For every one 'white' person unemployed 6.5 'black' people are unemployed³⁸. The lack of

³⁵ South Africa's Gini coefficient is close to .7 (0 is perfect equality, 1 is perfect inequality) (Human Sciences Research Council, 2004; Seekings & Nattrass, 2005), and is among the highest in the world.

³⁶ Terreblanche maintains that 2% of 'whites' are in the 'lower class' (p. 33) as a whole but does not say which of the three lower classes (upper, middle or lower lower class) they fall into. His definition of 'black' includes 'black', 'coloured' and 'Indian/Asian'.

³⁷ The poverty rate is 60% amongst female-headed households compared to 31% in male-headed households (Terreblanche, 2002, p. 384).

³⁸ According to the Labour Force Survey (Statistics South Africa, 2006) the South African unemployment rate is currently 39% (the so-called 'broad definition' i.e. those who are unemployed and are discouraged

employment opportunities has a direct impact on township youth. Fewer than 5% of school leavers are absorbed into the job market each year (Everatt, 1993) and nearly half of all current school leavers will *never* find employment³⁹ (National Labour & Economic Development Institute, 2003). While youth face the prospect of long-term unemployment (and therefore poverty), they are simultaneously influenced by the acquisitiveness portrayed in the media and by the show of luxury they see (Dixon, 2001)⁴⁰ in neighbouring suburbs (many of whom are 'white' beneficiaries of apartheid).

This continuing impoverishment of those who suffered under Apartheid, and who continue to do so has been attributed to two main reasons. The first is the government's fiscal economic policy. Although the ANC government has achieved laudable economic growth since 1994 and have succeeded in providing water, sanitation, and electricity for the poorest, in building up a wealthy 'black' bourgeois, they have failed to improve the quality of education and provide adequate employment, housing, and health care for the poor. It is widely acknowledged (see also Dixon, 2001, p. 224; Samara, 2003, p. 292) that the ANC has embarked on a neo-liberal (rather than socialist or welfare), free-market economy aimed at attracting global investment in order to 'grow away' poverty. The government's position is fraught⁴¹. They were left with an \$18.7 billion debt by the Apartheid state that threatened to jeopardise any attempt at economic reform, and they are dependent on large corporations for wealth creation – most of which remains in 'white' hands that (it is feared) would flee the country if nationalisation or high taxation were implemented.

from actively seeking employment) or 26% (those who are unemployed and actively seeking employment – the narrow or 'official' definition). Using the narrow definition – 30.7% 'black' people are unemployed, compared with 4.7% 'white' people, 18.9% 'coloured' people and 11.2% 'Indian' people.

³⁹ In order to address youth unemployment, a national Youth Service programme has been on the national agenda since 1993 (taken up by the National Youth Commission). Although there is political will and funding for the initiative, it is limited by the availability of exit employment opportunities for youth.

⁴⁰ Dixon (2001, p. 216) argues that the gap between rich and poor has been made much more obvious since the end of Apartheid has allowed 'black' people greater mobility and increased contact between 'race' groups.

⁴¹ Terreblanche is less generous in his analysis, arguing that government has abandoned half of the population and entered into 'elite compromises with the corporate sector and its global partners' (2002, p. 419) in order to ensure the enrichment of a small black elite.

The second reason for the continuing impoverishment of the majority of 'black' South Africans is the way in which most 'white' South Africans have sunk into collective and economically comfortable amnesia. During the Apartheid years 'white' South Africans enjoyed one of the highest standards of living in the world, and still do⁴². In 2000 the average 'white' household earned six times that of the average 'black' household (National Labour & Economic Development Institute, 2003). The tragedy has been that 'white' people generally tend not to acknowledge their complicity in the ongoing poverty in which the majority remain mired. Archbishop Tutu laments this when he says:

It is something of a pity that, by and large, the white community failed to take advantage of the Truth and Reconciliation process... Many of them carry a burden of guilt which would have been assuaged had they actively embraced the opportunities offered by the Commission; those who do not consciously acknowledge any sense of guilt are in a sense worse off than those who do. Apart from the hurt that it causes to those who suffered, the denial by so many white South Africans even that they benefited from Apartheid is a crippling, self-inflicted blow to their capacity to enjoy and appropriate the fruits of change (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2003, Foreword).

In keeping with the absence of *mea culpa* on the part of Apartheid's beneficiaries, there has been a deafening silence on the issue of restitution⁴³ in the public discourse. While the Truth and Reconciliation Commission asserted the importance of ensuring socio-economic justice in post-Apartheid South Africa, it also expressed the judgement that only if the 'emerging truth unleashes a social dynamic that includes redressing the suffering of victims will it meet the ideal of restorative justice' (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 1999, Volume One p. 131). But there has been no such 'social dynamic', much less an ongoing

⁴² The latest Human Development Report demonstrates that 'in South Africa the richest 20% have an HDI rank 101 places above the poorest 20%' (United Nations Development Programme, 2006, p. 270) which places them on the same standard of living as the wealthiest countries of the Global North.

⁴³ 'In the law restitution is required when there has been an unjust shift of wealth from one person to another, because it is legally and morally wrong for a person who has committed a wrong to be allowed to keep a benefit, obtained as a result of the commission of the wrong' (Molle, 2005, personal communication).

public discussion. Bell and Ntsebeza (2001) and others (Lombard, 2004; Vandeginste, 2004) describe this state of affairs as ‘unfinished business’. Since the ongoing impoverishment of the majority of South Africa’s populace is also an issue of justice – and justice is inherently a moral issue, South Africa’s current levels of poverty and structural injustice may be more accurately described as unfinished *moral* business.

Conclusion

The South African historical, political and economic contexts have undeniable moral implications for township youth. During South Africa’s numerous wars of dispossession and oppression, young people grew up in a context in which violence was normalised, and in which opposition to authority (since it was an immoral authority) was ingrained. In local township contexts, families were fractured through migrant labour, exile and incarceration. Young people’s political involvement meant that they developed autonomy and authority from an early age. Young people became the ‘shock troops of resistance’, although their behaviour sometimes morphed into excessive violence and hardened criminality.

While the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Moral Regeneration Movement, and the Race and Values in Education initiative have highlighted the relationship between reconciliation and justice, the government’s use of the philosophy of *ubuntu* has the potential to conceal it. How these efforts at moral renewal have impacted township youth is relatively unknown and unresearched. Arguably the MRM, by focusing on young people’s moral deficiencies, has tended to frame township youth as in need of ‘regeneration’, rather than emphasising their status as victims of injustice or potential agents of social change. These ongoing structural injustices means that township youth still have little prospect of jobs, and the corresponding hope for escaping poverty. In addition, since poverty remains the lot of most of these youth, any attempt by government or civil society to encourage the growth of pro-social moral values is likely to be constrained, since poverty has the potential to exacerbate moral decline. Nelson Mandela’s comment (during

his trial in 1964) on the relationship between poverty and morality under Apartheid applies equally well to the current South African context:

Poverty and the breakdown of family life have secondary effects. Children wander about the streets of the townships because they have no schools to go to, or no money to enable them to go to school, or no parents at home to see that they go to school... This leads to a breakdown in moral standards, to an alarming rise in illegitimacy, and to growing violence which erupts not only politically, but everywhere (Mandela, 1994, p. 437).

Political scientist, Allen Hertzke (1998, p. 653) elaborates on this connection and argues that 'we would expect to see moral depredation greatest among the most vulnerable members of society, who lack resources to inoculate themselves against environmental influences'. In a recent school-based study commissioned by the Department of Education during the RVE process:

Several parents put forward a critique of the government in respect to the link between access to basic social services, and the facilitation of values in young people. They suggest that if the government were achieving its more basic mandates, with particular reference to the provision of housing, jobs and a quality education for all, then 'values' could be more successfully navigated in the home environment (Porteus, Motala, Ruth *et al.*, 2002, p. 2).

This is not to say that dealing with poverty will automatically ensure that a society becomes morally good, but the two do seem to be related. This study attempts to tap into these dynamics of injustice, poverty and morality, and does so at a significant juncture in South Africa's history. It asks how township youth construct a notion of morality from within this context of poverty and in the aftermath of injustice. As a discourse, it seeks to move away from an official representation of morality and aims to foreground young people's voices. Before moving on to the core data of this study, the following chapter provides a more intimate portrait of township youth's social context and current moral realities.

‘WHAT WORLD IS THIS?’: COMPLEX SOCIAL REALITIES

On the first day of my research, while driving around the traffic circle near the Langa taxi rank I nearly drove into a herd of goats crossing the road. I braked hard and just in time. Goats in the middle of the township? Not exactly what I was expecting. It was, however, an apt reminder of the new, relatively unknown world of township life that I was entering. A world where people walked rather than drove, where they bought meat on the street rather than from supermarkets, where chickens were slaughtered in backyards and sold at the taxi rank, and where goats and cattle crossed the road with impunity to the blare of car and taxi hooters. *Quis hic mundus?* (What world is this?) was a question I frequently asked myself. And more important, how did this world contribute to young people’s¹ moral formation? My account² begins with the context I first encountered after negotiating the flock of goats on that first day – Mandela High School. The rest of the chapter takes us through the various ecological microsystems of Langa life – home, community and streets.

School

Mandela High comprises three neat multi-story face brick buildings, with a small prefabricated ‘hall’ that seats 80 (for a school of 1,400). Between buildings are two open-air quadrangles used for recreation and weekly assemblies of prayer and announcements (seldom held during the wet Cape winter). On either end of one quad stands two rickety netball posts which remained unused throughout my time at the school. There are no sports fields, and those of adjoining schools or community facilities are used to play what

¹ When I presented work to peers they erroneously assumed that my sample was of delinquent youth. While delinquent youth are included in this study, the young people who participated in this study cover the range of youth found in South Africa’s townships.

² In this chapter I draw from demographic data I collected about my research participants (see Appendix 5) as well as from fieldnotes, interviews, and recent national research (see Swartz, 2004).

little sport is on offer at Mandela³. Near the hall is a small tuckshop and a patch of ground used as a vegetable garden. Suzeka told me the garden was used to teach young people how to grow vegetables and eat nutritiously and forms part of the provincial poverty alleviation programme. A small sign on the outside school fence confirmed this fact. Surrounding the school is a razor-wired and electrified fence, inside which a second concrete and metal fence kept students more strictly encapsulated within the school buildings. The outside fence has a padlocked pedestrian gate which would be locked just after the school day began, imprisoning⁴ learners for the day. Young people who arrived late would sometimes be allowed to enter midmorning.

The school car park was filled with mainly late model Toyotas and Hondas belonging to teachers, most of whom (although 'black') lived outside of Langa, and in the suburbs. Teachers were expected to arrive at school half an hour before the official start to the day, began the day with a brief staff meeting, and were dismissed (by a bell) forty-five minutes after students had ended their day. The school timetable changed regularly and few students could tell me what time school ended since almost none owned watches. When the school gates were opened, school was dismissed. During my year at Mandela, school was regularly dismissed early because the Matrics (Grade 12 students) were writing exams, the staff had a course to attend, the water had stopped working, too many learners had come to school with rain-soaked uniforms, there was a student funeral, or it was staff payday. School also regularly ended at least a week (sometimes two) before official school closing dates. As a consequence young people, in effect, had some 20 to 22 weeks of holiday (instead of the 13 legislated weeks⁵).

³ In contrast, the suburban school Oakridge, had a swimming pool, indoor gymnasium, basketball, tennis and netball courts and acres of soccer, cricket and rugby fields. There is still enormous educational disparity between suburban and township schools (and between urban and rural schools) regarding class size, quality of teaching and physical facilities.

⁴ The school maintained it was also to keep 'thugs and gangsters' out, but did not deny that its primary purpose was to keep learners in school for the duration of the day.

⁵ The official length of the school year, excluding school holidays, was 39 weeks (75% of the year). Having extended holidays meant that teaching time was limited to only 56% of the year. Young people had more leisure time albeit with little to do on township streets.

Students' attendance at school was erratic. In spite of the school day beginning at 8:30, there were seldom many students in class by that time. One morning I decided to keep a running count. Officially there were 43 students⁶ in Grade 9C (the class with whom I spent my time). By 8:30 there were two students present in Natural Science, the first period of the day. Ms Afrika began teaching. By 8:55 there were ten young people present and by 9:55 twenty. After the midday break, an exodus occurred (intensified on a Friday, I later noticed). The day ended with 12 students present in the last two periods of the day, English and Maths. Absenteeism seemed to be a normal routine of the day as was 'bunking'. There were many days when I would see young people squeezing through the metal bars on the inside perimeter fence and then 'jumping the fence' – streaming over the two metre high fence using a nearby tree for support as they cleared the razor wire. Sometimes young people would make a mad dash for the exit gate if a car left during the course of the school day. When I asked young people why they arrived late, reasons ranged from transport problems⁷, being 'too tired', or just shrugged shoulders. When I asked why they left early invariably it was because they were bored or hungry. When it rained, there were fewer students at school. Luxolo told me it was because people thought they would 'melt in the rain'. We both laughed. A few days later she came and showed me the gaping holes in the soles of her school shoes. When she walks to school in the rain, she has wet feet the entire day. So she preferred not to come. Neither of us laughed this time.

The majority of classrooms at Mandela were bare-walled with two-seater desks and a small table for the teacher. In some of the classrooms, it was apparent that teachers had taken care to erect posters and display students' projects. In others, only obscenities decorated the walls. Sometimes, usually before exams⁸, I observed young people taking notes, listening intently and asking questions. One morning Ms Afrika was balancing equations on the board and sighed, 'These things are going to be on the test tomorrow. I don't know

⁶ The official ratio of educators to learners is 34:1 (Government Communication and Information Services, 2005) but many schools, especially those in townships, have a ratio as high as 60:1.

⁷ I asked Fundiswa why she wasn't at school on Monday or Tuesday. She said she had no money for transport. She explained that she shared a train ticket with someone in her area who worked night shift as a nurse but who had to work during the day on those days (Fieldnotes, Wednesday 1st September 2004).

⁸ Attendance was also at its highest during exams, although for Grade 9C class numbers never exceeded 32.

why you don't know it, but anyway, it doesn't matter' in response to a student's question. Teaching was done predominantly in *isiXhosa* despite the national policy⁹ for it to be in English, since national exit exams are in English (or Afrikaans).

There were a number of occasions when I saw young people actively engaged and even animated at school. Giving speeches during *isiXhosa* lessons with a favourite teacher, animatedly discussing masturbation during a Life Orientation¹⁰ lesson, demonstrating popular and traditional dancing as an example of cultural activities during Arts and Culture, and talking to the teacher in charge of their year. For the majority of time I spent sitting in their classes, young people looked bored¹¹, restless, or frustrated. Maths classes were most frequently a source of frustration. Students would begin by concentrating, get a problem right, and then become disheartened when Mr Mashiya leapt ahead to a new type of problem without adequate scaffolding. Maths was also the class when students would most frequently receive test papers back with scores of zero, two or five per cent. Those who got zero were fairly philosophical and dispassionate. They showed me their test papers, shook their heads, and laughed.

Generally students chatted incessantly amongst themselves while a teacher was attempting to speak. Announcements during class time and teachers coming in to talk to students added to 'everyone making chaos' (as Mhoza called it). In addition, few students carried books to school, and homework was seldom completed. One day after learners had clearly

⁹ It seemed that it was easier for teachers to teach in *isiXhosa* since young people's command of English was so poor. Many young people, newly arrived from rural areas, spoke no English whatsoever.

¹⁰ The curriculum comprises eight learning areas at secondary school, one of which is 'Life Orientation' and includes career guidance, general life skills (including basic banking and accounting procedures, design, and entrepreneurship), health, religion, sexuality, citizenship, physical, and moral education. Eight per cent or 2.2 hours per week of the timetable (Department of Education, 2002, p. 20) is devoted to life orientation in total, with an additional 5% available as discretionary flexitime. Specifically moral education occurs in the guise of citizenship, religious and sexuality education – about 35 minutes a week in the Senior Phase (Grades 7-9).

¹¹ This in spite of the fact that curriculum materials and examinations set by the Education Department were at pains to be youth and culturally relevant. Questions included music, relationships, traditional culture, sport, tourism, making money and future career plans. Young people exhibited a total lack of mental and emotional stamina at school. Ironically, the bored, soporific, nonchalant affect of the classroom were exchanged for eager, garrulous and curious conversation outside of it.

not read the assigned chapter of their English set book, Mr Tolo looked up at me and said: 'These learners want to blame the teachers for the fact that they're not learning. But you can see that they don't come to class, and they don't prepare.' In turn, students complained about the quality of teaching. Mr Tolo often spelt words incorrectly on the chalkboard, and shouted down students who tried to correct him. Sometimes students would ask questions about procedures. For example, Ms Afrika would not allow students to take their assignments out of the class to complete them during a free period or break time. When Nomonde asked why, Ms Africa's answer was: 'Because you must learn respect'. It became a common answer to challenges from students. Most teachers seem resigned to the noise level and lack of participation and continued to teach despite the noise and interruptions. Occasionally a teacher would send a student out – sometimes for wearing a beanie (knitted cap) in class, for fighting, or for more serious infractions. Mr Tolo had an ongoing saga with Khaya and Tapelo whom he had caught high and drunk respectively. He sent them out of his class every lesson for two weeks telling them only to 'return with your mother'. Each day they reappeared and were sent out. Their mothers never appeared. Eventually Mr Tolo relented and Khaya and Tapelo were allowed to stay.

Registration for Grade 9C was held after the midday break in the same classroom with the same teacher for the entire year. One November¹² afternoon I clearly remember the Grade 9C class teacher marking some absent who were present and some present that were absent. She hardly lifted her head as she read through the long list of names. It was apparent that she could not match names with faces and depended on students to either announce themselves present or their classmates absent. Students told me of some favourite teachers who 'respect us' and 'are like parents to us' and of those who 'come to school drunk, drunk, drunk', openly smoked *dagga* (marijuana) sometimes with students, and who 'take students as girlfriends'¹³. Luxolo told me '[teachers] they don't care at all;

¹² The South African school year follows the calendar year, so the teacher would have had the same class for eleven months by November.

¹³ In a frank discussion with Mr Mbeki, who played the role of school counsellor, he told me that not all approaches were made by male teachers to students. Young women wanted teachers to 'fall in love' with them, and sought male teachers out. He told me of numerous incidents when he had been 'proposed sex' by female students. Having a teacher as a boyfriend brought extra privileges, material benefits, and social status.

they don't even know our names... They are just here to do a job'. The majority of students I met in Grade 9C had already moved schools many times¹⁴. One important reason, told to me by Fundiswa but echoed by others, was that 'I failed in Khayelitsha because the teachers hated me'. Moving schools seemed to be the only solution. As a result, young people often end up commuting vast distances in order to attend a different school. These commutes are expensive, contribute to infrequent school attendance, and are dangerous because of overcrowded trains. Parents also tended to move their children around between township and suburban schools as they could afford it. Those who moved regularly often developed problems with language, and often failed *isiXhosa* First Language since they had taken it as Second or Third Language in suburban schools.

Mobility also occurred on a larger scale, as students migrated from their rural homes to Cape Town seeking improved quality and less crowding. Township school failure rates tend to be higher than their suburban counterparts. By the time I returned to the field in September 2006 (two years after beginning the study) one third of the young people in my sample had dropped out

of school, without completing¹⁵ (see Figure 5.1a). In September 2004 I had recorded that nearly one third of these youth had spent more than one year in their current grade, while almost a quarter had spent more than two

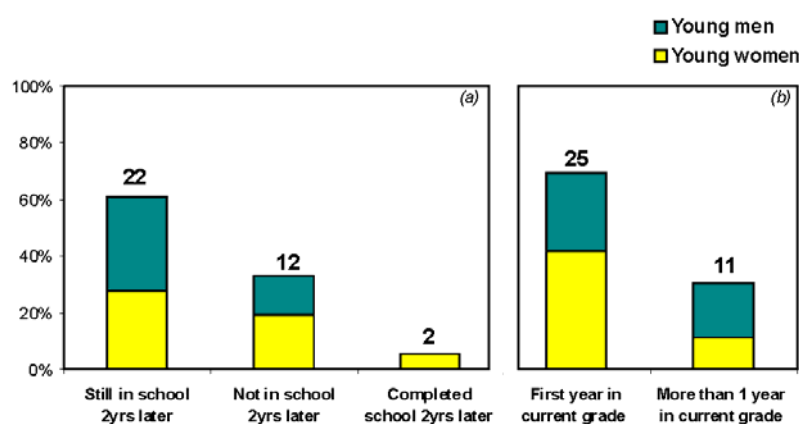


Figure 5.1 *Aspects of the school context of research sample (with a visual indication of the proportion of young men and young women in each category, n=36)*

Note: Figures above stacked bars are actual numbers of youth.

¹⁴ Only half of the students in my research group and half in Grade 9C came from Langa, the others commuted in from the surrounding townships of Khayelitsha, Crossroads, Gugulethu, Nyanga, and Philippi. Four lived in the suburbs (Kenilworth, Milnerton, Kuils River and Brackenfell).

¹⁵ While there is universal primary school enrolment, and an average 86% enrolment for secondary school (Government Communication and Information Services, 2003, p. 227), only 40% of learners who begin school in Grade 1 endure through to Grade 12 (Department of Education, 2003, p. 16).

years in it (see Figure 5.1b). Four young people had been in the same grade for three or four years. As a result young people were between two and four years older than their suburban (and suburban-schooled) peers.

Over the course of the year, a number of students at Mandela died. Bulelani, a member of the Grade 9C class fell off a train. He was in the process of robbing a woman of her handbag when he lost his footing and slipped to his death. Another died of ‘asthma’ – later confirmed as AIDS-related. A number of students were shot or stabbed. Mhoza’s neighbour, a Grade 12 student, was attacked and killed by gangsters. A friend of Nzulu’s was stabbed while at a party in Gugulethu. A member of the Young Chicanos, featured in Andile’s digital documentary, was shot by a rival gang. Numerous young people dropped out due to illness (often tuberculosis), pregnancy, and an inability to pay school fees. Thimna told me she decided not to write her end of year exams since there would be no point. She had heard that she would not get her results since she had not paid fees¹⁶. Paying school fees was a serious economic hardship for young people’s parents, despite the fact that they are relatively low (R250 per year at Mandela).

The milieu of Mandela is in stark contrast to that of Oakridge. At Oakridge teachers are mainly ‘white’ and discipline is rigidly enforced. Students and staff alike are immediately disciplined for substance-use infractions, and ‘drunk teachers’ and teachers who solicit sex from students are rare occurrences. At Oakridge, students spend the required time at school, are not locked in, seldom bunk, and have full and busy lives taken up with extramural and sporting activities. Liyema and Thandi tell me there’s ‘no time to get into trouble’. Katlego offers a different interpretation when he tells me that suburban school has merely taught him to ‘hide my life’ and that suburban school and township life for him are ‘two different countries or some – two different worlds’.

School is an important social and moral context for both suburban- and township-schooled young people. Both teach respect and discipline (either by its presence or absence) and

¹⁶ Legally schools are not allowed to do this, but the practice (or at least threats) at Mandela was different.

teachers' lives are seen as positive or negative moral exemplars. Besides these personal influences, township schools delivers less¹⁷ education (and of an inferior quality) compared to suburban-schools, and so learning (moral or otherwise) is limited. Suburban school students are not subject to the same cycle of failure, mobility, drop out and re-entry as their township counterparts. They also have more ready access to help – personal and academic – than their township-schooled peers. Oakridge students involved in this study, although younger than those at Mandela, showed evidence of more advanced critical thinking skills. What both suburban and township-schooled young people had (although in short supply) were a small group of teachers who took the time to enquire about their lives 'beyond the classroom'¹⁸ and who were available as counsellors and mentors. One such situation, in which I took an interest in a young man's life beyond the classroom, led me to learn more about young people's home contexts.

Home

On Monday 11th October I heard that Ingwazi, one of the young men who had just been on the adventure camp that I'd arranged for research participants, had been stabbed in the head. I decided to go and see him. This first visit to a young person's home made me realise how important it was that I visit my research participants in their home. It provided enormous insight into how young people's home contexts contribute to their moral formation. Ingwazi was small, lean but lithe, and had had a 'leaky heart'¹⁹ as a child. He lived in a whitewashed, one-bedroomed brick house in Crossroads. There were eight people living in his household – the female members slept in the main bedroom and the young men had mattresses which they laid out on the lounge floor at night. The bathroom

¹⁷ Oakridge had no extended school holidays, or time off for broken water supplies (nor broken water supplies at all), or time off on pay day or for funerals. School attendance of township students who attended Oakridge was also not affected by rain and lack of transport money, since their parents were financially better off.

¹⁸ A teacher aptly observed that 'teachers must realise that they must get involved in these young people's lives beyond the classroom if they want to make any difference at all'.

¹⁹ He asked me not to tell anyone at school because 'you have to be strong to survive in *ikasi*'. Weakness wasn't tolerated. If people knew he had a problem they would take advantage of him, he tells me.

and toilet was inside the house. His mother, like many others, was a domestic worker²⁰. She left home before six in the morning and came home after seven in the evening. Ingwazi was glad his mother worked but spoke ambivalently about the fact that she was a ‘maid’. On most nights they eat *mielie pap* (maize porridge) and cabbage or *mealies*. Meat is reserved for payday. At Christmas time, Ingwazi got new clothes – sometimes a new pair of sports shoes.

Ingwazi’s father, like many others, was not present – he had died when Ingwazi was four years old. Like many of his peers, Ingwazi did not know the circumstances of his father’s death, but attributed it to the work of ‘witches’. Three-quarters of young people in my sample did not have their biological fathers living in their homes and nearly half have no relationship with their father (see Figure 5.2).

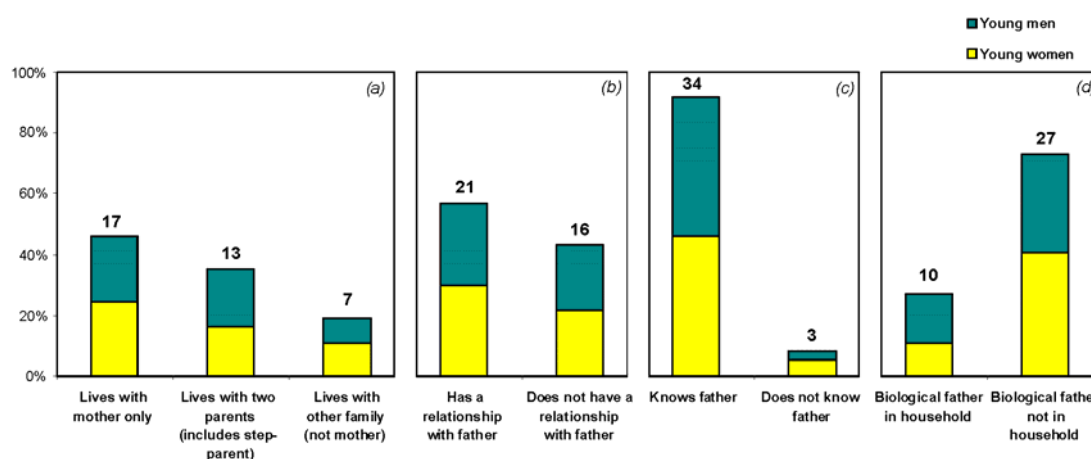


Figure 5.2 Aspects of the home context of research sample (with a visual indication of the proportion of young men and young women in each category, $n=37$)

Fathers seemed to have disappeared in a variety of ways, some to new lives and families, but an alarming number have simply died²¹. Young people were reluctant to talk about

²⁰ 850,000 people (primarily women) work as domestic workers in South Africa, accounting for 6.8% of all jobs (Statistics South Africa, 2006, p. ix).

²¹ An estimate regarding ‘disappeared’ fathers in the South African context is provided by Posel and Devey (2006, p. 47) who calculate that 12.8% of ‘black’ fathers are dead and 50.2% are ‘absent’ (for a total of 63%). This is slightly fewer than is the case for young people in my sample, for whom 73% had ‘disappeared’ fathers. The stark contrast comes when comparing these figures to those of disappeared ‘white’ fathers (2.4% of ‘white’ fathers are dead and 10.9% are ‘absent’ – a total of 13.3%). The causes of death is reported as having been from illness (HIV, pneumonia and tuberculosis), motor accidents (in taxis,

absent fathers. When they did it was with great emotion. Tears frequently welled up in the eyes of Lekho and Mandisa when they spoke of their fathers. Thimna and Luxolo did not cry but clenched their fists and swore in anger. Andile lied about how often he saw his father to hide the fact that his father did not want to know him.

Amongst young people in my sample, it was not unusual for there to be four children in a household each with a different father. Thulani, Nonkiza and Andile told me it made them feel ‘bad, bad, bad’, ‘embarrassed’, ‘disgusted’, ‘disgraced’ and ‘ashamed’ that each of their siblings had different fathers²². This ‘disease of us Africans – absent fathers’ (as one teacher put it) also played itself out in how young people spoke of marriage. Many merely wanted a ‘girlfriend’ or a ‘boyfriend’ and children rather than to get married in the future.

As far as physical living conditions were concerned, I recorded at least nine different types of dwelling in which the young people in my study lived (see Figure 5.3). Nearly a third of young people lived in small township houses similar to that of Ingwazi. Five (14%) lived in larger township homes – comparable to a small suburban house (all five attended a suburban school). Suzeka lived in a single-roomed township flat, previously a single-sex men’s hostel. All cooking, living and washing was conducted in one room and in her case housed five people: her mother, stepfather, baby brother, and grandmother. There were communal toilets on each corridor. Dipuo lived about 20km away from Mandela in a modest suburb of Milnerton, inhabited largely by ‘coloured’ people in a small suburban house. Khaya too lived in a largely ‘coloured’ suburb, a similar distance away from Mandela, in a flat with his mom and two siblings. Andile and Nomonde lived in a backyard shack attached to a house owned by extended family. Thimna and Thobane lived in a small backyard shack they rented from people with whom they had no family connection. These shacks comprised a single room and were usually made of wood.

as pedestrians, fewer as drivers), and violence (the armed struggle, stabbed during tavern brawls, and gangsterism). The South African household survey (Statistics South Africa, 2006, p. 1) estimates that there are currently 771,000 fewer ‘black’ men than ‘black’ women in South Africa. It felt far higher.

²² I found this response surprising. I guess I had expected young people to shrug it off since it was so pervasive in their communities. It made me realise how easy it is to infer that people may have a different standard of morality based on current realities. In the area of multiple sexual relationships and mixed paternities, it was no less acceptable to these youth than it might have been to middle-class people.

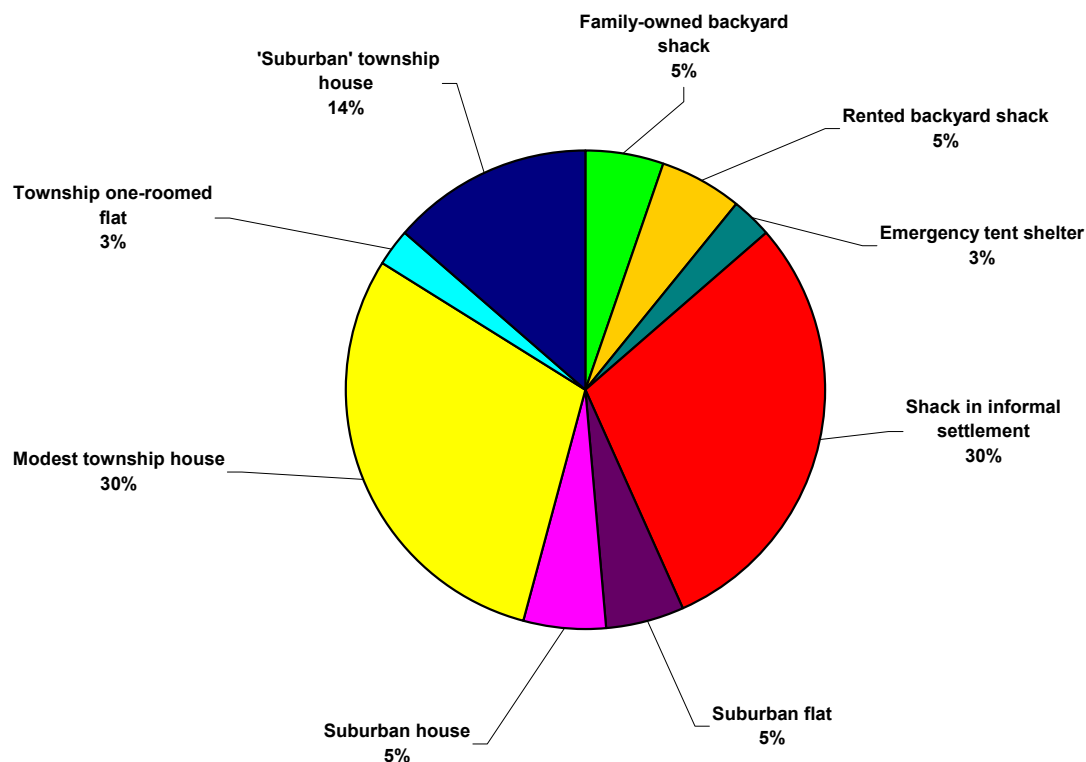


Figure 5.3 *Types of dwelling and proportion of young people in the sample living in each*

The remaining third of young people lived in cardboard, wood and zinc shacks in what are termed 'informal settlements' (Joe Slovo, Town Two, Site B, Site C, Philippi Park, New Crossroads and Sweet Home Farm). Thembisa lived in a large tent housing about three hundred people, erected by relief services after her shack in Joe Slovo was razed to the ground in one of the many fires plaguing informal settlements during the windy Cape summer.

Living in shacks and tents meant that young people had to use communal toilets, shared between four or ten shacks, and in the case of tents, one for every 15 people. Almost without exception, all shacks and houses had electricity, even if illegally (running extension leads across roads). In the bathrooms I used there was no toilet paper; instead, old newspapers were piled on the cistern neatly cut into large squares. Brick houses had running water, but those who lived in shacks (of all types) had to collect water from a communal tap or from the house to which they were attached. Despite the humble circumstances of homes, nearly every dwelling had a television. When I took young people

on camp (and there was no television), Phindiwe's wail of 'Sharlene, I need a TV' was regularly echoed by others. Just over half of the young people told me that they had 'real' homes in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape, and that these shacks they lived in were 'a place to sleep' (*indawo yokulala*) rather than a home (*ikhaya*). Phindiwe was especially eloquent when she said: 'This shack – it's not my home – if it was [pause] I would be ashamed. How can I – to live in a shack?'. When I asked how long she had been living there she replied: 'More than ten years'.

But what are the implications of absent fathers and poor living conditions? Mothers were busy single-handedly eking out a living, and so young people were not closely supervised at home. With the exception of Suzeka and Liyema, no-one had to ask for specific permission to go with me on an outing. Although teachers sometimes requested mothers to come to schools to consult about their children, they rarely did. Young people bunked school with impunity, confident that their mothers would not get to hear of it. Many of the young men who had been in jail over the weekend (or longer) told me that their parents did not know about it. Parents assumed that they were sleeping over at friends. Cramped living conditions also meant that there was little privacy in households. All aspects of their family's lives were on display to them from birth. It also meant that young people had little opportunity or space for quiet study. Mandisa told me that she could never study after 21:00 at night, even for her finals, because her uncle went to sleep early and they needed to save electricity.

A further interesting feature of young people's homes was that, despite the poverty in which they lived, youth insisted on being given lunch money for school. They told me that 'only babies take sandwiches' to school. The irony was that often 'lunch money' was used to buy *dagga* or Mandrax pills rather than food. There also seemed to be ubiquitous amounts of alcohol in young people's homes. Thimna, a tiny 19 year-old who struggled to concentrate, clearly had foetal alcohol spectrum disorder (see Chapter 8) and told me her mother had been an alcoholic. But most mothers drank 'not too much' although many sold alcohol out of their homes (running a *shebeen* or *smokolo*). So while many young people grew up 'in a shebeen house' with associated drunken violence, homes were mainly spoken

of in reverential terms. Young people's homes were places of love, protection, and nurture – especially from their mothers, of whom they spoke highly. Rape and violence were portrayed as issues that took place in the community and on the streets rather than in the haven that was home.

Community

In contrast to the neat, clean interiors of even the most modest homes, township streets are rubbish-strewn, pot-holed, and water-logged places. Townships, as remnants of the Apartheid era, were designed to be as confusing as possible with section numbers instead of street names to make political networking, collaboration, and postal services almost impossible. This is slowly changing. In post-Apartheid South Africa, unlike their sterile suburban counterparts, township communities are still busy and crowded places. People sleep in their homes, but tend to live life on the streets in their communities. Driving home through Nyanga one Friday evening, I noticed boys playing cricket on a side street and girls skipping on the pavement. People congregated around fires where *braaing* meat was being sold and sat on upturned crates talking to their neighbours. It was a festive and sociable place to be. Most importantly people knew each other and neighbourhoods were organised into civic associations.

Most streets or clusters of streets have a street committee, a remnant of the Apartheid struggle. No longer tasked with organising political activities, these street committees have evolved to deal with neighbourhood quarrels and community crime. Driving Luxolo back to her home, after having spent the afternoon talking about why she found it so difficult to stay in school for the whole year, she told me a harrowing story about a young man who had been caught trying to rape a young girl in their street. The girl's mother started screaming, and members of the street committee came to investigate. They took the alleged rapist to a nearby park, beat him with a concrete block, and finally tipped a burning brazier over his head. He died. When the police came, nobody could say what had happened. Luxolo continued to tell me that street committees did not always beat people who committed crimes – sometimes they expelled them from the community. A *skollie*

would return home to find his possessions had been put on the street and his shack or house padlocked. He had no choice but to leave the community on threat of being beaten ‘until he was scrap’ or even killed. I was to hear numerous variations of stories of street committees meting out their own form of justice. South African newspapers regularly run stories of ‘street justice’ or vigilantism (Maughan, Maphumulo, & Gifford, 2006; Otter, 2002; South African Press Association, 2002, 2004, 2005) – a common response to the high levels of crime and violence in township communities.

Crime in South Africa is high, and although the current crime statistics²³ reported by the South African Police Services indicate that there has been a slight decline in crime during 2005, South African violent crime rates (murder, rape, assault, and robbery) remain amongst the highest in the world. Appendix 6 provides a graph of South African crime statistics for the period 1994-2005 and a comparison of selected crime statistics for South Africa and other countries as rates per capita. While South Africa does *not* have the highest²⁴ crime incidence per capita *per se*, it is violence that characterises South African crime. Townships are not immune to this violence and experience the bulk of it, although it is crime perpetrated in the suburbs that receives the majority of media attention. When young people spoke of vigilante justice, it was as a common and acceptable practice. This has implications for their moral formation. It reflects a lack of trust in township policing and contributes to the *normalising* of violence in everyday life. Some of the daily violence experienced in South Africa is related to a fear of losing jobs to foreigners from the north, who intrude on the few opportunities people have to eke out a livelihood (Morris, 1998). Other violence is crime, gang and drug-related – some serious with gangs running the equivalent of large businesses and ‘employing’ thousands of young men. Yet other crime is what Peterson (2003, p. 208) calls ‘social banditry’ – stealing because of inequalities. Some, as youth like Katlego relate, begin as ‘sport’ but progresses into an inescapable spiral:

²³ Crime statistics are however not unproblematic. There are many countries who for political or infrastructure reasons do not participate in international surveys nor do they make their crime statistics public. In addition, those countries who report high incidence of crime may well just be better at policing rather than have higher crime rates than others.

²⁴ Those of England and Wales, New Zealand, Chile and the USA are higher.

Katlego: Take a place like *ikasi*, there it's like robbery is just a sport. It's a sport. People enjoy it. You go to jail and you come out and people respect you and they like join all these gangs.

Many of the young people with whom I spoke told me that much violent death in the township is accidental. To be sure, people do intend to stab each other, but never plan to kill. Often stabbings occur in alcohol-soaked contexts and bystanders are too intoxicated to prevent someone from bleeding to death. In addition, common burglaries often end up in violence, since they were opportunistic and unplanned to begin with and also fuelled by alcohol, drugs, and fear. Besides the correlation between substance use and violent crime, there also seems to be a link between violent crime and the extent of inequality²⁵ in a country. So poverty (especially as a result of inequality), ontological insecurity, low life expectancy, unemployment, substance abuse, and violent crime all seem to be related, as is evident in South African township communities. Apartheid had succeeded in corroding community structures through 'forced removals'²⁶, such that close-knit communities with inbuilt sanctions against deviance have been replaced with mobile populations who are strangers to each other. A further result of this dislocation and upheaval is the proliferation of street gangs. Where community has been built, it has taken a long time to be established. Ironically, as government builds and allocates houses according to random waiting lists, communities are once again disrupted.

My own experience with crime and violence during my year in Langa was not extensive. At a staff sports afternoon I witnessed two young men (knives in hand) chasing each other with serious intent. One Saturday afternoon two older men crouched behind opposite ends of my car, and proceeded to throw bricks at each other. A man brandished a large knife at a group of us while we were waiting at a set of traffic lights in Khayelitsha. Most of my information therefore about crime and violence was obtained from young people as they

²⁵ Countries with high murder rates (such as Venezuela, Colombia, Russia, Jamaica, Mexico and the countries of the former Soviet Union) are also countries with high Gini coefficients i.e. have high levels of income inequality.

²⁶ Between 1960 and 1984 2.9 million 'black' people, 83,691 'coloured' people, and 40,069 'Indian' people (Slabbert, Malan, Marais *et al.*, 1994, p. 42) were forcibly moved from their homes to create 'whites only' areas.

told me their own stories or stories from their communities. Fourteen out of the 37 young people in my study had been the victim of a crime; half had both perpetrated a crime²⁷ and been a victim of violence.

Twenty-two out of 37 had perpetrated some form of violence²⁸ (see Figure 5.4). More young men than young women were perpetrators of crime and violence but young women were clearly involved. One third of young women had been involved in perpetrating a crime or an act of violence. Nearly a quarter of young people in my sample had been arrested and jailed²⁹ (some only briefly). All those jailed were young men except for one young woman who had stolen a cellphone and was arrested for it.

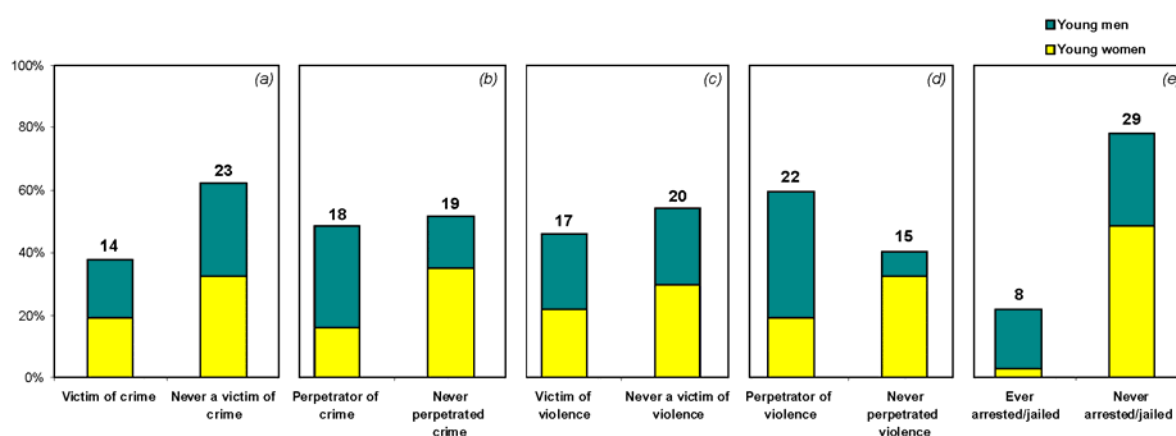


Figure 5.4 Reported crime and violence context of research sample (with a visual indication of the proportion of young men and young women in each category, $n=37$)

Young people were reluctant to blame their environments of poverty or the legacy of Apartheid for their (or their peers') current actions. In fact as I will later describe they were rather mute about these two issues, although their photographs (see Chapter 9) provide an alternative interpretation. But what young people did refer to constantly was work – employment of any sort. This, they told me in a multitude of ways, was the key to the future. They pointed out people selling fruit and vegetables, fixing shoes and cars, and

²⁷ Crime included stealing chocolates, money, cellphones, and cars, and hijacking a furniture truck.

²⁸ Violence included stabbings, serious fights (involving injuries), and shootings.

²⁹ Many spoke of jail as a rite of passage to becoming respected in the community. Andiswa told me of her 'brother-cousins' who kept returning to prison so they could progress up the rank of the prison gangs. See Steinberg (2004) for a full description of the Cape prison gangs.

selling alcohol from their shacks. Mathsufu was first among many to describe working men (usually labourers, agricultural workers or those working in construction) on the back of trucks and *bakkies* (open-back vans) as ‘cabbages’ but told me he’d rather be a ‘cabbage’ than unemployed.

Youth spoke clearly of the way in which people in the township help each other. *Ubuntu* is not dead, they told me, although it seldom extended beyond family and immediate neighbours. Family and immediate neighbours helped each other out with sugar, food, and money. In times of crisis this circle of care extended to helping strangers in need. But people in the township were also jealous of each other’s successes. And where there was jealousy, witches were to be found. Young people told me story after story about people who had been *thakatha* (bewitched) and the protection from harm received from traditional healers. Gangsters wore *muthi* (amulets) around their necks so that bullets would ‘bounce off their chests’; people ‘went mad’ after receiving the attention of an *igqirha* (a traditional healer); a revenge killing was orchestrated through supernatural means; a younger sibling was abducted by an *igqwirha* (witch); an *igqwirha* caused the death of a father; someone knew someone who had seen an old woman naked in her yard in the middle of the night (a sure sign that she was a witch).

Each of these modern, urban ‘black’ youth believed completely in the power of individuals to do harm through mediating spirits, although only a third consulted (or planned to consult) traditional healers.

Similarly, while the majority of young people professed a belief in God, (the same as the national census – see Table 5.1), only half of these attended church³⁰. More young women than young men regularly attended church and more young men than young women said they did not believe in God. Figure 5.5 depicts aspects of the religious beliefs of the youth in this study.

Table 5.1 *Religious affiliation of ‘black’ South Africans*

| Religious affiliation | Per cent |
|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Christian churches – excluding AICs | 55.6% |
| African Initiated Churches (AICs) | 24.3% |
| No religion/no answer | 17.5% |
| Undetermined | 1.3% |
| Islam | 0.2% |
| Other beliefs | 0.6% |
| African traditional belief | 0.4% |
| Hinduism (16,426 adherents) | 0.04% |
| Judaism (11,978 adherents) | 0.03% |

Source: South African National Census (Statistics South Africa, 2001)

³⁰ 15 out of the 21 youth who do not attend church, told me that they used to ‘when they were younger’.

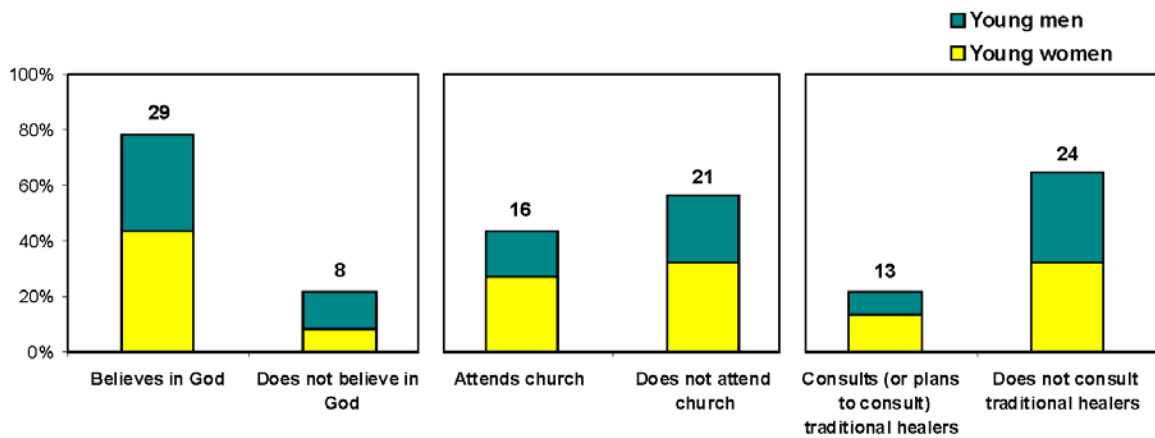


Figure 5.5 Aspects of the religious and belief contexts of research sample (with a visual indication of the proportion of young men and young women in each category, $n=37$)

Many respected studies have found that ‘religion plays a central role in the lives of [South African] young people’ (Slabbert *et al.*, 1994, p. 85-6). The landmark studies³¹ *Growing Up Tough* (Everatt, 1993) and *Youth 2000* (Everatt, 2000) found *gospel* music to be the most popular genre among South African ‘black’ young people (Everatt, 2000, p. 89), Rebecca Malope (a gospel singer) to be the second most popular role model (after Nelson Mandela) for ‘black’ youth (Everatt, 2000, p. 102), and church attendance by ‘black’ youth amongst the highest in the world (Everatt, 1993, p. 8). In addition, this same national survey found that ‘black’ youth are three times more likely to be involved in a church or a sports’ club than in political organisations (Everatt, 2000). These are staggering statistics given the trends showing far lower evidence of youth religious affiliation in countries like the United Kingdom, Australia, and USA as depicted in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Measures of youth religious affiliation by religious service attendance in four countries

| Country | Age | Never attend* | Attends once a week or more | Source |
|----------------|-------|---------------|-----------------------------|---|
| South Africa | 16-20 | 9% | 53% | (Everatt, 1993) |
| United Kingdom | 12-19 | 42% | 9% | (Roberts & Sachdev, 1996) |
| Australia | 15-29 | 34% | 6% | (Bentley & Hughes, 1998) |
| USA | 12-18 | 15% | 31% | (Smith, Denton, Faris <i>et al.</i> , 2002) |

* besides the occasional rite of passage service for weddings, funerals or baptisms

³¹ These studies were conducted by the Community Agency for Social Research (CASE) and consisted of a questionnaire administered by trained fieldworkers in the language of choice of participants. The sample size was 2,500 and the age of participants was between 16 and 35. Sampling was stratified by age, province, area, and race. The sample included young people from all nine provinces in South Africa. The number of participants in each ‘race’ group reflects the demographics of South Africa (‘black’ 80%, ‘coloured’ 9%, ‘white’ 9%, ‘Indian’ 2%), with the result that data for ‘black’ young people and data for all young people are almost indistinguishable.

Despite these reports of high youth church-attendance, there are various features of young people's lives that do not correlate with what might be expected of religiously committed young people. These include teenage pregnancy, racism, rape, gender discrimination and discrimination (often violent) based on sexual orientation. Nationally 49% of young women with children report that they were still at school when they became pregnant (Everatt, 2000, p. 6). South Africa's rape statistics are amongst the highest in the world. Sixty-eight percent³² of young people surveyed nationally say that racial hatred still exists in South Africa (Everatt, 2000, p. 101). Half of young people³³ believe that homosexuals should not have the same rights as heterosexuals (Everatt, 2000, p. 58-9).

In summary, township communities provide a further complex context for young people's moral formation. Exposure to, and participation in, high levels of crime and violence form a large part of young people's lives. Faith in God and fear of witches exist alongside community generosity, harsh street justice, and pervasive jealousy.

The Streets

The streets of Langa, while also a community space, are a distinctive locality of township youth culture. It is the place where young people spend most of their time. But I also use the term 'streets' to represent young people's friendship, romantic and sexual relationships, recreational pursuits, and substance use practices. On Saturday 10th January 2005 I experienced my first night on the streets of Langa. I had planned to spend the evening with some of my key informants: Andile, his girlfriend Andiswa, Luxolo, Bongani and Thando (both Luxolo's cousins), Thobane, and Mhoza – doing what they usually did on a Saturday night.

The day began rather eventfully. I saw clouds of black smoke billowing over the N2 highway from my home. I had hoped it wasn't a fire in Langa but it was. After meeting

³² 'Black' 64%, 'coloured' 75%, 'Indian' 90% and 'white' 93% (Everatt, 2000, p. 101).

³³ 'Black' 47%, 'coloured' 48%, 'Indian' 69% and 'white' 66% (Everatt, 2000, p. 58-9).

young people for interviews and to exchange cameras, we spent the afternoon surveying the damage of a fire started by a overturned paraffin stove that razed thousands of shacks and left 12,000 people homeless. As we walked through the debris, Andiswa commented: 'People are saying this year is cursed'. Mhoza added that she had heard 'It's the ghosts of those who were killed here [during the] ...war between blacks and whites' that were causing these catastrophes. We watched emergency and relief services set up mobile kitchens to serve food to displaced people. Hundreds of neighbourhood children joined the lines and hurried to their intact shacks nearby clutching steaming bowls of *mielie pap* and meat.

Later on after we had all changed, Andile introduced me to some of his friends who were members of the Young Chicanos, one of a few gangs in Langa. Others include Moscow, Dirty Mother Fuckers or DMFs, and Olafentse. Most had a 'junior' or 'young' version of the gang that operated as feeders. These Young Chicanos were hanging out on the street, eating triple-decker cheese and tomato sandwiches and talking about their plans for the night. Andile told me he had grown up with these guys and that 'I walk with them but I don't sit with them'. They, like my young informants, were all well dressed in fashionable clothes. Saturday is the day for 'advertising yourself' Andiswa tells me. But clothes are not the only fashion in Langa. Becoming pregnant, having multiple girlfriends or boyfriends, displaying how much you can drink and how much money you have to buy alcohol, along with 'robbery as sport' are also township 'fashion' or 'some kind of a competition'.

According to the first South African Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (YRBS)³⁴ (Reddy *et al.*, 2003) 14% of young people between the ages of 13 and 19 are members of gangs, 7% carried a weapon in the past month while 30% were involved in a physical fight in the past six months. Figure 5.6 provides these and a further selection of YRBS findings, some of which I will refer to later in this and subsequent chapters.

³⁴ The Youth Risk Behaviour Survey was directed by the Department of Health and conducted by the Medical Research Council of South Africa, using a stratified sampling technique throughout the country. The sample size was 10,699 and the study was based on the Youth Risk Behaviour Surveillance System conducted annually in the US by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

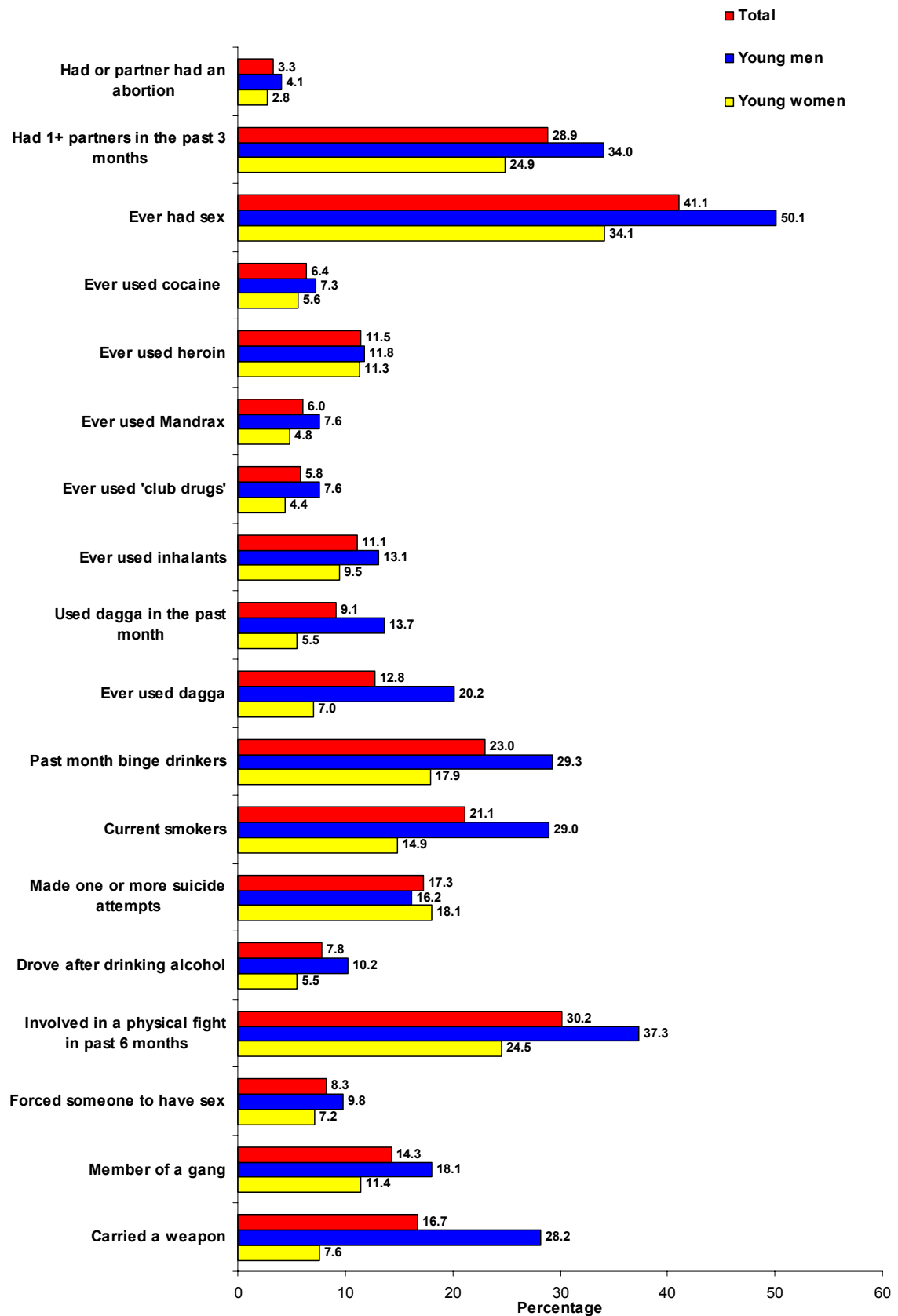


Figure 5.6 Selected reported risk behaviours amongst 13 to 19 year old South African youth

Source: Compiled from the South African Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (Reddy, Panday, Swart *et al.*, 2003).

Significant to note in these YRBS findings are the gender differences in the categories of violence ('carried a weapon' and 'involved in a physical fight'), and sex ('ever had sex'). Perhaps more surprising in these findings are the relative similarities between young men and young women in substance use (drugs use is similar, although young men report more alcohol use than young women), gang membership and having multiple sexual partners. As we wandered the streets that evening and I asked my group of young Langa friends why some have so many sexual partners, why there's so much territoriality between schools, why people are so quick to stab each other, or have no concept of social drinking, their answer invariably was: 'That's the way it is in the township' or 'That's *ikasi* style'.

We spent the early part of the evening attending an *ulwaluko* celebration. A young man in the neighbourhood had just completed his initiation ceremony, spending six weeks in isolation in the bush after having being circumcised. This Saturday night celebration would continue in earnest the next day. For now we drank *umqomboti* (traditional beer) and ate the cow we had watched being slaughtered earlier in the day. It had made a loud noise while being slaughtered which Andiswa told me meant the spirits were pleased. Four of the young men in my research group had completed their *ulwaluko* ceremony; the others all planned to do so in the coming years. While the ceremony was not common for young women, Dipuo had completed hers. It did not involve genital cutting for young women.

It was now about 21:00 and we headed off to Licks Tavern³⁵. Loud kwaito music pumped from over-sized speakers, and people were talking, playing pool, dancing or sitting around tables drinking 750ml bottles of beer and cider or sharing bottles of brandy. Kwaito music³⁶ is popular township music that evolved as Apartheid was ending. It consists of slowed down European house music with African urban rhythms and sounds liberally sampled into the mix. The dancing is sexual and the lyrics sexually explicit, often

³⁵ There are a number of terms for bars/pubs in the township, the differences not clearly delineated. Licks, is a formal establishment – a tavern. A Jukebox is somewhat less formal where patrons can select music to be played alongside drinking alcohol. A *Spot* is somewhat like a Jukebox, but is invariably a shack. *Shebeens* and *smokolos* are most informal – simply places to drink or buy alcohol, in the front room or backyard of a house.

³⁶ See Swartz (forthcoming) for a full discussion of the place of kwaito music and the accompanying street culture in the lives of contemporary 'black' young people.

misogynist, but not as violent as American *gangsta* rap, although robbery and drugs form part of the poetics of kwaito. Kwaito music has contributed to recreating ‘black’ youth identities and economic opportunities³⁷ since the demise of Apartheid. It has been one of the axes around which political and social change rotates (Dolby, 2001, p. 63). Many of the young people in my sample not only enjoyed kwaito music but aspired to producing their own sound i.e. becoming producers, DJs, and artists themselves. Like their suburban counterparts, (and world-wide peers), township youth slavishly follow brand name clothing. As Katlego puts it: ‘If you wear a certain brand you’re like this top dog ...Like Nike, Adidas, Reebok. Um, All Star. Levi. KG and Hemisphere. If you just wear other clothing or whatever, then you are just nothing’. For impoverished young people branded clothing is perhaps even more important than for their wealthy peers, since their contexts provide few other opportunities for enhancing self-esteem – such as acquiring socially desirable jobs, property or cars (Prahalad, 2005, p. 13).

We joined the crowd and chatted (and drank) the night away. At one stage Andile accompanied Andiswa to the toilet so ‘no one would interfere with her’. He said that rapes often occur when girls go to the toilet alone. Some of Andile’s older friends kept offering to buy us drinks. All my young companions drank alcohol (most in copious amounts). People were sharing cigarettes freely. Almost half of the young people in my study currently smoke cigarettes³⁸ while 15 out of 37 smoke (or have smoked) *dagga*. More young men than young women smoke cigarettes or *dagga* although young women are clearly involved in both practices. One quarter of young people (similar numbers of young women as young men) said they use or have used Mandrax. Only one young man, Tapelo, admitted to using hard drugs (cocaine)³⁹. Most youth in my study (33 out of 37) drink alcohol, and 16 out of 37, by their own definition, use alcohol excessively. Young people

³⁷ Kwaito is a large contributor to ‘black’ economic empowerment. The \$130 million per year industry is almost entirely ‘black’ owned – artists, record labels, production companies, clubs, and radio stations.

³⁸ Young people tend not to smoke many cigarettes a day since they seldom have the money for it. They tend to share cigarettes and buy singles, never packets.

³⁹ Upon my return to the field in August/September 2006, 14 months after I had completed my study, *Tik* (Crystal Methamphetamine) had become ubiquitous amongst these township youth. It had previously gone unmentioned by young people, although freely used by ‘coloured’ young people in adjacent areas.

appeared not to have a concept of social drinking. Thando asked me ‘What’s the use of drinking unless you get the feeling [of intoxication]?’. Twice as many young men as young women told me they got drunk regularly. Figure 5.7 depicts research participants reported substance-use habits.

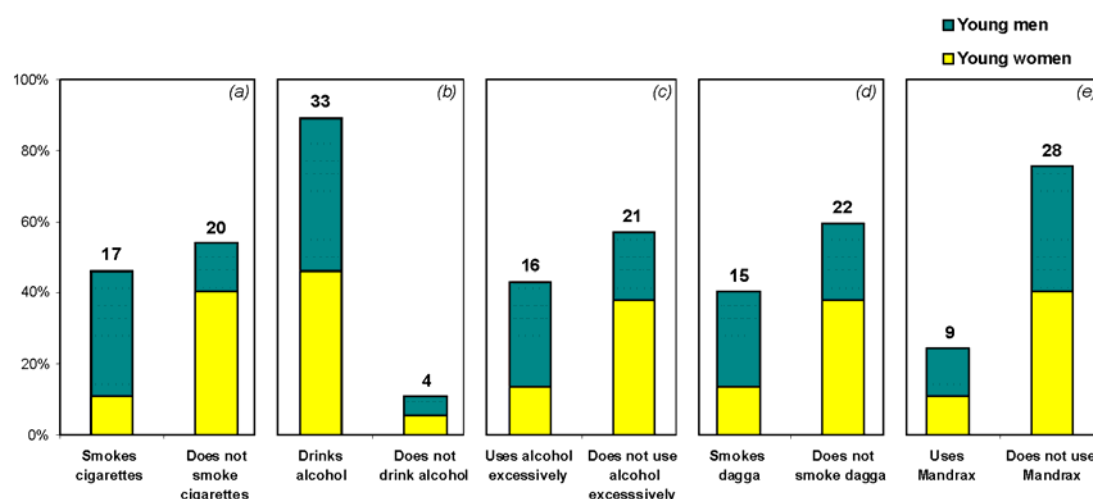


Figure 5.7 Reported substance use of research sample (with a visual indication of the proportion of young men and young women in each category, $n=37$)

Table 5.3 compares research sample data with YRBS data for selected behaviours. In every case statistics for research participants are higher than those reported nationally for youth sampled in the YRBS.

Table 5.3 Comparison of selected risk behaviours for research sample and national YRBS data

| | Total | | Young men | | Young women | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|------|-----------------|------|-----------------|------|
| | Research sample | YRBS | Research sample | YRBS | Research sample | YRBS |
| <i>Excessive use of alcohol</i> | 43% | 23% | 61% | 29% | 26% | 18% |
| <i>Smokes cigarettes</i> | 46% | 21% | 72% | 29% | 21% | 15% |
| <i>Smokes/ has smoked dagga</i> | 41% | 13% | 56% | 20% | 26% | 7% |
| <i>Use (or has used) Mandrax</i> | 24% | 6% | 28% | 8% | 21% | 5% |
| <i>Has ever had sex</i> | 62% | 41% | 61% | 50% | 63% | 34% |
| <i>Currently sexually active</i> | 54% | 29% | 61% | 34% | 47% | 25% |

Source: Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (Reddy *et al.*, 2003) and demographic descriptive statistics of research sample (see Appendix 6).

Two possible reasons for these differences are cogent to this discussion. The first is that young people are more likely to lie in surveys than in a trusting and long-term research relationship such as we had developed. The second reason is that the YRBS sample was a stratified, random sample, whereas the young people in my study tended to be those who

were more street smart, and probably had fewer young people who might be described as living more sheltered lives, that the YRBS might have sampled proportionately. Despite this last reason, the YRBS data does not appear to have fully captured the lived ‘street’ context of township youth⁴⁰.

We left Licks at around 22:30 and walked back to Andile’s home. The streets were deserted by now. Thobane told me that 22:00 was when ‘good’ people were inside their houses, a common community curfew I was to have confirmed by others. Just behind Andile’s backyard shack was a small, tarmac park. We hung out there for a while and rode the roundabout like a bunch of kids – talking about what we usually do on a Saturday night. The discussion inevitably turned to sex. Bongani got mad with me when I mentioned he had a son in passing conversation (I asked him how his son was). It was obvious that he was trying to hook up with Mhoza. He alternated between glaring at me and coming over to whisper in my ear that I was spoiling his chances with her. Regarding sex and parenting, nearly two thirds of young people in my sample said that they had had sex while just over half told me they were currently sexually active. Half of all young men said they had multiple sexual partners compared to only three young women who reported multiple sexual partners. Five young people in my sample had parented a child. Figure 5.8 provides a graphic representation of the reported sexual habits of the youth in the study.

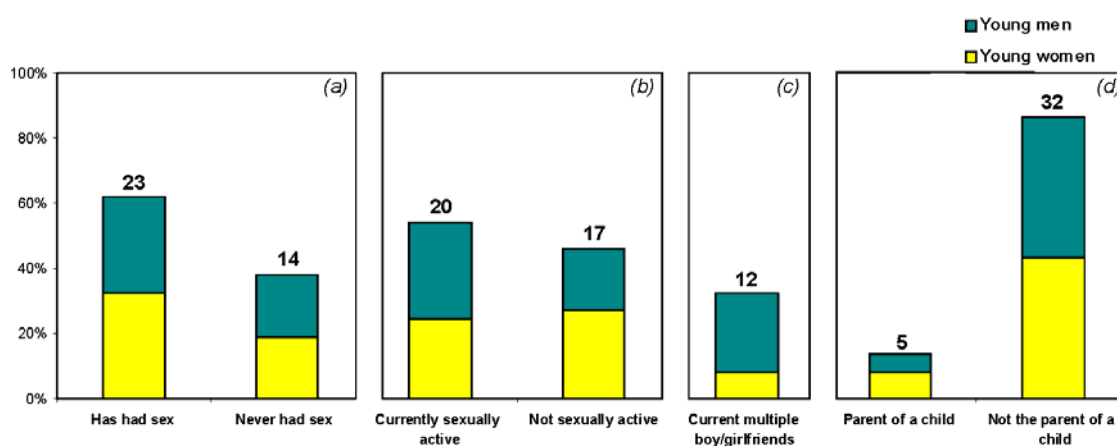


Figure 5.8 *Reported sexual behaviours of research sample (with a visual indication of the proportion of young men and young women in each category, n=37)*

⁴⁰ This is also true of the YRBS data for ‘black’ youth. Figures vary little between the overall sample and for ‘black’ youth since ‘black’ youth comprise such a large proportion of the youth population (79%).

As with substance use figures, these figures are higher than those reported by the YRBS, which found that 41% of young people between the ages of 13 and 19 report ever having had sex and 29% report current sexual activity (defined as having had one or more partners in the past three months). According to the YRBS, 8% of young people reported having forced someone to have sex with them. At least three young people in my sample told me they had ‘forced’ a girl to have sex with them, but had not raped them. They explained that what they meant by ‘forced’ was more like ‘convinced’ when girls were reluctant to have sex. I never pursued the topic further.

Related to young people’s sexual activity is the incidence of HIV infection in South Africa. The estimated adult prevalence rate in South Africa (people aged between 15 and 49) is currently 19% (Department of Health, 2006, p. 17). The majority of young people in my sample did not know their HIV status since they had not been for a test. Eight young people had been tested⁴¹, while the others told me they were too afraid to go for a test. The school counsellor at Mandela told me that at least twenty young people had come to him for counselling about their HIV positive status, while two had made a public disclosure at school. HIV/AIDS has contributed to lowering the average life expectancy in South African to 50.7 years (WHO, 2002). Vuma tells me he doesn’t want to know his status because if he knows he’s positive he will stop caring and will ‘just do anything’. Vuma is already an *amaGintsa* (a car hijacker).

By now it was nearly midnight, and time to go home. Many others, who were hanging out on the street or on their way home, came over to talk to me. Some reeling as they walked and slurring their speech as they spoke. A few said they were glad a *mlungu* (‘white’ person) was enjoying herself in the township. My young companions were planning to go home to watch late night television, talk some more, or have sex in an older friend’s shack. It had been an interesting Saturday in *ikasi*. There was a definite ‘street corner society’

⁴¹ The circumstances of their test is informative – two had volunteered for a test through involvement in loveLife (a youth sexual health programme); a further two had involuntarily been tested when they were pregnant, as were two young men prior to being circumcised. A final two, had mutually agreed to being tested before they embarked upon a sexual relationship.

(Whyte, 1993) going on here, throughout the day as well as the night. It was fun to have been part of it, and a stark contrast to a Saturday night in the suburbs.

Alcohol seems to form the basis of most township recreational activities. In Langa, the choice is between the library, a youth centre, watching TV and the streets. The street, complete with taverns, *smokolos*, Spots, Jukeboxes and *shebeens*, invariably won. A month earlier when I had invited Andile, Luxolo, and Andiswa to see a movie at a local suburban shopping centre, they told me it was the first time they had seen a movie in a cinema in their lives. For most of these young people their lives revolve, not just around the township, but around a *small section* of the township. Transport and entertainment further afield costs money, a commodity in short supply. Youth are subsequently rather insulated and isolated from suburban life. Sometimes, young people who commute to school, use their school train tickets to continue into the centre of Cape Town. They then spent the day bunking school and wandering around. Vuma and Ingwazi lived about 4km apart, but told me the only time they saw each other was at school because they lived in two different areas and that there was 'World War Three' going on between the boys of Crossroads and Nyanga.

Plainly, *kasi* streets are the space where young people spend the majority of their time. Streets are places filled with fun, laughter, impromptu card games, bashes (parties) and 'freaking' (partying) with friends. It was also places of stabbings, hijackings, cheap beer, *dagga*, and *ipilisi* (Mandrax). Young people were quick to tell me how much they 'love *ikasi* but hate it too'.

Conclusion

In answer to the question 'What world is this?' that I constantly asked in my firsthand observation of young people's lives, the words 'complex', 'unstable', 'inconsistent' and 'communal' appeared most frequently in my fieldnotes. None of their contexts were simple or straightforward, and each contributed in multiple ways to young people's moral formation. School is a source of hope for the future but is also fraught with danger from

predatory teachers and temptation from substance-abusing peers. Teachers demand respect, but seldom give it. They in turn are overburdened by a lack of facilities and too-large classes, and so their care for young people is limited. The quality of education is poor and it is clear that moral education is not a key aim of the curriculum, and so is given little priority given the daily struggle to keep young people in school for the whole day and deliver a minimum amount of education, given constant disruptions. Young people seldom complain about their living conditions despite the lack of privacy and exposure to excessive alcohol use (and accompanying violence) from a young age. Instead they regard their homes as havens and their mothers of extraordinary importance despite inconsistent messages. As a moral environment, homes provide little supervision and few male role models.

Township communities are dirty, street justice is deadly, and violence is normalised. While religious and traditional belief is part of community life it seems to perpetuate fear, jealousy and sometimes alienation (in the case of 'born again' Christians who separate themselves from their peers). While youth profess belief in both God and traditional practices, the majority do not regularly attend church or consult traditional healers. As a moral environment, township communities are not places where moral decisions are autonomous, personal or private. Neighbours know each other, communicate regarding young people's behaviour and are a source of public sanction and communal help. Young people's street culture, while vibrant, is limited by a lack of diversionary recreational opportunities. Those that are available are frequently associated with alcohol. Crime has become a recreational activity and the *ikasi* style of multiple partners, ubiquitous alcohol and *dagga* use is more frequently absorbed than deflected.

These unstable and complex social realities form an important part of young people's moral ecologies. Add to this pervasive poverty and the legacy of historical inequalities described in Chapter 4, and it could be concluded that young people's moral lives are less a matter of choice and more a matter of survival or utilitarianism. The following four chapters will consider in detail how young people understand the notion of morality in this context and how they negotiate the myriad moral pathways open to them. Chapter 6

answers the fundamental question concerning the type (or types) of moral code these young people construct. Chapter 7 shows how youth position themselves and others within this moral code. Chapter 8 explores how they negotiate between moral belief and moral behaviour. Chapter 9 considers the sources of young people's moral knowledges and influences.

PART THREE

YOUTH MORALITY IN THE AFTERMATH OF INJUSTICE

CONSTRUCTING MORAL CODES OF RIGHT AND WRONG

One Saturday afternoon in the course of watching *Resurrection* (the account of hip-hop artist Tupac Shakur's life) with research participants, a number of them picked up on a single line from the video: 'I know what good morals are, but you have to abandon good morals when you live in a bad world' (Shakur & Lazin, 2003). This quotation was to become central as I began to answer the research question: How do township youth understand and construct notions of morality? As I have just described in the previous chapter, their social contexts – for the most part – constitute a 'bad world'. In such a fraught context do young people have a developed moral code or is morality abandoned to basic survival tactics? Taking my cue from the Oxford English Dictionary (2005) that defines 'moral' as relating to the distinction between 'good or bad... right and wrong', this chapter provides an analysis of the ways in which young people negotiate, navigate and interpret the categories of right and wrong. It then elaborates how their moral codes are complex, comprising conventional, contested and contextual constructions. Finally, it attempts to make sense of these multiple codes by identifying the hegemonic and emancipated social representations that lie beneath them (as described in Chapter 2).

Negotiating and interpreting 'right' and 'wrong'

In the townships of Cape Town, young people's moral codes were not readily visible. Young people did not easily fall into the categories of 'decent' or 'thug' as described by Elijah Anderson (1999). Nor did they follow strict religious or traditional codes. Instead, their values and moral constructions emerged over the course of the year as together we did the 'moral work' necessary to reveal their representations. Early on in the study I was concerned to create a space in which youth could candidly express their opinions without my presence or a leading instrument prejudicing their responses. Once relationships had been sufficiently developed I invited young people to compile a *Free List* of the things they

considered right or wrong, loved and hated. *Free Lists* provided initial indicative data that framed young people's constructions. Table 6.1 and 6.2 provides a summary (with duplicates omitted) of the words generated under the headings of 'right' and 'wrong' respectively, organised by theme and separated by gender. These tables also indicate the order in which words were generated and the co-occurrences of words¹ across gender lists. So, for example, in Table 6.1 words relating to crime occur most frequently for young men and most frequently in the first five items appearing on their lists. For young women words relating to sex and relationships occur most frequently on their wrong lists and most frequently in the first five items occurring on their lists. In Table 6.2 words relating to school occur most frequently for young women and second most frequently for young men. Young people's *Free Lists* provided extraordinary insight into their moral worlds and was most valuable since it was the most open-ended of all the research instruments used. Appendix 7 provides frequencies for each category of words and a summary of words produced under the heading of 'love' and 'hate'².

I also made use of individual interviews³ to probe young people's constructions of 'right' and 'wrong'. Early on in the first individual interview, immediately after young people had related their life-histories, I asked them to recount stories about the 'right' and 'wrong', 'good' and 'bad' things they had done in their lives, or that had been done to them – and left it up to them to decide where to begin. Only two young people, both young women, were hard pressed to think of something they had done wrong in their lives⁴. For the rest, the answers took up at least half of the first interview, and flowed easily.

¹ According to Ryan and Bernard (2000, p. 770) the *frequency* of words, the *order in which words are generated* and the *co-occurrences of words* across lists are of significance in free lists.

² Although these data will be occasionally referred to, space does not allow a full analysis of it.

³ Interviews provided real life accounts of how these moral constructions worked in real life, and were more definitive and nuanced than *Free Lists*. Interview data is incorporated into relevant arguments but is also presented as a series of five Boxes (6.1-6.5) in order to foreground young people's voices.

⁴ Vathiswa said 'Nothing I've done wrong, I'm saved' referring to her Christian faith while Nonkiza was adamant she could not remember anything she had done wrong in her life. During later conversations Nonkiza told me she had not wanted me to think badly of her, and then gave a number of examples.

Table 6.1 Summary of words listed under the category 'Wrong' in Free Lists

| YOUNG MEN | 'Wrong' | | YOUNG WOMEN |
|--|-----------------------|------------------------|---|
| To do crime, go to jail, break into houses, steal, rob, kill and rape | *CRIME | *SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS | To have sex before marriage, before you're ready, at a young age, to sleep around, sleep with married men, have sex with teachers, have unsafe sex, harass someone sexually, have sex for money, be pregnant while young or still at school |
| To be a bad influence, be hateful, force someone to accept your opinions, have a negative approach to life, gossip, be jealous, make trouble, lie about someone, or commit suicide | SELF | *CRIME | To break into houses, rape, buy stolen goods, rob, steal, kill, do crime, be a criminal or a <i>skollie</i> , and go to jail |
| To sell, use or abuse drugs and illegal substances | *DRUGS | SELF | To be angry, have a bad attitude, be in a bad mood, be in or cause trouble or problems, disobey rules, break confidences, do wrong, want to be right all the time, cry, lie and get involved in things you don't know about |
| To be aggressive, beat children, carry guns and knives, fight, be a gang member, teach children how to use guns, abuse women, be involved in violence, and for teachers to beat students | VIOLENCE | *ALCOHOL | Alcohol, drinking, underage drinking, taverns and shebeens |
| To drink alcohol and drink and drive | *ALCOHOL | COMMUNITY, UBUNTU | To hate, be rude, mock people, gossip, never apologise, shout and swear at people, and upset people |
| To smoke cigarettes, smoke at school and teach children to smoke | *CIGARETTES | SCHOOL | To bunk school, drop out of school, copy schoolwork |
| To backchat your mother or say whatever you want to your parents, go out without permission, and hate your parents | HOME | *STREETS | To go clubbing, to bash at night, to walk around aimlessly at night, to have fun irresponsibly, party all the time, or to overdo it, to have wrong friends and to give in peer pressure |
| To have no respect, disrespect, mock or undermine people (including street kids and the disabled) | *DISRESPECT | *DRUGS | Drugs and drug dealers are wrong |
| To burn a girl lover (be unfaithful), force a girl to have sex with you, have sex at the wrong time, sleep around, get someone pregnant, or be gay | SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS | VIOLENCE | Fighting, beating people, bullying, guns, teachers bullying students, being a gang member and holding a grudge |
| To hurt, criticise, shout or swear at people | COMMUNITY, UBUNTU | HOME | To be cheeky to parents, disobey them, come home late, go out at night without telling them, and shout at your mother |
| To hang around on the streets at night, with wrong people, give in to peer pressure, to not play sport and not tell jokes | STREETS | CIGARETTES | Smoking, cigarettes, smoking as a child |
| To bunk school or cheat | SCHOOL | ABUSE | Abuse in general, child abuse, and parents who abuse children |
| To not go to church and to be sinful | #RELIGION | #ABORTION | Abortion |
| To abuse children | ABUSE | DISRESPECT | To mock people and have no respect |
| To not stand up for your rights | DEMOCRATIC IDENTITY | DEMOCRATIC IDENTITY | To discriminate |

Notes:

1. Items listed in order of frequency, from most to fewest
2. # denotes items unique to the list
3. * denotes items occurring most frequently in the first five items of 'wrong' lists

Table 6.2 Summary of words listed under the category 'Right' in Free Lists

| YOUNG MEN | 'Right' | | YOUNG WOMEN |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Achieve, be positive, be yourself, dream, have a role model, know yourself, persevere, stand up for yourself, love yourself, take life seriously, get a drivers license, ask questions, explore, experience new things, go on trips, be honest, be a gentleman and be good news, be an example, be responsible, and do what's right | *SELF | *SCHOOL | Be educated, get an education, go to school everyday, do homework, study, clean the school, read books, wear neat school uniform |
| Get an education, attend school (regularly and on time), keep school clean, and read books | *SCHOOL | *STREETS | Enjoy your life and youth, spend time with friends, help them and let them help you, have fun, laugh, freak, and go out |
| Give advice, share problems, share ideas, share your things, help people, care for animals, for the community, disabled, your family and people | COMMUNITY, UBUNTU | *SELF | Ask questions, be happy, be protected, be beautiful, communicate, give your opinion, smile, work independently, go on outings, be friendly, trustworthy, committed and patient, confront people about wrong behaviour, teach children the right things and get right influences |
| Respect in general, adults, gays, people with AIDS, parents, property | *RESPECT | *DEMOCRATIC IDENTITY | Be free, live in houses, have a long life, be open about your sexuality and HIV, government to build shelters for street kids and to give child support grants |
| Have friends, joke, have fun, avoid peer pressure, avoid wrong friends, and party | STREETS | *HOME | Have a mother, know your parents, spend time with your family, stay at home, clean your house, wash dishes at home, allow your family to teach you what's right |
| Know your rights, your roots, have foreign friends, be happy with your country, and live anywhere | DEMOCRATIC IDENTITY | SPORT | Be active, exercise, swim, climb mountains and play sport |
| Go to church, pray, question about God | RELIGION | OBEDIENCE | Obey parents, rules and teachers |
| Be fit and play sport | *SPORT | COMMUNITY, UBUNTU | Get involved in community organisations, help people who need help, share with people, and share your ideas |
| Love in general, yourself and your parents | LOVE | HEALTH | Be healthy, wash your hands before cooking, and wash everyday |
| Love, respect and obey your parents, clean your house, sleep at home at night | HOME | MATERIAL NEEDS | Eat healthy food and eat enough food |
| The law, parents, teachers | OBEDIENCE | LOVE | Love people, and one another |
| Talk in general, talk to your mother about your girlfriend, talk to people | *TALK | RESPECT | Respect people and others' decisions |
| Have money, enough money, eat food with meat | MATERIAL NEEDS | SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS | Delay sex, keep sex for a long-term stable relationship, have a child after marriage, use a condom when having sex |
| Drink alcohol, drink without overdosing | SUBSTANCE USE | RELIGION | Go to church, read your Bible |
| Work hard | WORK | WORK | Have a good job |
| Be a <i>pleya</i> , have a girlfriend but don't have sex | SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS | #FASHION | Wear nice clothes |
| Wash yourself, eat healthy food | HEALTH | TALK | Speak, talk to people |
| Fight | #VIOLENCE | SUBSTANCE USE | Smoke when you are old enough |
| Enjoy nature | #NATURE | | |

Notes:

1. Items listed in order of frequency, from most to fewest
2. # denotes items unique to the list
3. * denotes items occurring most frequently in the first five items of 'right' lists

Table 6.1 and 6.2 clearly demonstrate that these township youth had no trouble interpreting the categories of ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ or speaking about them. In interviews most began with the bad or wrong things they had done. Some had already told me about these ‘wrong’ incidents while relating their life-histories, and simply referred back to these formative events in response to this question. Katlego’s account captures the trilogy of substance-(ab)use, crime, and violence that characterised the majority of these young people’s ‘wrong’ responses:

Katlego: Bad, um, last year on [school] camp, I got drunk and I got caught.
 ... I stole um, two cell phones from one person – um, three weeks
 ago, and last week. ... Oh, oh, oh! There was this like one time
 when we almost beat to death like this one guy.

For some, crimes ranged from housebreaking, car hijacking, shoplifting clothes, stealing, robbing people of cellphones, to stealing chocolates from a shop or money from mothers’ purses. Substance use ranged from getting drunk on alcohol, to wide spread *dagga* and Mandrax use, and for Tapelo, cocaine use. Ingwazi’s account (Box 6.1) of migrating substance use – from cigarettes to *dagga* to Mandrax – was common, especially (but not exclusively) amongst young men.

Box 6.1 Ingwazi’s* Account of Drug Use

I started smoking [*dagga*] there [at ‘coloured’ school]. *I started with cigarette...* I was starting to, to don’t worry about school now you see. Then the other day we went out, *we bunked, we jumped a fence* you see... We sat in some kind of *hokkie* where there’s a lot of boys you see. We sat there, I saw it, they were smoking. I thought that that was *ganja* that they were smoking but no it was, it was *ganja* mixed with Mandrax you see. ... I started cigarette when I was 11 or 12. *iPilisi* in Grade 8. I think I was 16 or 17 or something like that, yah so this thing hey!

... They call it a Star or a Macarena, all those kind of thing you see. ... they take a empty bottle, they break it. They take the head you see and then they put the something inside, they get it so that the, the *ganja* won’t fall out you see and then they light it you see. Yah you see it’s like this is an empty neh? [demonstrates with his empty Coke glass]. Then they take a something like, you see this paper? [picks up interview questions]. Yah this paper, they put the Mandrax here you see – and then they, they fold it, they fold it so that it won’t fall out you see then they, they close it and take a, a something that is heavy to crush it. ... Then after that they light it, the, the *ganja*, so that there must be ashes on top. Then after that they pour it and then after that someone must light first cream – they say first cream you see – and then after that, give it to another person. They light it and then they give it.

Then you feel like hey, I don't know, man it's like, you, it's not that – you feel like eh, like you drunk but you, you, *it change something in your head*. . . Hey this thing, you start this thing, it changes you, you see. After you smoke it, you feel well after that you have to, you have to get another one you see. And if you don't have money, you are going to do anything you see, you will do anything to get it you see. You have to do – you will go and rob and do anything just to get that thing and it cost, it cost R15 a half and a whole one, a full one is R30 you see. . . *And this thing changed my life* and my mother is say to me the other day, 'What is wrong with you? Why you seem like you change, your lips are a little bit dark and your eyes are, are red you see'. But I said 'No, I'm not doing anything, I'm not doing anything', so she left me. So after that, hey I smoked this thing, I do it all this thing.

So if you don't have money, my friends would say yah let's go, let's go and rob you see. So we go and rob somebody. At night we go and rob people. People used to cry. And I say to myself *haaibo - Is it me that I am doing this thing? Hey but I didn't care*. I do all those things, rob, we want money, we take people's money everything. If a child is sent to the shop to go buy something or to go buy drink or something to eat for the home or maybe they sent him with R50 or R20, maybe even R10 we just take the money, all of the money you see. And we go and smoke that thing. *After that, again we go and have to have another one you see*.

[When I was robbing] I felt, hey, *I would say I felt nothing*. I felt happy because I was going to get this pill and that we have money, yebo. . . [Now] I'm thinking, Sharlene, . . . about those people who are crying that we took something from them. I think of them because hey, the way they cry, I, at the time I didn't feel it, like you see, yabon, but now, as time go, I'm thinking about that, hey, *that was wrong*, you see. . . My mother? She didn't, she didn't believe first time. [When] she was told that I robbed a person, she didn't believe it. She, I think she cried, yah, she cried. Hey, I felt sad. *I didn't want my mother to know that I'm doing things like this. I am not proud for those things I did. So it's like I feel like in my heart so like ashamed for those things*.

...

I'm telling [the children at home], I tell them everyday that *they must get out of trouble you see. They mustn't smoke even a cigarette because when you started smoking cigarette, that's when you get to another step you see – to another level*.

**Young man, aged 19, township-schooled*

Similarly, Luxolo's story (Box 6.2 overleaf) establishes that when youth spoke of 'smoking' it was usually to *dagga*, rather than cigarettes, they were referring. It also relates her activity as a 'house-breaker', and provides an example of the violence (stabbing her cousin) often 'over a little thing' about which young people, including young women, regularly spoke. Luxolo's account of violence was typical of about a quarter of the young women in my research group, and provides an important insight into what Sharon Lamb (2001) has termed 'the secret lives of girls' and that includes 'girlfighting' (Brown, 2003; Brown & Chesney-Lind, 2005) and aggression in peer and romantic relationships⁵.

⁵ There is a strong literature on 'girlfighting' including Dance (2002), Leadbeater and Way (1996) and Prothrow-Stith & Spivak (2005). Some dispute the rise in female violence calling it instead a moral panic (Brown, 2003; Brown & Chesney-Lind, 2005) and locating it in the backlash against feminism: 'Girlfighting has to be understood within a larger framework: as part of girls' struggle for voice, power and legitimacy within a patriarchal culture' (p. 77). Liyema (a suburban-schooled young woman) illustrates this point when she told me of a peer at school who wanted to stab her because of a guy. She explains: 'They feel the power when they are doing what guys do'.

Box 6.2 Luxolo's* Substance Use, Violence and Housebreaking

- Luxolo: [I was] around in school but not in class. From the morning to half-past two... Some of my friends – maybe in the morning we like put in some money and then tell each other we mustn't go to school, we must go to somewhere to smoke, and then you smoke until half-past two.
- Sharlene: That's a lot of cigarettes.
- Luxolo: Not cigarettes. [pauses] *Dagga*.
- Sharlene: Okay. So Luxolo, of these things that you've told me today, what would you consider to be wrong things that you've done?
- Luxolo: Um, I'll say, lying to my mom – bunking out of school, smoking [*dagga*], drinking ...Bad things? Uh [long pause]. No [laughs]. I'm, I don't think I did something bad to someone [long pause]. Oh yah! My cousin Thando that I live with ...The other day, *we were, were fighting over a little thing – he took my food* ... and then we fought and fought, I *clapped* him [laughs]. He hit me back and then we fight and *then I took a knife and stabbed him* [laughs].
- Sharlene: And you couldn't remember this Luxolo?
- Luxolo: [Laughs][pause] And also *house-breaking*. [Long pause]. About three times. *It's when I um – I drink a lot and I smoke a lot*. It was 2002, I um [pause] I left my friends that, the ones that were smoking - and then the other, the new ones were also smoking but they smoked and drank at the same time. Then they were, they were house-breakers and yah we [pause] we used to uh – break houses [laughs]. Mostly in Goodwood. But we never got caught.
- Sharlene: Tell me about one, one incident, what happened?
- Luxolo: It was something like this [points to burglar bars in my flat]. And then – my friend broke, broke the window and then I asked him how is – there was also a burglar [bar] here, in the middle window – I asked him how he's gonna get in. He said no I must just watch and learn and then he broke the window and then he squeezed himself in, in the burglar [bar] ...and then we got in um and the other one took um, music system and – but it was a portable one. And then the other one took the video and then I got to the room I saw um jewellery and then I took that and I wore it and when I walked out of the room and both of us were in the lounge we heard the keys [laughs].
- Sharlene: Of the people coming back?
- Luxolo: Yah, but it was only one person and it was a boy and my friend hit him with his fist and then he fell down. He had a pizza in his hands. And when he fell we got out the door and we ran ...we took our, the other way ...and then I heard the other two were arrested. They took the long road and then the police found them and they were arrested.
- Sharlene: And what happened to them?
- Luxolo: Aaah, they only stayed there [police station] the weekend. By Monday they came out ...the people didn't lay charges cos nothing was taken.
- Sharlene: And like nobody had guns?
- Luxolo: No. It's only the third time, I was, I was going with a bigger person, uh an older person. And then at the top of the wardrobe we found a gun and then he took it. Yoh! But he didn't even last a month, a month later he was arrested with that gun.
- Sharlene: And how do you feel about it Luxolo?
- Luxolo: I was scared!
- Sharlene: So why did you do it three times?
- Luxolo: [pause] I wanted money [laughs].
- Sharlene: And did you make any money from the house-breaking?
- Luxolo: Yah. [The jewellery] we got to town and changed it ...there's an other sister there that a lot of *tsotsis* are going to her to change jewellery there. It's a small jewellery shop. [I got] about R370
- Sharlene: And then you had to divide it between five of you?
- Luxolo: No, only two of us knew that [I had taken jewellery]. I told my friend that lives in my street.

**Young woman, aged 19, township-schooled*

This violence crosses gender boundaries. Andiswa uses violence against a young man and Andile has a physical fight with a young woman at school who insulted his mother⁶. Others, like Sipho and Vuma, describe particularly harrowing accounts of their involvement in violence and tell of their reasons for doing so: robbery in order to get alcohol, and stabbings in taverns because of drunkenness and in defence of property (see Box 6.3).

Box 6.3 Young People's Accounts of Involvement in Violence

Andiswa (*Young woman, aged 15, township-schooled*)

So I was with this guy ...*he treated me like a doormat* and I don't take that – I don't take that. ...we got into an argument... [pause] I hit him like – we were standing in a corner and I hit his head in a brick wall and I hit his head and his eyes like bobbed around ...and I was scared because I thought he was going to faint or something was going to happen because he was bleeding. So I said let me just go home and just leave him, because his home is next to this corner – so they will find him one way or the other. So I ran home – and that's the last time I saw him. But he's not dead or anything [laughs] but I never saw him again... I don't know [why I did it], *just because of the things that have happened in my life* – I feel as if I should be able to protect myself. Whenever you say shit to me, like it takes the switch off – like it reminds me of my mother being beaten and I couldn't do anything about it you know. And you know my father was almost like killed also – but he's a very strong man so he defended himself. He was beaten by four men ...So you telling me shit just – I think about the things that happened in my family and I couldn't like protect them – so I hate that. I feel as if I should be able to protect – like even if I'm young. *So when you say shit to me, it just unplugs and whenever I get mad it's like a switch.*

Andile (*Young man, aged 19, township-schooled*)

Ah, see I was in the class and, oh, we used to make, me and Nkothula we used to make each other jokes and that ...Then she make jokes, she make fun of me. Then I make fun of her back. Then she swears, she swear my mother out. Then I said to her 'Haai – you mustn't swear my mother out, that's wrong.' And she – she swears my mother out again. *She swears my mother out three times.* Then I, I come near her. Then she smack me. Then I smack her back. Ah, she started biting me and – all these things... I smack her back with an open hand. And then she bite me. I think there's still a mark here. Yah, she bit me on my back. She scratch my eyes. She was behind me. And I, she scratch my eyes then I pushed her over [pause]. She was angry with me. Then I, I hit her with the fist maybe two times. She, then she try to stand up and fight. *Then I kicked her in the face three times.* Then I left her...[The next day] I felt very nervous – that time. I said yah I told myself 'What if, what if the teacher saw us – then has to call our mothers.' [pause] Then she's also a girl ...and she doesn't know me like that [as a violent person] ...I felt bad ...*The problem is I like my mother very much. Because I don't have a relationship with my father. I didn't know my father much. I only know my father when I was fifteen years old. My mother, she does everything for me.*

Sipho (*Young man, aged 17, township-schooled*)

Yah like – okay, like, when I, like come from a shebeen – when I coming from the tavern neh. I mean *with my friends* neh and then we see there's somebody walking and maybe *the person is drunk* and even there's six or eight of us, I can see mos, it's only one guy – we just take him down, search him, take all his money. If he had a cell phone and then *we sell the cell phone for more alcohol.*

⁶ Renold (2003) notes the prevalence of 'mother-cussing' (verbal attacks aimed at mothers or sisters) among young people, and points out that 'mother-cussing' often results in physical violence.

Vuma (*Young man, aged 19, township-schooled*)

Yah [shifts uncomfortably]. I stab, I stab, I stab five people – with the knife you see. Two of them are coming back from the tavern. *I didn't kill I didn't – but almost. I was drunk you see eish.* Like yah, like eh... I stabbed them like in the tavern. Two of them you see. One of one of them were like he – he was [pause] like you see here? [points to shoulder]. He stabbed me here [points to his neck]. And then his friends was trying to beat me with an empty [bottle]. You see? So like – I was – *I have no choice...* I was carrying a knife. To school, no I don't carry but in *ikasi* I do. Not in afternoon, at night. For protection you see there are guys who can rob you with the knife you see. Just to rob you. Even shoes. They take the shoe with the knife. Or your clothes you're wearing. So like [pause] *I grew up in a township so – there's no one who can like* [pause] like – Sharlene *if someone want to rob me he has to kill me first* you see cos I can't [laughs] strip my jersey or give him my things. No, I cannot do that. If I can hear it is money he want – that money he's supposed to take it but *not while I'm standing*. No, I can't do that.

This violence is perhaps not surprising since, together with substance use and crime, these three elements feature prominently in young people's lives. Their accounts of substance use, violence and crime also exemplify the forthrightness (perhaps even naiveté) with which young people told me of their lives, of the 'wrong' things they have done, and the ease with which they employed moral categories, and judged actions to be right or wrong. Unlike the contemporary lay discourse, these accounts provide evidence that youth have not 'misplace[d] the moral borderline' (Midgley, 1997, p. 29). Young people may have been engaged in crime, violence, and not insubstantial substance use – but *none regarded these practices as right*. While some gave reasons for their actions, they never defended their actions. Khaya's account is typical:

Khaya: I have been, yah, in shop-lifting. I was under influence of drugs. It was a perfumes, LaCoste perfumes. They arrest me.

Sharlene: Why did you do it, Khaya?

Khaya: I was want to smoke another thing – I needed money for *iPilisi* [Mandrax].

Only Tapelo and Sipho's accounts (both of whom are characterised as *skollies* or gangsters in the following chapter) are exceptions to this general acknowledgment of wrong. Sipho says 'I mean I didn't break other peoples houses we *only* robbed people' while Tapelo says 'Yah I've never stolen anything, *only* cars'. Does this 'only' indicate a hierarchy of 'wrong',

or even perhaps that these actions are not ‘wrong’? But these were not the moral constructions of the majority of young people.

When I asked the group to describe something wrong or bad they had done *to others*, their accounts *excluded* substance use, became more specific, and focussed on interpersonal violence and crime (as evidenced by Andile, Andiswa, and Luxolo’s accounts). When I asked whether ‘someone has ever done anything wrong *to you*’, the majority of young people (three quarters of all young men and half of all young women) recounted incidents of violence perpetrated against them by parents, *skollies*, teachers, classmates, or even friends. A large number related incidents of robbery, while two young women told of nearly being raped. Some spoke of people telling lies about them or falsely accusing them of things they had not done. Whether by physical violence or words, underlying these incidents was a strong sense of injustice having been perpetrated against them. Young people who told of being beaten by parents or friends always qualified the story by telling how they were *unjustly* beaten. In spite of this sense of injustice, young people continued to display a hierarchical or contextual sense of moral values. Thulani told of having his nose broken by his mother. When I asked him why he had not defended himself he replied, ‘because I can’t, I can’t, she’s my mother. So I can’t beat my mother. It’s wrong’. In Thulani’s moral hierarchy, respect trumps self-defence.

As clear as youth were in articulating what constituted wrong or bad actions, the opposite was also true. They effortlessly articulated what constituted right actions in *Free Lists* and interviews, providing further evidence for the existence of moral borderlines. In the course of individual interviews, when I asked youth to relate an incident from their own lives in which they had acted in a good or right way their examples were numerous. Actions included returning wallets or money they found, helping a friend who had been stabbed get to a hospital, giving money they had earned or won to parents, encouraging a friend to continue with school, giving those more poor than themselves food or clothes, forgiving someone, and helping someone who had been robbed (see Box 6.4 overleaf, for fuller accounts of ‘doing good, doing right’). Only one youth could not think of an example of

doing good or right on the spot, while another two reflected Lehko's view: 'My problem is [if] I do something good like, I don't notice it'.

Box 6.4 Doing Good, Doing Right

Thulani (*Young man, aged 16, township-schooled*)

Okay when I was here in the taxi – I saw the money falling down, R100 fall out a person, so I called him said 'here's your money sir'.

Sipho (*Young man, aged 17, township-schooled*)

And it was my friend neh, the other, the other guy called Lungisa, he was stabbed neh, so like no one like could take care of him, like he, he's mos a *tsotsi*, so they don't like him neh. They just wanted him to die neh. He was there by the, one of the gangs neh, uh, the DMFs gang stabbed him neh and left him. So like, I managed to get, to take a trolley and then put him in the trolley. I just push him, took him to the Day Hospital there in Vanguard Drive. It was me and my other friend.

Xolani (*Young man, aged 19, township-schooled*)

My friend Anele. Because Anele he don't like school. He was not going to school. But I told him 'No Anele – you must go to school ... This is not right. Because if your mother – your mommy is gone – you need school to have work'. So he's listening and he go to school.

Vuma (*Young man, aged 19, township-schooled*)

For my mother, for my brother and you see for my family – you see when I was in Grade Seven – I was playing soccer there in primary you see ... I play well and then I was chosen that I was the player of the tournament you see. So like when I come back you see I have R1,500 in my pocket. So I take R1,000 you see then I give to them you see.

Nonkiza (*Young woman, aged 15, township-schooled*)

Okay this year neh, uh Sharlene, I take my old clothes and shoes which people saw that people can wear those clothes and I took them there at Joe Slovo [informal settlement] ... I take them there and I donate to them. I know that, that was a good thing.

Mhoza (*Young woman, aged 17, township-schooled*)

It was the other girl, she was, she was being robbed by the guys I know. So I told the guys to give back her things. So they give her – because they know that I know them and I am going to report them.

When I asked about their emotional responses to some of the 'bad' and 'wrong' things they had done, most of the Mandela youth in the sample said they felt bad, embarrassed or guilty. Amande added '[If I do] wrong things ... to a person, that means I don't respect the person ... so I feel bad'. In Ingwazi's earlier account of the impact of drugs in his life (Box 6.1), he cycles through a range of emotions including sympathy for his victims, shame when his mother found out, and 'nothing' while involved in robbery because of the drugs

he was taking. For Luxolo and Andiswa, emotions were not merely restricted to remorse but also included wanting to make things right if they could.

Luxolo: Yah, um, [pause], it's like, I feel like I could go back and change everything. Back to normal and um, [pause] like, just [pause] put everything right.

Andiswa: For some of them I feel bad and for some of them, I wish that I can erase them... I wish I can go to those people and say no, I'm sorry, that's not like me... I think if I had um the guts to beat someone, then I should have the guts to say sorry to someone, even though what happens may not be what I want. I've tried – with the guy whose head I beat in. We greet now, but we are not friends.

This initial reading of the data reveals that these township youth do have moral borderlines, and a strong sense of right and wrong. What it does not immediately reveal however, are some of the nuances and relocated borderlines which also infuse their moral constructions.

Conventional, contested and postmodern moral codes

Ronald Inglehart (2000, p. 223), the author of the World Values Survey⁷, describes values as essentially traditional, modern or postmodern. Traditional values are hierarchical, authoritarian and xenophobic with an emphasis on the 'duties of sharing and charity' (p. 225). Modern values, he argues, are materialist, emphasising economic growth, while postmodern⁸ values are post-materialist, tolerant, and self-actualising with an emphasis on 'self expression instead of deference to authority' (p. 223) and 'a declining acceptance of

⁷ Kotze and Lombard (2002, p. 431) have replicated Inglehart's World Values Survey in South Africa on a limited scale and has shown that between 1995 and 2001, while there has been some shift towards materialist values, the majority of South Africans are still concerned with a combination of traditional (pre-materialist, survival) and materialist values. This does not seem to apply to these township youth, who also exhibit post-modern values.

⁸ What Ulrich Beck (1992) calls the 'second modernity'.

rigid religious norms concerning sex and reproduction and a diminishing need for absolute rules' (p. 224). In a study commissioned by the South African Department of Education regarding the values of stakeholders in South African education (youth, educators and parents), Porteus *et al* (2002) assert that 'the value system under apartheid propagated a strong sense of hierarchy, a polarised conception of "right" vs. "wrong", and a follow-the-rules ethic over creative expression' (p. 19). They conclude that the values of South African youth are 'colonial values' and 'global economic values' rather than 'democratic values'. The picture painted by young people in this study is somewhat more complex. In addition to Inglehart and Porteus *et al*'s description Langa youth appear to have moral values that could be described as conventional, traditional or hegemonic – reflecting those of society as a whole; contested values – especially over the issues of money and sex and bound up with modernist notions of materialism and gender; and contextual, postmodern values around physical space and the place of self as moral arbiter. Within these categories (or codes), complex as they are already, are a multitude of nuances, exceptions and specific applications. How these township youth conveyed each of these codes will be considered in some depth, before an attempt to make analytical sense of them is made.

Somewhat conventional codes of substance use, violence and crime

In *Free Lists* and initial interviews young people displayed a clear conviction of the wrongness of substance use, violence and crime. I plotted the proportion of youth who produced words relating to each of these three themes along each axis of the 'right'/'wrong' and 'love'/'hate' categories. The resulting graphs (Figure 6.1a-c) depict these polarities graphically so that it is evident at a glance whether youth produced more 'love' or 'hate', 'right' or 'wrong' words in each theme. Words generated about (a) *substance use*, (b) *violence* and (c) *crime* were almost exclusively⁹ listed under the headings of 'wrong' and 'hated'. This was not the case for other categories of words produced such as (d & e) *sex and relationships* and (f) *self*.

⁹ Only one young man said it was right to 'drink alcohol', while another one said it was right to 'fight'.

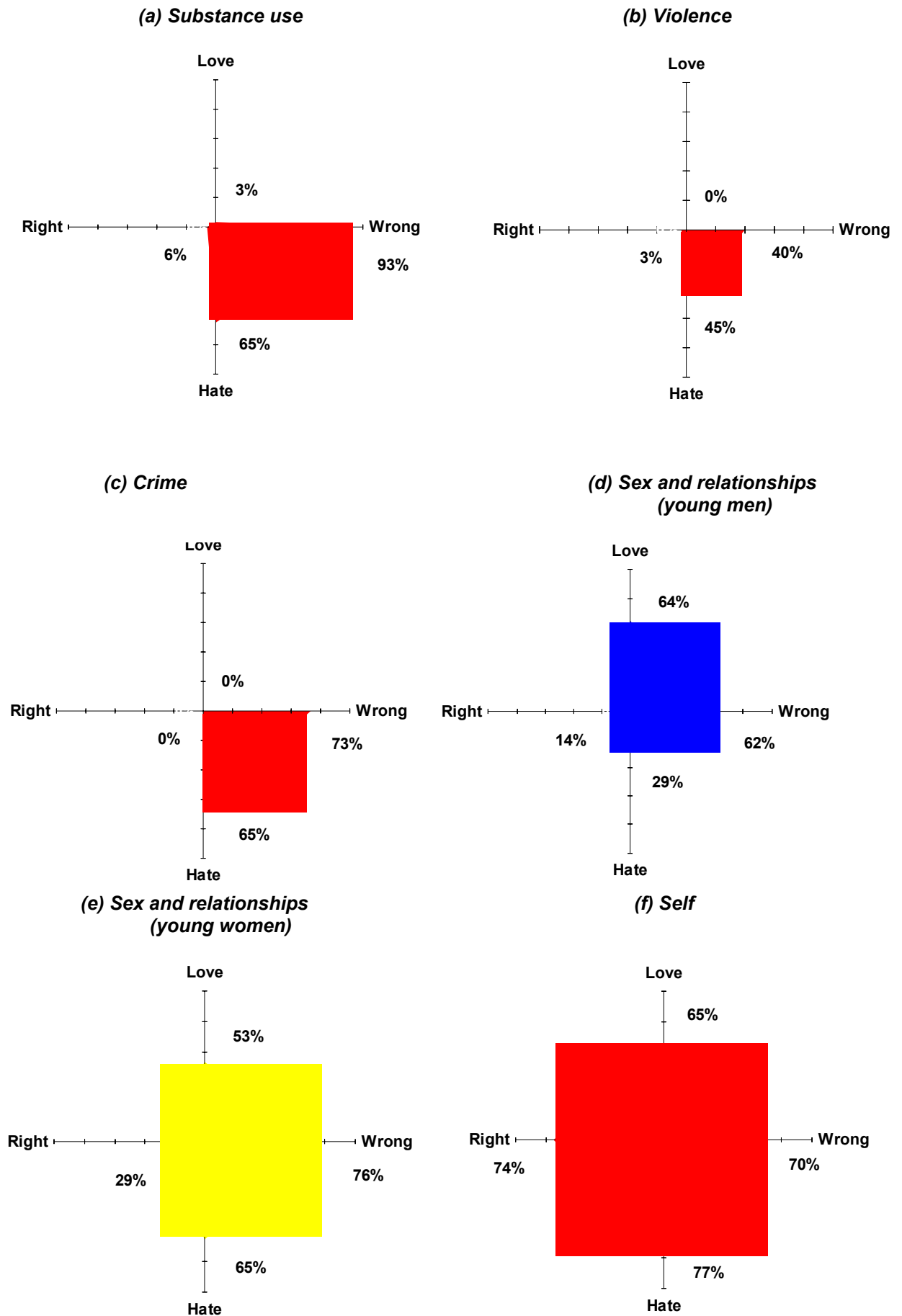


Figure 6.1 Plots depicting the nature of words listed in selected categories in the Free List activity

For example, in (a) substance use, 3% of youth produced words relating to loving substance use, 65% produced words relating to hating substance use, 6% produced words relating to substance use as right and 93% produced words relating to substance use as wrong. Young people's words about violence and crime were similarly located as 'wrong' and 'hated'. Together, these three issues dominated 'wrong' lists for both young men and young women. During interviews young people modified these strong views by talking about 'drinking without overdosing' and 'enjoying yourself, but not over-enjoying yourself'. In *Right and Wrong Questionnaires*¹⁰ however, these young people revealed a *hierarchy* of morality regarding substance use. Table 6.3 provides evidence of this.

Table 6.3 *Answers from Right and Wrong Questionnaires illustrating a hierarchy of substance use*

| | Total | | Young men | | Young women | |
|---------------------------------|--------|---------|-----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Using Mandrax | | | | | | |
| Wrong | 33 | 92% | 16 | 94% | 17 | 89% |
| Right | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 0 | 0% |
| Ambivalent | 3 | 8% | 1 | 6% | 2 | 11% |
| Using inhalants | | | | | | |
| Wrong | 32 | 89% | 15 | 88% | 17 | 89% |
| Right | 1 | 3% | 1 | 6% | 0 | 0% |
| Ambivalent | 3 | 8% | 2 | 12% | 2 | 11% |
| Smoking dagga | | | | | | |
| Wrong | 28 | 78% | 12 | 71% | 16 | 84% |
| Right | 2 | 5% | 2 | 12% | 0 | 0% |
| Ambivalent | 6 | 17% | 3 | 18% | 3 | 16% |
| Getting drunk | | | | | | |
| Wrong | 23 | 66% | 9 | 53% | 14 | 78% |
| Right | 1 | 3% | 1 | 6% | 0 | 0% |
| Ambivalent | 11 | 31% | 7 | 41% | 4 | 22% |
| Smoking cigarettes | | | | | | |
| Wrong | 21 | 58% | 10 | 59% | 11 | 58% |
| Right | 7 | 20% | 3 | 18% | 4 | 21% |
| Ambivalent | 8 | 22% | 4 | 24% | 4 | 21% |
| Experimenting with dagga | | | | | | |
| Wrong | 21 | 58% | 10 | 59% | 11 | 58% |
| Right | 5 | 14% | 3 | 18% | 2 | 11% |
| Ambivalent | 10 | 28% | 4 | 24% | 6 | 32% |
| Drinking alcohol | | | | | | |
| Wrong | 17 | 47% | 5 | 29% | 12 | 63% |
| Right | 2 | 6% | 2 | 12% | 0 | 0% |
| Ambivalent | 17 | 47% | 10 | 59% | 7 | 37% |

¹⁰ The *Right and Wrong Questionnaire* provided further insight into the level of consensus that existed among young people about the moral issues they had identified in the course of the study. Appendix 8.1 provides a summary of data obtained from the *Right and Wrong Questionnaire* grouped by theme and indicating gender differences in their responses. These gender differences (Appendix 8.2) are also only indicative since the sample size is too small to conclude about their significance. Appendix 8.3 provides a summary of 'wrong' actions about which youth displayed a strong consensus (more than three-quarters saying it was wrong) and a consensus (more than half saying it was wrong).

In it, we see that more young people said that using Mandrax was wrong, compared to those who said that using inhalants, smoking *dagga*, getting drunk, smoking cigarettes, experimenting with *dagga*, or drinking alcohol (in this order) was wrong. Young people also differentiated between drinking alcohol and getting drunk, and between smoking *dagga* and merely experimenting with it. Nonetheless, between a quarter and half were ambivalent about whether drinking alcohol, getting drunk and experimenting with *dagga* was wrong. Five young people said that experimenting with *dagga* was right, and seven said that smoking cigarettes was right. A strong consensus existed (more than three quarters of young people) that using inhalants, Mandrax, and regularly smoking *dagga* was wrong with no variation by gender. Notably no young women said that drinking alcohol is right and more young women than young men said that drinking alcohol is wrong.

What is especially interesting about this data is that the township youth in my study readily condemned substance use as predominantly ‘wrong’ despite its ubiquity¹¹. Perhaps this condemnation of substance use is not unusual in a community where substance abuse is rife and is often the cause of violence and death. But the dissonance between belief and behaviour requires further investigation. A further surprising finding was the way in which young people condemned *cigarette* smoking, and not on health grounds. Instead young people pointed to cigarettes as a gateway to smoking *dagga* and other drugs as typified by Ingwazi ‘when you started smoking cigarette, that’s when you get to another step you see – to another level’ (see Box 6.1 again). Ingwazi’s lengthy description of the first time he smoked a ‘Macarena’ or ‘Star’ (combination of Mandrax and *dagga*) quickly became a story of how his life spiralled out of control, beginning with his cigarette smoking at the age of eleven. When I asked him, during the course of a later discussion, what advice he has for the children growing up in his home, he was emphatic: ‘They must get out of trouble you see. *They mustn’t smoke even a cigarette*’.

¹¹ In Chapter 5, I described young people’s extensive substance use habits. Almost half of the youth in my sample smoked cigarettes on a regular basis. Nearly all drank alcohol, while nearly half told me they got drunk regularly. In addition, 15 out of 37 (41%) of youth have used or use *dagga* while a quarter use or have used Mandrax.

Similar hierarchies, distinctions, and even *rules*, emerged as young people spoke further about the morality of crime and violence. In *Free Lists*, as with substance use, young people strongly labelled violence and crime as wrong (and hated). Young men and young women both listed gangsterism, murder, rape, hijacking, fighting, robbery, theft, stealing, and bullying as wrong. In interviews it became clear that young people spoke of multiple forms of violence. Luxolo's violence (Box 6.2) stems from her short temper. She tells me she learned to fight (even over food) whilst living on the streets of Cape Town. What she illustrates here is also evident in the lives of other township youth – a lack of self control and an inability to delay gratification, born out of a daily fight for survival. Andiswa also has a short temper – 'when you say shit to me, it just unplugs and whenever I get mad it's like a switch' – but her aggression has an origin in her personal history of being treated 'like a doormat', in knowing that her parents have been victims of violence, and in feeling a sense of responsibility for protecting herself and her family. Andile's violent response is disproportionate to the 'smack' that Nkothula gives him, but in keeping with the way in which the 'mother-cussing' (Renold, 2003) affects him: 'The problem is I like my mother very much. Because I don't have a relationship with my father ...My mother, she does everything for me'.

For some, like Sipho, violence is a means to obtaining money (often for alcohol and drugs). But Sipho is also a gang member and tells me that violence is a normal part of being a gangster – 'They [gangsters] can even go killing inside your, your house, in front of your family'. When I asked him why he replied 'it's gangsterism' but then went on to elaborate that apart from being told to kill someone, often if another gang member 'shoots or maybe even smacks' someone from his gang, 'the whole Moscow gang will stand for me see. If we see that guy we kill him'. Sipho is part of Young Moscow (rather than Moscow, the senior gang) and says that in Young Moscow you 'can stab [people] but not to death'. Vuma's account of violence is similarly complex. His account in Box 6.3 tells of defensive action 'I have no choice', 'he stabbed me... was trying to beat me with a bottle' but also indicates the problems associated with the township culture of alcohol consumption, the plethora of taverns (often the only public social space), and the practice of carrying knives (especially amongst young men). Many of the young men told me of fights between friends that end

up in a stabbing because of drunkenness, and because the majority of young men, especially those who have completed their initiation ceremonies, carry knives¹².

Besides these various ‘social uses of violence’ (Hobsbawm, 1998, p. 308)¹³ young people also articulated complex rules of violence. They spoke of seldom inciting violence unprovoked, although it often took very little provocation. Revenge is an important motif in violence amongst township youth. If someone stabbed you, you (and your friends) hunted them down to retaliate. Revenge could be physical or supernatural¹⁴. However, if someone was stabbed in a tavern fight and the assailant was drunk, then no revenge was extracted. What the perpetrator had to do was make amends (pay for the taxi to get the person to hospital, apologise, and pay a negotiated fine if death occurred). The threat of violence is often used during housebreaking, e.g. brandishing a gun or a knife in order to scare people. Young people tell me they had/have no intention of using the weapon. When they do so, it is because something has gone wrong. Young people also tell me that you do not rob people ‘you know’ – partly out of friendship, but also because they ‘know where you live’ and will come and extract payment for what you have done, or set the street committee on you. The problem, they told me, was that once you were intoxicated, you no longer cared who you robbed.

Young people’s construction of the ‘wrongness’ of crime was also not in keeping with their practice. Despite a strong consensus that crime was ‘wrong’, young people were involved in crime at multiple levels. Again young people could delineate a hierarchy regarding *types* of crime. Table 6.4 provides a summary of the types of crime the majority of young people

¹² *Indodas* are meant to carry a knife to eat meat, and as a symbol of their position. The reality is that often these knives are used in drunken violence.

¹³ Hobsbawm (1998) talks about learning ‘to distinguish between different types of violent activity’. He aptly comments: ‘Nothing is more difficult for people brought up in a liberal culture, with its belief that all violence is worse than non-violence, other things being equal (which they are not)’ (p. 308).

¹⁴ One afternoon after a physical fight between a student from Mandela and another Langa school, an entire delegation from the rival school came to seek revenge on the Mandela student. Teachers quickly called a meeting to stop ‘a war from starting’ as Luxolo called it. Andiswa related an account to me of supernatural revenge after her fifteen year old cousin was shot. Her aunt (‘my aunt is like a *sangoma* of some sort but she’s also into witchcraft of some sort’) called the family together in a vigil that ended in the death of their cousin’s murderer.

said was ‘wrong’ ranging from most wrong (‘stealing from your parents’) to least wrong (‘stealing from the rich’).

Table 6.4 *Answers from Right and Wrong Questionnaires illustrating a hierarchy of crime*

| | Total | | Young men | | Young women | |
|----------------------------------|--------|---------|-----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Steal from parents | | | | | | |
| <i>Wrong</i> | 33 | 94% | 16 | 94% | 17 | 89% |
| <i>Right</i> | 1 | 3% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 5% |
| <i>Ambivalent</i> | 1 | 3% | 1 | 6% | 1 | 5% |
| Hijack cars | | | | | | |
| <i>Wrong</i> | 33 | 92% | 16 | 94% | 17 | 89% |
| <i>Right</i> | 1 | 3% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 5% |
| <i>Ambivalent</i> | 2 | 6% | 1 | 6% | 1 | 5% |
| Steal from ‘white’ people | | | | | | |
| <i>Wrong</i> | 28 | 78% | 14 | 82% | 14 | 74% |
| <i>Right</i> | 2 | 6% | 1 | 6% | 1 | 5% |
| <i>Ambivalent</i> | 6 | 17% | 2 | 12% | 4 | 21% |
| Not paying on train | | | | | | |
| <i>Wrong</i> | 26 | 72% | 13 | 76% | 13 | 68% |
| <i>Right</i> | 2 | 6% | 1 | 6% | 1 | 5% |
| <i>Ambivalent</i> | 8 | 22% | 3 | 18% | 5 | 26% |
| Steal from the rich | | | | | | |
| <i>Wrong</i> | 20 | 56% | 10 | 59% | 10 | 53% |
| <i>Right</i> | 7 | 19% | 4 | 24% | 3 | 16% |
| <i>Ambivalent</i> | 9 | 25% | 3 | 18% | 6 | 32% |

For example, more young people said it was wrong to hijack cars (33 out of 36) compared to those who said it was wrong to ride on the train without paying (26 out of 36). More young people said it was wrong to steal from your parents (33 out of 35), than from ‘white’ people (28 out of 36) or from the rich (20 out of 36). Later when young people completed the *Right and Wrong Questionnaire* they displayed ambivalence about whether it was right or wrong to kill someone who broke into your house, to carry a weapon, to engage in vigilantism or to extract revenge¹⁵.

I began this chapter by speaking of the ways in which substance use, crime and violence were universally seen as wrong by the young people in this study. As the study progressed, and I employed more and research instruments to tease out the nuances, it became apparent that this is only partly true. The existence of rules to govern violence, the differentiation between types of violence, hierarchies of crime, and better or worse kinds

¹⁵ Nearly two-thirds said vigilantism was wrong, while the rest were divided between it being right and being ambivalent. A quarter said it was right to take revenge, while a third were ambivalent.

of substance use provide evidence for this. However, more clearly contested than the codes surrounding substance use, violence and crime are those concerning money and sex.

The contested codes of money and sex

Somewhat related to codes of crime, these Langa youth constructed a complex morality of money. On the one hand, as I have just described, most displayed conventional and traditional values around not stealing, instead advocating ‘working hard’ for your money. Simultaneously they exhibited strongly modernist materialistic values – loving material possessions (boats, cars, cellphones, clothes, big houses, swimming pools, and a desire to live in the suburbs). In the *Right and Wrong Questionnaire* and in later interviews (see Box 6.5 for a selection of quotes) these young people expounded their morality of money more clearly, providing evidence for what I have termed ‘a mixed morality of money’.

Box 6.5 Mixed Moralities of Money

Phumeza (*young woman, aged 17, township-schooled*)

It depends like you don’t have more money to buy in the shop so you must buy [stolen things] – *it’s wrong but you can do it.*

Nonkiza (*young woman, aged 15, township-schooled*)

[Gambling is right] because you are going to make money Sharlene *without any robbing* and doing all those wrong things. You don’t know where your luck is. You can get more.

Joules (*young man, aged 14, suburbs--schooled*)

Lie to save money? Oh, it is quite a hard one. Yah I would. It is part of life Sharlene. To succeed you *have to lie – do dodgy stuff to succeed in life*. Cos life is an unfair trip getting from one end to another. Quite hard.

Ingwazi (*young man, aged 19, township-schooled*)

If you want a job like you see, like really ... if you want a job, you can, you can lie, but at the end of the day ... maybe they will [find out] that you are lied, *but at least you had, you had a job and you worked.*

Many of these contestations revolved around the relationship between truth-telling¹⁶, employment, and money. Young people were divided on the issue of whether it’s right or

¹⁶ Truth-telling in general, not merely over financial issues, was not held in high esteem amongst these young people especially when it would result in punishment or a diminished reputation. Twenty-one out of 35 (60%) of young people said it was right or were ambivalent about lying to protect your reputation. A similar number said it was right or were ambivalent about lying to get out of trouble (21 out of 36, 58%).

wrong to overcharge for goods¹⁷. Only one third said it was wrong to lie in order to save money (more young women than young men)¹⁸, reflecting Joules' view that since 'life is an unfair trip... *you have to lie* – do dodgy stuff to succeed in life.' Although only one young person agreed that it was right to buy stolen goods, seven (out of 35, or 20%) were ambivalent about it. Phumeza exemplifies this ambivalence 'because you don't have more money to buy in the shop... *it's wrong but you can do it*'. Making money by any means was generally portrayed as right. No youth whose parents ran illegal shebeens commented on this practice, implying that this is legitimate work. Gambling, too, was generally acceptable 'because you are going to make money ...*without any robbing*'. Nearly a third of youth were ambivalent about the morality of lying to secure a job¹⁹. Ingwazi's reason for lying to get a job, even if you are later found out, was most poignant: 'But at least you had a job and you worked'.

A second facet of this mixed morality of money emerges when the young people I spoke to talked about *who* it was wrong to steal from. Nearly all agreed that stealing from parents was wrong. Just over three quarters said that stealing from 'white' people was wrong. But on the issue of stealing from the rich young people were almost equally divided²⁰. Youth described in careful detail why stealing from the rich was justified. Rich people 'will not miss it...they will replace it [laughs] with another – they've got money' says Phindiwe. A large number of young people told me that rich people get their goods replaced by insurance, so it does not hurt them if it's stolen, whereas if a poor person is robbed of something 'they will cry'. More pragmatically, Bongani tells me that if he steals from a '*mlungu* house' and is caught 'I know one thing *neh* – I'm gonna go to Pollsmoor' [prison] whereas if he is caught stealing from *amaXhosa*, they 'are going to beat you to kill you'. Choosing prison over death, he focuses on 'white' *mlungu* houses in the suburbs.

¹⁷ Twenty-one out of 36 (58%) said it was wrong to overcharge for goods, while 7 (19%) said it was right to do so, and 8 (23%) were ambivalent.

¹⁸ Thirteen young people (36%) say it is right to lie in order to save money. The same number say it's wrong to do so. Ten were ambivalent (28%). Three times as many young women as young men said it was wrong to lie to save money.

¹⁹ Three out of 36 (8%) say it is right, and 22 out of 36 (61%) say it's wrong to lie to secure a job.

²⁰ Twenty out of 36 (56%) say it is wrong to steal from the rich, 7 (19%) say it's right and 9 (25%) were ambivalent.

Lekho and Thandi both provide a more critically conscious explanation about why people steal from the rich (and 'white' people):

Lekho: Most children, they stole from the rich *because they are poor*. Most of them. That is why I can say it is not about right and wrong. Some they are doing it for fun – but some they are suffering really. It's not alright but it's [pause] ... *You're doing it because you need*.

Thandi: A person who lives in Joe Slovo [an informal settlement] right – and sees this rich lady or something and maybe he goes to Constantia or somewhere – to one of those rich houses there... and stole something. The reason they stole like you know, maybe the TV – is because maybe they're poor – you know, and they don't understand why. *Why do black people have to be poor you know and white people have to be rich*. And so in a way, I think *they're trying to bring back – like have like a revenge*.

Thandi's comment also illustrates the difficulty young people had in distinguishing between 'white' people and rich people. In principle, more youth were opposed to stealing from 'white' people than from rich people. Partly, I think young people were aware of my 'whiteness' in answering this question, and tried to make the distinction, although not always successfully. During the struggle, Chabedi (2003) observes, that for many young 'black' South Africans stealing from 'white' people was not stealing at all: 'Poverty was understood to be a product of apartheid. Tsotsis had their own moral order of sorts... robbing people in town (that is, white people) was a ...more or less morally neutral enterprise' (p. 362). In the new democratic South Africa, stealing from the rich seems to have replaced stealing from 'whites' as a 'morally neutral enterprise'. This mixed morality of money, in which lying to save money and robbing from those who have more than enough, are clearly non-conventional values – and may even be described as emancipated representations of morality. But they exist alongside conventional values of abhorring theft,

robbery, and stealing, and materialist values. It would seem that these values indicate a complex discourse of money in the lived context of poverty.

On the topic of sex and relationships, the data indicate that young people's constructions are also contested. Some leaned towards what might also be described as emancipated representations of morality, while others displayed clearly gendered constructions of the morality of sex. In *Free Lists*, for both young men and women, the majority of words generated were under the category 'wrong'. Less than a quarter of youth listed words relating to sex and relationships under the 'right'²¹ heading. Noticeably, more young women (three quarters) produced words relating to sex as 'wrong' than did young men (two thirds of whom did so). Figure 6.1d-e provides a graphic portrayal of the quantity and nature of the words produced by young men and young women regarding sex and relationships.

But differences extended beyond mere numbers of words produced. For young women it was wrong to have a boyfriend, have sex before marriage (conventional) but also 'before time', 'at a young age' and 'before you're ready' (less conventional). In contrast, young men spoke of it being wrong 'to force a girl to have sex with you' rather than sex itself, and a small number said unfaithfulness ('to burn your girl lover') and having sex at the wrong time was wrong. Besides these few words, young men avoided writing any words in the 'wrong' category that related to *the act of sex* itself. While both young men and women listed their romantic partners as someone they loved, their emphasis was different. Young women loved 'being with my boyfriend' and 'having someone to love me' whereas young men loved 'my girl lover', 'sex' and 'looking at girls'. Furthermore, while young men hated condoms and AIDS, young women hated *ignorance* about AIDS, abusers and people who have multiple partners. The issue of multiple partners was further explained at length by young men who told me that there is pressure for them to have multiple partners in *ikasi*. If you are a *pleya* and have multiple partners you are the 'top dog'. Tapelo explains further:

²¹ Two young men did so while five young women did so. Young men said it was right to be a *pleya* (have multiple partners) and to not have sex. Young women said it was right to delay sex, use condoms, and have children after marriage.

Tapelo: It's like when you are *ikasi* and you've only got like one girl, so they say no you are junk, you are *isiShumani* [shoemaker] when you don't have girls, because you have only one. Which means like you, you are not someone when you don't have girls. So they say things like that – the guys I used to chill with. So like when we walk together like *we make like a competition with girls*. Like so how many girls you've got and how many I've got.

The pressure is strong, and like so much else in *ikasi*, takes the form of a competition. If you only have one girlfriend, Tapelo explains further:

Tapelo: They always talking 'oh – your girl has given you some *muti* to make you follow her only – that is why we always see you are good to her' ...[but] there is only one that I love... [if I could] *I would choose only one*, that one to share with my things and my problems.

Besides the irony of being pressured into multiple partners when in reality 'there is only one that I love', what Tapelo does not explain is that while the accusation of being bewitched ('given you some *muti*') serves merely to mock, the accusation against the one *doing* the bewitching is serious. Ashforth (2005, p. 243-252) describes multiple incidents of violence perpetrated against women who have been accused of using occult means to get or keep a partner.

In the *Right and Wrong Questionnaire* further gendered constructions concerning sex and relationships emerged. Figure 6.2 shows gendered constructions regarding (a) abortion, (b) dancing in a sexy way and (c) oral sex, with a strong consensus amongst young women that all of these actions were 'wrong'. On the issue of whether it was right to (d) hit your child as a parent, answers were also gendered with a strong consensus amongst young men that it was wrong, while the majority of young women said it was 'right' or were ambivalent about it. Young men told me they were opposed to physical punishment since they were most frequently on the receiving end of it at home and school. Young women said that it

was the only way to control children – a reflection of their lack of power within the household despite their overwhelming responsibility.

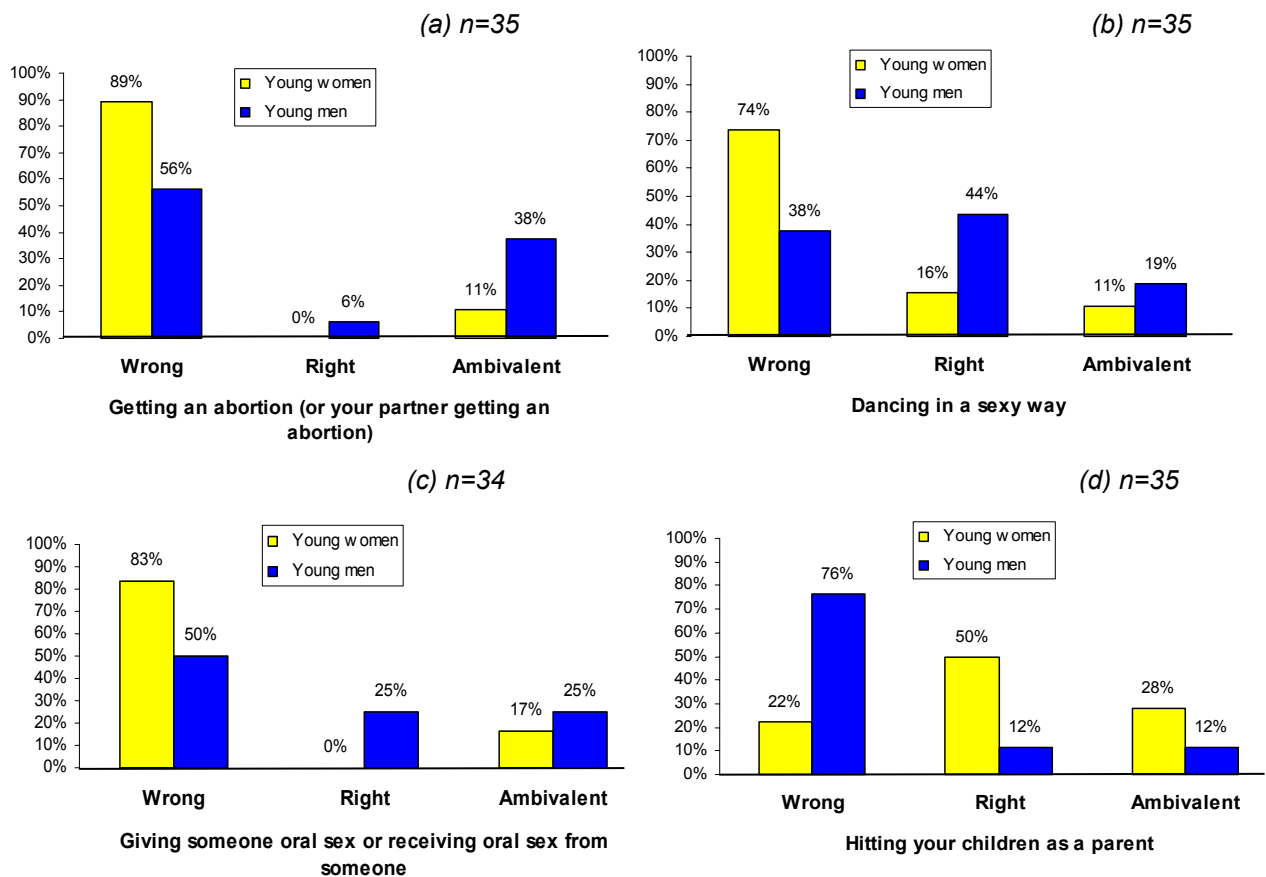


Figure 6.2 *Graphs depicting variation by gender for various aspects of sexuality and parenting practices*

Concerning the age and circumstance of sexual debut (see Table 6.5), *Right and Wrong Questionnaires* provided further nuanced data. Constructions were starkly gendered around it being wrong to have sex ‘before time’ but not as gendered regarding sex ‘before marriage’. Only a quarter of young men in the sample said it was wrong to have sex before marriage compared to nearly 40% of young women, figures that approximate Scott’s (1998) findings²² on British and American sexual attitudes in the 1980s (young women) and 1990s (young men).

²² In a meta-analysis of British and American attitudes towards premarital sex, Scott (1998) reports that although ‘gender disparities has been evident throughout the last thirty years, with women, on average more conservative than men’ (p. 822) in the past decade there has been gender convergence in attitudes (p. 828). In the 1980s around 1/3 of men were opposed to premarital sex while 2/5 of women were (p. 838). By the mid 1990s the figure for both men and women was around 20% disapproval rate. See Mayekiso (1994) for data depicting a similar gender convergence amongst ‘black’ South African university students.

Table 6.5 *Opinions concerning age/stage of sexual debut from the Right and Wrong Questionnaire*

| | Total | | Young men | | Young women | |
|----------------------------|--------|---------|-----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Sex before 16 | | | | | | |
| <i>Wrong</i> | 20 | 57% | 6 | 35% | 14 | 78% |
| <i>Right</i> | 4 | 11% | 4 | 24% | 0 | 0% |
| <i>Ambivalent</i> | 11 | 31% | 7 | 41% | 4 | 22% |
| Sex before 18 | | | | | | |
| <i>Wrong</i> | 13 | 38% | 4 | 25% | 9 | 50% |
| <i>Right</i> | 11 | 32% | 9 | 56% | 2 | 11% |
| <i>Ambivalent</i> | 10 | 30% | 3 | 19% | 7 | 39% |
| Sex before marriage | | | | | | |
| <i>Wrong</i> | 11 | 32% | 4 | 25% | 7 | 39% |
| <i>Right</i> | 8 | 24% | 5 | 31% | 3 | 17% |
| <i>Ambivalent</i> | 15 | 44% | 7 | 44% | 8 | 44% |

This gendered construction of sexual morality increases with decreasing age i.e. more young women say it is wrong to have sex before 18, than before marriage, and yet more say it is wrong to have sex before 16. No young women said it was right to have sex before the age of sixteen, whereas a quarter of young men (in my sample) said it was right to do so. Twice as many of these young men thought it was right to have sex before 18 than at 16.

Postmodern constructions of self and respect

Finally, young people's portrayal of the moral nature of self and respect, while also somewhat gendered, provide an example of the postmodern nature of young people's moral code. The majority of young people generated words relating to *self* in all four categories of their *Free Lists*²³ (Figure 6.1f). Words produced under the category of 'right' in *Free Lists* reflected an autonomous expression of life: 'Laugh, love, learn and live a long life', 'make yourself a star', 'have/be a role model', 'take life seriously' and 'be committed, trustworthy and patient'. In 'wrong' lists words included anger, gossiping, jealousy, lying, having a bad or negative approach to life, making/getting into trouble, and hating people. These words reflected self-centred language as opposed to religious or

²³ Twenty-one out of 30 (70%) young people generated words relating to *self* under the category of 'wrong' while 23 out of 31 (74%) did so under the category of 'right'. (20/30 'loved', 24 out of 31 'hated'). While more young men than young women produced words relating to *self*, the differences were small. However, words relating to *self* also occurred more frequently in the first five words of young men's lists than those of young women, possibly indicating that for young men, *self* is more prominent than for young women.

cultural values. Words relating to religion, law and ‘obedience’ were scarce, implying that young people’s values originate from within themselves as opposed to reflecting religious, cultural or legal origins (although their place is not entirely absent as will be discussed in Chapter 9). In their ‘hate’ lists young people regularly mentioned hating ‘being told what to do’. During interviews, only Thulani directly mentioned the role that others play in helping him determine what is right or wrong:

Thulani: When you are doing something right people are like – enjoying that thing – they are supporting you. You don’t have to hide what you are doing if it is right.

Instead, when I asked young people who was responsible for their character (or their future dreams), invariably the answer was ‘It’s me... It’s only me Sharlene because nobody can force me to do something’²⁴. When asked how they knew the difference between right and wrong, young people invariably pointed to the centrality of the self as moral arbiter. Comments such as ‘You just know what’s right’, ‘*You know* that the thing you are doing it’s wrong’, ‘it’s what you feel inside of you’ and ‘*I know* that because *I see*’ were regularly encountered. Thimna provides a compelling explanation:

Thimna: No one taught me – *I saw by myself*... you can’t take a chocolate from a shop and not hide it – it is wrong. If it was right you would not have to hide it.

When Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002) and Arnot (2006) speak of ‘freedom’s children’ they are referring primarily to the youth of the Global North. Central to their representation of freedom’s children is the place accorded the ‘self’ or the ‘I’ – what Beck refers to as the ‘me generation’ (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002, p. 156). Like their urban Global North counterparts, these township youth seem to exhibit the ‘self-authorisation’

²⁴ This varied sometimes when they differentiated between who was responsible for their positive character attributes from those who were responsible for negative ones. Khaya’s response is typical of these: ‘Uh, it’s my mom. She’s responsible for the good things. [The bad things] it’s my friends, those who stay in Stellenbosch, others in Mdantsane. And myself, yah’.

(ibid.) characteristic of modernity (and postmodernity), challenging Inglehart's view (2000, p. 222) that postmodern (postmaterialist) values are uncommon in developing societies. Unlike their developed world counterparts, township youth's self-authored morality is focused on immediate, personal, and local²⁵ concerns rather than future-oriented, social, or global issues²⁶. As Arnot (2006), suggests, this is perhaps because youth living in contexts of depredation have little opportunity 'to enact their agencies' (p. 74). Following Beck and Beck-Gernsheim's argument, Arnot argues that 'reflexive individualisation could also, if focused, ensure more co-operative or altruistic individualists who are able to think for themselves and live for others at the same time' (p. 71). The theme of *ubuntu*, while only appearing on 7 out of 31 young people's right lists, suggests that while young people think for themselves, they are also willing to exist for others. These township youth also appear to eschew formal political participation, although notions of democratic identity do emerge in their moral constructions²⁷. Such constructions were especially evident in young people's 'love' and 'hate' lists. They loved South Africa, 'freedom', and the right to 'live in houses', 'express yourself', 'live where you want', and 'have rights'; but hated unfair treatment, discrimination and racism.

The tensions associated with the centrality of self came through even more strongly in answers given by suburban-schooled youth and those youth who had dropped out of school over the course of the year. These young people provided the least number of wrong answers, and the most number of conditional answers in the *Right and Wrong Questionnaire*²⁸. Liyema's comment 'It depends ...it may be right for other people... I

²⁵ Crime, violence and substance (ab)use, home, school, and streets, money, sex, respect, and their own sense of self are all examples of local, personal and immediate concerns.

²⁶ Notable absences and silences were references to global warming, politics, war, torture, hyper-capitalism, globalisation and the impoverishment of the developing world, the environment, fair-trade, euthanasia, vivisection, genetically, modified foods or cloning. These are prominent moral concerns amongst developing world youth.

²⁷ Ten out of 31 youth noted democratic issues on their 'right' lists, while 3 out of 30 produced words relating to a democratic identity on their 'wrong' lists.

²⁸ In the case of ambivalent or contingent answers there were 10 participants who were in the fifty per cent quartile, scoring between 33% and 65% of their answers as ambivalent. While there were no patterns by gender, of note is that three of the four youth who had dropped out during the course of the study and four of the six suburban schooled youth were in this group.

wouldn't judge... I don't judge them in any way' was a typical answer when I asked young people why they provided ambivalent rather than right or wrong answers. In contrast, township-schooled youth provided the highest number of wrong answers. This data suggests in microcosm what we already know on a larger scale: that as developing world and traditional contexts morph into modernities and postmodernities, so does the extent of self-authorisation, and the issues about which 'freedom's children' self-author²⁹. This self-authorisation in turn contributes to a diminishing of simple polarities.

Closely related to young people's sense of self is the place of respect in their moral constructions. The notion of respect is complex and has at least three meanings. Respect might be equated with obedience and used to denote respect for elders. Respect might also be for oneself, or it is related to how you treat your peers and how they in turn treat you. Young people use the term 'respect' in their *Free Lists* and interviews in all of these ways. However, as I coded I distinguished between self-respect (coded under the theme of *self*) and respect for elders (coded under the theme of *obedience*). What remained was young people's concept of peer respect – both given to others and received from others. This was an important, although not dominant construction of morality. Nearly half of young people included a lack of respect (or *dissing*) as an item under the category 'wrong' – with twice as many young men doing so as young women. Just over one third of these Langa youth included respect for peers as a 'right' action (again by twice as many young men as young women). Respect also occurred amongst the first five appearing items on young men's 'wrong' lists, not the case for young women.

Although it may be argued that respect is a conventional value (respect for the hierarchy of age), the ways in which youth described words relating to respect turns it from a traditional value to a postmodern value. Young men speak of respect as something personal. Being *dissed* was often motivation for violence. But having multiple girlfriends, robbing someone, or going to jail was also part of the search for respect. In addition to these personal forms of respect, there are also democratic forms of respect. Young men and young women speak of having respect for socially marginalised groups of people

²⁹ See Burgess (2005) for examples from East Africa.

(‘people with AIDS’, ‘gays’, ‘disabled’ and ‘street kids’). Young people’s understanding and location of (dis)respect in their moral constructions therefore forms part of both the self-authorisation and the democratic project in the South African context.

Moralities of space and place

We could leave these township youth’s constructions of morality here with their various conventional, contested and postmodern codes of morality. To do so however, would result in losing the sense of space and place that pervaded the study. In all of young people’s constructions and representations concerning right and wrong, context seldom came up as a direct phenomenon. Few young people spoke of something being right or wrong contingent on one or another factor (except perhaps for the suburban-schooled youth mentioned previously). Instead young people spoke of their contexts in a different and surprising fashion – the central role of place, and the person within the space.

The three primary contexts of *home*, *streets*, and *school* topped young people’s ‘loved’ and ‘right’ *Free Lists*. Words in these categories also appear regularly within the first five items listed in their ‘loved’ lists. But more important than this high frequency of words, is what young people have to say about each of these contexts as moral spaces or locations. To be *in* school is right, to be *off* the streets (especially at night) is right, and to be *at* home is right. What is the significance of this demarcation of location as moral – to be *in* a place, *off* a space, and *at* a location? Each will be considered in turn.

First, nearly all³⁰ young people listed words relating to *home* and family in their ‘loved’ lists. These loves included a love for family members with mothers mentioned repeatedly by both young women and young men. No young men mentioned fathers as loved, and some young women listed their own babies as loved. Vuma said he loved ‘the way my parents control my life’. ‘Hate’ lists about home were absent for young men, while young men said they hated parents’ shouting and beating their children, and ‘people who shout at parents’ – essentially a double negative. ‘Wrong’ lists generally mirrored ‘hate’ lists with

³⁰ Twenty-eight out of 31, or 90%.

young men adding that it was wrong to go out without parents' permission. The 'right' list for both genders included keeping your home clean, talking to your family and getting to know them, and obeying and respecting your parents. For young women cooking and cleaning was included as being 'right' while for young men 'sleeping at home everyday' and taking care of your family was right. Thobane sums up this sentiment: 'It is right to be home at all times, or next to your house'.

When young people say it's right to 'sleep at home at night', 'come home early' and to 'stay at home' (and later repeat them during informal conversations and interviews), they are hinting at important social representation of morality. Good people and right behaviour are associated with being 'at home' rather than to aimlessly *khangela* (wander around and look for a good time) the township, especially at night. Sleeping away from home is behaviour reserved for *skollies*, gangsters, and those who are 'corrupt'. In fact, (as my reference group of young women tell me) you can tell someone is a *skollie* because they are unkempt, unwashed, and dirty in appearance, precisely because they do not sleep at home at night.

Repeatedly I heard that it was wrong to 'come late at home – ten o'clock is late... Nine o'clock is alright' (Nomonde) and to 'go around – stay there till late, after ten o'clock, it's wrong' (Nonkiza). Not sleeping at home meant you were either sleeping with a boyfriend (young women only) or drinking and robbing as Lekho and Xolile describe:

Lekho: It's not right to live with my aunt because my aunt just go there and there. She was not sleeping in the house. She was sleeping with her boyfriend.

Xolile: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday all the days I stay home, but when it comes you see it's a Friday – I put my books and go. Maybe other weekends I don't go to sleep at home. I sleep at my friends because I'm drunk or we rob the people, take their money.

Like last week I didn't sleep at home two days, Friday and Saturday.

I come home in the morning and wash my body and go again.

Lekho makes the connection between not sleeping at home and having sex, and Xolile between not sleeping at home and getting drunk and robbing people. Other young people told me that if you wanted to do what was right you needed to 'come earlier at home, not at night, yah' (Thobane) and 'you supposed to stay at your home and do the work you supposed to do' (Xolani). Being *at* home was a moral act, especially at night.

Second, while around one third of young people listed items relating to the *streets*³¹ as wrong and as hated, more than half of youth depicted words in their *Free Lists* relating to the streets (friends, fun, and sport) as right and the majority³² as loved. Both young men and women loved being active and playing sport, wearing 'cool clothes'³³, dancing and 'freaking', hanging out with friends, 'chilling' and having fun. Actions regarded as wrong and hated included 'partying all the time', clubbing, *tsotsitaal* (street slang), 'kids clubbing at an early age', going to 'wrong places', having 'wrong' friends, giving in to peer pressure, and simply hanging around doing nothing on the streets. But the underlying social representation about the streets was that although it was a happy and loved place, it became a matter of right and wrong at night. Coming home late, being out late, and 'being around at night' was wrong. In later interviews this was confirmed – being off the streets at night was an important sign of a 'right' person.

If you wanted to be a 'right' person then a 22:00 curfew was the acceptable limit. Most of the taverns closed by then (except for the larger ones on the weekend). A number of young guys told me that they hang out on the corners, smoking and talking with their friends until

³¹ Under the category of streets I grouped items relating to friends, fun, partying, and sport – but not substance use or violence.

³² Twenty-seven out of 31, or 87%.

³³ Nearly one third of young people listed words relating to *fashion* as 'loved'. Fashion undoubtedly forms part of the street culture of youth, but because it comprised such a large category I coded it separately from *streets*.

ten and then they go home. Mathsufu related an incident in which he and his friends were cleared off the streets one night:

Mathsufu: We were standing on a corner that we used to stand. Everyone knows us. We sit there. Even girls sometimes do sit there, so, I mean, *the community knows us*. When we're sitting there we don't do, I mean, crime. We're not doing anything to anyone, just sitting there, having fun. So that time it was night. So, actually *you don't supposed to stay there after ten*. Before ten, you go home. So it was just about eight or nine, so the City Police came to us ...some of us wanted to run, but we had no chance. So they said to us, 'Hey, go home, go sleep', and they beat us. I was wearing my armband and my headband – dressing like a hip-hop guy, I mean. So they said to me – actually they were coloureds, so they said, 'Hey Tupac go home, you're a gangster'. I don't know why, what's in people's mind, why they think hip-hop is about crime or something bad about it. I don't know, Sharlene. I was upset.

Besides Mathsufu's suggestion of racism (the police being 'coloureds'), he was indignant since according to township lore he had not broken the implicit curfew. What he does communicate strongly though is the (im)moral nature of the streets 'at night'.

Third, in *Free Lists* more than three quarters of young people produced words about *school* as right and nearly the same number as loved. Young people loved getting an education, 'some subjects', 'some teachers', and 'learning new things'. Young women loved wearing a school uniform and looking smart. But what made school a moral space? A large proportion of young people described being in school everyday (as opposed to only occasionally or bunking) as an issue of right and wrong. Frequently they echoed Thobane's description 'to be at school at all times [is to not be]... under the bridge smoking or sniffing glue while school is running'. Mhoza explains further when she tells me that it is the *skollies* who are not in school:

Mhoza: There are some *skollies* in this school [long pause] – most are not in school, they drop out ...Zola is a *skollie* – I think so. I'm sure he is by the way that he acts – he smokes *dagga* in the bottles – and Mandrax. He told me. Tapelo was a gangster but not any more. He was smoking and Mandrax too but he quit. Xolile help him – now he is back in school.

One Saturday afternoon when I went to collect some of my research participants from school where they were having extra lessons, a few guys walked past us in the street and I asked Mandisa whether they were *skollies*. She replied, 'No, they belong here at school – they are students and students aren't *skollies*'. Vuma explained further, 'To be at school means you don't smoke Mandrax and things like that and *ganja* – ...they are the *skollies* you know' rather to be at school means that 'you are a person who is like looking forward to their lives you know – to their futures you know'. Vuma's analysis is rather idealistic. There were young people at school who were gangsters and *skollies*, and whose substance use was, by their own admission, out of control. I watched as many of these young people dropped out over the course of the study. I also saw as others returned from prison terms, from being *gerook* (drugged), and also from having dropped out due to sickness (HIV, tuberculosis), lack of transport money, or sheer boredom³⁴. School seemed to be a moral magnet for these township youth, but many could not stay the course. Tapelo got 'fired' from school for continually arriving drunk, while many others dropped out after failing Grade 9 for the third or fourth time. In spite of the difficulty of staying in school, young people constantly articulated the hope they associated with the physical space of school. If only they could stay in school they would be kept from the corruption of the *kasi*. They would complete school, and be assured of a job (or so they believed). And if they had a job they would not be tempted to embark on a life of crime, and so would be 'right' people. School was mainly a protective factor for young people, but some articulated the (im)moral side to school. Male teachers who solicited sex from female students, 'teachers

³⁴ Luxolo tells me that most years by the time September comes she gets bored of school, and then 'the Devil gets into me' so she stops attending.

who do not teach', and who come to school drunk and smoke (dagga) with students were all condemned as 'wrong'.

The social representations behind these moral codes

This chapter has described multiple moral codes that comprise the moral constructions of township youth. First among these is what might be called an *active morality* (or morality of action) – the notion that morality is simply *what you do* or refrain from doing. In this sense young people construct an idea of morality that is traditional, conventional and hegemonic. The way in which they initially spoke about substance use, violence and crime are examples of these social representations of morality as action. At the same time, by referring to hierarchies and rules in the midst of these traditional codes these Langa youth are beginning to point to a set of moral codes that are more emancipated.

Codes surrounding money and sex might be described as contested and modern, while their strong sense of self-authorisation and the prominence given to respect might be viewed as postmodern. Young people's sexual morality distinguishes between coerced and respectful sex (young men) and not having sex at all (young women), and between having sex at an appropriate age rather than before marriage. Their morality of money contains tensions between active legal and communal citizenship (not taking what is not yours, not stealing, lying, and robbing) and passive but socially adaptive values such as saving money (by buying stolen goods or avoiding train fares). In the context of poverty in which young people find themselves, perhaps this mixed morality of money while emancipated, is not unusual. Young people's morality of self-authorisation is emancipated in that they claim to be the moral authority in their lives, breaking with traditional notions of external moral authority – whether cultural, religious or legal. A second social representation of morality might be deduced from these moral codes – that morality is not only about what you do (a morality of action) but also about *who you are* and *who others are to you* – an *embodied morality*. As I observed young people in their everyday lives and spent time with them, they began to articulate a conception of 'rightness' not as an abstract concept or even as an action but as

embodied in a person. ‘She’s a right person to me’ or ‘he’s a right teacher’ were comments that surfaced frequently. This notion will be further developed in the next chapter.

A final social representation that could be inferred from the data relates to young people’s construction of space and place as moral locations. By describing being ‘in school’, ‘off the streets’ and ‘at home’ as moral choices these youth indicate that where one locates oneself has moral overtones. Morality is not only about what you do, or who you are, but also about *where you are*. While some of these choices can be made i.e. one can choose to stay in school, or get off the streets at night, there is also a sense in which young people spoke about how their physical location *inevitably* affects their subsequent moral behaviour. These Langa youth constantly refer to the role of *ikasi* (the township) in their moral lives: *ikasi* fashion, *ikasi* style, *ikasi* competitions, ‘robbery as sport’ in *ikasi*, and ‘this is the way it is in *ikasi*’ frequently emerge in the data (see also Chapter 5) – and suggest a morality over which youth have little control. I call this *a morality of inevitability* since it is not only by placing yourself in a location that *determines* your moral stance, but also by virtue of merely living in a township that the nature of your moral life is *determined*. Table 6.6 offers a tentative summary of how young people’s moral codes and social constructions of morality may be related.

Table 6.6 *Summary of the components of young people’s moral codes*

| | Hegemonic | Emancipated | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>Categorisation</i> | Conventional/Traditional | Contested/Modern | Contextual/Postmodern |
| <i>Examples</i> | Substances, violence, crime | Money, sex | Self, respect, place |
| <i>Social representation</i> | Morality of action | Embodied morality | Morality of inevitability |
| <i>Morality as...</i> | What you do | Who you are | Where you are |

In the next chapter, this notion of an embodied morality will be further explored as young people position their peers as more or less moral and locate themselves along a moral spectrum. In Chapter 8 and 9 further attention will be paid to how context – where you are – affect young people’s constructions of morality, and moral formation itself.

POSITIONING OTHERS AND LOCATING THE MORAL SELF

In the previous chapter, I presented a complex view of how the young people in my study construct morality. Amongst these constructions are a number of hegemonic and emancipated social representations. Young people appear to have clear and conventional moral borderlines especially around issues of violence, substance use, and crime. This is the case, despite the fact that they often do not act in keeping with what they profess to be their moral code. In fact, their actions reflect a more nuanced code in which contextual rules apply (in the case of violence) and hierarchies exist (in the case of substance use and crime). Their moral codes around sex and money are mixed – the former informed by gender, the latter by the demands of poverty, and both place and self feature as important moral markers. This chapter builds on and further expands these representations by exploring the ways in which township youth position themselves and others within their existing moral codes. I begin by showing how these young people's morality is embodied in people, rather than only existing in particular actions or abstract principles. As we shall see, it is the process of embodiment that allows township youth to categorise their peers, and position themselves within the moral domain.

Understanding goodness: An embodied morality

As we saw in Chapter 6, when I asked young people to tell me what constituted 'bad' or 'wrong', the resulting answers revolved around the wrong actions they had committed. However, when I asked young people to relate examples of 'right' or 'good', the majority of accounts related to *someone* doing something good or right *to them* or *for them*: being given material possessions such as clothes or cellphones, having someone pay outstanding school fees, having friends 'always there for me' or being taken care of as described by Tapelo and Vathiswa:

Vathiswa: The people do something right in my life is the brothers and sisters in my church – because sometimes if I need something – they give me that thing I want. Like food, shoes, if I need the money to pay the [train] ticket – they give me.

Tapelo: It's like my mother, she does all good things for me. She send me to school.

A few youth spoke animatedly of the role of a boy- or girlfriend in their lives. Andile and Andiswa (a dating couple) both spoke of the good things that each had contributed to the other's life. For Andile, Andiswa had 'chang[ed] my life, encouraging me [in] all things' while Andiswa tells me:

Andiswa: I was treated in a good way when I met up with Andile... [the] boys at my neighbourhood, they treat girls as if they are all like, like shit... she's a mat of some sort – just for you to rub your feet... [but] not Andile.

Sipho (a gang member) and Bongani (convicted of housebreaking) both spoke about an older man in their community who had tried to get them to mend their ways. For Sipho goodness was embodied in a neighbour who bought him a tracksuit and encouraged him to join a football club because 'he just wanted me to stay out from this gang and drinking and all that'. For Bongani it was a man with whom he played pool who kept telling him to 'stop breaking the house ...he just say I'm still young for – so I can't do this fucking shit. He's thirty eight years... He's a *boetie* [a circumcised man]'.

Of course, good people were also those who did not use drugs or get drunk, and who did not get involved in violence. But few youth restricted their descriptions only to behaviours that people avoided, and instead described various character traits. Amande described a good person as someone who was 'innocent' while Thulani said it was someone with 'a clean heart'. Other characteristics of a good person included respect, helping (especially 'a

poor person' or someone 'in trouble'), and being trustworthy. Nonkiza describes all three features:

Nonkiza: To be a good person, is to help each other and to have good qualities. Like respect, um – to be able to help someone who is in trouble. And to be able to solve any problems by talking... to respect someone, Sharlene. Not doing things that you won't like someone do it to you.

Her definition of respect as reciprocity or the Golden Rule was repeated by at least five other young people. Vuma added 'self-respect' to respect for others in his own definition of what constituted a good person: '[When you] respect yourself and respect others ...then you become good to other people and to yourself'. *Talking* to people in an effort to help them solve their problems was listed by over a third of young people as a characteristic of a good person. Finally, Andiswa maintained that a good person is someone 'who makes mistakes, um, but learns from those mistakes'. So while the young people in the study described goodness in terms of conventional representations of action (avoiding some and espousing others), they also clearly constructed morality in terms of personal embodiment rather than abstract principles.

The four moral stances of township youth

This personal embodiment of morality extended to the way in which the young people I befriended repeatedly began labelling their peers as specific kinds of moral people, as embodying a particular moral stance. In order to 'simplify reality for the sake of intellectual understanding' (Dance, 2002, p. 53) I have clustered the various labels young people gave each other into four main categories – 'mommy's babies', 'right ones', '*kasi* boys/girls' and '*skollies*'. Upon my return to the field, I asked the group to comment on my analysis (see Chapter 3). They helped me further refine the clusters and each accompanying epithet. Table 7.1 provides a summary of these four agreed categories, and descriptors. Like Dance, I need to add the caveat that categorisations are analytical rather

than discrete and that ‘these labels represent abstract snapshots uncomplicated by the human capacity for flux and change’ (Dance, 2002, p. 52).

Table 7.1 *A summary of the characteristics of each category of young person as identified by their peers*

| | Mommy’s babies | ‘Right ones’ | Kasi girl or Kasi boy | Skollies |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| <i>Names given by youth</i> | <i>Ibari, moffie, mommy’s boy/girl, mommy’s baby</i> | Right one, right person, good one, <i>lungile, ulungileyo</i> | <i>Kasi boy, kasi girl, corrupt, amaOutie, amaJita, playa, spindans, isifebe, isiShumane</i> | <i>Skollie, gangster, tsotsi, thug, corrupt, amaGintsa, marhoshha</i> |
| <i>Description</i> | Isolated, protected, sheltered, ‘out of style’, always with family | Exposed but restrained, ‘not overdosing’ | Unmodulated substance use, uncalibrated violence, alcohol use, robbery and becoming pregnant as fashion, involved in competitions over alcohol and sex, ‘overdosing’ | Criminals, car hijackers, gang members, prostitutes |
| <i>Alcohol</i> | None | ‘Big days’, in moderation | Regularly intoxicated | Regularly intoxicated |
| <i>Dagga</i> | None | Perhaps experimented | Regularly | Regularly, possibly a dealer |
| <i>Mandrax and other hard drugs</i> | None | Never | Mandrax regularly, others seldom, always reforming | Regularly, possibly a dealer |
| <i>Violence</i> | None | Seldom | Often | Often |
| <i>Weapons</i> | None | Seldom | Knives | Knives, Guns |
| <i>Sex</i> | None, undetermined, not important | Possibly, but responsibly and discretely | Multiple partners | Multiple partners, rapists, prostitutes |
| <i>Faith</i> | Often, not always | Sometimes | Sometimes | Never |
| <i>Home</i> | At home | Near home | Seldom home | Seldom home |
| <i>School</i> | In school | In school | In/out school | Out of school |
| <i>Streets</i> | Off the streets | Off the streets by curfew | On the streets after curfew | On the streets, rule the streets |
| <i>Self portrayals</i> | Predominantly unequivocally good | Predominantly unequivocally good | Qualified good and ‘in the middle’ | Generally good (all three categories) |
| <i>Social representations</i> | Hegemonic – what you do | Emancipated – who you are | Emancipated – who you are, where you are | Hegemonic – what you do |
| <i>Moral stance</i> | Isolating | Deflecting | Absorbing, reforming | Ignoring, reforming |

So although young people are infinitely more than the labels they bear, these categories provide a window into young people's positioning of others (and ultimately themselves). Each of these categorisations represent a moral collage of belongings and attitudes, as well as style and status. They offer, if you like, the moral cultures which are on offer to youth and a spectrum along which young people have to locate themselves. Below I try to capture the nature of the distinctions and categorisations.

Mommy's babies

The first category of moral person Langa youth identified was that of the sheltered, protected or isolated young man or woman, often referred to as *ibari* – a mommy's boy or girl, or *moffie*¹ (only for young men). Mathsufu, although himself not a 'mommy's baby' describes the category:

Mathsufu: Thugs... they used to say I'm *ibari*, you see, so, so *ibari* is the person that, I mean I can say that's mommy's baby, yes... I know I'm not, but they say I am. I just ignore them.

In this category, more than others, young people were reluctant to describe themselves as sheltered. But young people were quick to identify their peers as sheltered or 'mommy's babies'. Akhona (an 18 year-old township schooled young man) and Mhoza (a 17 year-old township-schooled young woman) were both described by their peers as 'mommy's babies'. Mhoza was a pretty, slightly overweight girl, who took great pains with her appearance, and was relatively quiet in the classroom. She had few friends at school and mainly hung out with Akhona, himself an *ibari*. On the Saturday evening in January that she came out with us she appeared very nervous about being out at all. She later told me she had never gone out on a Saturday night in Langa before, preferring to spend her free time with family in the suburbs or at home watching television. Her mother has a good job as an area manager for a large supermarket and is seldom home. So although Mhoza has plenty of

¹ A colloquial Afrikaans expression, commonly used to refer to homosexuals or those who do not act in an 'acceptably' masculine fashion.

opportunities to do what she pleases, she seldom does. For young women who were labelled as mommy's babies, the label seemed less derogatory than when it was used to describe young men. In fact, many admired the sheltered existence of young women like Mhoza. On camp Ingwazi commented 'You go out with the *kasi* girls, but you marry a mommy's girl like Mhoza'. Ironically when I returned to the field after fourteen months, Mhoza had fallen pregnant and given birth to a child as a result of, what she told me was, her first sexual experience. When I spoke to her about these categorisations, she said she would no longer describe herself as 'sheltered' but as *lungile* (a 'right one'). When I asked other research participants how they would categorise a 'mommy's baby' who had fallen pregnant but who still remained fairly sheltered, they were confounded, and told me it depended not so much on having a baby as on 'other things' (like whether she had sex with multiple partners or openly). What it did reveal was the limited role that sexual activity played in young people's moral categorisations.

Akhona's story (Box 7.1) is somewhat dramatic but illustrates how culture and religious belief act to keep young people isolated from their peers. In my fieldnotes of Monday 6th December I described Akhona as 'living quite a sheltered life, but there seems to be some undercurrent of activity... He spends a lot of time at [The Universal²] church' and tells me he goes there to escape the streets. An important part of Akhona's biography explaining why he lives the sheltered life that he does emerged during his first interview. He began by explaining that he lives with his grandfather rather than his mother because his aunts and their children (who live with his mother) are jealous of him. At his grandfather's house, he spends most of his time 'sitting in the house, watching TV...[because] I don't want to mix up with *those guys outside*'. He continues to tell me that he is 'born again' and as a result he does not drink, smoke or sleep with girls. He tells me that he goes to church voluntarily *every day* to 'overcome some of the problems that are happening at home'. When I asked him about the nature of these problems, he tells me a harrowing story about his brother who 'got lost. I think the witches took him... She was jealous then she took him away'.

² The Universal Church of the Kingdom of God is a neo-Pentecostal movement originating in Brazil (Corten & Marshall-Fratini, 2000), which has gained purchase amongst poor communities in South Africa. It is not accepted as an orthodox church in South Africa, and there have been accusations of profiteering and drug smuggling against its leaders (South Africa Press Association, 2005).

Akhona's entire disposition changed as he told me the story the first time (he repeated it in his final interview). He became withdrawn, reluctant to speak, and physically shrank back into his chair. It was obvious that even speaking about his brother being taken by the witches terrified him. The way he chose to deal with it was by staying close to home or church at all times. Akhona told me that his brother had become 'lost' in 1997, when Akhona was only nine years old. He is now eighteen. So for almost a decade this fear has kept him from venturing out beyond the narrow confines of his home and church. His moral positioning, like other 'mommy's babies', was to isolate himself (or allow others to isolate him) from the bad influences of the surrounding environment.

Box 7.1 Akhona's* Story – A Mommy's Boy

I went to collect Akhona in Khayelitsha Site B today and interviewed him... It was significant that he chose mobile phone airtime rather than going on an outing or to see a movie as a gesture of thanks as most other young people did. He lives with his grandfather, but hasn't been keen for me to come inside his house and meet him ... The other guys at school refer to him as a moffie, because 'he doesn't do the things that boys do'. On camp he hung out with Mhoza and hardly ever spoke to anyone (Fieldnotes Monday 6th December 2004).

Akhona: My mother's sisters [who live with my mother] don't like me... my granny loves me very much... *the other children are jealous of me.*

...

Sharlene: How do you spend your time Akhona?

Akhona: *Sitting in the house, watching TV.*

Sharlene: All the time? Isn't that boring?

Akhona: Even if it is boring, I do stay... *I don't want to mix up with those guys outside...* I don't like to stay outside most of the time.

...

Akhona: I go Universal church in Khayelitsha... *I go every day...* I don't attend night church... when I come from school I just change then go to church... *No one force me [to go to church].* I go by myself... The reason that I go to church is because I need to be prayed for and supported [so that I] *can overcome some of the problems that are happening at home* [related in isiXhosa and translated].

...

Akhona: What we are taught [at church] is not to have girlfriends and boyfriends, don't drink, not to get involved in drugs, that you not gossip about people and talk bad about people.

...

Akhona: I have two brothers ...the one twin died – *the other one – got lost. I think the witches took him.* ...The witch was, she was the mother of his father, so the grandmother [pause] because he, he was very clever. In school he used to take the first positions, yah so the granny, *she didn't like that because her children was not as clever as him.* So she was jealous then she took him away. When he [the brother who was lost] was in the witches house, so the witch put something on his hand that he cannot speak about what the witch has done to him. He, he used to come back, come back home, maybe stay one day then he go away again. He come, come back after a month maybe. *I saw him last in '97.* He was born in 1981... he disappeared since today – since that time until now. *He is lost.*

*Young man, aged 18, township-schooled

‘Mommy’s babies’ had a tendency to spend a copious amount of time at home, had few friends at school (or hung out with other sheltered youth), and socialised with family rather than *kasi* youth. ‘Mommy’s babies’ were *in* school, *at* home and *off* the streets. The moral lives of these youth seemed to be circumscribed by their location (at home usually) and the adults in their lives (in Akhona’s case a strong grandfather, while for Mhoza, a strong mother). Many tended to be newly arrived from rural areas, and were sheltered in an attempt to keep them from the ‘corruption’ of *ikasi*. My key informants also described these youth as being ‘out of style’. Also of note is that not all youth who considered themselves religious or even ‘born again’ were classified by their peers as ‘mommy’s babies’. Akhona was religious but not Mhoza. Many youth who attended church or who spoke of a strong faith commitment were also street-smart *kasi* girls and boys and ‘right ones’.

‘Right ones’

The second category youth described were *ulungileyo* or ‘right ones’ – friends, peers, adults, and teachers who were generally good influences. These right youth were focused on studies, drank on ‘big days’³ (seldom to excess) and never used hard drugs. Some smoked cigarettes and many had *experimented* with dagga but were irregular users. They seldom ‘overdosed’ on anything. Most importantly they did not count *skollies* or *kasi* boys or *kasi* girls among their *close* group of friends, although they knew them as acquaintances. They were exposed to all the allurements and trappings of *ikasi* life but were restrained in their participation. Poseletso eloquently describes both a ‘right’ teacher and the characteristics of a ‘right’ youth:

Poseletso: [Mr Mbeki] He’s a right person to me ...I want to be a right person Sharlene. I want to live right not doing all those things that other children are doing – like smoke *dagga*. I just want to be a *right person*. If I want to enjoy myself, I just enjoy myself but *not over*

³ ‘Big days’ are how township youth refer to public holidays such as Christmas, New Year, Easter, Reconciliation Day (16 December), Worker’s Day (1 May), Women’s Day (9 August), Youth Day (16 June), Freedom Day (27 April), Human Rights’ Day (21 March) and Heritage Day (24 September).

enjoying myself – at the right time, at the right way... not overdosing things... If you drink just one or two glasses you are not overdosing. But if you are keep on drinking maybe three to four bottles... you end up losing your mind. I think you are overdosing.

Thando explains further about what characterises a ‘right’ youth: ‘To be safe *obviously* you have to *stay at home* with your books, watch TV and *hook up with right guys* who have good influences and to not be safe is to go out with corrupt guys’. So unlike ‘mommy’s babies’, staying at home is an important but not exclusive part of being a ‘right one’. In addition you ought not to hang out with ‘corrupt’⁴ people, but with ‘good friends, they are right’. As Poseletso describes, the amount of alcohol and the occasion of drinking, rather than merely the fact of drinking also characterises a ‘right’ person. To drink in moderation and usually only on ‘big days’ was acceptable to maintaining a reputation as a ‘right’ person. Nonkiza explains the difference between ‘right’ people and ‘corrupt’ youth: ‘I drink only on festive but they are doing it regularly, but I am not doing it regularly, just on big days’. Ingwazi (a *skollie*) explains his progression from a ‘big days’ drinker’ to a serious drinker, and characterises the difference between the two as being about self control – from drinking ‘just for fun’ to ‘I *must* know I have money... for drinking’.

In addition ‘right’ youth may or may not be sexually active. If they are, it was discreet and usually with only one sexual partner at a time. *Pleyas*⁵ and *isifebes*⁶ were not ‘right ones’. Interestingly becoming pregnant did not label you an *isifebe*. It was not the fact of being sexually active (or not) that defined a ‘right’ person, but the *extent* of sexual activity, and the extent to which it was *public knowledge*. Maintaining your reputation was important to being classified as a ‘right’ person. Nonkiza told me she did not gamble ‘because people will start talking a lot’ and for Mathsufu, hiding the fact that he was sexually active was important because ‘in church I mean, I want to be an example, you know. Because they

⁴ Later on I will describe more fully the ways in which ‘corrupt’ is used to refer to both *kasi* youth and *skollies*.

⁵ A guy with many girlfriends and sexual partners.

⁶ Literally a ‘bitch’ but more commonly accepted as ‘a girl who likes guys too much’.

don't know that I did it. I had sex before I married'. Being an example was a further trait of a 'right one'. Andiswa, although not categorised as a 'right' person at the time of the study, spoke of her desire to be a good influence to the younger children in her neighbourhood:

Andiswa: Having children around, having to think about young people – you have to set an example mos. And you think 'I can't do this in front of Lungi' – which is this young boy in my street... because he is going to adopt this bad thing and do it too. So *I must do this thing right to like let him see that this is the right kind of way to go.*

Another feature of a 'right' person is that they sleep at home at night, rather than at friends' or sexual partners' homes, and are generally indoors by the community curfew of 22:00. Being *in* school was clearly a characteristic of a 'right' person (see Chapter 6 for a fuller discussion of the morality of place). Young people spoke of 'right ones' as having a clear focus on school, the future, and listening to parents:

Khaya: My mom, she was always telling me about my future you see ...So she told me, if I want to be someone in the future I must go to school and not do something that can take me to the prison.

'Right' youth also contrasted their behaviour to that of a *skollie*:

Thulani: I'm not smoking [*dagga*], I don't do robbery and I listen to my parents, my guardian – every time. I do my homework, I do go to school, I'm not doing things that will make you, me to be like a *skollie* [laughs].

In summary, 'right' youth are those who hang out with other 'right' people, are exposed to *ikasi* life but partake judiciously, are focused on their education, are discrete about their practices (including sexual activity) and sleep at home at night. 'Right ones' are *in* school, *near* home and *off* the streets at night (by curfew). Unlike 'mommy's babies', they are not

disrespected or dismissed for their behaviour. They remain cool in the eyes of the *kasi* youth, since their lives are not characterised by ‘overdosing’ but by self control. Similarly, ‘right’ teachers were those who listened to and respected students, did not drink at school (or in public), and did not have ‘affairs with students’. Right people position themselves in opposition to the pervasive influence of the township. Instead they chart a course for future achievement which serves to deflect *ikasi style*.

Kasi boy or kasi girl

The term *kasi* or *kasi style* featured prominently in young people’s talk, not merely as a physical location but as a social representation (see Chapter 6 for a discussion of a morality of inevitability) or ‘explanatory stimuli’ (Moscovici & Duveen, 2000, p. 70). Young people spoke of *ikasi* as a cool place, the reason for certain behaviour, and as an explanation for certain social aspects of life. For example, when Katlego told me he had had his first girlfriend and sex at the age of six, I was startled at his answer, and told him so. His reply invoked *ikasi* as an explanation, ‘Yah it is [young], but that’s the life in *ikasi*’. Thulani’s comment that ‘you won’t find a virgin – not in this town – not in *ikasi*’ was similar. Thobane tells me that since he lives in *ikasi* rather than the suburbs he will ‘catch the style from *ikasi* that’s wrong’. An advertising billboard visible throughout the townships, while peddling a middle-class product (I never noticed what it was), advocated a township style and had as its by-line ‘*ikasi* for life’.

But while *ikasi* is a physical space – the township itself, and an explanatory framework, young people also used it to refer to a certain kind of moral young person. A *kasi* boy or *kasi* girl was one who drank excessively, partied all the time, had the latest branded gear, and lived life on the *edge* of addictions and crime. These young people (both young men and young women) had multiple sexual partners in full view of the community, often got involved in violent conflict resolution (stabblings ‘over small things’), and partook liberally in ‘smoking drugs’ (mainly *dagga*, occasionally Mandrax but seldom ‘hard drugs’). They operated on the hierarchy of kinds of substance use and types of crime I described in Chapter 6. Falling foul of the law was common place – but tended to be more sporadic

than ongoing (more ‘robbery as sport’ than as lifestyle or career). Although many were arrested, few were incarcerated and none were members of organised gangs (although many were members of innocuous neighbourhood gangs). Unlike their ‘right’ peers who were in control, *kasi* youth lacked self control – their substance use was unmodulated (apart from for the exclusion of ‘hard drugs’) and their violent responses uncalibrated.

Young people also referred to *kasi* youth as *spidans* – young men or women who loved to ‘advertise themselves’ or as *amaOuties* (i.e. ‘outside’ and in contrast to sheltered youth who were always ‘inside’). *Kasi* youth were predominantly in school, although many dropped out due to boredom, pregnancy, and scuffles with the law. Some were serial dropouts, embarked on a continual cycle of attending and dropping out. These young people, in my observation (or perhaps only for my benefit), were also the ones who were in the process of constant re-evaluation of their lives and of constant but unsuccessful reform.

Being well known on the streets, ‘famous’, having a tough reputation, and having ‘competitions’ about who could drink the most and have the most sexual partners were common, especially but not exclusively, amongst young men, as Luxolo (a young woman) and Ingwazi (a young man) explain:

Luxolo: And then like we do something sort of like a competition of who drinks the most or, it’s not about who drinks the most. It’s about who has the money the most, yah.

Ingwazi: Mmm, I would say drinking there, *it’s like a fashion*, you see. Like they make *competition*, yebo. Like we buy more beers, no you buy less beers, yebo, no we buy more beers, yebo. It’s like that, you see. Like *they want to be seen* that day.

Amongst *kasi* girls, competitions to see who would be the first to get pregnant were common. Andiswa told me it was ‘a fashion’ to be pregnant as a teenager. *Kasi* youth display a mixed morality of money I have previously described – they steal or rob in order

to obtain money to buy alcohol or drugs, or out of revenge⁷. Not sleeping at home and 'being around on the streets at night' were confirmed as characteristics of *kasi* youth. As with 'right' youth, just being sexually active seemed to be morally neutral for *kasi* girls and boys. However, if you were a *kasi* boy or girl and did not have a sexual partner you were called *isiShumani* or shoemaker (explained more fully in Chapter 6). One could be 'right' and be having sex with a partner. However, being a *pleya* or *isifebe* (having multiple partners in public view) tended to tip you into the category of *kasi* boy or girl, while being a prostitute (*marhoshha*) or rapist tipped you into the *skollie* category. One could have sex for drinks, favours or clothes and be considered a *kasi* girl but young women who 'slept with taxi drivers' and for money were frowned upon and considered to be *skollies* (although seldom referred to as *skollies* which is an appellation reserved for young men). In my observations, youth had to opt out of being a typical *kasi* girl or boy in order to be a 'right' person in spite of sharing the *ikasi* space with *kasi* youth and *skollies*. It took an act of personal and committed volition to be a 'right' person, to not overdose, because 'overdosing', 'corruption', and 'smoking' were the norm. *Kasi* youth simply absorbed the morality of the prevailing township culture.

In my analysis so far I have demonstrated young people's liberal use of the term 'corrupt' when speaking of moral stances. However, whether the appellation of 'corrupt' was reserved for *skollies*, or whether it referred equally to *kasi* youth was more difficult to discern. Nomonde told me that 'people who are selling drugs and *skollies*' are corrupt. For Amande, her previous school was corrupt because of the presence of *tsotsis* (or *skollies*) who 'come to the class where we are learning, so they take my things, our earrings... with a knife or a gun'. For both these young women being 'corrupt' is clearly associated with criminal activity – the domain of *skollies* that will be considered next. A little later though Amande goes on to tell me that a woman 'because she parties too much' is corrupt. Similarly, when Ingwazi tells me that Mandela High School does not want older students to attend 'because [the school authorities] think they are corrupting those younger children', his use of the term 'corrupt' refers to nothing more than smoking cigarettes at school and

⁷ Luxolo, Xolani, Ingwazi and Vuma all related similar stories of stealing wallets and cellphones in order to buy Mandrax. Katlego told me about stealing two cellphones (in successive weeks) off a 'white' classmate as revenge for a previous insult.

'backchatting' teachers – nothing criminal about that. But for Dipuo and Vuma corruption refers both to being a *kasi* youth and getting involved in criminal activity. Dipuo tells me:

Dipuo: I want my children to grow up in a quiet place. Because if you grow up in a like, like *ikasi* you might be corrupted. If it's a boy, he's going to *break house*. Girls going to drive me mad ... But if you grow up in the suburbs, it's going to be right, you see.

Vuma cycles through a similar range of actions he describes as 'corrupt'. He refers to his friend Themba as a 'trouble maker like – corrupt' because he introduced Vuma to drugs. When I asked Vuma what he would change about school if he were the Minister of Education he told me he might shorten the school day. Later he tells me that were school days shortened when 'students got back to the township – in the location, they will be more corrupt because they have got more hours to be corrupt'. Here Vuma's use of 'corrupt' is to general misbehaviour – drinking, smoking drugs but also refers to criminal activity. But Vuma also speaks of himself – an *amaGintsa* – as being 'corrupt' saying:

Vuma: If Apartheid didn't affect them [my parents] then maybe we wouldn't be staying in that shack house you know Sharlene – like me I won't get corrupt – like I will be still at school... Where I stay in the township Sharlene – *you see everything there you know* – so maybe if my parents are staying in the suburbs I wouldn't know about those things and I didn't see so many people smoking *ganja* you know.

From the evidence considered above, it appears that the term 'corrupt' is used liberally around the township and includes all behaviours from that of *kasi* youth to those of *skollies*.

Skollies

The final category that young people identified was that of *skollies*, which overlapped somewhat with *kasi* boy or girl. Under this rubric young people referred to *tsotsis*, thugs,

gangsters (and gangster girls), *amaGintsas* (carjackers) and *marhoshha* (prostitutes). These labels described young people who were into hard drugs, robbery, housebreaking, car hijacking and some who were members of organised gangs (gangsters). While this final category i.e. that of gangster was easier to discern through formal membership of a senior or junior gang e.g. Moscow, Young Moscow, DMFs (Dirty Mother Fuckers), Chicanos or Young Chicanos, the difference between being an *kasi* boy or *kasi* girl, and being a *skollie* or *tsotsi* was more difficult to discern. Stealing a cellphone didn't make you a *skollie* whereas housebreaking did. If you carried a knife you were a *kasi* boy but carrying a gun made you a gangster. In other words, the hierarchies of crime, violence and substance use I described in Chapter 6 were important in distinguishing between *skollies* and *kasi* youth. Popular author, Malcolm Gladwell (2000) speaks of two important concepts cogent to this discussion – 'tipping points' and 'stickiness'. At what point does the behaviour of *kasi* youth turn them into de facto *skollies* or *tsotsis*? At what point do they 'tip' from one category to another, and at what point does their behaviour go from experimentation to 'sticking'?

A key discernible difference between *skollies* and *kasi* youth was that at some point *kasi* youth stopped caring about their appearance and their criminal activity progressed from social banditry to fulltime job. A number of youth echoed Mathsufu's opinion about *skollies*:

Mathsufu: You can see the way they look... [and] talk – and even in their faces they have ...scars. And how to notice this one is a general guy and this one is just a *skollie*? The way they dress.

An incident with Bongani, a young man who had just been released from prison, corroborated Mathsufu's observation. I took Bongani to a shop to buy some clothes shortly after his release. A security guard in the store scrutinised him closely. Bongani seemed nervous and I asked him how he was feeling. He replied, 'There's no problem because I am clean, you see, but if I am dirty – then they think I am a *skollie*'. So outward appearance⁸

⁸ The one exception to this rule seems to be amongst organised gangsters who are earning enough money from their dealings to consistently dress well.

seems to at least be one distinguishing feature. Young people who no longer care about their appearance and whose scars testify to a lengthy involvement in violence are more likely to be *skollies* and gangsters than *kasi* kids. This is in keeping with recreational drug use becoming addiction, periodical fights becoming a way of life, and the tough postures of *kasi* youth morphing into the lifestyle of a *skollie*. So when Mhoza tells me that *skollies* are just ‘normal boys yah – but they do the wrong thing like smoking [*dagga*] and selling drugs’ when they are drunk and high, I have enough evidence to understand that while this is partly true, it is not entirely so.

Like *kasi* youth, building and maintaining a reputation for toughness was apparent among *skollies*. Bongani tells me *skollies* do the things they do ‘because these guys, they want you to know their name you see, they want to be famous’. Tapelo tells me that people are scared of him because of his ‘background’. When I ask him to explain he says:

Tapelo: It’s like *they know me* and even my friends – *what we have done*. So they scared of me – scared to do something wrong to me because they know maybe my [gangster] cousins will come for them... So they can’t do anything to me.

‘Gangster girls’ were those young women who were members of ‘girl gangs’ or who were the girlfriends of gang members. Gangster girls (not unlike *kasi* girls) regularly fought amongst themselves, or used violence to intimidate others.

There were five youth in my sample who were described by their peers as *skollies* or gangsters. Like ‘mommy’s babies’, these young people were reluctant to accept that they had been categorised as *skollies* or gangsters (with the exception of Siphso who freely admitted his gang involvement). None denied their actions, but insisted that they had reformed (or were in the process of reform). Bongani, who had been in jail three times over the past three years said, said, ‘No I am going to say I am a right guy, because I didn’t kill someone, but now I was a wrong guy before – so now I think I am right’. Ironically, when I returned to the field a year later, although Bongani had not been back to prison he

told his cousin Luxolo (who subsequently told me) that he was ‘changing jobs’. He was no longer going to do housebreaking; he was now going to hijack cars since the money was better!

Young people’s stories about gangs were harrowing. Sipho, a member of Young Moscow, told me of a time he helped his friend who had been stabbed to hospital (related in Chapter 6 as an example of ‘doing good’). He explains that:

Sipho: He was stabbed *neh*, so like no one like could take care of him, like he’s mos a *tsotsi*, so they don’t like him *neh*, they just wanted him to die. He was there by one of the gangs *neh*, uh, the DMF’s gang *neh*.

When I asked Sipho what the difference was between Young Moscow and Moscow, he replied:

Sipho: Young Moscow’s *neh* they don’t kill people. *They can stab you but not to death*, they are not [killers]. But Moscow [senior members] just kill people, yah.

Young people explained that there was very little pressure to become part of organised gangs: ‘There is no pressure. If you want to join you can join. They don’t call you. They don’t say come and join the gang. If you want to join you can join’. The reality, at least for Thobane, was different. He lived in an area inhabited by the Chicanos, and when a new gang started up in the adjacent zone, Thobane found himself being identified as a Chicano and beaten up (sometimes shot at) by a neighbouring gang. He decided to join the Chicanos for protection. The pressure he felt to join a gang was indirect but just as persuasive.

Skollies, like ‘mommy’s babies’, were also underrepresented in my sample, since most young people who were *skollies* had long since (and permanently) dropped out of, or had been ‘fired’, from school. Earlier Ingwazi had told me indirectly of the protective factor that school provides: ‘When I’m not in school you do something that you don’t want to do

but you do'. On my return to the field, of the *skollies*, only Sipho remained in school, and he had moved to an area far from the influence of Young Moscow in an attempt to reform his life. The others had all dropped out. In summary, *skollies*, *tsotsis*, and gangsters were *out* of school, *never* at home and *on* the streets, except of course when they were working their way up the crime hierarchy through varying levels of notoriety in prison gangs (Steinberg, 2004). Crime, substance use and violence were regular parts of their lives and most had been through the penal system. Their moral positioning was one of *ignoring* moral codes, unless of course they were in the process of 'reforming' – in which many claimed to be. Figure 7.1 summarises graphically these four categories and provides an indication of the relative size⁹ of each group within my research sample.

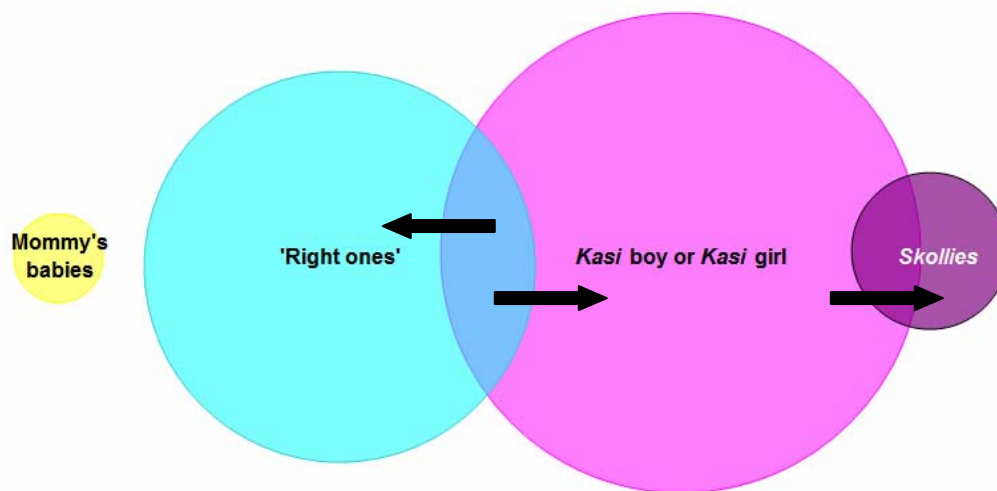


Figure 7.1 The four moral stances identified by young people (with the relative proportion of each category in the research sample represented by the size of each circle)

Although I do not claim that these relative proportions are indicative of the total township youth population since my sample was not representative, these proportions certainly resonated with my research participants. They told me that they thought that the proportion of 'mommy's babies' and 'skollies' was most likely higher than this diagram portrays. This is in keeping with my own reflection on my sample. Many young people, designated 'mommy's babies', did not feel free to speak to me because of the difficulties of language, and because of their sheltered lifeworlds.

⁹ In the research sample three out of the 37 young people were identified by their peers as 'Mommy's babies' (8%), 13 as 'Right ones' (35%), 16 as 'Kasi boys' or 'Kasi girls' (43%) and five as *Skollies* (14%).

Also most certainly, *skollies* are underrepresented in my sample, since most are out of school, rather than in school – and the primary site for this investigation was a school. In addition, other neighbourhood *skollies* were often *gerook* (high) or suspicious of me and so my conversations with them were limited. The arrows in Figure 7.1 point to the changes over time that occurred in the period I knew them (both during my initial fieldwork and a year later when I returned to the field). Upon my return to the field Mhoza had delivered a baby and was no longer considered sheltered; Andile and Andiswa had beaten their addictions and ‘demons’ and were now ‘right ones’ rather than *kasi* kids; Luxolo seemed to have shaken off her foray into *skollie* territory and was now more firmly entrenched as a *kasi* girl; and *kasi* boy Thobane had become a *skollie*. So while, these four moral stances form an interesting part of young people’s moral representations, and have been an important finding of this study, they are fluid and shifting. Notably, the social representations behind these young people’s portrayals of their peers suggest that mommy’s babies and *skollies* are both strongly judged by *what they do* – a hegemonic social representation. ‘Right ones’ and *kasi* boys and *kasi* girls on the other hand, are judged by *who they are* – an emancipated social representation. Arguably, as we shall see, youth are also judged by *where they are* – their physical location, of being at home, in school, off the streets, or the inevitable morality tied up with merely living in the township.

As important and interesting as these positionings of others are, it is also important to understand how these young people judge (or locate) *themselves* along the moral spectrum. Damon (1984) argues that in order for us to find out what place morality assumes in an individual’s life, we must investigate the nature of their moral *identity* or how a person understands ‘self in relation to these moral beliefs’ (p. 110). This will constitute the final task of this chapter.

Positioning the self-as-moral

In his research on the development of the self, Damon has shown that morality becomes ‘a dominant characteristic of self [in] ...middle adolescence’ (p. 116). It might therefore be expected that these young people would be able to locate themselves along the moral

spectrum they had previously described. In order to achieve this location of the moral self, I asked each young people in the study (during individual interviews) how they would describe themselves – as good or bad people. While young people did not use the same categories as they had used in describing their peers, their answers could also be classified into four categories, and provide further insight into their constructions of morality. Half of all young people described themselves as unequivocally good, and nearly half as either qualified good ('I'm a good person but...') or as both good and bad ('in the middle'). Only one young man described himself as bad ('more bad than good'). Figure 7.2 provides a graphic representation of these four categories of answers and a sense of the relative proportion of each set of responses. Each category will be briefly considered.

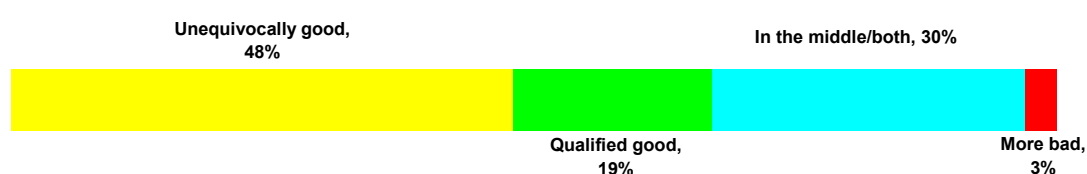


Figure 7.2 Moral self-description of young people in research sample

Unequivocally good

Nearly half of the young people in the research group characterised themselves as 'unequivocally good' i.e. 'good' without any qualifications (18 out of 37, 48%). While mainly 'right' youth described themselves as unequivocally good, some *kasi* boys and girls, *skollies* and 'mommy's babies' did so too (see Figure 7.3). Both 'mommy's babies' and 'right'

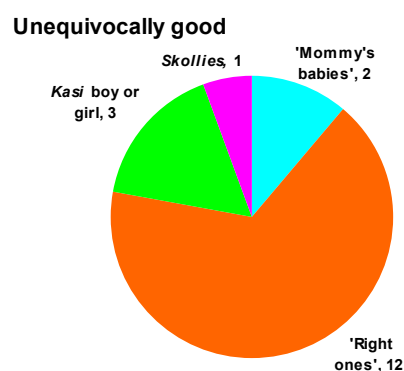


Figure 7.3 Categories of young people who describe themselves as unequivocally good (n=18)

young men and women used the same criteria for describing themselves as unequivocally good as their peers had used in describing them as mommy's babies or 'right ones' initially, i.e. being at home, in school, off the streets; being examples to others; because of what they did *not* do (drinking and smoking); because of the discretion they exercised about what they did do ('undercover, on the low down'); and because of the *limited extent* of what they did ('small liar', 'drink on big days'). Those *skollies* or gangster youth, who said they

were unequivocally good, said it was because they did not *kill* someone ('only stabbed') or 'do something wrong *in front of my mother and father*'. For *kasi* youth who described themselves as unequivocally good, their reasons were also about the extent, attitude, and location of their actions. 'I respect and care... I didn't smoke dagga in a public place – no!' says Thimna while Poseletso tell me she's a good person because she's not 'overdosing' and she knows what she's doing is wrong: 'Haai that's not good what I'm doing – but you see – I'm not overdosing. No sometimes I think what I'm doing is wrong. And – but – I know it's wrong but I'm doing it'. In general young people were quick to describe themselves as unequivocally good, rather than being critical of their own behaviour. They did not, however, apply the same generosity when describing their peers (as is evident in the previous categorisation).

Qualified good

All those young people who described themselves (7 out of 37, 19%) as 'qualified good' ('I'm good but...') were those whom others portrayed as either *kasi* youth or *skollies* (see Figure 7.4). Both Vuma (a *skollie*) and Luxolo¹⁰ (a *kasi* girl)

described the conflict between how others see them (generally as bad people, or people who do wrong things) and how they regard themselves as good people *on the inside*:

Luxolo: I think I'm a good person – but a good person who gets some things wrong... a good person is like someone who, well, *someone who maybe can help people* who, someone who [pauses] ...*doesn't take you as an outsider* or something. Let's just say maybe *someone with a heart*... someone who has a soft heart... Somebody who's like open to you and tells you when you're wrong, or something.

Sharlene: Are you a good person?

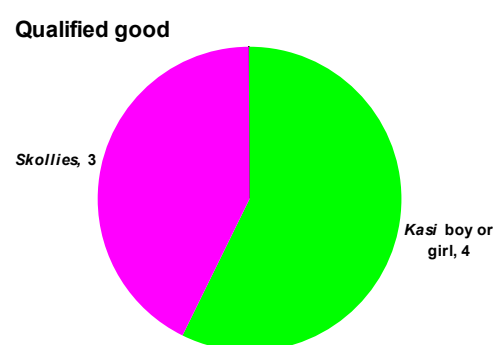


Figure 7.4 Categories of young people who describe themselves as qualified good (n=7)

¹⁰ Although Luxolo later describes herself as 'on the other hand I'm good and I'm just bad', this was in response to further probing. Her initial evaluation was 'I'm good, but...' led me to place her into the qualified good category.

- Luxolo: [Long pause] I'd say yes and I'd say no... because on the other hand I'm good and I'm just bad by, by doing all the wrong things, that's all. *Inside I'm a good person.*
- Sharlene: What makes you a good person inside?
- Luxolo: Like I uh, *I care for other people.*
- Vuma: Sometimes Sharlene [pause] *it's what I do to make me a good person* because like – *but it's inside*. Some people see me as a wrong person... cos I don't do good – like there's nothing good I did you know. Sometimes I'm not a good person Sharlene... Phew [pause] yah when it comes to be good yesssss – I can say that like, I'm a good person but [long pause] *I am a good person but without dagga and alcohol.*

Vuma and Luxolo both illustrate young people's representation of morality as *who you are on the inside*. For Vuma his comment that he is 'a good person but without *dagga* and alcohol' is especially poignant. Both Vuma and Luxolo highlight the fundamental attribution error¹¹, judging themselves less harshly than they judge others. When speaking of themselves they refer less to their dispositions to badness, and more to situational factors (for Vuma *dagga* and alcohol, and earlier, just because of what he's seen in *ikasi*). They also refer to their internal dispositions to goodness despite the wrong things they do.

In the middle or both

Although there was not much difference between the reasons young people gave for describing themselves as 'qualified good' versus 'in the middle' (11 out of 37, 30%) I have made the analytical distinction because of the emphasis in young people's answers. Vuma

¹¹ The fundamental attribution error is a phenomenon in social psychology identified by Lee Ross (1978) that maintains that people tend to attribute causes of behaviour to dispositional traits rather than to situational and external factors when judging other's behaviour. When people judge their own behaviour, the reverse occurs – they are biased towards explaining their actions based on environmental factors rather than on personal shortcomings. See also Samuels and Casebeer (2005).

and Luxolo were adamant that they were good but qualified their assertions. Nearly a third of youth were more hesitant, saying they were both good *and* bad or ‘in the middle’. With few exceptions, the majority of young people who said they were ‘in the middle’ were classified by their peers as being *kasi* youth (see Figure 7.5). Andiswa eloquently articulates the reasoning behind considering herself ‘in the middle’:

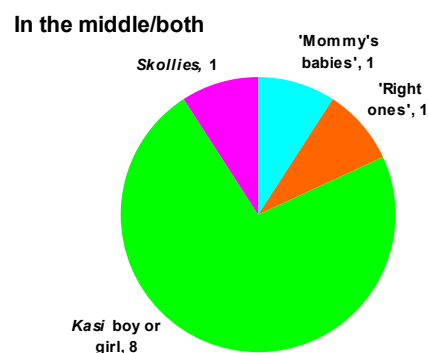


Figure 7.5 Categories of young people who describe themselves as ‘in the middle’ (n=11).

Andiswa: *Half bad, half good.* Because – I have a good side. There’s my hard work you know, my inspiration – me being a role model to kids... But half bad because of the bad things I have done... That makes me – a quarter of a bad person and three-quarter of a right person. *I’m in the middle.* [Pause] Right now I have just this quarter to sort out. Just knowing that I’m doing the wrong things but I’m not moving from them. I’ve sorted my *dagga* thing and my drinking problem. Now I have to start on my smoking problem. Once I move from that – no longer bad sins on my head. I’ll be a good person.

Surprisingly, she does not refer to her violence or shoplifting. When I asked her about it later she says ‘it’s in the past’ hence saying she just has ‘a quarter to sort out’. Notably, a number of young people were also reluctant to say whether they were good people or not. Both Lekho and Dipuo said ‘other people must say’ or ‘it’s you who have to tell me I’m a good or a bad’. Dipuo eventually settled for ‘I think I’m in the middle’.

More bad

Only one young man, Katlego, a *kasi* boy from Oakridge said he was ‘more bad than good’, although he started by saying ‘not good or bad’:

Katlego: Average. I am just another person. I am me. Not good or bad. [pause] Bad person. I'm more bad than good. [Why?] No the things I do. The cellphones [I've stolen]. Drink... and smoking. I – like, when I'm angry and stuff like that, I don't give a damn about other people. I just see me and I don't respect anyone else except me.

Katlego's judgement of himself was more harsh than most. He was a typical *kasi* boy and his behaviour was similar to many others. Yet he judged himself to be more bad than good. Was his judgement perhaps more realistic than others?

Conclusion

The four moral stances (or cultures) young people identified were essentially ones of *isolating* oneself from moral danger ('mommy's babies'); *deflecting ikasi* style and motivating oneself along an alternative path for the sake of your future ('right ones'); unthinkingly *absorbing* and then *reflecting ikasi* style (*kasi* boy or girl); or *ignoring* moral codes and abandoning oneself to the moment in pursuit of money, drugs and prestige¹². Also evident in *kasi* youth and *skollies*' moral positioning, was a representation of a *morality of inevitability* – a sense that merely being in the township meant that it was inevitable that your behaviour would reflect township norms around violence, substance use and crime.

Comparing young people's portrayals of themselves with those of others, Figure 7.6 (overleaf) shows diagrammatically how young people in each of the categorisations of 'mommy's babies', 'right ones', *kasi* youth and *skollies* located themselves along the spectrum of moral goodness. Overall, sheltered young people described themselves as unequivocally good or as 'in the middle' – a moral location of self in keeping with their peers' assessment. Except for one person, all 'right' young people described themselves as unequivocally good. 'Right' youth recognise their behaviour as being good or right and locate themselves in keeping with their peers' assessments. The majority of *kasi* youth

¹² For these latter two categories of youth (*ikasi* and *skollie*), there was also a fifth position – a constant state of *reforming* – that emerged in the course of our interaction, and that will be discussed more fully in Chapter 10.

described themselves as being ‘in the middle’ or as qualified good. They were clearly aware that their moral behaviour was not unequivocally good. But there were also a number¹³ of *kasi* youth, who despite violence, prolific substance use and forays into criminality, insisted on describing themselves as unequivocally good. It is most surprising that only one young person out of all research participants described himself as ‘bad’. But it was *skollies* who showed the least degree of self-awareness regarding their personal moral locations. Despite the robbery, hijacking, serious violence and housebreaking, no *skollie* describes himself as bad, and four out of five describe themselves as unequivocally good or qualified good!

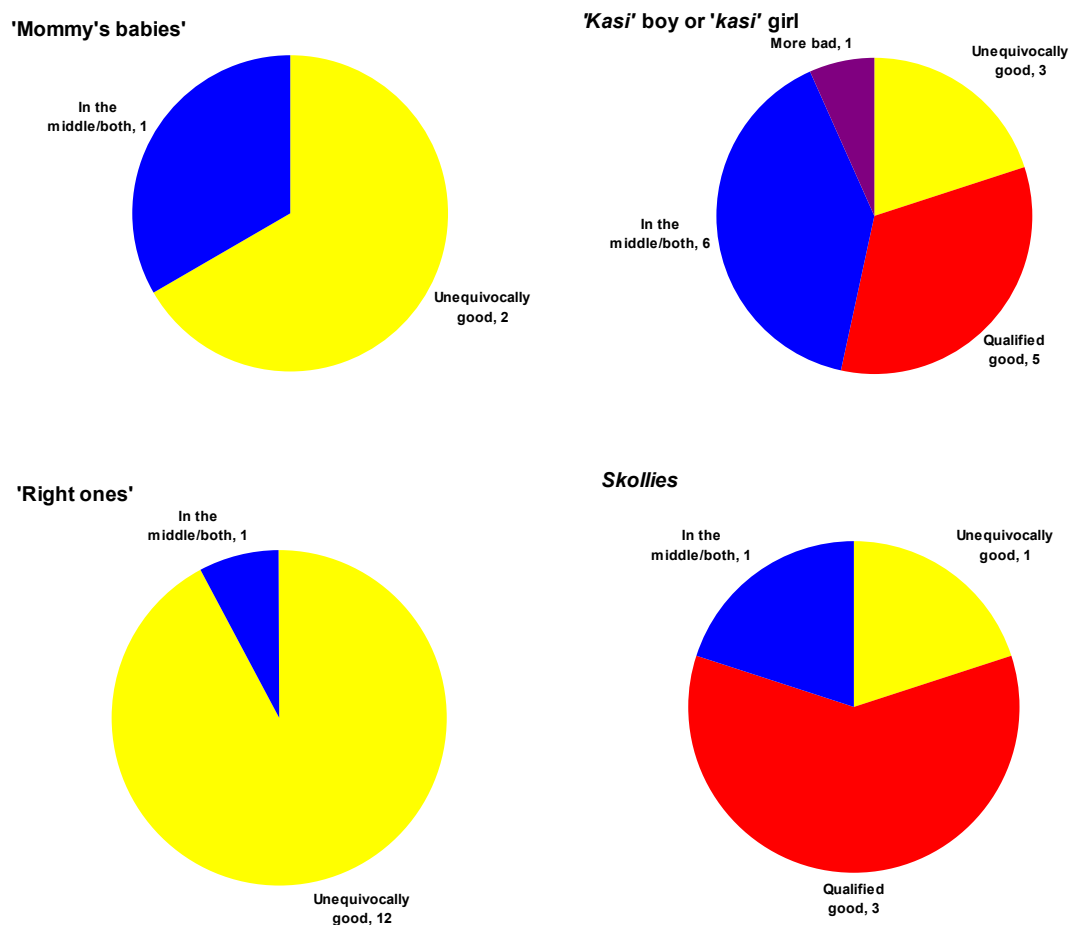


Figure 7.6 How each ‘other-described’ category of youth locate themselves in terms of moral goodness

Without investigating the extent to which these latter group of young people may have sociopath tendencies, (in which case such a lack of self-awareness might be expected), the

¹³ The three *kasi* youth who describe themselves as unequivocally good (Nzulu, Phumeza and Thobane) displayed unrealistic assessments of themselves in other areas too.

way in which *skollies* locate themselves within the moral spectrum is most startling. These young *skollies* speak of moral ideals but their ‘moral ideals are powerless if they are not rooted in a moral self’ (Blasi, 1984, p. 130). In social psychology, the concept of the fundamental attribution error (Ross, 1978; Samuels & Casebeer, 2005) maintains that people are more likely to judge others’ behaviour in terms of personal dispositions (personality or character), whereas they judge themselves using situational (environment or external factors) criteria. This is partly evident in young people’s moral positioning of self and others. While sheltered and ‘right’ youth seem to judge themselves realistically in terms of their moral identities, *kasi* youth and *skollies* seem to have less realistic opinions about their moral stances. Both speak of their internal goodness as being more important than their external actions. Surprisingly, young people do not invoke (at least not overtly) the pervasive presence of immoral practices in their environment nor the immorality of Apartheid and ongoing poverty in explaining their behaviours. They therefore only exhibit one dimension of the fundamental attribution error. Their understanding of the influence of their environment will be more fully explored in Chapter 9.

The significance of these moral positionings lie in the reality that social representations provide people with the resources to interpret and make sense of social situations and offer ‘a code for naming and classifying unambiguously the various aspects of their world and their individual and group history’ (Moscovici, 1973, p. xiii). For these township youth considering themselves to be ‘good’ in a ‘bad’ world is one such representation¹⁴. Of equal importance is the belief that social representations influence human behaviour (Duveen & Lloyd, 1990; Jaspars & Fraser, 1984; Scott, 2000). If young people who engage in crime, violence and harmful substance use consider themselves to be basically good people – while simultaneously maintaining these actions are wrong or bad – then this phenomenon must have implications for moral and citizenship education, and youth interventions.

In the next chapter, therefore, I explore in more depth how this group of township youth *enact* their morality – the ways in which they view their own moral agency and sense of

¹⁴ While beyond the scope of this study, it would be interesting to compare the social representations of middle-class, ‘white’, ‘coloured’ and ‘Indian’ youth to those of ‘black’ township youth.

moral responsibility and the processes by which they come to take particular actions and reject others. At the heart of this representation is their explanation for the incongruence between belief and behaviour.

CHAPTER EIGHT

MORAL PROCESSES: DECISION-MAKING AND DISSONANCE

Tapping into moral reasoning processes empirically is not easily done. In Chapter 1, I described and critiqued Lawrence Kohlberg's understanding of moral development. Chief in this critique was how Kohlberg's use of fictitious dilemma discussions were unlikely to tap the moral reasoning ability of people outside of Global North cultures. The approach I used was to ask the young people I befriended to draw and reflect upon *Mind Maps*¹ describing their own *real-life* decision-making processes. The results provide fascinating insights into young people's moral pathways and processes. I begin by identifying the various elements that these youth employed in making moral judgements before describing the connections they made between belief and behaviour. It is here that the interface between taking personal responsibility, the role of prior reflection and the impact of poverty come together.

How township youth represent the moral decisions they make

Of the 37 youth in my study, 27 successfully² completed *Mind Maps* (10 young men and 17 young women) and drew a total of 50 *Mind Maps*³. Young people produced more *Mind Maps* about good decisions (31) than bad decisions (13)⁴ with very little variation by gender. This is in contrast to young people's *Free Lists* where lists of wrong items exceeded lists of right

¹ This was a less sophisticated, but more open-ended activity.

² Seven young people merely drew lists of right or wrong decisions, and these I have excluded from this analysis, since it appears that they misunderstood the purpose of the activity. Of course they may also have been unwilling or unable to complete the task.

³ See Chapter 3 for a full explanation of this activity.

⁴ Diagrams depicting using various substances were predominantly portrayed as negative or bad decisions while decisions regarding stopping substance use, faith, and school were portrayed as good decisions. Decisions about relationships covered the range of good, bad, and neutral. There were four *Mind Maps* that did not indicate whether they were good or bad decisions (labelled neutral in Appendix 9). Decisions about forgiving friends were either portrayed as good or neutral while decisions regarding sport were only good.

items. I interpreted *Mind Maps* by looking at what components young people had freely chosen to include. Some included a combination of *consequences* and *benefits* of particular actions, and the interpersonal expectations and *influences* of those around them (what I have called ‘CBI’ *Mind Maps*). Others evidenced *metacognitive* ability, the ability to think about the moral thinking *process* itself and provide a *sequential* order to their decision-making (what I have called ‘MPS’ *Mind Maps*).

The content of young people’s *Mind Maps* is summarised in Figure 8.1. (See Appendix 9 for a detailed analysis). Two main conclusions can be drawn from this basic data. The first is that more young people represented their moral decision-making processes as a combination of consequences, benefits and influences (‘CBI’) than depicted an awareness of the metacognitive processes and sequences (‘MPS’) of decision-making i.e. their ability to think about their thought processes. The second conclusion is that the kinds of *Mind Maps* produced by young men and young women also differed somewhat. Young men produced nearly equal numbers of *Mind Maps* that could be categorised as ‘CBI’ and ‘MPS’ whereas young women produced far fewer ‘MPS’ *Mind Maps* than ‘CBI’ *Mind Maps*. In fact, young men produced twice as many ‘MPS’ *Mind Maps* as young women. The significance of this distinction will be returned to later in this chapter, once the nature of each of these kinds of *Mind Maps* produced has been discussed.

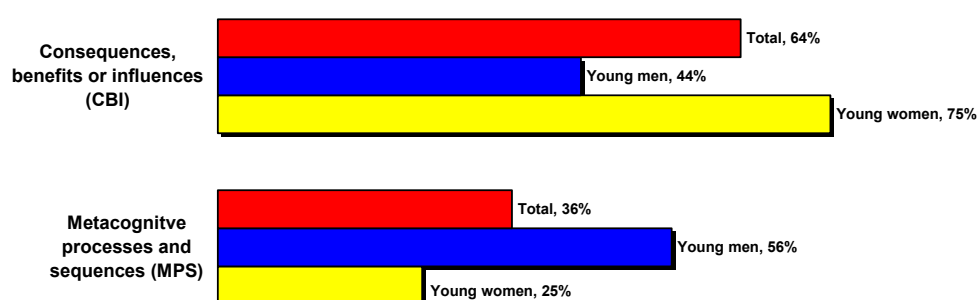


Figure 8.1 Breakdown of types of *Mind Maps* produced

Decision-making based on consequences, benefits and influences

Young people produced many more *Mind Maps* that reflected some combination of consequences, benefits and influences. Not surprisingly, they tended to depict more

positive benefits when depicting a good decision than a bad decision, in which case they tended to depict negative consequences. Tapelo, for example, listed seven *positive benefits* of a good decision ('remaining in school') in his diagram (Figure 8.2), including being 'out of trouble in my area', 'what I want to be' and having 'a bright future'.

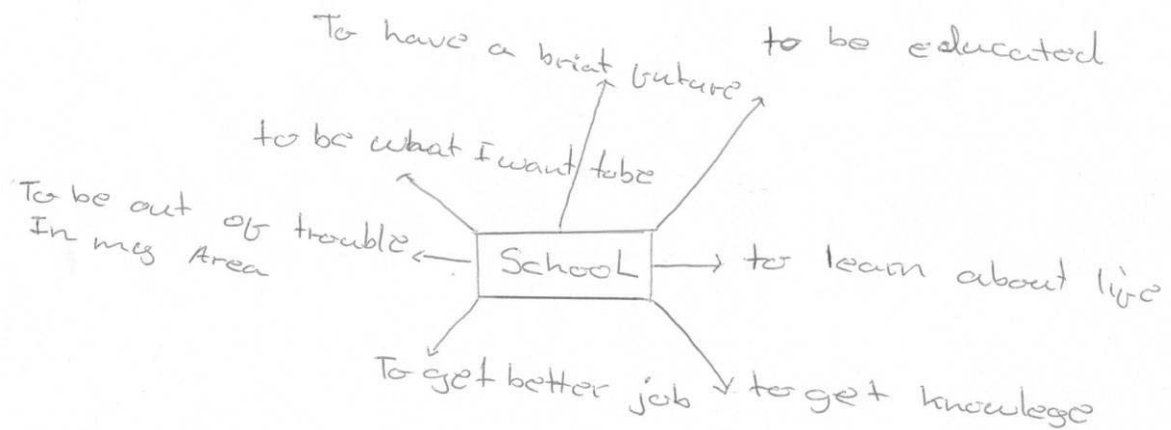


Figure 8.2 Tapelo's Mind Map (young man, township-schooled, aged 19) classified as a 'CBI' diagram, depicting a positive decision

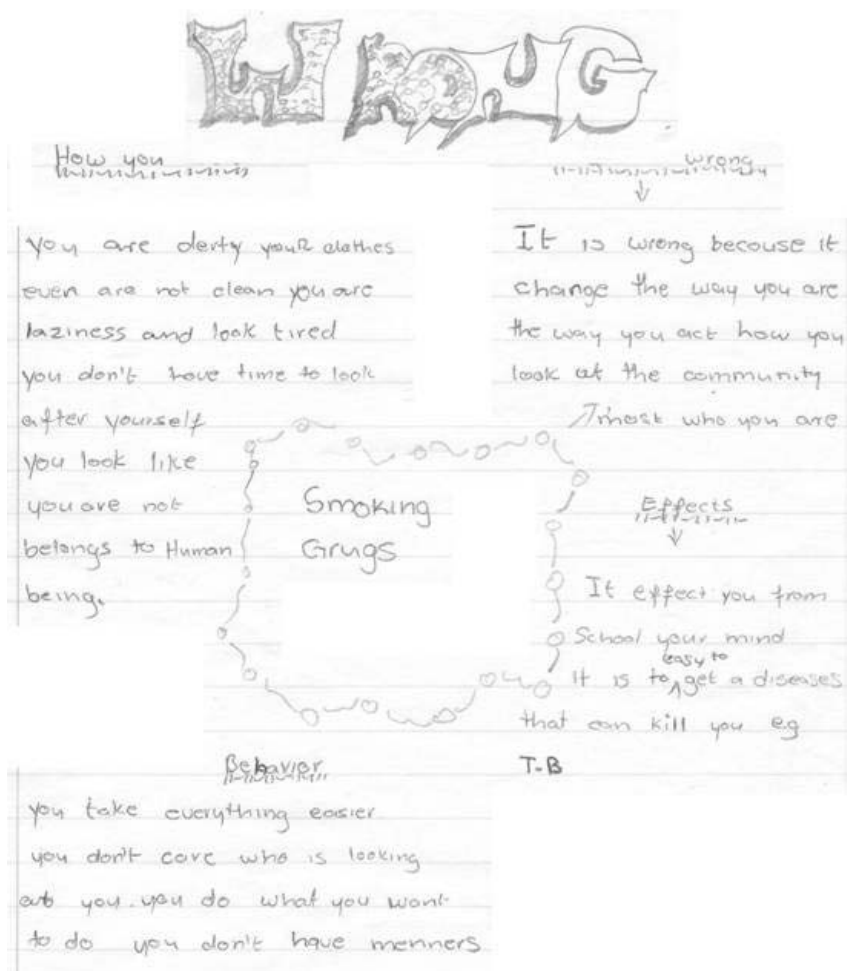


Figure 8.3 Vuma's Mind Map (young man, township-schooled, aged 19, classified as a 'CBI' diagram, depicting a negative decision

In contrast, Vuma's diagram (Figure 8.3) described a wrong decision ('smoking drugs') and focused on the negative consequences of the action e.g. 'you look like you are not belonging to human being', 'you are dirty', 'it affect... school, your mind', 'you don't have manners', and 'change the way you are'. Linking good decisions with positive benefits and wrong decisions with negative consequences was true for all young men and most (but not all) young women.

The majority of young men (five out of eight 'CBI' diagrams) only portrayed *influences*⁵ in their diagram (compared to only one out of 24 diagrams drawn by young women). Nzulu's diagram (Figure 8.4) provides an example of a young man's diagram that only listed influences. In his decision to 'go... back to smoking' he merely lists the three influences that motivated him to reach a decision (himself, his cousin and friends). He is also clear to indicate his own *responsibility* for making this 'bad' decision with the word 'myself' written larger than the other influences he notes.

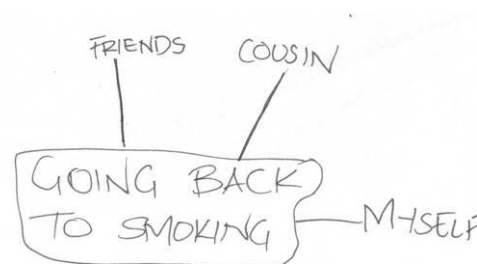


Figure 8.4 Nzulu's Mind Map (young man, suburbs-schooled, aged 15) classified as a 'CBI' diagram, depicting a bad decision

Young women tended to be more comprehensive in talking about all three facets⁶ of consequences, benefits, and influences when depicting their moral decision processes. Andiswa's diagram (Figure 8.5) is the most comprehensive of all in the 'CBI' categorisation and describes the positive benefits, negative consequences, and influences of her decision to stop smoking cigarettes and dagga. Her diagram relates a narrative providing a list of the *reasons* (negative consequences and positive benefits) for quitting smoking, and depicts the influences of various people (names deleted). While it does not elaborate on the process, it does describe in some detail the *circumstances* leading to making each decision. In a later interview she tells me:

⁵ Influences include mothers, younger and older siblings, other family members, community members, friends, and peers as moral influences and are more fully discussed in Chapter 9.

⁶ Of all 32 diagrams categorised as 'CBI', only 7 (22%) were characterised by the presence of all three features (consequences, benefits, influences) – all of which were drawn by young women.

Andiswa: Well, [pause] I can say that I changed for the better when I stopped smoking dagga ... Although it's kind of fun, it's nice to be high, but the *consequences* of it mm-mm [shakes her head]. So that's why I stopped it.

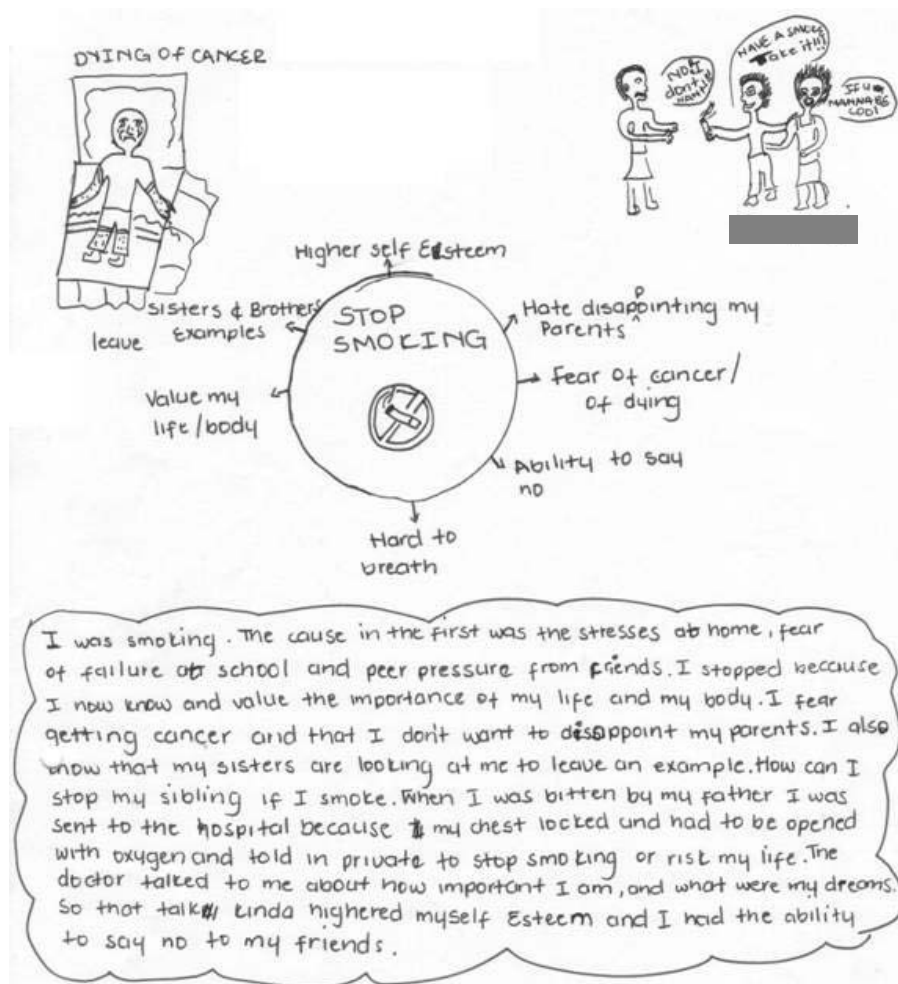


Figure 8.5 Andiswa's Mind Map (young woman, township-schooled, aged 15) classified as a 'CBI' diagram, depicting a good decision

Data from these 'CBI' diagrams illustrate the important place attributed to consequences by a large number (two-thirds) of young people. Avoiding going to jail (robbery), harming your health (drugs and cigarettes), becoming ill and contracting disease (sex), losing money (alcohol and gambling), and getting killed (crime and violence) were some of the consequences youth provided. This was confirmed during interviews. Ingwazi spoke eloquently of the dramatic consequences of using Mandrax in his life – from changes in his physical appearance to being out of control:

Ingwazi: The way I was looking, hey, I was a little bit ugly... my colour is dark... [and] pimples. And my eyes, they were red, you see, and I was coming a little bit thin, you see... This thing – it's waste money, you see. If you have R100, R100 is a cent, you just pay R100 in two minutes, it's over. Then you want another one. So, I hated that. And I didn't have pocket money, so that I can buy something for myself. Because if I have R50 or R20, I'm thinking about the pill, I don't think about other thing. But now if I have R10, I say no, man, let me go buy a chocolate or a nice pie, *yabon*. I can do that now, but last year I couldn't do that.

Other young people spoke of substance use causing them to 'lose things' because people would rob them when they saw they were drunk or *gerook*. Phindiwe spoke of the consequences of people's 'brains ...not functioning well after some time' due to substance abuse, while for Phumeza it was the consequence of alcohol causing you to 'do something wrong... like shouting [at] people and fighting and sleeping with men'. For Sipho and Tapelo (both gangsters) the reasoning behind deciding something was wrong, although based on consequences, was convoluted. For Sipho it was the potential consequences to his *own* life, rather than the harm it causes others:

Sipho: I know my – like robbing other people is not right. I know that it has, I mean consequences yah. At the end of the day *I was the one who's going to suffer*, who was going to end up in jail or, I was *mos* going to end up dead or something.

For Tapelo, deciding to steal cars 'with no one there' rather than hijacking cars with people in them, revolved around the *severity* of the punishment if caught:

Tapelo: It's like [hijacking] *is too bad so even when you are arrested*, because when you hijack you maybe hijack with knife or gun. So it is wrong, it is better to take it with no one there... It's like no one will see

me... My friends so, they said 'No, we won't hijack because it is bad'. Because sometimes the person of the car, he could not give the car so sometime they shoot him and kills him. We talk about it – and everybody agreed.

Tapelo's thinking also reflects the place of peers' influence and the hierarchy of wrong present in young people's moral codes (see Chapter 6) – hijacking cars is worse than simply stealing cars.

A number of youth used the phrase 'there's no future there' (or similar) in describing why they would avoid shoplifting or drug use. Xolani told me he avoided crime because 'I see that in my location... that life is not go on with – short life. I will die'. Similarly, for Luxolo doing 'wrong things... are going to make you, *you're not going to go anywhere*'. Khaya spoke of avoiding getting a girl pregnant because 'you are going to be *suffering* [financially] for a child' while Vuma told me he *had* to give a false name when he was arrested for car hijacking because of the consequences: 'It was to get out of trouble – so *I had no choice* just to lie you know. I didn't want a record.' A number of young men spoke of the necessity of carrying a knife to protect themselves, and of the need to fight should they be provoked so that no-one picks on them in the future – avoiding the *consequences of future harm*.

While in one respect, these explanations of moral reasoning are about simple consequences, in another more profound way, they indicate young people's future orientation, of wanting to achieve at school, get good jobs, escape the townships and help their mothers and younger siblings. So while a Kohlbergian analysis of young people who draw 'CBI' *Mind Maps* might place these young people at lower, preconventional⁷ levels of moral reasoning, it is also clear that township youth think about consequences in complex rather than simplistic ways.

⁷ According to Kohlberg (1981; 1984), preconventional reasoning was based primarily on the avoidance of punishment, avoiding consequences, self-interest and personal benefit. It is the lowest of his three levels of moral development.

Decision-making reflecting metacognitive processes and sequences

I categorised the second type of diagram produced by young people as metacognitive processes and sequences diagrams ('MPS'). Diagrams were categorised as 'MPS' diagrams if they displayed evidence of overt metacognitive skills such as describing the method, sequence, and context of their decisions. 'MPS' diagrams showed the circumstances which led to the decision, and what steps a young person took in making the decision (such as consulting parents or friends, thinking themselves, or identifying an event as being the catalyst for the decision). Most 'MPS' *Mind Maps* also included a comprehensive combination of consequences, benefits, and influences.

Luxolo's two diagrams, for example, show a clear perception of the process through which she came to make her decisions. Her first *Mind Map* describes the reasons why she decided to begin smoking (Figure 8.6) – seeing adults do it, being influenced by her friends' examples and pressure to retain their friendship, and due to her environment (having a *shebeen* at her house and constantly seeing people smoking and drinking).



Figure 8.6 Luxolo's first *Mind Map* (young woman, township-schooled, aged 19) classified as a 'MPS' diagram, depicting a bad decision

Her second diagram (Figure 8.7) describes how she stopped herself 'from doing crime', and illustrates the negative *consequences* of continuing the behaviour (going to jail), her friends' and mother's positive *influence*, and the impact of doing a youth development programme on motivation and decision-making. While this diagram reveals less of the process than her smoking *Mind Map*, she nonetheless manages to capture some of the *sequence* involved in making this decision.

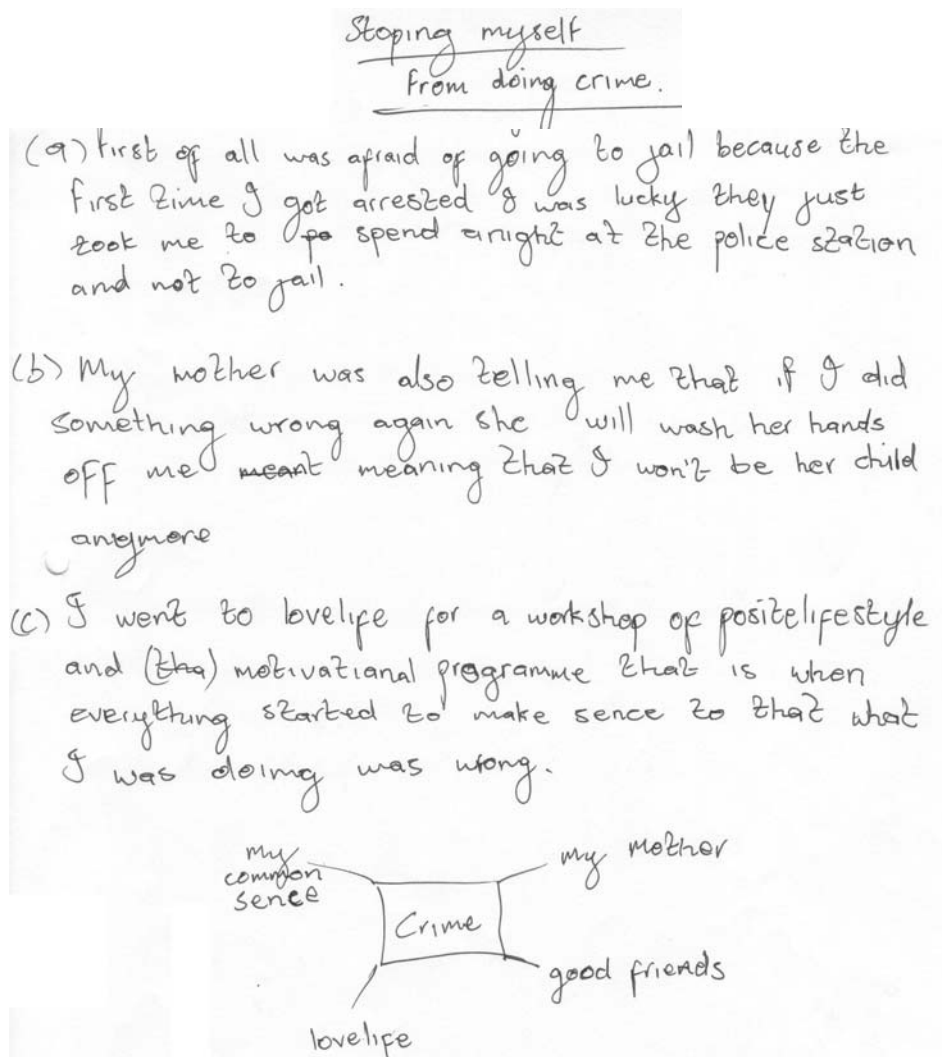


Figure 8.7 Luxolo's second *Mind Map* classified as a 'MPS' diagram depicting a good decision

Thandi's diagram (Figure 8.8) about friendship offers a detailed *analysis* that included four *influences* (her mom, the friend involved, her friends, and her own thinking processes). She shows a sophisticated understanding of the decision-making *process* balancing what she *wants*, what her mother *advises*, her friends' *opinions*, and her *interaction* with her friend.

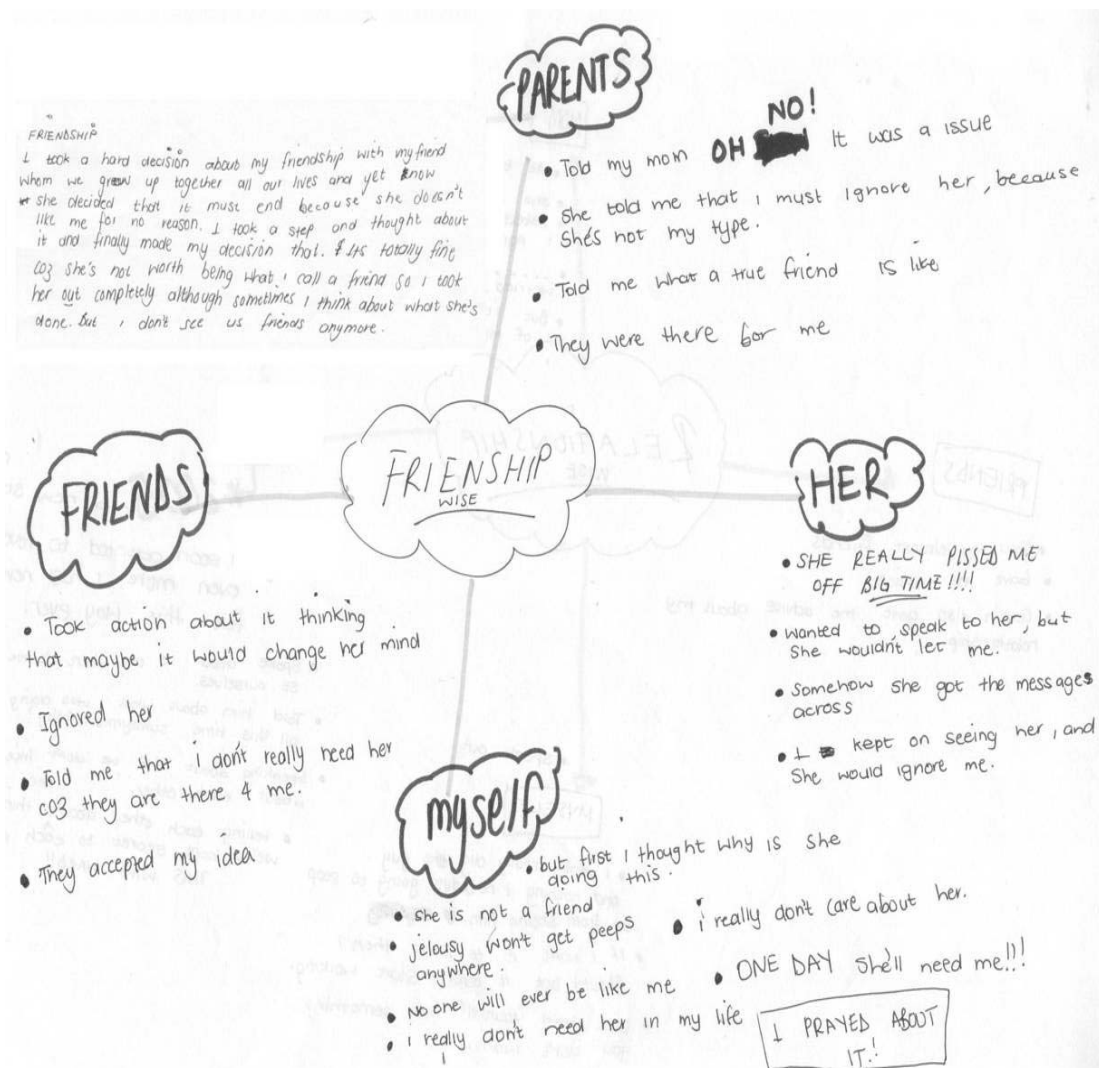


Figure 8.8 Thandi's Mind Map (young woman, suburbs-schooled, aged 16) categorised as a 'MPS' diagram, depicting a good decision)

Andile's set of two diagrams depict his decision to start drinking (Figure 8.9) and then to stop drinking (Figure 8.10). In his first diagram he *explains* when he began drinking, where he drank and with what frequency (two years previously, every week and at school). He lists the *consequences* of drinking – failing at school and getting arrested for being in a stolen car. Andile's second diagram continues the narrative and tells how he came to stop drinking, or at least limit it only to 'big days like Christmas'. He outlines his thoughts about the relationships between drinking and being arrested, his youth and the harm alcohol could cause, and finally his relationship with his new girlfriend, who makes him want to be a better person. While Andile's diagrams are more narrative in form, it does describe *consequences*, *influences*, and *processes* leading to his decision to stop drinking. Unlike Luxolo, he does not provide any indication of the process that led him to begin drinking.

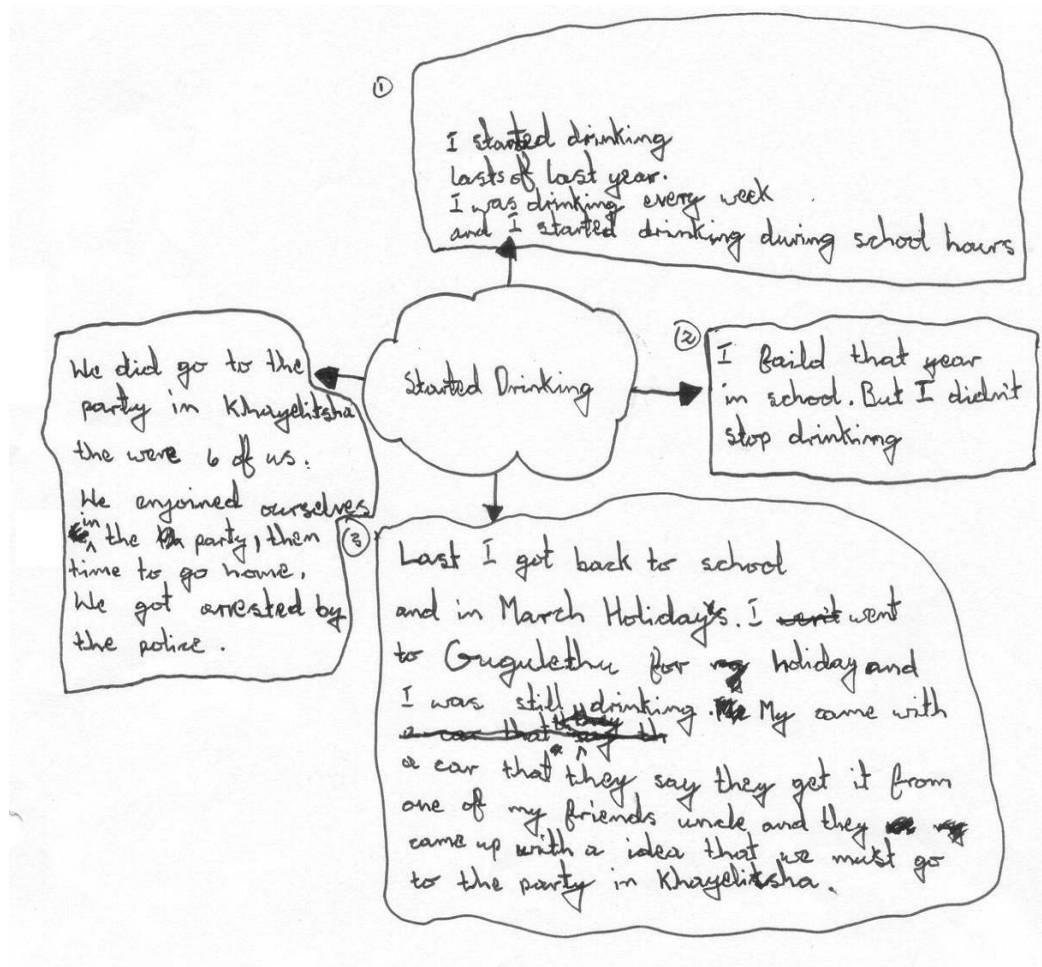


Figure 8.9 Andile's first Mind Map (young man, township-schooled, aged 19) categorised as a 'MPS' diagram, depicting a bad decision

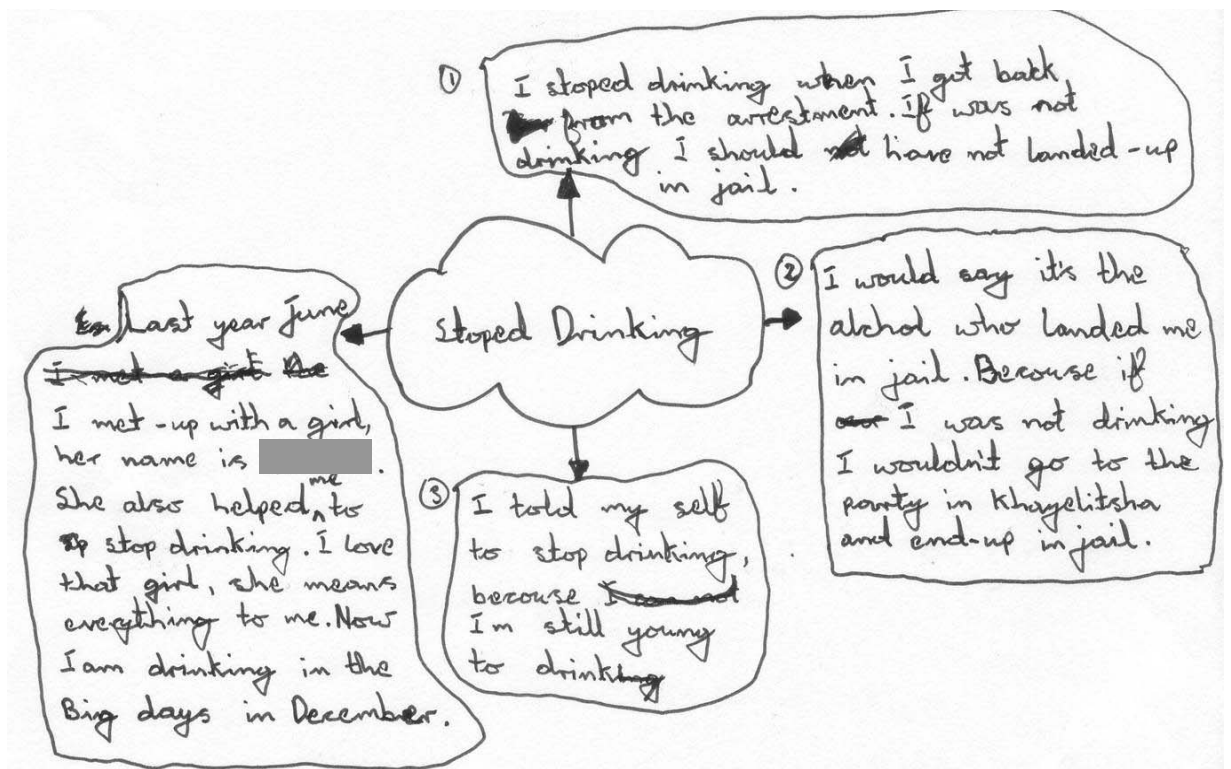


Figure 8.10 Andile's second Mind Map, classified as a 'MPS' diagram depicting a good decision

Katlego's depiction (Figure 8.11) offers a clearer depiction of the sequence in his decision relating to his future goals (becoming a rapper). He speaks about *planning* for the decision, thinking of his *future* and the *benefits* to himself. He then lists what he will *need* (help from his father, and finances). Finally he records his *motivation*: boredom, escape from family issues, and to further his career. He also lists his musical *influences*, and his *strategy* (making demos) and his reasons for deciding ('people tell me my songs are good', 'it was a talent that I had'). Katlego's thinking is an example of sophisticated process thinking.

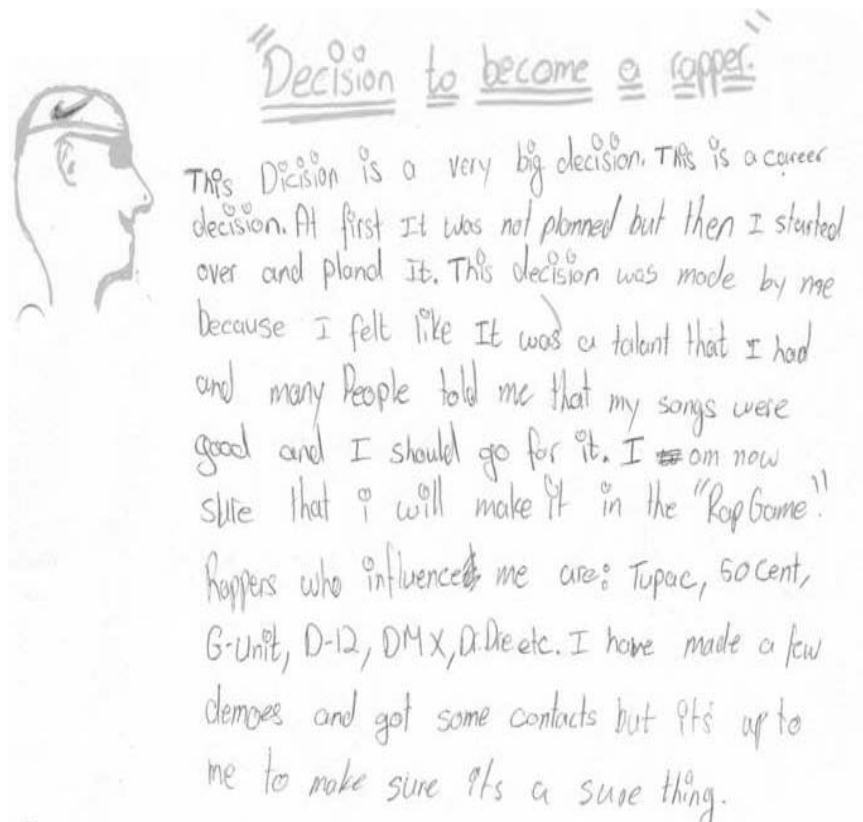


Figure 8.11 Katlego's Mind Map produced by (young man, suburbs-schooled, aged 15) classified as a 'MPS' diagram, depicting a good decision

Mathsufu's diagram (Figure 8.12) also displays an excellent grasp of *process* thinking. He says when he makes a good decision he *thinks* about it first, ensuring he has plenty of *time*. Then he asks for *advice* from his brother and someone from the community he *respects*. Subsequently he *compares options*, and finally *makes the decision*. Mathsufu's was one of very few diagrams that depicted a decision in the abstract rather than about a particular issue.

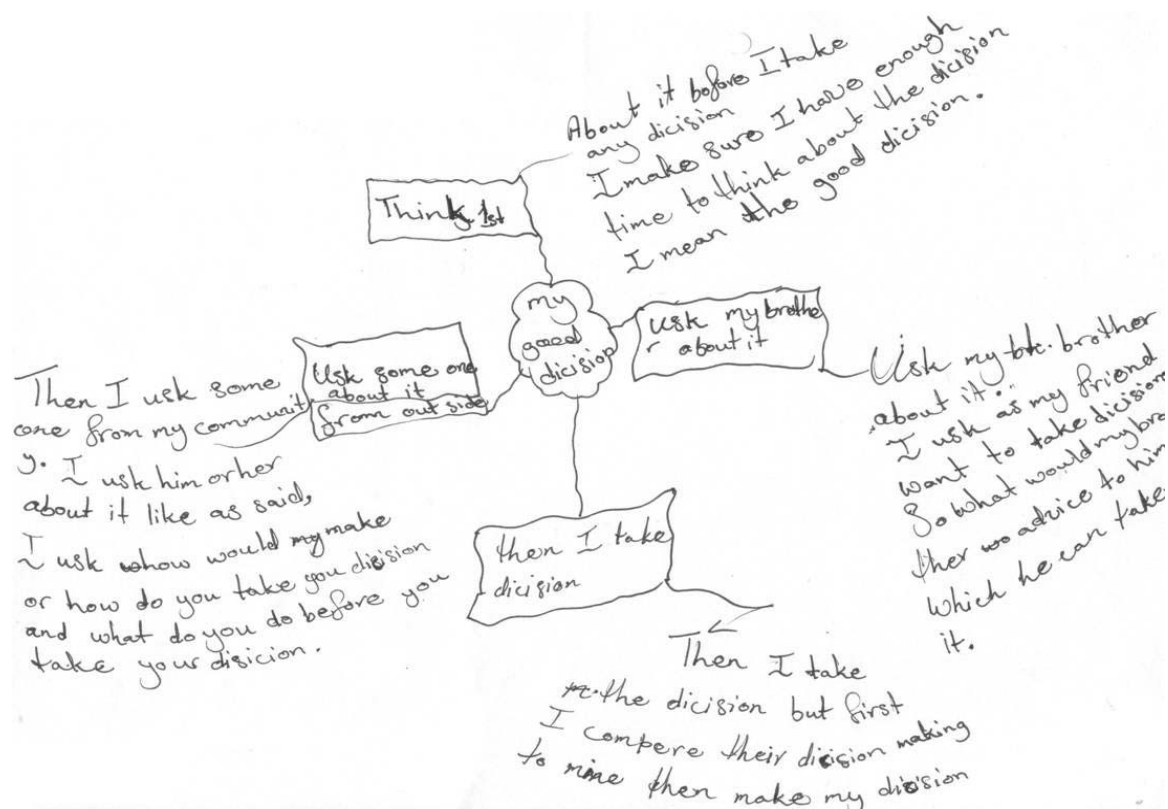


Figure 8.12 Mathsufu's Mind Map (young man, township-schooled, aged 18) classified as a 'MPS' diagram, depicting a good but non-specified decision

Gender and schooling differences in decision- making

In reflecting on young people's *Mind Maps*, it is interesting to note that the majority of suburbs-schooled youth (four out of the six young people) produced diagrams categorised as 'MPS' diagrams, while only five out of 21 township-schooled youth did so⁸. But there were at least four young women from Mandela High who, although producing CBI type *Mind Maps*, were able to display sophisticated 'process' thinking in subsequent interviews. For example, when we spoke of revenge, Fundiswa distinguished between an action being right but bad. She told me that 'sometimes it is right to take revenge on someone' but then went on to say that if you did so 'it will be a war – sometimes [something] is right but it's bad'. When speaking about drinking, Mandisa queried whether people smoke *dagga* or drink in order to get up the courage to do something wrong (like rob or fight) or whether their behaviour is an unintended consequence of smoking *dagga*. Discussions with Nonkiza

⁸ This translates into two thirds of suburbs-schooled youth completing 'MPS' diagrams compared to one quarter of township-schooled youth.

about overcharging for goods and with Poseletso about having sex for money and the death penalty also revealed sophisticated process thinking not reflected in their diagrams. These latter explanations led me to conclude that there is little difference between young men and young women's response to this activity.

However, the impact of a better education is evident in suburban-schooled young people's *Mind Maps* – both in the ease with which they were able to express themselves and the comprehensive way in which they discussed consequences, benefits, influences, sequences, and displayed an overall ability to think about their moral thinking processes. Township-schooled youth, partly as a function of language but also as a result of not having as much opportunity to express their opinions, required more time and greater patience (on the part of the researcher) in order to display their metacognitive skills (as indicated by data obtained from subsequent interviews).

In general, *Mind Maps* served to provide further evidence for the complex ways in which these township youth represent their moral decision-making. This technique foregrounds young people's metacognitive abilities – signs of advanced cognitive development. However much they may score lower on Western moral reasoning tests (Ferns & Thom, 2001; Smith & Parekh, 1996), given the opportunity they appear to be capable of reflecting on their decision-making processes and able to exercise sophisticated levels of judgement. *Mind Maps* also provided a catalyst, together with *Right and Wrong Questionnaires*, to speak of the relationship between the context in which they lived and their decision-making processes. In subsequent interviews, this interface between context, belief and behaviour became apparent.

How youth explain inconsistencies between belief and behaviour

As much as young people in this study have provided a compelling picture of their moral consciousness, as with many other studies, young people's reporting about their moral beliefs is not necessarily consistent with their moral behaviour. This 'belief-behaviour' gap is one that numerous authors discuss (Bergman, 2002; Blasi, 1980; Coles, 1986; Damon &

Colby, 1996; Lickona, 1976; Walker, 2004). Few have, however, explored empirically the relationships between young people's *stated* moral beliefs and their *observed* moral behaviour. The value of an ethnographic study is the way in which this 'belief-behaviour' gap can be observed firsthand, and that over time, contradictions and inconsistencies can emerge and be fully discussed. To be sure, many of these discussions were difficult, but the data that they reveal make an important contribution to understanding young people's overall moral ecology. As an exercise in quantifying some of these gaps, I compared 'belief' data young people provided in the *Right and Wrong Questionnaire* with 'behaviour' data⁹ I collected through observations (and some self-reports) over the course of the year. Table 8.1 provides a sample of these comparisons.

Table 8.1 *A comparison between aspects of young people's stated beliefs and observed behaviour*

| Belief [*] | Number | Behaviour [#] | Number |
|--|----------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| Wrong to drink alcohol | 17 (47%) | Abstains from alcohol | 4 (11%) |
| Right to smoke cigarettes | 7 (19%) | Smokes cigarettes | 17 (46%) |
| Wrong to use Mandrax | 33 (92%) | Uses Mandrax | 9 (24%) |
| Right to smoke dagga | 2 (6%) | Smokes dagga | 15 (41%) |
| Wrong to get drunk (n=35) | 23 (66%) | Gets drunk | 16 (43%) |
| Right to go to church on a Sunday (n=35) | 26 (74%) | Attends church | 16 (43%) |
| Right to have sex before marriage (n=34) | 8 (24%) | Has had sex without being married | 23 (62%) |
| Right to settle an argument violently | 7 (19%) | Has perpetrated violence | 22 (59%) |

^{*}From *Right and Wrong Questionnaire*
(n=36 except where indicated)

[#] From demographic data (See Appendix 5).
(n=37)

Gaps between belief and behaviour are immediately evident. For example, more than twice as many young people appear to smoke than believe it is right to smoke. A quarter of youth believe it is right to have premarital sex but two-thirds seem to have done so. Nearly twice as many young people believe it is right to attend church than appear to do so. Four times as many youth drink alcohol as believe it is right to do so. While nearly all youth believe it wrong to smoke Mandrax, nearly a quarter report that they do. While these comparisons do not take into account the number of youth who were ambivalent about actions, they do provide an indication of the fact that the 'belief-behaviour' gap exists spectacularly in the lives of these township youth.

⁹ See Appendix 2.5 for the coding sheet for biographical data and Appendix 5 for the demographic data itself obtained from interviews.

There were also numerous examples on an individual level in which young people displayed a ‘belief-behaviour’ gap. Vuma was involved in car hijacking, Tapelo was a member of a gang, Andile had been involved in a particularly gruesome fight with a female classmate, Andiswa had been a regular shoplifter, and Luxolo had stabbed her cousin – yet all indicated in their *Right and Wrong Questionnaire* that these specific actions were wrong. When I asked these young people about the inconsistencies between what they say they believe and how they behave, they were quick to admit to the gap (especially when confronted with evidence). But explaining why these gaps exist proved more difficult. Some like Poseletso said ‘a gap... [pause] there’s no reason I can say “it’s because of this”...it’s confusion. I’m confused’. But over the course of the year, and especially in final interviews, many more young people were able to offer reasons for the dissonance. They included (1) *personal choices* (autonomy, fun, and experience); (2) *intrapsychic factors* (weakness, anger, greed, and hopelessness); (3) *external pressures* (peers, money, and substance abuse) and (4) the role of *significant events* in their moral lives. Each will be considered in turn.

Personal choices overriding stated beliefs

Regarding personal choices, Fundiswa explained that especially ‘when you are very, very happy or like festive, on *big days*, you... drink alcohol’. Though you may believe drinking alcohol is wrong, the idea of having fun and celebrating overrides this belief. Once again, the explanatory stimulus of ‘big days’ makes an appearance, and overrides beliefs. Ingwazi elaborates on why he smokes cigarettes and dagga and drinks alcohol, in spite of saying it is wrong to do so: ‘I do it *just for fun*. [laughs]... to relax my mind... it *gives me more power, so that I can talk to more girls*’. Suburbs-schooled youth especially spoke eloquently of their need for personal autonomy. Katlego, speaking about back-chatting, said:

Katlego: Disrespecting like back-chatting... is wrong... I do sometimes disrespect and I feel – okay, look – I have to do this, because *this is what I believe in*. But I still believe it is wrong.

Joules, speaking about his choice to tell lies sometimes, told me that although he does ‘try to stick to His [God’s] rules by all means... sometimes you have to like *believe in what you believe* sometimes’. Both Liyema and Amande alerted me to the fact that in the *Right and Wrong Questionnaire*, they were not necessarily saying what they believed in, but what *they believed it was alright to believe in*. So when 14 year-old Liyema told me it was bad to have lost your virginity, when I asked her about it she said: ‘It’s not bad for me [cos I already have]... [but it’s] *in the category of a bad thing for a girl of my age*’. On the issue of homosexuality, Amande had a similar view. She tells me her church teaches that homosexuality is wrong and that ‘I won’t do that thing’ but she believes that others can ‘be what you want to be’ (which is why she said that homosexuality ‘depends’ in her belief questionnaire). Amande also asserted her autonomy regarding the issue of having a boyfriend, which her church taught was wrong. When I asked her how she was going to resolve this problem she said, ‘We are different people so we think different minds, so you know, it’s all about that’. When I asked her whether she would tell them that, she said, ‘No I will not say that’. Instead she planned to hide the fact of having a boyfriend from them.

For Khaya, the issue was simpler, he spoke of how guys (rather than girls) want to always break the rules, and that it was ‘natural’ for them to do so:

- Khaya: [Breaking the rules] It’s not okay, but you know, that’s natural.
- Sharlene: What do you mean it’s natural?
- Khaya: Just because mens always do some thing that is, not necessary for them... I can say 85% [of men] do and 15% don’t. We – the 85% – we just go on top of the rules and break the rules. I can say it’s not about our parents, how did they teach us. It’s us, breaking the rules, *by our own choices*.

For these young people, the ‘belief-behaviour’ gap existed because of a desire to assert yourself, for fun and for the experience of ‘breaking the rules, ‘by our own choices’ even when it is ‘not necessary’.

Thwarted by internal weaknesses

A second set of reasons young people provided for the existence of a gap between what they said and what they did concerned *intrapsychic factors* or internal weaknesses – a lack of self-control, an inability to delay gratification, to do what they knew to be right, and above all to control emotions of anger, hopelessness, and sometimes greed. Nonkiza tells me:

Nonkiza: I think we do things *when we are angry* Sharlene. When someone do something you don't like to you... maybe that person push you, always push you – you don't want to do that, then you do.

Luxolo and Xolile also speak eloquently of their lack of self-control:

Xolile: You see, if you earn money and you go to the tavern – you say, 'No, I must go to buy *one* beer' but if you buy that beer, it makes you to want more. 'Okay, I'm going to buy another one for last' and then you buy, drink it finish, then you go to buy again... Your friends ...when you are together they say, 'Let's get more beers now'. You say, 'No man!' but [pauses] *I can't control myself* – so I get drunk.

Luxolo: Every time I have money, I like, I think of a beer. I, if I want to do something and I don't have money, I tell myself, 'Okay with R10 I'm going to cut my hair and with the other money I'm going to buy some toiletries, I'm going to buy this and that' – but then *when I have the money in my hand, it all flushes* – and then I go to Mabacania's and drink... I don't know why. It's like *I can't control myself*. I don't know. Um, I try [pause] – to be a better person, but then it's hard.

Sharlene: Do you think about your decisions, Luxolo, like when you're about to drink or smoke *dagga* or break into a house? Or do you just do it?

Luxolo: [Pauses – then shakes her head slowly indicating no]. *Just do it.*

Besides self-control, Xolile also highlights the effect of peer pressure (discussed later), while Luxolo refers to her not thinking but ‘just do[ing] it’. But Luxolo’s description of how her good intentions ‘all flushes’ is related to a more pervasive condition in the lives of these young people – that of an inability to delay gratification. Learning how to delay gratification is a normal task of adolescence (and beyond) but it is made more difficult by living in the context of poverty (Evans & English, 2002) in which survival takes precedence over longer term goals, and in which psychological stressors undermine good intentions.

Andiswa’s struggle to tell me of why she got involved in regular shoplifting from the age of eleven was helpful in understanding the drives, motivations and the ultimate gaps between these young people’s beliefs and behaviour. Her story is recounted in Box 8.1.

Box 8.1 The Belief-Behaviour Chasm in Andiswa’s* Life

Andiswa: We saw some very nice things that we couldn’t afford, like, you know when you get into a shop like Truworths a top is about 250 something rand, and we didn’t have that kind of money. So the only way we could like get it is through stealing it. And we wanted it because – you, you like, *you feel like an outsider when you like don’t have nice clothes in the neighbourhood*. Because everybody ...will be dressing nicely because it’s on a Saturday. But then you have to dress like normally when everybody else is like dressed fantastically.

...

Sharlene: Does everyone steal to get their kit Andiswa?

Andiswa: No, not everybody, like Sharlene, there may be like in my standard – okay – maybe some they not poor but at the same time they not rich – *they’re in the middle*.

Sharlene: Like you?

Andiswa: Like me. But their mothers and their fathers are working. Not like me – *only my mother’s working*. Their mothers and fathers are working and working in like big companies like – permanent places ...then they tend to – to show off – like to me because I’m not like that rich girl ...That’s the reason for them to call me at my house to come show me their clothes you know? Just to spite me and give me like – ‘look at me I’m richer than you’. So they give me like that thing – like that hatred like – *I have to get those things – you know – they pressure me to do – like shoplifting and stuff*.

Sharlene: So you’re weak?

Andiswa: *I’m not weak Sharlene*.

Sharlene: But you’re telling me your friends pressure you to drink, to smoke, to shoplift. That means you’re weak.

Andiswa: *I am weak*.

Sharlene: No, but you’re not weak [laughs].

Andiswa: *Okay, I am admitting it – I’m weak*.

Sharlene: But I don’t think you’re weak – I think you’re strong.

Andiswa: But *I was weak then, but now at least I’ve got a vision*. My father gave me an idea that if you want to be successful in life you’ve got to have a plan.

...

- Sharlene: So are you telling me that shoplifting is right or it's wrong?
- Andiswa: *It's wrong. It's plain wrong.*
- Sharlene: Okay, but you're also saying that because your mother hasn't got money to buy you clothes when you need them or when you want them, then you'll do it anyway. I mean what's the difference between that and riding on the train without paying?
- Andiswa: No, they're different. Because when you're riding on a train, there's a, there's a situation that's forcing you to do that. But for shoplifting, there's nothing forcing me to shoplift. *It's just, it's just the fact that I'm greedy.* You know? There's a difference.

**Young woman, aged 15, township-schooled*

She begins by telling me how her sister was the one 'exposing me to this [shoplifting]' and how she felt like an 'outsider when you like don't have nice clothes in the neighbourhood'. Andiswa felt pressure, both internally and externally, to have 'a kit' for all the 'big days' and that not being able to have these clothes was 'frustrating like... [and] makes you feel jealous'. She believed that the girls in her class 'spite me with [their clothes and] they pressure me to do – like shoplifting and stuff'.

Besides this peer pressure Andiswa also admits to the weakness and helplessness she feels in resisting the pressure. She cycles through telling me she both is and is not weak, before finally saying: 'I was weak then [and greedy], but now at least I've got a vision [for my life]'. At one stage in our discussion, the most remarkable change came over Andiswa. She became pensive, before looking at me questioningly, and then saying (as if speaking to herself): 'Stealing clothes and following God don't match up, do they?'. For Andiswa, the gap between moral beliefs and actual behaviour is a combination of jealousy, frustration, weakness, greed and external pressures. But it is also a function of not really having thought about the multiple things in which she believes and its implications for her daily life. This lack of *prior reflection* provides another interesting, and somewhat puzzling phenomena in these young people's lives, and will be revisited later in this chapter.

External pressures and precipitating events

Besides the roles of peers, as Xolile and Andiswa describe them, in thwarting their intentions to put belief into practice, young people also identify the significant role that the

external pressures of money and substance use play in young people's understanding of their belief-behaviour gap. Although not a common response, Khaya's answer to why young people do the things they believe are wrong (in this case drink copious amounts of alcohol) was important. He was amongst the small minority who displayed a critical consciousness and told me that township youth behaved as they did out of the external pressure and complete despair of poverty:

Khaya: They are stress[ed], just because they're unemployed you see. Others – they don't have parents to support them. And others they are saying it's [better] rather [for] them to die than to live with nothing. To be poor. [So they drink].

Peer pressure was generally referred to less directly than in the way Xolile and Andiswa referred to it. As described in Chapters 5, 6 and 7, young people were driven to behave in ways out of keeping with their stated beliefs because of the pervasive *competitions* to have multiple sexual partners¹⁰, nice clothes, cellphones, and money for alcohol or drugs; they were also driven to rob and become pregnant because it was 'a fashion'. The pressure to have things was a pervasive consumerist pressure, one closely associated with being a *kasi* boy or girl. But money pressure was not only for the nice-to-haves but also the essentials, where their practical needs overrode their moral principles. Mandisa explains: 'It's wrong to lie... but in that time I need money because I don't have shoes, I will lie to get the money from somewhere'. She tells me she does think about her decisions but the practical opportunity of getting something by telling a lie outweighs her belief in lying as wrong. Lying to get a job was a commonly accepted practice, as was drinking because it was free. Ingwazi summarises when he says:

Ingwazi: Hey, I know *mos* yah it's wrong to drink but I do it, hey ... If I see the bottle of brandy, yah, I don't say, 'No I don't want those'. I say 'Yes, I want it'. Because I didn't buy it, *yabon*.

¹⁰ A number of young women spoke about having sex to 'satisfy my boyfriend' in spite of believing it to be wrong and not wanting to have sex.

A number of young people¹¹ who were heavily involved in substance use repeated Vuma's explanation about the role of drugs in wrong behaviour:

Vuma: In 2002 I was smoking *iPilisi* [Mandrax]. So that was wrong but I was doing it and *at that time I didn't like give a damn you know*. Like when you smoke a pill like – when you wake up in the morning there's no other thing you think about [except] how can I get like that thing. Like you see the boy there – take his cellphone, that sister there – even [though] she's black you know, that lady got like earrings like you know – maybe I can take those earrings. You just take out your [long pause] knife and you can stab her Sharlene, [pause], but that was wrong, Sharlene.

These external pressures of peers and money (for necessity or prestige), and the related issue of drinking because of negative circumstances (and then not caring about your behaviour) were amongst the most important reasons youth gave for the 'judgement-action' gap in their moral lives. A number of young people spoke of definite precipitating events or incendiary moments that they identified as the beginning of their downward spiral into moral decline, and that provided an explanation for the gap between their moral beliefs and behaviour. Luxolo's story is representative of many others. She tells me:

Luxolo: Everything started in '99. Everything like, [I] started smoking [*dagga*] and not listening to my mother, everything. All started in '99.

Sharlene: What happened?

Luxolo: I don't know. I just found new friends that's all.

But it was not primarily about 'finding new friends'. Luxolo relates the story about her betrayal by her father who wrote to her to ask her to come and see him:

¹¹Luxolo, Ingwazi, Xolile, Khaya, and Tapelo all told similar stories of being driven to rob by a craving for Mandrax or alcohol.

Luxolo: He wrote me a letter in '99, that he wants to meet me and in June holidays I was supposed to go there [to Namibia] with my mom. And ...he gave us a number and everything. And then when we got there then his friends said he already moved with his new wife for another place I don't know.

She tells me how angry she was and how her father became 'dead to me'. Throughout our many interactions, Luxolo constantly referred to 1999 as the year it all started: her decline into drug use, alcohol addiction, housebreaking, and endless cycle of attending and dropping out of school, and running away from home (which included a period living on the streets of Cape Town). 1999 was the significant event that facilitated her moral behaviour becoming divorced from her moral beliefs. Ingwazi's significant event was the transition from primary to 'coloured' high school and with it, his initiation into 'drugs [that] have changed me... a lot'. For Nzulu, it was also the realisation that his biological father did not care about him, and then as he puts it 'things happened'. These examples point to three features common in young people's accounts regarding precipitating events as external pressures opening up the gap between moral belief and behaviour: the transition between primary and high school, a sense of loss, hurt or betrayal, and finding new friends.

In their efforts to answer my question regarding the presence of a gap between what they say they believe and how they behave, young people have highlighted almost all of the 'situational factors' that Kohlberg himself points out when speaking of the chasm between moral development and moral action. Kohlberg's situational factors includes low intelligence, *akrasia* (weakness of will), peer pressure, or the inability to delay gratification (Bergman, 2002, p. 308). Young people's reference to personal choices, internal weakness, and external pressures therefore come as no surprise. What is surprising is that young people fail to attach *any* culpability for their behaviour to their poor education or the unstable and stressful environments in which they find themselves (except for Khaya). This is a reverse of the fundamental attribution error – blaming yourself instead of the system,

and one that has been shown to have negative effects on self-esteem¹² and mental health in general (Porter & Washington, 1979, p. 69) – a theme I develop in the final section.

Also surprising is these Langa youth's constant reference to significant events that trigger behaviour out of keeping with their values. Bergman (2002, p. 308) offers the suggestion that 'people fail to act on their moral beliefs because those beliefs are not really their own'. These township youth seem to suggest otherwise. Significant events seem to crush the fragile hope they carry about their lives, and their environment (including pervasive substance use and poor diet) causes emotional and mental health problems. Key amongst these is a lack of volition (avolition) that I observed and which the literature supports. Avolition is defined as a lack of desire and motivation to pursue goal-related activities. It is often associated with schizophrenia or with heavy marijuana and solvent abuse (Okada *et al.*, 1999, p. 351) – but is also an effect of the post-traumatic stress disorder¹³ common amongst those living in the context of poverty.

In spite of these many external pressures, hope remains a prominent feature in young people's lives. They are hopeful, about South Africa, their future – perhaps unrealistically so¹⁴ – and their desire to escape the township and help their younger siblings and mothers

¹² In numerous studies during the Apartheid years (Dawes, 1994; Hocoy, 1999; Straker, 1992; Straker & Mendelsohn, 1996), township youth were shown to have low self-esteem due to discrimination perpetuated against them. Verwoerd's education for servitude policies and the demeaning treatment of 'black' people in general were identified as causal factors. The Black Consciousness movement was one way in which these effects were ameliorated, but not all 'black' youth were reached by the movement.

¹³ Research on the effects of post traumatic stress disorder amongst poor children shows how children who live in chronic poverty have constantly raised cortisol levels (an indicator of stress) (Yehuda *et al.*, 2001) – not because of any overt trauma, but because of the subtle trauma which poverty produces. A similar study by Evans and English (2002) shows that children in contexts of poverty experience greater physiological stress than their middle-class counterparts. Poor youth have higher resting blood-pressure (putting them at risk for cardio-vascular disease in the future), and higher epinephrine levels (placing them on constant alert but eventually tiring them out). The study concludes that 'low income children ...live in noisier, more crowded, and lower quality housing than do their middle income counterparts... they also experience more psychosocial stressors such as elevated family turmoil, greater child-family separation, and higher levels of violence' (p. 1243). These socio-emotional sequelae of poverty include an inability to delay gratification, avolition, lower concentration levels, and less parental attention.

¹⁴ Taylor, Gilligan and Sullivan (1995, p. 199) report that young people regularly provide fantastical accounts of their future, unrelated to their current circumstances. This 'ideal self' (Blasi & Milton, 1991, p. 240) or 'personal fable' (Elkind, 1967) forms part of young people's construction of their identities.

into better lives. They speak of being doctors, lawyers, pilots, musicians and accountants, and of having nice cars and good houses in the suburbs. Mandisa tells me she wants to be a social worker in order to help people and ‘to give them the better life that – I want’, but ultimately she will be ‘even a domestic [worker]... just to help my family’. For Khaya, his aspiration in the music industry is ‘to put my family on another level’. Andiswa summarises this passionate sense of hope:

Andiswa: Sharlene, like I have so many plans, I have so many dreams... Each and every opportunity that comes my way, I grab it, as fast as I can and I make sure I win, because I want to get what I want.

Seeing these hopes deferred, as their older siblings remain unemployed, their surroundings grim, and the dream of a new South Africa elusive, must make these young people’s hearts sick¹⁵. Avolition, or a lack of moral motivation, in this context is perhaps understandable.

Moral responsibility and reflection in the context of poverty

So far in this chapter I have shown that young people are able to reflect, at sophisticated levels, on their moral processes but also that their behaviour often fails to match up to these ideals. Colby and Damon (1993) argue that ‘when there is perceived *unity between self and morality*, judgment and conduct are directly and predictably linked and action choices are made with great certainty’ (p. 150). In the previous chapter I have shown evidence of this ‘unity between self and morality’ in the lives of these Langa youth. The young people I got to know overwhelmingly identified themselves as morally good people, yet the belief-behaviour gap remains. So what is the missing factor? Blasi (1984) argues that a sense of *personal responsibility* is the connecting line between a moral identity and moral action and he describes moral responsibility as the ‘obligation to act according to one’s judgement’ (p. 130) and to act with ‘self-consistency’ or ‘integrity’ according to one’s view of self (p. 132). Similarly, Walker (2004), building on Blasi’s work, found that when young people were helped to develop a sense of *personal responsibility* and an integrated ethical sense of

¹⁵ ‘Hope deferred makes the heart sick’, Proverbs 13:12 (The Bible – New International Version).

self, they were more likely to translate moral judgement into moral action. Colby (2002) suggests that young people who do not act on their beliefs, rationalise their actions especially by blaming situational factors yet this rationalisation is not strongly evident in these township youth. On the contrary, instead of blaming, these township youth display enormous levels of responsibility for their own lives, actions, and dreams.

Box 8.2 provides numerous examples of this sense of personal responsibility beginning with responsibility for achieving dreams and goals¹⁶ (Thulani and Thembisa) and holding *themselves* responsible for their wrong actions, and failure to put their moral ideals into action (Vuma, Thobane, Mane, and Xolani). Half of all young women and two-thirds of all young men, when asked who was responsible for their moral character or the kind of person they were, or had become, said it was themselves *alone*. Often young people would differentiate between who was responsible for their good actions and who was responsible for their bad actions, blaming themselves for bad behaviour but attributing their good behaviour and character to ‘my mom, the people of my church, my cousin-sister, yes and God’. Only a very few (like Ingwazi and Vuma) said they blamed the environment in which they lived (including the absence of a father) for shaping their moral character, and then only after acknowledging that they themselves were responsible, and at my pressing. Andiswa was a lone voice in directly blaming the effects of Apartheid in response to a question about her future success: ‘It’s this Apartheid era that ruined all black people’s lives’.

Box 8.2 The Burden of Responsibility

Responsibility for achieving dreams and goals:

Sharlene: And if you don’t succeed?

Thulani: No-one – I’ll blame myself – I’ll blame myself.

Thembisa: No-one I can blame. Maybe being poor I can blame being poor... But I will try my best.

¹⁶ The vast majority of youth (32 out of 37) said they were responsible if they did not achieve work goals. Only five young women said they would blame others. When I pressed young people, they conceded that possibly an absence of money could destroy their dreams. As our discussions deepened, the initial optimism often dwindled to youth saying there is a ‘small chance’ that dreams will be achieved, but still they refused to blame external factors for these ‘small chances’.

Responsibility for moral character:

Vuma: No-one Sharlene – I won't blame anyone Sharlene. Like er – I don't like to blame someone for things that I – like for what I've done you know.

Mane: No-one. Only me... Cos like, if I don't let those people to influence me then I won't be influenced.

Xolani: No I didn't blame any person – because it's me – I told myself that I want to be like this now... my parents they didn't know that I do these things

Andiswa: I did this on my own. I wouldn't say my mother. Yes, I had stresses with my mother, but she didn't force me... And also my friend, Lebo, I don't blame her, too, because she didn't take a gun and put it up to my head and said I should smoke [*dagga*]. But I should have had the backbone to say no in the first place.

What about external factors?

Vuma: No one pushes me to do anything – if I say no I say no. So like I blame no one... When I don't want to do something I don't want to.

Sharlene: And not *ikasi* – it doesn't push you – living in *ikasi*?

Vuma: Yah, Sharlene I can say that! Cos if I were not living there – like maybe I was living in another place, *being another person* – maybe I was not behaving like I am now.

Ingwazi: I'm responsible. I would say it's me. No one else. ... Sometimes I do think that hey, if my father was here, it wouldn't be like this, *yabon*, but hey, life is life, *yabon*.

Differentiating between responsibility and blame:

Khaya: Uh, it's my mom. She's responsible for the good things. [The bad things] it's my friends, those who stay in Stellenbosch, others in Mdantsane. And myself, yah.

Mhoza: Responsible? It's my friends, and my mom. Blame? No-one – it is me.

Very little critical consciousness

Andiswa: What are the chances for me to achieve my dreams? I may say two out of ten. Because for you to achieve your dreams, I need finance. I do have the determination for it, you know, but the finances are not there and it takes up the 80%, you know. The determination only takes about 20%. Even though I'm trying to get means, you know but they're not working out.

Sharlene: So, who will be responsible if you don't achieve your dreams?

Andiswa: Not my mother. Certainly not my parents are going to be responsible for the fact that the, the whole, what's this era called, the Apartheid era happened in the first place. *It's this Apartheid era that ruined all black people's lives.*

These young people display a sense of responsibility for their lives, dreams and behaviour not commensurate with Blasi, Colby, Damon, and Walker's findings of how personal responsibility closes the gap between belief and behaviour. In fact, young people's strong sense of personal responsibility seems to reflect the 'meritocracy myth' (McNamee & Miller, 2004). Meritocracies encourage the idea that by hard work and personal

responsibility a person is able to achieve what has eluded others, without concern for social and political contexts. This finding regarding the unrealistic and ‘middle-class’ responsibilities poor youth take upon themselves, while lacking the middle-class resources with which to realise the goals for which they hold themselves responsible, is also reflected in Diane Reay’s work amongst working-class youth (Lucey & Reay, 2002; Reay, 1990; Reay & Ball, 1997). Lucey and Reay (2002, p. 264) argue that this meritocracy myth – ‘the belief that people get what they deserve and deserve what they get... constantly threatens to undermine children’s positivity and creativity’. In the case of the young people in my study, their positivity appears not yet to have been harmed by their fervent belief in the power of their own agency to escape the strictures of their environment – but it has the potential to do so.

If young people’s sense of responsibility is intact, as the data indicate, then are there other explanations for this disconnect between belief and behaviour? Do these senses of responsibility and moral selfhood perhaps provide insufficient motivation for moral action? Perhaps the answer lies on an altogether different front. The cognitive developmentalists tell us that helping young people to *reason at higher levels* will affect their moral behaviour. So how does this issue of reflection measure against young people’s practices? Frequently young people told me about ‘just not thinking’, not ‘thinking straight’, doing something on the ‘spur of the moment’, ‘without thinking’ and not knowing why they did the things they did. Vuma and Khaya provide extended examples of these occasions:

Vuma: Like Sharlene – *If I think before I did something* - I will know that that is wrong ...cos *I’m a man so I must think* ...so that people can’t see me I’m behaving like a boy.

Khaya: When I am alone, thinking about things, I just ask myself what I was thinking, when I was doing that thing ...when I was robbing the Pick ’n Pay. Go to the shop to buy something, then do something else that *I was not planning for it*. I was just ask[ing] me that question. *I was not thinking, just do...* You just follow – you don’t think.

When I asked Andile why he got addicted to *dagga* he tells me ‘I didn’t think. Maybe it was a stage’. Later when I asked him what had caused him to change, he tells me ‘maybe something came up to my mind [and I] start realising it – gee I’m damaging my future’. Andile describes his realisation that he was damaging his future as a passive occurrence – ‘something came up to my mind’. Young people seldom described reflection as an active process. Poseletso told me about her friend who was continually becoming pregnant and said, ‘She’s not using her mind in such a way that she learns... she just do something’. But she also told me that there were times when she did not use ‘her mind’ relating to sleeping with her boyfriend without using contraception.

Thembisa relates a more complex story, one that indicates not only a lack of reflection but also *how* such a lack of reflection leads to the gap between belief and behaviour (Box 8.3).

Box 8.3 Thembisa’s* Pregnancy

Thembisa, one of the young women in my reference group, was a regular churchgoer, and in her final year of schooling when she fell pregnant. She lived in a large tent with her boyfriend, Banele, in Tsunami Village after her shack had been consumed in a blaze that left more than 12,000 people homeless. Both her parents had died a few years ago and although she had been staying with her sister, she had eventually moved out to stay with her boyfriend who worked for a construction company. Late in May I noticed she was no longer at school and I went to find her. She told me, avoiding my gaze, and wringing her hands, that she was pregnant. During a later interview I asked her how come she had said that she ‘hate[d] having a child before married’ but now she was doing just that. She told me:

Thembisa: They told us in the church the things we mustn’t do and the things we must do as Christians... I know [laughs nervously] Sharlene it’s wrong – pregnant before married... *It was not my plan to stay with my boyfriend*, I was hating to stay with a boyfriend... because we are not married.

She explains that it was her circumstances that forced her to go and live with Banele, and when he said he wanted a baby *she wanted to please him*, in spite of her own beliefs. A further complication she added was that now she was pregnant she could no longer attend church because it did not ‘show respect’ to go to church while you were pregnant and unmarried, and that ‘I can’t lie and say it’s a mistake – it’s not a mistake’. When I asked her what made her decide to have sex with her boyfriend she replied:

Thembisa: I decided myself. Mmm [laughs] just *because I love him* – that is why I have sex with him. I can’t say it’s a mistake Sharlene. I don’t know what to say – just because I was not using needle to prevent.

Sharlene: Why did you want to have this baby, in your last year of school?

Thembisa: *My boyfriend need a child...* I saw him that, he loves me, and he was very serious that he need a child... [so that we can] have our own family.

* Young woman, aged 19, township-schooled

Thembisa's beliefs and behaviour was dissonant. She believed that having sex before you were married was wrong but she engaged in it anyhow. She believed that having a child outside of marriage was wrong (and she *hated* the fact that people did so) but she had a child outside of marriage. She believed in going to church and in the teachings of her church about sex, marriage, and childbearing within marriage, but decided to stop going to church to prevent any indication of disrespect. All these beliefs failed to prevent her from acting on her desire to please her boyfriend. At the outset of our interviews, Thembisa told me things like 'education is the key of the future', 'to have an affair with *one* person, makes you a good person' and that 'my family, my boyfriend, school, and church is important' when I asked her about her values. What my later conversations with her revealed was that she had never had the *opportunity* of talking through how these values might be at odds with one another, and how she ought to act based on these (her own) beliefs. This is not to say that the outcome may have been different, but the obvious confusion, embarrassment, and shame she felt in speaking to me and in hiding from her friends, school and church, may have been alleviated.

But Thembisa, Poseletso, Khaya, Andile, and Vuma were not alone in their paucity of reflection. During interviews, in which we discussed the many issues raised by the *Right and Wrong Questionnaire*, young people frequently changed their mind or denied a previous answer. Even discounting those who were now embarrassed to stick to their opinions in the context of a face-to-face discussion, this constant changing of minds indicates that few had ever previously reflected on these issues, hence their jumbled thoughts on the topics – and perhaps subsequent gap between behaviour and belief.

Two topics, that of vigilantism and homosexuality, further illustrate this marked absence of reflection. On the issue of vigilantism¹⁷ young people changed their opinions from right to wrong, from depends to right, from right to depends, and in Joules case, from right to

¹⁷ In the *Right and Wrong Questionnaire* 22 out of 36 (61%) young people said it was wrong 'for a street committee to kill someone who is a rapist', while 8 (22%) said it was right and 8 (17%) were ambivalent.

wrong to depends and back to right (see Box 8.4). Regarding homosexuality¹⁸, youth displayed their paucity of reflection, not so much in the constant changing of their minds as with vigilantism, but in not being able to articulate clear reasons for why they believed it was right or wrong¹⁹. Mhoza and Fundiswa told me clearly that they ‘didn’t think about it before’ while Thulani and Katlego are at a loss to provide clear reasons for why they think homosexuality is wrong (besides not being able to produce children, and very emotional reasons – calling it ‘disgusting’).

Box 8.4 Vigilantism and Homosexuality

Vigilantism – changing their minds

From right to wrong:

Thabisa: The point is when someone is raping, they must take him to the police, not just kill by themselves.

From depends to right:

Poseletso: It depends, maybe sometimes they catch someone raping my sister – it’s better to kill him – why should he live – living and raping children?

Sharlene: And he shouldn’t just be punished and go to jail?

Poseletso: No, just because you see there’s not a penalty at the end of the day. He leaves after 15 years – he will come back and he will rape again if he does want.

From right to depends:

Mhoza: Haai, it is right. Because he destroyed that person’s life, so he must be killed. He must be punished.

Sharlene: Why mustn’t he get arrested and go to the courts?

Mhoza: No – ah ah [shakes head]. It’s because he can get bail, R500 bail, so, he can come and do, he can come out of jail and rape the other person too.

Sharlene: And let’s say it was your brother who was caught raping somebody. Would you like the street committee to kill him or to arrest him?

Mhoza: To arrest him [laughs].

From right to wrong to depends and back to right:

Joules: *Eish* Sharlene those kind of people aren’t welcome in communities because they, they make other people’s lives uncomfortable ...Um, I believe that they don’t have to be killed but they must be taken away to another place because you can’t live around a rapist Sharlene.

¹⁸ Homophobic violence in South Africa is still common, and these township youth’s lack of prior reflection (and inability to speak rationally about the issue) is significant in a country where same-sex civil partnerships and sexual equality are constitutional and legal rights.

¹⁹ In the *Right and Wrong Questionnaire* 21 out of 36 (60%) young people said it was wrong ‘to sleep with someone of the same sex (to be homosexual)’, while 4 (11%) said it was right and 10 (28%) were ambivalent.

Sharlene: Mmm. I mean I hear what you are saying, I'm just wondering why you thought that they should be killed? Now you're saying that maybe they shouldn't be killed, they should be arrested or taken away.

Joules: But it depends Sharlene, some people don't do that because they want to but, probably sometimes because of their mentality problems, you see so. Yah, but if those people do that for fun, they are supposed to be killed or executed or just taken away to another place.

Homosexuality – 'I didn't think about it before'

Mhoza: I don't like gays... It is in between right or wrong because they say – they born like – to be the gay people – so - I don't know... *I didn't think about it before.*

Fundiswa: It depends... I have a friend at school she is gay... she have no feeling over men... I don't know its wrong or its right ... *I didn't think about it before.*

Thulani: [Angrily] How are you gonna get some children?... *I never talked* to [people in the community] about that. I don't think they believe in that... [and church] they don't say.

Katlego: The gay thing I do believe it is wrong ...Like how can, *it looks disgusting*, two guys – as well as, okay, *two girls is a lot better cos I am a guy* but, that too is still wrong. Like two guys is like – ...in the guy, there is no place for another guy. You see, what if like everyone at this moment like everyone was gay, you see, then there would be like no children made, it would just be the end.

Throughout my time in the field I was acutely aware of the lack of 'face-time' these youth had with adults (either parents or teachers), and how they sucked up the time I spent with them like a desert in a rainstorm. Of course, this constant changing of their minds, and lack of firm opinions, may also be part of their developmental processes. But both arguments, as young people told me how they 'hadn't thought of it before' or 'don't think, just do' point to a paucity of reflection, some of which is directly related to their context of poverty. Young people, who attend school sporadically, live in overcrowded homes with a usually lone and stressed breadwinner, and who experience high levels of stress and anxiety from constant exposure to violence, crime, and substance abuse need meaningful adult involvement in their lives. Their contexts mitigate against this. They are not incapable of reflecting, as has been evidenced throughout this study, but they certainly lack the supportive environments of their middle-class peers that make such reflection an everyday occurrence. Unlike the cognitive developmentalists' call for young people to be taught how to reason at higher levels, it seems that youth living in a context of poverty need to be given the opportunity *to reason at all*.

Conclusion

The three issues of moral reasoning ability, the role of personal responsibility and young people's context of poverty appear to be complexly interwoven – and they are crucial to understanding the chasm that exists between their stated beliefs and subsequent behaviour. Poor young people lack not so much the *ability* for high order levels of cognitive reflection, but the *opportunity* to do so. In the absence of these opportunities, their cognitive reasoning abilities tend to reflect aspects of 'lower-order' thinking (Kohlberg, 1984), based primarily on consequences. In addition, in the short space of a year, as youth were encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and provide reasons for some of the 'belief-behaviour' gaps in their lives, their ability to do so grew profoundly. My own role as researcher overlapped with one of youth worker and intervener, with interviews and *Mind Maps* providing young people an opportunity to reflect on their own real-life moral dilemmas, and to do so with a caring adult. While I would like to suggest that, with appropriate adult support, young people living in a context of poverty would be more likely to reflect on their beliefs, which in turn would lead to them acting on their judgements, this does not convey the entire story.

In philosophy, there are two contrasting views regarding the relationship between moral judgement and moral action: 'motivational judgement internalism' (MJI) and 'motivational judgement externalism' (MJE). In MJI it is held that those 'who sincerely judge actions right are motivated to perform those actions' (Shafer-Landau, 1998, p. 353) while in MJE it is held that moral judgment does not necessarily result in moral action because of external pressures. These external pressures (or situational factors) have important consequences for questions of moral behaviour. Rosati (2006), in claiming that 'a good and strong-willed person – not *depressed* or *apathetic* or *suffering* from weakness of will – [will do] what she is motivated to do' (no page numbers, Section 3.2 Internalism v. Externalism) points towards an important explanatory framework in the context of poverty. If depression, apathy, and numerous other mental health and emotional problems result from living in a chronic and pervasive context of poverty, then it follows that young people

living in this environment may *lack the physical, mental and emotional resources to act on* what they believe to be the good and to which they aspire.

The problem with making such a statement is that it opens up the problematic question about whether poor people are more or less moral than their middle-class counterparts. The answer depends largely on what is meant by ‘being moral’. If by moral we mean *doing* the good, then the answer is yes – *some* poor youth are less moral than their middle-class counterparts. But if by moral we mean – *knowing* the good, *desiring* the good, and *having a moral self identity*, then the answer is a resounding no. The poor youth in this study possessed all three of these latter facets of morality, but seemed to lack the resources (not all, but the majority) to *act* on their beliefs. If, as the literature suggests, poverty results in physical manifestations of depression, despair, fatigue (from epinephrine and cortisol overload), anxiety, apathy, a struggle to delay gratification, emotional blunting, the sequelae of foetal alcohol spectrum disorders²⁰, and avolition, then *it is understandable that youth who live in chronic and pervasive contexts of poverty lack the resources to act on what they know and desire to be right*, and toward which they aspire. The disconnect between belief and behaviour can therefore be attributed to the lack of an *enabling environment*.

Having made this leap, there is a vast amount of resilience literature that points to the ways in which young people are able to overcome these mental health disadvantages in the midst of their adverse contexts. Ann Masten (2001, p. 228) defines resilience as ‘a class of phenomena characterised by good outcomes in spite of serious threats to adaptation or development’ and talks about the ordinariness or ‘everyday magic’ of resilience. She illustrates that an environment that encourages ‘brain development and cognition, caregiver-child relationships, regulation of emotion and behaviour, and the motivation for learning and engaging in the environment’ helps youth to overcome even the most adverse

²⁰ Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is described as ‘learning and behavioral problems caused by prenatal exposure to alcohol’ (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2006). Numerous conditions characterise the disorder, for example, difficulties with memory, attention and learning; poor impulse control and judgment; small stature in relation to peers; poor coordination, language delays, mental retardation or low IQ; and poor reasoning and judgment skills. ‘Children with FASD are at risk for psychiatric problems, criminal behavior, unemployment, and incomplete education’ (ibid). The Cape Province in South Africa has the highest rate of FASD in the world (May *et al.*, 2000).

conditions. Harvard Medical School psychiatrists, Buckner, Mezzacappa, and Beardslee²¹ (2003) confirm these basic building blocks in an empirical study and expand Masten's list to include: meaningful attachment to positive, competent and caring adult role models in the family and community; able to be disciplined, diligent, and having an internal locus of control, able to be empathic and to regulate emotions; and possessing high self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-reflection and self-understanding and good problem-solving skills (p. 141). While moral discussion classes help young people to reason at higher levels, young people living in contexts of poverty also need the 'ordinary magic' of internal and external resilience skills their middle-class peers take for granted. This relationship between poverty-induced mental health problems and moral functioning is an area that seems to have been overlooked in the moral education literature, and requires further research. This is perhaps not surprising since most moral research is situated in the Global North, where poverty is limited.

As with perspectives on poverty itself, the answer as to where the responsibility lies for ensuring appropriate moral behaviour is often polarised between 'blame the victim' and 'blame the system' (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 316). Neither does justice to the reality. Poor young people's contexts do mitigate against moral motivation, but they are also able to learn internal resilience skills. A moral climate can be created, if not for an entire community, certainly in the school, home or peer group. Caring adult intervention is crucial, but is not a panacea in the absence of an enabling environment. When Blasi argues for 'a psychological theory to explain how and why moral understanding leads, when it does, to the desire to act morally' (Blasi cited in Bergman, 2002, p. 119), part of the theory must be sociological and include the social, emotional and physical effects of poverty on moral functioning.

²¹ The study also notes that resilience breaks down upon the cumulative effect of stressors – even the most resilient young people crumble under a load of multiple stressors.

MAKING MEANING OF MORAL INFLUENCES

Throughout the previous chapters, the accounts I have provided – of young people’s moral contexts (Chapter 4 and 5), their moral codes of right and wrong (Chapter 6), the way in which they position themselves and others in relationship to moral goodness (Chapter 7), and their moral decision-making processes (Chapter 8) – have hinted at a multiplicity of moral influences. Below I begin the process of providing a more structured account of the most dominant¹ and interesting² of these influences as portrayed by young people in the photographs they took in direct response to the question: ‘What are the good and bad influences in your life?’

Photographs provide an unmediated glimpse into these Langa youth’s moral lifeworlds. At the same time, the rank order activity (that I called *Circles of Influence* – see Chapter 3) provided data about the *strength* of each kind of moral influence which young people identified. In Table 9.1 (overleaf) I start by summarising the strongest positive, negative, and simultaneously positive and negative influences identified by young people in the rank order activity. (See Appendix 10 for the complete rank ordered list of over fifty items). In this top ten list, we can begin to see a pattern – ‘school’, ‘mothers’, ‘siblings’, ‘dreams’ and ‘God’ (not ‘church’ though) are strong moral influences for both young men and young women.

¹ Those influences that more than half of young people depicted as moral influences (indicated in Table 9.2 as either a strong consensus or a consensus). Dominance is the principle I have used throughout in order to get at social representations.

² Interesting influences are those that either receive little attention in the literature or are related to specific aspects of young people’s context of poverty and living in the aftermath of Apartheid. These are not dominant influences, and so do not form part of the social representations I have attempted to uncover throughout this dissertation thus far.

Table 9.1 *Summary of strongest moral influences as portrayed in Circle of Influence activity*

| All | Young women | Young men |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. School/education | 1. Mother | 1. School/education |
| 2. Dreams/goals | 2. School/education & Dreams/goals | 2. Dreams/goals |
| 3. Mother | 3. God/Jesus | 3. Mother |
| 4. God/Jesus | 4. Siblings & Church | 4. Siblings |
| 5. Siblings | 5. Music | 5. Boy/girlfriend |
| 6. Music | 6. Friends | 6. God/Jesus |
| 7. Boy/girlfriend | 7. Being cool/fashion | 7. Music |
| 8. Friends & Being cool/fashion | 8. Fun | 8. Sport & Being cool/fashion |
| 9. Fun/Sport | 9. Boy/girlfriend | 9. Fun |
| 10. Church | 10. Sport | 10. <i>Ulwaluko</i> |

However, the photographs taken by the group told a more complicated story (see Table 9.2 for a summary of data and Appendix 11 for detailed data). For example, ‘school’ was represented as both a positive and a negative influence, and although ‘alcohol’ was a dominant depiction (portrayed by more than three-quarters of the group), it was not ranked as a strong influence (ranked 16th out of 30 places).

Table 9.2 *Summary of young people’s moral influences as portrayed in Digital Documentaries*

| Positive | Negative | Positive and negative | |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Strong consensus (more than ¾ of youth took photos of these subjects) | | | Dominant |
| -- | Alcohol | School | |
| Consensus (more than ½ but less than ¾ youth took photos of these subjects) | | | |
| Work | Poverty | Streets (Fun and friends) | |
| Younger siblings | | | |
| Self | | | Interesting (little consensus) |
| Mothers | | | |
| Weak consensus (between ½ and ¼ of youth took photos in this category) | | | |
| Home | Crime | Fashion | |
| Music | Violence | Materialism | |
| Romantic relationships | Dagga | Sexual relationships | |
| Aesthetics (love of beauty) | Cigarettes | Community members | |
| Christian faith | | Mobility and instability | |
| Television | | Older siblings | |
| No consensus (less than ¼ of youth took photos of these subjects) | | | |
| isiXhosa culture | Mandrax, cocaine, heroin | Government policies | |
| Sport | Apartheid | HIV/AIDS | |
| Creating music | Abusive sexual relationships | Traditional religion | |
| Cross-cultural friendships | Self harm (suicide/risk-taking) | Uncles or aunts | |
| Ulwaluko | Witches | Fathers | |
| Ubuntu | | Policing | |
| Grandparents | | | |

In keeping with my aim of eliciting social representations, I categorised photographs according to the *proportion* of young people who took photographs in each theme. Significantly, there were no *dominant* representations of positive moral influence although ‘younger siblings’, ‘mothers’, ‘employment’ and their own positive sense of ‘self’ were strong representations i.e. more than half of youth, but less than three-quarters, took photographs portraying these four themes. It is evident that ‘alcohol’ and ‘poverty’ is the dominant negative moral influence and that ‘school’ and ‘streets’ are the dominant ambivalent influence.

While not all of these influences will be discussed in this chapter (there are too many of them), an analysis will be provided of the *meanings* youth attribute to some of the most important. In particular I ask what the nature is of these influences, how they are interpreted and how exactly they affect young people’s moral growth. In organising this chapter, I return to Bronfenbrenner’s ecological levels of adolescent development (described in Chapter 2) and begin by describing those influences closest to young people, i.e. the microsystems of home, school, street and community. Next I turn to consider prominent influences in the macrosystem i.e. that of *isiXhosa* culture, Christian faith and traditional beliefs and practices. I conclude with a consideration of the role that elements of the exosystem and chronosystem play in their lives, focusing attention on the triumvirate role of employment, poverty, and Apartheid. Throughout, I use young people’s photographs³, their commentaries on these photographs, and their *Circles of Influence* as primary sources for this analysis.

Symbols, fictions, dualities and saboteurs

In describing the social and moral contexts of young people in Chapter 5, I depicted the four microsystems of township youth as home, school, community, and streets, and provided some insight into the nature of these contexts. When young people photographed their moral influences in these contexts they regularly emphasised the *people* in each

³ I have paid special attention to excluding photographs that might identify young people and so have not depicted family members, where to do so would identify research participants.

context, while also singling out the impact of *education* and *alcohol* on their lives. Eager to understand the deeper nature of the influence in each context, in this section I focus on young people's explanations on *how* each person, place or action affects their moral formation rather than merely whether they considered each influence 'good' or 'bad'. I begin by considering the microsystem of home and family.

Exemplary mothers, inspirational younger siblings

In the context of the home, siblings, mothers, and (absent) fathers feature prominently, if for different reasons, as moral influences. Mothers and younger siblings were photographed by nearly two thirds of young people⁴. Young people regarded mothers as inspirational and exemplary moral influences. Vuma and Andile elaborate on why this is the case:

Vuma: [Softly] *This mother is everything to me.* She's a good influence Sharlene. Because I'm here, and I have what I have [pause] it is her.

Andile: She does everything for me. She looks after me [and] her four children. She's one – she's the mother and at the same time, she's the father... And my mother is struggling. She is working. She is looking for jobs... She just works sometimes and sometimes she doesn't. She's a [long pause] I would say it's a domestic worker⁵.

Throughout young people displayed substantial affection for their mothers independent of whether they were working, drank excessively, or had multiple children from different

⁴ Mothers were ranked 3rd strongest moral influence while siblings were ranked 5th in the *Circle of Influence* activity. There was only a slight difference between young men and young women's rankings of mothers and siblings (see Table 9.1).

⁵ The fact that many mothers were domestic workers seemed to surface repeatedly, and always accompanied with anger or tears. Young people often referred to their desire to liberate their mothers from the always backbreaking and often demeaning work of being 'a maid'.

men. Young people judged their mothers' substance use and sexual habits⁶ as wrong, but did not allow these to affect their evaluation of their mothers as overwhelmingly positive moral influences. Mothers' moral influence was symbolic and inspirational because of the hard work they did to hold their families together in difficult circumstances, and because of the love and support they provided their children, rather than for being exemplary moral figures in their personal lives or for directly *teaching* youth about right and wrong. In this sense young people echo 'the maternal emphasis in sociological analysis, which is the strong black female and its complementary partner the marginal male'⁷ (Mirza, 1993, p. 38).

This 'marginal male' or 'absent father' was also frequently represented as a strong moral influence (in interviews rather than in photographs and *Circles of Influence* – where they were simply excluded). Young people interpreted their father's absence in three ways of significance to their moral formation: anger, shame and loss. Thimna and Nonkiza explain:

Thimna: I have no relationship with my father. Because he didn't bought me even a waterproof when I was young, not even food. So I don't care about him... If I see him I just ignore him. I'm angry, I'm angry, I hate him too... [long pause] I feel ashamed of myself... it wasn't my fault but he [pause] he knows nothing about me and [pause] he is supporting other children.

Nonkiza: [Not seeing my father] makes me sad because I always thought when something doesn't go right with me – I think maybe [if] my father was here, he was going to be able to solve it for me.

⁶ Nonkiza said 'I don't want to go through the same thing' while Thando tried to explain that mothers may have been 'party animals' when they were younger, had a child with a man who subsequently 'ran away' so she 'tries again, and again'.

⁷ Mirza (1993, p. 37) is critical of this emphasis since she argues that it 'has had the effect of marginalizing the important telling of the urban confrontation of race, class and sexuality'. But sociologists seem to be accurately reflecting young people's own views in this case.

Young people explained, often tearfully, that their absent fathers made them angry – because they did not provide any financial support and yet were supporting other children. Young men especially were ashamed to know that they would not take their father’s name when it came to performing traditional ceremonies like *ulwaluko* (see also Ramphele, 2002). Numerous young people said that having an absent father caused jealousy and rivalry between them and their siblings and often the words ‘you don’t even know your father – just don’t talk’ came up in bitter fights. They also reported a sense of loss at not having their father around when faced with difficult issues. Nearly half of the young men said they wanted to be good and *present* (rather than absent) fathers to their children. Andile commented that ‘I want to have my wife by my side and my children. Not, not separate. I don’t like separate children. I don’t want to be like my father or my mother’ while Ingwazi told me ‘I want my child to, to feel proud and to grow up with his father, you see. Not like me to grow up without knowing his father’. Young people’s understanding of the nature of their (absent) fathers’ influence is immediate and simple. It seems though that their understanding of the emasculation of men in the South African context through Apartheid, migrant labour and poverty is virtually nonexistent⁸.

The final group of people about whom youth spoke in the context of home were their siblings. *Younger siblings* were cited as inspirational, positive moral influences since they provided motivation for success⁹, and because they ‘forced’ youth to be the positive role models their younger siblings expected them to be, as Vuma and Ingwazi explain:

Vuma: If I get a work Sharlene – they [younger twin brothers] will be the first ... I will be the first to look after them you know.

Ingwazi: I want to be a person that children can look up to, *yabon*, and say that, ‘Hey, I want to be like Ingwazi, you see. He was like that in

⁸ See Richter and Morrell (2006) for a detailed analysis of the state of fatherhood in South Africa. Chapters by Ramphele and Richter (2006), Wilson (2006), and Mkhize (2006) analyzing the historical, social, economic and moral dimensions are especially pertinent to this discussion.

⁹ Later in this chapter I explain how work, success and morality are intricately linked in young people’s meaning-making.

the past, but now you see he is doing his own things, yebo. He's like a role model'.

In contrast to younger siblings as inspirational moral influence, young people were more hesitant about older siblings. While some were good role models especially since they had good jobs (Liyema, for example, told me about her brother who was a labour lawyer), others were detracting influences, setting bad examples¹⁰ for them to follow.

The ambivalent fiction of school

'School/education' was a further dominant¹¹ social representation of both empowering and detracting moral influence. The images speak for themselves – while some are positive, many are negative. Figures 9.1-9.6 show photographs of young people hanging out on sports fields, a school badge (Oakridge), an overflowing toilet¹², smoking in the toilets, students bunking school and students studying (all Mandela).



Figure 9.1 *The view from the Oakridge High School sports fields*

¹⁰ Young people spoke of older siblings (mainly brothers) who had been or were currently in prison, and are 'drunk, drunk, always drunk'. Older female siblings were bad influences because 'she's having two children – [each] one is having its own father'.

¹¹ Four-fifths of young people included photographs of 'school' in their digital documentaries, while ranking 'school/education' 1st overall in the *Circle of Influence* activity (2nd for young women and 1st for young men).

¹² In a study on inclusion (Kaplan, Lewis, & Mumba, 2007) the state of the toilets at school was a prominent part of students' critique across all three research sites (United Kingdom, Indonesia and Zambia).



Figure 9.2 A girl's toilet at Mandela



Figure 9.3 A young woman smoking in the toilets at Mandela



Figure 9.4 Students squeezing through the inner perimeter fence at Mandela at midday



Figure 9.5 *A student working in a classroom at Mandela High School*



Figure 9.6 *Students studying for an exam at Mandela*

When I talked to the group about their photographs they provided significant insight into how school is interpreted as a source of moral influence. Their answers can be divided into three main areas of influence: education, peers, and teachers. Education was seen as key to developing good moral values since ‘in school you will learn many things – you will know how to respect yourself, [learn] what is wrong and what is right’. Young people made the connection between education and achieving future dreams and goals (‘If you don’t have any education, no future for you’) – and later also made the connection between having a job and being a moral person. In other words school was seen to be empowering. Being at school was seen as diversionary, a deterrent to crime, and the key to future success (by young people in both suburban and township schools):

Nonkiza: If you are not in school, you are not going to get the job that you always wanted, but if you finish your studies, you're going to get that job.

As they did with their mothers, young people attached symbolic meaning to school – it was a moral and economic panacea, despite poor quality, uncaring teachers and its potential for violence. Mhoza was very aware of how little learning gets done in school because of the 'nonsense here in the class' and 'children making ...chaos' referring to the high noise levels and frequent disruptions to learning in township schools. The young women in my reference group (who were close to writing Matric) were critical of school language policies that prejudiced them in the final school exit exam:

Lekho: Why do they write Matric examination in English and Afrikaans? Why do they not put *isiXhosa* there – because they know that there are *amaXhosa* who are going to write that? They only write English and Afrikaans. Maybe they want us not to pass.

Dipuo: The white people, they don't take you if you don't have English or Afrikaans but *isiXhosa* is [also] a part of our language. Why they don't say like 'we don't take the one who don't have *isiXhosa*?'

Mandela students especially recognised their school environment as detracting or contributing to their ability to be 'right' people. Having few extramural opportunities meant that 'we are like this now because we have nothing to do in location – that is why we take a *dagga* and smoke and make crime' and poor facilities (such as classrooms, toilet, and libraries) were interpreted as 'they don't want us to learn here in this place'. In contrast, Oakridge students spoke of rugby, drama, singing, netball and cricket as keeping them busy, disciplined and out of trouble.

Township-schooled youth also showed an understanding of the importance of 'right', professional and caring teachers. Nonkiza tells me 'Mr Mbeki is *friendly* and also he's

working hard'. Young people saw teachers who were competent in the classroom and who helped them with problems as a good influence and as a 'parent to us' but were critical of teachers who 'didn't like me', were 'lazy', 'doesn't teach good' and who don't 'try to get through the syllabus', a finding corroborated by Bray and Gooskens (2006, p. 48). Caring teachers were those who were involved in students' lives by 'encourage[ing] them to be a good person', 'talk[ing] free with us' and 'talk[ing] to us not just laugh at us' or 'tell others about our problems'. In contrast to this desire for caring and professional teachers, youth bemoaned the fact that their teachers were corrupt, 'teach children wrong things', drank and smoked *dagga* at school, and 'are having affairs with students' (see Box 9.1).

Box 9.1 Teachers Having 'Affairs' with Students

Poseletso (*Young woman, aged 17, township-schooled*)

[What must change about school?] Teachers must not be abusing children – you must feel free when you are at school – must not be afraid that oh, my teacher is going to touch me here and he is going to propose at me. I won't be happy at class if I don't let him do what he want to do. *Yah I think school must be like a home, you must be free at school.*

Dipuo (*Young woman, aged 19, township-schooled*)

Mr Mhlaba – last year – in yah January, first term – okay I come to take my report – ...He don't want to give me my report [laughs]. I said 'why?', he said 'I want to talk to you first – wait.' I said 'Okay.' I wait and then after that he said, 'Can I give you a lift?' I said 'No.' ...I remember it was the 14th Feb – Valentines ...Then you see he touch me like - [points to top of leg] and I didn't like that thing. I said 'No teacher' and he said 'No, don't say teacher, say Raymond' ...He touched me like you see – on on my bum – here [points to breasts] everywhere. So I was scared you see, so I said 'I have to go home because my mother gonna shout me'. 'No man it's too early' [he says]. 'Okay fine I'll stay' and then [he] buy me coldrinks and I stay. After that... he park in a yard, in the flats ...Then he takes me like a boyfriend... The following day I come to tell Lekho and Mandisa and they said I have to go to Mr Mhlabeni [principal]. I said, 'No then if I go to Mr Mhlabeni then there's going to get big problems' ...*How can you report the things – yoh! Sharlene – it's not easy. It's going to be a big thing... He's going to hate me. When I write the exam – maybe you know that thing – maybe he will fail me...* Then Mr Mhlaba comes to face me and I say, 'That thing is wrong'. He said 'I won't leave you alone because I love you'... He teach me this year. Maths – that's why I don't concentrate. I'm too scared to ask, even for a book, or to ask a question, if a problem is right ...There's other one [girlfriend at school] for Mr Mhlaba, [also] Mr Mpazi and Mr Bhenya [have girlfriends at school].

Thembisa (*Young woman, aged 19, township-schooled*)

I hate Mr Mhlaba... he love to have affairs with students. He has affair with Dipuo. I saw. Dipuo ...she did not want to tell me that she is having affair, but Mr Mhlaba he said we must go to Dipuo and tell her that and that and that just because he knows she is my friend. But Dipuo she don't want to tell me that... *It is wrong to have an affair with a teacher just because he's already educated, he just play with you, that you must not take care of your books – and he's just working. It is not good, it's not good. Not a good example.*

The issue of sexual relationships between students and teachers arose frequently in discussions. Poseletso tells me that teachers must not be 'abusing children... school must be like a home, you must be free at school.' A few months earlier Poseletso had left her previous school due to unwanted attention from a male teacher and came to Mandela in the late stages of her penultimate year. She became friends with some of the young women in my reference group, one of whom (Dipuo) was having an 'affair' with a male teacher. Dipuo's relationship with the teacher was convoluted and fraught. On one hand, she enjoyed the attention and benefits. On the other hand, she felt she was being forced to do things against her will and was afraid to end the relationship because the teacher in question was her Maths teacher. She was afraid that he might fail her if she tried to end it. Her account of the relationship, as well as those of her two friends, Thembisa and Poseletso, illustrates these conflicts and complexities. The issues of power, professional responsibility and conduct, poverty (of students who engage in these relationships), maturity¹³ of students (due to a interrupted schooling) all point to the need for further research on this subject, and is of importance for parents, youth, and school authorities.

Besides school itself and teachers, young people also highlighted their own and peers' practices which made school an ambivalent moral influence. On the positive side, young people portrayed photographs of friends at school as being good moral influences because friends provided them with a constant supply of people with whom to share problems and find help. On the negative side, there were too many of their peers who were 'corrupt' and who fought, stole, 'smoked' and drank at school. Thimna told me she was prevented from coming to school by girls in a gang from a rival school. Some young people also highlighted their own shortcomings, especially bunking school as a constant source of temptation and hence a negative influence¹⁴.

¹³ Often students are willing participants, and in most cases were over 18 and of legal age to provide consent.

¹⁴ Young people never mentioned it as a negative influence, but one unusual thing that I noticed was the amount of time youth took off school for common illnesses or family events. Young people were frequently off school for an entire week with a cold, two or three weeks for a relative's funeral, and Ingwazi was off school for a month after being stabbed in his head. His condition was serious enough to warrant perhaps two weeks of convalescence but he told me he did not want to be teased – which is what he predicted would happen if he came to school with a bandaged head.

School is clearly the source of complex and ambivalent moral influence for young people. They can see education as meaningful by representing it as a fictional symbol that will empower them to find jobs and become good people, and divert them from doing wrong. Yet the poor quality of education, the dangers of violence and unwanted sex, and the scant attention paid to them by uncaring teachers, meant that young people have little chance of success (either moral or vocational). These young people attached moral significance to the mere fact of being *in* school rather to what occurs in school (see Chapter 6 – a morality based on place – *where you are*).

Navigating the dual influence of the streets

The streets of *ikasi* represent the place where young people spend the bulk of their time – hanging out with friends, talking, laughing and joking, and enjoying this space of recreation. Recreational pursuits included street bashes, street dancing, sitting around, playing games¹⁵, drinking in taverns, *shebeens*, *smokolos*, wearing good clothes, owning a cellphone and listening to music at jukeboxes. As a moral influence the streets were a complex domain. Nearly three quarters of young people took photographs of friends and having fun and ranked them strongly in their *Circle of Influence* activity (8th for ‘friends’ and 9th for ‘fun’)¹⁶. Figure 9.7-9.15 provides a selection of photographs coded in this category.

For the most part young people classified their ‘fun’ as diversionary except for those involving substance use, which they said was uniformly detracting. Music was highlighted as a key diversionary moral influence – both listening to it and making it. For Mathsufu listening to music in your house means ‘you can stay away... from the street’ which was good since when ‘something wrong happens there in the street, you are not there, you are at your home listening [to] music that you like’.

¹⁵ Popular games on the street included *Stok*, Crazy Eight, Twenty-four, pool, gambling for small amounts of money, cricket, soccer, and elastic.

¹⁶ Friends were ranked slightly higher for young women, at 6th, than for young men who ranked them as 11th strongest influence. Fun was ranked similarly for both young men (9th) and young women (8th).

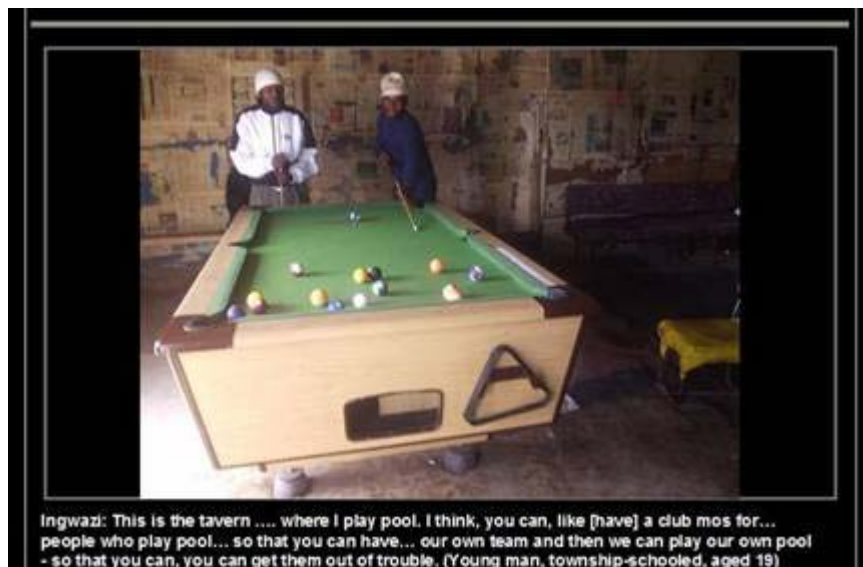


Figure 9.7 *Playing pool in a tavern in Crossroads*



Figure 9.8 *Young men sitting behind flats in Langa*



Figure 9.9 *Young people playing street soccer in Langa*



Figure 9.10 *A jukebox/tavern in Langa*



Figure 9.11 *A group of girls congregating on a street corner in Langa*



Figure 9.12 *Two friends in Philippi*



Figure 9.13 A group of young men hanging out on the street in Langa



Figure 9.14 Dancing at a party in Langa



Figure 9.15 A group of girls playing cards for money in Langa

Besides music, youth identified sport and television as positive diversionary influences. For both of these activities it 'keeps me busy' and 'takes children away from the streets' were common refrains. A number of young people mentioned the pedagogic role that television played in their lives, identifying a plethora of 'edutainment' series currently on South Africa television (*Zola 7*, *Soul City*, *Yizo Yizo*, *Tsha Tsha*) that they found morally inspiring.

Friends were spoken of as simultaneously exemplary, empowering and detracting moral influences. Friends who were 'right' were good role models ('It's a good influence to be with friends, good friends they are right'), while those who helped you through your problems were empowering¹⁷. 'Wrong' friends were those who had multiple sexual partners, did crime, and overdosed on alcohol or drugs, but still remained friends. Young people recognised that some friends were the source of 'competitions', turning robbery into 'sport', getting drunk into 'fashion' and becoming pregnant into a contest. Consequently friends' moral influence had to be carefully navigated as these young men explain:

Joules: Since they're my friends I'll take them as good influences but what they do uh-uh [shakes head from side to side].

Vuma: My friends they will tell me... like no man, this is wrong you know... but sometimes they won't tell me – they will say you can do it – it doesn't matter. Like to approach a girlfriend whereas I have got a girlfriend you know – they will say that's good.

Xolile: [At home] I'm going alone because the friends there in Khayelitsha, most of them... they drink and do such things with their friends. They rob the people, kill the people and they have so many guns to them. And they steal the cars.

¹⁷ In a study conducted by Bray and Gooskens (2006) in Cape Town, it was found that 'peer pressure is not as powerful as the discourse implies' (p.48) and that young people 'receive a high degree of support from their friends' (p. 49).

Thobane: In the end it's up to you... sometimes you follow your friends in the good things, sometimes you follow them in the bad things.

Those involved in long-term romantic relationships spoke of their partners as inspirational and sometimes pedagogic moral influences¹⁸. Many young men echoed Xolile's description of the way in which his girlfriend helps him to be a 'right' person.

Xolile: The one girl that I love in my heart ...she tells me everything... Like if I'm go with wrong friends, she tell me that, 'No you take a wrong step now. So come back, and sit down to talk'. And if [she thinks] I do a something wrong, we sit down and talk.

For Andile and Andiswa, their relationship was of mutual moral benefit. They helped and inspired each other to do the 'right' things. Andiswa told me she had 'finally, finally [found] a partner that I can stop smoking [*dagga*] with'. While Andile told me that Andiswa has 'chang[ed] my life, encouraging me [in] all things' but emphasises also how he had changed her life:

Andile: I [also] changed Andiswa's life. When I met Andiswa, she was like hey, drinking, smoking *dagga*, getting home late. That's a girl! She was doing all those things like at *ikasi* do. Then I met up with her – she didn't have one guy, many guys, uh-huh. Uh, and I started coming to her life, then started like, I started changing her life. She stopped smoking [*dagga*]. Then she stopped drinking.

When young people later read this chapter upon my return to the field they were surprised that romantic partners had not been portrayed as *both* good and bad influences. Said Luxolo: 'Not all the relationships are the same, some bring you down'.

¹⁸ Overall one third of young people took photographs of a girl- or boyfriend and cited them as being inspirational moral influences. More young men (8 out of 18) than young women (5 out of 19) portrayed their romantic partner as a positive moral influence. In the *Circle of Influence* activity 'boy/girlfriends' was ranked as the 7th strongest moral influence in young people's lives (9th for young women and 5th for young men).

A further item related to young people's street culture was that of fashion and materialism. Nearly half of young people (slightly more young men than young women, and significantly more suburbs-schooled youth than township-schooled youth) took photographs of items that could be categorised as referring to fashion or coveted material possessions (cars, clothes, and cellphones – see Figure 9.16-9.20). In young people's *Circle of Influence* 'fashion/being cool' was ranked similarly and highly for both young men (8th) and young women (7th). Nzulu, a suburbs-schooled young man spoke of his obsession with fashion and material possessions telling me 'my life is nothing without my phone' and that he 'couldn't bear wearing one jean like – like today and then wear it again tomorrow'.



Figure 9.16 Township young people on a summer Saturday evening in Langa



Figure 9.17 Shop window displaying shoes and clothes



Figure 9.18 A Land Rover poster on a young person's bedroom wall



Figure 9.19 A pile of R100 notes



Figure 9.20 A young person's cell phone

Although fashion and material possessions were desired, they were perceived as a negative moral influence because it corroded money and there was pressure to look one's best especially on a Saturday. Similarly with cell phones: most young people wanted to be fashionable and have cell phones but often said it caused them to do things they would otherwise not do (like shoplifting, stealing, lying to get money, and disrupting relationships with parents from whom they demanded money). In contrast to Nzulu, township-schooled Luxolo spoke of the impact money, fashion and material possessions had on her self-esteem:

Luxolo: I would say like you know when you want something – there are the kids, you know... maybe they're wearing R500 shoes and you want to have them but you can't have them, that sort of like *puts you down*, yah. But then you can't have them. Like, you just wish you were like that kid, yah.

Sharlene: And how does that make you feel?

Luxolo: Sort of like you, you, maybe like you're not, *you're not someone like out there* – in South Africa.

Sharlene: And why is it important to be someone out there?

Luxolo: *To be like recognised as a person.*

Luxolo never directly links this to her subsequent foray into housebreaking as Andiswa does regarding shoplifting (Chapter 8). But it is reasonable to conclude that a desire for material possessions as a statement of worth, and crime are closely related.

The pervasive and sabotaging influence of alcohol

We have already seen that alcohol forms a pervasive part of both young people's street culture and community life. Young people's photographs confirmed this knowledge. In a particularly symbolic photograph, Thulani captured the 'life story of Black' (Figure 9.21). It is an anthropomorphic, fictitious, and humorous account of the origination of Carling Black Label beer (known in the township simply as 'Black') scrawled on a tavern wall.

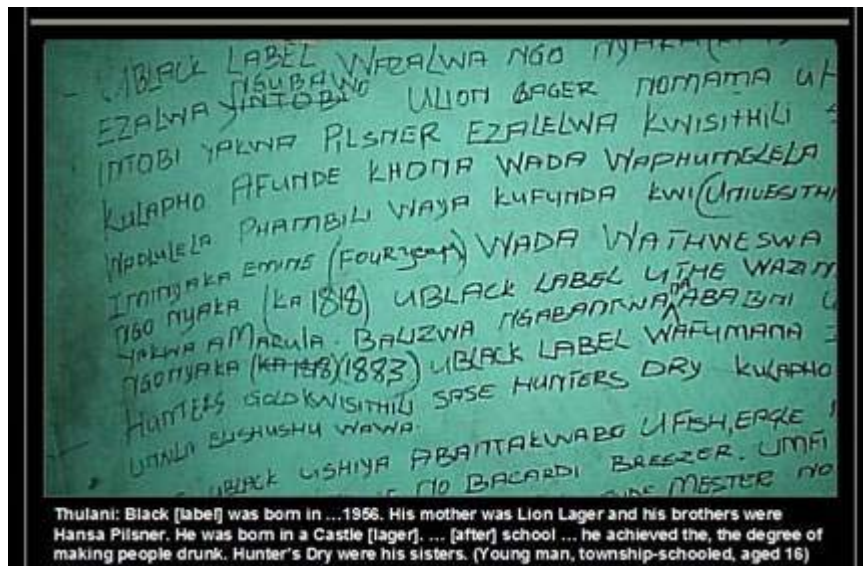


Figure 9.21 Anthropomorphic story of 'Black' beer on a tavern wall in Langa

'Black' is marketed as the strong ('black') man's beer. At 5.5%, it has a higher alcohol content than other beers marketed¹⁹ in the suburbs and is sold in *ikasi* in 750ml bottles rather than the 340ml containers found in suburban bars. As a result it is also cheaper (by net volume). Its use is ubiquitous amongst young people and adults alike and is the source of much of the township's 'corruption'. Young people considered alcohol and other substance use as almost uniformly wrong despite their ubiquitous use of it (Chapter 6). Of all the moral influences portrayed in *Digital Documentaries*, alcohol was most widely photographed with 31 out of 37 young people²⁰ (84%) capturing images of beer, brandy, taverns, *shebeens*, jukeboxes, *smokolos* and people drinking or drunk (see Figures 9.22-9.30). Besides alcohol, over a third of young people took photographs depicting cigarette smoking, various stages of *dagga*²¹ use (from the plant growing, to being dried, to being rolled into a joint or smoked with Mandrax in a broken bottle) and hard drug use. Figures 9.31-9.36 provides a sample of these photographs.

¹⁹ Hansa has an alcohol level of 4.5% while Castle Lager contains 5% alcohol.

²⁰ This varied slightly between young men (16 out of 18, 89%) and young women (15 out of 19, 79%).

²¹ More young men than young women took photographs but not by a large margin. Eight out of 18 (44%) young men took photographs of *dagga* compared to six out of 19 (32%) young women. In the *Circle of Influence* activity *dagga* was represented as a weak moral influence with an overall ranking of 25th (young men 21st, young women 27th).



Figure 9.22 Men sitting in a neighbourhood shebeen



Figure 9.23 A man transporting a case of beer in Langa



Figure 9.24 People sitting in a smokolo in a participant's shack



Figure 9.25 Men and women in a shebeen in Langa



Figure 9.26 Young men in a tavern with six large bottles of 'Black' beer



Figure 9.27 Two women in a tavern with a child



Figure 9.28 A young man stabbing another with others attempting to intervene

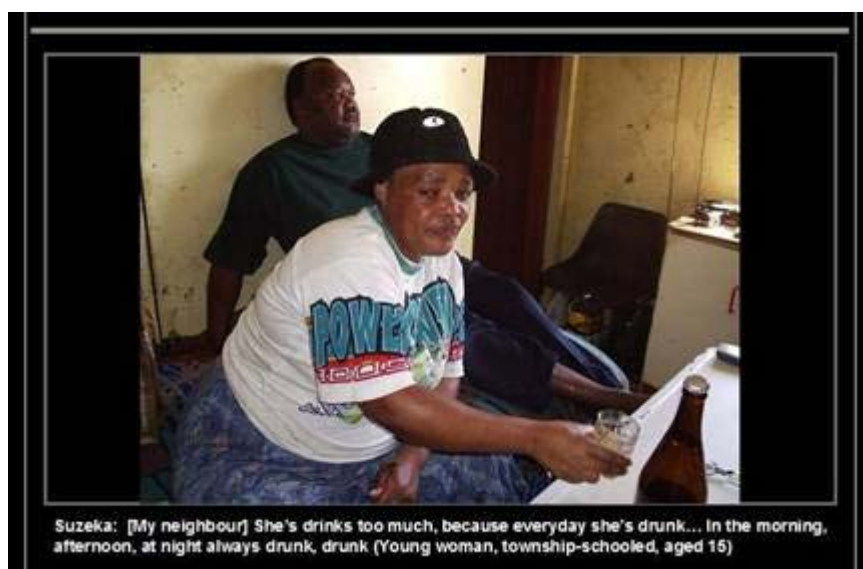


Figure 9.29 Neighbours drinking beer in a one-roomed flat in Langa



Figure 9.30 Men drinking beer at a tavern during the day



Figure 9.31 Man preparing heroine for use



Figure 9.32 Young man smoking dagga through a broken bottle neck



Figure 9.33 Young men in shack smoking dagga



Figure 9.34 Young man smoking dagga and Mandrax



Figure 9.35 Dagga and a bottle neck on a magazine

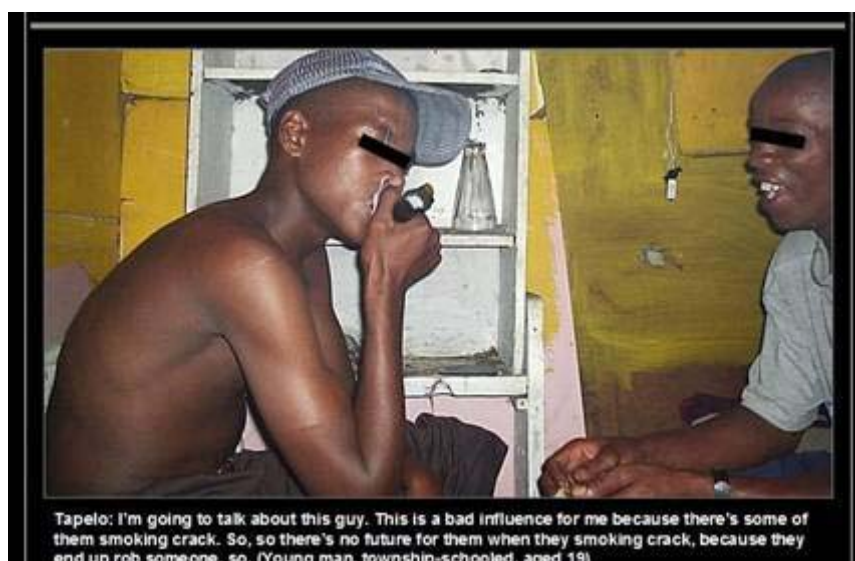


Figure 9.36 Young men smoking crack cocaine

The meaning attributed to drugs as a moral influence were generally viewed in the same light as alcohol. Young people distinguished between those who were committed users (and of what kind of drug they used) and those who only experimented or used *dagga* infrequently. Chapter 6 provides some of the complex hierarchies these young people identified with regard to drugs use, and will not be repeated here.

In explaining alcohol as a *moral* influence, young people focused on *who* drank, *how much* they drank, *where* they drank, and with what *effect*. Only people who drank regularly (as opposed to only on ‘big days’) and in front of children (or who served alcohol to children²²) were cited as bad moral influences. Ingwazi’s comment on a photograph of two women²³ sitting in a shebeen with a child (see Figure 9.27) was particularly scathing when he asks: ‘What is she teaching ...to her child?’. Related to *when* people drank are the *quantities* they drank. Those who ‘overdosed’ were bad moral influences. Young people who got drunk and allowed their mothers to see²⁴ them drunk showed ‘no respect’.

In spite of articulating the nuances of how much is consumed, where and when, young people constantly flagged the pervasiveness and dominance of alcohol in their lives as problematic. They easily made the connection between alcohol and social problems such as alcohol-fuelled violent crime (‘On big days... people are drunk, they kill all people’; ‘too much drinking, too much crime’) and how alcohol addiction served to impoverish families. Regarding the latter, youth related numerous examples of men who get waylaid by taverns that open as early as 06:00 in the morning – they stop for a drink and then end up not going to work. Poseletso showed me a photograph (see Figure 9.30) she had taken of working men drinking at 14:00 in the afternoon. Andiswa highlighted how people are

²² Many young people told me that they had never been refused alcohol in a tavern even when they were children. Only Vuma told me a tavern-keeper had refused him alcohol when he was drunk, and only because the tavern-keeper happened to be his neighbour and knew him well.

²³ One-third of the photographs of alcohol portrayed women drinking alcohol – taken by both young men and young women.

²⁴ Getting drunk and sleeping it off before coming home was better than coming home drunk. Getting drunk in your own shack (for young men) was better than getting drunk in a tavern.

often paid in alcohol²⁵ for work done (see Figure 9.23). Young people also commented on the important role that alcohol plays in the township economy and that despite it providing an income, ‘growing [up] in a shebeen house’ (see Figure 9.22) was a bad influence because you grew up thinking alcohol was right. But mothers who ran a *smokolo* (see Figure 9.24) were seldom criticised. Instead youth defended the need for their mother to sell alcohol to make a living. When I asked what it was like to live in a house with a *smokolo* Phumeza spoke of the influence without blaming her parents: ‘It’s a bad influence because we are going to become drinking you know’. Her brother Xolani articulated the dilemma: ‘It’s good because we’re making money but at the time it’s bad because the people are fighting there – when they get drunk’. Nomonde told me ‘they all drink’, speaking of her family members, ‘because my mother sells beer’.

The most frequently cited influence of alcohol regarded the way it caused young people to do (or fail to do something) – detracting from moral agency. Alcohol prevented you from being a ‘right’ person, by ‘caus[ing] you to do the things you don’t want to do’. This removal of agency was perhaps the strongest reason youth gave for citing alcohol as a sabotaging or detracting moral influence. For Xolile the need for alcohol caused him to lie and steal in order to get money to purchase it. For Ingwazi alcohol ‘takes me out of control’ while Andile tells me how alcohol has caused him to get into fights and fail at school. He continues by telling me that ‘some people... force [girls] to sleep with you because he bought her some beers’. Andiswa’s explains her photograph (Figure 9.25) by telling me that not only is drinking alcohol wrong, but when ‘girls [are] drinking along with the men... [they] are being *used* by these guys – [pause] for sex’.

It is not hard to see, and hear, that young people’s judgements about alcohol are developed and nuanced. They see the moral problems that alcohol causes but also distinguish between drinking and getting drunk, between getting drunk and causing problems for yourself and

²⁵ The *dop system* (May, Brooke, Gossage *et al.*, 2000; McKinstry, 2005; Rosenthal, Christianson, & Cordero, 2005) was widespread in Apartheid South Africa, especially in the Western Cape wine-growing areas. That township inhabitants now do the same to their labourers is ironic but perhaps not surprising.

others, and behaving responsibly²⁶ when drunk. What they fail to do however, is to make the connection between poverty and alcohol use. They do not comment on how their lack of modulation²⁷ is perhaps linked to mental health privations or the lack of alternative forms of recreation. Neither do they speak of how the Apartheid practice of paying people in alcohol and supplying alcohol to migrant workers to keep them corralled (and docile) in their townships was an everyday occurrence. The questionable business practice employed by large breweries in differentially marketing alcohol (in order to entrap users?) in poor areas also goes uncommented upon. Vuma is alone in articulating how alcohol may be seen as self-medication for the stress and trauma of poverty (see his comment about drinking ‘to put down the nerves’ in Figure 9.26). What they were aware of, however, was how alcohol was part of the fabric of cultural life. Its ubiquitous use was an inevitable part of township youth culture – *ikasi* style and being an *ikasi* girl or boy. When *ikasi* youth had ‘a competition’ it was about ‘be[ing] seen that day... Other people must think “these guys are cool guys, you see, they have money”’ Ingwazi tells me. But alcohol also formed part of *amaXhosa* culture that measured fines in ‘a case and a bottle’²⁸ and immersed traditional ceremonies in beer, brandy and *umqomboti*. It is to a discussion of the moral meanings of these cultural (and religious) influences that I now turn.

The pedagogic influence of religious and cultural beliefs

Unlike microsystems which are the closest and most personal influences in young people’s lives, as we saw in Chapter 2, Bronfenbrenner identifies cultural and religious beliefs as

²⁶ Several young men told me that they drank at home with their friends in their shacks to avoid fights. Vuma told me they purposefully never drank with girls to avoid doing something they would regret later (‘forcing’ girls into sex); Khaya that he would go home straight after drinking; Ingwazi that he always ran away when fights broke out, and Tapelo that he never carried his knife to a tavern so he was not tempted to take it out when he was drunk. None spoke of limiting their alcohol intake to only one or two drinks so that they do not get intoxicated in the first place.

²⁷ One of my observations, especially when visiting taverns with young people, was their lack of restraint when drinking. They seldom ordered one beer or a small beer, rather clubbing together to buy a case of beers and a bottle of brandy which they shared between four or five people. When that was finished they found more money to do the same again. Their alcohol use could be described as uncalibrated.

²⁸ A case of ‘Black’ label beer and a bottle of brandy. Fines in *amaXhosa* culture were given for a range of cultural infractions from wearing trousers as a married woman, not carrying the knife you were given at your *ulwaluko* ceremony, to getting a girl pregnant or even accidental death.

forming part of the overarching macrosystems in young people's lives. Macrosystems impact on microsystems as they exert their influence on school, home, community and street life. Two of these macrosystems that will be considered in this section are those of cultural beliefs (witches, traditional healers, *ulwaluko* and *ubuntu*) and religion (God and church). I focus on these two, not because they were especially strong influences, but because of the potential each holds for pedagogic moral influence and the complex ways in which young people make meaning of each as a moral influence.

God and church

Just under a third of young people took photographs depicting Christian religion as a moral influence (see Table 9.2 earlier) which is surprisingly low²⁹ given the high rates of church attendance reported in national religious affiliation surveys (see Chapter 5). However, when young people were later confronted with the label 'God/Jesus' and 'church' in the *Circle of Influence* activity, these influences were ranked as stronger influences than the photographic activity revealed. 'God/Jesus' was ranked as the 4th highest influence while church was ranked 10th (Table 9.1). In both cases young women ranked these elements of Christian faith higher than their male peers³⁰. The way in which young people spoke of God as an important influence despite not attending church was also intriguing. For those youth who did mention Christian faith as a moral influence they were divided between faith being inspirational, pedagogic and exemplary, and being little more than a protective talisman³¹. Mandisa told me that, 'Jesus gives me that power to be strong' while for Joules reading the Bible 'leads me to the good side of life'. For those youth who believed in God but did not

²⁹ This could of course be attributed to the method used – youth might have felt uncomfortable taking photographs in church or did not attend in the weeks in which they had cameras.

³⁰ In the *Circle of Influence* activity 'God/Jesus' was ranked 3rd for young women and 6th for young men, while church was ranked 4th for young women and 16th for young men. This gender difference was further extended with many more young men (11 out of 18) than young women (2 out of 19) *excluding* it as a moral influence in their lives in the *Circle of Influence* activity.

³¹ Christian Smith (2005) describes this approach to Christian religion, which he concludes characterises the faith of most American teenagers as 'moralistic therapeutic deism' (p. 162-170).

go to church (see Chapter 5³²), ‘God/Jesus’ was invoked as a external moral agent in their lives, attributing success, talent, and protection to him – sometimes fatalistically:

Mathsufu: If you tell yourself that God is always on my side and I’m gonna survive – you will. You don’t have to be scared.

Young people also spoke of attending church for something to do, to meet people, and because parents (or more often grandparents) insisted. In this sense young people recognised church attendance as a diversionary moral influence. No young people appeared antagonistic towards Christian faith. Youth who seldom or never attended church listened to Gospel music and admired Christian friends. Katlego described a friend who goes to church as a good influence and someone he would like to emulate:

Katlego: [My friend] goes to church like my mother goes to church. He’s a good influence. *Like I wish I was him*. This guy is, I don’t know, he doesn’t drink, he doesn’t smoke, it’s not easy but he’s a strong person. *He’s a Christian but he’s still cool*. He rolls with us.

What is most striking, however, is the little impact that young people’s faith (for those who told me they were committed) was reported to have on their moral behaviour. For example, only a very few related abstaining from sex to their religious beliefs, and none used religious faith as a reason for saying getting drunk or having an abortion was wrong. On the contrary, I recorded a number of incidents from young people who professed Christian faith that are out of keeping with these beliefs. Joules told me he had stolen two cellphones and spoke emphatically about taking revenge in spite of his Christian faith. Andiswa smoked *dagga*, shoplifted, and was violent in spite of her committed church attendance. Towards the end of our discussions when I asked her about the relationship between her faith and her behaviour she commented:

³² Nearly 80% of young people in this study professed belief in God although less than half of these attended church regularly.

Andiswa: I think they clash with each other... I like believe in God – that he can do everything for me – then what am I doing for him? That by stealing *mos*, I'm doing the opposite that he's teaching ...My mother and my father are in church. I'm also in church. But then once I walk in the street with red eyes, everybody can see that I've smoked *dagga*, *yabon*? How can a child be walking in the street, when there's preaching in the church saying people mustn't smoke, how's that?

Christian faith is pervasive in South African townships, but it appears to exert little moral power over these young people. Especially surprising is the fact that young people say very little about the *pedagogic* influence of religious moral teachings. Instead, 'God' is invoked as an external agent, providing both current and ontological security – and to a lesser extent (but more so to young women) – diversion and inspiration. Photographs of Christian faith included images of church services in progress, a range of church buildings³³, Bibles (Figure 9.37-9.41), a picture of Da Vinci's *Last Supper*, a minister on television, and various Gospel music artists.



Figure 9.37 A church service in Khayelitsha

³³ The churches depicted were a Zionist (African Independent) church, a Methodist church, an Old Apostolic Church, the Universal Church of God and two Assembly of God churches.



Figure 9.38 An Assembly of God church in Khayelitsha



Figure 9.39 A Universal Church building in Crossroads



Figure 9.40 A shack church and a member of the church (Zionist)

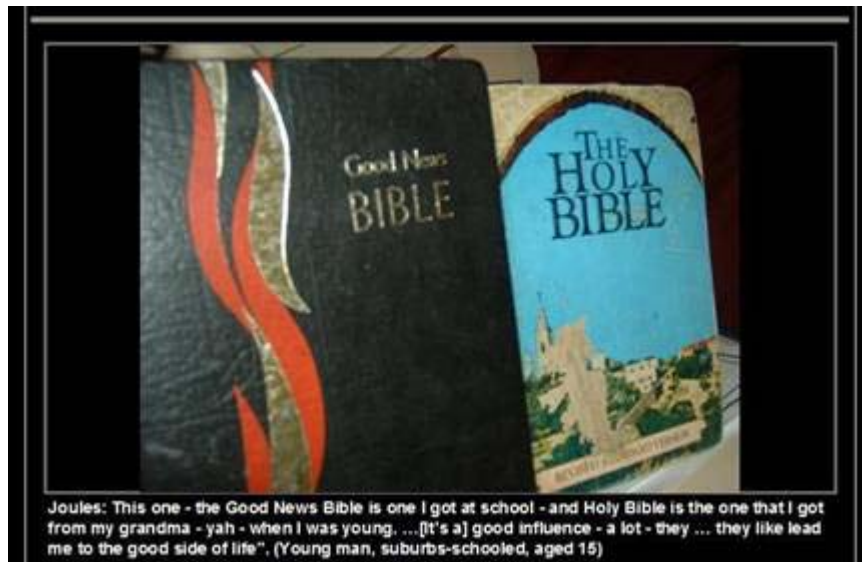


Figure 9.41 Two Bibles in a research participant's home in Langa

Relinquishing agency to witches and traditional healers

Christian faith was not the sole source of this security. For a number of young people³⁴, living at the nexus of traditional and modern society resulted in an experience of 'cognitive polyphasia'³⁵ in which multiple realities coexist dynamically. A number of young people believed both in God and the power of traditional beliefs and practices, with its emphasis on veneration of ancestors, and the power of traditional healers – *amaqqirha* and *ixhwele*³⁶ –

³⁴ Joules was ambivalent about what he believed. He told me he 'loved the Almighty' and although he went with his mother to his grandfather's grave and watched his mother talk 'to the stone' and then 'cleanse our hands – after we've touched that thing', he did not 'believe in those stuff that's because I grew up in the modern world' and because 'I go to a multi-racial school... maybe the people who's around at school – they like influence me like – to take these things like – not too seriously'. Later Joules tells me that he believes that his ancestors 'are like the middle people between me and my communication with God. See I believe that if I speak to them, and tell them my problems, they can like try to speak to God and try to help me'. When I ask him what his church teaches about ancestors he tells me his pastor 'is a Xhosa man... he grew up with those things... black people, we like, believe in those things... Those ancestor things help us, help us in many ways'.

³⁵ 'Cognitive polyphasia' is described by Moscovici when he observed the 'dynamic co-existence... [of] distinct modalities of knowledge' (cited in Wolfgang, Duveen, Jyoti Verma *et al.*, 2000, p. 304). Wagner *et al* provide an example of this in their study (in contemporary northern India) of social representations of mental illness interpreted simultaneously as medical disease and ghost possession.

³⁶ Numerous terms are used to describe traditional healers. Besides *iqqirha* (diviner) and *ixhwele* (herbalist), youth also used *sangoma* and 'witchdoctor' to refer to traditional healers. But even the distinction between a herbalist and a diviner is blurred with some characterising *ixhwele* as merely making traditional medicines and *iqqirha* who consult the spirits for supernatural ability to divine. This distinction is commonly accepted wisdom amongst youth but in fact is more complex. See Ashforth (2005, p. 289-300) for a detailed and nuanced discussion of the difference between herbalists and diviners.

to heal, divine and protect. Almost no-one discounted the existence of *amagqwirha* (witches) and their ability to do harm. The moral influence of these traditional practices and beliefs are complexly portrayed. Seven young people took photographs of traditional healers, *muti* or *muti* ingredients available in township shops (Figures 9.42-9.46) and were divided about whether these practices were good or bad moral influences. Despite two-thirds of young people telling me they did not believe in such ‘cultural’ things, I recorded multiple stories of encounters with traditional healers, *muti* and witches.



Figure 9.42 The interior of a shop selling items for use in traditional healing in Langa

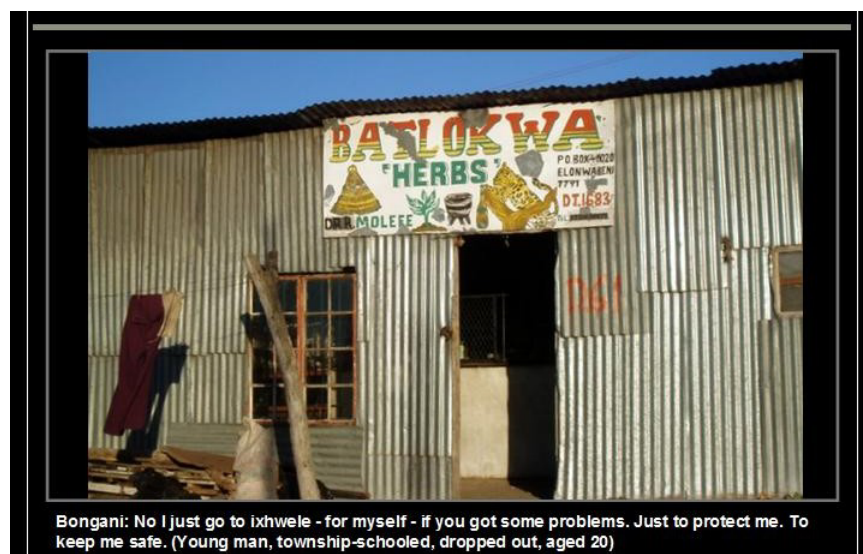


Figure 9.43 The exterior of shop selling traditional medicines in Khayelitsha



Figure 9.44 A group of women amagqirha in Khayelitsha



Figure 9.45 Young man wearing amulets (muti) on his ankles



Figure 9.46 Animal skins (muti) in a research participant's shack

The line between where *muti* obtained from a traditional healer differed from that used by a witch seemed to be blurred³⁷. What was apparent was the way in which young people eagerly attributed (even relinquished) external moral agency to both traditional healers and witches. Young people's belief in the inevitability of external agents to protect or cause harm was astounding³⁸ to hear (and see). Box 9.2 provides some of these accounts.

Box 9.2 Witches and Traditional Healers

Sipho (*Young man, aged 17, township-schooled*)

Me and my grandma did go to a – what you call it? [laughs] *igqirha* yah, we did go to *igqirha* on, in December yah. I mean like she wanted me to be strong see *neh*. *Igqirha* tells you mos like, I mean tells you everything about you. Sees everything about you... So she told me I'm this person – on last year December I was going to die and I was supposed to die because of the, the witches you see [laughs]. Yah. They wanted me to die *neh*. She said I was going to die with a knife maybe or a gun or a car accident. But that didn't happen because like the, the *igqirha* gave me those things *neh* to wash with – and like so, nothing like, no bad – evil spirits yah – like could come, could come to me yah. So like from now I, now I think I'm safe.

Andiswa (*Young woman, aged 15, township-schooled*)

We sat there for two hours not saying anything and my aunt was the only one who was making a noise. She's a *sangoma* wearing all those things and having bones and stuff. Then about – two hours later we heard police cars running around outside... She told us before the police cars could come, that when you hear police cars don't run to the windows and check what's going on, just sit down and shut your mouth. So we heard the cars like running around outside and we heard people screaming and gunshots – like outside... then the cars went silent and the people went silent and – my aunt told us now we can get up and look what's going on outside. She said, 'The person who killed my son has been killed. The person who lives by the gun will die by the gun'. We all went outside and we found that the guy that killed Ayanda, he was also shot by the police and that it was an open and closed case because there was nothing leading to my aunt.

...

I think that – I know that my aunt like – called the guy to come there. She like influences his mind, she like bewitches his mind to doing some kind of a crime – because he was shot [for doing]... some sort of a crime. She like had a plan for this guy ...she bewitch[ed] someone who is a policeman to like [shoot him]... How did they get the information? Like it just came out of the blue or something like that... [I don't like to] say too much. And sometimes I'm scared. I don't even talk to other people about this kind of thing, so I'm just scared that she will be listening or some sort. So I just mind what I say. The thing is with witchcraft – but you wouldn't understand – if you grew up with it then you would understand.

³⁷ Divination and the practice of 'witchcraft' are outlawed in South Africa. Much work of the *igqirha* relies on divination but this practice is seldom policed. Police are, however, regularly involved in investigating accusations of 'witchcraft' since accusations and killing of the accused are often related. Similarly so-called 'muti-murders' – murder for the purpose of harvesting body parts for *muti* – are closely policed.

³⁸ Nama and Swartz (2002, p. 291) make an important point when they note that 'beliefs in supernatural forces are found throughout the world and across all social classes'. They continue to say that since 'these beliefs may however interact with local conditions of poverty and deprivation' they ought to be especially carefully and sensitively studied.

Nomonde (*Young woman, aged 19, township-schooled*)

Nomonde: You won't understand, Sharlene.

Sharlene: Help me understand.

Nomonde: You see the bread or broom, they take all their clothes off and then they take the broom and then they fly with the broom on top of your house – then they throw things, some medicine, wrong medicine, *umuti* – then the next morning you wake up and you get a stroke or Sharlene she's dead or maybe Sharlene's daughter she's got a sickness, something like that.

Sharlene: But Nomonde, people get strokes and I don't blame it on the witches. How come you blame it on the witches?

Nomonde: *I do. I can get stroke when I'm old but not now. So if I get a stroke now when I'm young it's the witches.*

Sharlene: OK. And so don't you think that sometimes people blame witches when things go wrong when actually it's not the witches' fault?

Nomonde: *Sometimes they do blame witches but it's not the witches.* Maybe Sharlene I wanted a job and I'm doing grade 12 this year, and I'm writing an exam and then I fail. I would say it is the witches who made me fail, *but it's not them it's because I don't study my books.*

For Sipho, an encounter with a traditional healer marked the turning point in his life and saved him from impending death. Sipho's grandmother took him to see this *igqirha*, who gave him *muti* after divining that a witch had cursed him and he was meant to die. For him traditional healers were an empowering moral influence. For Andile the opposite was true. He told me:

Andile: The *umuti* that they [gangsters] are using... it's supposed to be that if you wear that you cannot be stabbed or shot by the gun... If you try to shoot him, the gun will lock. *So it makes you more violent because you think you're strong. No one can touch you.*

Andile also told me of his personal experience with the power of *muti*. He and his *igqirha* friend, Lwazi, were in a tavern when a Moscow gangster came up to them, demanded a cigarette and smacked Lwazi in the face. Lwazi went home and 'made a *muti*... We went out, looked for that guy and when we got back, we didn't find that guy... After three days, then we had heard he is dead'. When Andile told me this story he was not triumphant or jubilant. Instead he shrugged his shoulders acknowledging the inevitability of these external agents.

Andiswa told me of her 14 year-old cousin, Ayanda, who had been shot dead by a rival gang member in front of Lulu's bakery in Langa. After the funeral her aunt, an *iqqirha* (but 'also into witchcraft of some sort'), called the family together and told them that her son's killer was going to die that day. Sure enough they heard gunshots and when they went to look Ayanda's killer had been shot by the police. Nomonde told me of students at school consulting a '*sangoma*' who 'put something on a pen and then she will write and then she will pass' and of her brother's fits being cured by a 'witchdoctor' giving her mother '*umuti* to put in the house. He doesn't have fits anymore'. Nomonde told me that witches 'come here and kill you' because they are jealous, like if you've 'got a car, a big house and a lot of money'. She tells me 'even your mother she can kill you, your own mother if she's a witch', then adds 'You won't understand, Sharlene'. Nomonde's account of bewitchment also includes an explanation of when witches ought to be blamed (having a stroke when you're young rather than old) and ought not to be blamed (failing matric without studying). A common answer when I enquired about how a member of their family had died was that 'the witches had taken them'. In Chapter 7, I recounted Akhona's story of how his brother had been taken by witches. There were many others. Phumeza told me of a sibling who 'died when she was a baby – taken by the witches'. Dipuo told of an uncle who died in a car accident – 'the witches did it'. Thulani told me that witches will '*thakatha* me – bewitch me' if he wears good clothes when he visits Transkei since 'the grandmothers of the other children will be jealous of me'. These accounts came from township- and suburbs-schooled youth alike³⁹.

Blaming witches for death or sickness is a complicated issue in township life. It is a pervasive moral influence, and it is attractive to youth in that it provides attributive or external agency in creating meaning of their lives. In a discussion with Professor Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela (2004), we discussed the possibilities of 'witches' being a *symbol* employed by people traumatised by poverty and Apartheid. While I am sure that this is also the case, I have no doubt that the accounts related to me by young people were intended to be literally, rather than symbolically, understood. Adam Ashforth offers a similar analysis:

³⁹ After one discussion that included witches on camp, young people were too afraid to go to bed. The next morning Ingwazi told me he had hardly slept. During a similar conversation with the group of suburbs-schooled youth some urged me to change the subject – seriously and clearly 'spooked' by the topic.

When Africans invoke ‘witchcraft’ in accounting for their suffering ...they are articulating an interpretation of the meaning of misfortune that *frames suffering in terms of harm caused by persons motivated by hatred and resentful jealousy using secret occult means...* The rapidly increasing inequality within African communities and families ...leaves many feeling left behind and resentful of others’ good fortune (or fearful of others’ resentment of theirs), everyone is struggling to make sense of the mounting death toll from HIV/AIDS, and the collapse of that structural evil named ‘Apartheid’ leaves much misfortune still to be accounted for (Ashforth, 2005, p. 89).

In constructing a discourse of witches, young people are able to make sense of life that remains difficult and unjust despite democratic transformation. Witches provide an opportunity to attribute external agency and to create meaning apart from blaming structural injustice or ‘white’ people. Ashforth’s analysis provides an important key to understanding young people’s reluctance to assign blame for the multiple ways in which they experience structural injustice. Witches also offer an opportunity to relinquish agency in the face of unemployment, poverty, the legacy of Apartheid and government policies that have not yet trickled down to meeting the needs of the poorest. This important triumvirate of factors – unemployment, poverty, Apartheid – will be discussed in the final section of this chapter.

Ulwaluko and ubuntu

Two further cultural practices⁴⁰ with moral meaning are that of *ulwaluko* (Figure 9.47-9.49) and *ubuntu*. As was the case with witches and Christian faith, neither were strongly represented in photographs. But each provides important insights in understanding young people’s moral ecology. *Ulwaluko* was the only moral influence which youth portrayed as an overt positive pedagogic influence – one that affected practice.

⁴⁰ Other cultural practices with moral significance included venerating ancestors, being proud of traditional dress and art forms and engaging in other ceremonies to thank or implore the ancestors. Young people related these practices as positive because it ‘helped you to be respectful’.



Figure 9.47 A young man living in isolation during his initiation ritual



Figure 9.48 Young men at MHS dressed in the clothes of an *ikrwala* (initiation graduate)

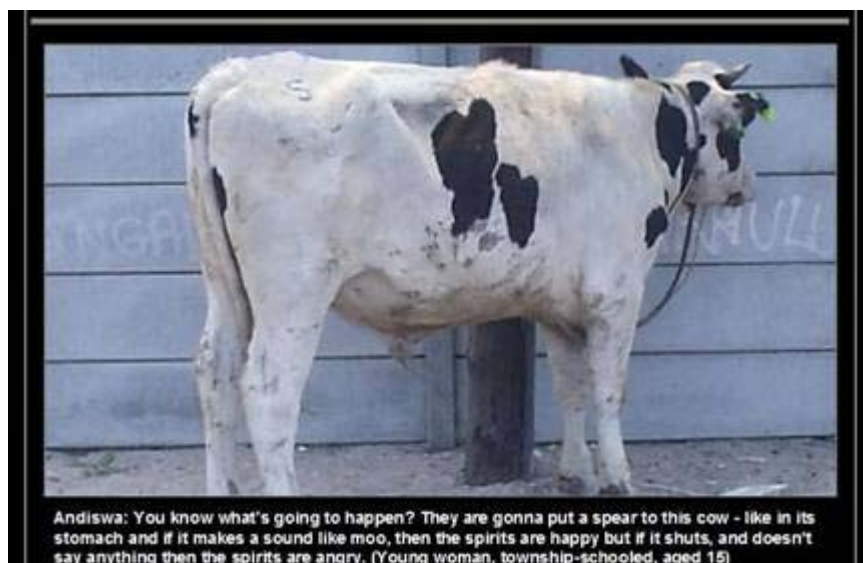


Figure 9.49 A cow waiting to be slaughtered for an *ulwaluko* celebration in Langa

A quarter of all young men⁴¹ in the study indicated that *ulwaluko* – the practice of circumcising young men, and sending them to the bush for a period of lengthy teaching, solitary reflection and initiation into *isiXhosa* manhood – was an important *pedagogic* moral influence in their lives. It taught them ‘to know what is right and wrong’. Four of the five young men who spoke of *ulwaluko* as a moral influence had completed their ceremonies (two during the time of my study) while one was about to do so (Andile). For these young men *ulwaluko* was of enormous significance. Some took secret⁴² pictures of *amakweta*⁴³ (initiates) in the bush, while others took photographs of *amakrwala* who had returned from the bush and who were dressed in new suits⁴⁴, and of a cow awaiting slaughter. All four *indodas* (Tapelo, Vuma, Khaya and Xolile) related their experience in some detail despite it being a ‘secret’. An extract of Khaya’s account is contained in Box 9.3.

Box 9.3 Khaya’s* Story – *Ulwaluko*

- Khaya: You going to stay there for, for two weeks without drinking water. No food with oil and like that – we eat a crush samp or white samp – ... it must not be wet, must be dry ... the old men is going to do the stuff – [indicates cutting of penis]. Circumcise, yah.
- Sharlene: Khaya what’s the purpose of going to the bush? In 2004?
- Khaya: Uh it’s tradition. *It means you going to another stage*. Eh, you see, if you don’t go there, they going to take you as a boy. No matter you 42 or 50.
- Sharlene: How do they know?
- Khaya: They know you, I don’t know. They will call you *inkwenkwe*. But if you are a man you are *indoda*. *A boetie*.
- Sharlene: And what’s the difference in how people treat you if you are a boy and not a man?
- Khaya: They treat you, *they call you a dog if you not a man*, a dog you see.
- Sharlene: And what do the old men teach when you go to bush, the *iKangatha*?
- Khaya: *They teach you the way you have to respect the old men*. No matter I’m younger than you if I went to the bush first, you have to respect him. You see. And how to talk to old parents, yes something like that. *And how to, to behave – with women and in the home*. Eh, you must not hit your mother or your sister. If you have something in your pocket, you must buy something and show it to your mother and share with your sister – you see and all this stuff.

⁴¹ None of the suburbs-schooled young men portrayed this custom as a moral influence and only one young woman spoke of *ulwaluko* as a moral influence. In the *Circle of Influence* activity ‘*ulwaluko*’ was ranked 10th for young men as a moral influence and second last for young women.

⁴² It was against cultural tradition to speak with anyone other than those who have completed the ritual, and taking photographs was included in this taboo.

⁴³ Men were known as *indodas* but called each other *boetie*. Uncircumcised boys were known as *inkwenkwe*. During the ceremony initiates were known as *amakweta*, while just after they were *amakrwala*.

⁴⁴ When a boy goes to the bush his old clothes are destroyed and he is given a complete new wardrobe upon his return. Its symbolic value is obvious. For six months after his return he must wear smart clothes including a hat. At Mandela these new initiates were permitted to wear these clothes to school instead of their school uniform.

...

And they teach you how to talk to another man, when you're from the bush [to] talk about manhood things. *And if you don't know that thing about the manhood you have to buy some drink, a case and a bottle.* But you are going to give that up. You are not going to drink that brandy just because you don't know nothing about the culture.

Sharlene: What are the things you must know about your culture?

Khaya: What you were doing [in the bush]. What was the man who do that to you, the name of that man and the clan name. And the history of your clan and everything.

Sharlene: Wow! So do you think that going to the bush and being circumcised is still important today?

Khaya: Yah it's from long ago but they're still doing that.

Sharlene: Will your son do it?

Khaya: *My son? Yah he must do it.*

** Young man, aged 18, township-schooled*

To Khaya's explanation of what he learnt in the bush, others added: 'Don't shout at your mother', 'Know the time to come home – you mustn't be out of your house after dark', 'Don't beat your parents', 'You must work', 'You don't go to the taverns', 'You don't stand in the corner smoking with other boys [smoking with men is okay]', 'You can't stand with a woman in a public place', 'You must be dignified – you can't run or sit on the floor', 'Don't be drunk in a public place', and 'Be disciplined'. These moral imperatives form an important part of *ulwaluko*, and young men spoke animatedly of how *ulwaluko* had changed them. A few months after he had returned from the bush, Tapelo tells me 'It has changed me, because some of the other things [crime] I been doing, I didn't do'. Xolile tell me that while he was in the bush he thought about 'when I come out here [from the bush] I tell myself no, I want to change because if you do that things that you do when you are a boy they still call you *inkwenkwe* – they say that no you are still the same – a boy'. When I asked him why there were still *indodas* who are doing wrong things he replied:

Xolile: Yah Sharlene, that thing it depends to you... If you listen when they talk to you. Or whether the words go straight through your ears. It depends to you.

It is clear that *ulwaluko* plays an important role as a rite of passage for young *amaXhosa* men. There are, however, many ways in which it could be considered flawed as a moral influence in current contexts. Apart from some of the health considerations (using the

same knives for circumcision and dangers of lethal infections⁴⁵) families incur enormous debt in order to finance *ulwaluko* ceremonies. The cost is extremely high because besides two celebrations (sending off and returning), the cost of the food and paying the *iKangatha*, there is also the substantial cost of a new wardrobe for new initiates. Andile telling me his ceremony is being delayed because ‘it can cost ten or maybe twenty thousand [rand]’ and his mother hasn’t got the money for ‘beer... brandy and a goat. And some *umqomboti*. Then when you come back, you have to make another [celebration]... maybe you buy four sheep. Then there’s some [more] beers’.

The other flaw concerns the ubiquity of alcohol around the ceremony – during celebrations, while in the bush, used as currency for the payment of ‘fines’, and in the many rituals leading up to the ceremony. Andile told me of a time when he and some other boys went to the bush at 03.00 one morning to cut down branches with which to build the *khaya* (shelter) for another boy in the neighbourhood. The boys who had gone to cut down the branches were rewarded with brandy. Andile told me he got drunk even though it was the day of a final exam because it was expected and the alcohol was free. He also said he had thought it would wear off by the time he had to go and write the exam. It did not and he failed the exam. Andiswa explains that drinking at cultural rituals is about solidarity: ‘You have to get drunk. Like the whole thing is to get the guy coming from the bush drunk for him to forget his pains you know... [and] we’re sharing his pain – you know’. Despite this detracting role of alcohol in *ulwaluko*, the ritual has potential as an inspirational and pedagogic moral influence on young men as they make the transition from boyhood into adulthood. The role of ‘peer review’ amongst young men who have completed *ulwaluko* too could be of moral significance.

Ubuntu is the other significant cultural belief/practice, that despite receiving little attention from young people, can be described as an important moral influence. In Chapter 4, I described how the African ‘philosophy’ of *ubuntu* has become a feature of South Africa’s

⁴⁵ For Xolile and Tapelo, before they were allowed to begin their ritual they had to go to a local hospital to ‘check their blood’ i.e. have an HIV test. They were only allowed to proceed if the test was negative. This practice is not universal and there are reports of young initiates becoming HIV infected, and dying due to poor sanitary environments.

moral regeneration campaign in spite of a number of criticisms. Like Christian faith it appears to be pervasively present, but seems to have little impact on young people's moral formation. Only three young people brought it up unprompted, although when I asked during interviews whether they had *ubuntu*, the majority⁴⁶ of young people knew what it was, called it a positive moral influence, and described themselves as having it. Young people described *ubuntu* as 'respect', doing things for others without expecting payment, 'not stealing from neighbours', sharing money and food ('if I see them – they are suffering'), and 'to be kind, talk with people'. Many provided detailed examples such as helping your neighbour with food, helping to move people's belongings out of harm's way during a disaster like a fire (see Figure 9.50), allowing someone to buy vegetables or have their hair cut on short-term credit. Box 9.4 provides more detailed explanations. *Ubuntu* as part of *amaXhosa* culture taught them to treat people with humanity – it was a potentially pedagogic moral influence.

Box 9.4 *Ubuntu*

Andile: Ubuntu like it's [pause] it's when there's something, when a person like *gives a respect*, uh-huh. He or she *don't do a bad things that is going to hurt a person* uh-huh because he knows or she knows that hey, he is a *human being*.

Lekho: Yah, I can say the community have *ubuntu*. Because *when there is something wrong, the neighbours then can come and ask*. That's how *ubuntu* is like. There is *ubuntu* in Philippi because if the neighbours saw someone who is doing a housebreaking, she can call the others and that *skollie* can be beaten to die, you see. So that is how *ubuntu* works in Philippi.

Andiswa: And like the furniture is not properly put down. Those people are in a hurry, they are just throwing it, no matter what happens. *But if something is in the way and you can see the fire is coming to this object they can take it and put it all there*. You can go and search for what you lost – *it will be safe...* Because these fires have happened so many times and *instead of people stealing from them, people are helping them*.

Mandisa: So the owner is the one that – he have the *ubuntu*. You want, say, like tomato and you don't have money so you can – pay tomorrow – *he will give you today ...he will understand what your problem is and give you* – that is a good [influence].

⁴⁶ A small proportion of young people, mainly suburbs-schooled, did not know what *ubuntu* was. Five out of the six suburbs-schooled youth in my research sample did not know what *ubuntu* was whereas five out of 31 township-schooled youth did not know.



Figure 9.50 Rescued possessions after a blaze in Joe Slovo

Those young people who spoke of *ubuntu* spoke of it in contrast to ‘white’ people who do not have it. Thulani told me ‘there’s *ubuntu* [among black people] as we live in small places’. In fact, what he was trying to say was that township people *created* community out of necessity and despite the high density of the population. This was because they, unlike their ‘white’ counterparts, needed their neighbours. Xolani elaborates ‘You whites... You got your money, you got everything. You don’t need to talk your neighbours’. In contrast to *ubuntu*, signs of a lack of *ubuntu* are when people ‘laugh at you when you are in trouble’, ‘not talking to your neighbours’, and being ‘more jealous’. Jealousy was frequently alluded to as the opposite of *ubuntu*. Andiswa explains that jealousy makes *ubuntu* increasingly difficult because ‘many people in my own neighbourhood are hating me just for being a success... People were using *muti* on me but it didn’t work’. Andiswa’s identifying of jealousy as a counterpoint to *ubuntu* is taken up in Ashforth’s (2005) analysis of ‘witchcraft’ in South Africa. Like Coertze (2001, p. 113ff) and Krog (1999, p. 392-9), he argues that an *ubuntu* ethic is hard-pressed to ‘survive transplantation from face-to-face life in small villages and communities whose inhabitants have been related to each other for generations to large industrial cities where people must scramble for cash’ (Ashforth, 2005, p. 86). It is this ‘scramble for cash’ in the midst of structural injustice, dire poverty, unemployment and in the aftermath of Apartheid that forms the focus of the final sphere of young people’s moral influence.

The silencing influence of structural injustice

In Chapter 2, I argued that employment, poverty, and Apartheid form part of the exosystems and chronosystems of young people. These influences are, by definition, removed from young people yet exert an influence on them. In Chapter 8, I flagged the *potential* of poverty to affect young people's psychological moral functioning through depriving them of the physical, mental, and emotional resources necessary to act upon their moral beliefs. Yet I also indicated that the group of youth I befriended did not, as a whole, attribute their morals to the effects of poverty. In this section, I address this missing element in the discussion, that of how or whether these township youth *understand* the impact of poverty (and associated structural injustices like unemployment and the effects of Apartheid) on their moral formation. The difficulty inherent in answering such a question is that young people almost never spoke *unprompted* about these issues. Instead, they took photographs and spoke about the physical nature of their contexts of dirt and 'chaos', and of their longing for work once they had completed school. Few linked these observations back to poverty and the aftermath of Apartheid injustice. What was it about their physical contexts that silenced these young people?⁴⁷ This section therefore, more so than others, represents a greater effort on my part to indirectly draw out and interpret young people's representations of poverty⁴⁸. Ultimately, it was the graphic complexity of their photographs, that described more eloquently than their spoken words, their understanding of the influence of poverty on their lives. It helped me to see that though they might have been silent, they were not blind.

⁴⁷ Or perhaps the research process itself contributed to silencing young people? Certainly talking about Apartheid to me as a 'white' person and member of the group who had been the 'oppressor' was difficult for young people to do. Although later on in the year they did become freer in expressing their opinions on issues relating to 'race'.

⁴⁸ This section on poverty has been most difficult for me to analyse, process and write about. To be sure, young people found it difficult to talk to me about their poverty, in spite of my eagerness for them to express themselves. I desperately wanted to help them find 'the mouth with which to tell of their suffering' (Achebe, 1958, p. 152). At the same time I was caught in the midst of an emotional whirlwind of my own. Poverty may be the only reality that they have known and so are seemingly numb to it, but I was anything but numb. My own complicity in their poverty was real and raw. It forced me to think in terms of research as both an intervention and emancipatory endeavour – quite appropriate for a study on morality, and strengthened my earlier analysis (in Chapter 4) concerning the unfinished moral business of restitutive justice in South Africa (see also Swartz, 2007). But I am also uncertain about the extent to which this section bears too much evidence of my own analysis, and not enough of their voices.

Poverty and Apartheid

During early interviews, while there was ample opportunity for young people to tell me about their lives, almost none⁴⁹ mentioned being poor or living in hardship. But youth did take numerous photographs of dirty outside toilets shared between multiple households, taps serving an entire street, children carrying water, and the indignity of communal showers (Figure 9.51-9.55).

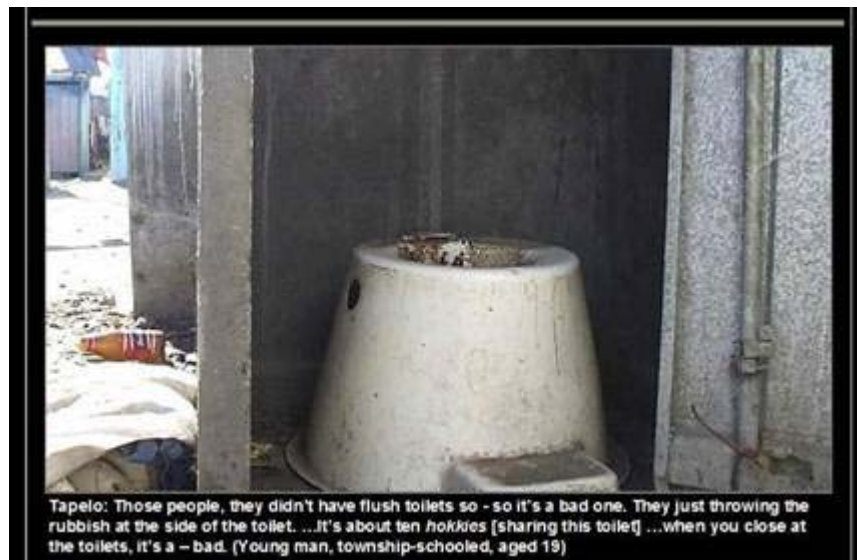


Figure 9.51 *A shared toilet in the Khayelitsha shacklands*



Figure 9.52 *Temporary toilets and bathrooms in 'Tsunami' tent village*

⁴⁹ Nonkiza told me that, 'If you're poor, then it's because you didn't work hard' while Thando explains, 'In Khayelitsha... the people who are poor are the ones who are committing themselves into crime - a lot'.

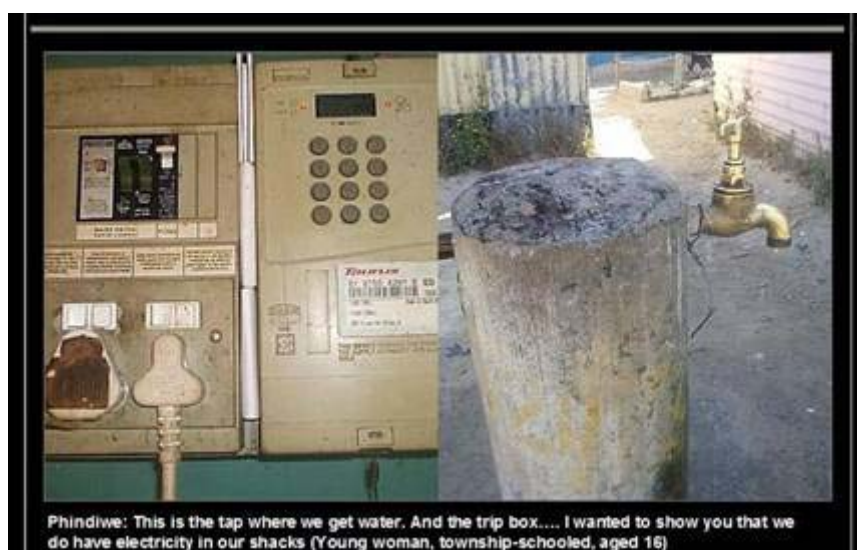


Figure 9.53 *A shared tap and individual shack electricity supply*



Figure 9.54 *Boys carrying water to their shack in Khayelitsha*



Figure 9.55 *Shared showers in a block of flats (former hostel) in Langa*

They also produced endless pictures of dirt and rubbish strewn on township streets and vacant land, multiple images of densely packed zinc shacks, tiny living areas, barren interiors, overcrowding, and of people who were HIV⁵⁰ positive and living in squalor (Figure 9.56-9.62).



Figure 9.56 *Rubbish bags in Samora Machel township*

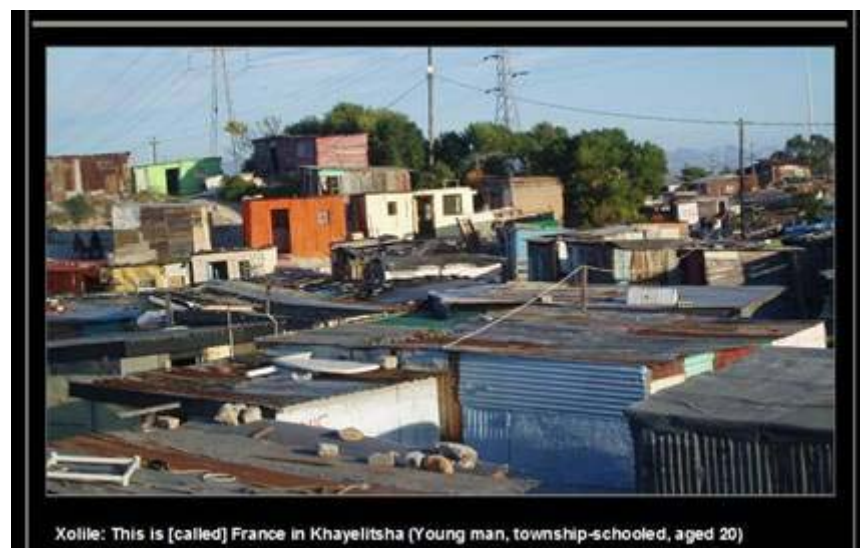


Figure 9.57 *Shacks on a sand dune in Khayelitsha*

⁵⁰ Space does not allow for an elaboration of how young people considered HIV/AIDS to be a moral influence, except to say that some young people considered it to both a good and bad influence. Good because it made them care who they had sex with and caused them to care about those who were infected. Bad because if they became infected they would stop caring about their own lives and 'just do anything'.



Figure 9.58 Five members of a research participant's family in a shack in Town Two



Figure 9.59 A young man's room



Figure 9.60 A woman in a shack in Khayelitsha



Figure 9.61 The family home of a young man in Khayelitsha

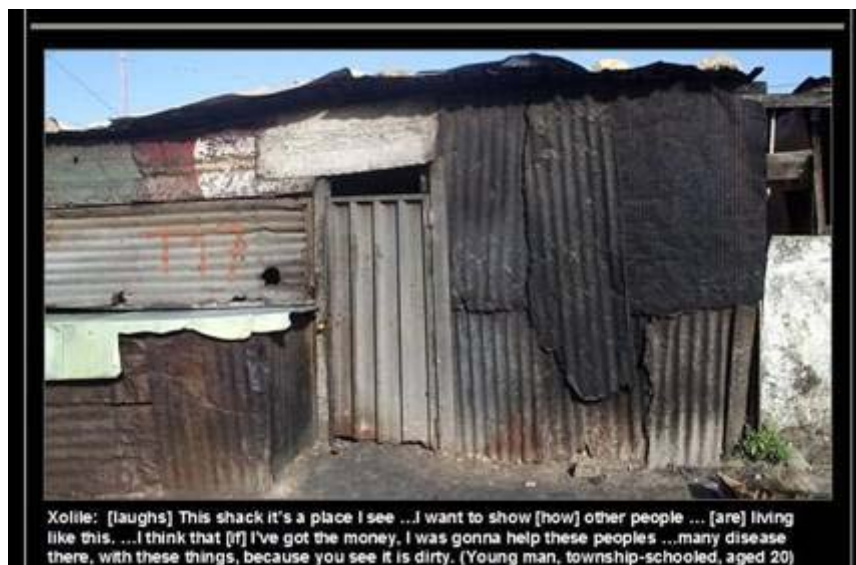


Figure 9.62 A shack in Khayelitsha

Andiswa took pictures of a 14 year-old pregnant neighbour 'who doesn't come from a rich family' who had purposely become pregnant 'to like bring cows to the house' (Figure 9.63). The young woman's expectation was that the father of the child would marry her and then pay *lobola* (bride-price) traditionally measured in cows but paid in cash to her family. Fundiswa took two photographs from the train window on her route between home and school (Figure 9.64-9.65) and compared the brick-built houses of Mandalay (a predominantly 'black' suburb) to the zinc and iron *hokkies* of Site C, Khayelitsha – her own home.



Figure 9.63 *A young pregnant girl in Langa*



Figure 9.64 *The view from the train - Khayelitsha shacklands*



Figure 9.65 *The view from the train - Mandalay suburbs*

She commented, 'I wish the people [who] are living in bad conditions could live in these houses'. Except for one photograph⁵¹ by a suburbs-schooled youth, all poverty-related photographs were taken by township-schooled youth.

Although my group took multiple photographs depicting scenes of poverty, their silence persisted into interviews. Instead of providing a critique of why conditions were as they were, young people merely described their photographs superficially as dirt, shacks, toilets etc. Their talk about these topics was unemotional and blame-free. The only time young people blamed some external agency for their circumstances were when they spoke of witches and *muti*. However, in final interviews, when I asked young people direct questions about the impact of Apartheid and poverty on their lives, the answers came out in a flood – but were often surprising.

The first surprise was that only half of young people considered themselves poor. This was corroborated by the *Circle of Influence* activity in which 'being poor' was only ranked by half of the group as a moral influence and then weakly⁵². Instead young people preferred to say they were 'in the middle'⁵³ neither rich nor poor, despite living below the poverty line⁵⁴. Suzeka provides one clue to why this might be so when she says: 'I just know my life, how I'm living in *ikasi*... I don't know how I am compared to others'. But another explanation might also be plausible, and that is young people's overwhelming sense of personal responsibility for their lives (as discussed in Chapter 8) and their fear of jeopardising their desired future by admitting to their present realities.

⁵¹ The photograph was of 'poor people' waiting for transport to work early in the morning.

⁵² Those who did rank it, gave it a median score of 1 (out of a possible 5), indicating it was a weak moral influence. Overall 'being poor' was ranked 18th for young women and 20th for young men out of 30 possible rankings.

⁵³ Only township-schooled youth said they were poor. All suburbs-schooled youth said they were 'in the middle'.

⁵⁴ South Africa is currently undergoing a review of poverty indicators and as such there are multiple 'poverty lines' in use. The Human Sciences Research Council (2004) places the figure at 57% based on the World Bank's definition of individuals living on less than \$2 a day. Terreblanche (2002, p. 34) sites a R353 'minimum living level' per person, according to which 50% live below the poverty threshold.

Young people's views about the *effects* of Apartheid on their lives were another surprise. As with 'poverty', in the *Circle of Influence* activity half of all young people excluded 'Apartheid' as an influence in their life (ranked 20th out of 30 positions). Few young people made the connection between Apartheid and their present socio-economic circumstances. Views such as 'Apartheid hasn't affected my life. I live on a freedom world now. I will have a house like yours if I work hard' were common with youth equating hard work and education, and seeing both as the panacea to achieving socio-economic mobility. There was almost no evaluation of the inferior quality of township education and the lack of available jobs⁵⁵ even for those who complete school. Comments such as 'I understand why poor people would steal from the rich – like revenge for Apartheid' were rare, coming mainly from township youth who were schooled in resourced suburban schools. Instead the majority of youth (especially young men) reflected Joules' sentiment about Apartheid: 'I don't want to live my life in the past', with little reference to how the past might prevent him from realising his future ambitions. When I pressed young people on these issues, while some conceded Apartheid may be a distant⁵⁶ influence i.e. 'it affects me because it affected my parents', or 'it affected our grannies cos they are all domestic workers and we don't live in the suburbs', very few made the connection between the legacy of Apartheid (unemployment, poor education, general poverty) and current social problems (substance abuse, violence and crime).

Only a small minority of those I got to know expressed any critical judgements about current government policies⁵⁷. A quarter of young people took photographs about housing and spoke about 'corruption' and long waiting lists for housing, but few were critical of ongoing 'white' privilege and its relationship to their impoverishment or government's rate of delivery. Phumeza's photograph of 'suffering' farm workers on the back of a truck

⁵⁵ Only a minority, 9 out of 37 youth, believe the government ought to be doing more, or were critical of poor education standards, housing polices and language polices in schools.

⁵⁶ More young woman (12 out of 19, 63%) than young men (5 out of 17, 29%) said that Apartheid was a current rather than a distant influence.

⁵⁷ Like school language policies, disrupting communities by allocating people to new housing settlements without regard for their provenance, inadequate social spending, lack of compensation for victims of Apartheid atrocities, and insufficient land redistribution (see Chapter 4 for a full critique).

in Philippi and of her mother selling second-hand bricks (see Figure 9.66 and 9.67) because the government was not ‘do[ing] work for them’ was one exception. Andiswa’s comment about Apartheid (and resulting poverty) putting ‘an end stop’ to her dreams was another:

Andiswa: [Apartheid affects me] SJoe, very much. It’s actually *putting an end stop in most of the things that I want to do* because, yah, I like Mbeki High but it was not my dream school, you know. I wanted to go to, um, St Faith’s in Rondebosch.

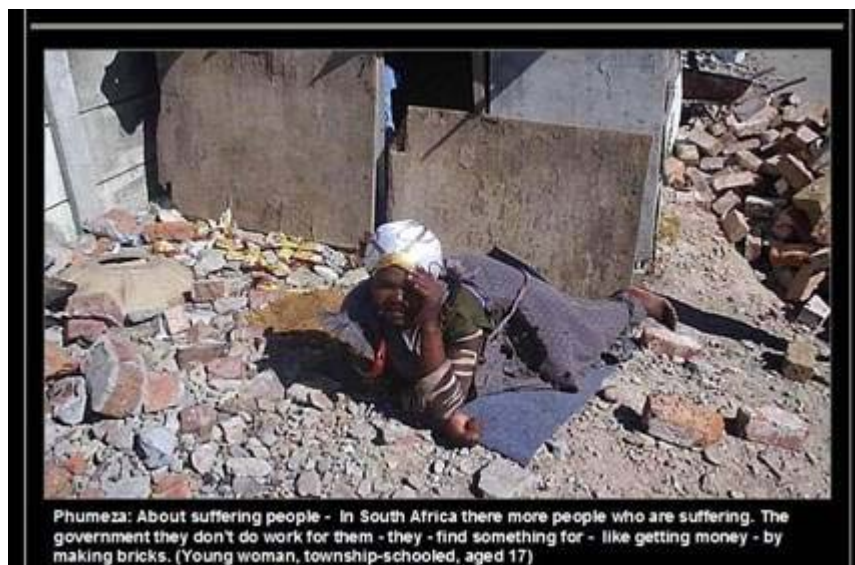


Figure 9.66 A mother selling second- hand bricks at Sweet Home Farm informal settlement



Figure 9.67 Farm workers on the back of a truck in Philippi

Instead of blaming ‘white people’, Apartheid or the government for their poverty young people chose to tell me that ‘we haven’t achieved yet’ and ‘our time is coming’. Although Thando was almost the only youth to depict a photograph portraying the Apartheid struggle, his commentary was scathing, telling me that Apartheid was ‘becoming an excuse for black people’ not achieving (Figure 9.68).



Figure 9.68 *Billboard commemorating the struggle against Apartheid in Langa*

A very difficult conversation with Vathiswa (Box 9.5) highlights the muteness, about poverty and structural injustice, that I perceived afflicted young people. Our conversation was difficult partly due to language – her English was not good and my *isiXhosa* worse still. But I was also becoming increasingly exasperated. I was frustrated that she did not (or would not) make the connections between poverty and structural injustice (as well as at the knowledge that I was badgering her and asking leading questions). So besides this extract being a poor example of interviewing technique, it illustrates the point well. I desperately needed her to say what I was feeling. Vathiswa’s reluctance to blame Apartheid for her current condition made this research extremely personal. I, as a ‘white’ South African, had been a beneficiary to the Apartheid that robbed her of her future. The least she could do was see it – and be angry about it and blame me or Apartheid. Instead she persisted in describing proximal and immediate contexts (‘blacks’ not getting educated) rather than the distal influence of Apartheid-related injustices.

Box 9.5 Vathiswa's* Account of Apartheid and Poverty

Sharlene: And what do you think of living in that shack in Khayelitsha Vathiswa?
Vathiswa: I don't like it.
Sharlene: And why do you live in that shack?
Vathiswa: Because my mother have no money – to buy and live in the other house.
Sharlene: And why has your mother got no money?
Vathiswa: She's not working.
Sharlene: Why isn't your mom working?
Vathiswa: Because she didn't get the job.
Sharlene: And why are there no jobs?
Vathiswa: [long pause – hangs her head]
Sharlene: Do you get angry when you see that you are poor and there's no work for your mother?
Vathiswa: [Pause - softly] Yes.
Sharlene: And why do you think this is true – I mean I have a job and I have a house – but you have to live in a shack. Why do you live in a shack and I live in a house?
Vathiswa: Because you have money.
Sharlene: Why do I have money and you don't?
Vathiswa: Because my mother is not working –
Sharlene: You think it's got nothing to do with Apartheid that I have money and you don't?
Vathiswa: [Softly] Yes.
Sharlene: Okay – so tell me
Vathiswa: Yes – Apartheid – because [for] the black people is not easy to find a job. White people is easy to find a job. Because [pause] whites learn – *so black people do not learn because in long ago – they – the black people is not getting better education*. So white people have a better education, and the black people - their parents have no money to go to school.

* Young woman, aged 19, township-schooled

Vathiswa's persistence is worth noting and provides insight into the general optimism that township youth feel about the future in spite of their crippling contexts. The danger it flags is that of an unsustainable belief in meritocracy, and as Thando explains, simply 'learn[ing] to live with it':

Thando: [Poverty] No, *I've learnt to live with it – ...I've learnt to accept it...* I just forget about it [being poor], because *it will lower my self-esteem*. It will make me sad you know. So I just keep myself busy listening to music, and dancing – *just to forget about all these things*.

This reluctance I encountered does not mean that no young people made connections between poverty, and crime, violence, despair and unemployment. In Chapter 8, I recounted Andiswa's explanation for shoplifting as arising from feelings of being considered 'an outsider' for being poor, Khaya's comment about the connection between

poverty, despair and substance use, and Luxolo's poignant words that poverty 'puts you down... like you're not, you're not someone – like out there – in South Africa'. One of the final questions I asked young people was to tell me what they would change about South Africa in general and school in particular (if they were the President or the Minister of Education). The majority of answers were concerned with social and economic issues – providing more houses, jobs, free schooling, better quality education, more tertiary bursaries and more sports, extramural opportunities and other recreational activities for youth to keep them from 'doing crime'. While not many made direct connections between morality and a lack of housing, recreation, and support services, those who did made profound observations. 'Having nothing to do' and therefore 'doing crime' was a key observation. Vuma's analysis was particularly astute and poignant. He begins by telling how he saw 'mothers ...running for the bread':

Vuma: You know Sharlene like I was worried when I see – last of last week – ...there were about twenty to fifty mothers you know – where they are giving bread away like. So I saw mothers they are running there – to be there the first to get that bread. *I thought like in SA it has changed but it didn't change that much.* It's the little things that have changed because *you see the mothers they are running for the bread* you know. I feel like how are their children? Like are they at school? And *how do they take them to school when the farmers give them so little money* – and they have to run for bread?

Vuma continued to tell me at length what he thought needed to change in South Africa. Increased social spending (grants for the unemployed), free schooling, eradication of shacks (because of the fire hazard), better community policing and limiting opening hours for drinking establishments. Vuma also criticised the limitation of the school feeding scheme to only primary schools saying, 'I want to go to school, [but] because I'm hungry, I can't learn. I can't listen when I'm hungry'. Like many others he added improved youth support services (sexual health and substance abuse counselling) and free school uniforms, books and transport to the ways in which schools can be improved. Finally, he made the

connection between past injustice and present poverty (as I have already described in Chapter 7):

Vuma: Like Sharlene – it has affected my parents – and when it affect my parent it affect me you know cos like *if Apartheid didn't affect them then maybe we wouldn't be staying in that shack house* you know Sharlene – *like me I won't get corrupt* – like I will be still at school... So maybe if my parents are staying in the suburbs I wouldn't know about those things... smoking *ganja* you know and hijacking.

What remained absent however was a pervasive critical consciousness by the majority of young people, an understanding of how these current problems had structural causes and origins in blatant injustices, for which there has been inadequate redress. The young people I talked to also tended to omit the personal dimension: how Apartheid and poverty affect their everyday lives. Most tacitly refused to identify themselves as victims of injustice telling me instead that Apartheid had not affected them personally. Why was there this seeming lack of critical consciousness? These young people appeared to not want to talk about the past in order to not jeopardise their future. Young people were keen to forget and move on, little realising how (in my opinion) remembering might in fact aid their liberation. Their desire to forget bordered on a paranoia or superstition. Will the act of remembering itself cause a rupture of dreams, a denial of opportunities? Or, as described in Chapter 6, do township youth perhaps express their resistance to the strictures of poverty in their mixed morality of money⁵⁸, or in finding things to celebrate in their socially poor environment such as unbridled aspiration and an interactively rich community? Perhaps this is their critical (moral) consciousness in relation to poverty. What is certain is that young people do not easily recognise poverty to be an explicit moral influence in the same way as they recognise their mothers to be a positive exemplary moral influence, alcohol a detracting influence, or as shall be considered next, work as an empowering and diversionary influence.

⁵⁸ Half say it is okay to steal from the rich. Two-thirds say it is right or are ambivalent about lying to save money.

The empowering influence of work

Finally, another response to their poverty was the way in which young people represented the morally empowering influence of employment or work. In Chapter 8, I described young people's sense of hope about the future and their optimistic (perhaps quixotic⁵⁹) goals and ambitions. For these young people completing school and securing a job (of any description, although professional jobs were preferred to informal jobs) was the key to leaving behind substance use, crime, and to provide a better life for mothers and younger siblings. Ironically, two-thirds of young people might also sacrifice honesty in order to obtain a job. The prospect of employment was a key moral influence and was seen as being at once empowering, inspirational and potentially diversionary i.e. will keep young people from crime ('instead of doing crime, he did something else'). Nonkiza's view that 'If you're poor, then I think it's because they didn't work hard... it's their fault' was surprisingly common in later conversations. And while young people's sense of responsibility is in some respects commendable, and points to a sense of agency, it belies the structural impediments under which they live.

In *Digital Documentaries* 26 out of 37 young people⁶⁰ took (often multiple) photographs portraying some type of work or employment and then described these as empowering and diversionary moral influences (see Figure 9.69-9.80 for examples). While many young people portrayed informal selling (selling alcohol, sheep's heads, *binnegoed*, cooked meat, fruit and vegetables, traditional beer, milk, bricks, and scrap metal) others included services such as car repairs, fixing shoes and hair styling. Two young people took pictures of *music as work* – deejaying and playing the piano, while only three young people took pictures of professional jobs⁶¹.

⁵⁹ Young people's unrealistic optimism regarding their future is in stark contrast to that of minority groups in the United States where 'lack of access to opportunity was an important factor leading to pessimistic future orientations among urban minority youth' (Torney-Purta, 1990, p. 472).

⁶⁰ Somewhat more young women (15 out of 19, 79%) than young men (11 out of 18, 61%) took photographs of 'work'.

⁶¹ Of course young people had very little access to the City and suburban offices and so their portrayal of work as local and predominantly informal is most likely in keeping with their limited mobility.



Figure 9.69 *A person repairing shoes*



Figure 9.70 *A person preparing sheep's heads for sale*



Figure 9.71 *Drums used for making umqomboti (African beer)*

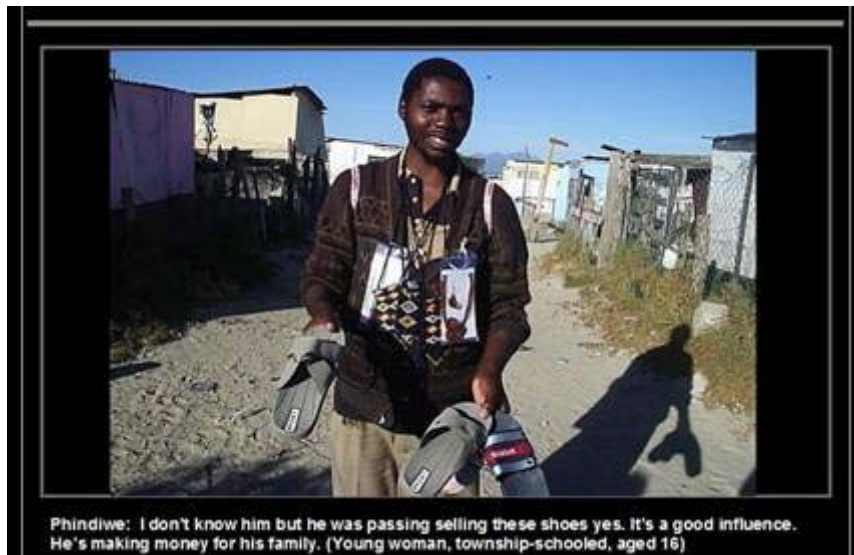


Figure 9.72 *A man selling shoes in Town Two*



Figure 9.73 *A young man fixing a car*



Figure 9.74 *A woman selling fruit and vegetables from a backyard shack*



Figure 9.75 A person running an informal Spaza shop



Figure 9.76 A woman selling grilled intestines



Figure 9.77 A man working on a building site

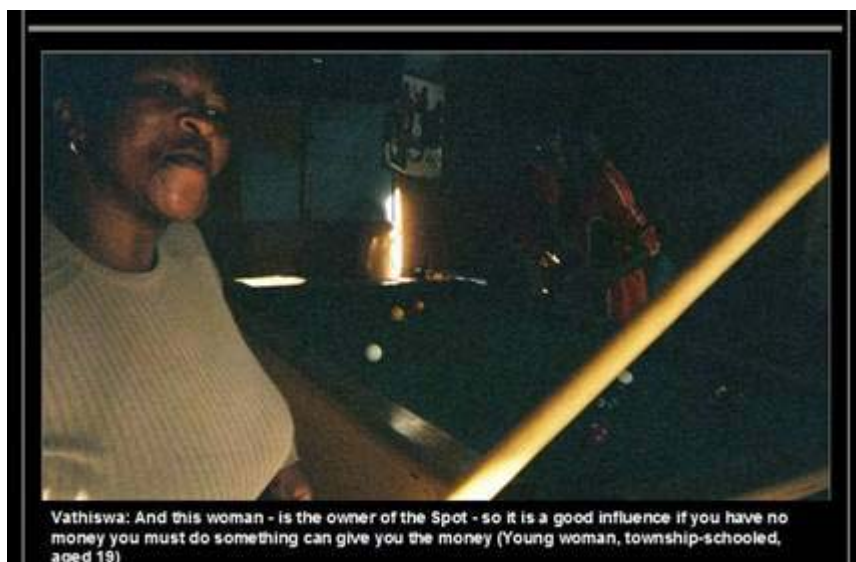


Figure 9.78 *The owner of an informal tavern*

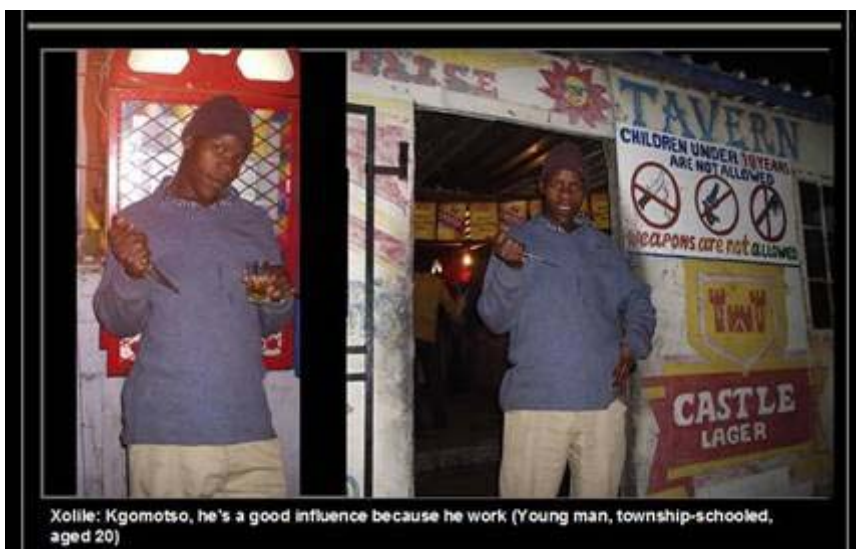


Figure 9.79 *A young man outside a tavern holding a knife (and a drink)*



Figure 9.80 *A young man selling sweets and cigarettes outside the station*

In contrast to the types of work portrayed in their photographs, as discussed in Chapter 8, young people had much loftier employment aspirations as accountants, doctors, lawyers, and astronauts. A further paradox to these images, was that young people often spoke of *informal* work as not working at all. So Poseletso tells me:

Poseletso: My mother she was just — *she was not working yah — she was just working chars* [part time cleaning]... she's my role model. But at work no I don't want to do chars [like she does]. I want to be an accountant.

Although young people did not clearly articulate it as such, it seems apparent that although limited by their localities, a *formal* job is what these Langa youth believe will be an empowering moral influence. While on one hand young people seem to value all work, when asked about their *own* personal career aspirations, they all want to *be* someone rather than *do* something⁶². This self-authoring of 'freedom's children' (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002) is widely accepted in the Global North. Evidently young people living in a context of poverty show similar tendencies. Unlike their Global North peers, however, *in the absence of a formal job, any job will do*.

Running a *shebeen* or *smokolo* was seen as legitimate work for mothers with no comments on whether selling alcohol (often illegally) was in any way different to selling fruit or sweets. For Vathiswa, whom I knew to be a devout young Christian woman and critical of alcohol consumption, running a Spot (an informal tavern) was legitimate work because 'if you have no money you must do something can give you the money' (Figure 9.78). Her comments are indicative of the representation that work of any sort was held in high regard and that ultimately even *work against your principles* was preferable to unemployment. Young men were less sure about 'dangerous' or 'dirty' work and Bongani's comment about

⁶² I am indebted to Nick Hornby (2006) for this idea from his novel *A Long Way Down*: 'The trouble with my generation is that we all think we're... geniuses. Making something isn't good enough for us, and neither is selling something, or teaching something, or even just doing something; we have to *be* something. It's our inalienable right, as citizens of the twenty-first century' (p. 23).

construction work ('I'm too young to die falling off a high building') and instead choosing crime was the one of the few times that the *nature* of work was called into question.

The most commonly cited answers when I asked why a picture of people working was a 'good' moral influence explained the connection between work as a deterrent to crime. Nonkiza tells me 'if people cannot buy things themselves, they are stealing other people's things', while Andiswa explains why she took a photograph of a 17 year-old young man selling sweets and chips at the train station (Figure 9.80):

Andiswa: This guy ...his mother is at home – ill or something. But he doesn't have a dad... So he takes some of it [his mother's pension] and bought these [things] to sell to people – to try and make some money. And *instead of doing crime, he just did something else.*

Ingwazi spoke most eloquently about the moral meaning of work. Work provided money, dignity ('they know how to do something for themselves'), and made it possible for you to train others and stay out of trouble ('he can teach them so that they won't ...always go to trouble you see'). Ingwazi also speaks of the importance of earning rather than the significance of how much is earned: 'Maybe R30 or R40 for a day, but, but I don't mind. It's something'. Poseletso summed up young people's association between morality and work most profoundly when she suggests:

Poseletso: I think education should be free – *some of them they want to be good people but they don't have money to go to university so that they can study and then – become good people when they have got their own jobs.* So they don't have money, so they end up staying in the street – doing all those things.

People 'become good people when they have got their own jobs' is a key representation of poverty and morality and points to young people's understanding of morality as a form of capital – a conclusion which will be discussed at length in the next chapter.

In addition to pictures of work in progress, a number of young people took pictures of friends or older siblings, not to describe *them* as moral influences, but the fact that they *were working* as positive moral influences. For example, when I asked Xolile to tell me about a picture portraying a young man in his early twenties standing outside a tavern holding a glass and a knife and another of the same friend drinking brandy (Figure 9.79), his commentary was '[This is] my friend Kgomotso. He's a good influence *because he work*'. Xolile's picture highlights the magnitude of importance that work assumes in the lives of these young people, as a source of moral rightness, in spite of other moral questions which, for instance, holding a knife and drinking alcohol may present.

In the *Circle of Influence* activity although there was not a label entitled 'work', two related labels 'unemployment' and 'dreams and goals' provide further insight. 'Dreams and goals' was rated on average as the second highest influence for both young men and young women. 'Unemployment' on the other hand was only rated as a moral influence by one fifth of young people (more strongly for young women than for young men⁶³). What can be inferred from this data is that it is the inspiration and hope of future work, rather than the fear of not being employed, that young people represent as strong empowering moral influences. They clearly see the link between employment, success, and moral goodness, just as they see the link between not working, being on the streets, and being 'corrupt'.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a lengthy and detailed consideration of young people's visual moral narratives. Inherent to these narratives are how this group of Langa youth make sense of their moral worlds – the stories they tell themselves about their moral influences. In previous chapters, I have already shown how young people juggle various representations of morality – morality as *what you do*, *who you are* and *where you are* (Chapter 6) with various positionings of others as protected ('mommy's baby'), right, street-wise (*kasi* boy/girl) and criminally corrupt (*skollie*) (Chapter 7). In these visual narratives young

⁶³ Unemployment was ranked at position 20 (out of a possible 30) overall. Young women ranked it at position 18 while young men ranked it at position 23.

people provide a further explanation for why they are good people, somewhat good or ‘in the middle’. Some of these stories are symbolic while others are fictions. Young people recognise in their mothers and younger siblings the moral motivation to be ‘right ones’. In school they recognise the potential for moral empowerment while at the same time acknowledging its detracting influence. Alcohol and drugs are interpreted by young people as moral saboteurs or detracting influences. While able to articulate the sabotaging effect of substance abuse on their life, they are less able to verbally articulate the effect of poverty on their lives – although do so through photographs. They portray their context of dirt, want and degradation (in short – poverty) as influences that exacerbate negative moral behaviour, detract from their moral aspirations and divert their best efforts away from the pursuit of moral goodness. Discourses of work and employment is a key story young people tell themselves, as an alternative to immoral behaviour and a way out of the boredom, social banditry, substance use and allurements of criminality characteristic of township life.

The lack of pedagogic influences portrayed by young people is also of importance. Very few of young people’s influences were pedagogic (or at least not strongly so). While some young people spoke about the role of religious belief and cultural practices such as God, church, *ulwaluko* and *ubuntu*, with the exception of *ulwaluko*, none were strongly pedagogic when they might have been expected to be. Instead, youth were *inspired* to be better people by the vision of work or the encouragement of people, or by having worthwhile diversionary activities in which to engage. Having a sense of pride in their homes (however modest), an enjoyment of their culture, and an appreciation of beauty⁶⁴ (often in the midst of squalor) added to their sense of empowerment, self, and agency. Significantly, young people pay less attention to crime and violence⁶⁵ as moral influences *per se* and instead focus on those issues that cause them, such as substance use, jealousy, witches and *ikasi* style. Especially in regard to witches and *ikasi* style, young people continue to articulate an element of *inevitability* in their moral lives – subject to external forces against which they

⁶⁴ Vathiswa took a picture of a modest teapot telling me it turned her shack into ‘a beautiful place’ and was therefore a good influence.

⁶⁵ While nearly half of youth represented these as moral influences in *Digital Documentaries*, in their *Circle of Influence* activity they were ranked 21 (crime) and 22 (violence) out of 30 positions.

consider themselves powerless. These six analytical descriptors of moral influence are summarised in Table 9.3.

Table 9.3 *Six emergent analytical descriptors of moral influence*

| Exemplary or inspirational | Empowering or diversionary | Pedagogic or didactic | Detracting or sabotaging | Insidious or unrecognised | Inevitable or agency relinquishing |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Mothers | Work | <i>Ulwalo</i> | Alcohol | Poverty | <i>Ikasi</i> style |
| Younger siblings | School | Christian faith | Materialism | Apartheid | Witches |
| Working friends | Music | <i>Ubuntu</i> | Fashion | Government policies | God |
| 'Right' friends | Sport | Grandparents | 'Competitions' | Mobility | |
| Romantic partners | Mobility | | Absent fathers | | |
| Older siblings | Fashion | | Predatory teachers | | |
| | Christian faith | | Sexual relationships | | |
| | Materialism | | Crime/Violence | | |
| | | | HIV/AIDS | | |
| | | | Older siblings | | |
| | | | 'Wrong' people | | |
| | | | <i>Dagga</i> /other drugs | | |

Overall these young people's visual narratives indicate that their moral knowledges seem to be relational and inspirational rather than pedagogic. Primary moral influences remain centred around people who are 'good' to them and for them (an embodied morality – see Chapter 6). Most of their moral influences are recognised and easily articulated, except for the *insidious* and not easily articulated influence of poverty and structural injustice. As a result, despite a strong sense of personal responsibility and agency young people find themselves up against a 'moral glass ceiling' – with their desire to be good people clashing with a disabling environment. In these narratives, substance use, violence and crime are shown (more than told) to be exacerbated by unemployment, poverty and Apartheid

In this regard, this study raises important practical and intellectual questions about work, the meaning of poverty and structural injustice for young people, as well as multiple issues around agency – both the strength of it and how it is frequently relinquished. Each of these questions has implications for policy, pedagogy, community programmes, and the kinds of research approaches adopted amongst youth living in contexts of poverty, and will be considered further in the final chapter. Before offering these practical implications, the following chapter summarises the data presented in this study and offers a theoretical contribution to how it might be understood.

PART FOUR

APPLYING CONTEXTUAL MORAL KNOWLEDGE

THEORISING A NOTION OF MORAL CAPITAL

This study began by claiming that amongst its aims it would explore a *youth* discourse of morality as a contribution to current debates around moral regeneration in South Africa, and globally, as a contribution to the ways in which moral education is conducted. It asked: *How do youth in a South African township understand the concept of morality, and how does this construction facilitate an understanding of their processes of moral formation?* As the study unfolded, the group of youth who I befriended elaborated on their understanding of morality by revealing their moral codes of right and wrong, the ways in which they represented the ‘good’ and the ‘bad’, and how they positioned themselves and others along a moral spectrum. They also described their processes of decision-making, the relationship between their moral beliefs and behaviour, and provided narratives of how they interpreted the various moral influences that shaped their lives. In doing so, these ordinary Langa youth displayed a formidable understanding of morality, not as abstract phenomena but as lived reality, and as an integrated and essential part of everyday life. The data presented in this study has shown how complex and nuanced the notion of morality is in the lives of township youth, and how, given a sensitive approach to research, these moral understandings may be elicited. This chapter aims to provide a summary of these findings and offers a theoretical understanding of how this data may be usefully understood. It concludes by considering how morality might relate to the social reproduction of poverty.

Moral cultures: A first reading of data

My first reading of the data provided an account of youth *moral cultures*, accounts of which are presented in Chapters 6 to 9, although specific moral stances are described in Chapter 7. Making limited use of Moscovici’s theory of social representations I was able to capture the complexity of young people’s codes, positionings, processes, and narratives of moral influence. Figure 10.1 provides a graphic representation of this data.

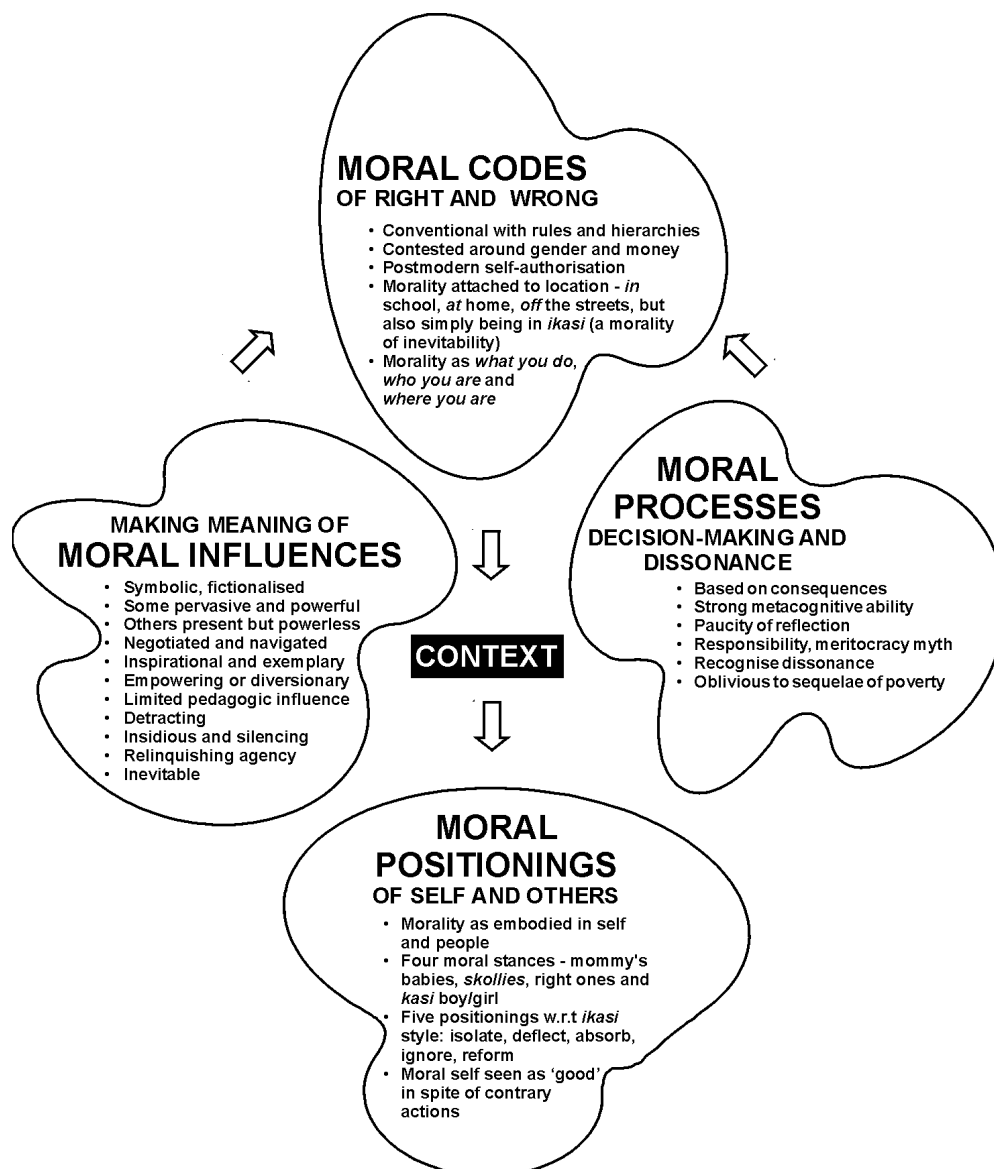


Figure 10.1 The components of young people's constructions of morality as presented in this study

Moral codes

This study has revealed that, despite public and government representations of young people as out of control and immoral, the youth in this study – despite being surrounded by crime and poverty – nevertheless demonstrate a sophisticated moral code (Chapter 6). They clearly distinguish between right and wrong using reasonably consistent boundaries, and expound a conventional view that the trilogy of substance abuse, violence and crime are all 'wrong'. This moral code at one level reflects legal and religious understandings of morality – that morality is about action – *what one does*. In Moscovici's terminology, this is a 'hegemonic' social representation of morality. The exception to this conventional understanding was the presence of rules and hierarchies that existed, for example, between

types of substances used, the kinds of crime engaged in, and the rules governing violence. These hierarchies and codes indicate the presence of representations of morality that go beyond simple precept-following and reflect what Moscovici would term an ‘emancipated’ representation of morality. These emancipated representations are further evidenced in young people’s codes around money and sex. They portrayed what I have termed ‘a mixed morality of money’, in which saving money or getting money is valued over truth-telling. Regarding sexual relationships (and parenting), young people’s values are clearly gendered on issues ranging from age and circumstance of sexual debut, to provocative dressing and corporal punishment of children. Also emancipated, and somewhat paradoxically given their strong conventional codes, these young display a strong sense of self-authorisation when speaking of moral authority.

Less easy to define in terms of hegemonic and emancipated representations are young people’s representations of morality as *where one is* – or a morality based on location. On one hand when young people describe being good as being *in* school, *off* the streets and *at* home they are articulating a hegemonic and conventional interpretation of morality. But they also hint at how being linked to a specific location determines one’s morality – a ‘morality of inevitability’. As they show more clearly in their moral positionings of others, just by being in the township – in *ikasi* – one’s morality is inevitably determined.

Moral positionings

Beyond these codes of morality as what one does and where one is young people exhibit a pervasive sense of morality being connected with *who one is*. I have termed this an ‘embodied morality’: a sense that goodness is reflected in *the kind of person you are rather than only in what you do* (Chapter 7). The youth I befriended identified four moral positions that township youth adopt: (1) Sheltered youth (‘mommy’s babies’) who *isolate* themselves from the prevailing moral culture; (2) ‘*Ikasi* boys/girls’ who simply *reflect* and/or absorb the prevailing moral culture of the township i.e., the violence, substance abuse, and trivial banditry engaged in to support addictions and material desires; (3) Gangsters (‘skollies’) who *ignore* the hegemonic moral culture and are committed to serious crime and

premeditated violence; and (4) ‘Right ones’ who *deflect* the prevailing moral culture, while not completely opting out of it, and are hard-workers at school, have a focus on the future, and are respected by their peers as morally good despite occasional substance use indulgence and discreet sexual activity.

A further aspect of this ‘embodied morality’ is how youth described goodness in terms of people who were good *to* them (mothers and others) or good *for* them (friends and romantic partners). Young people locate *themselves* as ‘good people living in a bad world’ or as ‘good people who make mistakes’. Overwhelmingly they describe themselves as ‘good’ despite their behaviour to the contrary. There are a number of possible explanations for why this might be so. The first is that in a context where youth are only partially-parented and partially-schooled, they lack meaningful adult influence in their lives, and also opportunities for self-reflection. The second is perhaps more opaque – young people tended to describe themselves in fictionalised terms – they desire to be ‘good’ and so their positionings appear to be more of an indication of that desire than of current reality. Despite their descriptions of self as almost uniformly good, these positionings (especially of others) indicate a heterogeneity of youth moral cultures based more on character than action. It also reflects a dissonance between belief and behaviour – the latter being more immediate responses to context, the former having been internalised by a variety of abstract but also pragmatic influences.

Moral processes

I captured young people’s moral decision-making processes using *Mind Maps* (Chapter 8) which also lead to in-depth discussions about their metacognitive processes. Many youth based their decisions on a range of consequences, benefits and influences (‘CBI’) while some displayed a more sophisticated understanding of the processes and sequences involved in moral decision-making (‘MPS’). With adult encouragement, these young people demonstrated an ability to engage thoughtfully with moral decisions, although they spoke of not doing so in the course of everyday life, and *before* acting. This *instantaneous* decision-making seemed to be the feature most harmful to their moral formation.

Young people also displayed a strong sense of *personal responsibility* for their moral actions, that reflected their strong belief in meritocracy (being personally responsible for escaping poverty through hard work), and were able to identify and reflect on the frequent dissonance between their moral beliefs and behaviour. In the light of these findings a key question raised by the data was: What does it mean to be a moral person? Is it based solely on moral action, or do moral knowledge (codes), moral desire and moral identity (positionings) also count as 'being moral'? The question arises since young people seem to display all of the latter, while struggling to convert moral desire, moral knowledge and moral identity into moral action. In this regard, the effect of the socio-emotional sequelae of poverty on moral motivation seems to be little researched and infrequently taken into account when considering the moral decision-making processes of youth who live in a context of poverty (Chapter 8).

Moral influences

Although moral influences had been a pervasive subtext of the data produced about codes, positioning and processes, Chapter 9 analysed the meanings youth attribute to selected influences. Young people distinguish between moral influences that are diversionary/detracting (i.e. keep them away from doing wrong) and pedagogic (teach them what is right) and those that inspire or empower them to be 'good' people. They describe their mothers and younger siblings as inspirational moral influences, while education and school are regarded as empowering and diversionary respectively. As with their own moral positionings, these influences tend to assume a somewhat symbolic and fictionalised place in their life: mothers, younger siblings and school are symbolically associated with escaping poverty, rather than their mother's behaviour or school's impact being morally influential. Young people clearly identified a dual and ambivalent role of friends as moral influences who could pull them towards or away from the 'good'. They recognise the powerful influence of alcohol in their lives and community, and identify it as a moral saboteur. Traditional culture seems to play a more powerful pedagogic role than Christian religion, which, while pervasively present appeared to be largely powerless.

Pedagogic influences were generally minimal. Youth preferred to be inspired to do right than to be taught how to do so. Their sense of agency appears to override any suggestion of the determining effects of poverty. Consequently, they exhibited difficulty in *speaking* about the effects of poverty and structural injustices on their moral formation. This has the potential for having profound consequences for their sense of agency since it produces a ‘moral glass ceiling’ – a point beyond which their own resources are unlikely to take them. Paradoxically, and possibly related to their difficulty of making meaning of poverty, youth demonstrated how they abdicated agency to external agents (witches, God, *ikasi* style) in some areas and exhibited what I have termed a morality of inevitability. This paradox between a strong sense of personal agency and abdicating agency to external forces (which did not include poverty or Apartheid) was amongst a number that I observed and that emerged more strongly in reading the data as a set of interlocking moral systems. Below I shift the conceptual analysis to this higher level.

A moral ecology of interconnecting systems: A second reading

Moral systems emerge when young people’s *moral cultures* are combined with the historical, political, economic and social contexts described in Chapters 4 and 5. As young ‘black’ South Africans have moved from a tribal culture, to a period of colonisation, through the nefariousness of Apartheid and finally into democracy, so too have their moral contexts changed. Tribalism engendered strong community and cultural values, colonialism paternalistic values, and Apartheid a fractured morality as conflict and violence became entrenched both against the oppressor and within communities. The advent of democracy has resulted in a quixotic hopefulness and a strong belief in meritocracy. Throughout these shifts, poverty has been pervasive and chronic. Also of influence have been the wider attitudes and ideologies of society – whether around gender or ‘race’, corruption, violence or substance use, social spending, materialism or school language policies. Reading the data through Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems lens (Chapter 2) has helped to uncover some of the tensions and paradoxes with which township youth contend at each level of their ecology. This reading has suggested the presence of interconnecting systems within a *moral*

ecology. These tensions, paradoxes or antinomies present in young people's lives at each successive level of their moral ecology are described in Table 10.1.

Table 10.1 *A moral ecology of complex antinomies*

| Empowering | Constraining |
|---|--------------|
| Endosystem – Self | |
| A striving for agency ⇔ Agency relinquished to supernatural forces | |
| Clear understanding of right and wrong ⇔ A chasm between beliefs and behaviour | |
| Deep connections to close kin and friends ⇔ A limited circle of care | |
| Epiphanal interpersonal moments and constant quest for reform ⇔ Little long-term success | |
| Keen for mentoring ⇔ A dearth of meaningful adult involvement | |
| Strong sense of self ⇔ Socio-emotional and physical weakness as a direct sequelae of poverty | |
| Able and willing to reflect ⇔ Little opportunity for reflection or guidance in doing so | |
| Microsystems – Primary relational contexts | |
| A desire for education ⇔ Disengaged and bored at school, constant bunking, few role models in teachers | |
| AIDS aware ⇔ Multiple partners (although unacceptable as norms) | |
| An embodied morality of 'right' ⇔ An 'ikasi style' morality of inevitability | |
| Loved and respected mothers ⇔ Anger at absent fathers | |
| Community collectivism ⇔ Harsh vigilante justice | |
| High mobility to escape negative circumstances ⇔ Mobility causes instability and sheared relationships | |
| Untapped potential of music and sport ⇔ Lack of recreational and diversionary activities | |
| Materialism as a means to dignity ⇔ Stealing for drugs, cellphones, and as a 'sport' (jail not a deterrent) | |
| Little adult sanction over use of substances ⇔ Rampant substance use | |
| Unharnessed educational value of media ⇔ Uncritical media consumption | |
| Macrosystems – Culture, religion, physical environment | |
| A love of beauty ⇔ A shameful, dirty environment | |
| Not antagonistic to faith ⇔ Very little engagement with it | |
| Potentially pedagogic cultural practices ⇔ Sabotaged implementation | |
| <i>Ubuntu</i> rhetoric ⇔ Community jealousy at individual success and 'competition' about wealth | |
| Exosystems and Chronosystems – Structural injustice, politics | |
| Work as moral panacea ⇔ Unrealistic work ideals | |
| A sense of personal responsibility ⇔ Silent about poverty and the causes of structural injustice | |
| Not blaming the past ⇔ Unable to articulate the effect of Apartheid and neo-liberal government practices | |
| Formative | Limiting |

In each dyad, there is a potentially empowering factor and a related constraining or limiting factor. While not every tension is present in each young person's life, and some have multiple constraining factors, taken as a whole these antinomies contribute to the overall moral ecology of township youth.

In the *endosystem*, young people exhibit a strong sense of self, while simultaneously being unaware of the socio-emotional deficiencies they experience as a direct consequence of living in poverty. They strive for agency while at the same time relinquishing agency to supernatural forces. They display a clear understanding of right and wrong while acknowledging a chasm between moral beliefs and moral behaviour. They show deep connections to close kin and friends, but have a limited circle of care that seldom extends beyond these relationships. They seem to respond to epiphanal moments that inspire reform, but their attempts at reform seldom result in long-term change¹. They articulate a willingness for mentoring relationships with adults but have too few adults meaningfully invested in their lives. They live superficially non-reflective lives, but given the opportunity and adult encouragement are able and willing to do the 'moral work' of reflection.

At the level of *microsystems* young people live in a world (created by Apartheid) in which survival is difficult and death and violence are everyday occurrences. They have enormous amounts of free time due to frequent school disruptions and absent adult caregivers who are either permanently absent (fathers) or busy making a living by informal means or in poorly paid jobs. The result is that youth are socialised on the streets of a community that is at once exciting and caring but also violent, retributive and alcohol-sodden; and how, whilst hopeful about their future, youth seem to be unaware of its unattainability. They profess an enormous desire for education but are disengaged and bored at school and only partially attend school. They are HIV/AIDS aware and recognise that having multiple partners is unacceptable as a norm, yet succumb to pressure to have multiple partners. They articulate what I have called an embodied morality of what it means to be right or good, while at the same time evidencing an '*ikasi* style' morality of inevitability.

¹ Later in this chapter I refer to twelve accounts of young people who told me about wanting to 'change' and their limited success in doing so.

Pervasive anger and feelings of loss exists towards 'absent' fathers, while mothers are idealised as moral exemplars (often in the absence of what youth describe as 'right' behaviour). Young people live in communities that profess collectivism and communalism but practice harsh retributive justice. They espouse high rates of mobility to escape negative circumstances, yet mobility causes instability and sheared relationships crucial for moral growth. Young people have few recreational and diversionary activities in the township, yet despite their love for music and sport, these are largely untapped as forms of diversion. Television is uncritically consumed in large doses, yet like sport and music, its educational value is untapped in schools and homes. Youth see material acquisitiveness as a means to dignity yet transgress their own values by stealing in order to acquire drugs, cellphones, and clothes. Youth partake in uncalibrated substance use with little adult sanction and many adults are similarly addicted.

At the level of the *macrosystem* youth people display a love for beauty despite living in a dirty environment of which they are ashamed. They are not antagonistic to religious faith, but are also not meaningfully engaged in its practices and institutions. They are animated about cultural practices and open to its pedagogic influence but are waylaid by the excess of alcohol that accompanies many practices. They live in communities that professes an *ubuntu* ethic of mutual help while at the same time exhibiting community jealousy at individual success and 'competition' about wealth. At the level of the *exo-* and *chronosystems* youth see employment as a moral panacea but harbour unrealistic work ideals. They also display an almost crippling sense of personal responsibility and meritocracy but are unable to articulate their plight of poverty and the causes of current structural injustices.

An ecological systems approach to youth moral formation expands our interpretive vision beyond the existence of moral cultures and allows for a deeper consideration of the interrelationships which exist at each level of complexly interacting systems. As South Africa attempts to grow its economy, provide social and health services, employment and housing for its citizens, and implement democratic local government, law enforcement and criminal justice policies, these systems will continue to affect and shape the moral formation of young people. As young people interact with their peers, function within

blended and reconstituted families, attend low-quality schools, and live in communities that are at once welcoming and dysfunctional, they are exposed to widely varying moral influences. Considering young people's moral functioning as a complex ecology provides a productive analytical lens through which to consider moral panics, moral regeneration campaigns, and moral education.

In this summary of contexts, codes, influences, positionings, processes and antinomies youth provide a challenging collage of their moral understandings and moral lives. What is startlingly clear is that the moral life of youth living in a context of poverty is neither linear, ordered nor directly related to physical maturation (as is often depicted in existing literature focused on youth living in the Global North). In stable environments moral formation is largely depicted as a series of deliberate choices within a series of narrow options. In the lives of township youth, while options are far wider, the act of choosing is more limited and immediate. Life is cheapened by the presence of so much death, physical well-being and survival are not guaranteed, retribution is often instantaneous, and dangers are both physical and supernatural. The usual institutions that might inoculate youth against multiple negative influences exert less influence and so township youth have to choose to opt out of the prevailing *ikasi* culture unlike their middle-class counterparts who are protected against harmful moral choices by the presence of normative role-models and regulators such as parents and police. The picture that these young people described for me, while being morally fraught in many respects, also provides insights into how youth construct a moral world in resistance to the prevailing culture, and how their own self-authorisation provides resources not available from the environment and mediating institutions. Such a third reading – considering the articulation of power and social mobility with morality – moves us from the analysis of moral systems to a theory of moral capital.

Moral capital: A third reading

While an understanding of moral culture and moral systems provides a contextual and integrated understanding of young people's moral lives, it does not address issues of

power, marginalisation and social advantage. Consequently, in the third and final reading of the data, I place the study in a wider neo-Marxist interpretive context and interrogate notions of social, cultural and economic reproduction inherent in morality. This has led me to ask how or whether morality might be viewed as a form of capital², and if so, what might constitute the elements of such ‘capital’. In his seminal essay, ‘Forms of Capital’, Bourdieu ([1977] 1997) described three types of capital – *economic*, *social* and *cultural*³. Economic capital comprises *physical assets* which have the ‘potential capacity to produce profits and to reproduce itself in identical or expanded form [and] contains a tendency to persist in its being’ (p. 46). Cultural capital encompasses the forms of knowledge, skill, education or other embodied, institutionalised or objectified advantages a person possesses that *provide them with the means for obtaining a higher status in society*. Social capital comprises the social obligations and networks of trust based on group membership and relationships that *serve to confer advantage on individuals and groups*. Ultimately, Bourdieu argues that ‘every type of capital is reducible in the last analysis to economic capital’ (p. 54). In his formulation, social networks and education as a form of capital help to explain why societies are structurally stratified and not merely dependent on ‘simple games of chance... so that everything is not equally possible’ (p. 46).

As these young people spoke of their desire to be good people, and what being a good person might mean to their immediate and longer-term futures, a notion of ‘morality as capital’ suggested itself as an explanatory framework. I want to argue that ‘moral capital’ refers to those qualities, capacities, intelligences, strategies and dispositions that young people acquire, possess and can ‘grow’ in the pursuit of moral maturity, and where moral maturity (with its goal of ‘being a good person’) is related to educational, career and

² The notion of morality as capital has, to date, not been explicated as an explanatory framework for how it confers or withholds social and economic advantage. The term ‘moral capital’ is generally used to describe the moral prestige held by political figures such as Nelson Mandela and Aung San Suu Kyi (Kane, 2001), who by virtue of their own sacrifices for political freedoms have earned the right to speak truth to power in cases and places of similar oppression. Others use the term to denote capital that has been morally or ethically invested on financial markets (Heilbrunn, 1997).

³ Others have described *human capital* i.e. the natural and acquired skills and abilities necessary for acquiring a job (Becker, 1993); *intellectual capital* i.e. the use of knowledge and information (Stewart, 1997); and *emotional capital* i.e. the ‘emotional resources passed on from mother to child through processes of parental involvement’ (Reay, 2000, p. 569). In later writings Bourdieu (1991) also introduces the notion of *symbolic capital*.

financial success. Moral capital consists of accruing a record of moral stance, enactment, and reputation. It can be possessed, enlarged, increased, invested in, lost, gained and transferred. It is recognised by others, creating advantages and comprises a combination of personal, social, relational, institutional and structural features that ultimately convey (economic) benefit to those who possess it. From the data I have identified four features of moral capital as (1) connection, (2) reflective practice, (3) personal agency, and (4) the presence or absence of an enabling environment. Figure 10.2 provides a summary of these four main components of moral capital as well as the particular elements in each category that emerge from the data.

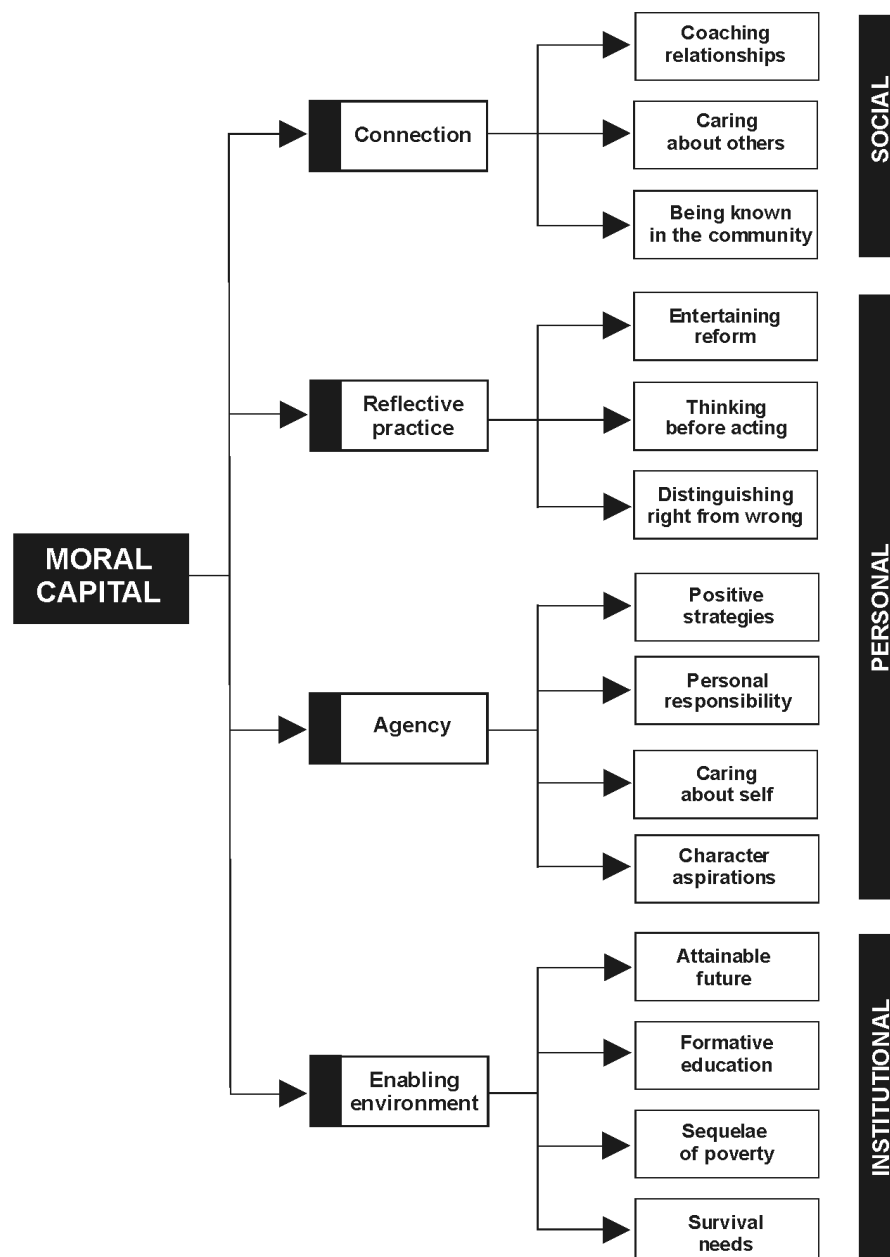


Figure 10.2 Schematic representation of the components of moral capital

In the remainder of this chapter I use the notion of ‘moral capital’ as a heuristic device and consider each of its components before returning to a discussion regarding the ways in which poverty, morality and social reproduction may be related.

Connection

The first element of moral capital relates to the sense of connection young people displayed and articulated as a moral influence. Chapter 9 described the prominence given to mothers and younger siblings as exemplary and inspirational moral influences, and to friends and romantic partners as central features of young people’s lives. These *caring* relationships provided youth with strong emotional ties and motivated young people to make sacrificial moral choices, such as voluntarily parting with money earned or won, keeping a job, and working hard at school in order to maximise the possibility of getting a job. Relational connection acted as a resource (a form of capital) in young people’s quest to become good people for the sake of those people who cared about them.

The young people in my study also spoke of how *being known* in their community⁴ was a deterrent to doing wrong. A number of youth explained that if a mother sees someone else’s child behaving badly, that mother will tell that person’s mother. Some *ikasi* youth and *skollies* said they limited their criminal activities to places where they were not known so that street committees and community members could not hunt them down, ‘fire’, beat or kill them in retaliation. In this regard, despite vigilantism, street committees also play a role in ensuring community connection. When Sipho tells me, ‘I only rob the people I don’t know – if you know him, you won’t rob him’, one strategy might be to provide opportunities to young people to widen their circle of connection – of those who know them and who are known to them. But other young people were equally emphatic that despite the connection to community, in the presence of alcohol or drugs ‘being known’ no longer provides immunity: ‘When they are drunk or high yah – they don’t care who

⁴ Community connection seems to form an important component of moral capital but it is limited. In townships most people walk rather than drive and people seldom leave their immediate surroundings (except for work). Consequently the circle of care is geographically limited. Walking even five or six blocks away from your own house or shack means that you are relatively unknown.

they rob', and if you are drunk or high, you become an easy target for crime being perpetrated against you. In addition, as I noted in Chapter 5, young people from different schools in the same neighbourhood consider each other legitimate targets for territorial violence. So while moral capital is created by being known in one's community, it is offset by both substance use and territoriality.

Perhaps most surprising of all regarding young people's sense of relational connection is their overt hunger for adult involvement in their lives. In Chapter 3, I described the multiple ways in which young people experienced involvement in this study as personally valuable. They repeatedly told me that they felt 'free' with me, that I 'understood' and that talking with me 'about everything including the hard and personal things... had helped'. Young people confided in me in ways disproportionate to the length of our relationship, and lamented the absence of others in their lives with whom they could 'talk' or be 'coached'. 'There is not someone who is coaching me that you must do this one and you don't do this one' lamented Thembisa. Andiswa spoke eloquently of her father who seldom 'talked to [me] like in a calm manner', and of looking for someone with whom she could talk:

Andiswa: When you are *talking* about something, it's much more easier for you to find out what's the problem and what's the solution. But then it's much more different when *somebody's lecturing it to you*, you know. And it's much more different *when somebody's forcing you to do the right thing*. Like, rather than talking... So, if I can just find *someone who can be there*, you know?

Mothers⁵, other family members, older friends, and neighbours featured high on the list of those with whom young people could talk. Young people wanted 'coaching relationships'

⁵ For those youth who lived with both parents, talking to fathers occurred less frequently, but often with more profound effect. Vuma describes how his father sought him out to talk to him after a crisis – just after he'd been shot at. He tells me '[My father] tried to convince me [about changing my life]... and after that Sharlene I feel like hey, I don't know what to do. How can I – what can I do to stop this thing?'. Numerous young men also told me it was their mothers to whom they spoke about sex and the use of condoms.

that were long-term, stable and in which ‘a person listens to me’ and ‘pushes me’ rather than ‘judge[s] me’. Only a few young people spoke about the mentoring they receive from teachers⁶, church, and the guidance young men receive from their *iKangatha* (*ulwaluko* teacher). The need to build up a store of moral capital through mentoring seems to be an important implication, both of young people’s existing relationships, and those they eagerly desire. Much in the same way as an investment of time by people fosters cultural capital, relational connection produces moral capital by helping young people to develop strategies about ‘becoming good people’ and being deterred from wrong behaviour by being known in the community.

Reflective practice

Related to this sense of connection, another feature of moral capital that could be distinguished is that of reflective practice. In Chapter 8, I described how young people told me that they tend to be unreflective at the *moment* of making moral decisions. In Vuma’s words: ‘Like Sharlene, if I think before I did something, I will know that that is wrong’. What young people needed was the opportunity and encouragement to reflect on moral decisions in a *systematic* way and *prior* to acting, and then guidance to act *in keeping* with these beliefs. Only a few, like Thobane, spoke of thinking *before* acting:

Thobane: I first looked at beers and asked myself: If I drink this, where is my future? Where would I go with beers? [My friends] said I mustn’t think about these things, I better drink... I said, ‘No guys, that’s not good for me, you better not be my friends if you want to do this to me’. I stopped drinking... They said I must smoke *dagga*, I asked them first: ‘What’s this *dagga* going to do? [If] I’m thinking like if I want to go to house breaking, that *dagga* gonna tell me you better go right now’. Said no, I can’t smoke this... I never smoke *dagga*.

⁶ Only a few young people spoke of their teachers as possible confidantes largely because teachers ‘don’t know us’, ‘they laugh at us’, ‘tell others our problems’, and are ‘too busy to care’.

This reflection is moral capital because it modulates behaviour that detracts from being a good person. This study provides evidence for the multiple ways in which youth *were* reflective⁷ – but needed a catalyst to make their reflection intentional and to translate beliefs into behaviour. A few more young people spoke of ‘knowing the rules’, especially surrounding alcohol, violence and crime. Drinking in a friend’s shack away from girls one might be tempted to ‘force into sex’, not carrying a knife when they knew they were going to be drinking, making amends for drunken violence, not extracting revenge for drunken violence, using a weapon to scare not harm someone, not robbing people they know, and in Xolile’s words, hitting an old man ‘not very hard... we don’t rob any woman... [and having] knives, but no gun’. While arguably these rules are still appalling, the fact that young people consider *rules* governing behaviour at all is evidence of moral capital. It points to the existence of reflection even in the midst of what is ‘wrong’ behaviour.

Perhaps the richest deposit of moral capital is to be found in young people’s intense desire and struggles to *reform* that I observed over the course of the year. Accompanying these desires were often significant moments, turning points⁸ or epiphanies⁹ in their lives. Young people constructed these epiphanies as profound influences on their moral character. For young women epiphanies included becoming pregnant and subsequently having a baby at a young age, the death of a parent, or even relocating from a rural area to the city. For young men it was invariably a stint in jail, a near-miss encounter with violence, ‘becoming a man’ (Xolile) and for Sipho, a supernatural reprieve (see Chapter 9). For Ingwazi there were multiple incidents. After his arrest for robbery and upon being released on bail he tells me:

Ingwazi: As I was in the taxi, I ask myself, ‘Where am I going to now?’
because this is taking me too far... So I said ...I must forget all

⁷ Young people distinguished clearly between right and wrong and provided reasons for why they judged each to be so. They were also able to reflect on the dissonance between moral belief and moral behaviour.

⁸ Masten (2001, p. 233) refers to the frequency with which ‘turning points’ were encountered in studies of resilience.

⁹ Originally a religious term used to refer to the appearing of Jesus Christ to humanity but more popularly used to denote a moment of insight or realisation which has a profound effect on the course of a person’s life (Dictionary.com Unabridged, no date).

about this drugs you see and robbing you see and drop it... It was sending me on a wrong direction you see. [Being in jail] was a shock to me... *I knew all the things that I was doing that was wrong you see.* And I knew that the next time, if I do robbing again, I'm gonna die because I saw my friend was shot while we were doing this thing you see. So I said no man – *this is not the life I want to live you see. I want to succeed in life.*

Besides these incidents and reprieves¹⁰, for others it was a desire to complete studies that provided the motivation for 'changing my footsteps' (Khaya), and the presence of a new girl- or boyfriend. Andiswa describes how 'I notice how my life is like going down... the drain' with bad friends, alcohol, fighting, shoplifting and *dagga*. She tries a number of strategies to rid herself of these habits and friends and tells me that when she met Andile she was 'very desperate' to 'stop my habits' and that he helped her to change. Andile and Andiswa were each other's turning point. Andile tells me how his changes ('wrong friends', alcohol and failing at school) were due to 'myself, then comes Andiswa's support'. In total I documented twelve complex struggles to reform (five young women, seven young men). While desire for change was spread across the range of types of youth, most of the struggles I captured were from young people in the '*ikasi boy*' or '*ikasi girl*' category (see Chapter 7). In fact, a key way in which youth represented themselves as moral people was by the constant reference made to reforming and changing.

This constant state of (or desire for) *semper reformanda*¹¹ is a form of moral capital. If young people were happy with their current moral context, reflective practice would be useless. Reflective practice could be increased by providing young people with the opportunity and encouragement to reflect in a systematic and strategic way, and to act on these intentions given the limitations of available resources. Sadly, few of these young people's attempts at reform were successful. Ingwazi, Xolile, Tapelo and Luxolo all dropped out of school and

¹⁰ For Luxolo, it was the fact of not being caught after three housebreaking episodes (while her accomplices had been) that made her want to reform (the first time), and her mother's death (the second time).

¹¹ From the Latin meaning 'always reforming' or literally 'always *about* to be reformed'.

reverted to heavy drinking (with the exception of Luxolo). Others became gang members or began using drugs. Andile¹² and Andiswa were two of very few ‘reform’ success stories. I wondered about the ‘reform fatigue’ that these youth must experience and their frustration at being unable to achieve lasting success.

Agency

Linked to young people’s desire for reform, and also their lack of adult supervision, a third element of moral capital that can be identified from the data is young people’s strong sense of agency. Young people’s struggles to reform *over the course of the year* as well as the way in which they displayed strong elements of self-authorisation and personal responsibility demonstrate moral agency. In Chapter 8, I showed how young people were quick to take responsibility for their moral actions. The majority¹³ told me it was they who *alone* were responsible, while others included other external factors *in addition* to themselves. Along similar lines, when asked about the kind of person they wanted to be in the future, all but two young people’s¹⁴ character aspirations were to be good or ‘right’ people. Many extended these aspirations to include being role-models to younger siblings and children in their communities, and to being good examples to the ‘black’ community in general. Being good and *present* fathers was frequently cited as character aspirations by young men.

A further source of moral capital arose from young people’s care for themselves, manifest in caring about their *reputation* in the community. Damon (1984) argues that

¹² A year later Andile talks about his successes and failures with alcohol and how he now drinks ‘only one beer and then yah finished’. In 2007 Andile is in Grade 12 and has been offered a scholarship doing a BA in Community Development at the University of Stellenbosch, in a programme designed for mature-aged students from disadvantaged educational backgrounds. The opportunity arose when, upon my return to the field, he spoke about his experience of this research study at a public seminar. A member of the audience was impressed with the way in which he acts as a mentor and friend to the younger men in his community including gang members, while retaining his own sense of morality. Andile and Andiswa are still together as a couple.

¹³ Only one young man, Bongani – who had already been incarcerated three times – refused to accept personal responsibility for his actions. He blamed his friend for luring him into his current criminal behaviour.

¹⁴ Only suburbs-schooled Liyema (‘the same person that I am now’) and Katlego (‘who I am’) were happy with the way they were and had no further character aspirations for the future.

developmentally, adolescence is a time when ‘one’s “reputation” becomes a focal concern, and the moral aspect of one’s reputation becomes primary’ (p. 118). A number of young people spoke about living up to the expectations of others who considered them ‘good people’. Nonkiza told me although she thought that there was nothing wrong with gambling, she did not gamble because ‘because people will start talking a lot’ and they ‘think I am a good person’. She was keen to preserve this reputation. Mathsufu, a young man who says he goes to church ‘when I feel like it’ but who would not call himself a Christian, says that ‘in church I want to be an example, you know. Because they don’t know that I ...had sex before I married, so I don’t want to do it [have sex] again’. Andiswa told me how she decided not to have sex with the guys that were buying her drinks in the *shebeen* because of her *reputation* (‘My reputation is ... good, and especially amongst the old people’) and how smoking *dagga* while attending church was ruining both her and her family’s reputation (Chapter 8). Damon (1999) provides a further key to capitalising on young people’s care for self and reputation when he advocates that communities ought to establish ‘a consensus in expectations for young people’ that ought to aim for ‘multiple social influences that guide a child in the same general direction’ (p. 78)¹⁵. The existence of young people’s care for self is thus a form of moral capital. If as Damon suggests, communities capitalise on these dispositions to goodness, then the result will be morally good youth.

Besides young people’s sense of personal responsibility, their character aspirations and their regard for preserving their reputation as a good person, a few displayed agency in constructing positive strategies to avoid moral harm. Mathsufu deliberately chose music and sport to keep him from succumbing to the ‘*ikasi* style’ of robbery, alcohol and drugs. A number of young people spoke of ‘not walking’ with wrong friends, even if it meant moving neighbourhoods, changing schools, or leaving gangs (Chapter 8). Thobane’s weariness with violence and the threat of violence caused him to take drastic action. He tells about a time where some young men were constantly picking fights with him and his

¹⁵ He calls this a ‘Youth Charter’ (Damon & Gregory, 1997) – a negotiated document that sets out the rights and responsibilities of youth to their communities.

friends for 'stealing their girlfriends'. It became unbearable. He could seldom leave his street without threat of violence. He decided to make a courageous stand:

Thobane: [This guy] took a big panga – tried to stab me but I run... I stop. I grab his panga. I said, 'If you want to kill me you better kill me'. I give him the panga, I stand next to him... He didn't do nothing, he just turn and go... That guy always told me shit and swear me, I don't answer when he swear me, I get tired of that things... [So now] I don't fight with the other guys... if I was wrong, I just apologise. And if they don't want to listen, I won't fight. If they will beat me I'll not fight.

Examples of positive strategies of agency are limited, but to the extent that they are present at all is evidence of agency – and agency to 'do right' is a crucial form of moral capital. Young people are aware of the many competing influences in their life, but are adamant that they are the primary agents in their moral formation. These discourses of care for self, responsibility, aspiration and positive strategies are important aspects of moral capital with implications for pedagogy and intervention. That there are limited examples of agency points to the difficulty (or impossibility) of sustaining agency, reflective practice and relational connection in the absence of an enabling environment.

Enabling environment

In Chapter 8, I drew attention to how the debate around youth delinquency centres around two opposing poles: 'blame the victim', and 'blame the system' (Giddens & Birdsall, 2001, p. 316). So far, in considering the notion of moral capital, personal and social factors have been taken into consideration. But what of systemic, structural, environmental and institutional factors? During final interviews with research participants, I asked them to identify factors that might help them to be or become better people. Only a few referred

to the influence of environmental factors¹⁶ on their lives. For the rest, their analysis centred around their own agency being central in becoming good people. None spoke directly of lacking the resources to act on their good intentions that I have described in detail in Chapter 8 (concerning stress, depression, and other socio-emotional sequelae of poverty). When pushed however, a number hinted at four enabling factors in the environment that might help them to be better people – and that could therefore be considered a form of moral capital. The strongest was the availability of an *attainable future*, in other words, employment. For most young people, completing schooling and finding a job were the key factors in allowing them to break through the moral glass ceiling imposed by poverty. Poseletso's sentiment of 'becom[ing] good people when they have got their own job' was constantly repeated (see Chapter 9). In the absence of such an attainable future, as youth grow older, they increasingly turn to crime to meet their need for material dignity (Sayer, 2005).

When Nel Noddings (2002) articulates her ethic of care for school, she has in mind 'establishing the conditions and relations that support moral ways of life [rather]... than the inculcation of virtues in individuals" (p. xiii). Noddings' vision is for a morally enabling environment in schools, and can be understood in two ways. School can, through provision of a *formative* education, encourage young people to be reflective, connected and can exemplify democratic processes of living. This would be a form of moral capital. Township schools that are marked by violence, filthy toilets, a lack of recreational space, and uncaring, intoxicated and predatory teachers will not achieve these outcomes. School can also provide young people with a good *quality education* that will lead to employment. As one young person remarked: 'I must just finish at school you see – so I can go find a job'. In the South African context this basic function of school has, despite government's best efforts, not (yet) materialised. Classes are too large, and young people disengaged by harried teachers who often give up (while remaining in their posts) in these challenging circumstances. South Africa's language policy, in which young people learn a subject in their mother tongue yet have to write exit exams in one of two languages (English and

¹⁶ Those who did so included: Ingwazi and Vuma who spoke of the influence of being exposed to violence, crime and drugs from young; Nonkiza, who told me that seeing her mother with 'many men' confused her own sense of sexual morality; and Andiswa who observed that Apartheid ruined 'black' people's lives.

Afrikaans), amounts to discrimination against 'black' students. In the absence of formative and quality education, young people's school environment becomes morally disabling, and prevents the formation of moral capital.

A third characteristic, identified by young people, that prevented the formation of moral capital was the unavailability of help to cope with the mental health effects of living in an environment of poverty. Most alluded to their problems with substance use. Khaya specifically said he needed someone to help him 'learn... how to communicate with people without alcohol' while Luxolo wanted help to 'commit myself to something else'. Luxolo also says she needs courage 'to be brave', while Joules needs help to be 'strong and ...to isolate myself from bad things and people'. While young people do not call these mental health issues or talk of them in terms of the socio-emotional sequelae of poverty, it is in fact what they are. Young people need to be helped to develop communication skills, increase courage and set goals for dealing with problems. These would all form part of an enabling environment, that in turn assists in growing young people's moral capital. As Smith and Standish (1997) argue,

[The] insistence on the irreducibility of personal responsibility, not to be shuffled off on the grounds that 'it's all society's fault', has begun to lead to a denial of the part played by social and political factors: a refusal to accept, for example, that unemployment is causally linked to crime and despair (p. ix).

Luxolo and others' inability to delay gratification; Thimna's hyperactivity due to Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder; Vuma, Tapelo, Sipho and Ingwazi's violent responses to conflict; and the general mental and physical fatigue, apathy, avolition, and emotional blunting common amongst these township youth are all consequences of poverty. Consequently, to deal with these issues as sequelae of poverty requiring mental health intervention, rather than as flaws of character is to recognise the connection between an enabling environment and moral capital.

Institutional and environmental conditions for the development of moral capital in South African townships are absent. Social spending¹⁷ is inadequate given the high levels of unemployment. Young people come to school hungry, and then leave early, unable to concentrate. Many complain of being unable to study in the noise of cramped shacklands, where late night studying is impossible due to the cost of electricity and the needs of family members who have to sleep early to begin long commutes before sunrise. Too many young people do not have basic needs met, and so are unable to fully engage in the school environment that could aid their moral growth, and have limited relationships with poverty-stressed adults. To ensure that young people develop moral capital they need an enabling environment at school (basic needs and formative education) and an attainable future (employment opportunities and mental health services).

This focus on an enabling environment is not meant to suggest that dealing with poverty will automatically ensure that a society becomes morally good. This is clearly not the case in the Global North, where despite an enabling environment, young people remain alienated and disaffected. What I am arguing, however, is that young people need an enabling environment *in addition* to relational connections with friends, family, neighbours and teachers. They need caring adults who will help them to reflect on their beliefs and behaviour, and they need to be helped to convert their strong senses of agency into moral agency. What I am also arguing is that, in the South African context, the lack of an enabling environment is connected to high levels of poverty, which in turn are connected to the injustices of Apartheid. Creating an enabling environment for young people is therefore a matter of justice, and justice is inherently a moral matter. Part of the problem in South Africa remains the lack of a national programme of restitutive justice (Chapter 4). No ‘white’ South Africans – beneficiaries of Apartheid – struggle to have their daily survival needs met. As Edward Said¹⁸ has warned ‘unless national consciousness at its moment of success was somehow changed into a social consciousness, the future would hold not liberation but an extension of imperialism’ (Said, 1993, p. 267).

¹⁷ Civic pressure for a Basic Income Grant (Harman, 2006) has been refused by government, who have only now called for the establishment of a national Poverty Datum Line (Statistics South Africa, 2007).

¹⁸ Said contributed to the inaugural Moral Regeneration Movement conference held in Cape Town in 2002.

Morality, poverty and social reproduction

Bourdieu's key argument in elucidating the forms of capital was to show how societies are structurally stratified such that 'everything is not equally possible' (Bourdieu, 1997, p. 46). He applied his theory of the forms of capital specifically to the way in which education and society are related, concluding that the existence of cultural and social capital account for the reproduction of class through education. The key questions that remain to be answered are how moral capital relates, if at all, to economic capital, and whether the possession of moral capital is in any way connected to the reproduction of social inequalities. In my analysis of poverty and morality, I have shown how young people's moral lives are affected by poverty in limiting their ability to be good people through the absence of normative regulators, the inability of mediating institutions to be effective pedagogic agents, and due to the physical effects of poverty on mental health functioning crucial to moral decision-making. On the evidence of this study poor youth, whilst not verbalising the effects of poverty and structural injustices on their lives, persist in their efforts (somewhat like trying to swim in oil) to become better people by acknowledging responsibility, and aiming to work harder in order to escape their lives of deprivation. As serious as these effects of poverty are on township youths' moral formation, there is a further economic effect.

Poor youth *depend* on turning moral capital into economic capital. In the absence of relational connection, reflective practice, agency and an enabling environment, they will be prevented (or at least limited in their endeavours) from economic advancement and social mobility. Moral capital provides young people with the opportunity to embark on the cycle of 'be a good person, complete school, get a job, be a good person'. In this sense, morality is seen as an instrumental good – it produces economic value. This is a clear example of how moral capital could¹⁹ be transformed into economic capital, and how being prevented from acquiring moral capital therefore reproduces social disadvantage. This notion of moral capital challenges economic reproduction theorists who ignore issues of morality in their elucidation of theories of social reproduction. It also challenges the sociological

¹⁹ This in how these young people perceive it, even if it is not necessarily true since jobs are a scarce resource in South Africa.

celebration of resistance and opposition to hegemonic forces as a central value. In contrast, the ways in which youth speak of morality as a form of capital seems to suggest that *moral conformity* has a role to play in young people's pushing back against the poverty and social exclusion that dominate their lives and circumscribe their prospects.

Conclusion

Schuller, Baron and Field (2000, p. 31) in reviewing and critiquing the concept of *social capital* ask three questions of the concept: (1) How does it relate to other concepts within existing theoretical frameworks? (2) Does it address issues of power and social exclusion? and (3) Is it analytically productive and does it have empirical application? These are useful questions to ask also of the concept of moral capital and will be considered in turn as a means of summarising the notion of moral capital.

In terms of how moral capital is *related to existing theoretical frameworks*, like cultural capital, moral capital is produced and transmitted through investment in education. We already know that cultural capital is dependent on the 'relationship of appropriation, between an agent and the resources objectively available' (Bourdieu, 1997, p. 49) and 'cannot be transmitted instantaneously... by gift or bequest, purchase or exchange' (p. 48), but by 'presuppos[ing] a specific labour, i.e. an apparently gratuitous expenditure of time, attention, care, concern' (p. 54). In this way, cultural capital is directly linked to the possession of economic capital. In Bourdieu's analysis converting cultural capital to economic capital is largely dependent on the usable time – particularly in the form of the mother's free time. Families who already have economic capital are therefore more able to purchase this usable time. Like cultural capital, moral capital assumes a good deal of investment which can be converted economically. Moral capital is also difficult to acquire since in poor communities, a mother's time is in demand because of the amount of time it takes to provide the basic necessities for the family in the absence of permanent employment and strong social security.

Moral capital is also contiguous with social capital, while differing from it in a number of respects. Like social capital, moral capital accrues benefit to both the individual and the group. As youth make good decisions, their future become less uncertain (although by no means secure) and the community becomes more cohesive, safe and inviting. In this regard, moral capital may be seen as a form of ‘communitarian’ capital – having benefit beyond the individual. Unlike social capital, moral capital can reside within an individual (as personal agency) and is not dependent on relationships, although it is enhanced by relationships. One of the factors that Putnam (2000)²⁰ identifies as being responsible for the decline of social capital concerns increased social mobility and the ‘rootlessness’ that follows it. Young people’s constant moving between family members, schools and rural and urban homes cause connections to falter and with them opportunities for reflective practice. In this respect social capital and moral capital are contiguous. Similarly, when Bourdieu offers his analysis of the decline of social capital as being due to the rise of globalisation with concomitant neo-liberal economic policies which leads to the further impoverishment and neglect of the poor, his analysis is also pertinent to the decline (or insufficient presence) of moral capital in South Africa’s township youth.

In terms of its ability to address issues of *power* and *social exclusion*, moral capital provides a useful counterpoint to talk of moral panics and moral deficiencies. If moral capital is linked both to increased schooling, and also to relational connection as I have previously described, then poor youth are necessarily disadvantaged. By recording youth discourses of morality and suggesting that the term ‘moral capital’ be employed by researchers, educators and policy-makers we allow the focus to be shifted from what is *absent* in the moral lives of youth, to what is *present*. And that, surely, is of benefit to young people, who in my experience are animated by discussion of their own capabilities, instead of indifferent to their much-touted shortcomings.

²⁰ Bourdieu’s and Putnam’s notion of social capital differ considerably. For Putnam (2000) social capital is a resource to be acquired by individuals for strategic purposes and is a choice made by an individual. For Bourdieu (1997) the concept of choice is alien, since social capital is defined by social position and is used for the reproduction of relations of inequality.

In the context of South Africa's moral regeneration campaign, the notion of moral 'capital' has perhaps greater theoretical and practical usefulness than that of 'regeneration'. Besides foregrounding young people's current disposition to moral goodness, it also has the capacity to draw attention to the lack of a morally-enabling environment. Furthermore, if moral educators adopted the nurturing of moral capital (personally, socially and in the environment) as their aim, moral education might be more productive and less contested than it currently is. It would also serve to shift the current limited focus off developing cognitive skills or promoting virtue to include discussions around the implications of the absence of an enabling environment, and about strategies for fostering relational connection, developing agency and encouraging reflective practice. Finally, if the aim of moral education is to nurture or increase moral capital, then moral behaviour can be analysed with regard to the extent of moral capital already available to an individual or to a group. This could result in a more nuanced conversation between the 'blame the victim' and 'blame the system' schools of thought, since *social* and *institutional* factors will become part of the discussion, rather than solely focussing on the *personal* in questions of morality.

As an *analytical concept* moral capital urges us to *unravel* what is usually considered together. If we accept that the moral formation of young people is best considered as an ecological web of interconnecting relationships between the personal, social, institutional and environmental, then a notion of moral capital is a valuable analytical tool. It follows that as a conceptual framework for research it will have *empirical applications*. The next and final chapter provides practical implications that arise out of this study as a whole and from the notion of moral capital in particular.

IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

I began this dissertation by referring to Pierre Bourdieu's description of 'Anglo-American ideology' that suggests the poor are both intellectually and morally deficient: 'The poor are not just immoral, alcoholic and degenerate, they are stupid, they lack intelligence' (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 43). This study has attempted to move away from such an ideological analysis by providing a rich and complex youth ethnography of the moral sphere. I also called attention to the way in which the study of human morality in general and young people's morality in particular has been individualised and atomised along strictly bounded academic lines. Throughout this dissertation I have made a case for a *socio-cultural* understanding of morality that privileges young people's own constructions of right and wrong and their moral decision-making processes. In this final chapter I turn to how such contextual knowledge can be applied to community and school interventions, and the extent to which a multi-method, ethical ethnography can inform academic research on morality.

The theoretical usefulness of an ethnography of morality

In spite of this being a case study (all ethnographies are case studies), this research has the potential to be used as the basis of comparison with contexts elsewhere in the world, as well as in other parts of South Africa. The methods of research and analysis too are replicable, and may perhaps even be formative for future researchers of young people's understanding of morality. While aspects of the South African context are unique, in many ways it is typical of many others: a poor community, a developing country, a new democracy. Consequently, it is these 'lines of connection... which make for global relevance allowing... ethnographic writing to carry across the world' (Willis & Trondman, 2000, p. 7).

As was the case with the three readings of the data I described in Chapter 10, a study such as this can itself be interpreted in multiple ways. On a *descriptive* level, it can be seen to be an account of vulnerable young people's attempts to make meaning of their lives – to cope and survive – from within a context of partial-parenting, partial-schooling, pervasive poverty, and in the aftermath of injustice. Alternately, some may view it only as a study of delinquency and deviance although it is much more. The danger of this is that as young people's private lives are made public, those in authority may use it as an opportunity for greater surveillance and regulation¹ (Kelly, 2000). On a *critical* level, this study offers insight into how society itself is structured, and how social forces shape and reproduce the conditions of injustice. Paul Willis (2000, p. xvi) speaks of 'everyday culture' mediating 'between individuals and structures'. We undertake ethnographic research not just to learn about the lives of young people, but because of what their lives tell us about the structures and injustices of society. On a *practical* level, at the very least, this study should inform moral education practice (at home, in school, and in community programmes) for young people living in the contexts of poverty.

Ethnographic studies have a tendency to raise multiple issues, all of which could affect practice. Besides the theoretical notion of 'moral capital' that I addressed fully in Chapter 10, I have chosen to address only selected implications of this study: *methodological* implications for researching in the context of poverty; *pedagogical* implications for moral education; and *programmatic* implications for community interventions. The chapter concludes with a consideration of the limitations of the study and offers a future research agenda for the sociology of morality. From a theoretical and methodological perspective, this study has made a number of important contributions to research amongst youth living in a context of poverty. First, it has operationalised an *ethical ethnography* – a study in which research ethics take precedence over research design. In Chapter 3, I explicated a study design that incorporates young people's own agency in research, is sensitive to social context, protects youth, and gives 'something' back over the course of the research, and

¹ Kelly (2000) argues that the increasing number and sophistication of youth studies may have unintended consequences. Policy-makers are able to interpret research as 'surveillance' and thus render young people 'knowable in all their diversity through the activities of those who *do* youth studies' (p. 302).

following it. This study has also shown how research can be ‘research-as-intervention’ while retaining the integrity of the data.

Second, this study has taken seriously young people’s voices and their own knowledge about morality. By using multiple methods of eliciting data, the very notion of morality has been unpicked in ways which get at its inherent complexity. The key components I have used to describe young people moral constructions – codes, processes, positionings, and visual narratives of influence – have only been possible through using such a variety of methods, while maintaining an ethnographic presence of observation and conversation. These interactive and youth-centred methods have succeeded in engaging young people over a lengthy period and have resulted in rich data, thick description and in-depth analysis. Especially through the use of autophotography (or photo-voice), it has brought to light the way in which innovative technologies are able to uncover data young people might not know how to verbalise. The insidious influence of poverty, Apartheid and other structural injustices is an example of this, while young people’s talk of witches and traditional practices that revealed the unspeakable were also largely prompted by the use of photography. By taking data back to young people, and allowing them to re-hear their (now interpreted) voices, the study has succeeded in incorporating principles of emancipatory² and democratic research.

Third, this study has made use of a conceptual framework that foregrounds social context in the study of morality. Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory provides a variegated lens (described in Chapter 2 and used in Chapters 5, 9 and 10) for understanding morality in social context in general and in contexts of poverty in particular since it has the potential to uncover how ‘the evil, and the cure, lie not with the victims of alienation but in the social institutions which produce it, and their failure to democratic society’ (Bronfenbrenner, 1972, p. xxv). Bronfenbrenner’s framework has allowed me to articulate the conceptually valuable notion of a *moral ecology*, in which moral *codes*, *positionings*, *processes* and *influences* are considered in the light of social, historical and political *contexts*.

² How this research is disseminated however will also be a measure of its success as ‘emancipatory’.

Finally, Moscovici's *social representations* theory has also been valuable since it has allowed me to distinguish between individual understandings of morality and the social representations that lie behind these. In doing so, it allows this study to foreground the *social* rather than *individual* nature of young people's moral understandings, and contributes towards explanatory frameworks for moral behaviour. It has helped to differentiate representations of morality around which there is a consensus (dominant representations), and to distinguish between hegemonic (those that reflect wider society) and emancipated representations (those that are grounded in a sub-culture). For example, social representations around violence, crime and substance use reflect those of wider society and are (with some exceptions) hegemonic, whereas those around sex, money and self-authorisation are emancipated. Young people's views on each of these issues revealed a moderate to strong consensus whereas those, for example, around religion, culture and policing were weak representations. The theory of social representations has also enabled me to identify and examine the multiple images and metaphors that circulate in young people's language about morality (for example, 'being famous', 'competitions', 'robbery as sport', 'being around at night', 'overdosing', being 'corrupt' and 'big days'). Most importantly though it has allowed me to identify young people's social representations of morality as action (what you do), as embodied in people (who you are – a 'right one', and who others are to you – good *for* them and good *to* them) and as located or inevitable (where you are i.e. *in* school, *at* home, *off* the streets, or merely living in *ikasi* with its distinctive style and external agents).

Contextual pedagogies for moral education

The second set of implications concerns pedagogical practices in moral education. Current trends³ in moral education include social perspective-taking, stimulating cognitive development through discussion of fictitious dilemmas, promoting an ethic of care, creating a moral climate, and providing opportunities for service learning. Each has something to offer in helping young people develop moral identities, empathy, increase

³ I purposefully exclude character education since it encompasses such a range of approaches as to not be easily defined.

cognitive reasoning ability, and gain experience in moral action. However, this study offers three further directions for moral education, especially amongst vulnerable youth. These are moral education that: (1) promotes critical moral consciousness; (2) includes mentoring and Socratic⁴ questioning; and (3) is youth-centred and takes seriously the effects of young people's social contexts on their moral formation. Below I elaborate on each of these dimensions.

Twentieth-century teacher, radical and Christian activist, Paolo Freire advocated that the poor and oppressed, through 'conscientisation' and dialogue about their lives and the conditions of their oppression, be helped to 'name their world' (Freire, 1972, p. 61) and in so doing to 'perceive the reality of oppression not as a closed world from which there is no exit, but as a limiting situation which they can transform' (p. 25-6). The pedagogy most suited to such an agenda would be 'problem-posing' education (rather than 'bank-deposit' education) in which 'men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world' (Richard Shaull, Foreword to Freire, 1972, p. 13-4).

A notion of education for critical *moral* consciousness⁵ is therefore closely aligned with Freire's call to conscientisation. However, it places the emphasis on understanding the *moral* significance of 'race', discrimination, poverty, suffering, Apartheid, unemployment, and government social spending. Its aim would be to help young people understand these issues *as moral issues*, and to explore its influence on their own moral processes and formation. For example, understanding work as a human right, and unemployment as a major determinant of moral functioning is to educate young people for critical moral consciousness. To return to Bourdieu's quotation of how Anglo-America ideology considers the poor to be 'immoral, alcoholic and degenerate' (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 43), Freirean pedagogy helps those living in contexts of poverty and oppression to reply:

⁴ Learning through dialogue and questioning (Burbules, 1993, p. x-xi).

⁵ I first read of the notion of 'education for critical moral consciousness' in Elena Mustakova-Possardt's (2004) paper in the *Journal of Moral Education* of the same name. While she too derives her understanding of the notion from Freire, her explication is too esoteric, spiritualised and linked to the experience of Global North youth to offer help in applying the concept to moral education amongst vulnerable youth.

They used to say we were unproductive because we were lazy and drunkards. All lies. Now that we are respected as men, we're going to show everyone that we were never drunkards or lazy. We were exploited! (Freire, 1972, p. 39).

Education for critical moral consciousness might sound surprising in a country that has achieved its liberation from the oppression of colonialism, Apartheid, and totalitarianism. But the fact that overt and subtle effects of Apartheid remain in young people's lives are insidious forms of oppression. Maya Angelou (1971) speaks of the caged bird *singing* of freedom instead of emerging from a cage whose doors are now open. But there is also a second oppression growing in South Africa, that of the neo-liberal preoccupation with meritocracy, 'survival of the fittest' and enriching the already-wealthy as I described in Chapter 4. Thirteen years after the advent of democracy, township education remains poor, social spending inadequate, and the widening income gap morally indefensible. Education for critical moral consciousness could be the means to help young people take a more active role in their own liberation – not only by recognising the structural injustices in which they live, but by being helped to develop positive personal and social strategies to address them. In the absence of such education, a second revolution is a possibility.

The second direction for moral education concerns mentoring based on Socratic questioning and has emerged from two sources in this study. As I described in Chapter 9, young people revealed that their moral influences are primarily inspirational, exemplary and diversionary, rather than overtly pedagogic. They are *inspired* to be better people and are *motivated* by the examples they see in others to be good friends, role models and providers. Closely related, young people show a surprising yearning for mentoring (Chapter 8). They speak animatedly about the 'coaching' they desire and demonstrated their desire for mentoring relationships as willing participants – ready to do the 'moral work' – in this research study. Young people continuously expressed an appreciation of being listened to, and expressed how *talking* helped them 'to learn at the same time' (see Chapter 3). Few young people had meaningful relationships with adults who had the time and expertise to mentor them. Young people expressed the importance for mentoring especially during important life transitions – from primary to high school (Carlo, Fabes,

Laible *et al.*, 1999, p. 138), and from high school into tertiary education or (un)employment.

Furthermore, if as this study has shown, township youth *know* the good, *desire* the good, and *possess a moral self-identity*, then mentoring relationships may help to bridge the chasm between belief and behaviour, and provide young people with individual attention in addressing the socio-emotional sequelae of poverty that affect moral functioning (see Chapter 8). Epiphanies alone, while providing an incentive for change, do not last. With the aid of a mentor, young people can be helped to act on their insights and desire to change, as well as to deconstruct negative incendiary moments – the point from which their lives spiralled out of control. A mentor can help young people to develop cognitive skills, especially in light of poor quality schooling, and encourage young people to develop agency and strategies to act on the beliefs they proclaim. Mentoring also has the potential to expand young people’s relational connections beyond that of kin and friends⁶.

Mentoring based on the Socratic method addresses the centrality of self in young people’s moral understanding (which as I have already argued society need not fear since young people’s self-authoring morality⁷ is in most cases conventional and ‘decent’). A Socratic method of moral education favours critical consciousness and can be used to help young people ‘reason about moral matters in a way which respects the “impersonal”⁸ features of morality’ (Straughan, 1982, p. 109) while also avoiding turning moral conversations into

⁶ See Bellah (1996, p. 112) for a discussion about immediate ‘circles of concern’.

⁷ This is unlike the ‘therapeutic contractualism’ (i.e. what works for me) that Bellah (1996, p. 129) speaks of in his landmark study. Understanding the centrality of self in young people’s moral framework means that character education, in which virtues are espoused, cannot gain traction. Young people need to work out their values for themselves – and this study has provided evidence that these values will not be far off the norm.

⁸ Smith and Standish (1997) provide an insightful argument into what constitutes the impersonal features of morality and contrast this to the commonly held (mis)conception ‘of the moral life – as consisting of issues and choices... To oppose someone’s choice then looks like an unwarranted suppression of their individuality and authenticity... No wonder that anything goes... moral choice takes a characteristic *aesthetic* turn, just as you choose a colour scheme for your home. But values, and especially moral values, are not like that. *We do not choose to think this is right and that is wrong. Normally we cannot see things otherwise: their rightness or wrongness forces itself on us*’ (p. 141 emphasis mine).

singularly polemical debates⁹. Bronfenbrenner's (1972, p. xxv) call 'for nothing more radical than *providing a setting in which young and old can simply sit and talk*' in his ecological research is also applicable to a call for mentoring. Bronfenbrenner continues by saying that 'the fact that such settings are disappearing, and have to be deliberately recreated, points to both the roots of the problem and its remedy' (ibid.). The same can be said of mentoring – young people need caring adults with whom to talk, and their absence points to both the root of the problem and its remedy.

The third direction for moral education concerns young people's social, historical and economic contexts. While education for critical moral consciousness and Socratic mentoring take seriously the issue of contexts, moral education needs to be explicit in using contextual curricula and pedagogies. To do so moral educators should be informed by young people's multifaceted moral ecology, have an in-depth understanding of the moral capital that young people bring into the classroom, as well as an awareness of the specific socio-emotional sequelae of poverty of their students (that affects their moral functioning). Dreyer *et al's* (1999, p. 210-11) observation that moral 'behaviour seems to be determined by factors other than mere cognitions and affects, such as intentions, action priorities, and *the contextuality of time and place*' needs to be operationalised through youth-centred and contextual pedagogies and curricula. As this study has shown, the way in which young people locate themselves within a moral identity is just as important as the way in which they construct notions of morality – and is crucial for youth-centred, contextual pedagogies.

In one sense, this study itself has presaged what contextual, Socratic, education for critical moral consciousness might look like. *Discovering* young people's own moral understandings; *engaging* youth through open-ended activities such as *Digital Documentaries*,

⁹ Often moral education programmes focus on areas about which there are high levels of value disagreement, which tends to frame moral education as polemical discussions and perpetual conflicts rather than as opportunities for cognitive, affective and behavioural engagement with matters of everyday human conduct (Smith & Standish, 1997).

Circles of Influence, *Mind Maps*¹⁰, and *Free lists*; and *discussing* their own dilemmas in a caring and democratic environment are all important pedagogical strategies for relevant moral education for vulnerable youth.

Enhancing the contribution of mothers and friends

The final set of implications concern programmatic interventions suitable for implementation by community-based youth agencies concerned with young people's moral formation. I highlight one further possibility, that of *enhancing the contribution of mothers and peers* to young people's moral formation. Throughout this study young people (including young men) spoke highly of their mothers – in terms of respect, love and as moral exemplars. This presents an unexplored opportunity for moral education. Also evident, however, were mothers' difficulties in engaging their children's schools, navigating the judicial systems when children were in trouble with the law, and intervening in their children's anti-social behaviours. These barriers that limit mothers' involvement in their children's lives need to be removed. While the literature does not focus on the educative potential of mothers alone, Eisenberg & Murphy (1995, cited in Carlo *et al.*, 1999, p. 135) suggest five ways in which parents¹¹ influence young people's moral and prosocial development: '[1] providing information about desirable ways to behave, [2] direct modelling of prosocial behavior, [3] encouraging and directing appropriate behavior, [4] punishing inappropriate behavior, and [5] creating an affective climate that encourages (or discourages) empathy development'. Mothers living in a context of poverty could develop their skills in these areas. Community programmes that aid mothers to plan intentional educative interventions might provide a new emphasis in moral education.

¹⁰ *Mind Maps* especially have multiple benefit if used in a classroom or mentoring context. Diagrams may be used to stimulate metacognitive reflection, and help youth to think about the multiple components of decision-making such as benefits, consequences, influences, and processes involved in making decisions. It is also an open-ended technology, important in allowing young people to think through their own realities rather than through often contextually inappropriate dilemmas in which the moral nature of the action in question has already been decided.

¹¹ Carlo *et al* (1999, p.135) also maintain that while parents have a tendency to pull away as children grow older, what young people want is authoritative and democratic (rather than authoritarian) parenting, and it is these styles of parenting that are associated with prosocial behaviours.

Young people, while speaking of the negative influence of some friends (and the detracting role of *sexual partners*) nonetheless spoke highly of friends and *romantic* partners as being both diversionary and inspiring moral influences. Interventions seldom take seriously the roles of friends and romantic partners. Instead friends are often disparaged as sources of peer pressure, and romantic partners are dismissed as a source of premature or unsafe sexual practices. In the lives of these township youth, while ‘*ikasi* friends’ are sources of negative influence, many friends are positive influences. Studies have found that good friends enhance young people’s self-esteem, promote prosocial behaviours (Carlo *et al.*, 1999, p. 137), and that romantic relationships focus ‘adolescents’ attention... on behaviours that foster and promote intimacy [such as] helping, caring... sharing... sympathy and empathy’ (Fabes, Carlo, Kupanoff *et al.*, 1999, p. 9). Encouraging young people to be ‘right’ friends to each other, and to adopt behaviours that promote intimacy provide a further emphasis that community interventions can adopt.

Limitations of the study and opportunities for further research

Notwithstanding the extensive and rich data this study has produced, it has a number of limitations. Partly because of its stated aim to paint a broad picture, it has necessarily sacrificed depth¹² in many places where the data require deeper analysis. It has done so to address a serious omission in the literature – that of producing a non-individualised, re-integrated portrait of the moral lives of poor youth. The gender analysis in this study has also been rudimentary, partly due to the volume of data required to construct such a broad-ranging portrait, but also because differences between young men and young women’s lives were not obviously dissimilar – although they were subtly so. In addition young people’s understanding of the rules and hierarchies of substance use, violence and

¹² Data that emerged from photographs especially regarding faith, *ulwaluko* and other cultural practices demand much deeper analysis. The moral lives of young people on either ends of the ‘positionings’ spectrum i.e. sheltered and delinquent also require far greater analysis than I have been able to supply. I have glossed over young people’s home contexts and have substantial amounts of data from home visits and life histories that went virtually unexamined. In addition, issues such as HIV/AIDS, drug-use, self-harm, the influence of grandparents, aunts and uncles, policing, abusive and transactional sexual relationships, mobility, and television have received only superficial attention.

crime and the ways in which they negotiate the moral implications of HIV/AIDS are areas of further study¹³.

Given these limitations, as well as the multiple sites this study has opened up to scrutiny, opportunities for further research abound. The most obvious opportunity is for this study to be replicated in other contexts in order to gain a fuller picture of young people's moral ecologies and moral capital in other developing contexts, as well as amongst youth of different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Applying the contextual knowledge revealed in this study to classroom and community contexts beyond the limited options I have suggested are another avenue for further research. The most important opportunity for further research however, is to develop the theoretically valuable notions this study has raised regarding the development of a sociology of morality (and moral education). To study morality in sociological context serves to add a critical dimension to the study of both youth culture and the sociology of (moral) education. The nature of young people's moral cultures, the interactions of ecosystems in a moral ecology and the forms, sources and reproduction of moral capital are all productive areas of further research. Each of these options for further research, making use of contextual (and critical) knowledge for the benefit of vulnerable youth, will contribute to a sociology of morality.

Conclusion

After the first few weeks in the field I asked myself, 'What world was this?' that I was experiencing. It was a world in which a young woman comes to school the day after her brother is shot in front of her; a baby is found dead in a drain; a woman is raped and killed in a field; a Grade 8 forces his penis into another boy's mouth at school to 'teach him a lesson'; a teacher is threatened at school with a knife. It was a world of violence, revenge,

¹³ There are multiple further empirical studies that suggest itself from this research. Included in these might be: (1) An investigation of the role and understanding of *work* in the lives of youth living in contexts of poverty, including the understanding of work as moral panacea, human right and the effects of a belief in meritocracy amongst poor youth; (2) A study on the perceived role of restitution as social, political, moral, and religious obligation in South Africa, and linked to this, young people's engagement with the meaning of poverty and structural injustice; and (3) A study that looks at ways in which cultural practices can be effectively used in building moral capital amongst poor youth, as well as the ways in which young people's belief in divination (witches and traditional healing) interact with poverty.

shootings and stabbings; where young men and women beat their romantic partners and drink alcohol and 'smoke' drugs out of boredom and then addiction. It was a place where fourteen year-old boys robbed girls of sweets at knifepoint; where teachers came to school drunk, smoke *dagga* with students in the toilets and solicit sex from female students.

At the same time it was also a world in which youth write songs extolling people to wake up and make a plan to escape poverty; where young people help serve food to those who have lost their homes in a fire; and where teenagers display a parental concern for younger siblings and neighbourhood children alike. It was a world where mothers make enormous sacrifices for their children and teachers spend afternoons helping young people to come to terms with their HIV infection, drug addiction and pain at having an 'absent father' just before an *ulwaluko* ceremony. It was a world where a young man refuses to defend himself from an abusive mother because she is his mother; where a son lies to protect his mother's reputation; and where a *skollie* wheels a friend who has been stabbed to hospital in a supermarket trolley because no-one else would help him. It is a place where a young man stands up to another wielding a panga in an attempt to make peace; another goes to live 40km away in order to escape gang affiliation; where young people demonstrate tenacity and courage in trying to reform their behaviour; and where they regard 'being good' as a way to escape poverty and help their 'suffering' mothers and siblings.

This world of township youth was certainly not one I expected. Nor was I expecting the kind of deep access that I was given. I have worked with young people for over fifteen years in suburbs and townships, but I have never spent such a sustained amount of time with any one group of youth. I do believe I have experienced a world to which few adults have access, and certainly one seldom encountered by academics. Is this world negative or positive? The answer, of course is multifaceted. South African township youth inhabit a world fraught with horror, violence, crime and substance abuse, but they also have remarkable moral capital, which has been ignored by the official quest for 'moral regeneration'. Are they good young people or bad young people? This answer too is complex. Most are good, although neglected, and live non-reflective lives. They do bad things, which given the availability and pervasiveness of alcohol and *dagga*, become

entrenched. Tupac Shakur, in one of his songs about life in an American ghetto, sums up these young people's lives profoundly when he writes:

'No one knows my struggle, they only see the trouble' (2Pac, 2002).

In a similar manner, the moral ecology of South Africa's township youth needs to form the focus of educational attention if educators and policymakers are to see beyond the trouble, and apply innovative interventions.

This study has aimed to make that struggle clear.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Correspondence regarding school access

1.1 Letter requesting permission to research in a state school



Ruislip
120 Campground Road
Rondebosch
7700

ss537@cam.ac.uk

16 June 2004

The Head: Education
(For Attention: Mr Peter Present, Director Education Research)
Western Cape Education Department
Private Bag X9114
Cape Town
8000
South Africa

Dear Mr Present

Conducting research in WCED schools

I am a South African currently working towards a PhD at the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom. My research concerns the processes of moral formation in South African youth. My consideration of this topic has resulted from an ongoing interest in the National Department of Education's moral regeneration movement and values in education initiative, and I believe the findings of my research will contribute to future curriculum development in moral education and citizenship education.

I would like to ask your permission to spend some time conducting research with youth in Grade 9/10 in several high schools under your jurisdiction from 1 August 2004 to 30 August 2005. I have identified a number of schools (detailed overleaf) in which I would like to work at various levels.

- I would like to visit two or three school in order to pilot some instruments for data collection (see group interviews on p. 24, individual interviews on p. 27 and curricula activities on p. 22 of the abridged extract from my work to date).
- Then I would like to visit all five high schools in Langa in order to select one as a basis for ongoing research based on various demographic features such as a gender balance and representativeness of the group.

- On an ongoing basis I would like to observe Grade 9 (in 2004) and Grade 10 (in 2005) learners in the classroom, at sports events and at break times; engage in group discussions with learners throughout the year at agreed upon times; and interview approximately 30 learners, 2-3 times each at a mutually agreed upon time.

I have carefully read circular 0249/2003 and understand and accept the conditions therein. I attach a copy of my CV and research proposal (abridged) including proposed interview questions for learners and consent forms for learners and their parents/guardians. While I hope to include educators in my research, the nature of the interaction will mostly be informal. In addition, I would also like to ask for special permission to work in the chosen school in Langa during the fourth term until the end of October (prior to the commencement of exams). Once I have received your permission I will contact each school individually to secure their permission.

While researching I will be under the dual supervision of the University of Cambridge and the University of the Cape Town. If you have any queries regarding this research please feel free to contact me or either of the following people who serve as supervisors of my research:

Professor Madeleine Arnot
Faculty of Education
University of Cambridge
17 Trumpington Street
Cambridge
CB2 1QA
United Kingdom
Telephone number: +44 (0)1223 332 898
Email address: mma1000@cam.ac.uk

Professor Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela
Department of Psychology
University of Cape Town
Rondebosch
7701
South Africa
Telephone number: 021 650 3427
Email address: pgobodo@humanities.uct.ac.za

I eagerly await your response to my request.

Yours sincerely



Sharlene Swartz

Doctoral candidate

List of schools in which I would like to work

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| • XXXX XXXX in Langa | XXXXXX XXXX in Langa |
| • XXXXX XXXX in Langa | XXXXXX XXXX in Langa |
| • XXXX XXXX in Langa | XXXX XXXX in Mowbray |
| • XXXX XXX in Pinelands | XXXX XXXX in Lansdowne |

1.2 Letter of permission from Western Cape Education Department

Navrae
Enquiries **Dr RS Cornelissen**
IMibuzo
Telefoon
Telephone **(021) 467-2286**
IFoni
Faks
Fax **(021) 425-7445**
IFeksi
Verwysing
Reference **20040721-0020**
ISalathiso



Wes-Kaap Onderwysdepartement

Western Cape Education Department

ISEBE leMfundo leNtshona Koloni



Ms Sharlene Swartz
Ruislip
120 Campground Road
RONDEBOSCH
7700

Dear Ms S. Swartz

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: THE INTERFACE OF VALUES IN THE PROCESS OF MORAL INFORMATION IN SOUTH AFRICAN YOUTH.

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **1st August 2004 to 31st August 2005**.
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December 2004).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr R. Cornelissen at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number.
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the Principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the following schools: **XXXX XXXX, XXXX XXXX, XXXX XXXX, XXXX XXXX, XXXX XXXX, XXXX XXXX, XXXX XXXX, XXXX XXXX, XXXX XXXX, XXXX XXXX**.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Education Research.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:
**The Director: Education Research
Western Cape Education Department
Private Bag X9114
CAPE TOWN
8000**

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.

Signed: Ronald S. Cornelissen
for: **HEAD: EDUCATION**
DATE: 21st July 2004

MELD ASSEBLIEF VERWYSINGSNOMMERS IN ALLE KORRESPONDENSIE / PLEASE QUOTE REFERENCE NUMBERS IN ALL CORRESPONDENCE /
NCEDA UBHALE IINOMBOLO ZESALATHISO KUYO YONKE IMBALELWANO

GRAND CENTRAL TOWERS, LAER-PARLEMENTSTRAAT, PRIVAATSAK X9114, KAAPSTAD 8000
GRAND CENTRAL TOWERS, LOWER PARLIAMENT STREET, PRIVATE BAG X9114, CAPE TOWN 8000

WEB: <http://wced.wcape.gov.za>

1.3 Letter to MHS school head following a meeting



Ruislip
120 Campground Road
Rondebosch
7700

ss537@cam.ac.uk

Tel: 021 689 8151
Cell: 083 310 7100

1 August 2004

XXX XXX XXXXXX
XXX XXX XXXXXXXXX
XXXXXX XXXXXX
XXXXXX
XXXXXX

Dear XXX XXXXXX

Conducting research at Mandela High School

Thank you very much for your time during our recent meeting. This letter serves to confirm our discussion. I am a South African currently working towards a PhD at the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom. My research concerns the processes of moral formation in South African youth. My consideration of this topic has resulted from an ongoing interest in the National Department of Education's moral regeneration movement and values in education initiative, and I believe the results will contribute to future curriculum development in moral education and citizenship education.

I have sought and obtained permission from the Western Cape Education Department to conduct research in schools, a copy of which I have provided for your records, but would now like to request your permission to work with the 2004 Grade 9 year group from August 2004 to June 2005. If you and your staff were able to accommodate me, I would be most grateful for the opportunity to spend this time in your school conducting my research. I believe that my work will entail minimal disruption to your school's formal programme. If it is possible, I would like to:

- Observe Grade 9 learners on an ongoing basis possibly during their English and Life Orientation classes.
- Talk informally to learners about their ideas about moral regeneration and moral formation.
- Invite learners to participate in group discussions with their Grade 9 peers.

- Invite approximately 30 learners to be more formally engaged in the study by being interviewed on 2-3 separate occasions. Interviews will be recorded and transcribed.
- Have access to the school's computer facilities for some aspects of the study.
- With permission from their class teachers, set learners two interesting assignments as part of the formal curriculum.
- Invite learners to take part in a holiday project digitally documenting the influences on their moral formation.

I would also be glad to supervise Grade 9 learners during free periods which may arise from educators being absent, and would be more than happy to assist in the school's extra-mural programme. Some ideas for my involvement in the extra-mural programme include leadership activities, a series of films and discussions on various topics, career guidance, and computer skills.

While I would also like to include educators in my research, the nature of the interaction will be informal, and I would ask their consent on an individual basis should the need arise for me to interview them. In return for your hospitality I'd like to offer your school a digital camera which would have been used throughout the project, as a contribution to your school's audiovisual resources. I will of course also be happy to provide a copy of the completed dissertation to the school.

While conducting my research I will be under the dual supervision of the University of Cambridge and the University of Cape Town. If you have any queries regarding this research that I am unable to answer please feel free to contact either of the following people who serve as supervisors of my research:

Professor Madeleine Arnot
Faculty of Education
University of Cambridge
17 Trumpington Street
Cambridge
CB2 1QA
United Kingdom
Telephone number: +44 (0)1223 332-898
Email address: mma1000@cam.ac.uk

Professor Pumla Gobodo Madikizela
Department of Psychology
University of Cape Town
Rondebosch
7701
South Africa
Telephone number: 021 650-3427
Email address: pgobodo@humanities.uct.ac.za

I eagerly await your response to my request.

Yours sincerely



Sharlene Swartz
Doctoral candidate

Appendix 2: Individual and group interviews

2.1 Interview participants (pseudonyms)

Three focus group discussions

First group of Grade 9 students from Mandela High School (MHS) (camp - October 2004)

Luxolo, aged 19 (young woman)
Mhoza, aged 17 (young woman)
Nomonde, aged 19 (young woman)
Thimna, aged 19 (young woman)
Akhona, aged 18 (young man)
Andile, aged 19 (young man)
Ingwazi, aged 19 (young man)
Khaya, aged 18 (young man)
Vuma, aged 19 (young man)
Xolile, aged 20 (young man)

Some reference group members - Grade 11 from MHS (camp - November 2004)

Dipuo, aged 19 (young woman)
Lekho, aged 17 (young woman)
Mandisa, aged 18 (young woman)
Phindiwe, aged 16 (young woman)

Group of Grade 10 learners from Oakridge High School (OHS) (McDonalds - January 2005)

Liyema, aged 14 (young woman)
Thandi, aged 16 (young woman)
Joules, aged 14 (young man)
Katlego, aged 15 (young man)
Mane, aged 14 (young man)
Nzulu, aged 15 (young man)

A set of three interviews

Reference group of Grade 11 young women from MHS

Dipuo, aged 19
Lekho, aged 17
Mandisa, aged 18
Phindiwe, aged 16
Poseletso, aged 17
Thembisa, aged 19

Grade 9 students from MHS (township-schooled)

Akhona, aged 18 (young man)
Amande, aged 17 (young woman)
Andile, aged 19 (young man)
Fundiswa, aged 16 (young woman)
Ingwazi, aged 19 (young man)
Khaya, aged 18 (young man)
Luxolo, aged 19 (young woman)
Mathsufu, aged 18 (young man)
Mhoza, aged 17 (young woman)
Nomonde*, aged 19 (young woman)
Nonkiza, aged 15 (young woman)
Phumeza, aged 17 (young woman)
Sipho*, aged 17 (young man)
Suzeka, aged 17 (young woman)
Tapelo, aged 19 (young man)
Thimna, aged 19 (young woman)
Thobane, aged 15 (young man)
Vathiswa, aged 19 (young woman)
Vuma, aged 19 (young man)
Xolani, aged 19 (young man)
Xolile, aged 20 (young man)

Grade 10 students from OHS (suburbs-schooled)

Liyema, aged 14 (young woman)
Thandi, aged 16 (young woman)
Joules, aged 14 (young man)
Katlego, aged 15 (young man)
Mane, aged 14 (young man)
Nzulu*, aged 15 (young man)

Other – snowball sampling

Andiswa, aged 15 (young woman, Grade 10, other Langa school) – Andile's girlfriend
Thando, aged 19 (young man, Grade 10, MHS) – Luxolo's cousin
Thulani, aged 16 (young man, Grade 9, other Langa school) – Thobane's friend
Bongani, aged 20 (young man, not in school) – Luxolo's cousin

** Two interviews only*

2.2 Schedules for series of three semi-structured interviews

First individual interview (life histories, right and wrong)

- *Thank you. You are the expert – no wrong answers.*
 - *Confidentiality – use of aliases and consent form.*
 - *Honesty – to help others.*
 - *Encourage young people to speak isiXhosa when they need to, I'll get someone to translate.*
1. Tell me about all the important things that have happened to you in your life so far.
Prompt: Where you were born, who you live with, school, interests, etc.
Probe: Why are you X years old in Grade 9?
Probe: How do these things make you feel?
 2. Tell me about a time when you have done something good/right/wrong/bad.
Probe: How did you know it was good/right/wrong/bad?
 3. Tell me about a time when someone did something good/right/wrong/bad to you.
Probe: How did you know it was good/right/wrong/bad?
 4. Tell me about a time when *you* treated someone else in a good/bad way.
 5. Would you consider yourself a good person or a bad person?
Probe: Why or why not?
 6. Tell me about some moral values that you hold. What are the things that are important to you?
Probe: Another one.
Prompt: Where did it come from? Example – value in action.
 7. Who are your role models? What/who helps you to be a good person?
Probe: Who/what inspires you? Episodes.
Prompt: Friends, family, school?
 8. Are there any (other) adults who are a positive or negative influence in your life?
Probe: Who? How do you know them?
Probe: How do they affect you?
 9. What gets in the way of you being a good person?
 10. Can you tell me about some of the things that you believe?
Probe: (If religious) how it affects your life.
 11. Do you know your HIV status?
Prompt: Boyfriend/girlfriend? Sexually active?

Second individual interview (digital documentaries)

- *Thank you for your digital documentary.*
- *If you'd like any of the pictures I can print them off on my printer for you in black and white.*
- *As we scroll through each picture tell me what it is (because the tape recorder can't see the pictures!).*
- *Tell me why you took it, and whether it's a good influence or a bad influence in your life.*

Third individual semi-structured interview (clarifications, meanings, understandings)

- *Thank you for all your help during this research project.*
- *Some of these questions will be quite hard to answer but I'm really interested in what you have to say - so try really hard to think of answers. Don't be afraid to ask for time to think.*
- *Remember to be open and free with me — everything you tell me is confidential and I'll be using that fictitious name that you chose last time when writing about what you tell me.*

Part 1

Follow up from previous interviews and activities. (Separate schedule prepared for each research participant).

Part 2

1. What makes someone a good person? Are you a good person?
Prompt: How do they behave, how do they live, how do they treat others?
Probe: What about the bad/wrong things you've told me you do?
2. Is there a gap between what you believe/say is right and what you do?
Probe: If yes: Why? If no: Who/what has helped this to be possible?
3. How do you feel about some of the bad things you've done in your life? Some of the bad things that have happened to you?
Prompt: Not knowing your father, different fathers for your siblings, being beaten, death, accidents.
4. How do you know what's right and what's wrong?
Probe: Does right and wrong matter? Why, why not?
5. If you know what's right, why do you do what you know (that you've told me) is wrong?
Prompt: Why do you drink, steal, take drugs, have unprotected sex, fight?
Probe: What does it do for you?

6. Is there anything/anyone you blame for making you the kind of person you are? Who is responsible for the kind of person you are?
Prompt: Poverty, apartheid, abuse, violence, drugs, having a baby?
7. Who/what helps you to be a better person?
8. Have you had a moment in your life that changed your life for the better or the worse?

Part 3

9. You've told me your dreams are... What are the chances that you will realise your dreams? Who will be responsible if you don't?
10. How does poverty affect your character (the kind of person you are)?
11. What place does *ubuntu* have in your life?
12. What kind of person would you like to be in the future? What prevents you from being this kind of person?
13. What help do you need to become a better person?
14. If you were the President, what would you do to make life better for young people, and to make South Africa a better place in which to live?
15. If you were the Minister of Education, how would you change school to help young people become better people?
16. How do you think *apartheid* has affected the kind of person you are?
Probe: The way you behave?
Probe: Your life in general?
17. Is there anything else you'd like to tell me that you think would help me in my research? Any advice you'd like to give me? Give to young people?
18. Tell me about how you've found participating in this study.

2.3 Transcriber's confidentiality agreement



Ruislip
120 Campground Road
Rondebosch
7700

ss537@cam.ac.uk

Tel: 021 689 8151
Cell: 083 310 7100

4 May 2005

Ms Cindy Smith
19 Oak Avenue
Wynberg
7800

Dear Cindy

Confidentiality Agreement

Thank you very much for agreeing to help me with transcription of my interviews for my PhD research project for the University of Cambridge regarding the processes of moral formation in South African youth.

Due to the sensitive nature of the disclosures being made to me by participants in my study I need to ask you to agree to the utmost confidentiality regarding the content of the interviews, activities, group discussions, and fieldwork notes as well as to maintain strict confidentiality with regard to the identity of participants.

This agreement shall be binding in perpetuity – you will be required never to disclose the contents of these tapes to any person or institution, including official sources – since research is bound by a code of professional and ethical conduct.

Yours sincerely



Sharlene Swartz
Doctoral candidate

Confidentiality Agreement

Transcriber

The nature and purpose of this research has been satisfactorily explained to me and I agree to participate in this research project as a transcriber of interviews, discussions, and fieldnotes. I hereby bind myself to maintaining the strictest confidentiality regarding the content of the research.

Name: *Cindy Smith*

Contact Details: *19 Oak Avenue, Wynberg, 7800*

Transcriber's Signature: _____

Signed at *Rondebosch* **on this** _____ **day of** _____ **2005.**

Witness 1: _____

Witness 2: _____

Investigator

I have discussed with Cindy Smith the above procedures, explicitly pointing out potential risks or discomforts. I have asked whether any questions remain and have answered these questions to the best of my ability.

Name: *Sharlene Swartz*

Contact Details: *Ruislip, 120 Campground Road, Rondebosch, 7700*

Investigator's Signature: _____

Signed at *Rondebosch* **on this** _____ **day of** _____ **2005.**

Witness 1: _____

Witness 2: _____

2.4 Emergent codes

General

Complexity
Interrelationships between various systems
Social representations
Justifications for influences
Moral capital
Gender differences
Moral language

School

Attendance
Teachers
Education
Peers
Moving school
Long daily commutes

Home

Siblings
Parents
Other family support
Domestic violence
Household jobs
Rural homes
Supervision
Response to pregnancy or impregnation
Marriage
Alcohol in the home
Money
Moving home

Streets

Sport
Friends
Fashion
Cellphones
Ikasi life
Recreation

Violence and revenge

Supernatural revenge
Relationship to crime
Gangs

Types of violence - rules
Impulse control
Weapons
Role of alcohol and drugs
Death

Crime

Shoplifting
Theft
Robbery
Alcohol and crime
Crime for drugs

Sex and relationships

Non-sexual relationships
Sexual relationships
HIV / AIDS
Abusive and exploitative
Teenage parenting
Sexual orientation
Reproductive health services

Substance use

Cigarettes
Alcohol
Dagga
Mandrax
Other hard drugs
'Lunch money'
Older friends

Media

Music
Television
Reading

State regulation

Law enforcement
Housing polices
School polices – language and age
Social assistance

Economic world

Poverty

Money

View of work

Materialism

Housing

Geographical isolation

Community and environment

Street committees
Neighbours
Taxi drivers
Segregation by housing type
Aesthetics
Environment
Rural-urban migration

Culture

Ubuntu
Ancestors
Ulwalo
Alcohol and payment of fines
Traditional art
Lobola
Homes and houses

Faith and belief

Christian faith
Traditional beliefs
Both simultaneously

Self

Sense of self
Values
Emotion
Metacognition
Future orientation

Democratic identity

Political participation
Controversial issues
Democracy
Apartheid
Disability
Xenophobia

2.5 Coding sheet for biographical data

Name of research participant

School Grade (as at September 2004)

Age as at 31 December 2004 Gender

Type of dwelling

| | Yes | No | Other | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Attends church | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Used to attend church, no longer |
| Believes in God | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Faith | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Consults <i>sangomas</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Believes in traditional healers but not yet consulted one |
| Has had sex | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Currently sexually active | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Has multiple current girl/boyfriends | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Parent of child | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Smokes cigarettes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Drinks alcohol | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Uses alcohol excessively | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Smokes/has smoked dagga | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Uses/has used Mandrax | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Uses other hard drugs | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Lives with mother | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Lives with other family members, not mother/father |
| Has a relationship with father | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Knows father | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Biological father in household | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Has completed <i>ulwaluko</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Rural home | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Victim of crime | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Perpetrator of crime | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Victim of violence | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Perpetrator of violence | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Ever arrested | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| Jailed | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| In school (as of Sept 2004) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | -- | |
| In school 2 yrs later (Sept 2006) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Completed school successfully |
| More than 1 year in current grade ¹ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Not in school |
| More than 2 yrs in current grade ¹ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Not in school |
| More than 3 yrs in current grade ¹ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Not in school |
| More than 4 yrs in current grade ¹ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Not in school |

¹As at September 2004

2.6 Final coding frame for interviews

- 1. Biographical**
 - 1.1 Home
 - 1.2 School
 - 1.3 Goals
 - 1.4 Living in South Africa
 - 1.5 Self
- 2. Significant events and epiphanies**
 - 2.1 Change for good
 - 2.2 Change for worse
- 3. Moral behaviour – good/right**
 - 3.1 Doing right/good to others – examples
 - 3.2 Having right/good done to you – examples
 - 3.3 Doing right/good – justification
- 4. Moral behaviour – bad/wrong**
 - 4.1 Doing wrong – examples
 - 4.2 Doing wrong – feelings
 - 4.3 Doing wrong/bad to others – examples
 - 4.4 Having wrong/bad done to you – examples
 - 4.5 Doing wrong/bad – justification
- 5. Moral identity**
 - 5.1 Moral self-description and reasons
 - 5.2 Good person – characteristics
 - 5.3 Hindrances to goodness
 - 5.4 Helps to goodness
 - 5.5 Character aspirations
- 6. Moral values**
 - 6.1 Examples
 - 6.2 Origin
 - 6.3 Knowing right from wrong
 - 6.4 Justification for deciding something is right
 - 6.5 Justification for deciding something is wrong
- 7. Moral processes**
 - 7.1 Belief and behaviour gap
 - 7.2 Decision-making
- 8. Moral capital**
 - 8.1 In general
 - 8.2 Reform
 - 8.3 Reputation
 - 8.4 Knowing and being known
 - 8.5 Talk
- 9. Faith and belief**
 - 9.1 Christian
 - 9.2 Traditional – ancestors and *ulwaluko*
 - 9.3 Witches and healers
- 10. Sexual mores**
 - 10.1 Sexual values
 - 10.2 Sexual practices
 - 10.3 HIV and condom usage
 - 10.4 Sexual relationships
- 11. Responsibility**
 - 11.1 For moral character
 - 11.2 For achieving dreams
- 12. Influences**
 - 12.1 Good/positive
 - 12.2 Bad/negative
 - 12.3 Poverty
 - 12.4 Apartheid
 - 12.5 *Ubuntu*
- 13. Change**
 - 13.1 South Africa
 - 13.2 School
- 14. Miscellaneous**
 - 14.1 Methodology, research experience
 - 14.2 Final words and advice
- 15. Youth analysis**
 - 15.1 Complexity
 - 15.2 Connections – crime and apartheid
 - 15.3 Connections – education and morality
- 16. Social representations**
 - 16.1 Images and metaphors
 - 16.2 Morality as action
 - 16.3 Morality embodied in people
 - 16.4 Goodness as place bound
 - 16.5 Morality as inevitable
- 17. General context**
 - 17.1 Violence
 - 17.2 Substance use
 - 17.3 Crime
 - 17.4 Community
 - 17.5 Streets – friends and fun
 - 17.6 Law enforcement system
 - 17.7 Sport

Appendix 3: The Right and Wrong Questionnaire

Right and Wrong Questionnaire Soloko, Zange, Kuxhomekekile

Your Name:

Date of birth:

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

What do you think... Is it always wrong or never wrong to do some of the things listed below, or does it depend (and on what?) or is it not about right and wrong?

Ucinga ntoni, ingaba kusoloko kungalunganga okanye zange kwalunga ukwenza ezi zinto zilandelayo okanye kuxhomekekile (kwintoni) okanye ayikho ngakulunga nakulunga?

| | Always Wrong Soloko kungalunganga | Right (Never Wrong) Zange kwalunga | Depends Kuxhomekekile | Not about right and wrong Akukho ngakulunga nangokungalungi |
|--|--|--|--------------------------|--|
| 1. Having sex with someone who is married Ukuhambisana nendoda okanye umfazi otshatileyo <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Being a member of a gang Ukuba lilungu lemgulukudu <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Having sex for money Ukuthengisa ngomzimba <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Being disrespectful to an adult Ukungabinambeko komntwana emtwini omdala <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Being racist Ukucaucalula <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Betraying someone's secrets Ukuthetha imfihlelo zomnye umntu <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Buying stolen goods Ukuthenga izinto ezibiweyo <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Implementing the death penalty Isigwebo sentambo <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Carrying a weapon Ukuphatha isikhali <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Child abuse Ukuhlukunyezwa kwabantwana <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | Always Wrong Soloko kungalinga ganga | Right (Never Wrong) Zange kwalunga | Depends Kuxhom- ekekile | Not about right and wrong Akukho ngakulunga nangokungalingi |
|--|--|--|-------------------------------|---|
| 11. Circumcision Ulwaluko <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. Committing suicide Ukuzibulala <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. Criticising the government Ukwenyelisa urhulumente <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. Dancing in a sexy way Ukudanisa ngendlela etsala umdlu ebantwini ingakumbi amadoda <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. Divorce Uqhawulo kweqhina lomtshato <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16. Drinking alcohol Ukusela utywala <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17. Eating too much Ukutya kakhulu <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18. Experimenting with dagga Amava entsango <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 19. Circumcision of young girls Ukwaluka kwamantombazana aselula <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20. Forcing someone to have sex with you Ukunyanzela omnye umntu abelane ngesondo kunye nawe <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 21. Gambling Ukudlala imidlalo yezemali <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 22. Getting an abortion (or your partner getting an abortion) Ukukhupha isisu (okanye umhlobo wakho okhuphe isisu) <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 23. Getting caned at school (corporal punishment) Ukubetwa esikolweni <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | Always Wrong Soloko kungalun- ganga | Right (Never Wrong) Zange kwalunga | Depends Kuxhom- ekekile | Not about right and wrong Akukho ngakulunga nangokungalungi |
|--|---|--|-------------------------------|---|
| 24. Getting drunk Ukunxila <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 25. Giving someone oral sex or receiving oral sex from someone Ukwenza ucantsi ngomlomo okanye ukunika omnye umntu <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26. Giving up your seat on a bus for an older person Ukusukela umntu omdala esitulweni <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 27. Going to church on a Sunday Ukuya ecaweni ngecawe <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 28. Having sex before you're 16 Ukulala nendonda phambi kokuba ube neminyaka eyi-16 <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 29. Having sex before you're 18 Ukulala nendonda phambi kokuba ube neminyaka eyi-18 <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 30. Having sex with an animal Ukulalana nesilwanyana <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 31. Having sex with someone if you know you are HIV positive Ukulalana nomntu uzazi ukuba unentsholongwane ye HIV <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 32. Having sex without being married Ukwabelana ngesondo ungekatshati <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 33. Having to pay Lobola Ukubhatala ilobola <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 34. Hitting your children as a parent Ukubetha umntwana njengomzali <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 35. Stabbing someone Ukuhlaba <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 36. Killing someone in a bank robbery Ukubulala omye phakathi ebhankini ngokukhuthuza <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | Always Wrong Soloko kungalun- ganga | Right (Never Wrong) Zange kwalunga | Depends Kuxhom- ekekile | Not about right and wrong ngakulunga nangokungalungi |
|--|---|--|-------------------------------|---|
| 37. Killing someone in war Ukubulala omnye emfazweni <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 38. Killing someone who breaks into your house Ukubulala omnye oqhekeza endlwini yakho <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 39. Killing someone you don't like Ukubulala omnye ongamthandiyo <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 40. Laziness Ivila <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 41. Letting someone else be blamed for something you did wrong Ukuyeka omnye asolwe ngento oyenzileyo engalunganga <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 42. Lying to get a good job Ukuxoka ngenjongo zokufuna umsebenzi olungileyo <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 43. Lying to get out of trouble Ukuxoka ngokufuna ukuphuma entweni engalunganga <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 44. Lying to protect someone's reputation Ukuxoka ngokukhusela omnye ngento yakhe <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 45. Lying to protect your own reputation Ukuxoka ngokukhusela wena ngento yakho <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 46. Lying to save money Ukuxoka yokusindisa imali <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 47. Lying to save someone's life Ukuxoka ngenjongo yokusindisa ubomi bomnye umntu <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 48. Lying to save your own life Ukuxoka injongo yokusindisa ubomi bakho <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 49. Making your child become a prostitute Ukwenza umntwana wakho athengise ngomzimba <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | Always Wrong Soloko kungalinga ganga | Right (Never Wrong) Zange kwalunga | Depends Kuxhom- ekekile | Not about right and wrong Akukho ngakulunga nangokungalungi |
|--|--|--|-------------------------------|--|
| 50. Marrying someone of a different race to you Ukutshata umntu owahlukileyo ngokohlanga lwakho <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 51. Marrying someone of a different religion to you Ukutshata umntu owahlukileyo ngenkolo yakho <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 52. Masturbation Ukuzanelisa ngokudlala ngomzimba <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 53. Mocking someone who is disabled Ukugezela umntu okhubazekileyo <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 54. Not believing in God Ukungakholelwa kuThixo <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 55. Not voting in an election Ukungavoti kulwanyulo <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 56. Overcharging for goods Ukutsalo imali ethe rhatya kumaxabiso empahla <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 57. Paying children to be in pornographic movies Ukubhatala abantwana babe kwimiboniso ye pornografi <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 58. Paying people different salaries for the same work Ukubhatala abantu imivuzo eyahlukeneyo ngomsebenzi ofanayo <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 59. Polluting the environment in order to make money Ukungcolisa intlalo yokusingqongileyo ngenjongo zokwenza imali <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 60. To sleep with someone of the same sex (to be homosexual) Ukulalana nabantu abakwisini esinye <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 61. Refusing to share your stuff with someone who needs it Ukungafuni ukwabelana izinto nomnye ozidingayo <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 62. Regularly smoking dagga Ukuzimisela ekutshayeni intsango <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | Always Wrong Soloko kungulun ganga | Right (Never Wrong) Zange kwalunga | Depends Kuxhom- ekekile | Not about right and wrong Akukho ngakulunga nangokungalingi |
|---|--|--|-------------------------------|--|
| 63. Sacrificing your life to save someone else's life Ukuzincama ekuncedeni ubomi bomnye <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 64. Seeing someone and imagining you are having sex with them Ukubona omnye ucinge ungabelana ngesondo nabo <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 65. Selling a secretly damaged TV to someone Ukuthengisa imfihlelo yomonakalo ye tv komnye <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 66. Selling stolen goods Ukuthengisa izinto ezibiweyo <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 67. Settling an argument with a physical fight Ukulamla ingxoxo ngokulwa <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 68. Sexism Ukujongela abantu besifazana phantsi kuwe <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 69. Smoking cigarettes Ukutshaya icuba (cigarette) <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 70. Speaking loudly in public Ukuthetha kakhulu esidlangaleni <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 71. Stealing CDs if you know you're not going to be caught Ukuba amacwecwe omcuno uyazi ukuba awuzukubhaqwa <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 72. Stealing because you were hungry Ukuba kuba ubulambile <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 73. Stealing from the rich Ukuba kotyebileyo <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 74. Stealing from white people Ukuba kubantu abamhlophe <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 75. Stealing from your parents Ukuba ebazalini bakho <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | Always Wrong Soloko kungalinga ganga | Right (Never Wrong) Zange kwalunga | Depends Kuxhom- ekekile | Not about right and wrong Akukho ngakulunga nangokungalungi |
|---|--|--|-------------------------------|---|
| 76. Stealing if God changed his mind and says it's now allowed Ukuba uThixo angatshintsha ingqondo athi ukuba kuvumelekile If you ticked "depends", then say on what here: Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 77. Stealing to help your family Ukuba ngokunceda usapho lwakho If you ticked "depends", then say on what here: Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 78. Stopping a woman from becoming a pastor in a church Ukunqanda umfazi ukuba angabi ngumfundisi ecaweni If you ticked "depends", then say on what here: Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 79. Swearing at someone Ukuthuka omnye umntu If you ticked "depends", then say on what here: Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 80. Taking revenge on someone Ukuziphindezela komnye umntu If you ticked "depends", then say on what here: Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 81. Telling lies about someone you dislike Ukuthetha ubuxoki ngomntu ongamthandiyo If you ticked "depends", then say on what here: Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 82. Using inhalants (sniffing glue or paraffin) Ukusebenzisa izinto ezifunxwayo If you ticked "depends", then say on what here: Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 83. Using Mandrax Ukusebenzisa iziyobisi (ipilisi – mandrax) If you ticked "depends", then say on what here: Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 84. Using muti against someone Ukusebenzisa umuti ukulwa omnye If you ticked "depends", then say on what here: Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 85. Watching a video with a 18-year-old restriction (and you're 15) Ukujonga ivideo enomiselo weminyaka eyi18 (wena una 15) If you ticked "depends", then say on what here: Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 86. Watching pornography Ukujonga izithombo zepornografi If you ticked "depends", then say on what here: Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 87. Wearing revealing clothes as a woman Ukunxiba impahla etsalisa umdla kubanye abantu ungumfazi If you ticked "depends", then say on what here: Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 88. Wearing tight jeans as a man Ukunxiba ijini ekubambayo nje ngendoda If you ticked "depends", then say on what here: Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | Always Wrong Soloko kungalinga ganga | Right (Never Wrong) Zange kwalunga | Depends Kuxhom- ekekile | Not about right and wrong Akukho ngakulunga nangokungalungi |
|--|--|--|-------------------------------|--|
| 89. Wife beating Umfazi obethwayo <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 90. Worshipping ancestors Ukukholelwa kwizinyanya (ancestors) <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 91. Worshipping Satan Ukukholelwa kusatana <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 92. Xenophobia – hating foreigners Ukungafuni abantu abangengobaseMzantsi <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 93. Hijacking cars Ukukhuthuza imoto zabantu <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 94. Hating your parents Ukucaphukela abazali bakho <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 95. Riding on the train without paying Ukukhwela uloliwe ungahlawuleli <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 96. Bunking school Ukuqhwekha esikolweni <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 97. Cheating on exams Ukukopa kwimviwo <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 98. To go clubbing Ukuya kwindawo yokonwaba <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 99. To kill someone suspected of being a witch Ukubulala umntu ngokumcingela ukuba ligqwirha <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 100. For a street committee to kill someone who is a rapist Abantu basekuhlaleni ababulala umdlwenguli <i>If you ticked "depends", then say on what here:</i> <i>Ukuba utikisha "kukuxhomekeka", chaza ukuba kuxhomekeke entwenini:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Appendix 4: Informed consent

4.1 Youth participant's consent form



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

Ruislip
120 Campground Road
Rondebosch
7700

ss537@cam.ac.uk
Tel: 021 689 8151
Cell: 083 310 7100

10 September 2004

Dear

The 'Voices of Youth' Research Project

I would like to invite you to take part in a project I am doing about young people and their ideas about right and wrong. This project forms part of my studies at the University of Cambridge. It's a really important project to make sure that young people's voices, opinions, and thoughts are heard and recorded for when schools and youth organisations plan programmes for youth. The study will run until June 2005 and there are a number of ways for you to be involved, but for you to do so I need your permission and your parent or guardian's permission.

Your part

- Talk to me informally about your ideas about right and wrong, and moral values.
- Tell me about your life and what helps you to be a good person, or what stops you from being one.
- Show me the people and places that are an important part of your life.
- Volunteer to be part of a few small group discussions over the year.
- Volunteer to speak to me individually (three times), at a time we both agree, for about an hour each.
- Be involved in a project taking photographs of the influences in young people's lives.
- Respect the times of meetings we make.
- Keep everything that's said in discussions confidential.
- Participate in a camp with a group of your classmates.

My part

- Nothing you say to me will be right or wrong, I will be interested in everything you tell me.
- Nothing you tell me will be shared with anyone in a way in which you will be identified. I will give both you and your school a fictitious name (which you are welcome to help me choose).
- I will use what you tell me for my University work but will not link your name to anything you say.
- I will ask you to check what you've told me to make sure it was what you said.
- If you are uncomfortable about any questions I ask you, you don't need to answer them.

I really hope you would like to participate. Please sign the attached form and bring it back to me if you would. There is a separate form to be signed by your parents/guardians.

I'm looking forward to hanging out with you. Enkos' itshomi yam.

Sharlene Swartz
Youth researcher

To be completed by the participant

The nature and purpose of this project has been explained to me and I agree to participate. I undertake to do my part. I also understand that Sharlene will gladly answer any questions that arise during the course of the project.

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Telephone number _____

Your Signature

Today's Date

Your date of birth

To be completed by the researcher

I have discussed with _____ the above procedures, explicitly pointing out potential risks or discomforts. I have asked whether any questions remain and have answered these questions to the best of my ability.

Researcher's Signature

Date

If you have any questions please contact Sharlene Swartz at ss537@cam.ac.uk or
telephone 021 689 8151 or on 083 310 7100.

4.2 Caregiver's consent form



Ruislip
120 Campground Road
Rondebosch
7700

ss537@cam.ac.uk

Tel: 021 689 8151
Cell: 083 310 7100

11 August 2004

Dear

The 'Voices of Youth' Research Project

I am conducting a research project on the moral formation of youth as part of my studies at the University of Cambridge in order to ensure that young people's voices are heard and recorded when new educational programmes are designed. I would really like your son/daughter/ward to participate in this study and I would therefore like to ask your permission for them to do so.

The study will run until June 2005, during which time I will be spending time with them at school and in the community. There are a number of ways in which your son/daughter/ward could be involved including talking to me informally about their ideas about moral values; participating in individual activities and group discussions with their classmates; speaking to me on three separate occasions during which time I will record their responses; and participating in a project in the community creating a documentary by taking photographs of the people and places which influence them.

Their participation will not jeopardise their school performance and both the school and the Western Cape Education Department have given their permission for this study to be conducted. All responses received from learners will be kept confidential and although I will use the information to write up my university report and possibly to write a book and some articles, the identity of your son/daughter/ward will not be revealed. I would highly value your son/daughter/ward's participation, which will be completely voluntary. They will be allowed to withdraw their participation at any time during the study.

I look forward to receiving the signed slip below as a confirmation of your consent. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions.

Yours sincerely



Sharlene Swartz
Researcher

To be completed by the parent/guardian of a youth participant

The nature and purpose of this research has been explained to me and I agree to allow my son/daughter/ward to participate in this research project. I understand that I am free to withdraw my permission at any time I choose to do so, and that the researcher will gladly answer any questions that arise during the course of the study.

I hereby give my permission for _____ to participate in the research project.

Participant's Parent/Guardian's Signature

Date

To be completed by the researcher

I have requested permission from the parent/guardian of _____ for him/her to participate in this research study.

Researcher's Signature

Date

If you have any complaints or problems concerning this research project you may and should, report them to either of the following two people:

Professor Madeleine Arnot
Faculty of Education
University of Cambridge
17 Trumpington Street
Cambridge
CB2 1QA
United Kingdom
Telephone number: +44 (0)1223 332 898
Email address: mma1000@cam.ac.uk

Professor Pumla Gobodo Madikizela
Department of Psychology
University of Cape Town
Rondebosch
7701
South Africa
Telephone number: 021 650 3427
Email Address: pgobodo@humanities.uct.ac.za

If you have any questions please contact Sharlene Swartz at ss537@cam.ac.uk
or telephone 021 689 8151 or on 083 310 7100.

Appendix 5: Demographic statistics of research sample

| (n=37, young men = 18, young women=19) | | Yes | No | Other | % Yes | % No | % Other |
|--|--------------------|-----|----|----------------|-------|------|------------------|
| Believes in God | | 29 | 8 | -- | 78% | 22% | -- |
| | <i>Young men</i> | 13 | 5 | -- | 72% | 28% | -- |
| | <i>Young women</i> | 16 | 3 | -- | 84% | 16% | -- |
| Attends church | | 16 | 21 | -- | 43% | 57% | -- |
| | <i>Young men</i> | 6 | 12 | -- | 33% | 67% | -- |
| | <i>Young women</i> | 10 | 9 | -- | 53% | 47% | -- |
| Used to attend church | | 15 | -- | -- | 41% | -- | -- |
| | <i>Young men</i> | 6 | -- | -- | 33% | -- | -- |
| | <i>Young women</i> | 9 | -- | -- | 47% | -- | -- |
| Consults (or plans to consult) <i>sangomas</i> | | 13 | 24 | -- | 35% | 65% | -- |
| | <i>Young men</i> | 6 | 12 | -- | 33% | 67% | -- |
| | <i>Young women</i> | 7 | 12 | -- | 37% | 63% | -- |
| Has had sex | | 23 | 14 | -- | 62% | 38% | -- |
| | <i>Young men</i> | 11 | 7 | -- | 61% | 39% | -- |
| | <i>Young women</i> | 12 | 7 | -- | 63% | 37% | -- |
| Currently sexually active | | 20 | 17 | -- | 54% | 46% | -- |
| | <i>Young men</i> | 11 | 7 | -- | 61% | 39% | -- |
| | <i>Young women</i> | 9 | 10 | -- | 47% | 53% | -- |
| Has multiple current girl/boyfriends | | 12 | 25 | -- | 32% | 68% | -- |
| | <i>Young men</i> | 9 | 9 | -- | 50% | 50% | -- |
| | <i>Young women</i> | 3 | 16 | -- | 16% | 84% | -- |
| Parent of child | | 5 | 32 | -- | 14% | 86% | -- |
| | <i>Young men</i> | 2 | 16 | -- | 11% | 89% | -- |
| | <i>Young women</i> | 3 | 16 | -- | 16% | 84% | -- |
| Smokes cigarettes | | 17 | 20 | -- | 46% | 54% | -- |
| | <i>Young men</i> | 13 | 5 | -- | 72% | 28% | -- |
| | <i>Young women</i> | 4 | 15 | -- | 21% | 79% | -- |
| Drinks alcohol | | 33 | 4 | -- | 89% | 11% | -- |
| | <i>Young men</i> | 16 | 2 | -- | 89% | 11% | -- |
| | <i>Young women</i> | 17 | 2 | -- | 89% | 11% | -- |
| Uses alcohol excessively | | 16 | 21 | -- | 43% | 57% | -- |
| | <i>Young men</i> | 11 | 7 | -- | 61% | 39% | -- |
| | <i>Young women</i> | 5 | 14 | -- | 26% | 74% | -- |
| Smokes/has smoked <i>dagga</i> | | 15 | 22 | -- | 41% | 59% | -- |
| | <i>Young men</i> | 10 | 8 | -- | 56% | 44% | -- |
| | <i>Young women</i> | 5 | 14 | -- | 26% | 74% | -- |
| Uses/has used Mandrax | | 9 | 28 | -- | 24% | 76% | -- |
| | <i>Young men</i> | 5 | 13 | -- | 28% | 72% | -- |
| | <i>Young women</i> | 4 | 15 | -- | 21% | 79% | -- |
| Uses other hard drugs | | 1 | 36 | -- | 3% | 97% | -- |
| | <i>Young men</i> | 1 | 17 | -- | 6% | 94% | -- |
| | <i>Young women</i> | -- | 19 | -- | -- | 100% | -- |
| Lives with mother only | | 17 | 13 | 7 ¹ | 46% | 35% | 19% ¹ |
| | <i>Young men</i> | 8 | 7 | 3 | 44% | 39% | 17% |
| | <i>Young women</i> | 9 | 6 | 4 | 47% | 32% | 21% |
| Has a relationship with father | | 21 | 16 | -- | 57% | 43% | -- |
| | <i>Young men</i> | 10 | 8 | -- | 56% | 44% | -- |
| | <i>Young women</i> | 11 | 8 | -- | 58% | 42% | -- |
| Knows father | | 34 | 3 | -- | 92% | 8% | -- |
| | <i>Young men</i> | 17 | 1 | -- | 94% | 6% | -- |
| | <i>Young women</i> | 17 | 2 | -- | 89% | 11% | -- |

| | Yes | No | Other | % Yes | % No | % Other |
|--|-----|----|----------------|-------|------|-----------------|
| Biological father in household | 10 | 27 | -- | 27% | 73% | -- |
| <i>Young men</i> | 6 | 12 | -- | 33% | 67% | -- |
| <i>Young women</i> | 4 | 15 | -- | 21% | 79% | -- |
| Has completed <i>ulwaluko</i> | 5 | 32 | -- | 14% | 86% | -- |
| <i>Young men</i> | 4 | 14 | -- | 22% | 78% | -- |
| <i>Young women</i> | 1 | 18 | -- | 5% | 95% | -- |
| Rural home | 20 | 17 | -- | 54% | 46% | -- |
| <i>Young men</i> | 8 | 10 | -- | 44% | 56% | -- |
| <i>Young women</i> | 12 | 7 | -- | 63% | 37% | -- |
| Victim of crime | 14 | 23 | -- | 38% | 62% | -- |
| <i>Young men</i> | 7 | 11 | -- | 39% | 61% | -- |
| <i>Young women</i> | 7 | 12 | -- | 37% | 63% | -- |
| Perpetrator of crime | 18 | 19 | -- | 49% | 51% | -- |
| <i>Young men</i> | 12 | 6 | -- | 67% | 33% | -- |
| <i>Young women</i> | 6 | 13 | -- | 32% | 68% | -- |
| Victim of violence | 17 | 20 | -- | 46% | 54% | -- |
| <i>Young men</i> | 9 | 9 | -- | 50% | 50% | -- |
| <i>Young women</i> | 8 | 11 | -- | 42% | 58% | -- |
| Perpetrator of violence | 22 | 15 | -- | 59% | 41% | -- |
| <i>Young men</i> | 15 | 3 | -- | 83% | 17% | -- |
| <i>Young women</i> | 7 | 12 | -- | 37% | 63% | -- |
| Arrested | 8 | 29 | -- | 22% | 78% | -- |
| <i>Young men</i> | 7 | 11 | -- | 39% | 61% | -- |
| <i>Young women</i> | 1 | 18 | -- | 5% | 95% | -- |
| Jailed | 8 | 29 | -- | 22% | 78% | -- |
| <i>Young men</i> | 7 | 11 | -- | 39% | 61% | -- |
| <i>Young women</i> | 1 | 18 | -- | 5% | 95% | -- |
| In school (as of Sept 2004) | 36 | 1 | -- | 95% | 5% | -- |
| <i>Young men</i> | 17 | 1 | -- | 94% | 6% | -- |
| <i>Young women</i> | 19 | -- | -- | 100% | -- | -- |
| Of those in school, in school 2 yrs later | 22 | 12 | 2 ² | 59% | 35% | 5% ² |
| <i>Young men</i> | 12 | 5 | -- | 67% | 33% | -- |
| <i>Young women</i> | 10 | 7 | 2 | 53% | 37% | 11% |
| More than 1 year in current grade ⁴ | 11 | 25 | 1 ³ | 30% | 68% | 3% ³ |
| <i>Young men</i> | 7 | 10 | 1 ³ | 39% | 56% | 6% ³ |
| <i>Young women</i> | 4 | 15 | -- | 21% | 79% | -- |
| More than 2 yrs in current grade ⁴ | 8 | 28 | 1 ³ | 22% | 76% | 3% ³ |
| <i>Young men</i> | 5 | 12 | 1 ³ | 28% | 67% | 6% ³ |
| <i>Young women</i> | 3 | 16 | -- | 16% | 84% | -- |
| More than 3 yrs in current grade ⁴ | 4 | 32 | 1 ³ | 11% | 86% | 3% ³ |
| <i>Young men</i> | 1 | 16 | 1 ³ | 6% | 89% | 6% ³ |
| <i>Young women</i> | 3 | 16 | -- | 16% | 84% | -- |
| More than 4 yrs in current grade ⁴ | 2 | 34 | 1 ³ | 5% | 92% | 3% ³ |
| <i>Young men</i> | 1 | 16 | 1 ³ | 6% | 89% | 6% ³ |
| <i>Young women</i> | 1 | 18 | -- | 5% | 95% | -- |

Notes:

¹ Lives with other family members, neither mother nor father

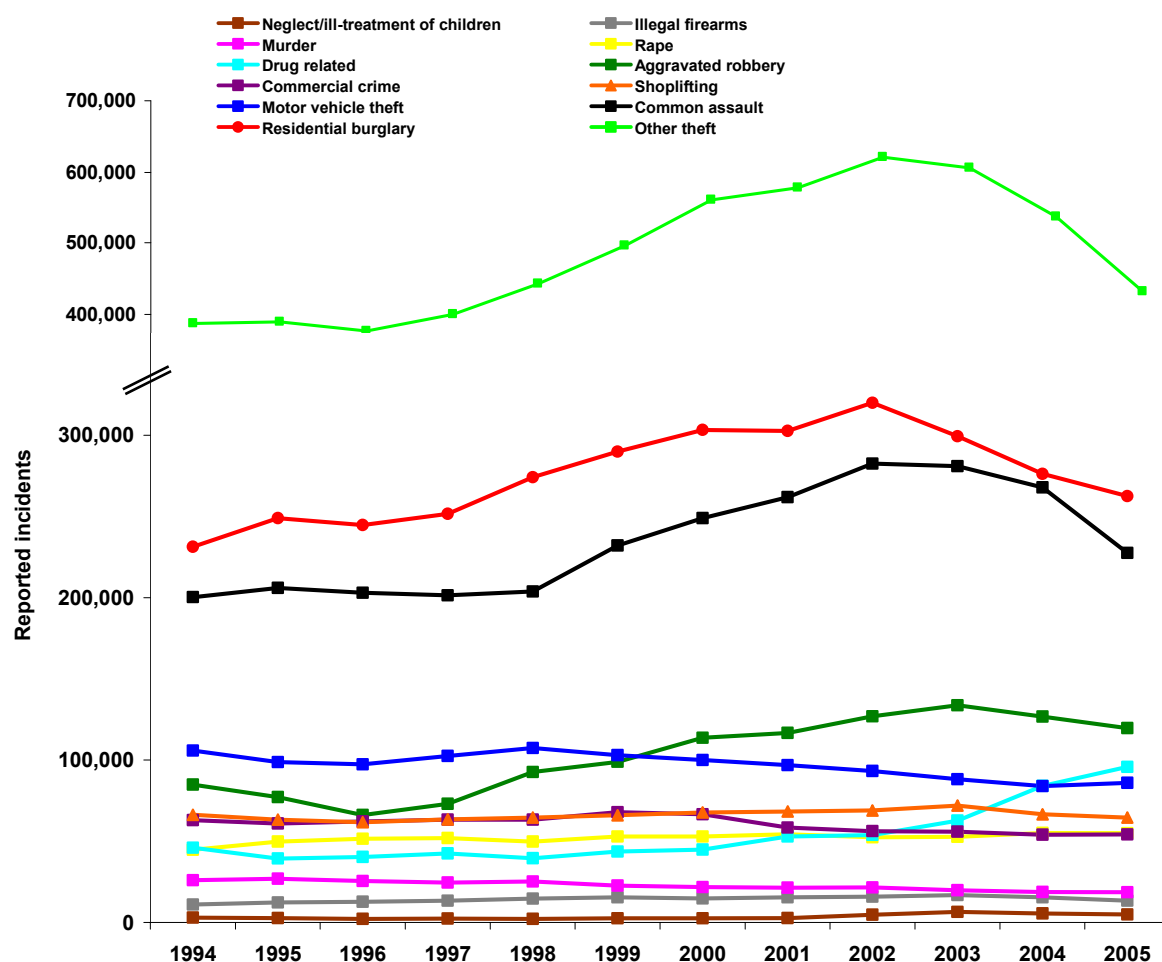
² Completed school successfully

³ Not in school at beginning of research study

⁴ As of September 2004

Appendix 6: Crime statistics for South Africa

6.1 Trends of reported South African crime rates for 1994 to 2005



Source: Compiled from the South African Annual Crime Statistics (South African Police Service, 2006)

6.2 A selection of comparative crime statistics

| | South Africa | England & Wales | Malaysia | New Zealand | Portugal | USA* | Zambia | Chile |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|----------|-------------|----------|--------|--------|--------|
| <i>Total recorded crimes</i> | 7997.1 | 9766.7 | 717.5 | 11152.5 | 3632.9 | 8517.2 | 588.4 | 9275.9 |
| <i>Burglaries</i> | 921.9 | 1579.1 | 141.3 | 1714.4 | 473.3 | 755.3 | 97.7 | 151.7 |
| <i>Major assaults</i> | 664.7 | 29.6 | 21.9 | 101.7 | 8.1 | 329.6 | 219.1 | 25.8 |
| <i>Robberies</i> | 460.4 | 179.7 | 63.1 | 46.3 | 171.6 | 147.4 | 26.7 | 728.1 |
| <i>Fraud</i> | 156.7 | 603.1 | 8.6 | 541.5 | 52.3 | 133.7 | 3.5 | 29.7 |
| <i>Rape</i> | 123.9 | 16.2 | 5.2 | 22.5 | 3.9 | 32.1 | 3.0 | 8.2 |
| <i>Drug offences</i> | 106.8 | 214.3 | 58.8 | 641.6 | 65.3 | 560.1 | 4.0 | 0.8 |
| <i>Murders</i> | 51.4 | 1.6 | 2.4 | 1.2 | 2.5 | 4.6 | 7.9 | 1.5 |

* figures for 1999

Source: Seventh United Nations Survey of Crime Trends 1998-2000 (United Nations, 2004), given as rates per 100,000 people

Appendix 7: Summary of data from *Free Lists*

7.1 Proportion of youth producing words in each category

| Category | All | | Young men | | Young women | |
|--|--------|----------|-----------|----------|-------------|----------|
| | Number | Per cent | Number | Per cent | Number | Per cent |
| ‘Wrong’ | | | | | | |
| <i>Substance Use</i> | 28 | 93% | 13 | 100% | 15 | 88% |
| <i>Crime</i> | 22 | 73% | 10 | 77% | 12 | 71% |
| <i>Self</i> | 21 | 70% | 11 | 85% | 10 | 59% |
| <i>Sex and Relationships</i> | 21 | 70% | 8 | 62% | 13 | 76% |
| <i>Disrespect</i> | 14 | 47% | 8 | 62% | 6 | 35% |
| <i>Violence</i> | 12 | 40% | 5 | 38% | 7 | 41% |
| <i>School</i> | 11 | 37% | 4 | 31% | 7 | 41% |
| <i>Streets</i> | 11 | 37% | 4 | 31% | 7 | 41% |
| <i>Home</i> | 9 | 30% | 3 | 23% | 6 | 35% |
| <i>Democratic Identity</i> | 3 | 10% | 1 | 8% | 2 | 12% |
| ‘Right’ | | | | | | |
| <i>School</i> | 24 | 77% | 11 | 79% | 13 | 76% |
| <i>Self</i> | 23 | 74% | 11 | 79% | 12 | 71% |
| <i>Home</i> | 17 | 55% | 6 | 43% | 11 | 65% |
| <i>Streets</i> | 16 | 52% | 7 | 50% | 9 | 53% |
| <i>Respect</i> | 11 | 35% | 7 | 50% | 4 | 24% |
| <i>Democratic Identity</i> | 10 | 32% | 4 | 29% | 6 | 35% |
| <i>Religion</i> | 8 | 26% | 5 | 36% | 3 | 18% |
| <i>Health</i> | 7 | 23% | 2 | 14% | 5 | 29% |
| <i>Sex and Relationships</i> | 7 | 23% | 2 | 14% | 5 | 29% |
| <i>Ubuntu</i> | 7 | 23% | 4 | 29% | 3 | 18% |
| <i>Material Needs</i> | 6 | 19% | 2 | 14% | 4 | 24% |
| <i>Obedience</i> | 6 | 19% | 2 | 14% | 4 | 24% |
| <i>Substance Use</i> | 2 | 6% | 1 | 7% | 1 | 6% |
| <i>Work</i> | 2 | 6% | 1 | 7% | 1 | 6% |
| <i>Violence</i> | 1 | 3% | 1 | 7% | 0 | 0% |
| ‘Loved’ | | | | | | |
| <i>Home</i> | 28 | 90% | 11 | 79% | 17 | 100% |
| <i>Streets</i> | 27 | 87% | 12 | 86% | 15 | 88% |
| <i>School</i> | 23 | 74% | 10 | 71% | 13 | 76% |
| <i>Self</i> | 20 | 65% | 8 | 57% | 12 | 71% |
| <i>Music and Media</i> | 18 | 58% | 11 | 79% | 7 | 41% |
| <i>Sex and Relationships</i> | 18 | 58% | 9 | 64% | 9 | 53% |
| <i>Personal Taste</i> | 15 | 48% | 9 | 64% | 6 | 35% |
| <i>Fashion</i> | 11 | 35% | 6 | 43% | 5 | 29% |
| <i>Material Needs</i> | 10 | 32% | 4 | 29% | 6 | 35% |
| <i>Luxury Possessions</i> | 9 | 29% | 6 | 43% | 3 | 18% |
| <i>Religion</i> | 9 | 29% | 3 | 21% | 6 | 35% |
| <i>Ubuntu</i> | 6 | 19% | 3 | 21% | 3 | 18% |
| <i>Democratic Identity</i> | 4 | 13% | 1 | 7% | 3 | 18% |
| <i>Culture</i> | 2 | 6% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 12% |
| <i>Work</i> | 2 | 6% | 1 | 7% | 1 | 6% |
| <i>Substance Use</i> | 1 | 3% | 0 | 0% | 1 | 6% |
| ‘Hated’ | | | | | | |
| <i>Self</i> | 24 | 77% | 11 | 79% | 13 | 76% |
| <i>Crime</i> | 20 | 65% | 9 | 64% | 11 | 65% |
| <i>Substance Use</i> | 20 | 65% | 9 | 64% | 11 | 65% |
| <i>Personal Taste</i> | 19 | 61% | 9 | 64% | 10 | 59% |
| <i>Sex and Relationships</i> | 15 | 48% | 4 | 29% | 11 | 65% |
| <i>Democratic Identity</i> | 14 | 45% | 7 | 50% | 7 | 41% |
| <i>Violence</i> | 14 | 45% | 5 | 36% | 9 | 53% |
| <i>School</i> | 13 | 42% | 5 | 36% | 8 | 47% |
| <i>Streets</i> | 10 | 32% | 5 | 36% | 5 | 29% |
| <i>Home</i> | 5 | 16% | 3 | 21% | 2 | 12% |
| <i>Material Needs</i> | 5 | 16% | 2 | 14% | 3 | 18% |
| <i>Respect</i> | 5 | 16% | 2 | 14% | 3 | 18% |
| <i>Ubuntu</i> | 2 | 6% | 0 | 0% | 2 | 12% |
| n=31 (14 for young men and 17 for young women, except for ‘Wrong’ lists where n= 30 (13 for young men and 17 for young women)) | | | | | | |

7.2 Summary of words portrayed as ‘loved’

| YOUNG MEN | ‘Loved’ | | YOUNG WOMEN |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Brothers, sisters, cousins, babies, parents, mother, grandparents, home, future family and girlfriend’s family, and the way my parents control my life [NO fathers] | *HOME | *STREETS | Friends, making new friends, hanging with friends, school friends, enjoying myself, entertainment, ‘freaking’, having fun, playing games, going out, joking, partying and socialising |
| Playing games, pool, soccer, rugby, swimming, cricket, basketball and pool | *SPORT | *HOME | Brothers, sisters, cousins, my father (3x), my mother (8x), seeing my mother happy, staying with my mother, my family, home, my baby, and parents |
| Music, South African music, writing songs, deejaying, dancing, watching television, movies, news, and cartoons | *MEDIA | *SCHOOL | School, biology, business economics, being a student, studies, homework, wearing school uniform, and (some) teachers |
| Friends, friends at school, hanging with friends, playing cards, chilling, laughing, joking, and fun | *STREETS | *MEDIA | Music, dancing, singing in choirs, singing, watching television and movies |
| Getting attention, being alone, being young, happy, right, challenges, enjoying the day, experimenting, meeting people, myself, privacy and expressing myself | SELF | SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS | Being loved, having someone to love me, boyfriends, having ONE boyfriend, being cared for, knowing my HIV status, love, using condoms |
| Food [of all descriptions], eating, and fizzy drinks | *PERSONAL TASTES | PERSONAL TASTES | Food, eating, chocolate, coffee, vegetables and cooking |
| Learning new things, reading books, education, school and teachers | SCHOOL | *SPORT | Being active, playing sport, basketball, netball, soccer, and swimming |
| Flowers, mountains, rivers, being outside, trees, camping, animals, whales | NATURE | SELF | Being creative, life, my life, myself, meeting new people, and the way I am, talking, having someone to talk with when I’m upset, being beautiful, my body, and looking nice |
| Girls, my girlfriend, my girl lover, and sex | SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS | RELIGION | Church, God and my pastor |
| Cars, boats, luxury, money and shopping malls | LUXURY POSSESSIONS | FASHION | Clothes, fashion, shopping and shoes |
| Clothes, bling, brands, and ironing my clothes | FASHION | COMMUNITY, UBUNTU | Cooperating with people, sharing, <i>ikasi</i> , doing something for my township |
| Helping people, sharing, Cape Town and being around in <i>ikasi</i> | COMMUNITY, UBUNTU | LUXURY POSSESSIONS | A big house with a swimming pool, nice car, cellphone, and shopping malls |
| Church and God | RELIGION | DEMOCRATIC IDENTITY | Freedom, my rights, people with AIDS, and all of South Africa’s people |
| Talking | TALKING | NATURE | Nature, camping, animals |
| Food, and houses | MATERIAL NEEDS | MATERIAL NEEDS | Healthy, food, fruit and vegetables, enough water |
| Drinking alcohol | SUBSTANCE USE | #CULTURE | Culture and traditions |
| South Africa | DEMOCRATIC IDENTITY | SUBSTANCE USE | Smoking cigarettes |
| Working | WORK | WORK | To have a job, and working hard |

Notes:

1. Items listed in order of frequency, from most to fewest
2. # denotes a unique category
3. * denotes items occurring most frequently in the first five items of ‘loved’ lists

7.3 Summary of words portrayed as ‘hated’

| YOUNG MEN | ‘Hated’ | | YOUNG WOMEN |
|---|-----------------------|------------------------|--|
| Bad influences, arguing, being played with, sad, in trouble, feeling cornered, forced to do something, liars, people with no self confidence, being rejected, secrets and rumours | *SELF | *SELF | Being cross, angry, in the world, punished, in trouble, bored, unhappy, losing, lying, crying, my enemies, people who hate me, and who are fakes |
| Crime, criminals, jail, prison, people who steal, thieves, and thugs | *CRIME | *COMMUNITY, UBUNTU | People who are rude, clumsy, dirty, people who don't care about others, are selfish, treat people badly, gossip, shout and swear, street kids, vicious dogs, dirty places, traffic, people who don't clean, people who are cross, and being in <i>ikasi</i> |
| HIV/AIDS, condoms, gays and lesbians, girls, girls who get pregnant young, prostitutes, rapists and sex | SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS | SCHOOL | Youth not liking school, not going to school, morning classes, afternoon classes, not understanding, failing, maths, maths' teacher, noise while trying to study, school holidays, not having money for lunch, having no uniform, going to school when it's raining, studying for exams, teachers, teachers not teaching |
| Being sworn at, swearing, arrogant people, people who give up, are rude, tell me what to do, shout at me, and who make me angry | *COMMUNITY, UBUNTU | *CRIME | Crime, criminals, being in jail, prison, hijacking, murder, robbery, stealing, thugs, theft, rapists, people who rape children |
| Drugs, dagga, smoking drugs, glue, seeing friends smoking drugs | *DRUGS | *VIOLENCE | People who are cruel to animals, who fight, beat and bully others, gangs and gangsters, guns, teachers who bully and beat children, parents who fight and beat children |
| Fighting, bullies, gangsters, being a gang member, and ganging up on people | VIOLENCE | *SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS | Boyfriends, some boys, having multiple boyfriends, having a child before marriage, gay people, people who are ignorant about HIV/AIDS, prostitutes, sex, and teachers who sleep with students |
| Alcohol, drinking, overdosing on alcohol, too much beer, and taverns | ALCOHOL | DEMOCRATIC IDENTITY | Being in South Africa, Robert Mugabe, discrimination, racism, Thabo Mbeki in the news, watching the news, reading newspapers and foreigners |
| Crossing rivers, flowers, mountains, rivers, sea, sharks and cats | #NATURE | ALCOHOL | Alcohol, drinking and drunk people |
| Disrespect, people who disrespect others, people with no self respect, people who disrespect, mock and undermine me | *DISRESPECT | HOME | Home, people who shout at and disobey parents, staying without my mother, in the Eastern Cape, and with my cousin |
| Pap, pork, red meat, and snacks | PERSONAL TASTES | DRUGS | People smoking drugs, dagga, drugs and children using drugs |
| School, some teachers, not going to school and maths | SCHOOL | PERSONAL TASTES | Eating a lot, dull colours |
| Cross country, mountain climbing, rugby and swimming | SPORT | STREETS | Clubbing, kids clubbing, partying all the time, <i>tsotsitaal</i> , too many friends |
| Afrikaans, discrimination, unfair treatment, racism, foreigners and George Bush | DEMOCRATIC IDENTITY | CIGARETTES | Smoking and tobacco |
| Friends ‘suffering’, sharing a bed, and expensive clothes because I’m poor | MATERIAL NEEDS | DISRESPECT | People disrespecting me and children who show no respect |
| Cigarettes, smoking and smokers | CIGARETTES | MATERIAL NEEDS | Always eating samp, the same food and food without meat, having no money and living in a shack |
| Langa police and police | POLICE | POLICE | The City police and the police |
| Some friends, and not doing anything | STREETS | #CULTURE | <i>Amaqaba</i> (traditional people) |
| Jews | #RELIGION | FASHION | Wearing a short skirt |
| Talking to people | #TALKING | #ABUSE | Old people who abuse children |

Notes:

1. Items listed in order of frequency, from most to fewest
2. # denotes a unique category
3. * denotes items occurring most frequently in the first five items of ‘hated’ lists

Appendix 8: Data from the *Right and Wrong Questionnaire*

8.1 Grouped by theme with gender differences marked (*)

| INNER SELF | Wrong | Right | Ambivalent |
|---|-------|-------|------------|
| Committing suicide (Q12) | 83% | 0% | 17% |
| Eating too much (Q17) | 14% | 43% | 43% |
| Lying to save your own life (Q 48) | 14% | 63% | 22% |
| Lying to save someone's life (Q47) | 31% | 42% | 27% |
| Lying to protect your own reputation (Q 45) | 40% | 26% | 34% |
| Lying to protect someone's reputation (Q44) | 44% | 17% | 39% |
| Lying to get out of trouble (Q43)* | 42% | 22% | 36% |
| Laziness (Q 40) | 58% | 11% | 30% |
| Letting someone else be blamed for something you did wrong (Q41)* | 75% | 8% | 16% |
| SCHOOL | Wrong | Right | Ambivalent |
| Cheating on exams (Q97) | 94% | 0% | 6% |
| Bunking school (Q96) | 89% | 0% | 12% |
| Getting caned at school (corporal punishment) (Q23) | 72% | 8% | 20% |
| HOME/FAMILY | Wrong | Right | Ambivalent |
| Being disrespectful to an adult (Q4) | 58% | 3% | 39% |
| Divorce (Q15) | 31% | 11% | 58% |
| Hating your parents (Q94) | 81% | 3% | 17% |
| Stealing from your parents (Q75) | 92% | 3% | 6% |
| STREETS | Wrong | Right | Ambivalent |
| Betraying someone's secrets (Q6) | 77% | 3% | 20% |
| Carrying a weapon (Q 9) | 54% | 6% | 40% |
| Gambling (Q 21) | 53% | 14% | 33% |
| To go clubbing (Q98) | 20% | 46% | 34% |
| Telling lies about someone you dislike (Q81) | 83% | 8% | 9% |
| Swearing at someone (Q79) | 71% | 9% | 20% |
| Lying to protect someone's reputation (Q44) | 44% | 17% | 39% |
| Letting someone be blamed for something you did wrong (Q41)* | 75% | 8% | 16% |
| VIOLENCE AND REVENGE | Wrong | Right | Ambivalent |
| Being a member of a gang (Q 2) | 81% | 3% | 17% |
| Carrying a weapon (Q 9) | 54% | 6% | 40% |
| Committing suicide (Q12) | 83% | 0% | 17% |
| For a street committee to kill someone who is a rapist (Q100) | 61% | 22% | 17% |
| Wife beating (Q89) | 94% | 0% | 6% |
| Settling an argument with a physical fight (Q67) | 64% | 19% | 17% |
| Taking revenge on someone (Q80) | 40% | 23% | 37% |
| Hitting your children as a parent (Q34)* | 49% | 31% | 20% |
| Stabbing someone (Q35) | 80% | 3% | 17% |
| Killing someone in a bank robbery (Q36) | 97% | 0% | 3% |
| Killing someone in war (Q37) | 36% | 22% | 42% |
| Killing someone who breaks into your house (Q38) | 40% | 20% | 40% |
| Killing someone you don't like (Q39) | 91% | 3% | 6% |
| SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS | Wrong | Right | Ambivalent |
| Having sex with someone who is married (Q1) | 80% | 9% | 11% |
| Having sex for money (Q3) | 77% | 3% | 20% |
| Dancing in a sexy way (Q14)* | 57% | 29% | 14% |
| Forcing someone to have sex with you (Q20) | 97% | 0% | 3% |
| Getting an abortion (or your partner getting an abortion) (Q22)* | 74% | 3% | 23% |
| Wearing tight jeans as a man (Q88) | 29% | 40% | 31% |

| | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|
| Wearing revealing clothes as a woman (Q87) | 33% | 39% | 28% |
| Watching pornography (Q86) | 53% | 19% | 28% |
| Imagining you are having sex with someone (Q64)* | 41% | 21% | 39% |
| To sleep with someone of the same sex (to be homosexual) (Q60) | 60% | 11% | 29% |
| Paying children to be in pornographic movies (Q57) | 71% | 14% | 15% |
| Masturbation (Q52) | 64% | 19% | 17% |
| Making your child become a prostitute (Q49) | 91% | 3% | 6% |
| Having sex with someone if you know you are HIV positive (Q31) | 77% | 6% | 18% |
| Having sex with an animal (Q30) | 97% | 0% | 3% |
| Having sex before you're 18 (Q29)* | 38% | 32% | 30% |
| Having sex before you're 16 (Q28)* | 57% | 11% | 31% |
| Giving someone oral sex or receiving oral sex from someone (Q25)* | 68% | 12% | 21% |
| Having sex without being married (Q32) | 32% | 24% | 44% |

| CRIME | Wrong | Right | Ambivalent |
|--|-------|-------|------------|
| Being a member of a gang (Q2) | 81% | 3% | 17% |
| Buying stolen goods (Q7) | 77% | 3% | 20% |
| Child abuse (Q10) | 97% | 0% | 3% |
| Forcing someone to have sex with you (Q20) | 97% | 0% | 3% |
| Riding on the train without paying (Q95) | 72% | 6% | 23% |
| Hijacking cars (Q93) | 92% | 3% | 6% |
| Stealing CDs if you know you're not going to be caught (Q71) | 86% | 3% | 11% |
| Selling stolen goods (Q66) | 94% | 0% | 6% |
| Stealing to help your family (Q77) | 57% | 14% | 29% |
| Stealing from 'white' people (Q74) | 78% | 6% | 17% |
| Stealing from the rich (Q73) | 56% | 19% | 25% |
| Stealing because you were hungry (Q72) | 63% | 14% | 23% |
| Making your child become a prostitute (Q49) | 91% | 3% | 6% |
| Killing someone in a bank robbery (Q36) | 97% | 0% | 3% |

| SUBSTANCE USE | Wrong | Right | Ambivalent |
|---|-------|-------|------------|
| Drinking alcohol (Q16)* | 47% | 6% | 47% |
| Experimenting with dagga (Q18) | 58% | 14% | 27% |
| Smoking cigarettes (Q 69) | 58% | 19% | 22% |
| Using Mandrax (Q83) | 92% | 0% | 9% |
| Using inhalants (sniffing glue or paraffin) (Q82) | 89% | 3% | 9% |
| Regularly smoking dagga (Q62) | 78% | 6% | 16% |
| Getting drunk (Q24) | 66% | 3% | 31% |

| MEDIA | Wrong | Right | Ambivalent |
|---|-------|-------|------------|
| Watching a video with a 18-yr age restriction (you're 15) (Q85) | 56% | 8% | 36% |

| COMMUNITY/UBUNTU | Wrong | Right | Ambivalent |
|---|-------|-------|------------|
| Being disrespectful to an adult (Q4) | 58% | 3% | 39% |
| Being racist (Q5) | 75% | 6% | 20% |
| For a street committee to kill someone who is a rapist (Q100) | 61% | 22% | 17% |
| To kill someone suspected of being a witch (Q99) | 78% | 8% | 14% |
| Xenophobia - hating foreigners (Q92) | 77% | 11% | 12% |
| Telling lies about someone you dislike (Q81) | 83% | 8% | 9% |
| Swearing at someone (Q79) | 71% | 9% | 20% |
| Sacrificing your life to save someone else's life (Q63) | 31% | 28% | 42% |
| Refusing to share your stuff with someone who needs it (Q61)* | 58% | 14% | 27% |
| Mocking someone who is disabled (Q53) | 97% | 0% | 3% |
| Letting someone else be blamed for something you did wrong (Q41)* | 75% | 8% | 16% |
| Lying to protect someone's reputation (Q44) | 44% | 17% | 39% |
| Giving up your seat on a bus for an older person (Q26)* | 3% | 85% | 12% |
| Getting drunk (Q24) | 66% | 3% | 31% |

| FAITH/SUPERNATURAL WORLD | Wrong | Right | Ambivalent |
|--|-------|-------|------------|
| To kill someone suspected of being a witch (Q99) | 78% | 8% | 14% |
| Worshipping Satan (Q91) | 82% | 9% | 9% |

| | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|
| Worshipping ancestors (Q90) | 14% | 63% | 22% |
| Not believing in God (Q54) | 47% | 19% | 34% |
| Using muti against someone (Q84) | 69% | 0% | 31% |
| Stopping a woman from becoming a pastor in a church (Q78) | 86% | 3% | 12% |
| Stealing if God changed his mind and says it's now allowed (Q76) | 61% | 14% | 25% |
| Marrying someone of a different religion to you (Q51) | 11% | 67% | 22% |
| Going to church on a Sunday (Q27) | 0% | 74% | 26% |

| CULTURE | Wrong | Right | Ambivalent |
|--|-------|-------|------------|
| Circumcision (<i>ulwaluko</i>) (Q11) | 6% | 67% | 28% |
| Circumcision of young women (Q19) | 81% | 6% | 12% |
| Speaking loudly in public (Q70)* | 31% | 37% | 31% |
| Having to pay Lobola (Q33) | 23% | 57% | 20% |

| ECONOMIC WORLD | Wrong | Right | Ambivalent |
|--|-------|-------|------------|
| Having sex for money (Q3) | 77% | 3% | 20% |
| Buying stolen goods (Q7) | 77% | 3% | 20% |
| Eating too much (Q17) | 14% | 43% | 43% |
| Riding on the train without paying (Q95) | 72% | 6% | 23% |
| Hijacking cars (Q93) | 92% | 3% | 6% |
| Selling stolen goods (Q66) | 94% | 0% | 6% |
| Overcharging for goods (Q56) | 58% | 19% | 23% |
| Stealing to help your family (Q77) | 57% | 14% | 29% |
| Stealing from 'white' people (Q74) | 78% | 6% | 17% |
| Stealing from the rich (Q73) | 56% | 19% | 25% |
| Stealing because you were hungry (Q72) | 63% | 14% | 23% |
| Selling a secretly damaged TV to someone (Q65) | 75% | 8% | 17% |
| Stealing CDs if you know you're not going to be caught (Q71) | 86% | 3% | 11% |
| Stealing if God changed his mind and says it's now allowed (Q76) | 61% | 14% | 25% |
| Polluting the environment in order to make money (Q59) | 83% | 8% | 16% |
| Paying people different salaries for the same work (Q58) | 72% | 11% | 17% |
| Lying to save money (Q46)* | 36% | 36% | 28% |
| Lying to get a good job (Q42) | 61% | 8% | 30% |

| DEMOCRATIC IDENTITY | Wrong | Right | Ambivalent |
|--|-------|-------|------------|
| Being racist (Q5) | 75% | 6% | 20% |
| Implementing the death penalty (Q8) | 66% | 9% | 25% |
| Criticising the government (Q13)* | 46% | 11% | 43% |
| Getting an abortion (or your partner getting an abortion) (Q22)* | 74% | 3% | 23% |
| For a street committee to kill someone who is a rapist (Q100) | 61% | 22% | 17% |
| To kill someone suspected of being a witch (Q99) | 78% | 8% | 14% |
| Xenophobia - hating foreigners (Q92) | 77% | 11% | 12% |
| Sexism (Q68) | 78% | 11% | 11% |
| Not voting in an election (Q55) | 54% | 11% | 34% |
| Not believing in God (Q54) | 47% | 19% | 34% |
| Stopping a woman from becoming a pastor in a church (Q78) | 86% | 3% | 12% |
| Stealing from white people (Q74) | 78% | 6% | 17% |
| To sleep with someone of the same sex (to be homosexual) (Q60) | 60% | 11% | 29% |
| Marrying someone of a different religion to you (Q51) | 11% | 67% | 22% |
| Marrying someone of a different race to you (Q50) | 3% | 64% | 33% |
| Getting caned at school (corporal punishment) (Q23) | 72% | 8% | 20% |

* Significant gender difference above 90% confidence level (See Appendix 8.2)

8.2 Significant variation by gender (above the 90% level of confidence)

| | Wrong | | Right | | Ambivalent | | Statistics | |
|--|------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| | <i>Young Men</i> | <i>Young Women</i> | <i>Young Men</i> | <i>Young Women</i> | <i>Young Men</i> | <i>Young Women</i> | <i>Pearson's Chi-square</i> | <i>Significance level</i> |
| Criticising the government | 35% | 56% | 24% | 0% | 41% | 44% | $\chi^2=5.0$ | $p > .08$ |
| Dancing in a sexy way | 38% | 74% | 44% | 16% | 19% | 11% | $\chi^2=4.8$ | $p > .09$ |
| Drinking alcohol | 29% | 63% | 12% | 0% | 59% | 37% | $\chi^2=5.3$ | $p > .07$ |
| Getting an abortion (or your partner getting an abortion) | 56% | 89% | 6% | 0% | 38% | 11% | $\chi^2=5.2$ | $p > .07$ |
| Giving someone oral sex or receiving oral sex from someone | 50% | 83% | 25% | 0% | 25% | 17% | $\chi^2=6.2$ | $p > .05$ |
| Giving up your seat on a bus for an older person | 6% | 0% | 69% | 100% | 25% | 0% | $\chi^2=6.6$ | $p > .04$ |
| Having sex before you're 16 | 35% | 78% | 24% | 0% | 41% | 22% | $\chi^2=8.0$ | $p > .02$ |
| Having sex before you're 18 | 25% | 50% | 56% | 11% | 19% | 39% | $\chi^2=7.9$ | $p > .02$ |
| Hitting your children as a parent | 76% | 22% | 12% | 50% | 12% | 28% | $\chi^2=10.5$ | $p > .01$ |
| Imagining you are having sex with someone | 20% | 58% | 33% | 11% | 47% | 32% | $\chi^2=5.5$ | $p > .06$ |
| Letting someone else be blamed for something you did wrong | 59% | 89% | 18% | 0% | 24% | 11% | $\chi^2=5.4$ | $p > .07$ |
| Lying to get out of trouble | 35% | 47% | 41% | 5% | 24% | 47% | $\chi^2=6.9$ | $p > .03$ |
| Lying to save money | 18% | 53% | 47% | 26% | 35% | 21% | $\chi^2=4.8$ | $p > .09$ |
| Refusing to share your stuff with someone who needs it | 41% | 74% | 12% | 16% | 47% | 11% | $\chi^2=6.0$ | $p > .05$ |
| Speaking loudly in public | 50% | 16% | 19% | 53% | 31% | 32% | $\chi^2=5.9$ | $p > .05$ |

8.3 Summary of consensus representations of ‘wrong’

| Strong consensus | | Consensus | |
|--|-----|---|-----|
| Child abuse (Q10) | 97% | Being racist (Q5) | 75% |
| Forcing someone to have sex with you (Q20) | 97% | Letting someone else be blamed for something you did wrong (Q41)* | 75% |
| Having sex with an animal (Q30) | 97% | Selling a secretly damaged TV to someone (Q65) | 75% |
| Killing someone in a bank robbery (Q36) | 97% | Getting an abortion (or your partner getting an abortion) (Q22)* | 74% |
| Mocking someone who is disabled (Q53) | 97% | Getting caned at school (corporal punishment) (Q23) | 72% |
| Selling stolen goods (Q66) | 94% | Paying people different salaries for the same work (Q58) | 72% |
| Wife beating (Q89) | 94% | Riding on the train without paying (Q95) | 72% |
| Cheating on exams (Q97) | 94% | Swearing at someone (Q79) | 71% |
| Stealing from your parents (Q75) | 92% | Using muti against someone (Q84) | 69% |
| Using Mandrax (Q83) | 92% | Giving someone oral sex or receiving oral sex from someone (Q25)* | 68% |
| Hijacking cars (Q93) | 92% | Implementing the death penalty (Q8) | 66% |
| Killing someone you don't like (Q39) | 91% | Getting drunk (Q24) | 66% |
| Making your child become a prostitute (Q49) | 91% | Masturbation (Q52) | 64% |
| Using inhalants (sniffing glue or paraffin) (Q82) | 89% | Settling an argument with a physical fight (Q67) | 64% |
| Bunking school (Q96) | 89% | Stealing because you were hungry (Q72) | 63% |
| Stealing CDs if you know you're not going to be caught (Q71) | 86% | Lying to get a good job (Q42) | 61% |
| Stopping a woman from becoming a pastor in a church (Q78) | 86% | Stealing if God changed his mind and says it's now allowed (Q76) | 61% |
| Committing suicide (Q12) | 83% | For a street committee to kill someone who is a rapist (Q100) | 61% |
| Polluting the environment in order to make money (Q59) | 83% | To sleep with someone of the same sex (to be homosexual) (Q60) | 60% |
| Telling lies about someone you dislike (Q81) | 83% | Being disrespectful to an adult (Q4) | 58% |
| Worshipping Satan (Q91) | 82% | Experimenting with dagga (Q18) | 58% |
| Being a member of a gang (Q2) | 81% | Laziness (Q 40) | 58% |
| Circumcision of young women (Q19) | 81% | Overcharging for goods (Q56) | 58% |
| Hating your parents (Q94) | 81% | Refusing to share your stuff with someone who needs it (Q61)* | 58% |
| Having sex with someone who is married (Q1) | 80% | Smoking cigarettes (Q 69) | 58% |
| Stabbing someone (Q35) | 80% | Dancing in a sexy way (Q14)* | 57% |
| Regularly smoking dagga (Q62) | 78% | Having sex before you're 16 (Q28)* | 57% |
| Sexism (Q68) | 78% | Stealing to help your family (Q77) | 57% |
| Stealing from white people (Q74) | 78% | Stealing from the rich (Q73) | 56% |
| To kill someone suspected of being a witch (Q99) | 78% | Watching a video with a 18-yr age restriction (and you're 15) (Q85) | 56% |
| Having sex for money (Q3) | 77% | Carrying a weapon (Q 9) | 54% |
| Betraying someone's secrets (Q6) | 77% | Not voting in an election (Q55) | 54% |
| Buying stolen goods (Q7) | 77% | Gambling (Q 21) | 53% |
| Having sex with someone if you know you are HIV positive (Q31) | 77% | Watching pornography (Q86) | 53% |
| Xenophobia – hating foreigners (Q92) | 77% | | |

*Significant gender difference (See Appendix 8.2)

Appendix 9: Decision-making elements in youth *Mind Maps*

| | Negative Consequences | Positive Benefits | Influences | Processes & Sequences | Topic | Type of decision | |
|-------------|--------------------------|----------------------|------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-------|
| Young Men | | | | | | | ‘CBI’ |
| Tapelo 1 | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | School | Good | |
| Vuma 1 | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | Sport | Good | |
| Vuma 2 | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | Substance use | Bad | |
| Mane 1 | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | Violence | Bad | |
| Mane 2 | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | School | Good | |
| Thobane 1 | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | Faith | Good | |
| Nzulu 1 | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | Money | Good | |
| Nzulu 2 | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | Substance use | Bad | |
| Katlego 1 | | | | | | | |
| Katlego 2 | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Do music as a career | Good | |
| Andile 1 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Leave Cape Town | Good | |
| Andile 2 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Stop drinking | Good | |
| Joules 1 | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Start drinking | Bad | |
| Joules 2 | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Commit to God | Good | |
| Joules 2 | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Commit to sport | Good | |
| Khaya 1 | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Smoke drugs | Bad | |
| Khaya 2 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Attend school | Good | |
| Mathsufu 1 | ✓ | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | None specified | Good | |
| Mathsufu 2 | ✓ | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | None specified | Bad | |
| Young Women | | | | | | | ‘CBI’ |
| Thimna 1 | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | Substance use | Bad | |
| Thimna 2 | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | Substance use | Bad | |
| Nomonde | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | Stop smoking dagga | Good | |
| Nomonde | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | Sex and relationships | Neutral | |
| Fundiswa 1 | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | Faith | Good | |
| Mandisa 1 | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | Faith | Good | |
| Nonkiza 1 | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | Partying | Bad | |
| Nonkiza 2 | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | Forgive friends | Good | |
| Phindiwe 1 | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | Attend school | Good | |
| Suzeka 2 | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | Faith | Good | |
| Phindiwe 2 | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | Substance use | Neutral | |
| Mhoza 2 | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✗ | School | Good | |
| Dipuo 1 | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | Substance use | Neutral | |
| Dipuo 2 | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | Sex and relationships | Good | |
| Suzeka 1 | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | Forgive friends | Good | |
| Mhoza 1 | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | Substance use | Bad | |
| Vathiswa 1 | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | Attend church | Good | |
| Andiswa 1 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | Stop attending church | Good | |
| Andiswa 2 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | Stop smoking | Good | |
| Mandisa 2 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | Stop drinking | Good | |
| Thembisa 1 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | Stop attending church | Bad | |
| Thembisa 2 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | School | Good | |
| Poseletso 1 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | Forgive friends | Neutral | |
| Poseletso 2 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | School | Good | |
| Thandi 1 | | | | | | | ‘MPS’ |
| Thandi 2 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | End a friendship | Good | |
| Liyema 1 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Keep a boyfriend | Good | |
| Liyema 2 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | End a relationship | Good | |
| Lekho 1 | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Work hard at school | Good | |
| Lekho 2 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Cheat on boyfriend | Bad | |
| Luxolo 1 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Prostitution | Bad | |
| Luxolo 2 | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Stop doing crime | Good | |
| | | | | | Begin to smoke | Bad | |

Appendix 10: Summary of data from *Circles of Influence*

| Rank | All | Score out of 5 | Rank | Young women | Score out of 5 | Rank | Young men | Score out of 5 |
|------|------------------------------|-------------------|------|------------------------------|-------------------|------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. | School/education | 4.4 | 1. | Mother | 4.4 | 1. | School/education | 4.5 |
| 2. | Dreams and goals | 4.3 | 2. | School/education | 4.3 | 2. | Dreams and goals | 4.3 |
| 3. | Mother | 4.2 | 2. | Dreams and goals | 4.3 | 3. | Mother | 3.8 |
| 4. | God/Jesus | 3.7 | 3. | God/Jesus | 4.2 | 4. | Siblings | 3.6 |
| 5. | Siblings | 3.5 | 4. | Siblings | 3.5 | 5. | Boy/girlfriend | 3.5 |
| 6. | Music | 3.2 | 4. | Church | 3.5 | 6. | God/Jesus | 3.2 |
| 7. | Boy/girlfriend | 3.1 | 5. | Music | 3.3 | 7. | Music | 3.1 |
| 8. | Being cool/fashion | 2.9 | 6. | Friends | 3.2 | 8. | Being cool/fashion | 2.9 |
| 8. | Friends | 2.9 | 7. | Being cool/fashion | 3.0 | 8. | Sport | 2.9 |
| 9. | Fun | 2.8 | 8. | Fun | 2.9 | 9. | Fun | 2.7 |
| 9. | Sport | 2.8 | 9. | Boy/girlfriend | 2.8 | 10. | <i>Ulwaluko</i> | 2.7 |
| 10. | Church | 2.6 | 10. | Sport | 2.7 | 11. | Friends | 2.6 |
| 10. | Grandparents | 2.6 | 11. | Grandparents | 2.6 | 11. | Grandparents | 2.6 |
| 11. | Teachers | 2.0 | 12. | Teachers | 2.1 | 12. | Peer pressure | 2.2 |
| 12. | Sex | 1.9 | 12. | Sex | 2.1 | 13. | Teachers | 2.0 |
| 13. | Aunts/Uncles | 1.8 | 12. | Cellphones | 2.1 | 14. | Playing pool | 1.8 |
| 14. | Cellphones | 1.7 | 13. | Social workers | 2.0 | 15. | Sex | 1.7 |
| 15. | Ancestors | 1.6 | 14. | Aunts/Uncles | 1.8 | 15. | Aunts/Uncles | 1.7 |
| 15. | Social workers | 1.6 | 14. | Ancestors | 1.8 | 16. | Church | 1.5 |
| 16. | Alcohol | 1.5 | 14. | Father | 1.8 | 16. | Alcohol | 1.5 |
| 16. | Father | 1.5 | 15. | HIV/AIDS | 1.7 | 17. | Ancestors | 1.4 |
| 16. | Peer pressure | 1.5 | 16. | Zola 7 | 1.6 | 18. | Cellphones | 1.3 |
| 17. | HIV/AIDS | 1.4 | 16. | Mother dom. worker | 1.6 | 18. | Younger children | 1.3 |
| 17. | Zola 7 | 1.4 | 17. | Alcohol | 1.5 | 18. | Bunking school | 1.3 |
| 18. | <i>Ulwaluko</i> | 1.3 | 17. | Death | 1.5 | 18. | Fear of jail | 1.3 |
| 18. | Mother dom. worker | 1.3 | 18. | Being poor | 1.4 | 19. | Social workers | 1.1 |
| 18. | Younger children | 1.3 | 18. | Police | 1.4 | 19. | Father | 1.1 |
| 19. | Being poor | 1.2 | 18. | Unemployment | 1.4 | 19. | Zola 7 | 1.1 |
| 19. | Bunking school | 1.2 | 19. | Younger children | 1.3 | 19. | Apartheid | 1.1 |
| 19. | Playing pool | 1.2 | 20. | Apartheid | 1.2 | 19. | Shoplifting/stealing | 1.1 |
| 19. | Police | 1.2 | 20. | Fear | 1.2 | 19. | Jukeboxes/taverns | 1.1 |
| 20. | Apartheid | 1.1 | 21. | Violence/fighting | 1.1 | 20. | HIV/AIDS | 1.0 |
| 20. | Death | 1.1 | 22. | Bunking school | 1.0 | 20. | Mother dom. worker | 1.0 |
| 20. | Unemployment | 1.1 | 23. | Shoplifting/stealing | 0.9 | 20. | Being poor | 1.0 |
| 21. | Fear | 1.0 | 24. | Peer pressure | 0.8 | 20. | Police | 1.0 |
| 21. | Shoplifting/stealing | 1.0 | 24. | Playing pool | 0.8 | 21. | Witchdoctors/ <i>igqirha</i> | 0.9 |
| 22. | Fear of jail | 0.9 | 24. | Witchdoctors/ <i>igqirha</i> | 0.8 | 21. | Sickness | 0.9 |
| 22. | Jukeboxes/taverns | 0.9 | 24. | Sickness | 0.8 | 21. | Street committees | 0.9 |
| 22. | Witchdoctors/ <i>igqirha</i> | 0.9 | 24. | Street committees | 0.8 | 21. | Witches/ <i>igqwirha</i> | 0.9 |
| 22. | Violence/fighting | 0.9 | 25. | Jukeboxes/taverns | 0.7 | 21. | Dagga | 0.9 |
| 23. | Sickness | 0.8 | 25. | Witches/ <i>igqwirha</i> | 0.7 | 22. | Fear | 0.8 |
| 23. | Street committees | 0.8 | 25. | Divorce | 0.7 | 23. | Death | 0.7 |
| 23. | Witches/ <i>igqwirha</i> | 0.8 | 25. | The Devil | 0.7 | 23. | Unemployment | 0.7 |
| 24. | Divorce | 0.7 | 26. | Fear of jail | 0.6 | 23. | Violence/fighting | 0.7 |
| 25. | Dagga | 0.6 | 26. | Mandrax | 0.6 | 23. | Divorce | 0.7 |
| 26. | Guns | 0.5 | 27. | Dagga | 0.4 | 24. | Guns | 0.5 |
| 26. | Mandrax | 0.5 | 27. | Guns | 0.4 | 24. | Taxi drivers | 0.5 |
| 26. | The Devil | 0.5 | 28. | Taxi drivers | 0.3 | 25. | Mandrax | 0.3 |
| 27. | Taxi drivers | 0.4 | 28. | Gambling | 0.3 | 25. | Disability | 0.3 |
| 28. | Disability | 0.3 | 28. | Respect* | 0.3 | 25. | Gambling | 0.3 |
| 28. | Gambling | 0.3 | 29. | <i>Ulwaluko</i> | 0.2 | 26. | The Devil | 0.2 |
| 29. | Respect* | 0.2 | 29. | Disability | 0.2 | 26. | Being angry* | 0.2 |
| 30. | Being angry* | 0.1 | 30. | Being angry* | 0.0 | 27. | Respect* | 0.0 |

* Denotes label added by research participants

Appendix 11: Summary of data from *Digital Documentaries*

| Moral influence | All (n=37) | | Young men (n=18) | | Young women (n=19) | | Type |
|---|------------|----------|------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|---|
| | Number | Per cent | Number | Per cent | Number | Per cent | |
| Alcohol | 31 | 84% | 16 | 89% | 15 | 79% | <i>Detracting</i> |
| School | 30 | 81% | 13 | 72% | 17 | 90% | <i>Empowering, detracting</i> |
| Fun | 27 | 73% | 13 | 72% | 14 | 74% | <i>Diversiory, detracting</i> |
| Work | 26 | 70% | 11 | 61% | 15 | 79% | <i>Empowering</i> |
| Friends | 26 | 70% | 13 | 72% | 13 | 68% | <i>Diversiory, detracting</i> |
| Poverty | 22 | 67% | 10 | 67% | 12 | 68% | <i>Insidious, unrecognised</i> |
| Younger siblings | 23 | 62% | 10 | 56% | 13 | 68% | <i>Inspirational</i> |
| Self as talented | 22 | 59% | 10 | 56% | 12 | 63% | <i>Empowering</i> |
| Mothers | 21 | 57% | 11 | 61% | 10 | 53% | <i>Exemplary</i> |
| Crime | 18 | 49% | 9 | 50% | 9 | 47% | <i>Detracting</i> |
| Violence | 18 | 49% | 11 | 61% | 7 | 37% | <i>Detracting</i> |
| Fashion | 17 | 46% | 10 | 56% | 7 | 37% | <i>Detracting, empowering</i> |
| Materialism | 15 | 41% | 10 | 56% | 5 | 26% | <i>Detracting, empowering</i> |
| Home (proud of) | 14 | 38% | 7 | 39% | 7 | 37% | <i>Inspirational</i> |
| Music | 14 | 38% | 7 | 39% | 7 | 37% | <i>Diversiory</i> |
| <i>Dagga</i> | 14 | 38% | 8 | 44% | 6 | 32% | <i>Detracting</i> |
| Sexual relationships | 14 | 38% | 7 | 39% | 7 | 37% | <i>Detracting, inspirational</i> |
| Community members | 14 | 38% | 7 | 39% | 7 | 37% | <i>Detracting, empowering</i> |
| Romantic relationships | 13 | 35% | 8 | 44% | 5 | 26% | <i>Inspirational</i> |
| Mobility and instability | 13 | 35% | 6 | 33% | 7 | 37% | <i>Diversiory, detracting</i> |
| Aesthetics (beauty) | 12 | 32% | 6 | 33% | 6 | 32% | <i>Inspirational</i> |
| Cigarettes | 12 | 32% | 9 | 50% | 3 | 16% | <i>Detracting</i> |
| Christian faith | 11 | 30% | 5 | 28% | 6 | 32% | <i>Didactic, diversiory, empowering</i> |
| Older siblings | 11 | 30% | 4 | 22% | 7 | 37% | <i>Exemplary, detracting</i> |
| Television | 10 | 27% | 5 | 28% | 5 | 26% | <i>Didactic, empowering</i> |
| <i>amaXhosa</i> culture | 9 | 24% | 3 | 17% | 6 | 32% | <i>Didactic, empowering</i> |
| Government policies | 9 | 24% | 5 | 28% | 4 | 21% | <i>Empowering, insidious</i> |
| Sport | 8 | 22% | 7 | 39% | 1 | 5% | <i>Diversiory</i> |
| Creating music | 8 | 22% | 5 | 28% | 1 | 5% | <i>Diversiory</i> |
| HIV / AIDS | 8 | 22% | 6 | 33% | 2 | 11% | <i>Detracting, empowering</i> |
| Cross-cultural friendships | 7 | 19% | 3 | 17% | 4 | 21% | <i>Empowering</i> |
| Strong drugs (Mandrax, cocaine, heroin) | 7 | 19% | 3 | 17% | 4 | 21% | <i>Detracting</i> |
| Traditional religion – <i>muti, ixhcele</i> or <i>igqirha</i> | 7 | 19% | 5 | 28% | 2 | 11% | <i>Inevitable</i> |
| <i>Ulwaluko</i> | 6 | 16% | 5 | 28% | 1 | 5% | <i>Didactic</i> |
| Apartheid | 6 | 16% | 5 | 28% | 1 | 5% | <i>Insidious, unrecognised</i> |
| Abusive/transactional sex | 6 | 16% | 2 | 11% | 4 | 21% | <i>Detracting</i> |
| Uncles or aunts | 5 | 14% | 2 | 11% | 3 | 16% | <i>Detracting, exemplary</i> |
| Self-harm (risks/suicide) | 4 | 11% | 1 | 6% | 3 | 16% | <i>Detracting</i> |
| Fathers | 4 | 11% | 2 | 11% | 2 | 11% | <i>Detracting, empowering</i> |
| Policing | 4 | 11% | 1 | 6% | 3 | 16% | <i>Detracting, exemplary</i> |
| <i>Ubuntu</i> | 3 | 8% | 1 | 6% | 2 | 11% | <i>Empowering</i> |
| Grandparents | 2 | 5% | 2 | 11% | 2 | 11% | <i>Didactic</i> |

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