

https://dspace.org/

'Born-free' narratives: life stories and identity construction of South African township youth

Howard, Kim

2016

http://hdl.handle.net/10539/21965

Howard, Kim (2016) 'Born-free' narratives: life stories and identity construction of South African township youth, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, <http://wiredspace.wits.ac.za/handle/10539/21965>

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

‘Born- Free’ Narratives:

Life stories and identity construction of South African township youth

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
University of the Witwatersrand

by:

Kim Howard

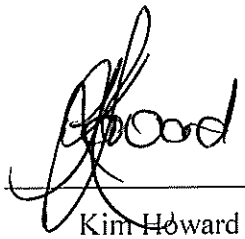
8703752V

December 2016

Supervised by: Prof. Jill Bradbury

Declaration

I declare that this thesis, titled *'Born-free' Narratives: Life stories and identity construction of South African township youth'*, is my own work. It is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted for any other degree or examination at any other university. All sources cited have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



Kim Howard

24 November 2016

Date

Abstract

Within a narrative paradigm, this research project had two elements. Firstly, the project aimed to enable the researcher to gain an understanding of the construction of adolescent identity from the perspective of a cohort of first-generation, post-Apartheid adolescents as members of an NGO's after-school support programme. Secondly, a participatory action element aimed to provide the participants with an opportunity to reflect upon their own lives in a positive, empowering way thereby providing an understanding of their past lives, strengthening a realistic power of agency for their future lives, balanced between self-identity and self transcendence in the present (Crites, 1986). Within this research, the self is theorised psychosocially, presented as both a narrated and narrating subject in which identity construction is consolidated through story-telling and the adaption of these stories to different audiences and cultural contexts.

12 volunteer participants were provided with disposable cameras and asked to take photographs of people and objects that were important to them. Using these photographs, the participants then constructed art timelines of their lives in the narrative format of 'past', 'present', and 'future'. Each participant was then narratively interviewed twice, four months apart. The two datasets (the art timelines and the interview transcripts) were subject to three levels of analysis. Firstly, the construction of each participant's descriptive narrative portrait was analysed across the time zones of 'past life', 'present life', and 'future life'; secondly, thematic analysis was horizontally conducted across the narrative portraits identifying the similarities and differences between the participants, extending the specific experiences discussed by the participants into generalised themes; and thirdly, the vertical analysis of portraiture was re-invoked in greater depth, examining how the different theoretical dimensions of narrative identity identified, coalesce in one case history.

The first level of analysis focused specifically on the imagoes, or personified concepts of the self, identified within the narrative portraits of three participants. It was found that these imagoes had significant effects on the identity construction of these young people, specifically on those whose parents had died. In the second phase of analysis three different dimensions of, or ways of thinking about, narrative identity were distinguished: relationality and the sense of belonging or alienation experienced by the participants in their interaction with others; the consolidation of life stories at adolescence and the participants' social positioning within the systems of structural identity markers of race, class, gender and sexuality; and lastly the participants' hopes and dreams, their narrative imaginations and future-orientated lives. In the third level of analysis, one participant's narrative was selected to illustrate the theoretical concepts that underpin the construction of narrative identity, particularly constructionist intersectionality (Prins, 2006) and cultural creolisation (Glissant, 1989).

These young people's narratives indicate a patent tension between their lives to date, the histories of their families marked by insecurity and feelings of being unsafe as the effects of racism, disease and poverty, and their future imagined lives characterised by the promise of freedom and agency, education, employment and health. Through listening to and analysing these young people's past, present and future stories, this study gained an insight into the ambivalence that exists in their lives, the contradictions they face between their moments of belonging and their moments of alienation, and how all these experiences inform and contribute to their identity constructions.

Keywords: Narratives, youth identity, South African township youth, belonging and alienation, constructionist intersectionality, creolisation

Table of Contents	Page
Declaration	**ii**
Abstract	**iii**
Dedication	**viii**
Acknowledgements	**ix**
Chapter 1: Introduction	**1**
1.1. Contextual History	2
- 1.1.1. Apartheid and Fragmentation of the Black South African Family	4
1.2. Project Context	7
1.3. Research Aims	9
1.4. Chapter Organisation	10
Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework	**16**
2.1. Introduction	16
2.2. Identity and Adolescence	18
2.3. Narrative Identity	21
- 2.3.1. Imagoes and Internalised Others	25
- 2.3.2. Moral Agency	27
2.4. Relationality – Recognition and Belonging	28
- 2.4.1. Home as a Site of Belonging	29
- 2.4.2. Church as a Site of Belonging	31
2.5. Structural Dimensions in the Construction of Adolescent Identity	32
- 2.5.1. Structural Identity Markers	34
- 2.5.1.1. 'Race' and Class	35
- 2.5.1.2. Gender and Sexuality	38
2.6. Intersectionality and Discursive Power	44
- 2.6.1. Constructionist Intersectionality	45
- 2.6.2. Cultural Creolisation	49
- 2.6.3. Narrative Imagination – Agency through Hope and Choice	52
2.7. Conclusion	53
Chapter 3: Literature Review	**56**
3.1. 'Race' and Adolescent Identity Construction	57
3.2. Gender, Sexuality and Adolescent Identity Construction	61
3.3. Cultural Creolisation	64
3.4. Narrative Imagination as a Form of Participatory Action Research	73
3.5. HIV/AIDS and Adolescent Identity Construction	76
3.6. Conclusion	78
Chapter 4: Methodology	**80**
4.1. Methodological Framework	80
4.2. Participants	87
4.3. Data Collection	89
- 4.3.1. Phase 1	89
- 4.3.2. Phase 2	91
4.4. Data Analysis and Interpretation	92
- 4.4.1. First Level of Analysis: Narrative Portraits	92
- 4.4.2. Second Level of Analysis: Thematic Analysis Across the Narrative Portraits	95
- 4.4.3. Third Level of Analysis: Narrative Portrait: Aviwe	96
4.5. Reflexivity: The 'me' in the room	97
4.6. Ethical Considerations	100
Chapter 5: Narrative Portraits	**103**
5.1. Asanda: In the Image of My Father	103
- 5.1.1. Past Life	104
- 5.1.2. Present Life	111
- 5.1.3. Future Life	114
5.2. Nandipha: The *'fly kid'*	116
- 5.2.1. Past Life	116
- 5.2.2. Present Life	118
- 5.2.3. Future Life	123
5.3. Ayabonga: Hard Work Brings Success	126

	Page
- 5.3.1. Past Life	126
- 5.3.2. Present Life	130
- 5.3.3. Future Life	131
5.4. Conclusion	133
Chapter 6: Relationality and Belonging	**135**
6.1. Family Backgrounds	136
- 6.1.1. Biological Mothers	136
- 6.1.2. Grandmothers	139
- 6.1.3. Fathers	143
- 6.1.3.1. Paternity	145
- 6.1.4. Confusion Surrounding Family Origins	147
- 6.1.5. Abandonment	148
6.2. Surrogate Families and Imagined Communities	149
- 6.2.1. Church	149
- 6.2.2. School	156
- 6.2.3. The NGO - Ithemba	158
6.3. The Alienating Effects of HIV/AIDS	162
- 6.3.1. Feelings of Guilt	163
- 6.3.2. Stigma Exacerbates the Loss	165
- 6.3.3. HIV and the Effect on Young People's Sexuality	166
- 6.3.4. AIDS Discourse Changing Slowly	168
6.4. Conclusion	169
Chapter 7: Structural Dimensions in the Construction of Adolescent Identity	**171**
7.1. Narrative Consolidation at Adolescence	172
7.2. Structural Ideological Markers	175
- 7.2.1. 'Race' and Class	175
- 7.2.2.Gender and Sexuality	184
- 7.2.2.1. Ulwaluko – Transition from Boys to Men	184
- 7.2.2.2. Women Living in Reference to Men	186
- 7.2.2.3.Gender Discourse Changing Slowly	191
7.3. Narratives of Overcoming	193
7.4. Conclusion	195
Chapter 8: Narrative Imagination	**198**
8.1. Education and Being Employed – the Route to Freedom and Independence	201
8.2. Acquisition of Assets: Houses and Cars	207
8.3. Sense of Community	212
8.4. Different Choices – Breaking the Links	215
8.5. Conclusion	221
Chapter 9: Theoretically Informed Narrative Portrait: Aviwe	**223**
9.1. Phase 1: Family Relationality	225
9.2. Phase 2: Aviwe's Structural Position as 'Gay'	229
9.3. Phase 3: Sites of Belonging	236
- 9.3.1. PIN Number 1: Aviwe's Ulwaluko	244
- 9.3.2. PIN Number 2: Camp Organised by Ithemba	248
9.4. Phase 4: Narrative Imagination	251
9.5. Conclusion	253
Chapter 10: Concluding Discussion	**255**
10.1. Relationality and Belonging	257
10.2. Structural Dimensions in the Construction of Identity	259
10.3. Narrative Imagination	261
10.4. Theoretical Constraints Illustrated in One Narrative Portrait	263
10.6. Conclusion	265
Appendix A: Transcription Conventions	**267**
Appendix B: Consent Form To Participate in the Study	**268**
Appendix C: Consent Form to Record Interview	**269**
Appendix D: Narrative Portraits with Images from Art Timeline	**270**

	Page
Reference List:	**332**

List of Tables

Table 1: *Profile of Participants* (p. 89)
Table 2: *Levels of Analysis* (p. 97)

List of Figures

Figure 1: *Photograph of RDP House* (p. 8)
Figure 2: *Asanda's art timeline* (p. 103)
Figure 3: *Asanda as a baby* (p. 104)
Figure 4: *Asanda's father* (p. 106)
Figure 5: *Asanda's mother* (p. 109)
Figure 6: *Asanda as a teenager* (p. 110)
Figure 7: *Asanda and her Ithemba friends on a plane trip to Cape Town* (p. 111)
Figure 8: *Asanda's brother* (p. 112)
Figure 9: *Asanda as a child* (p. 113)
Figure 10: *Asanda at UCT* (p. 115)
Figure 11: *Nandipha's art timeline* (p. 116)
Figure 12: *Quote from Nandipha's art timeline* (p. 119)
Figure 13: *Photograph of wedding gown on Nandipha's art timeline* (p. 124)
Figure 14: *Nandipha's 'future' art timeline* (p. 125)
Figure 15: *Ayabonga's art timeline* (p. 126)
Figure 16: *Ayabonga's 'past' art timeline* (p. 128)
Figure 17: *Ayabonga's drawing of his burning home* (p. 129)
Figure 18: *Ayabonga's church pastor and his wife* (p. 130)
Figure 19: *Ayabonga's drawing of him and his future wife* (p. 132)
Figure 20: *Ayabonga's drawing of his dream car and house* (p. 132)
Figure 21: *Phozisa's old house* (p. 179)
Figure 22: *Phozisa's current home* (p. 179)
Figure 23: *Nozuko's home* (p. 180)
Figure 24: *Aviwe's dream car* (p. 207)
Figure 25 *Malusi's dream car* (p. 208)
Figure 26: *Malusi's dream house* (p. 208)
Figure 27: *Nobomi's dream car* (p. 209)
Figure 28: *Phozisa's dream car* (p. 209)
Figure 29: *Phozisa's dream house in the township* (p. 211)
Figure 30: *Phozisa's dream house in the suburbs* (p. 211)
Figure 31: *Nobomi's niece* (p. 218)
Figure 32: *Aviwe's art timeline* (p. 224)
Figure 33: *Aviwe's mother* (p. 226)
Figure 34: *Aviwe's 'future wife'* (p. 234)
Figure 35: *Aviwe's 'future job'* (p. 252)

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to all South African ‘born-free’ adolescents, most especially those who shared their stories with me. You are the future of this incredible country. My dream is that through conscientisation your generation will have the will to break through the structural barriers of ‘race’, class, gender and sexuality to enable your ‘possible castles’ to become a reality.

Acknowledgments

A PhD is not just a personal endeavour; it requires the patience, support and input of so many. The process has possibly been the most difficult undertaking I have embarked on in my life thus far; the stamina and grit required me to draw from many along the way.

Firstly, my family who endured many hours of my unavailability and 'living in a tracksuit'! Steven, thank you for encouraging me when I needed it and kicking my butt when I became morose and self-indulgent! Ben and Sam, thank you for your encouragement and acknowledgement of my hard work. Thank you to you all for believing in me and creating the loving and safe environment conducive for me to be able to complete this task.

To my parents, both of who instilled the value of education and free thought in me from an early age. Both, through their actions, inculcated a strong social conscience in me and the appreciation of the position and perspective of the underdog. Thank you to you both, I think of you and your input into my life daily.

Thank you to my friends, some of whom contributed markedly to early drafts and discussion – Hannah and Guin. And to the rest (Sasha, Margie, Liz, Mandy, Mandi, Kitty and Leanne) all of you encouraged me and endured my one-dimensional conversations and frustrations. It's a true testament to your loyalty and patience that you are still my friends, I have been quite dull! Thank you!

To my supervisor, Jill, thank you for your input and patience. It's quite an undertaking to attempt to conscientise a banker into a social psychologist. I'm not sure if I am there yet, the journey has only begun, but you have played a significant role in guiding me through relevant literature and challenging my thought processes and schemas.

Chapter 1

Introduction

> Those who do not have power over the stories that dominate their lives, power to retell them, rethink them, deconstruct them, joke about them, and change them as times change, truly are powerless because they cannot think new thoughts (Rushdie, 1992, p. 432).

Through a narrative paradigm, this research project aimed to gain an understanding into the construction of adolescent identity from the perspective of a cohort of first-generation, post-Apartheid adolescents who were members of an after-school support programme run by an NGO. This NGO, which for the sake of this study I have called *Ithemba*, the isiXhosa word for 'hope', provides support for orphaned and vulnerable children and those infected or affected by HIV and/or Tuberculosis (TB) living in a township in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. There is a patent tension between these young people's lives to date, marked by insecurity and feelings of being unsafe as an aftermath of the effects of disease and poverty, and their future lives characterised by the promise of freedom and agency, education, employment and health. Through listening to and analysing these young peoples' past, present and future stories, this study sought to gain some insight into the ambivalence that exists within their lives, the tensions and contradictions they face, their moments of belonging contrasted against their moments of alienation and how all these experiences inform and contribute to their identity constructions.

In addition to the historical significance of this particular generation of young people, as adolescents they are at a juncture in their lives when for the first time they are starting to look outwards, engaging with the world as they project their early 'self' constructions and start to reflect on their lives from the position of the 'other' through secondary reflection. Adolescence, the apprenticeship to adulthood, is a time when young people become aware of how they are perceived by those around them (Erikson, 1968), a time of exploration of possible vocational, sexual, and religious paths, and contemplation on the meaning, purpose and destiny of one's life. In the aftermath of Apartheid, the participants have suffered devastating social and personal events; their lives punctuated by loss, poverty, disease, death, and stigma, yet also sparked with hope for a new life, in a new nation. This hope of a better future is supported, sustained and encouraged by a social contract with *Ithemba* that undertakes to economically and psychologically support these young people's dreams.

In a sense, these young people are emblematic of South Africa, representing the tension and conflict of a land in which we are still dealing and grappling with the same problems we were twenty-five years ago, but at the same time hopeful for a more equitable future in which people do not suffer and struggle as a result of the colour of their skin, their gender or their sexual orientation. The dream of the 'New South Africa', in which 'race' and class structures are not just reproduced generation after generation, envisions the possibility to traverse the structures that subordinately socially position those disempowered under Apartheid through a narrative of hope, imagination and the contemplation of a counter-narrative of belonging and recognition, in stark contrast with their parents' alienation and misrecognition.

In South Africa, impossibility and possibility live side by side. As the country still struggles to provide all its citizens with basic health and education, the opportunity also exists for some children from the poorest segment of the population to attain university education and become economically sustainable. This spectrum of possibility is markedly evident in the narratives of the participants, indicating that hope of a better future exists, despite appearing impossible considering the past and the present. As Alexander (2013) points out:

> South Africa is a microcosm of our modern world. It is one of a few countries where the relationships, proportions, and dispositions of the population reflect the global proportions, dispositions and possibilities for human interactions. For this reason, though it is 'an ordinary country'… [but] one where hope for a better world remains alive (Alexander, 2013, p. viii).

1.1. Contextual History

The participants of this study, twelve adolescents ranging in age from 18 to 21 years old, live in a township on the outskirts of a city in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. These young people were born in the early 1990s, a time in which the laws and structures of Apartheid were being dismantled. This generation is hopefully and colloquially known as South Africa's 'born-free's'. But, for these twelve 'born-free' adolescents, who live in a lower income area, today still ravaged by the legacy of Apartheid structures, and its resultant poverty and high HIV and TB incidence, this label is somewhat ironic. The first democratic elections in South Africa in 1994 marked the start of the 'post-Apartheid' era, but for most South Africans this event was little more than symbolic. Despite the belief that race and class as social structures would be extricated on the abolishment of Apartheid, minimal change has been effected in the daily lives of these young people, severely prejudiced and disempowered under the previous regime. Under Apartheid in South Africa, race

was defined in terms of a rigid classification of exclusive categories: 'White', 'African', 'Coloured' and 'Indian'. This classification, or socio-legal construct, was brandished as an instrument "of surveillance and control by a state animated by fantasies of omniscience as much as omnipotence" (Posel, 2001, p. 87). In the social hierarchy of Apartheid, 'Whites' were preferentially treated and 'African', 'Coloured' and 'Indian' people prejudicially treated, culturally alienated, dispossessed of land, and economically dominated, particularly African people, positioned at the lowest end of the social strata, who were relegated to living in homelands far from metropolitan centres where capital is concentrated.

In addition to suffering from the aftermath of Apartheid, the participants of this study were born into one of the poorest provinces in the country, the Eastern Cape, which has not only experienced a turbulent and traumatic history, but also suffered in the past from low government investment and poor service delivery, particularly in the areas of health and education (National Treasury, 2015). Plagued by high rates of unemployment and HIV incidence, the Eastern Cape remains one of South Africa's poorest provinces, together with the Limpopo province, reporting the lowest GDP per capita in the country (Statistics SA, 2014). It is into this context that the participants of this study were born.

The Eastern Cape has been plagued by racial wars and clashes for centuries, primarily caused by colonial occupation, in particular the settlement in the area by the British in 1820, which resulted in the Xhosa and Khoi-San people being dispossessed of land and enslaved by the armed settlers. The Frontier Wars date back to 1779 when the Khoi-San, the Xhosa people, the Boers (descendants of the Dutch-speaking settlers), and the British clashed intermittently for almost one hundred years (Peires, 1982).

In more recent Apartheid history, the Xhosa people of the Eastern Cape were subjected to the corruption and farcical creation of the Bantustans or homelands specifically designated for different race groups, in particular the Transkei and Ciskei. Bantustans were created by the Apartheid government in South Africa under the justification that because of the many different ethnic groups in the country, peaceful co-existence could only be achieved by enabling each ethnic group to have their 'own space'. These 'independent' countries within South Africa were economically unviable, governed by chiefs who were often forced to take orders from the South African Apartheid government, and represented by "scattered little bits of the most unyielding soil… unsuitable for agricultural or pastoral work" (Biko, 2004, p. 90). The creation of 'homelands' resulted in a large mass of uneducated, unemployed people living in poverty, with parents forced to find migrant

work, leaving their children in the care of older relatives, and robbed of citizenship in their own country (Peires, 1992). “The geographical isolation of Transkei, its rural character, its economic backwardness and the greed and prosperity of its educated elite, all combined to create a climate where Transkei independence seemed a great deal more than a bad joke” (Peires, 1992, p. 367).

Steve Biko, as the leader of the South African Student Organisation, before he was captured and killed by the Apartheid government in 1977, wrote about the farcical nature of these Bantustans, which comprised only 13% of South Africa’s land for the majority of the population, designed to fragment black resistance: “We know that the Transkeian parliament is a stooge body” (Biko, 2004, p. 38). Bantustans gave black people false hope of autonomy and reduced the power of resistance against oppressive white rule.

However, this history of conflict, and colonial and racial oppression resulted in the Eastern Cape giving rise to a number of influential politicians and freedom fighters. Oliver Tambo, Nelson Mandela, Steve Biko, and Govan and Thabo Mbeki, to name a few, all originated from the Eastern Cape, indicative of the region’s revolutionary spirit and resistance against domination.

1.1.1. Apartheid and Fragmentation of the Black South African Family

One of Apartheid’s most devastating legacies is the fragmentation of the black family in South Africa, both physically and emotionally. The reasons for this are numerous but mostly, driven by migrant labour, parents were forced to find work away from where their family resided (Bray, Gooskens, Kahn, Moses & Seekings, 2010) resulting in a generation lost from the family structure. Migrant labour is historically rooted in the lives of black South Africans, having been politically and economically entrenched in the late 1800’s through the demand for cheap labour in mining and related industries (Smit, 2001). Black people were forced to live in rural reserves and ‘homelands’ where they struggled to support themselves through subsistence farming, often severely affected by livestock disease and drought (Gelderblom and Kok, 1994). In terms of the tenure system, in order to retain ownership of ancestral land in the reserves, or Bantustans, where black families were forced to live, the land had to be occupied and cultivated, forcing men to leave their families behind to occupy the land while they sought work in urban areas (Gelderblom and Kok, 1994). Many black women were, and still are, also forced economically to become migrant workers, mostly seeking employment in domestic service in urban areas and very seldom able to cohabit with their families (Preston-Whyte, 1991).

Despite the abolishment of Apartheid, migrant labour still persists today as a result of urban housing shortages and limited work opportunities in rural areas where many impoverished black people live (Russell, 1995). Mothers are forced to leave their children in the care of grandparents in rural and semi-urban areas where housing is more available and affordable (Bray et al, 2010).

High unemployment rates and low wages, combined with the introduction of the child-support grant in the early 2000's which has, to some extent, afforded mothers more economic independence, has functioned to erode the traditional standing of the man as the family provider conferred by patriarchal and cultural values. This has resulted in further alienation of men from their families and reduced paternal involvement and influence (Bray et al, 2010, Ramphele, 1993). The Cape Area Panel Study (2002) cited in Bray et al (2010) reported that only 32% of low-income, black children aged between 0 and 13 years live with both parents compared with 69% in high-income households, and almost 20% of low-income, black children live with neither parent. 70% of adolescents spend no time with their fathers and almost 40% never spend time with their mothers.

It has been argued that children are adaptable and easily accustomed to domestic fluidity (Spiegel, 1996) particularly in the context of extended family structures in African cultures, and that the absence of parents need not entail bad relationships with other caregivers, any more than parental presence ensures good parent/child relationships (Bray et al, 2010; Siqwana-Ndulo, 1998). Historically the meaning of 'family' in Africa, and specifically among Xhosa families in the Eastern Cape, refers to a wider circle of people based on the principle of collectivity and interdependence, part of a social system with a cultural heritage quite different from Western values or the narrow 20th century notion of the nuclear family (Siqwana-Ndulo, 1998). Siqwana-Ndulo (1998) argues that despite the physical fragmentation of families through migrant labour and other pressures, family structures are still greatly influenced by cultural values of collectivism evidenced through high levels of economic cooperation and daily assistance among kin, neighbours and friends.

> This reflects the resilience of more flexible ways of 'doing family' within South Africa's African population. African children can draw on long-standing social and cultural resources concerning collective care for children, codes of respect towards older people, the designation of care responsibilities to senior women and investment in a rural home of origin (Bray et al, 2010, p. 94).

In societies where mothers and young children live in extended and multi-generational families such as is the case in South Africa, older women, most often grandmothers, play an active role in

child-rearing including transmitting socio-cultural norms, influencing health and nutritional practices (Aubel, 2012), providing safety and discipline, and providing income through pensions and social grants. This important source of support to vulnerable children, has received limited attention from a research perspective. In the South African context where parents have often died, grandmothers perform a vital role in providing support for their grandchildren. Chazan (2008), in her study on grandmothers in South Africa, concluded that "the societal impacts of AIDS are, at present, not as dramatic as frequently portrayed. South Africa does not appear to be experiencing 'calamity' or 'apocalypse'. Instead it seems that the strength and resilience of grandmothers are cushioning the negative consequences of the epidemic" (p. 954). For children whose mothers have died or are not available, their grandmothers or older female relatives are often their greatest source of support.

Professor Jonathan Jansen, the Rector and Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Free State, describes grandmothers as the South Africans he most admires:

> The unknown citizen – that South African who works as part of 'the moral underground', unnamed, doing great things that keep this country together, and yet she will never win a presidential honours award or appear on TV. But every day she rises early, as a grandmother, to raise the children of a daughter who dies of AIDS; and she runs a backyard crèche caring for other peoples' children, so that young mothers can go to work… There are many like her, (Elle magazine, April 2015, p. 56).

It is evident that the extended African family structure is taking considerable strain exacerbated by economic pressures and the effects of the prevalence of HIV infection among the participants' families and the incidence of death and disease as a result of AIDS and Tuberculosis. As a result, the community or wider family are unable to support the growth and development of these young people (Haley & Bradbury, 2015). Researchers have reported that the effects of HIV/AIDS may compromise children's well-being and inhibit emotional development as a result of the lack of consistent parenting and the constant presence of a primary caregiver (Booysen & Arntz, 2002; Ramphele, 2002; Cluver & Gardner, 2006; Cluver, Gardner & Operario, 2008; Bray et al, 2010). Ruptures in family and caregiving relationships may compromise children's ability to form bonds with family members and others later in their lives. In addition to parental absence and lack of support, one of the major issues young people affected by HIV face is the social stigma associated with the virus. Cluver et al (2008) identified that AIDS orphans suffer detrimental psychological health effects from AIDS-related stigma in the form of bullying and social ostracisation.

This study explores the intersection of the greater Eastern Cape history with the participants' own individual stories, which began simultaneously with the birth of the 'New South Africa', a nation led into the post-Apartheid era by the world icon, Nelson Mandela, who hailed from the ancestors of the participants in the Eastern Cape. The twelve adolescents' stories and photographs produced in this study were analysed in order to understand the participants' relationality and the juxtaposition between belonging and alienation, recognition and misrecognition, and how these young people were able to exercise agency and choice within the prescriptive and constraining social structures within which they live. The structural identity marker of 'race' remains a defining feature and marker of inequality and class in South African society, with the poor majority of the population still being almost entirely black. 'Race' combined with gender, class, sexual orientation and the urban-rural divide of place position a person socially. The social position at the point of the intersection of these structures strongly informs the construction of personal identity, where a person feels they belong and where they feel alienated. The process of identity construction for these young people is also fuelled by the hope and promise of being 'born-free'; their life stories indicate cultural adaption and "creolisation" (Glissant, 1989; Nuttall & Michael, 2000, Erasmus, 2001, Martin, 2006), and the possibility of agency and choice, thereby enabling these young people to imagine and write new narratives, or counter-narratives, within and against inherited social and cultural scripts.

1.2. Project context

The township in which the NGO's centre is situated is a low-income area about 20 km from the city centre. The township consists of small, crowded living spaces and poor infrastructure with limited drainage, few trees, limited tarred roads and no pavements. Many of the homes are 'shack' houses built out of corrugated iron, wooden pallets, plastic and cardboard with no access to electricity, water or water-borne sewerage. Since 1994, the South African Government has built Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) houses in the township. These homes generally consist of four rooms, with access to electricity, water and water-borne sewerage. The participants of this study live in both shack and RDP homes.

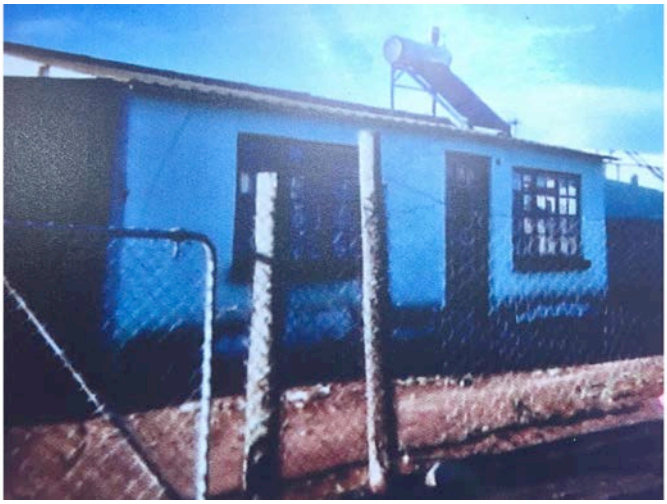


Figure 1: Photograph of RDP house

As stated above, this project was conducted within the framework provided by an NGO based in a township in the Eastern Cape which runs support programmes in which the research participants participate. The NGO was started through the partnership of a teacher from a township school and a young American college student who, while on a backpacking trip through South Africa, stayed with the teacher and his family in the township for six months. Their vision was to attempt to create a support structure that would enable children and adolescents to move from their 'unsafe' and trauma-filled childhoods into the possibility of lives with access to education, healthcare and the chance to live markedly differently from their predecessors. In fulfilling this vision, the NGO has adopted an integrated and holistic approach to the assistance of orphaned and vulnerable children. The NGO places priority on how deeply and meaningfully it can impact and support a child's life through setting children and adolescents on sustainable paths, equipped with education and good health, rather than evaluating its contribution on the number of children it can reach. The fund provides children who live in the township in which it operates with health care, assistance in securing their homes, access to counsellors and mentors, and provision of books, stationery and uniforms for school. From an educational perspective, the fund operates an early childhood development programme, an after school programme, personal development programmes and workshops, a university scholarship programme and career counselling. The fund recently opened a centre comprising a clinic licensed to dispense anti-retroviral (ARV) and TB medication, and education facilities in the township where its members live, providing a safe space for children to come after school in order to participate in the NGO's after-school programme which provides tuition and extra support in the subjects of mathematics and English.

All of the participants of this study were participants in the NGO's after school programme aimed at providing academic support for high school scholars. In 2012 the NGO contracted with the management consulting company, McKinsey, to track the results of their participants against the other learners in the schools their participants attend. It was found that 72% of the NGO's after school programme participants passed the secondary school matriculation exam compared with 35% of non-participants. Similarly, the NGO members' adherence to ARV and TB medication was found to be close to 100%, significantly higher than non-NGO member adherence.

In addition to this academic support, the after-school programme also provides the participants with numerous extra-mural activities and interests such as attending wilderness camps, trips to visit local South African universities, ballroom dancing, cooking, and the opportunity to learn to play musical instruments. Given that most of the participants are infected or affected by HIV, The NGO provides the participants with a safe space, free from the stigma and prejudice they receive in their everyday lives and an opportunity to develop skills, foster interests and form relationships with others in similar positions to their own.

1.3. Research aims

The purposes of research and intervention in this study were inter-dependent, with the intention that both the participants and the researcher would gain from participation in the research. In the words of Freire (1996):

> The starting point for organizing the programme content of education or political action must be the present, existential, concrete situation, reflecting the aspirations of the people. Utilising certain basic contradictions, we must pose this existential, concrete, present situation to the people as a problem which challenges them and requires a response – not just at an intellectual level, but at the level of [understanding and] action (p. 76).

The study aimed to provide the participants with the opportunity to reflect upon their lives thereby constructing and bolstering their identities through telling their life stories through words and visual representations to a different (research) audience, thereby providing these young people with the ability to reflect and 're-write themselves' through new meaning-making systems.

Accordingly, this research project aimed to:

1. Enable the researcher to gain an understanding of the participants' everyday experiences, how these define and shape the construction of their identities, affecting how they perceive themselves and how they believe others perceive them.
2. Provide the participants with an opportunity to reflect upon their own lives in a positive, empowering way thereby providing an understanding of their past lives, strengthening a realistic power of agency for their future lives, balanced between self-identity and self transcendence in the present (Crites, 1986).

1.4. Chapter Organisation

By way of concluding this chapter, a brief synopsis of the remaining chapters contained in this thesis is provided:

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

Chapter two presents a framework for the theoretical construction of adolescent identity from a narrative perspective within a phenomenological approach, and argues that identity construction occurs through an amalgamation of all subjective life experiences and the ability of these experiences to provide recognition and belonging (Squire, 2008; Taylor, 2004). Narrative identity is conceptualised as "a multiplicity of stories evolving in a de-centred psychological space" (McAdams, 2011, p. 102), specifically relevant at adolescence where individuals strive to consolidate their stories into a temporal 'whole' (Erikson, 1968; Breger, 1974). This framework specifically addresses three different dimensions of, or ways of thinking about, narrative identity: 1) relationality and the sense of belonging or alienation; 2) social positioning as an intersection of the structural identity markers of 'race', class, gender and sexuality; and 3) narrative imagination and belonging to or alienation from the future possible and imagined lives tacitly promised through the post-Apartheid, New South Africa discourse.

I argue that within the structural forces that position us, from the perspective of a narrative paradigm, identity is not merely a matter of naming and labelling, but rather one of deeper enmeshing of social and psychological processes and narration through "constructionist intersectionality" (Prins, 2006). Through the construction of counter-narratives and access to different and broader meaning-making systems, the possibility exists for the disruption of the holds that social positionings impose on us, thereby facilitating "cultural creolisation", or merging of

cultures, (Glissant, 1989; Nuttall & Michael, 2000, Erasmus, 2001, Martin, 2006) and new ways of being.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

This chapter presents a review of the relevant South African literature and empirical studies on adolescent identity construction. The review focuses on the effects of 'race' and class, both inextricably linked in the South African context, on identity construction. To a lesser extent due to less empirical work being available, studies on the effects of gender, sexuality and sexual orientation on identity construction are also discussed. Closely linked to the social structural positionings of 'race', class, gender and sexuality, empirical studies on the effects of HIV/AIDS and identity construction are examined, with specific reference to the stigma suffered by those infected and affected by the virus and disease. From a relationality perspective, empirical studies on how the social interactions of those affected by the virus and the disease are slowly becoming more normalised, are examined.

Empirical studies on the social and cultural transformation evident in various areas of South African life are discussed, indicating the adaption of youth discourses and the ways in which young South Africans are challenging pre-established boundaries and social structures. Lastly, empirical studies specifically using narrative as a methodology in participatory action research and consciousness-raising are presented.

Chapter 4: Methodology

This research project was conducted by employing narrative methods of data collection within an action research paradigm. The research is qualitative in nature, offering a snapshot in time, grounded in history and context (Squire, Andrews and Tamboukou, 2008). Narrative theory as an "approach assumes that sequential temporal orderings of human experience into narrative are not just characteristics of human, but *make* us human" (Squire, 2008, p. 43).

The individual participants' stories reflect an important socio-historical moment in a particular place. The analysis of how the participants' articulated their life stories in relation to the longer histories of their families and communties offer a glimpse into the perpetuation of historical inequalities and social changes. In particular, the study focused on relational belonging, the

experience of social positioning from the perspectives of ‘race’, socio-economic inequality, gender and sexual orientation, and narrative imagination of the future.

The study involved two phases of data collection, each phase resulting in a data set. The first phase entailed a group meeting to introduce the participants to the project and provide them with disposable cameras to pictorially record their lives. One month later the group met again to create the first data set, the art timelines of the participants’ lives using the photographs taken by them. The second phase consisted of two narrative interviews conducted four months apart producing the second data set, the interview transcripts. The analysis of the data involved three levels of analysis: Level 1) An initial construction of narrative portraits involved a vertical analysis of each participant’s life story through the creation of narrative portraits in a temporal form under the broad thematic time zones of ‘past life’, ‘present life’ and ‘future life’. Level 2) Thematic analysis was conducted across the narrative portraits identifying the similarities and differences between the participants thereby extending the specific experiences discussed by the participants into generalised themes. Level 3) The vertical analysis of portraiture was re-invoked in greater depth, thinking about how the different theoretical dimensions of narrative identity explored thematically across the participants, coalesce in one particularly interesting case history of one participant. The chapter concludes with a discussion on reflexivity and ethics.

Chapter 5: Narrative Portraits

This chapter presents three narrative portraits from the first level of analysis with selected images from the participants’ timelines. Each portrait is presented in relation to the broad thematic time zones of past life, present life and future life and provide a window into the life stories and experiences of living in a township in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. These three portraits were specifically chosen for their ability to illustrate how imagoes, or personified and idealised concepts of the self constructed in the image of people who have played significant roles in one’s life, both positive and negative, contribute to the construction of identity (McAdams, 1993). The participants’ links to their parents, particularly those whose parents were absent or had died, were illustrated in the description of their imagoes as a mechanism through which these young people attempt to live with their feelings of loss and abandonment.

Chapter 6: Relationality and Belonging

This chapter is the first of three chapters in the second level of analysis, the horizontal thematic analysis across the narrative portraits, and provides an exploration of the relationality experienced by the participants through an examination of how their social context and environments, particularly focused on the interactions with their families, 'surrogate' families and "imagined communities" (Anderson, 1991), features in their narratives. The relationality the participants' experience with others through interaction with social others within their families, communities, churches and schools provides experiences of belonging and alienation, and through this the basis of their identity construction is formed (Fay, 1996).

Chapter 7: Structural Dimensions in the Construction of Adolescent Identity

This chapter analyses the participants' lives with specific reference to adolescence as a time of consolidation and a search for meaning and purpose. Having analysed the relationality encountered in the lives of the participants in the previous chapter, this chapter analyses the structural dimensions on the identity construction of these young people and their perception of their hierarchical social positioning within the system of structural identity markers such as 'race', class, gender and sexuality. While the intention of this study was to understand how the experiences of the participants contributed to their identity construction through what Josselson (2004) refers to as the hermeneutics of faith, or a restoration of meaning, in the analysis of the data it was impossible to ignore the hermeneutics of suspicion (Josselson, 2004), and the use of theoretical concepts, such as the structural dimensions these young people are exposed to, in an attempt to decode and understand their lives. The tension between the social structures and power imbalances that act to socially position these young people, and the possibility for, and hope of, agency and social mobility is evident in the participants' narratives.

Chapter 8: Narrative Imagination

This chapter analyses the participants' 'future-orientated' narratives, their narrative imaginations and their ability to break from the structures that have constrained their past lives and present worlds, freeing them to imagine their futures as healthy, educated and prosperous adults. Narrative imagination and the ability to conceive of how life will be from the position of how life currently is provides human beings with the ability to engage with the possibility and language of agency and choice (Brockmeier, 2009; Andrews, 2014). The social structures that constrain the lives of these

young people, presented in the previous chapter, heightens the tension between fantasy and agentic narrative imagination, both evident in the participants' narratives.

Chapter 9: Narrative Portrait: Aviwe

This chapter presents the third level of analysis, undertaken with just one participant. Aviwe's narrative portrait was specifically chosen for its ability to illustrate the theoretical constructs of "constructionist intersectionality" (Prins, 2006) and "cultural creolisation" (Glissant, 1989; Martin, 2006), both important constructs in the expression of agency and productive identity construction. Through the engagement with theory and literature and the consolidation of the smaller stories or PINs (Wengraf, 2011) and momentous events (Pillemer, 2001) into a coherent, temporal plot, this chapter presents four temporal phases of Aviwe's life. The first phase presents his experience of his childhood and his early family relationships. The second phase presents his life from around the time of his realisation of his sexual orientation as a gay man and the associated social alienation and judgment he experienced due to not conforming to the societal expectations of his community. The third phase of his life thus far, from late adolescence, examines how Aviwe has learned to live with both recognition and misrecognition and find sites of belonging sufficient to enable him to accept his sexuality and articulate a 'coming out' story (Plummer, 1995). Lastly, through the sites of belonging and moments of acceptance, Aviwe has been able to engage in a process of narrative imagination. Through constructionist intersectionality and cultural creolisation, Aviwe's mind has been opened to new ways of meaning-making enabling him to dream of life as an *actional* (Fanon, 2000) person of worth (Fay, 1996) despite the alienation and misrecognition he is subject to in his everyday life in the township.

Chapter 10: Concluding Discussion

In the final chapter I provide a concluding discussion of the findings presented in the thesis. The first level of analysis focused specifically on the imagoes, or personified concepts of the self, identified within the narrative portraits of three participants. It was found that these imagoes had significant effects on the identity construction of the participants, specifically on those whose parents had died. In the second phase of analysis three different dimensions of, or ways of thinking about, narrative identity were distinguished from the narratives: relationality and the sense of belonging or alienation experienced by the participants in their interaction with others; the consolidation of life stories at adolescence and the participants' social positioning within the systems of structural identity markers of race, class, and gender; and lastly the participants' hopes

and dreams, their narrative imaginations and future-orientated lives. In the third level of analysis, one participant's narrative was utilised to illustrate the theoretical concepts that underpin the construction of narrative identity, particularly constructionist intersectionality (Prins, 2006) and cultural creolisation (Glissant, 1989).

Chapter 2

Theoretical framework

2.1. Introduction

Life-stories provide an interpretive entry point into understanding the intersection between individual psychological and social realities, reflecting the prescription of structural forces-juxtaposed against moments of agency (Andrews, Squire and Tamboukou, 2008). This chapter presents a framework for the theoretical construction of adolescent identity from a narrative perspective within a phenomenological approach, and argues that identity construction occurs through an amalgamation of all subjective life experiences and the ability of these experiences to provide recognition and belonging (Squire, 2008; Taylor, 2004). The self is theorised psychosocially, narrated dialectically between the dual positioning of subjects that both shape the world and are shaped by the world (Hall, 1996, 2000, Andrews, Sclater, Squire & Treacher, 2004; Weedon, 2004). The self is presented as both a narrated and narrating subject in which identity construction is consolidated through story-telling and the adaption of these stories to different audiences and cultural contexts. Identity could be thought of as the 'social self', the way one perceives oneself through one's own 'external' eyes, and the eyes of others; where one is perceived by oneself and others to belong.

Shotter and Gergen (1989) argue that identities are performed contextually and in relation to available discourses, making selves multiple, fragmented, fluid, and often contradictory, as the 'self' struggles in its quest for meaning and purpose. Narrative identity is conceptualised as "a multiplicity of stories evolving in a de-centred psychological space" (McAdams, 2011, p. 102). A person's narrative at any point represents who one is at that particular moment in time. This 'point in time' is however not one-dimensional; rather, it is comprised of iterations upon iterations of memories, both conscious and unconscious, and one's most hopeful goals and fears, converging in the present. The narratives of young South Africans at the beginning of the twenty first century are complex, reflecting multiple social positions; semi-urban, township-dwelling, black, poor, 'disadvantaged', but with the 'promise' of being 'born-free'.

A narrative provides a semblance of sense, unity and purpose to the numerous roles life calls on us to play in the creation of a coherent plot of temporally arranged episodes (Polkinghorne, 1988). Narratives do not merely record lists of facts of how things actually were; rather they provide

"meaning-making systems" that "make sense out of the chaotic mass of perceptions and experiences of life" (Josselson, 2004, p. 13). The self, through time, is constructed as a narrative identity, as the fragments of life are integrated through a dynamic system of interpretation and meaning-making. McAdams (2001) proposed that narrative's function is "diachronic" in that it integrates elements that are separated in time into a meaningful, "temporally organised whole" (p. 102), and "synchronic" in that it integrates the wide range of diverse, and potentially conflicting, roles one is relationally required to fulfil in life providing moments of both belonging and alienation. If a person's self-understanding is synchronically and diachronically integrated to the extent that it situates them "into a meaningful psychosocial niche" and provides "some degree of unity and purpose", then that person could be considered to 'have' identity (McAdams, 2001, p. 102).

From a "synchronic" perspective (McAdams, 2001), narrative identities are constructed within the context of social positionings and ideological standpoints, relationally constructed within the discursive limits of power. Ideologies such as racism, patriarchy, and capitalism are articulated in institutions such as the family, school and church. Despite the marginal position of this generation of South African, township youth, I argue that through the acceptance of and recognition by 'valued others' (Fay, 1996; Taylor, 2004), the possibility exists for the construction of agentic counter-narratives or "counteracting narratives" (Squire, 2013, p. 42). With agency, we are able to choose how we respond to others' perceptions of us (Fay, 1996). From the perspective of narrative, identity is not merely a matter of naming and labelling, but rather one of narration where the opportunity exists to consider a life story beyond the constraint of social structures. Through the construction of counter-narratives and new possibilities of being, the opportunity exists for the disruption of the hold that social positionings have on individuals through what Prins (2006) refers to as 'constructionist intersectionality', enabling cultures and social lives to be 'creolised' (Glissant, 1989; Nuttall & Michael, 2000; Martin 2006) through the insertion of new interpretations into existing cultural scripts. The possibility of considering these new ways of 'being' enable people to revise and expand their systems of meaning-making thereby becoming both actors in and co-authors of their life-stories. Narrative imagination (Andrews, 2014) and conscientisation (Freire, 1970, 1996) enable us to interpret and gain meaning not only from how things currently are, but also how they could be in the future through the language of agency, thereby creating a relationship of possibility and hope between the world and ourselves (Brockmeier, 2009). The processes of constructionist intersectionality, cultural creolisation and narrative imagination in identity construction are particularly pertinent at adolescence when for the first time in one's life it becomes

possible to consider one's life with "wholeness, unity and integration" (Breger, 1974, p. 330), giving one the perception of a 'complete' life.

2.2. Identity and Adolescence

Adolescence, a relatively recent phenomenon, arising out of industrialisation and increased access to education, was first proposed as a distinct developmental concept by Stanley Hall in the early 1900's and refers to the transitional period or threshold between childhood and adulthood (Arnett, 1999). In industrialised societies, adolescence represents the time in one's life when a child becomes a 'pre-adult', free from the responsibilities of being an adult; an adult in training who is expected by the 'storm and stress' discourse (Arnett, 1999), to make a few mistakes along the way, but provided with the opportunity to learn from these mistakes in an 'apprenticeship into adulthood' (Arnett, 1999).

Adolescence is the time that individuals become preoccupied with how they appear in the eyes of others (Erikson, 1968), as young people cast their nascent psyches out into the world, striving to belong and be recognised as people of worth (Fay, 1996; Taylor, 2004). The confluence of the desire for consolidation, an understanding of temporality and a search for meaning, with the awareness of oneself in relation to others, results in the search for and construction of foundational identity at adolescence.

Ariès (1962) argues in *Centuries of Childhood* that medieval and early modern society lacked the distinct stage of adolescence that bridged the development between childhood and adulthood and that people matured early in their lives, integrated into the adult world directly from childhood. Krausman Ben-Amos (1995) notes how prior to industrialisation, adolescence and youth as distinct periods did not exist, rather arising as cultural creations of the post-Industrialisation, modern world, in line with both socioeconomic and epistemic shifts.

> Cartesianism, enlightenment, military conscription, romanticism, technological advancement, and the expansion of schooling as all referred to at one point or another as somehow related to the new mentality of prolongation of childhood and emergence of adolescence and youth. Cartesianism enforced the spirit of classification, the Enlightenment brought to the fore the moral and social importance of systematic education of adolescents, military conscription extended the adolescent stage, romanticism invented the typical 'adolescent' hero, and

> modern technology imposed technical requirements that involved longer training (Krausman Ben-Amos, 1995, p. 72).

During the 19th century schools in Western societies started to segregate the youth, considered separate from both children and adults, constructing these young people, or adolescents as they later became known, in terms of distinctive characteristics. Childhood was extended into adolescence "by almost the entire generation of the school cycle" (Ariès, 1962, p. 334). The fact that access to education was limited to the middle and upper classes, where young people were placed in "a long phase of transition in which they were segregated [and protected] from adult life" (Krausman Ben-Amos, 1995, p. 73), results in adolescence, as a developmental stage, being restricted to these social strata. Mannheim (1952) likewise argues that it was historical and economic forces, as opposed to biological factors, that caused the tempo of change in society that resulted in the formation of adolescence.

Adolescence and youth is therefore clearly shaped by sociocultural factors. The way a child is transformed into an adult varies from one society, and socioeconomic stratum, to another. In traditional societies, the transformation of a child into an adult is relatively short, marked by ceremonies and rituals that pass on societal assumptions of adult behaviour and roles in an unambiguous way. By contrast, in industrialised societies, the transition from childhood into adulthood is a protracted process with a "long interval between learning and actual participation in productive work" (Krausman Ben-Amos, 1995, p. 78).

However, since the release of Ariès's (1962) book, historical literature written has shown that in many medieval and early-modern societies, that a distinct period between adulthood and childhood did exist, and that even in the positions of servant or apprentice, one of dependence on adult teachers and sponsors, young people were often sheltered from adult responsibility, provided with board and lodging and a stipend (Brigden, 1982; Krausman Ben-Amos, 1995). Nonetheless, the length and nature of this liminal or transitional stage between childhood and adulthood is dependent on levels of wealth and access to education in a particular socio-historical context. These factors dictate when and how a particular child needs, or is able to, become an adult, making childhood and adolescence a cultural and societal, rather than a biological, phenomenon.

Burman (2008) argues that in deriving the norms, markers and milestones that comprise developmental psychology, a picture of "orderly, progressive graduation through stages" towards "competence and maturity" is presented with the express purpose of "maintaining social control

within and between social groups and nations" (p. 26). Adolescents are kept within a quasi-adult band; not children, and not yet adults; a liminal phase characterised by 'storm and stress' as adolescents navigate the 'crisis of identity'. Wilbraham (2009), through her work on adolescent sexuality and gender in South Africa, notes how traditional developmental psychology, and the Western psy-complex (Rose, 1998), regards adolescents as young people characterised by mood-swings, difficult and rebellious behaviour, risk-taking, sexual experimentation and negative peer influence, requiring "a generally authoritarian parenting style, including co-regulation and monitoring of children's activities" (Wilbraham, 2009, p. 59). This regulatory expertise and control of adults over children aims to ensure optimal population development and remove any threat of maladjustment outside of normalised growth rates that could potentially destabilise societies (Wilbraham, 2009).

From the perspective of social positioning, Burman (2008) cautions that "we need to be vigilant about the range of intended and unintended effects mobilised by claims to development, to be mindful of whose development is being privileged and, correspondingly, whose is marginalised" (p. 12). Children from non-Western societies may be marginalised because they do not fit into the 'norms' and milestones set by Western psychology. This is particularly relevant in South Africa in where education and health standards in many areas are lacking or compromised and Western benchmarks label children as abnormal or inferior.

> The technologies of description, comparison and measurement of children that underlie the descriptive knowledge base of developmental psychology have their roots in demographic control, comparative anthropology and animal observation that set 'man' over animals, European man over non-European, man over woman, as well as politician over pauper. So the history of developmental psychology offers glimpses of its structural and structuring influence in its coming of age as the authoriser and arbiter of child, family and professional relations within capitalist and now neoliberal state apparatus (Burman, 2008, p. 26).

Cognisant of these limitations of traditional psychology and the prejudicial effects on marginalised societies, recent social psychological research has attempted to move away from studying children and adolescents as merely components of families and communities in the process of socialisation into adulthood, rather focusing on their "everyday experiences as social actors navigating through socio-economic, cultural and political environments" (Bray et al, 2010, p. 38). Historical and cultural variations of what constitutes an ideal childhood are taken into account in this paradigm where emphasis is on understanding the phenomenonology of their daily lives, their relationships

and the meanings of their actions without assessing young people against a repertoire of expected 'normalised' behaviours (Qvortrop 2001; Burman, 2008; Wilbraham, 2009; Bray et al, 2010).

Adolescence is characterised as a time in life when young people are impressionable and "sometimes morbidly, often curiously, preoccupied with what they appear to be in the eyes of others as compared with what they feel they are" (Erikson, 1968, p. 128), marking adolescence as the time when the 'self' extends into an awareness of how one is perceived through the eyes of others and the foundations of identity construction are laid down.

Erik Erikson, a pioneer in the study of identity in the late 1950's and early 1960's was influenced by the large social and political changes occurring in the world post World War II. He proposed a series of eight stages of psychosocial development through a lifespan, each stage presenting a challenge of overcoming a developmental crisis, and the resolution of the previous developmental crisis preparing the individual to tackle the next stage. Erikson (1963) was one of the first theorists to include society as a major determinant of identity and proposed that in the fifth developmental stage, reached in late adolescence, the developmental 'crisis' or challenge is to acquire 'identity' over role confusion. Erikson (1959, p. 109) defined personal identity as "an unconscious striving for a *continuity of personal character*… a maintenance of an inner *solidarity* with a group's ideals", linking individual identity with social identity, ideology, and the individual's position within a larger group, society or community, implying a need for a sense of belonging and recognition from, and identification with, others. Thinking about one's life narratively allows a person to understand the connections they have with others in their lives, enabling coherence across multiple roles through time.

2.3. Narrative Identity

McAdams's (1985) "life story model of identity" extends "Erikson's (1963) developmental concept of *ego identity*" (p. 101). Despite the unlikelihood of Erikson's identity crisis being fully resolved in a task-like fashion during adolescence, there are a number of reasons why this period in one's life is important in the initial construction and development of identity. Given that adolescence as a period is characterised by the exploration of the ideological and occupational options available in society, and experimentation with a wide range of social roles, this period in one's life is aimed at consolidating one's "beliefs and values into a personal ideology and making provisional commitments to life plans and projects" (McAdams, 2001, p. 102) positioning the adolescent into societal 'niches' (McAdams, 2001). McAdams (1985; 2001) argues that prior to adolescence, there

may be ‘self’ but no ‘identity’, or ‘self in context’. A child is not aware of her-‘self’ in relation to others, rather only aware of the self in isolation.

At adolescence, an individual’s self-understanding and consciousness of their constitution and social positioning starts the process of identity construction. This the search for coherence occurs with the introduction of what Piaget (1952) refers to as ‘formal operations’, a cognitive process that provides the ability to engage in abstract thought and, through metacognition, reflect on one’s own thought processes from the position of the ‘other’, vital in the process of identity construction.

> The idea of a unitary or whole self in which past memories of who one was, present experiences of who one is, and future expectations of who one will be, is the sort of abstraction that the child simply does not think about. [But] with the emergence of formal operations in adolescence, wholeness, unity, and integration become introspectively real problems. (Breger, 1974, p. 330).

Narrative identity occurs as people seek meaning in their lives, as McAdams (2011) suggests, “a meaning that transcends any particular social performance or situation, people seek some semblance of unity and purpose as they move into and through adulthood” (p. 103). Story-telling enables us to order our thoughts through internal dialogue and in the communication with others in telling our stories and hearing theirs. A community would not be human if it had no stories. Telling our own stories and assessing and appraising others’ stories is one of the primary mechanisms of human interaction; a way of preserving the “social fabric, the texture of our relationships” (Appiah, 2007, p. 29). Polkinghorne (1988) maintains that “we can explain and understand human lives by situating the events that have made them up into a whole pattern of intrinsic relationships” (p. 116).

Narrative meaning, or the meaning derived from a story, arranges human experiences into temporally arranged episodes through emplotment (Polkinghorne, 1988). The key distinguishing feature of narrative form is that it offers us not just a meaningful way to express experience, but also a way to understand the meaning of life through time. Narrative meaning is derived through understanding the context, prior events and experiences, in relation to present life and future possibilities.

> Briefly, in everyday oral storytelling, a speaker connects events into a sequence that is consequential for later action and for the meanings that the speaker wants listeners to take away from the story (Riessman, 2008, p. 3).

Thinking about life through a series of events in time gives meaning to human existence. A story told at a point in time is afforded meaning through understanding the context of what has been experienced previously and the connections and relationships between the events experienced and the people involved. The passing of time affects and alters the meaning and perceived significance of events and experiences in one's life. What seemed not to be significant at all in an everyday life becomes significant with the passing of time and in the light of subsequent events. Only in retrospect can significance, and the meaning afforded from this significance, become visible and even then, never statically (Fay, 1996).

Life experiences provide us with raw material or "the primal stew of data which is our daily experience" from which to choose and select meaning, "a kind of arranging and telling and choosing of detail – of narration" (Rose, 1983, p. 6). Narrative, through language both externally vocalised and internally thought provides the meaning and implication of our memories in our attempt to answer the questions and solve the inconsistencies of our past, present and future lives (Sarbin, 1986; McAdams, 2001). The construction of our narrative is an attempt to consolidate our fragmented stories into an integrated self. The "'first order' activity of lives as they are lived is mirrored in 'second order' activities of reflection, representation, accounting and storytelling" (Andrews et al, 2004, p. 7) in the search for understanding, meaning and purpose.

Emplotment, or literary coherence, distinguishes narrative accounts from a list of the facts, providing coherence and second order meaning. A life narrative demonstrates through its reasoning that there is an understanding of the whole, viewing it as a dialectic integration of all the parts (Polkinghorne, 1988). A narrative is distinguished as an account through the ability to connect experiences, events and consciousness, temporally and causally, articulated to provide meaning for a particular audience (Polkinghorne, 1988; Ricoeur, 1984). Narratives describe an earlier event or object in terms of prior and later events or objects, implying temporality and emplotment; a sequence of events ordered to make meaning (Fay, 1996). The concept of a story is one of moving forward in time, established in retrospect with the benefit of hindsight (Freeman, 1993; 2010).

In the search for belonging and meaning through the construction of coherent narratives we should be aware of a tendency to over-simplify our varied lives and multiple narratives into one single narrative (Taleb, 2010). Frosh (2013) cautions us not to be tempted towards the over-simplification of narratives in the quest to find coherence and make everything fit neatly in our minds. He encourages the recognition of the existence of multiple narratives in articulating the same experience from different perspectives. Squire (2012) warns that over-reliance on one, coherent

narrative, is problematic as it may be "inherently rigid, reifying, and monothilic" (p. 68). The tendency of individuals towards narrative simplification and reduction in the quest for coherence can result in superficiality, a form of "bad faith" (Craib, 2004).

> The central point is that even though many people working with narratives know full well how precarious and contradictory they can be, there is a constant pull (which I am tempted by as much as anyone else) away from this awareness and instead towards a kind of celebratory re-presentation of the 'one story' that sums everything up (Frosh, 2013, p. 5).

Frosh (2013) goes so far to say that "making a coherent narrative can be seen as a *defensive* process" (p. 6, emphasis in original) and that the "fantasy of integration" (p. 8) gives an illusion of idealised unity, masking our unconscious defences and the 'blind spots' in our lives. The tendency towards coherence or over-simplification of our narratives could be a way that the unconscious defends against real or imagined threats on the psyche. Frosh (2013) warns that by neatly summing up our lives we never move out of our comfort zones, and never challenge ourselves to take new paths or embark on new experiences and expand our consciousness. By contrast, acknowledging the contradictions and confusions that exist through engaging with multiplicities and incoherence may be a 'healthier' and more authentic approach.

> Yet I take this disarray and anxiety as an indication of something healthy: if we feel less anxious when we are held in a more integrated state, then perhaps increasing anxiety can (under some circumstances – I do not recommend trying this on your own at home) signify a willingness to take risks, to fall into contradictions that reflect the contradictory nature of the social reality we find all around us. That is to say, preserving the unsettledness of experience requires a concatenation of different disciplinary voices and the breaking down of boundaries to allow them to be heard. It is unlikely that beautiful tonal music will be created as a consequence, but it is surprising how enjoyable discord can be (Frosh, 2013, p. 13).

While being cognisant of this human tendency to over-simplify, the narrative process does have the capability to highlight the relationships and connections between actions, events and experiences thereby producing meaning and a sense of belonging (Polkinghorne, 1988; McAdams, 2001). The narrative process is critical in consciously tracking, and ultimately constructing and creating, identity.

> The idea that identity is an internalized life story resonates with a number of important themes in [developmental, cognitive, personality and cultural] psychology and dovetails in synergistic ways with research on the development of self-understanding, autobiographical memory, personality structure and change, and the complex relations between individual lives and cultural modernity (McAdams, 2001, p. 101).

By its very nature, identity is reflexive, it is monitored by us everyday in our ability to 'fit in' or 'feel out' (McAdams, 2001; Bauman, 2011). Stories "tell us who we are through accounts of our identity struggles… All the medical tales, the historical narratives, the psychodynamic case studies, the agony columns, the oral histories, and twelve-step recovery stories" (Plummer, 1995, p. 5). In the search for meaning in our lives, we sort our life episodes and events into an order that confirms this meaning and purpose (Freeman, 1993; Fay, 1996). What made no sense before gains a pattern, the agonies that numbed us and took us down, the joys that provided the relief and strength to continue, the effort put in that was rewarded and the relationships seen in retrospect all add to our understanding of our-selves. As Sarbin (1986) asserts, narrative provides a "root metaphor" (p. 3) for psychology and the understanding of people.

2.3.1. Imagoes and Internalised Others

In the incorporation of the self synchronically and diachronically and the construction of an integrated identity, it is necessary to assimilate and amalgamate all the roles one is required to play. McAdams (1993, p. 122) argues that the creation of "a personal myth" with rich and diversified characterisation, or "a suitable cast of imagoes" enables an individual to integrate the many roles within their lives in the construction of their identities.

> An imago is a personified and idealized concept of the self. Each of us consciously and unconsciously fashions main characters for our life stories. These characters function in our myths as if they were persons; hence, they are "personified." And each has a somewhat exaggerated and one-dimensional form; hence, they are "idealized." Our life stories may have one dominant imago or many. The appearance of two central and conflicting imagoes in personal myth seems to be relatively common (McAdams, 1993, p. 122).

Imagoes are often constructed by drawing on aspects of significant people in our lives with whom we have had or have interpersonal relationships, both positive and negative, a form of internalising

an ‘other’. These people may be dead or alive, constructed from our memories, expressing our desires, dreams, goals and also our fears, threats and doubts.

> Imagoes would appear to be life-story derivatives of early object relations. In other words, certain main characters in personal myth may spring from the intrapsychic sources of internalized objects. In some cases, we write our main characters according to the guidelines of which we are not consciously aware. The guidelines are embodied in those unconscious representations we have accrued as a result of a lifetime of loving, hating and being with other people (McAdams, 1993, p. 131).

An imago is inherently linked to the “narrative unconscious” (Freeman, 2010). The narrative unconscious in this context does not refer to repression from a psychoanalytic perspective, rather that part of ourselves that has been lived by us or our predecessors, but not yet told, intimately linked with our personified pasts that constitutes our character list of imagoes that are “woven into the fabric of our memory” (p. 96).

An imago could also be considered to be a “possible sel[f]” (Markus & Nurius, 1986, p. 954), “the cognitive components of hopes, fears, goals and threats… incentives for future behaviour and to provide an evaluative and interpretive context for the current view of self” (p. 954); a personalised form of narrative imagination (Brockmeier, 2009).

“Imagoes personify our traits and recurrent behaviours” (McAdams, 1993, p. 129), lived out in our personal myths and in the way we perceive our behaviours, our actions and ourselves. Imagoes provide us with the stock plot for the way we react to certain situations, governed by the way the personalised characters in our ‘selves’ and identities react to a given set of circumstances.

An imago can also signal “a fundamental life conflict” (McAdams, 1993, p. 131). Conflicting imagoes are common in identity construction, with many being organised around “starkly polarized characters” (Ibid, p. 132), representing the conflicts between structure and agency, individualism and communion, and power and love. Imagoes “act, interact, converse, argue, develop, do combat and make peace” (Ibid, p. 132). Watkins (1986) argues that a healthy psyche and an integrated identity involves an internal dialogue between both conflicting and consistent personified presences in one’s mind, particularly in adolescence at the start of the narrative identity construction process.

2.3.2. Moral Agency

Imagoes provide a moral voice in an individual's personal myth or narrative by embodying individual and cultural values, providing the opportunity to exercise moral agency through the ability to take a stand for what one believes is right, good, and holds importance for us, forcing us to reflect on our pasts through a moral lens (McAdams, 1993; Taylor, 1992). Our life stories provide the opportunity to judge whether our lives have been and are worthwhile, possessing dignity and agency, with moral awareness and the ability to act within this moral framework (Taylor, 1992).

> Who am I? … this can't necessarily be answered by giving name and geneaology. What does answer this question for us is an understanding of what is of crucial importance to us. To know who I am is a species of knowing where I stand. My identity is defined by the commitments and identification which provide the frame or horizon within which I can try to determine from case to case what is good, or valuable, or what ought to be done, or what I endorse or oppose. In other words, it is the horizon within which I am capable of taking a stand (Taylor, 1992, p. 27).

Taylor (1992) argues that without this moral agency people suffer from an "acute form of disorientation" (p. 27) resulting in not knowing who one is and lacking a frame from which to judge significance. For Taylor (1992), identity represents a fundamental orientation from which to act meaningfully and know what is important to you; the difference between good and bad, what is worth doing and fighting for and what is not. How we act is likely to be informed by the singular notions of identity such as 'race', gender and religion, but is driven by much more than that. Our identities govern our ability to act meaningfully and morally, whatever moral code we live by. Who I am determines how I act and the story I tell of my life.

> … to be able to answer [who one is] for oneself is to know where one stands… we naturally tend to talk of our fundamental orientation in terms of who we are. To lose this orientation, or not to have found it, is not to know who one is. And this orientation, once attained, defines where you answer from, hence your identity (Taylor, 1992, p. 29).

This moral agency, or 'acute form of orientation' (Taylor, 1992), is able to be conceptualised and understood through the meaning-making repertoire society has made available and the construction and reflection of one's narrative. How we identify ourselves through the groups we belong to, and

others to which we aspire to belong but are restricted from, configures our possible thoughts, behaviours and actions.

> [S]elf-conscious beings characteristically want to be recognised as persons – that is, as conscious entities which are centres of agency – and not just as mere objects in the world of interest only because of their use. [In addition] they also want to be recognised as persons of a certain sort, to be thought of as having a particular identity and a particular worth. A self-conscious being needs assurance both that it exists and that it is of value (Fay, 1996, p. 43)

2.4. Relationality – Recognition and Belonging

In order to be recognised and belong we have to exist in specific ways for others and be acknowledged for this (Taylor, 1994). Our relationality and interaction with others, such as our families and communities, determines our perception of whether we belong and are recognised or not, a cornerstone of identity construction (Fay, 1996; Taylor, 2004). "[W]e learn how to make sense of our experience in narration by participating in the rites of a community" (Hammack, 2011, p. 32). Relationality and our system of meaning-making, derived from our cultural and master historical narratives, determines our sense of belonging or alienation in the world.

> …identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves. Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being (Taylor, 2004, p. 269)

Master historical narratives are created from the stories of our pasts and our cultural heritage, both distant and more recent, that summarise socially shared understandings and form our perceptions of the world (Lindemann Nelson, 2001). Culture, created through the narration of stories and practices, enables us to derive meaning from our experiences, the ability to fit in or not, "a psychological mode that anchors thought, feeling and action" (Hammack, 2011, p. 32). Master narratives are made up of the stories of a culture, society or group's collective experience (Fay, 1996; Hammack, 2011) and influence how those within the culture or sub-group perceive themselves, as well as how others perceive them. The "stock plots" (Lindemann Nelson, 2001, p. 106) of master narratives characterise groups of people in ways that promote culturally accepted

behavioural patterns of these group members, determining who belongs and who is alienated. Our cultures provide us with the ability not only to describe ourselves and the ideals to which we compare ourselves, but also the basis on which we acquire our ideologies, narratives and identities. Fay (1996) defines culture as "a complex set of shared beliefs, values, and concepts which enables a group to make sense of its life and provides it with directions for how to live" (p. 55).

The family, as the original and central human social unit (Ankrah, 1993), provides the first interaction humans have with others and, as such, is foundational in the construction of our self-concepts and identities. In all children's lives family provides the first site of interaction with the 'other', the origin of relationality. The family structure is situated within ideological contexts reflecting and entrenching the positioning within social structures such as 'race', class, gender and sexuality and provides the repertoire for how we navigate and interpret our lives and construct our narratives and identities. As discussed in the introduction to this thesis, one of the most devastating legacies of Apartheid is the fragmentation of black families particularly through the effects of the racialization of space and migrant labour. Further, the devastation caused by the HIV/AIDS pandemic has also deprived many black children and adolescents of finding belonging in a family structure.

2.4.1. 'Home' as a site of belonging

A sense of belonging is an emotional attachment and a feeling of being quite literally 'at home' in the world (Yuval-Davis, 2006). Bell Hooks (1990) in recollecting her childhood home describes a "homeplace" as a place of safety where "all that truly mattered in life took place, the worth and comfort of shelter, the feeding of our bodies, the nurturing of our souls. There we learned dignity, integrity of being … there we learned to have faith" (p. 41-42). The lack of having a permanent abode, moving between relatives, or making makeshift homes in other people's yards is a fate suffered by many township children and adolescents. In a world where we seek to belong, homelessness and displacement negatively affects identity construction; a home is a symbol of a self and a culture and the base of a family. The word 'rootedness' "describes a state of mind or being in which a person's whole life and pursuits are centred around a broadly defined home" (Terkenli, 1995, p. 329).

> Humans occupy space and use symbols to transform it into place; they are creatures of habit who appropriate place and context as home. The idea of home is broad and profoundly

> symbolic, a parameter that infiltrates every relationship between humans and environment as humans reach out to the unknown and return to the known (Terkenli, 1995, p. 325).

In returning to the known, home symbolises a place of belonging and recognition. By contrast, homelessness and displacement symbolises alienation and non-recognition (Terkenli, 1995; Taylor, 2004). Being homeless or displaced does not simply refer to the absence of a physical domicile, but extends further into reduced family cohesion, relationality, and belonging, and hampers identity construction. A person without a home and their own place in the world is reduced to a lesser person in the eyes of themselves and others. "A home region is a system of interlinked patterns of habitual association and attachment" (Terkenli, 1995, p. 324), and as such represents much more than just a building on a piece of land. The concept of 'home' is multidimensional and includes the actual physical location, the length of time lived in this location, and the social connections and sense of belonging associated with this location. Being 'at home' in terms of these three factors, validates an individual as a human being (Terkenli, 1995). Conversely, homelessness and lack of a space where a child or adolescent feels she 'belongs', causes alienation and hampers identity construction.

Linked to homelessness and its associated transience, one's sense of self and ability to 'belong' are affected by being unable to trace one's ancestral roots, particularly in African communities where ancestral lineage has significant belonging and identity related implications. Many young, black South Africans, whose lives have been fragmented in the aftermath of Apartheid through the effects of migrant labour and HIV/AIDS, do not know who their biological fathers are. In a study done by Russell (2003), 94.5% of rural black participants and 52% of urban black participants believe that "a child who is deceived about who its actual biological father is, is likely to get sick or worse" (p. 157). The belief that children who have not been properly and ritually introduced to their patrilineal ancestors "are believed to be vulnerable to all sorts of dangers, including physical, social, spiritual and material dangers" (p. 157), thereby heightening the importance of paternal identity in African communities. Fatherhood in many traditional African societies is only established on the occasion of *imbeleko* sacrifice and the introduction of the child to his or her family and *abaphansi* (ancestors) (Mkhize, 2004) thereby elevating the social value of children who have acknowledged fathers (Richter, 2006) and relegating those who don't to 'orphan' status. If African children and adolescents are unable to trace their patrilineal origins they are not able to identify with their clan names, an important part of their ancestral identity (Townsend, 2002; Richter, 2006), thereby hampering their sense of ancestral, and therefore cultural, belonging.

An additional issue for black township dwelling adolescents relates to their future lives and where they envisage their future homes and physical sites of belonging. The 'New South African dream' discourse that many township adolescents have bought into (Swartz, Hamilton, Harding, De Lannoy, 2012), suggests that in post-Apartheid South Africa people will have a choice of where they would like to live. This raises the question as to whether people will choose to move to previously 'white-only' areas, or whether they will remain living in the townships in which they were brought up. A home in the physical sense extends into the psychological realm through providing a site of belonging, a place where one feels recognised (Terkenli, 1995). Given that space is a social construction and as such an expression of power (Massey, 1999), one is only able to feel comfortable and recognised in a physical space according to one's social capital and position on structural power grids. While economics play a large part in where one lives, Donaldson, Mehlomakhulu, Darkey, Dyssel and Siyongwana (2013) argue that social and cultural reasons are more important in selecting where one resides. The increased social capital that economically 'successful' black people receive through remaining in the townships where they were born provides black middle class people with recognition and belonging.

> …townships remain the preferred choice of residence for many of the emerging black middle class. Social, cultural and, to a lesser degree, economic reasons account for this choice. The township traditions and social networks constitute strong bonds which keep the [black middle class] shining in the townships rather than becoming invisible beings in the suburbs (Donaldson et al, 2013, p. 118).

Home as a space provides individuals with a place of physical and social belonging. Similarly, church as a place provides people with social interaction and recognition.

2.4.2. Church as a site of belonging

Despite the fact that church attempts to control its congregants through its prescribed doctrines, it could also be considered to be a site of belonging through functioning as a surrogate family and providing young people with recognition and belonging from both the leaders of the church and fellow congregants. Anderson (1991) coined the term "imagined communities" particularly in relation to national identity, whereby connections between oneself and anonymous others are imagined. "[T]he members of even the smallest nations will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson, 1991, p. 6). Wenger (1998) describes imagination as "a process of

expanding one-self by transcending our time and space and creating new images of the world and ourselves" (p. 176). The engagement that young people have with church, while physical in nature through attending a physical place and interacting with physical congregants, also provides belonging through imagination and being part of an imagined, socially constructed community. The bonds felt between members of a church, those that know each other and those that don't, provide a fellowship and sense of belonging that transcends the physical and enters into the realm of the imaginative, in a similar way to how Anderson (1991) describes the bond between people of the same nation.

In the same way as a culture represents "a complex set of shared beliefs, values, and concepts" (Fay, 1996, p. 55) thereby providing guidelines for how to live, the doctrine of church does the same. Those that abide by this doctrine are provided with recognition (Taylor, 2004) and a sense of belonging, an identity constructive process.

While church as a supportive network provides its congregants with a sense of belonging and spiritual support and meaning, it is also a major method of control and subjugation, often entrenching the inequalities of a society through preaching the acceptance of God's will and suppressing the desire to change the status quo through activism. The church could be considered to be a mechanism that entrenches ideologies and socially positions subjects within the social dimensions of race, class, gender and sexuality.

2.5. Structural Dimensions in the Construction of Adolescent Identity

> Precisely because identities are constructed within, not outside, discourse, we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies. Moreover, they emerge within the play of specific modalities of power, and thus are more the product of the marking of difference and exclusion, than they are the sign of an identical, naturally constituted unity (Hall, 2000, p. 17).

Family and church as sites of belonging function within economic and political structures, resulting in relationality as a foundation of identity construction operating within the structural dimensions that socially position societies' subjects. In many cases, structural dimensions such as 'race', class, gender and sexuality determine an individual's interactions with others and the experiences of belonging or alienation that transpire through these interactions. Identity is constructed within an

ideological context, affected by the way in which meaning or signification creates and sustains power relations and the recognition or misrecognition this power confers upon an individual. The discourses and channels of power result in more worth being conferred on some identities than on others. Depending on the position within the social structures in which individuals live, the ability to exercise agency is more or less constrained.

Althusser's (2000) work on interpellation in the late 1960's was pivotal in introducing ideology into the realm of the individual and the development of identity. In considering how a person is positioned in the world, emphasis should be put on understanding the social structures that disempower or empower them in their everyday lives (Hayes, 1989; Weedon, 2004). Althusser's political theory, extending Marxist analysis of economic notions of class, proposes a way of understanding the intricacies of socialisation and a person's position within the social structures that identify and define them (Hayes, 1989).

These processes of socialisation prescribe a person's position within the social structures of 'race', class, gender and sexuality, primarily entrenched and maintained through the interaction with others within institutions. Althusser (1971) referred to these institutions "such as religion, education, the family, the law, politics, culture and the media [which] produce [and maintain] the ideologies within which we assume identities and become subjects" (Weedon, 2004, p. 6) as "Ideological State Apparatuses" (Althusser, 1971, p. 146) (ISAs). ISAs dole out "daily doses of nationalism, chauvinism, liberalism, moralism" (Althusser, 1971, p. 146) and, in so doing, position every person on a power grid determining how the subject experiences recognition and misrecognition (Taylor, 2004) in the construction of identity construction.

According to this approach "[w]hat is represented in ideology is… not the system of the real relations which govern the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relation of those individuals to the real relations in which they live" (Hayes, 1989, p. 88), thus firmly taking ideology into the psychological arena. Ideology's effectiveness is due to the fact that "it works at *both* the rudimentary levels of psychic identity and the drives *and* at the level of the discursive formation and practices which constitute the social field" (Hall, 2000, p. 20, emphasis in the original), indicating the inter-relation of social and discursive methods with psychological processes.

Althusser's (2000) main thesis is that ideology interpellates, or 'calls', individuals into subject positions. Interpellation is an ideological process in which a person is 'hailed' and in recognising and responding to this call is positioned as a subject (Althusser, 2000; Weedon, 2004). Individuals

are pre-subjected and 'positioned' in the social sphere, recognised as belonging to some groups and alienated from others in the process of identity construction.

2.5.1. Structural ideological identity markers

"Some aspects of identity are more ideologically charged than others" with qualities of singularity attached to them (Ndlovu, 2012, p. 145). These 'structural identity markers', such as 'race', class, gender and sexuality, confer more power on some than on others in the construction of identity; white over black, rich over poor, man over woman, straight over gay; identity is reduced to a position within the systems of human classification and categorisation.

> Race, class and gender still matter because they continue to structure society in ways that value some lives more than others. They matter because they structure the opportunities, resources and power of some, even while other groups struggle. They matter because they remain the foundations for systems of power and inequality that … continue to be among the most significant social facts of people's lives (Andersen & Hill Collins, 2007, p. 1).

Generations of economic and symbolic oppression has been based on structural ideologies such as racism, patriarchy and capitalism as 'true' and incontestable, and are therefore perpetuated and entrenched. Ideologies produce scripts that societies live by and automatically accept (Hammack, 2011). As Freeman (1993) notes, an investigation of the master social and historical narratives and structures present in our lives reveals that "we have reverted too often to a kind of holistic fictionalisation of the past, imposing unity and continuity on that which doesn't deserve it" (p. 47). In South Africa 'race', and, through Apartheid's economic oppression, class, together with gender and sexuality form a structure of social relations supported by ideological beliefs that make them appear 'normal' and 'acceptable', thereby concealing the intricacies of how social structures actually operate and generate power imbalances (Andersen & Hill Collins, 2007). Social power relations weave and form master narratives and structure subject positions in the formation of identity within specific modalities of power (Hall, 2000; Weedon, 2004).

> The aspects of identity that seem to have a quality of singularity in certain situations and moments are precisely the structural forms of identity that are historically pervasive and entrenched. These structures of identity, such as "race", gender, sexuality, class, nationality and ethnicity, cannot readily be concealed and submerged even in the context of other multiple, legitimate forms of identity… Rather, there are aspects of identity that are

> historically hegemonic over others, and it is around these identity markers that contestations of singularity occur (Ndlovu, 2012, p. 145).

Ndlovu (2012) acknowledges that, although people inhabit and are produced by the intersections of multiple aspects of identity, there are "critical contexts and moments when and where certain aspects of our identity are made more salient and dominant than others in the articulation of who we are" (p. 143). Through social and institutional structures, 'race', class, gender and sexuality are aspects of identity that can, in certain contexts, be made more prominent and singular in the construction of identity.

2.5.1.1. 'Race' and Class

> …the body as a marker of 'racial' difference, a concrete sign of 'racial' superiority or inferiority… The bodily experiences that have formed special sites of significance in South Africa have been the tortured body, the dejected body, the interred body, and the body representative of reconciliation, of cultural diversity, and the new nation (Nuttall & Michael, 2000, p. 342).

Apartheid, through the ideology of racism, was set up to subjugate, inferiorise and control black South Africans from both a social and economic perspective, entrenching the structural identity marker of 'race' as the primary indicator of social hierarchy. The economic and social oppression suffered by black people, who under Apartheid had limited access to capital and land, has the effect of inextricably linking race and class in South Africa.

As Biko (2004) stated, "Apartheid – both petty and grand – is obviously evil. Nothing can justify the arrogant assumption that a clique of foreigners has the right to decide on the lives of a majority" (p. 29). Biko (2004) claimed that the ultimate subjugation of the black African was not material but, rather, psychological, resulting in "spiritual poverty. All in all the black man has become a shell, a shadow of man, completely defeated, drowning in his own misery, a slave, an ox bearing the yoke of oppression with sheepish timidity" (Biko, 2004, p. 31), resulting in the ultimate misrecognition and nullification, affecting the core of black, African subjectivity and hampering identity construction.

Likewise, Fanon (2000), through his "metaphoric thought" (Mbembe, 2012, p. 19), introduced psychoanalytic psychology into the realms of anti-colonial activism. He asserts that colonialism

does not just alienate the black person from the physical and material, but also from the construction of his or her psyche, hampering the construction of an integrated identity and inflicting severe psychological damage. “When the Negro makes contact with the white world, a certain sensitizing action takes place. If his [sic] psychic structure is weak, one observes a collapse of the ego. The black man [sic] stops behaving as an *actional* person” and loses all forms of agency (Fanon, 2000, p. 206, emphasis in the original).

All South Africans under Apartheid were required to register as members of an officially designated ‘race’, the classification of which would then determine and inform every aspect of that person’s life (Posel, 2001). “White Western societies privilege white bodies as an unmarked norm against which difference is measured and marked” (Weedon, 2004, p. 15). While the participants of this study were born around the time of the abolition of Apartheid, their parents and grandparents were born and grew up under this regime. Apartheid and racism in all its guises had, and in many cases still has, the effect of depriving the black African of a sense of self, as “he looks with awe at the white power structure and accepts what he regards as the ‘inevitable position’ ” (Biko, 2004, p. 30).

In the desire to live the life of a ‘born-free’, Apartheid’s ‘hinge generation’ (Hoffman, 2005) may attempt to repress the horrors and inequities of Apartheid in the desire to be a ‘new’ South African, part of the ‘Rainbow Nation’. However, Freeman (2010) warns that it is not possible to disregard the past, referring to the ‘Narrative Unconscious’, the parts of our lives that are lived or lived by those that go before us, but not yet told. Narrative Unconscious is the “process by which sources beyond the perimeter of the individual become woven into the fabric of memory” (Freeman, 2010, p. 96). The un-erasable “internalized past” (Hoffman, 2005, p. 27) of Apartheid is indelibly imprinted on the psyches of its hinge generation, still defining and identifying them in its “postness, and by powerful but mediated forms of knowledge that have followed from it” (Hoffman, 2005, p. 25).

> The story of my life is always embedded in those communities from which I derive my identity. I am born with a past; and to try and cut myself off from that past, in the individualist mode, is to deform my present relationships… What I am, therefore, is in key part what I inherit, a specific past that is present to some degree in my present. I find myself part of a history and that is generally to say, whether I like it or not, *whether I recognise it or not*, one of the bearers of a tradition (MacIntyre, 1981, p. 205, emphasis my own).

Freeman (2010) points out that the statement, 'whether I recognise it or not' is of central importance. Just because "aspects of historical inheritance" (Freeman, 2010, p. 120) are unconscious or not openly spoken about does not mean they do not form part of us, particularly those events or time-periods such as Apartheid, in which people were traumatised, threatened and prejudiced against.

Migrant labour, sub-standard education and limited access to housing in urban centres as the legacy of Apartheid for the 'born-free' generation limit their potential for class mobility. One of the primary ways in which black South Africans lives are racialised and 'classed' is through limited access to appropriate standards of education. Education is utilised as a mechanism of control and establishment of social structures such as racism. In South Africa, with its colonial and Apartheid history, education was, and in many cases still is, a site of oppression, prejudice and control. The Bantu Education Act of 1953, a racially different system of education, entrenched white privilege by providing black learners with substandard education in comparison with white learners (Kallaway, 1984; Mabokela, 2000), particularly in the areas of mathematics and science (Mouton & Gevers, 2009). Apartheid used education, particularly the Bantu education system as a process of deliberate preparation for an unequal society. Although efforts have been made to transform education in South Africa post 1994, education standards are still not equal across 'race' groups. Despite an attempt by the Government to redress the differential standard of education received by different racial and socio-economic groups, this gap is still considerable and unacceptable.

> The fact that our children cannot read at grade level, fail miserably at Maths and Science and English and produce under 15 per cent matriculation endorsements annually, that there is a shortage of some 40,000 teachers in the system, and so on – these are all interesting and illuminating 'facts' for the layperson. The real issues lie much deeper, however, and unless they are spelled out and addressed systematically and with perseverance, we are doing no more than what the ill-fated passengers did with the deck chairs on the *Titanic* (Alexander, 2013, p. 54)

The standard of education a child receives positions her as a social subject. As Leibowitz, Bozalek, Rohleder, Carolissen, & Swartz (2010) state, "in contexts of extreme social inequality such as South Africa, the intersection of 'race' and class differences has a profound impact on power relations,… and ultimately, on what and how students learn" (p. 83). These inequalities are perpetuated through the recent increase in privatisation of schooling in South Africa that results in the perpetuation of inequality through the differential expenditure on education dependent on parents' income levels.

The persistent low standard of education in township schools and the many disruptions learners are faced with through teacher absences and difficulties in attending school as a result of the challenges in their personal lives, hampers the opportunity for many of these young people to gain access to higher education institutions. This has the effect of stunting their opportunities and affecting the way these young people see their past, present and future lives and how they construct their identities. This sentiment is aptly illustrated by bell hooks in her reflections on unequal education in the U.S.:

> As someone who has moved from teaching at very fancy private, predominantly white schools to teaching at an urban, predominantly non-white, campus in Harlem, the first thing I noticed was how the students were equally brilliant in Harlem as what they were when I taught at Yale… but their sense of what they could do with that brilliance… their sense of agency was profoundly different… my really brilliant students in Harlem, many of who have very difficult lives; they work, they have children; they don't have that sense of entitlement, they don't have that imagination into a future of agency… (Interview with Bell Hooks, 2006)

'Race' in South Africa is therefore a perpetual subscript to everyday life for all South Africans. Our lives are racialised and 'classed', the effects of which are still evident in all spheres of South African life. Racial, and by implication class, structures are still very evident in our societies.

2.5.1.2. Gender and Sexuality

As in the case of 'race', gender is also a social construction, structuring the relationships between women and men, providing contrasting positions of advantage and disadvantage through the patterns of gender relations that are "present in the processes, practices, images and ideologies, and distribution of power in the various sectors of social life" (Acker, 1992, p. 567). "Changing gender relations is not just a matter of changing individuals. As with 'race' and class, change requires transformation of institutional structures" (Andersen and Hill Collins, 2007, p. 80). Awareness of patriarchy and of how it enacts and entrenches the binary of gender is vital in understanding gender bias and prejudice. As Deutsch (2007), in her article *Undoing gender,* argues: "It is time to put the spotlight squarely on the social processes that underlie resistance against conventional gender relations and on how successful change in the power dynamics and inequalities between men and women can be accomplished. Namely, we need to shift from talk about doing gender to illuminating how we can undo gender" (p. 107). Gender, as a social structure, shapes our identities, infiltrating

our consciousness, ideas, and interaction with others, deeply embedded in social institutions such as work, family, education and the state (Andersen and Hill Collins, 2007).

Gender, as with 'race', is inscribed on the body in what Fanon (2008, p. 92) describes as an "epidermal schema". It is within the terrain of the body that oppression against women is mostly experienced. Patriarchy and Apartheid in combination determined that black women were positioned at the lowest end of the class, racial and gender spectra in terms of privilege and advantage (Shefer and Ratele, 2006). In terms of access to safety, health and other material aspects of well-being, women, and black women in particular, were, and still are, significantly disadvantaged.

Sexuality, which is often erroneously understood as the biological counterpart to gender, also functions within discursive frameworks of normative patriarchal gender and sexuality roles, with men assuming the dominant and controlling role and women accepting the subservient role, and alternative sexualities positioned as outside of what is considered to be 'normal'.

In her study on political gender differences reproduced and modified in adult relations, Hollway (1989) identified three sexual discourses; the male sexual drive discourse, the have/hold discourse and the permissive discourse. While to some extent these discourses describe women's evolvement of sexual autonomy, they also indicate how men prescribe women's sexuality and how women are considered in relation to men as opposed to distinct human beings in sexual, and gender, discourses. Historically women have been constituted with reference to their differences from men, dependent on men who have both denied and yet provided them with the conditions of their possibility.

The Male Sexual Drive discourse proposes that, "men are driven by the biological necessity to seek out (heterosexual) sex" (ibid, p. 54). Female sexuality is seen as an absence in contrast to the presence of the male sex drive and women are deemed to be the vessel with which men satisfy their male sexual urges. Women are confirmed as 'the other' or *'difference'* with reference to men, the standard (Derrida, 2000).

The Have/Hold discourse proposes that sex should take place within the framework of marriage and Christian family values. This discourse places the woman subservient to the man as the head of the household and part of the 'Malthusian couple' - a heterosexual, monogamous pair who have sex and remain together in order to raise their children. Coined from the marriage vows of the Anglican Church, the 'have/hold' discourse maintains that the activities of women should be confined to the

nurturing of a husband, care of children and maintenance of the home. However, through the management of this domestic sphere, women may gain social influence through their roles as wives, mothers, homemakers and caregivers of the next generation (Collins, 1997). Within this discourse there is limited scope for women to play societal roles outside of the home, relegated to support roles.

The Male Sexual Drive and 'Have/Hold' discourses are complimentary, both aimed at dominating and controlling women's behavior and identifying them as the 'other', with the sole purpose of supporting and bolstering the man. Under the 'Have/Hold' discourse women's sole purpose is to get married, be taken care of and reproduce. Sex for women is understood solely as "a prelude to satisfaction of the maternal instinct and finding joy in family life" (Hollway, 1989, p. 55). This discourse entrenches what Lips (1994) refers to as the "cultural preparedness for powerlessness" (p. 90). In summarising the difference between boys and girls based on extensive longitudinal research into socialisation of the sexes, Jeanne Block (1984) claimed that girls are encouraged to develop roots, whereas boys are taught to develop wings. Young boys are generally given toys that require perseverance and skill to master, whereas girls are given dolls (Lips, 1994). As recently as 2011, Gymboree, a U.S. children's clothing manufacturer, sold baby clothes proclaiming "Smart like Daddy" for boys and "Pretty like Mommy" for girls. Along similar lines, J.C. Penny recently sold T-shirts to teenage girls claiming "I'm too pretty to do homework so my brother has to do it for me" (Sandberg, 2013, p. 19).

In addition to this early social positioning, as girls approach adolescence their parents, and society as a whole, teach them that their bodies are vulnerable and endangering to them. Tighter restrictions are placed on the freedom of female adolescents with closer surveillance from parents and teachers than experienced by their male counterparts. Haley and Bradbury (2015) noted the link between gender and sexuality in their study of child-headed households where they found that community members assumed that, without adult supervision and provision, the girls would engage in prostitution, and labelled female child household heads as 'whores'. All these gendered factors lead to "a persistent sense of powerlessness" (Lips, 1994, p. 93) and subjugate early identity constructions underpinned by the perceived weakness of girls and women.

The institutions and ideologies of patriarchy and heterosexuality operate as primary sites for the production and reproduction of gender power inequalities (Shefer, 2004). In particular, women's vulnerability to "physical and sexual violence, HIV/AIDS and STIs, unwanted pregnancies, and other bodily invasions and abuses (including poverty, hunger and malnutrition)" is evidence of the

social and structural inequalities that plague women's lives, particularly those of black women (Shefer & Ratele, 2006, p. 236). The gender power imbalances that exist in many young people's lives may result in young women engaging in sex unwillingly and struggling to negotiate condom usage (Boer & Mashamba, 2007). Young women are often reluctant to carry condoms or insist on their usage as this may be seen as a sign of their or their partner's implied promiscuity, infidelity or HIV infection (Macleod & Tracey, 2010). Generally, condoms are seen as a threat to trust and intimacy between partners. Early sexual debut of young girls is affected by their levels of education, provincial location, 'race' and orphan status (Macleod & Tracey, 2010). A difference of up to three years in sexual debut has been reported between the lowest and highest education groups, with the Eastern Cape (the province in which the participants of this study reside) and Mpumalanga, both provinces with reputably low standards of education, reporting the lowest age of sexual debut. Orphaned teenagers appear to have earlier sexual debut than non-orphans (Thurman, Brown, Richter, Maharaj & Magnani, 2006), indicative of the gender power imbalance.

Coercion and physical violence from male intimate partners is rife among young, black girls in South Africa (Dunkle, Jewkes, Brown, Gray, McIntyre, & Harlow, 2004) and appears to be correlated with early sexual debut (Rutenberg, Kehus-Alons, Brown, Macintyre, Dallimore & Kaufman, 2001; Jewkes & Abrahams, 2002). 97% of women who reported first intercourse before 13 years, and 26.7% of those reporting first intercourse between 13 and 14 years reported that they were forced to engage in sexual activity. Higher levels of coerced and violent sex convey important messages about gender power dynamics. The substantial age differences between teenage girls and their male partners reduces women's ability to influence the timing and circumstances of sex, preventing them from having control in the sexual process and making them highly vulnerable to disease and pregnancy (Macleod & Tracey, 2010).

In African societies, gender inequalities may be further entrenched by gendered initiation practices that ritualise entry into adulthood, such as the Xhosa *Ulwaluko* or initiation month, the sacred and concealed ritual of male circumcision that young men between the ages of 17 and 21 undergo in the symbolic transition from boys to men. The focus is on group learning and the entry into the ancestral line of adult men, connecting the dead and the living and preparing for a future of continuity. The month long process, where the young men spend time separated from their communities in the 'bush', encourages male cohesion and camaraderie (Sev'er, 2012). In traditional life, the *Ulwaluko* is the apprenticeship to becoming an adult man, male adolescence condensed into a month. However, despite the positive value associated with this ritual in the sense of reinscribing

community bonds and inducting young men into responsible adulthood, it has been argued that ritualised male circumcision practices play a role in the formation and reinforcement of masculine dominance, and inscribe dominant and hyper-masculinities on men (Sev'er, 2012). Hyper-masculinity is defined as "an undue emphasis on strength, aggression, power, virility and sexual conquest", "the triangulation of beliefs about male power, male supremacy and legitimacy of aggression and violence" (Sev'er, 2012, p. 69). Vincent (2008) argues that the "historical mechanisms for the sexual socialisation of young men" (p. 433), such as the *Ulwaluko*, have largely broken down resulting in men believing that they have an "unlimited and unquestionable right to access to sex" (p. 431) as opposed its original intention of inculcating sexual responsibility and restraint. This further entrenches patriarchy through the production of 'entitled men' and results in sex being one of the primary sites of gendered behaviour and prejudice.

The purpose of the *Ulwaluko* is not focused on the phallus and the entitlement to sex, rather the traditional purpose of the ritual is on male camaraderie and bonding, and learning the ways of the Xhosa from the elders. However, as Vincent (2008) argues, the phallus and resultant sexual entitlement through hyper-masculinity is a consequence of this ritual. While the sexual entitlement and hyper-masculinity demonstrated by South African men through the country's high sexual abuse statistics could be considered to be a defensive reaction to the way that Apartheid subordinately positioned young men within the structures of 'race' and class, serving to marginalise them, the hyper-masculinity caused by the *Ulwaluko* rite of passage could be considered to contribute to this situation. The combination of these issues has been argued to elevate men above women on the return from their *Ulwaluko* (Vincent, 2008; Sev'er, 2012) with the effect of further entrenching and inculcating gender bias and the relegation of women to support roles in society. The *Ulwaluko* and the *Mketi*, the 'coming out' party that the *Abakwetha* (initiates) attend on their return, are both examples of societal rituals and ceremonies that bestow special rights and recognition on men and separate them from women, by implication relegating women to relatively inferior societal status and social positioning (Epstein, 1986; Sev'er, 2012).

Patriarchy and heteronormative discourse extends the resultant gender power imbalance into prejudice of all other forms of sexuality outside of heterosexuality. The understanding of sexuality within prevailing discourse is that heterosexuality represents the norm and all other forms of sexuality, the 'other' (Henderson & Shefer, 2008) and as a result the identity construction of sexually 'other' people is hampered, often resulting in societal alienation. Homosexuality is often perceived to be an un-African, white Western phenomenon resulting in severe discriminating

practices against gay African people (Potgieter, 2003) exacerbated by patriarchal Christian ethics that view homosexuality as sinful and wrong (Butler and Astbury, 2005).

Homophobia emerges in numerous sites of social interaction creating inequality and abusive practices, including internalised homophobia or self-hatred experienced by homosexual people experienced in difficulty in accepting their own sexuality (Henderson & Shefer, 2008). Despite our progressive constitution with its "explicit constitutional prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation", generally unique in Africa (Lane, Mogale, Struthers, McIntyre, & Kegeles, 2008, p. 430), by and large, South Africa is intolerant of homosexuality, where gay men are often "stigmatised, 'othered', feminised and abused within society" (Henderson & Shefer, 2008, p. 2). Lesbian women, often considered deviant due to falling outside of socially acceptable dictates of 'real' women through their challenge of patriarchal ideology, are also often subject to violent abuse, 'corrective' rape and murder (Potgieter, 2003).

Msibi (2012) notes that there is limited research on the experiences of gay-identified learners in South African township schools, but the few that have been conducted have found that gay identified learners in South African schools are subject to derogatory language and, in some cases, vicious, reactionary hate, often expressed through violence and perpetuated by both teachers and fellow scholars with adverse effects on the identity constructions of these young people.

Human beings "live their lives in a constant movement across different practices that address them in different ways. Within these practices, persons are addressed as different sorts of human being, presupposed to be different sorts of human being, acted upon as if they were different sorts of human being" (Rose, 2000, p. 321). These ways of being are determined by society's power structures and an individual's position within these structures. The construction of identity depends on our position within these social structures, determined by ideologies such as racism, patriarchy and capitalism, and how we navigate and perceive these positions.

Despite the limiting and constraining nature of subordinate social positionings within the structural identity markers of 'race', class, gender and sexuality, entrenched through the institutional structures we are exposed to everyday, society is not reproduced identically intergenerationally. The possibility of the construction of counter-narratives, new perceptions of being, and the disruption of the hold that social positionings have on individuals is possible through the expression of agency in the form of "constructionist intersectionality" (Prins, 2006) expressed in the possibilities and

actualisation of “cultural creolisation” (Glissant, 1989; Nuttall & Michael, 2000, Erasmus, 2001, Martin, 2006).

2.6. Intersectionality and Discursive Power

In most contexts and for most people, social structures and the associated ascribed identities such as ‘race’, class, gender and sexuality operate as the most salient aspects of identity. But identities are constructed within various positions and intersections of social structures and dominant discourses at a point in time and history. Positions within social structures shift and change, bump and churn against each other in the construction of identity. While the intersection of structural forms of discrimination can exacerbate the marginalisation and exclusionary effects of ‘race’, gender and sexuality considered in isolation, the dynamic cocktail of these intersections at specific junctures in time can also disrupt the hold that social structures have on people in what Prins (2006) refers to as the “constructionist approach to intersectionality” (p. 277), thereby enabling agency, new perspective, and perhaps ultimately change. As Prins (2006) notes “[c]ategories like gender, ethnicity and class co-construct each other, and they do so in myriad ways, dependent on social, historical and symbolic factors” (p. 279).

Foucault (1979) provides us with an alternate view of power than that which solely operates to dominate and marginalise in the creation of submissive and docile citizens through subordination, challenging us to re-consider the mechanisms of power from two new perspectives. Firstly he raises our awareness of historical shifts in the way power operates. The era of sovereign power imposed top-down by rulers through torture and physical punishment, as in colonial rule or legitimation of political structures such as Apartheid, has been replaced by disciplinary power. Secondly, he proposes that ‘disciplinary power’, defined as a set of methods, processes and evaluations that measure, monitor and remedy subjects, enables a more productive alternative to the methods of sovereign power (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982).

Foucault (1979) does not conceive of power as a property, rather as a relation and, as such, considers it a dynamic and unstable process with constantly changing conflicts and points of resistance. It is through this disciplinary process that “particular regimes of power inform the discursive fields that define and shape both materiality and meaning of bodies” (Weedon, 2004, p. 17), introducing language as a key determinant in the process of disciplinary power. In a “poststructuralist theoretical approach to subjectivity and identity, language *constitutes* rather than reflects or expresses the meaning of experience and identity” (Weedon, 2004, p. 17, emphasis in the

original). Foucault (1980a; 1990) proposes that while individuals are ultimately determined by their discursive contexts and master cultural narratives, there is possibility for growth and 'push-back' against the structures that dominate them (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982). Where there is power, there is also resistance through mobile and temporary points which produce dynamic fragmentations and regroupings which change individuals, dividing their points of reference and reconstituting and creating their identities (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Power does not only suppress, it also produces subjects through strategic interactions in which all parties can exert a certain amount of control and influence. While it must be acknowledged that there are still situations in the world in which the mechanisms of power operate in a totalitarian manner producing domination and oppression, more often, subjects are produced by discourses within relations of power that display a dialectic between acceptance and resistance (Foucault, 1990; Weedon, 2004; Prins, 2006). Power establishes a relation among elements and, through this articulation, identity is constructed (Foucault, 1990; Prins, 2006).

South Africa's history dichotomised people according to 'race'. But as Nuttall & Michael (2000) note, prior to the abolishment of Apartheid, there was an "imbrication of multiple identities" (p. 1) despite Apartheid's pursuit of masking these multiple identities through "the ideology of separation" resulting in a 'creolisation' or merging of cultures. "Important as this focus on the decompression of the post-Apartheid period has been, we may also begin to see that complex configurations, at least at the level of identity, were always there" (p. 1). This is encouraging as it could mean that in the future, instead of being a 'Rainbow Nation' of separate cultures, we could become a creolised nation of South Africans expressing agency through enculturation and new systems of meaning-making. While intersectionality can enforce mutually reinforcing dimensions of oppression (e.g. for black women), it may also produce contradictions, fissures or gaps whereby some aspects of identity may be dominant and others less so – this makes resources available for other possibilities and alternatives.

2.6.1. Constructionist Intersectionality

'Intersectionality' as a construct was introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) in the discussion of employment of black women in the U.S. and recognises the importance of examining and analysing the intersection of multiple lines of discrimination and simultaneous positioning of subjects within numerous social categories (Phoenix, 2006) such as 'race' and class, and gender and sexuality discussed above.

Intersectionality was initially a call to consider the intersections of structural forms of discrimination. While social structures such as 'race', class, gender and sexuality are often seen as individual characteristics or aspects of identities, it is impossible to consider these systemic forms of inequality in isolation. It is only in understanding the context of these structures and how they interact with each other that an insight into the lives and experiences of those that are oppressed and prejudiced under these structures will be gained.

> Being a woman is not distinct from being either black or working class or heterosexual. We cannot partial out gender from the rest of who we are – for we are simultaneously classed, raced and gendered. Hence we cannot talk about my experience of being a woman without talking about my race and my class for how I experience the social world and others' responses to me are inextricably tied to all these axes of difference (de la Rey, 1997, p. 7).

Racism, colonialism, and patriarchy collide for young, black South Africans. From a systemic perspective, the construct of intersectionality indicates the compounded damaging effects on those at the "subordinate poles of gender, race and class" (Prins, 2006, p. 279) and highlights the dominant positions within these social structures such as masculinity, whiteness, heterosexual, and upper and middle-class (Crenshaw, 1989). Crenshaw (1991) proposes a systemic interpretation of intersectionality in revealing the unilateral and detrimental symbolic and material consequences for people whose lives are situated at the intersections of different social categories thereby foregrounding the impact of social systems and structures and their "performative effects of social subordination" (Prins, 2006, p. 279)

> Intersectionality is what occurs when a woman from a minority group… tries to navigate the main crossing in the city… The main highway is 'racism road'. One cross street can be Colonialism, then Patriarchy Street… She has to deal not only with one form of oppression but with all forms, those named as road signs, which link together to make a double, a triple, multiple, a many layered blanket of oppression (Yuval-Davis, 2006, p. 196).

But viewing intersectionality as this 'multi-layered blanket of oppression' may imply that power is unilateral and absolute, assuming that "the human subject is primarily constituted by systems of domination and marginalisation" (Phoenix, 2006, p. 23) with identity functioning only to categorise and label. As Foucault (1979) asserts, power is not a property, rather a relation and through a societal disciplinary process there is a possibility to exercise agency and productive power. Social structures are by definition socially constructed as opposed to being biological and essential; their

significance created through social and historical processes and therefore part of the institutional fabric of society. While these structures constrain us under their "matrix of domination" (Andersen & Hill Collins, 2007, p. 63), the fact that they are socially constructed makes them open to social challenge and change over time through narrative resources and the ability to alter and change meaning-making systems.

Crenshaw (1991) acknowledges that categorisation is not always unilateral and "there is nonetheless some degree of agency that people can and do exert in the politics of naming" (p. 1297). Identity construction does not always refer to 'being subjected to', it can also refer to 'becoming a subject' with his or her own way of thinking or acting through narrative and enabling resources (Prins, 2006). Hill Collins (1998) uses African American people's reference to Africa as a 'homeland' and addressing each other as 'brother' and 'sister' as an example of resisting the subordinating effects of 'race' placed on black Americans.

Prins (2006) in line with Foucault's relational or disciplinary, as opposed to oppressive, approach to power proposes a constructionist interpretation of intersectionality. "It is only in cases where the infinitesimal mechanisms of power have become reified into static structures with totalitarian traits that we may speak of domination and oppression" (Prins, 2006, p. 279). In contexts where disciplinary power exists, intersectionality provides an opportunity to consider configurations of social structures in terms of the creation and construction of narratives, the possibility of counter-narratives and agency. When one thinks in terms of a story, it is possible to consider the possibility of a twist and a turn in the plot, whereas when a position is seen in terms of a reductionist and determinist label and category, no possibility for change exists.

Prins (2006) asserts that "[m]arkers of identity such as gender, class or ethnicity are not merely exclusive and limiting forms of categorization, but simultaneously provide narrative and enabling resources" (p. 280). Through the intersectional nature of identities, people experience multiple lines of belonging and alienation (Yuval-Davis, 2006) through multifaceted and contradictory social categories which themselves intersect in a variety of different ways. When the historically accepted meanings of social categories are challenged, new counter-narratives and new ways of 'belonging' and being recognised are made possible.

From the perspective of constructionist intersectionality (Prins, 2006), identity is not merely a matter of naming and labelling, but rather one of narration as we are simultaneously the actor in and co-author of our life-stories (Arendt, 1998; Prins, 2006). A list of characteristics describing 'what' a

person is falls short in defining identity. Identity is rather 'who' a person is, a culmination of their stories. While stories can convey situations of structure and oppression, they can also provide the opportunity to expound the possibility for agency and the ability to take initiative and be spontaneous, create new thoughts and actions through words in what Arendt (1998) refers to as "natality." "The new beginning inherent in birth can make itself felt in the world only because the newcomer possesses the capacity of beginning something anew, that is, of acting" (Arendt, 1998, p. 9). Just as every new birth implies a new life story, one not able to be told at the time of birth, so it is with the human capacity for action and agency, which can initiate the new and unexpected (Benhabib, 1990). Arendt (1998) proposed that action, or the ability to act and take initiative through language is the way people exercise agency and insert themselves into the world. She referred to this as a "second birth" (p. 177), giving the notion of natality both biological and social dimensions. Narrative expounds the tension between structure and agency with identity constructed dialectically somewhere in between.

> I use 'identity' to refer to the meeting point, the point of suture, between, on one hand, the discourses and practices which attempt to 'interpellate', speak to us or hail us into place as the social subjects of particular discourses, and on the other hand, the processes which produce subjectivities, which construct us as subjects which can be '*spoken*'. Identities are thus points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us (Hall, 2000, p. 19, emphasis my own).

Life-stories are multi-layered and contradictory. While social categories such as 'race', gender and sexuality play a constitutive role, some more totalising than others, they never intersect in the same way as merely determining factors. Individual identities are constructed at the intersections of different axes of social difference and inequality. These intersections are never static and fixed; rather they are constant sites of struggle and negotiation (Hall, 2000; Prins, 2006). "[W]e are simultaneously less and more than the sum of the social categories with which we are identified" (Prins, 2006, p. 281).

Constructionist intersectionality (Prins, 2006) provides the possibility for agency and change. The bumping and churning of social positionings as they intersect at certain points in time and history may serve to disrupt the hold of individual dimensions of social positioning, enabling individuals to exercise agency and insert new interpretations of culture and themselves into existing cultural scripts with the effect of "creolisation" and the formation of something new (Glissant, 1989; Nuttall & Michael, 2000; Erasmus, 2001; Nuttall, 2004; Martin, 2006; Cohen, 2007).

2.6.2. Cultural Creolisation

Disciplinary power is at play in the modification and adaption of culture through enculturation (Fay, 1996) and "creolisation" (Glissant, 1989; Nuttall & Michael, 2000, Erasmus, 2001, Martin, 2006). At the time of the abolishment of Apartheid and the formation of the 'new' South Africa, in the spirit of reconciliation and creation of a new nation, the country's new leaders encouraged acceptance and tolerance of difference. Thabo Mbeki's 'I am an African' speech on the Constitutional Assembly's adoption of the South African Constitution Bill in 1996 attempted to do just this. In his attempt to be inclusive of South Africans' different African and European ancestry he drew on the old composition of South African society, a juxtaposition of discrete, 'different' groups (Martin, 2006). Similarly Desmond Tutu's promotion of multiculturalism through coining the phrase 'Rainbow Nation' called for containment and "polite proximities" (Nuttall & Michael, 2000, p. 6). Nation building was promoted through being able to retain your cultural identity in a fixed and uncontested way, enabling people to feel secure in the fact that they could retain their ethnic roots. This may have been a palatable way to begin a new nation, particularly given the potential for hostility between racial groups instilled by Apartheid's forced segregation, but numerous authors have called for a more fluid theorising of culture and identity as opposed to the distinct and discrete separations that have been encouraged historically (Nuttall & Michael, 2000; Nuttall, 2004; Martin, 2006)

Despite South Africa's history of segregation, difference and closure, the possibility for cultural fluidity appears to exist, thereby exceeding the "simplified evocations of difference that have so frequently inhabited South African cultural theorizing" (Nuttall & Michael, 2000, p. 5). As Sarah Nuttall (2004) notes, "exclusionary notions of identity, based on race and ethnicity, are still operative among certain sectors of post-apartheid South African society… But how do we find a way of accounting for the transformations that are also taking place?" (p. 731).

"Creolisation" (Glissant, 1989; Nuttall & Michael, 2000, Erasmus, 2001, Martin, 2006) has been proposed as a way of explaining the cultural transformation evident in many areas of South African life. Creolisation, an ongoing, dynamic process inherent in all forms of cultural encounter, implies that everyone participates in the modification and adaption of culture and that no new form takes precedence over the old, thereby implying productivity, creativity and agency (Michael & Nuttall, 2000). The old and the new do not come to together in a hybrid retaining elements of its previous

form, rather a new culture is formed with elements of the past, but with the previous components not necessarily recognised in an exclusionary, political way (Cohen, 2007).

> Post-colonial readings of culture have tended to focus on difference – but more complex studies of affinities and how they are made are now needed, particularly in South Africa. The theoretical possibilities of the term 'creolisation' need to be drawn on not to bring about erasure – an erasing of difference – but to underwrite a complex process of making connections (Nuttall & Michael, 2000, p. 10).

Creolisation occurs when "particular elements from incoming or inherited cultures, endow[ed] with meanings different from those they possessed in the original cultures" are merged to "create new varieties that supersede the prior forms" (Cohen, 2007, p. 369). Creolisation has been offered as a concept in considering new subject positioning, understood as a process of creating new cultures and social organisations through "transformative fusion" and the creation of a 'new' third space (Nuttall & Michael, 2000, p. 6). Unlike hybridity, creolisation is not necessarily predicated on challenge and resistance, but "is seen as an ongoing process that is inherent in all forms of cultural encounter" (p. 7). Creolisation implies that everyone participates in the cross-cultural process in the creation of culture and identity and that the new form is not oppositional to other social categories thereby implying productivity and creativity.

Nuttall (2004) notes that South African theorists in the past have been uncomfortable with the notion of creolisation as it is thought of as synonymous with 'colouredness', biologically and culturally, and the Apartheid state's interpellation of colouredness as neither black nor white and the racist implications of this. Erasmus (2001) cuts through this issue in her proclamation that colouredness is a good example of a creolised cultural identity, "derived not merely from two 'pure' traditions, African and European, but from multiple sources that themselves are impure and contingent" (p. 22).

> In re-imagining coloured identities we need to move beyond the notion that coloured identities are mixed-race identities. Rather we need to see them as cultural identities comprising detailed bodies of knowledge, specific cultural practices, memories and rituals and modes of being… The result has been a highly specific and instantly recognizable cultural formation – not just a 'mixture', but a very particular 'mixture' comprising elements of British, Dutch, Malaysian, Khoi and other forms of African culture appropriated, translated

> and articulated in complex and subtle ways. These elements acquire their specific cultural meaning only once fused and translated (Erasmus, 2001, p. 21).

Erasmus (2001) refers to "cultural creativity under conditions of marginality" (p. 16) thereby alluding to the agentic nature of creolisation. Creolisation is a demonstration of agency, change, reflexivity and intersectionality where the positionings within social structures are potentially disrupted and something new is created with new language and possibilities and repertoires of meaning-making.

> To be a Creole is no longer a mimetic, derivative stance. Rather it describes a position interposed between two or more cultures, selectively appropriating some elements, rejecting others, and creating new possibilities that transgress and supersede parent cultures, which themselves are increasingly recognised as fluid (Cohen, 2007, p. 381).

Our identities are constructed in an iterative process through the interaction between the self and the other. The possibility of agency and change occurs in this continuous cycle of relationality between the self as another to oneself, and the external other (Ricouer, 1992). Arendt (1998) proposes that language and narrative are the tools humans use to construct personal identities and reveal and disclose who they are, whether this is through internal, self-speak, or interactive speech with others. Natality, for Arendt, refers to the ability to be spontaneous, the human capacity to create new thoughts and actions through words (Gordon, 2002). Just as every new birth implies a new life story, one not able to be told at the time of birth, so it is with the human capacity for action and agency, which can initiate the new and unexpected (Benhabib, 1990) through narrative possibilities (Prins, 2006).

Cultural creolisation and constructionist intersectionality through the function of narrative possibilities provide us with the potential to express agency, create new systems of meaning-making and experience and belonging in the construction of integrated and coherent identities.

> The concept of narrative represents a natural bridge among the social sciences… for its actual utility at specifying an *integrative*, if more complex framework for the study of lives in context and the study of groups, societies, and cultures (Hammack, 2011, p. 17, emphasis in the original).

2.6.3. Narrative Imagination – Agency through Hope and Choice

A narrative without a future component lacks hope and agency. Brockmeier (2009) expounds on the meaning-making resources of language as a form of agency, proposing that narrative imagination, or the ability to conceive of how things will be from the vantage point of how things currently are, plays a crucial role in humans acting towards, what Bruner (1986) refers to as, *'Possible Castles'*. "[N]o less is at stake than our freedom, which relies on our ability to see things not only as they are, but as they are not" (Andrews, 2014, p. 5). An understanding of human beings' meaning-making systems is evident in how individuals "construct their real and possible worlds – and their material and fictitious castles" (Brockmeier, 2009, p. 214). Brockmeier (2009) cautions us not to spend time trying to differentiate between the real and the fantasy, instead calling for "concepts that are differentiated, open and sensitive enough to live up to the complex and delicate fabric of our meaning constructions" (p. 214).

Following on the work of Harré, Brockmeier (2009) states that "human agency cannot be separated from the study of the language of agency" (p. 224). Language, and the discourse of agency, not only "reflects, labels and describes an action, but also creates it – both morally and ontologically" (p. 225). The discourse and language of agency is the way we create a relationship of possibility between the world and ourselves.

> What makes narrative such a flexible form and vehicle of imagination is its capacity to tap into multiple frameworks of meaning that draw on both real and fictive scenarios of agency. Narrative imagination seamlessly mingles the factual with the fictitious, the real with the possible; in fact it fuses the real and possible with the impossible… …narrative is our most powerful device to subjunctivize the world. It opens up to the hypothetical, the possible, and the actual. It invites us to live in more than one reality, in more than one context of meaning, in more than one order of time (Brockmeier, 2009, p. 227).

Narrative imagination provides hope through envisaging possible castles and reaching for meaning, "the ultimate form of human agency" (Brockmeier, 2009, p. 230). Freire (1996) proposed that agency and transformation become possible through hope and consciousness.

> The radical, committed to human liberation, does not become the prisoner of a "circle of certainty" within which reality is also imprisoned. On the contrary, the more radical the person is, the more fully he or she enters into reality so that, knowing it better, he or she can

> better transform it. This individual is not afraid to confront, to listen, to see the world unveiled. This person is not afraid to meet the people and enter into a dialogue with them (Freire, 1996, p. 21).

Freire (1996) argues that "the word" is the "essence of dialogue". Through critical and reflexive dialogue on economic, political and social issues, individuals have the possibility to become conscientised, aware of the world around them and their impact on it. Through this process, and the possibilities of language, change at both the individual level and the broader social level is made possible.

Bradbury & Clark (2012) caution that the process of South African youth "imagining 'better futures' does not just entail "simply developing individual agency", but rather young people "need to find imaginative (re)connections across present divisive lines inscribed by our past histories" (p. 186) through linking the 'individual' and the 'social' and extending agency from an individual quest into a social and political project. Bradbury & Clark (2012) propose that we need to "actively confront disabling and disempowering narratives" (p. 186) moving beyond "[t]he recurring nightmares of our apartheid past" (p. 187) present in the 'narrative unconscious' (Freeman, 2010) and facilitate the creation of new narratives and views of the world through narrative imagination. The challenge with future orientated narratives is to differentiate between fantasy and agentic narrative imagination thereby providing "hopeful inspiration for new horizons of action, rather than illusory mirages that seduce and paralyse" (Bradbury & Clark, 2012, p. 187).

2.7. Conclusion

Recognition (Fay, 1996; Taylor, 2004) and belonging (Fay, 1996; Yuval-Davis, 2006; Prins, 2006) refer to the experience of being co-positioned in a number of different structures such as nation, culture, ethnicity and 'race' as well as in "articulatory practices around family, gender, age religion, sexuality or class" (Prins, 2006, p. 288). Most importantly though, "belonging does not refer to a state of being, but to a desire to belong, a 'longing to be' " (Prins, 2006, p. 288). Identity is performatively constructed through narrative representations and because of this, belonging is never ultimately achieved, rather it is always a precarious and a constantly changing position throughout one's life.

> The desire for narrative closure, the quest for a life that is unitary and whole is like the longing for a lost paradise; it will necessarily remain unfulfilled. This impossibility of

> returning to one's *roots* incites human subjects (individually and collectively) to trace out their *routes*. Concerns for a (common) origin often tend towards essentialist and politically conservative conceptions of (common) destiny. At the same time,… if the narrative of one's life lacks an account of the larger genealogy or collective identity into which it can be inscribed, this constitutes a serious obstacle to forging new routes (Prins, 2006, p. 289, emphasis in the original).

Bhabha (2000) speaks of the 'right to narrate' as not just as a linguistic act, but also as "a metaphor for the fundamental human interest in freedom itself, the right to be heard, to be recognized and represented" (p. 2). This authority to tell our stories, recall and challenge our histories, and generate and change the direction of social life contributes to human beings' ability to be agentic. Bhabha (1990) proposes that the coherence of a nation, and its inhabitants' ability to find belonging, is possible through social and literary narratives in which "[t]he language of culture and community is poised on the fissures of the present becoming the rhetorical figures of a national past (p. 294). Bhabha (1990) uses 'the city' as a metaphor for language and narrative, in that it "provides the space in which emergent identifications and new social movements of the people are played out… and the perplexity of the living is most acutely experienced" (p. 320). Our differences in terms of our individual histories, languages, and social positionings from the perspective of race, class, gender and sexuality are able to be brought together through the right narrate.

> It is only when we respect the right to narrate of those cultures and communities of difference that live in our midst that we begin a process that internationally bridges the hope of the world… For a world culture is nothing more or less than an act of bridging… and such a bridge… always begins with the desire to narrate (p. 3).

We all tell our stories in the creation and confirmation of our identities and life meanings. The desire to narrate is underpinned by our need as humans to make sense of the world, the *right* to narrate, as Bhabha intends it, entails a recognition of the politics of narration, who gets to speak and whose stories are heard. This right to narrate is collectively articulated and functions through the understanding of difference, particularly of marginal populations, a dialogical process that makes human agency possible through enunciation and the right of reply. Some write autobiographical tomes and others regale their friends and families with their tales. As Crites (1986) aptly puts it, "psychic strength includes both a strong sense of self-identity, rooted in the past, and an equally strong power of self-transcendence, directed toward the future. This strength must be concentrated in the present, which is the point of tension between self-identity and self-transcendence" (p. 171).

If a narrative can reflect this strength through meaningful memories of the past, combined with the hope of adventures, wisdom and human connection in the future, balanced and grounded in the present with the acknowledgement of the contradictory and messy nature of life, the narrator is likely to understand his or her narrative and gain meaning from it (Crites, 1986; Scheibe, 1986). "A self without a story contracts into the thinness of its personal pronoun" (Crites, 1986, p. 172).

Chapter 3

Literature Review

This chapter presents a review of South African empirical studies conducted in the last two decades since the abolishment of Apartheid on adolescent identity construction considered relevant to the current study on black, South African youth. These diverse studies include qualitative, quantitative and action research methodologies conducted within multiple disciplines including Education, Psychology and Sociology. The studies reviewed focus on the period of adolescence broadly conceptualised from early adolescence with the onset of puberty to late adolescence and indicate how South African adolescent identity construction has been influenced by the socio-political events in the country at the time.

As would have been expected considering the country's history, a wide range of South African literature and empirical work exists on the effects of 'race', and by implication, class, inextricably linked to 'race' in the South African context, as social structures in the construction of adolescent identity. These studies, as considered relevant to the current study, are discussed below. Empirical studies on the effects of gender, sexuality and sexual orientation on identity construction are not as extensive and prolific as those focused on the effects of 'race', but those found to be relevant to the current study are discussed under the heading 'gender, sexuality and adolescent identity construction'.

Empirical studies on the social and cultural transformation evident in various areas of South African life are discussed under the heading 'cultural creolisation' as defined in chapter 2. Indication of the adaption of youth discourses and the ways in which young South Africans are challenging pre-established boundaries and social structures are evident in these studies. Empirical studies using narrative as a methodology in participatory action research and consciousness-raising in the South African context are explored.

As discussed in chapter 2 above, the social structures of 'race', class, gender and sexuality determine the social interactions and positioning of a society's subjects. Prejudicial positionings within these structures, in which agency is constrained, result in individuals being more vulnerable to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Empirical studies on the effects of HIV/AIDS and identity construction are examined, with specific reference to the stigma suffered by those infected and affected by the virus. Lastly, from the perspective of relationality, empirical work focused on how the social

interactions of those affected by the virus and the disease are slowly becoming more normalised is discussed.

3.1. 'Race' and Adolescent Identity Construction

In the early 1990s, before the abolishment of Apartheid in 1994, Campbell (1995a; 1995b) interviewed 40 (20 women and 20 men) isiZulu speaking residents of a Durban township between the ages of 17 and 23 years in order to examine identity construction in terms of life challenges, group memberships and behavioural options. The most important group memberships in order of importance were family, school, church. The people with whom the participants identified with in order of influence were black people, church members, comrades (politically conscious youth supportive of the Mass Democratic Movement and the African National Congress), decent citizens (reliable and respectable community members), educated people (those who had received formal education), family, friends, gender, lovers, urban as opposed to rural people, and the younger generation. The participants described their greatest life challenges as alcohol, crime, freedom of movement, interpersonal conduct in terms of high levels of jealousy amongst their peers and interpersonal conduct in the form of violence. Political conflict was also a major life challenge given the high levels of conflict the participants were living under in the townships of Natal at the time.

Franchi & Swart (2003) examined "whether post-apartheid society offers young adults new and different possibilities for constructing their identity, or whether 'race' still constitutes a central defining feature of their representations of *Self* and *Other*?" (p. 209). The study involved the analysis of "self-articulated self-conceptions and future identity aspirations and threats" of 542 South African students from different cultural and language backgrounds.

> The new dispensation attempts to offer identity possibilities predicated on the recognition and reversal of past inequalities, and the construction of a sentiment of national unity that integrates previously designated 'racially constructed' differences into a vision of a meaningful and valued national identity (Franchi & Swart, 2003, p. 210).

Franchi and Swart (2003) used Harré's (1998) proposition that the individual reflects "the strategic positioning of the self within historically, politically, socially, culturally and gendered subject locations" (p. 211). They propose that participants whose identity is constructed on the basis of a 'past' location would identify predominantly with their language group of origin whereas those whose identity is constructed on the basis of a 'present' location would identify with a national

identity, a social class, professional body or community of choice. Individuals who are more focused on the future tend to reject cultural, racial, linguistic, class and gender identifications, believing that they can surpass social structural positioning in terms of 'race', class, and gender in the expression of agency and cultural creolisation. While the results of this study indicate that South Africa offers its youth a variety of identity possibilities not restricted to, "'racial', 'cultural' and national representations of self and other", the authors question whether these identity options are "disguising the 'racial' discourses of the past, or whether these identity options [actually] offer new ways of conceptualizing the self and other" (p. 233).

An ethnographic study conducted by Gaganakis (2004) through a series of semi-structured interviews indicated a strong identification with 'race' from a positive perspective in the construction of black adolescent identity. The 16-17 year old girls comprised two groups, a lower income group who attended various township schools and a middle income suburban group who attended a previously white-only school. A strong sense of cohesion and identification with being black was reported amongst the first group who made references to "proud of being black", "our people", "I have great pride in being black" and "being black is related to a sense of connection, community and neighbourliness" (p. 63) indicative of the post-Apartheid discourse of hope and promise of a new life. In contrast, the white girls interviewed showed less identification with 'race' and being white, making reference to how being white was equivalent to being side-lined and eroded.

Thom and Coetzee (2004) compared the identity development of black and white adolescents through the effects of cultural identity and positive cultural role models. 2142 participants were drawn from nine provinces in South Africa representing seven of South Africa's official languages. The Erikson Scale developed by Ochse (1983) was used to analyse the questionnaires with the total score indicating the degree to which adolescents have developed "a sense of trust, autonomy, initiative and industry during childhood" and the degree of identity formation during adolescence (p. 187). Erikson explicitly states which types of subjective feelings and attitudes are likely to be experienced by adolescents who have successfully resolved the developmental crises. Thom & Coetzee (2004) report that the sample of black adolescents had developed a stronger sense of identity than their white counterparts. Similarly to the Gaganakis (2004) study, the findings of this study propose that with the introduction of democracy, black culture has been more openly acknowledged, encouraged and valued thereby entrenching positive identity development of black youth. As proposed by Stevens and Lockhat (1997), black identity was strengthened through a

common black, social identity against a common enemy under the racism of Apartheid, which continues to operate as a frame of reference post its abolishment in 1994.

Norris, Roeser, Richter, Lewin, Ginsburg, Fleetwood, Taole & van der Wolf (2008) conducted a study on adolescents post the dismantling of Apartheid in order to assess whether youth from racially different backgrounds embraced a collective national South African identity and how important this national identity was to them in comparison with their racial group memberships defined according to the Apartheid definitions of 'Black', 'White', 'Coloured' (mixed 'race') and 'Indian' (from Indian descent). It was found that 'Black' and 'Coloured' youth tended to have more certainty about being South African, reportedly "feeling "very South African" " (p. 58), displaying a stronger collective identity than the 'White' and 'Indian' youth who displayed a more individualistic identity and less positive perceptions about the prospects of South Africa. The black participants exhibited dual identities through strong national as well as strong racial identities. This was not evident among the 'White', 'Coloured' and 'Indian' participants. "[I]t appears that White South Africans assigned greater importance to personal identities (age, gender) and relatively low importance to collective racial-cultural and national identities compared with Blacks, Coloureds, and Indians" (p. 60).

Low, Akande and Hill (2005) conducted a qualitative study in which a total of 272 students from the US (123 students) and South Africa (149 students, split broadly equally between White (Afrikaans speaking), Sotho, isiXhosa and mixed 'race') completed the Extended Version of the Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status Questionnaire based on Marcia's (1966) work on identity, an extension of Erikson's work. Low et al (2005) demonstrated that adolescents could be classified according to Marcia's (1966) four statuses of identity based on exploration and commitment dimensions. If individuals are not committed to any goals, values and beliefs and have not explored any options they are said to be in a '*diffused'* status. Individuals currently exploring their options are said to be in '*moratorium'*. Those who have not explored options but are committed to their goals, values and beliefs are said to be '*foreclosed'*, and individuals who have been in moratorium and have now committed are said to be '*identity achieved'*. It was found that significantly more South African students than their U.S. counterparts were classified as '*identity achieved'*, particularly in ideological and political domains. The authors attributed the higher percentage of South African students classified as *'identity achieved'* to the fact that in societies such as South Africa where traditional forms of culture, particularly among African people, are undergoing rapid change, adolescents are left to make major life decisions with limited parental guidance as their parents and

older relatives have limited knowledge of the changing environment, thereby resulting in high levels of adolescent individualisation.

Walker (2005) explored the narratives of a group of black and white undergraduate students at a historically white, Afrikaans-medium university in South Africa. The study raises interesting issues about narrative, memory and recollections in the lives of 'born-free' South Africans. Walker (2005) poses the following questions:

> Could it be that the racism that saturated apartheid South Africa and deeply shaped social and educational identities has been erased by a new inclusive 'multiracialism' so that looking back to the past is neither relevant nor helpful? Or is it that racism and its dimensions of power continues in both old and newer guises, shaping how young South Africans take themselves to be, such that for some reminders of the past are uncomfortable for their new South African identities, while for others the past is a key referent for the work that still needs to be done to produce a society genuinely free of racial division? (p. 130)

Walker (2005) concludes that at the time of her study there was a combination of both Rainbow Nation and new racism being displayed on the Northern University campus. While there are signs of hopefulness in the integration of the student group across 'race', and Apartheid ideology has been somewhat subdued, it definitely has not been defeated. "What is clear is that all of the students' lives are marked, whether acknowledged or not, by race, by racialized subjectivities, and by a past of racial separateness" Walker (2005) suggests in her conclusion that the cultivation of a critical narrative imagination, or "the ability to think what it might be like to be in the place of a person different from oneself, to read such stories intelligently, and to understand the emotions and desires that someone so placed may have" (p. 143), could assist in racial integration and the reduction of "racism lite" or "default racism" (p. 143) that existed on the campus.

Pattman's (2007) research conducted by third-year sociology students on student identities at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Durban, and notes: "'Race' emerged as a dominant theme in the research. Although I had asked my students to research student identities in general, all the various student groups they identified were racialised, and it seemed almost impossible for my students to research and write about student identities at UKZN without addressing 'race'" (p. 477). In addition, the student researchers tended to seek out and research students of the same 'race' to themselves further indicating how the construct is the primary identifier amongst university students.

3.2. Gender, Sexuality and Adolescent Identity Construction

As indicated by the studies reviewed above, the effects of 'race' and racialised existence on the construction of adolescent identity in South Africa are still strong. Similarly the effects of gender and patriarchy are also present in the construction of identity, as one of the interviewees in Haffejee's (2015) book '*What if there were no whites in South Africa'* remarked, "[w]e've kind of left patriarchy untouched, which for me is also anti-black. Because black women are the majority in this country, if you leave a system like patriarchy, you're leaving a system to screw over the majority" (p. 41), thereby indicating the effects of intersectionality of 'race' and gender. I have included the empirical studies on gender and sexuality together as the two intertwine. Generally, sexuality has been understood to represent the biological component of gender, a social construction. Men and heterosexuality are considered the standard and all other ways of being are considered to be the 'other'. As the studies reviewed below indicate, the ideologies of patriarchy and heterosexuality are primary sites for maintaining power inequalities between men and women in terms of gender, and heterosexual individuals and those of other forms of sexual orientation.

Gender emerged as a primary organising factor of the social identity of the participants in Campbell's (1995b) study with girls focused more on the private spheres of home, family and lovers, and boys more focused on the public world outside of the home, showing a greater interest in their communities than girls. From a behavioural perspective, boys were more independent and exerted more control over their lives than girls. "Girls tended to be far more accepting of their subordinate social status both as black people in the wider South African context, as women, and as members of the younger generation" (1995b, p. 165).

The patrilineal nature of Xhosa families was indicated in a study by Siqwana-Ndulo (1998) who surveyed 96 respondents, ranging in age from 21 to 92 in the old Transkei sub-region of the Eastern Cape in South Africa in order to gain an understanding of family constellations and household arrangements. Despite the fact that men were absent from 62% of households as a result of migrant work, death or mothers being single, a household was only considered by its inhabitants to be a 'home' when a man was present.

A recent narrative study conducted by Haley & Bradbury (2015) with six adolescent heads of households and their siblings in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa indicated that gender and sexuality stereotypes are still upheld by patriarchal ideology. The interviews were conducted utilising the categories in the McAdams (1993) personal narrative interview protocol which served as a guide for

asking open-ended, exploratory questions about their lives. The authors found that while these young household heads benefit from support networks, they often experience particularly gendered, often hostile, adult surveillance. While neighbours are important in these young people's lives, they were often subjected to a high degree of animosity and negative stereotyping about their child-headed household status as a result of the stigma attached to HIV/AIDS, assumed by their neighbours to be the reason for their orphanhood. In addition to this, the surveillance and judgment from their neighbours and others in their communities is gendered. Boys are perceived to be "dangerous and likely to become involved in anti-social behaviours associated with aggression and gang violence…, and risk-taking behaviour such as alcohol and drug abuse" (Haley & Bradbury, 2015, p. 400). This assumption of deviant boys is consistent with the findings from a study conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (2003) on fatherhood which found that in the absence of fathers in a household, mothers are believed to be incapable of controlling teenage boys. The surveillance on girls is focused on regulating their sexuality. There appears to be a link in the discourse of child-headed households to girls in this situation being perceived to be 'whores' without adult regulation and control. This assumption is derived from the expectation that young women are forced to engage in prostitution in order to feed their families, whether true or not, and as a result a threat to existing family structures (Haley & Bradbury, 2015).

In studying the practices of power and abuse and the reproduction of heterosexual gender roles in gay male relationships, Henderson & Shefer (2008) explored the case study of a young isiXhosa speaking, gay man in the Western Cape of South Africa. The study is a collation of snapshots of the life of this young man and formed part of a broader study exploring gay male relationships and the dynamics of control, power and abuse. This study investigated whether stereotypical heteropatriarchal constructions operate similarly in gay relationships to heterosexual traditional roles in which women typically assume subordinate roles, or whether there is indication of a shift to "alternative, more flexible and possibly more equitable relationships" (p. 1) amongst homosexual couples.

The participant discussed how in homosexual relationships he experienced "dominant gender binarism" (p. 16), and was often negatively positioned as the 'female' and undermined for appearing more feminine in body type and voice pitch than other men. His partners would expect him to cook and wash and perform traditionally female designated, domestic roles. The authors concluded that "it appears that internalised homophobia and uncritical assumption of gender binarisms may

facilitate and in some cases exaggerate practices of dominance-submission, abuse, and violence in gay relationships" (p. 17).

Ulwaluko, the traditional Xhosa circumcision ritual of spending a month in 'the bush' with only men has been argued to reinforce masculine (Sev'er, 2012) and heterosexual dominance. In light of this critique, the way the gay participant in the Henderson & Shefer (2008) study experienced his *Ulwaluko* was interesting. Despite the participant feeling different from the other men when he attended this ritual and being actively 'othered' through being excluded from some traditional activities, he was less ostracised than when at home. The tension between feeling accepted by the other men, and yet at the same time feeling different was illustrated through his story of the other men covering themselves up more when he was around. While he was aware that they covered up, he also interpreted this as a form of their respect. The authors concluded that a start had been made in opening up traditional rites of passage to all men regardless of their sexuality.

Msibi (2012) studied the experiences of "queer youth in South African township schools" (p. 515) through interviewing 14 isiZulu speaking, black school learners, between the ages of 15 and 18, and teachers. He discovered that despite young gay men and women experiencing "punitive actions" ranging from "derogatory language to vicious reactionary hate" (p. 515), in many cases expressed through violence and "often perpetrated by teachers" (p. 515), there were other instances in which 'queer learners' displayed resistance and agency.

Language was found to be the primary mechanism of harassment and discrimination against 'queer learners'. Pervasive and irrational fear of homosexuality and a general lack of understanding of what it means to be gay were identified amongst teachers. "Teachers were seen as central in spreading the idea that homosexuality was contagious, and therefore 'straight' learners were seen as being in danger of being infected by queer learners" (Msibi, 2012, p. 523). This indicates how school as an Ideological State Apparatus (Althusser, 1971) entrenches the social structures of gender and sexuality in socially positioning individuals. "Homophobia in schools is a weapon for sexism… it is the hierarchical and oppositional organisation of sexuality that works to consolidate discourses of homophobia and (hetero)sexism" (Msibi, 2012, p. 526). The participants stated that as gay-identified men they were relegated in the minds of straight men to 'being girls'.

3.3. Cultural Creolisation

The abolishment of Apartheid in South Africa has been instrumental in changing the way black adolescents construct their identities, indicating a modification and change of perceived social positioning within ideological structures.

Gaganakis' (2004) study, introduced above under the discussion on 'race' and identity construction, indicated that the identities of the girls interviewed were "fluid and adaptive", as "new systems of meaning, new relationships and new patterns of behavior and identity" evolve over time (p. 64). Through being forced to speak English and adopt 'white' mannerisms the girls slip in and out of social roles, shifting the confluence of their identities and thereby creating new identities and cultures in an illustration of constructionist intersectionality and creolisation.

Similarly, Bagnol, Matebeni, Simon, Blaser, Manuel & Moutinho (2010) found more than a decade after the abolishment of Apartheid that the discourses of youth in South Africa, especially in Johannesburg, are starting to challenge pre-established boundaries, "transforming the notions of identity based on race/color/ethnicity, gender, class, and sexuality" (p. 283). While the study concluded that young people are still struggling to negotiate the juxtaposition of living in societies with violent pasts and the current fluidity, it was observed through their socialisation and dating patterns that youth between the ages of 18 and 24 years from different 'races' and ethnicities, previously separated during Apartheid, now interact and socialise more freely, with particular reference to the Johannesburg area. While racism "is not far from the surface", the participants in this study "live with increased openness to diversity and the ability to relate in multicultural and multi-"racial" surroundings" (p. 297).

While this positive description of openness and multiplicity suggests deracialisation and the maturation of South Africa as a young democracy, these cultural crossings are not symmetrical and do not operate in a vacuum. Rather, they are embedded in historical and contemporary global systems. Creolisation may therefore also result in role confusion and difficulties with integrated identity construction or finding one's place in the world.

Such issues of role confusion, particularly in relation to dominant Western consumerism, were found in a study conducted by Swartz, Hamilton, Harding & De Lannoy (2012). Swartz et al (2012) researched "what it means to be poor, young and black and belong in a society that has suffered debilitating and dehumanising racial subjugation" (p. 27). The authors concluded that young people

from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds display two, very split and dichotomous, methods of belonging and constructing their identities; *dreaming* which enables access to the 'New South African' narrative of consumerism, social mobility and a focus on the future; and *ikasi style* which provides an opportunity to belong without real opportunity. Swartz et al (2012) refer to their participants "employing the normative narrative of potential and elevated goals" (p. 28) evident in their aspirations of upward mobility. For those that have accepted that these 'New South African' goals are unattainable, they attach themselves to *ikasi-style*, a rationalisation of behaviours comprising sex, alcohol, music, recreation, fashion and other diversions that challenge existent social norms and indicate role confusion (Erikson, 1963).

In an effort to be forward focused and adopt the 'New South African' neoliberal values of consumerism and 'success' these young people who belong to the *'dreaming'* group do not connect the poverty and prejudice they continue to live with to Apartheid as a recently dismantled structure. Instead, there is a belief that hard work and education alone is the route to socio-economic mobility.

> Township young people's reluctance to acknowledge the limitations on their opportunities imposed by the legacies of Apartheid was both the method and result of their will to belong to the hope-filled future of the 'New South Africa'. This double-edged sword, of high aspiration coupled with slim chances of success, is what we term 'the quiet violence of dreams' – a phenomenon that asks whether dreaming is itself a 'weapon of the weak'… or a weapon *against* the weak (Swartz et al, 2012, p. 32).

Swartz et al (2012) interpreted poor South African's belief that they "maintain total control over their lives" (p. 32) and an increased sense of agency as "a form of resistance and a weapon against despair" (p. 32). Swartz et al (2012) express concern for what happens to these young people when their aspirations of being wealthy businessmen, brain surgeons and professional soccer players are relegated to just being dreams, instead of goals, concerned that "as disillusionment sets in, the weapons of resistance [could] work against the person's well-being" (p. 33).

> …it is significant that in the 'New South Africa', the dream of democracy coupled with a global consumer culture appears to have led young people to have unreasonably high aspirations and to believe in their endless potential to acquire 'the goods' of this new democracy, despite the lack of opportunity to fulfil such dreams, at least in socially acceptable ways (Swartz et al, 2012, p. 33).

Socially deviant behaviours such as drinking alcohol, smoking marijuana and having multiple sexual partners are justified as the ways things are done in '*ikasi*'. For subjects who have already been excluded from the 'New South African' narrative, *ikasi style* is a discourse of inclusion and belonging, a way of accessing the markers of success of the 'New South Africa', such as cars and clothes, through alternate means than those of education and hard work.

Swartz et al (2012) conclude that "[y]outh might benefit from being aided to develop a Freireian critical consciousness (Freire, 1996) regarding influences of past conflict and present poverty on their current development and future life choices. This would need to be carefully broached given young people's reluctance to look backwards and their optimism about the future" (p. 38).

Role confusion as a result of a shift from African collectivist ideology to an individualised capitalist ideology has been in process for a number of decades. Stevens & Lockhat (1997) conducted one of the first investigations into black identity post-Apartheid in which they cautioned against the unitary nature of analyses which tend to view "Black people or Black adolescents as a homogenous and coherent group with a unitary experience of Blackness or adolescence" (p. 132). This study examines identity within Eriksonian psychosocial theory and Bulhan's analysis of identity development within oppressed social groups, and argues that the contradictions between capitalist, racist and individualist ideologies, and African collectivist ideology hindered the construction of healthy self-concepts and the attainment of identity over role confusion in the mid-1990's in South Africa. Black adolescents having been exposed to the imagery, symbols and values that encourage individual achievement and social mobility according to capitalist ideology were limited in their access to the capital necessary to achieve these goals due to South Africa's racist past.

> …there is increasing presence of western ideological symbols at all levels of the social fabric, through language, dress codes, recreational activities and so on. Many black adolescents are now actively adopting an identity that allows them to cope to some degree in this new socio-historical period, but that simultaneously also marginalises and alienates them further from their own social realities… this process of acculturation frequently results in the historically oppressed experiencing a psychological tension related to them straddling different worlds that all become increasingly alien (Stevens & Lockhat, 1997, p. 258)

This issue is illustrated by the authors in noting a number of challenges faced by black adolescents who were engaged in various forms of liberation politics at the time Apartheid was abolished. These individuals were forced to redefine their identities and life scripts from "young lions" to

"young entrepreneurs" (p. 142), which in many cases led to what Erikson (1963) describes as role confusion. Entrepreneurial ambitions are consistent with a capitalistic framework which at the time of the abolishment of Apartheid was unattainable to these adolescents due to the racist legacy of South African society and counter to their political aspirations and beliefs. The common 'enemy' that previously provided a reference point for many young, black people under Apartheid and against which they collectively defined themselves, became less visible or obvious in post-Apartheid South Africa resulting in these young people feeling "directionless and uncontained" (p. 143). Under Apartheid a collective identity developed among black youth in their shared political views that challenged "pervasive racist ideology" (p. 143). Post Apartheid this collective identity was threatened by the dominance of Western ideologies that caused a shift from collectivism to individualism (Stevens & Lockhat, 1997).

In the late 1990's Nuttall & Michael (2000) called for a shift away from post-colonial readings of culture that focus on difference between South Africans, thereby highlighting ideological and social positionings, instead encouraging the possibility for "creolisation" (p. 10). Instead of bringing about erasure, creolisation underwrites a complex process of making connections, of creating a third space with elements from incoming or inherited cultures, bestowed with different meanings. A number of empirical studies indicate how this is occurring in South Africa amongst the youth, particularly through creolisation of music, clothing, media and technology, and through language expressed through accents and linguistic codes.

Salo (2003) examined the shifts in young men and women's racial and gendered identities in Manenberg, a predominantly coloured (mixed 'race'), Afrikaans speaking township in Cape Town, South Africa. It was found that through consumerism expressed through "music, dress styles and technological gadgetry" new meaning was given to local values and practices (p. 348). This manipulation of "linguistic codes, accents, dress style and attitude" enabled the Manenberg youth to break free from "archaic, racial apartheid notions of personhood"(p. 363). While the influences were from Western sources, these influences were creolised into an African rendition through the youth making them their own as opposed to just replicating them per se.

The study indicates how television programmes and soap operas have replaced the moral surveillance from the elder women in the community. Television programmes enabled young women to challenge local notions of gender roles in heterosexual relationships, a role previously carried out by older women, mothers, aunts or older female family friends. "The emergent notions of personhood emphasized the individual's familiarity with the cosmopolitan styles and spaces of

the new South Africans, whose bodies were no longer anchored in specific racialised spaces or marked with ethnic accents and dress codes." (p. 363).

Nuttall (2004) demonstrates how, what she refers to as Y-culture, essentially youth culture, is characterised by creolisation through the reworking of American signs in making them their own. Nuttall (2004) demonstrates through her study on Y-culture, specifically in Rosebank, Johannesburg, "how young people remake the past in very specific ways in the services of the present and the future and how they develop a mode of cultural accessorization in the making of their contemporary selfhood" (p. 432).

This "accessorization" through popular culture is demonstrated through clothing, and how young people take traditional items of clothing and modify them to 'make them their own'. Bogatsu (2002) illustrates this through his essay entitled *Loxion Kulcha: Fashioning Black Youth Culture in Post-Apartheid South Africa.* The designers at Loxion Kulcha (LK), a clothing brand targeted at young, black youth, specifically the Y-Culture referred to above, demonstrated cultural creolisation through the LK-branded overalls. This was achieved by taking an item of clothing historically associated with "the working-class world of migrant labour" (p. 2) and making it cool and hip for young people to wear. The primary colours of the overalls differentiate them from the "utility-oriented mass-produced overalls", but the desire to express notions of the past is not lost in the reconstruction of something new, an example of creolisation. "Making and wearing a utility garment like overalls declares something, just as the modern punk's army pants communicate belligerence", representing "celebratory representations of what were once framed as oppressed images" (p. 8). The overalls represent the "cultural identity of contemporary youth and their parents' past" (p. 8).

Loxion Kulcha's brand has managed to incorporate the 'hipness' of township life promoting being proudly township and creating "ghetto-credibility" as "an unofficial measuring tool for one's blackness" (p. 5). By wearing LK the wearer boldly declares "I am a product of the township" and "I celebrate township culture" (p. 5), but in my own way, through the creolisation of culture as opposed to disregarding all reference to the roots, and routes, of my past.

> Through invoking historical sartorial idiom, whether it be of the stylish gangster or the migrant worker, the LK range revives a set of historical meanings and associations that resonate in the present. This preoccupation of contemporary youth culture with using cultural codes from the past can be understood as a strategy to draw from existing cultural forms to redefine a novel set of experiences. Yet at the same time, this improvisation, which takes

> shape around a strained and complex history, assumes an affectionate and celebratory tone (Bogatsu, 2002, p. 11).

Dolby (1999; 2000) investigated how global popular culture has become a significant influence in the construction of youth identity, specifically with respect to 'racial' identity. Dolby (1999) found through her interaction with learners from a multiracial school in Durban that popular culture provides the ground for both racial conflict and connection, and the shifting of racial alliances. Students construct their conceptualisations of 'race' through what Bourdieu refers to as a discourse of taste (Dolby, 2000).

> Students need to recognize how their identities are formed and their "mattering maps" produced through an engagement with electronic and other types of media. As a result potential sites of identification have expanded dramatically, carving out new, globally defined spaces in which ideas of self and other are imagined, produced and lived. Unbound from attachment to one specific, geographic location, youth identities transcend local and national borders (p. 292).

Dolby (1999) describes how racial differences and identity construction through popular music is demonstrated through a school fashion show. She observes how the principal of the school attempts to resolve a racial conflict between the learners around the choice of music for the show; the white learners want to use only techno music and the black learners would like a mix of techno, pop, rap and children's songs. The white students are clinging to "the styles and tastes of global whiteness, here specifically to music, to consolidate an identity about which they feel and express passionate attachments" (p. 298). Despite the fact that the roots of techno music are from the African-American community in Detroit, likely to be unbeknownst to the white learners, in their minds techno music is associated with European contexts and 'whiteness'.

In contrast to this divisive effect created by popular culture through music taste, it also has the capacity to build ties and affiliation across 'races'. "Popular culture, instead of other dynamics, such as politics, history or even family ties, becomes the ground on which affiliation is built and maintained" (p. 301). Dolby (1999) notices how the rigid boundaries between tastes, specifically around popular music, have started to blur. In the late 1990's, rave music and rave clubs, historically perceived to be a white influence, gained favour amongst all 'races' and acted as a connecting interest and activity over weekends, uniting the 'races'. "Suddenly students were coming to school talking about 'rave' sessions at coloured clubs, and coloured students began to find common ground

with white students, because of and through the practice of raving" (p. 303). Clothing trends started to follow the affiliation with rave music and young people across 'races' started to dress in "those shiny things because you are at a rave" (p. 303). This enabled a practice of cultural creolisation in the creation of new, less 'race' depicted, music tastes across the youth in the school observed. For these students with limited memories of Apartheid, or interest in politics and history, 'taste' is the basis on which they understand 'race'. As tastes merge and intersect, so too will cultures, which creolise and form new practices, alliances and divisions. This study indicates how identities are "not fixed and stagnant; there is always the potential for change, to rewrite the script and create new worlds" (Dolby, 1999, p. 305), indicating how "'race' rests on ground which is inherently and historically unstable" (Dolby, 2000, p. 7). Belonging is no longer associated to any one place or specific location rather, young people now traverse these boundaries easily and rapidly, shifting between "cultural and social spheres marked by a plurality of languages and cultures" (Giroux, 1994, p. 288).

Two studies, Vandeyar (2008) and McKinney (2010), focused on two previously white Government schools in Pretoria and Johannesburg indicate how, despite the teachers' attempt to force black adolescents to assimilate, through giving up "their own identities and cultures" and acknowledging "the superiority of the [white] culture", these scholars produce new identities through "mobile points of resistance" without assimilating white culture but rather forming a creolisation of all the subjectivities they are exposed to (McKinney, 2010, p. 192).

Vandeyar (2008) studied the extent of racial integration and the emergence of new identities at three former white, now racially mixed, schools in Pretoria by interviewing 13 participants at each school. The study explored how adolescents frame and negotiate their identities within the dominant institutional cultures still present in former white high schools in South Africa. The findings confirm how, despite the fact that whiteness is presented as "morally, intellectually and biologically superior,… identities are constantly being questioned and recast as black and white students begin to engage each other in the daily routines of institutional life" (p. 286). The study reiterates how creolisation is an important concept in postcolonial theory as cultural signs and practices from both the colonised and the colonising cultures are integrated. Bhabha (1994) asserts how racial and cultural purity can no longer exist in situations of integration, taking the newly integrated subjects beyond their so-called essential identities, producing a "third space of enunciation" (Vandeyar, 2008, p. 289). There was a definite trend of students wanting integration and change and in many instances taking the initiative to promote cross-cultural and inter-racial relationships where the

school and predominantly white teachers fail to do so, demonstrating how creolisation provides opportunities to challenge the notion of stable identities.

> A decade of democracy has witnessed students moving from overt racial practices as in derogatory name calling and stereotyping… to a situation of improved inter-cultural attitudes and less negative stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination in these schools. Processes of migration, diaspora formation and cultural hybridisation have transformed individual and group identities and created 'new ethnicities". (Vandeyar, 2008, p. 296).

This study indicated that some South African youth are "subliminally rejecting racial categories of old,… discarding homogenous identities for an unfixed, inclusive and creolised "South African" identity" (p. 296).

McKinney (2010) conducted an ethnographic case study of a previously white only suburban girls' school in Johannesburg that is now primarily comprised of black scholars who travel far distances to attend the school. The study involved observation, regular interviewing of groups of learners and staff members and the analysis of transcripts derived from a small number of individual learners who wore microphones in an attempt to record naturally occurring conversations. As in the previous study, assimilation techniques are employed by a very strict white headmistress who employs a 'fit in or get out' attitude. To this point, Soudien (2007) analysed racial integration in South African schools and found that the incorporation of non-white learners into previously white-only schools in post-Apartheid South Africa has been typified by a bias towards white people positioned "as the bearers of preferred knowledge", and black people subjugated "as the embodiment of inferior understandings of the world" (p. 443).

> [T]he consequences of assimilation for subordinate groups are dire. They are expected both to give up their own identities and cultures and critically to acknowledge the superiority of the culture, and by implication, the identities of the groups into whose social context they are moving (Soudien, 2004, p. 96).

McKinney (2010) concludes that despite this racial power imbalance, the learners manage to create creolised identities that "subvert their positioning in official discourses" and in the process are "changing the culture of the school and expanding, rather than replacing, their identity repertoires" (p. 192). This is evident in how the girls use signs and signification from their own popular culture such as rap music, traditional dance and songs and resist the pressure to be 'good girls' while still

achieving high academic results thereby preventing criticism of their teachers. This creolised cultural practice is concordant with a poststructural approach to identity construction, which rejects the notion of replacing one identity for another, rather proposing a more fluid and dynamic process of identity construction. McKinney (2010) draws on Foucauldian theory in order to explain the reconstitution of these girls' new and expanded identities:

> …one is dealing with mobile and transitory points of resistance, producing cleavages in a society that shift about, fracturing unities and effecting regroupings, furrowing across individuals themselves, cutting them up and remoulding them, marking off irreducible regions in them, in their bodies and minds (Foucault, 1990, p. 96).

McKinney (2010) also draws on what Davies and Harré (1999) call "dynamic aspects of encounters" (p. 32) in understanding the creolised cultural practices that these students display: "[a]n individual emerges through the processes of social interaction not as a relatively fixed end product but as one who is constituted and reconstituted through the various discursive practices in which they participate" (p. 35).

McKinney (2007) explored the role that language plays in constructing identity in youth who attend desegregated schools in South Africa and how language is entangled in social positioning, an indication of race and class, and cultural creolisation. She explains in her article, "*If I speak English, does it make me less black anyway?*" (p. 6) how learners recognise and characterise different kinds of English and English accents, "attaching prestige to some varieties and, by implication, deficit to others" (p. 7). McKinney (2007) refers to language as an "act of identity" (p. 12) through which individuals reveal their personal identities and their social positioning. One of her participants illustrates this use of language through coining the phrase "Louis Vuitton English" linking 'posh' English not only to white speakers, but also to wealth and the "desire for elite consumption" (p. 14). The study illustrates how language produces social strata in an 'us' (model C or suburban schooled) versus 'them' (township schooled) division. While the proficiency and accent of English spoken produces fissures and divisions among black learners, McKinney (2007) concluded that young people "have far more opportunities and space to play with their identities" (p. 21) than they have had in the past, and demonstrate that through language it is possible to shift allegiances, traverse class barriers, and creolise cultures through "drawing on both static and hybrid discourses of 'race' "(p. 21).

3.4. Narrative Imagination as a Form of Participatory Action Research

Bradbury and Miller (2010) conducted an action research study illustrating how "conceptualising identity in narrative terms can take multiple and diverse theoretical directions aligned with the more general "turn to language" in the social sciences" (p. 2). Over a number of years Bradbury & Miller (2010) engaged with one hundred isiZulu-speaking adolescents from two disadvantaged schools in an annual programme which included multiple forms of the arts, such as, *inter alia,* music, dance and film, in order to explore and construct identity. The ways in which the participants engaged practically caused the researchers to reflexively question and rethink the possible intersections of theoretical frameworks. Based on Vygotskian theory, the researchers conceptualised the programme as a "Zone of Identity Development" (p. 5) where the task of the mediator became a facilitation role in the creation of new pathways in the process of 'becoming' as opposed to teaching, determining and prescribing who the learners will become. "We argue that a zone for the development of identity can be created through the use of texts and stories that offer the mediated subject the capacity to "escape", or, at least, make the discursive constraints of the internalised other elastic or permeable" (p. 6). From a narrative standpoint, the authors also observed how life is unavoidably and fundamentally story-like and that "psychological subjectivity or individual identity at any moment may be understood as the culmination or product of the story "thus far" " (p. 9).

The researchers conclude by questioning whether it is possible for this generation to compose imaginative stories of a future so markedly different from the narratives of their predecessors. They propose that only in enabling an opportunity for young people to express themselves and engage with their stories and their insecure pasts, will a chance to dream and imagine narrative possibilities be made possible.

> We are aware of a need to be vigilant against the dual traps of nostalgia and romantic idealism; these are very real traps for "new" South Africans who can alternate between a euphoric sense of triumph (the destruction of the old political regime in the particular way in which this was achieved is not inconsequential) and despair (the task of building a society is far more complex than a simple cross-in-box for all) (p. 13).

Educators and teachers have a role in providing the opportunity for designing and creating new zones of proximal development that are not prescriptive, but rather supportive in the creation of new identities and the ability for young people to traverse multiple spaces, cultural worlds and systems of meaning-making (Bradbury & Miller, 2010).

Bradbury and Clark (2012) collated the stories and vignettes of their experiences of working with young, black isiZulu speaking people in KwaZulu-Natal with a twofold agenda: firstly "to listen attentively to the narratives of their lives", and secondly "to provide the resources for the construction of alternative counter-stories" (p. 185). The authors found that often their hopes for the youth were "tested and eroded by the recognition that, as South African youth struggle to make their way in the world, the resources most easily available to them may be conservative and reactionary" (p. 187). In their struggle between the worlds of theory and the worlds of practice in interacting with these young people, Bradbury & Clark (2012) found "an ambivalent oscillation between these worlds [that] may mirror young people's own uncertainties about how to step into the future" (p. 187). They concluded their study by posing the challenge to find new ways to, in the words of Bell Hooks (1994), "teach to transgress" (p. 187) so that the promise of the Rainbow Nation can serve to inspire "new horizons of action" as opposed to "illusory mirages that seduce and paralyse" (p. 187).

Life stories illustrate how the 'self' and social structures intersect to produce narrative possibilities and the sense of belonging or alienation in the construction of identity. While social structures such as 'race', class, gender and sexuality are often perceived to be dominating aspects of identity construction, narrative resources provide the possibility to move beyond the politics of naming in the construction of counter-narratives and new ways of belonging in the world.

Autobiographical narratives have had a special role to play in South Africa's history, their function and form changing over the years in response to the social and political environment of the time. Nuttall & Michael (2000) trace the function and role of what they refer to as "Autobiographical acts" (p. 298) in South Africa from the 1950s to the 1990s. In a country that denied a sense of self to the majority of its population as a result of their 'race', autobiographical narratives provided many with the opportunity to find meaning and hope amidst the subordination and prejudice they suffered. The function of writing an autobiography extended from a literary act into a profoundly psychological act, a way of imagining the possibility of constructing an identity away from the oppression under which black, South Africans lived.

> The autobiographical act in South Africa, more than a literary convention, has become a cultural activity. Memoir, reminiscence, confession, testament, case history and professional journalism, all different kinds of autobiographical acts or cultural occasions in which narrators take up models of identity that have become widely available, have pervaded the culture of the 1990s and spread into the new century (p. 298).

Autobiographies written in the 1980s, referred to by Nuttall & Michael (2000) as the autobiographies of the future and narrative possibilities, offered "a potential space of healing and freedom" (p. 300). Mostly written by women, they describe collective spaces through the discourse of a collective community and the narrative of hope of a new, democratic nation. The narratives of this time refer to the belief that when Apartheid is finally abolished the self would be free from the commitments of the collective struggle, able to be a real, forward thinking community with narratives of hope and possibility. In the autobiographies of Kuzwayo (1985), Magona (1990) and Mashinini (1989) a sense of hope pervades in the belief that personal trauma will be absolved and replaced by a community of hope striving for the success a nation that values humanity through "the dictum 'a person is a person through other people'" (p. 306), the underlying premise of African Ubuntu.

Narratives of the 1990's, which Nuttall & Michael (2000) refer to as the narratives of the past, were heavily influenced by the Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC) and the breaking of silences. 'Grieving is Healing' was proclaimed by the TRC posters, "if you speak, the message is, you heal yourself; further if you do so, you heal the community and the nation" (p. 307). The heroic voice of the 1980's, became the voice of the victim in the 1990's, dictated by the omnipotence of the TRC. The agency written of and hoped for in the 1980's was replaced by the narratives of victims in the 1990's.

> If, in the autobiographies of the 1980s, notions of healing and freedom were projected on to the future nation, in the 1990s, with the arrival of the longed-for moment, a new investment is made in examining the past. Healing and freedom now mean a revisiting of the trauma of the apartheid past, in order to lay it to rest and in order to achieve forgiveness but not forgetting, another central tenet of the TRC philosophy (Nuttall & Michael, 2000, p. 308).

Mamphela Ramphele describes how she found a moment of healing through writing her autobiography, *A Passion for Freedom: My Life* (2014); "I had to find a way of making sense of my life in the unfolding historical drama" (p. 249). White authors also used narratives as a way of making sense of their lives and acknowledging the atrocities of apartheid. In the spirit of the 1990s' truth and reconciliation, Antjie Krog in *Country of my Skull,* confessed to the transgressions of her people in attempting to find a place for herself in the new nation; "We are so utterly sorry. We are deeply ashamed and gripped with remorse. But hear us, we are from here. We will live it right – here – with you, for you" (1998, p. 99).

Narratives have been used in the South African context in an attempt to understand the past and in a cathartic quest to heal and find peace in the present, and hope and dream into the future, enabling the individual to emerge as "a key, newly legitimized concept" (Nuttall & Michael, 2000, p. 298).

3.5. HIV/AIDS and Adolescent Identity Construction

Despite the evidence of cultural creolisation and the possibility for black youth in South Africa to find belonging in post-Apartheid South Africa through narrative imagination, the HIV/AIDS pandemic still hampers integrated identity construction in those infected or affected by the disease. Individuals in subordinate social positions with respect to the social structures of 'race', class, gender and sexuality, for whom agency is constrained due to being prejudicially socially positioned, are more susceptible to the devastating effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. HIV/AIDS is fraught with stigmatisation resulting in prejudice and discrimination. At a time when most vulnerable, HIV positive individuals and their families are stigmatised and discriminated against by those who are threatened, fearful and judgmental. HIV positive individuals and by implication, their families, bear the mark of sexual misconduct, the "vestigial sense of shame felt when moments of sexual connection and release are marked by and evidenced in a sexually acquired infection or illness" (Cameron, 2005, p. 97). People cope with the fear and threat of HIV/AIDS by projecting their worst fears onto clearly identifiable 'others' who are then subject to prejudice and discrimination (Joffe, 1999). The word AIDS encompasses notions of clinical disease, contamination, exclusion, hostility, morality, sexual deviance, risk, blame, fear and death (Wilton, 1997). Acknowledgement of HIV positive status produces a mark of disgrace that causes isolation from communities and discrimination that affects the everyday lives of HIV positive individuals and their families. HIV positive contributors to the Levine and Ross (2002) study report that their greatest fears are associated with the stigma of the disease rather than the pain and suffering associated with infection. "Stigma... makes AIDS the silent killer, because people fear the social disgrace of speaking about it, or taking easily available precautions...or seeking treatment..." (Ban Ki Moon, 2008, p. 7).

The effects of HIV/AIDS operate in a structural way to ostracise and stigmatise its sufferers, socially positioning and prejudicing infected individuals and their families, an important social dynamic in South African society. "AIDS is an epidemic enmeshed with sex and death. In Africa the epidemic is enmeshed with the politics of race and sex and death" (Cameron, 2005 p. 75). The disease goes to the heart of our insecurities and emotions, threatening the freedom of one of our most basic and intimate physical acts and as a result is fraught with stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination. At a time when most vulnerable, HIV positive individuals are stigmatised and

discriminated against by those threatened, fearful and judgemental. Despite the fact that medical science has evolved to the point of enabling the disease to be managed successfully through chemical intervention, the stigma surrounding the disease still causes millions to die untreated for fear of prejudice and discrimination.

Cluver & Gardner (2006) studied the psychological well-being of children orphaned by AIDS in Cape Town through a study involving 30 orphaned children and 30 matched controls using standardised questionnaires on emotional and behavioural problems, social and attention difficulties, and prosocial behaviour. The study found a 73% incidence of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in addition to marked concentration difficulties and social issues such as viewing themselves as not having good friends and suffering from stigmatisation in the orphan sample.

In a study to ascertain the impact of HIV/AIDS on social and educational development of AIDS orphans in child-headed households in rural Kwa-Zulu Natal, Hartell & Chabilall (2005) interviewed four child-headed families in their homes, observing and discussing their life experiences and the "perspective of their life-world[s]" (p. 213). The authors found that many of these adolescents were forced to abandon their schooling as they were called on to nurse dying parents and assume parental roles for their younger siblings. Those that did manage to attend school underperformed, finding it extremely difficult to concentrate in class due to their other responsibilities and the stress and trauma experienced. The participants reported "[f]eelings of apprehension, remorse and humiliation…negative emotions, mood swings, angry outbursts … followed by feelings of anxiety, guilt, shame and embarrassment, particularly at school" (p. 223). The stigmatisation of the disease leads the participants to withdraw from both school and society as a result of "discrimination and victimisation" (p. 226). The authors conclude that "[t]he lack of an effective support system together with the lack of basic needs such as food, acceptance, belonging, respect, security and shelter inhibit the development and the self-actualization of the orphans in child-headed households" (p. 227).

Similarly Booysen & Arntz, (2002) found that non-attendance at school was common amongst HIV/AIDS orphans. This study was conducted in the early years of Government rolling out child-support grants to children in an effort to enable children to create stable household bases despite being orphaned. Booysen & Arntz (2002) reported that one of the biggest effects of losing a primary caregiver to HIV/AIDS was that children were then passed from one household to another which disrupted school attendance as a result of moving so often.

In a larger study, Cluver et al (2008) interviewed 1 025 participants (425 AIDS orphans, 241 orphans from non-AIDS causes, and 278 matched non-orphans) aged 10 – 19 using standardised psychological measures of depression, anxiety, posttraumatic stress, peer problems, delinquency, and conduct problems. The AIDS orphan sample reported "higher levels of stigma and fewer positive activities than other groups" (p. 410). "Experience of AIDS-related stigma was shown to strongly mediate the association between AIDS orphanhood and depression, posttraumatic stress, conduct problems, and delinquency" (p. 415). The authors found that positive recreational activities such as sports are a protective factor against the effects of stigma.

Squire (2013), in her book *Living with HIV and ARVs,* adopts a narrative approach to research on HIV and the changing effects of the pandemic, focusing on the importance of particularity "against the background of many commonalities in contemporary three-letter lives" (p. 245). The stories of those on ARVs indicate that living with HIV is becoming more 'normalised' in South Africa, "medical successes have made it a liveable condition; knowledge and treatment mean that stigmatisation is less", involving "gossiping", as opposed to "overt stigmatisation or discrimination" (p. 221). As was suggested in this research, "[t]he scale and visibility of HIV in South Africa means that by default it is part of everyday living and to some extent normalised, treated as a regular element in social discourses and practices" (p. 221), unlike in the UK where it is "invisibilised" (p. 221). Given the pandemic's prevalence, "stigma may be resisted by declaring that the condition is everywhere, and that at least the disclosing or disclosed HIV positive person knows their status and is doing the right things: getting ARVs, using condoms" (p. 221). Despite the limits and constraints imposed on those with HIV, of which Squire (2013) reports many, there was a sense that communities were being more supportive of those infected by the virus that has been reported in the past (Cluver & Gardner, 2006; Cluver et al, 2008).

> Throughout the stories, interviewees narrated and performed resourcefulness: both a critical awareness of resource constraints, and an ongoing attention to existing and possible resources. Participants' resource mobilisations rested on the convivialities of community, neighbourhood, and family engagements, as much as on activist histories (p. 241).

3.6. Conclusion

A wide range of empirical studies relevant to the subject of identity construction in black township youth born at the time of the dismantling of Apartheid, the hinge generation (Hoffman, 2005), have been discussed in this review. The tension between the structural forces of 'race', and by implication

in South Africa, class, and gender and sexuality, and the opportunities for marginalised young people to exercise agency and choice is explored empirically demonstrating a tension between these opposing possibilities. “Constructionist intersectionality” (Prins, 2006), the ability to think narratively and see one’s life as a coherent and temporal sum of the parts, and “cultural creolisation” (Glissant, 1989; Erasmus, 2001; Martin, 2006) provides the ability for young people to ‘belong’ in post-Apartheid South Africa. Narrative as a methodology, providing the opportunity to envisage narrative imagination and alternative possibilities from those dictated by Apartheid social scripts, enables the acknowledgement and potential healing of the past and the construction of post-Apartheid youth identities through new systems of meaning-making.

Despite this productive discourse, young people in South Africa are still plagued by the past through their exposure to the HIV/AIDS pandemic and their resultant struggle to find belonging and recognition in the world due to ongoing, albeit somewhat abating, stigmatisation, resulting in the hampering of integrated identity construction.

Chapter 4

Methodology

4.1. Methodological Framework

This research project was conducted by employing narrative methods of data collection within an action research paradigm. The research is qualitative in nature, offering a snapshot in time, grounded in history and context (Squire et al, 2008). Narrative theory as an "approach assumes that sequential temporal orderings of human experience into narrative are not just characteristics of human, but *make* us human" (Squire, 2008, p. 43). The primary aim of the study was to explore the narrative identity construction of black, adolescent, first-generation post-Apartheid South Africans at this historical moment and how their everyday experiences define and shape their perceptions of themselves and how they believe others perceive them. The analysis of the participants' life stories and the social changes they have experienced in their lives offered a glimpse into the construction of these young people's identities. In particular, the study focused on relational belonging, the experience of social positioning from the perspectives of 'race', socio-economic inequality, gender and sexual orientation, and narrative imagination of the future. These young people's narratives provide a window into wider socio-political and historical processes of 'born-free' youth as instantiated in individual experiences.

A phenomenological epistemology was adopted in collecting and analysing the data thereby affording priority to the lived experiences of the participants through their stories and the knowledge of their realities. "Knowing an experience requires more than simply having it; knowing implies being able to identify, describe and explain" (Fay, 1996, p. 20). Through this study the participants were afforded the opportunity to 'know' themselves better and as a researcher of this process I was afforded an insight into their lives and identity construction. It could be argued that truly understanding the experience of another is an impossible task through the eyes of a researcher possessing their own politics and theories, particularly one socially positioned so differently to the participants. Others' meanings are not easily understood, inevitably requiring interpretation by the researcher in terms of their own theoretical, cultural and political positioning thereby rendering a phenomenological approach problematic. But as Fay (1996) asserts:

> …genuine understanding goes beyond sensitivity. To know others – indeed to know oneself – is to be able to make sense of their experience. For this one needs, in addition to sensitivity,

> the ability to decipher the meaning of their experiences. For this you needn't be them or be very much like them (except in the innocuous sense of being able to have experiences and to think and feel in ways persons do) (p. 28).

While I will never grasp the intimacies of how the participants experience their own realities, our various interactions at *Ithemba's* centre in the township in which they live, and their generosity, openness and engagement with me in the telling of their stories assisted in me getting to 'know' these young people. 'Knowing', according to Fay (1996), is interpreted as being able to attach meaning to these young people's experiences. "To know someone else or even ourselves requires not the ability to psychologically unite with them or ourselves at an earlier time but the ability to *interpret the meaning* of the various states, relations, and processes which comprise their or our lives (Fay, 1996, p. 25, emphasis in the original). This process of meaning making is indeed informed by my own social positioning, life experiences and theoretical orientation.

The narrative approach does not prescribe the direction the interview or discussion should take, as it is not governed by specific, interrogative interview questions, as such it cannot assume that the accounts "accurately reflect experience, and that they unleash 'truth' in a pure form unadulterated by the assumptions and values of the researcher" (Mama, 1995, 2006, p. 81). I was only able to 'know' what I was told and was able to infer about the participants' lives, and only through the limits of my own system of meaning-making.

My position as the researcher in this research was not to question the factual accuracy of the participants' accounts, but rather to accept them as their experience and version of the truth.

> The value informing the approach is typically that the researcher should not presume to question the truthfulness of the account and that this position is usually coupled with the view that a person's own account is most relevant for research because it is meaningful to the teller… what this approach achieves is a reasonably faithful reproduction of whatever assumptions people use to interpret their own experience in the research relationship. Put another way, it reproduces (and legitimises through science) whatever discourses research participants use to position themselves at the time (Hollway, 1989, p. 40).

Accepting the "post-structural formulations of the uncertainties of language" (Squire et al, 2008, p. 7), narrative theory attempts to get an understanding of what events, experiences and feelings mean to the participants, and how these meanings have contributed to the construction of their identities.

Narrative methodology provides the framework for individual life narratives to reflect the intersection between the wider historical background in which the participants find themselves, their social and community influences and the events and experiences of their individual lives, culminating in a description of their identities and perceived position in their worlds. This process of linking individual life stories to wider socio-political and historical histories, is also entailed in the further layers of analysis provided by the researcher, particularly thorugh the conceptual or analytic lenses that are brought to bear on the data.

Amina Mama's *Beyond the masks* (2006), cautions that research of marginalised populations often generates theories that reaffirm and maintain the status quo in which 'race', class and gender are major dimensions of oppression. Mama (2006) challenges researchers to conduct research "in such a way as to assist the participating group to know more about themselves and the social conditions of their existence and formation" (p. 67). Audré Lorde (cited in Andersen and Hill Collins, 2007) raises the point that "whenever the need for some pretense of communication arises, those who profit from our oppression call upon us to share our knowledge with them. In other words, it is the responsibility of the oppressed to teach the oppressors their mistakes… Black and Third World people are expected to educate white people as to our humanity" (p. 53). In my capacity as white and middle-class, I wanted to guard against a study on marginalised people conducted solely in order to educate me, ensuring that the participants also gained through this process. With this in mind, an additional aim of the study was to afford the participants a chance to explore their own self-constructions through reflexively considering their life-stories and constructing their narratives in order to project their fledgling, adolescent selves and reflect on their identities. I intended to provide the participants with a chance to get to 'know' themselves better, as "knowing involves some reflective element which merely having an experience does not require" (Fay, 1996, p. 22). The action research emphasis was influenced by the conscientisation approach to adult education and social activism developed by Brazilian intellectual Paulo Freire (1996). Freire's (1996) assertion that social change and progression is more likely to be effected by those with greater consciousness and information of their social and individual realities informs the participatory action element of this study and assumes that understanding and reflecting on the construction of one's identity increases the possibility for individual consciousness and social change.

It should be cautioned though that the process was not a fully participatory process as the design of the research methodology and all analysis and writing up of the thesis was undertaken by me, as the researcher, with no participation from the participants. The participatory aspect was most present in

the data gathering stage in the hope that the participants would learn as much about themselves as I learnt about them (Fine & Torre, 2006).

> Since most of the power lies in the interpretation and allocation of meaning, and in the analysis, theory-building and in the production of publications, participation in data-gathering is a long way removed from power-sharing, but still a major change from the complete exercise of power that has characterised traditional social and psychological research (Mama, 2006, p. 80).

Although the project had more modest aims than revolutionary, change-focused Freireian work, I believe the concepts of Freire's work are relevant. Conscientisation describes the process of facilitating social awareness through the development of an educated and socially aware self, particularly in the oppressed and marginalised segment of the population (Freire, 1996). Freire (1996) argues that conscientisation should be the basic aim and goal of education thereby enabling individual transformation and critical reflection of the individual's position in society, and ultimately the possibility for political and social change.

> When people lack a critical understanding of their reality, apprehending it in fragments which they do not perceive as interacting constituent elements of the whole, they cannot truly know that reality. To truly know it, they would have to reverse their starting point: they would need to have a total vision of the context in order subsequently to separate and isolate its constituent elements and by means of this analysis achieve a clearer perception of the whole (Freire, 1996, p. 85).

The method of conscientisation enables an understanding of the generative themes of a particular time period in history through introducing "women and men to a critical form of thinking about their world" (Freire, 1996, p. 85). These themes are characterised by a "complex representation of many ideas, values, concepts and hopes, as well as the obstacles which impede the people's full humanisation" (Freire, 1996, p. 82). One of the paths to conscientisation is through the formation and telling of one's life-story. Through one's narrative, a person can gain and develop critical self and social awareness, thereby introducing an action research component to this study through narrative theory. Freire himself alerts us to the importance of the temporal or narratival quality of life:

> Because – in contrast to animals – people can tri-dimensionalise time into the past, the present, and the future, their history, in function of their own creations, develops as a constant process of transformation within which epochal units materialise (Freire, 1996, p. 82).

Generative themes are represented by generative codes, or representations of the particular situation in which individuals find themselves. These codes, which in the case of this study are generated by the participants themselves, could be comprised of images, expressions or narratives, sketches or photographs, which lead by "abstraction to the concreteness of existential reality" (Freire, 1996, p. 86). The use of a narrative method therefore complements this form of action research as it gives the participants an opportunity to tell their stories through various different codes and mediums. In the process of narration, an individual is given the opportunity to generate their own themes and codes (stories, photographs and artistic timelines, as were collected in this study) and broaden the horizon of their perceptions through a process of 'conscientisation' resulting in the construction of their identities through an understanding of themselves and their place in the world.

Through self-consciousness, 'conscientisation' (Freire, 1996) and narrative imagination achieved through dialogue with ourselves and others, individuals are able to entertain the notions of agency, choice and hope. This is particularly relevant in South Africa "where the past often seems quite literally like 'another country'" (Bradbury & Clark, 2012, p. 176). Bradbury and Miller (2010) posit that new narratives and counternarratives can, and need, to be created through conversations about and negotiations of African identity where the history of oppression is confronted and new versions of our-selves are able to be articulated. Through constructing their narratives it is hoped that the participants were able to make sense of and acquire meaning out their life stories. In balancing the challenges of their pasts with the hopes and dreams of their futures in the present moment of their current narrative identities it is hoped that the participants were able to gain access to a larger repertoire of meaning-making thereby enabling narrative possibilities and a sense of belonging and recognition from both themselves and others.

The approach to narratives can take various forms; some are event-focused and others experience-centred, some are dialogic or performance oriented, constructed with greater focus on their audience, and others are visual through the use of photographs, paintings, film and other visual media (Patterson, 2008; Squire, 2008; Riessman, 2008).

Event focused narratives are based on the underlying premise that the primary function of narrative is the recapitulation of events. The narrative is intended to be an objective reality of what actually

happened with little or no allowance made for "the inevitably *partial and constructed* nature of any account of personal experience" (Patterson, 2008, p. 30, emphasis in the original) with no emphasis on producing phenomenological data, analyses and interpretation. The analysis of event-focused narratives could also omit important interactions between the storyteller/narrator and the listener/audience through the co-construction of narratives (Squire, 2008, Riessman, 2008).

While events were recapitulated in the stories told by the participants, the focus in the interviews and analysis of this research was not on the accuracy of their accounts, but rather on how the participants experienced these events and what they meant to them. Experience-centred research "rests on a phenomenological assumption that experience can, through stories, become part of consciousness [and] takes a hermeneutic approach to analysing stories [aimed] at full understanding" (Squire, 2008, p. 41). This form of analysis locates meaning not only in what the narrator or interviewee says, but also in the interaction between interviewer and interviewee and the context in which the narrative is told (Squire, 2008).

With the aim of gaining an understanding of the 'meaning' of a narrative, experience-centred research often uses visual materials in order to prompt and recall memories and experiences (Squire, 2008). These images could be 'found' or could be 'made' in order to tell a narrative. Narrators could tell a story 'with' images to enhance a narrative, or could tell a story 'about' images that tell a story on their own. "Visual representations of experience – in photographs, performance art, and other media – can enable others to see as a participant sees, and to feel" (Riessman, 2008, p. 142). The intention with using visual images in this research study in the form of the art timelines which utilised photographs and other images in the narrative format of past, present and future was twofold. Firstly, the art timelines functioned as a prompt and discussion point in the interviews, and secondly, as a data set, analysed together with the interview text data and other memorabilia from the participants' memory boxes discussed below.

> Stories can be found in moments of the research process, in some of the images, in reactions viewers bring to the images at different points in time, and sometimes in the implicit goals of a project (Riessman, 2008, p. 145).

A dialogic/performance narrative is a narrative formed through dialogue between speakers and is driven largely by the context within which the narrative is created and the audience to whom it is told. Dialogic/ performance analysis "interrogates how talk among speakers is interactively (dialogically) produced and performed as narrative" (Riessman, 2008, p. 105). This method of

analysis, in which the researcher is integrally positioned within the data, highlights how stories are constructed through interaction with others and within the context of society and culture. While the participants were asked to answer a broad introductory question aimed at uncovering their own views and experiences of how they came to be the people they are (discussed in the data collection section below), most of the participants were unable to speak about their lives without questioning and prompting by me. This resulted in the participants' narratives being largely dialogic and performance driven as they were formed in conjunction with me, the researcher. Narrative identity, in this context, is positioned and constructed with an audience, or an 'other', in mind.

> We are forever composing impressions of ourselves, projecting a definition of who we are, and making claims about ourselves and the world that we test out and negotiate with others. In situations of difficulty, social actors stage performances of desirable selves to preserve "face" (Riessman, 2008, p. 106).

Riessman's (2008) dialogic/ performance approach is influenced by Bakhtin's (1981) dialogic imagination, which argues that texts contain many voices – "hidden internal politics, historical discourses, and ambiguities – beyond the author's voice", making narratives "polyphonic" or "multivoiced" (p. 107).

> All narratives are, in a fundamental sense, co-constructed. The audience, whether physically present or not, exerts a crucial influence on what can and cannot be said, how things should be expressed, what can be taken for granted, what needs explaining (Salmon & Riessman, 2008, p. 80).

Wengraf (2001) cautions that the interview process in research is often too easily believed to provide an insight into psychological and social realities and therefore the participants' fixed or stable identities. He argues that an interview provides "data only about a particular research conversation that occurred at a particular time and place" (p. 1) produced in a momentary interaction between the narrator and the audience. The stories told in this interaction are "processes of meaning-making in narrative talk through the examination of how key narratives and the warranting of entitlement to speak (category entitlement) establish identity claims" at a particular time and place in conjunction with a particular audience (Phoenix, 2008, p. 74).

Through the combination of experience-centred and dialogic/ performance narrative approaches it was hoped that the participants would provide a window into their experiences of living in a South

African township at this historic moment. In addition to this phenomenological objective, my intention was that the participants would have an opportunity to become 'conscientised' (Freire, 1996) and have access to new systems of meaning-making thereby providing them with an opportunity to construct their narrative identities. Sandino (2010) argues that people's stories not only provide access to their truths and experiences but also "offer us an opportunity to hear the self in the process of becoming through reflective narration" (p. 178).

In utilising narrative methodology, it is necessary to acknowledge the limitations of the method. Narrative methodology is reliant on the productive interpretive qualities of language, through which all people make sense of and communicate experience. However, this reliance on language is problematic in that some experiences, particularly experiences with heightened emotional meaning, are difficult to articulate or 'put into words'. As Frosh (2013) argues what lies beyond language may be as important or even more important than the story told. There is a further complication with language in the context of this particular study in that the researcher is a monolingual English speaker and English is the participants' second language and the expression of emotive subjects may have been difficult for many to articulate resulting in meanings being lost in translation. The introduction of visual narratives, in the form of photographs and the art timelines, was intended to overcome this limitation to some extent through providing an additional medium of narrative expression. An additional shortcoming of the methodology is that a narrative interview produces one version of a life among many that could be told to different audiences at different times. The reflexivity section of this chapter (section 4.5 on page 97) attends to this positionality of the researcher as an older white woman associated with the NGO structure. This relation of difference would certainly have precluded some narratives but it is also conceivable that this outsider status of the interviewer could have enabled some narratives that would be taboo in the particiants' local community.

Stories are situated and strategic, and storytelling, an integral part of being human, "tak[es] place in institutional and cultural contexts with circulating discourses and regulatory practices, always crafted with audience in mind" (Riessman, 2008, p. 183). While narrative as a paradigm continues to be critiqued as being "elusive, contested and indeterminate", its functions include "an epistemology, a methodological perspective, an antidote to positivist research, a communication mode, a supra-genre [and] a text-type" (Riessman, 2008, p. 183). In this study on identity construction, narrative theory provided the appropriate framework for the participants to be able to reflect on various aspects of identity construction such as where they experience belonging and

alienation in their lives, how they are socially positioned and how they envisage and imagine their narratives going forward.

4.2. Participants

As discussed in Chapter 1, the participants were all enrolled in *Ithemba's* after school programme, which operates in a township in the Eastern Cape of South Africa in which the participants live. *Ithemba* is set up to provide support for orphaned and vulnerable children and those infected or affected by HIV and Tuberculosis. The after school programme in which the participants are enrolled operates from *Ithemba's* centre in the township four days a week after school, and provides assistance with mathematics and English, and other homework and personal development. Each adolescent who enrols on the after school programme is allocated a counsellor who monitors the adolescent's health and attendance on the programme. The attendants of the after school programme were asked to volunteer to take part in this yearlong study on youth identity construction through telling their life stories. Twelve participants volunteered to take part in the research. The fact that the participants were volunteers, and not forced in any way to participate, is likely to have been one of the reasons for the high levels of engagement and enthusiasm with which these young people approached the research process. The participants ranged between the ages of 18 and 21 years old, born in the early to mid 1990's, thereby representing the first generation of the post-Apartheid period. All of the participants spoke isiXhosa as their first language. Only three male participants volunteered to participate in the study, hence the uneven gender division of the participants. When I asked the *Ithemba* counsellors why there was such an uneven distribution by gender of the participants, they replied that, *"boys don't like to normally speak about this kind of emotional stuff"*. Contrary to my expectations following this comment, the three male participants were more generous with the narratives of their life experiences than many of the female participants, as will be evident for the reader from the analysis chapters that follow. While two of the participants openly discussed their HIV positive status, the status of the other participants was unknown. Many of the participants openly discussed their parents' HIV infection and HIV/AIDS related deaths. Table 1 overleaf provides a demographic summary of the participants.

Table 1: Profile of Participants

Participant *	Gender	Age	Closest family member/s alive	Education achieved and current activity
Nandipha	Female	19	Grandmother	Matriculated, studying computer course
Asanda	Female	18	Grandmother	Upgrading matric
Anathi	Female	21	Both parents	Matriculated, unemployed
Nobomi	Female	20	Both parents	Matriculated, unemployed
Siphosethu	Female	18	Grandparent	Doing A levels
Nozuko	Female	18	Mother	In matric
Thembela	Female	18	Mother	In matric
Gcobisa	Female	18	Both parents	Upgrading matric
Phozisa	Female	18	Both parents	In matric
Aviwe	Male	18	Mother	Upgrading matric
Malusi	Male	19	Uncle	In matric
Ayabonga	Male	21	Aunt	Matriculated, working

* All names have been changed

4.3. Data Collection

The study involved four interactions with the participants resulting in two data sets: the first being a pictorial depiction of the participants' lives through an art life timeline with photographs taken by the participants, and the second, interview transcripts from two individual interviews conducted with each participant four months apart.

4.3.1. Phase 1

The project was initialised by meeting the participants as a group and providing them with an introduction to the study, explaining how narrative may be a reflexive tool in the construction of identity. Each participant was given a disposable camera with 24 photographs and asked to take photographs of objects, people or places they consider to be significant and meaningful in their past, present and future lives. The cameras were collected by the counsellor in charge of the after school programme and the photographs were developed. One month after the initialisation of the project, we met again as a group and each participant was given an A2 piece of cardboard and together with

their own photographs and utilising stock photographs from magazines and other art supplies, the participants were asked to design an art timeline of their lives in a past, present and future format. These art timelines are presented in Appendix D. Coloured notes were given to the participants to record feelings and emotions associated with the events and experiences depicted on their timelines.

The intention with providing the participants with cameras was to offer them the ability to express themselves visually through "photo voice" (Riessman, 2008, p. 142) in addition to their 'narrative voice' in the interviews. One of the benefits of this approach is indicated in Clark-Ibáñez's (2004) study where she highlights the difference between her 'outsider' eye and her research participants' 'insider' view. Bringing participants into the research process in an active way by using art and photographs reduces the voyeurism that allows 'us' to view 'them', instead enabling researchers to 'see' participants through their own viewfinders.

Photography has been used as a tool for the exploration of society from its invention, and photographers have taken this as one of their major tasks. Every part of the photographic image carries some information that contributes to its total statement; the viewer's responsibility is to *see,* in the most literal way, everything that is there and respond to it. Put another way, the 'statement' the image makes, not just what it shows you, but the mood, moral evaluation and causal connections it suggests, are built up from those details (Becker, 1986).

Using photography in this study was useful in a number of ways. At the outset of the study, having photographs of the participants' lives was beneficial in order to gain an overall picture and image of their lives, an ability to see the participants through their own eyes. Visual documentation demands that the researcher actually comes into contact with the participants and the details of their social lives more than other qualitative methods. Photography also enabled me as the researcher to develop a rapport with participants through the discussion and review of the photographs of their lives thereby enabling me to quickly and specifically demonstrate a familiarity with them and their environments (Gold, 2004). The photographs also assisted with conversation in the interviews, often acting as prompts for both the interviewer and interviewee. Stanczak (2004, p. 25) refers to photography as a "can opener" thereby enabling greater reflection and more in-depth discussion in the interview situation. Responses elicited through the use of images enables the subject to play an active and collaborative role in the research process, as opposed to being a passive object of study (Stanczak, 2004). The photographs were also analysed in conjunction with the text data and separately for their contribution to the understanding of the participants' experiences of their lives.

4.3.2. Phase 2

A month after the art life timelines were produced, a one on one narrative biographic interview was conducted by me with each participant in English. A counsellor from *Ithemba* was present in each interview in case the need for translation or emotional support arose. Other than on a few occasions in which translation of a word from isiXhosa to English was required, this third person was mostly silent and passive in the interviews, physically positioned to the side of the room. No emotional support was required from the counsellor in the interviews. In this study, the emphasis was to discover the experiences of the participants, their sense of themselves and ways of understanding their relationship with the world in the construction of their identities. As a result a non-directive and open-ended approach to collecting, analysing and thinking about the participant as a subject was required in an attempt to achieve what Mama (2006) calls "consciousness-raising" (p. 72) or Freire calls 'conscientisation' (1996). The aim with this process was to provide the space for the participants to reflect on the aspects of their personal histories that they believed were influential in making the participants into the people they are in the eyes of themselves and others. Mama (2006) cautions that where formal interviewing procedures are conducted with set questions it often results in the researched being disempowered as the researchers direct the production of the data as opposed to the researched being provided with a space to use their own voice.

The biographic interview consisted of two parts. In the first part of the interview a single question aimed at inducing a narrative (SQUIN) was posed (Wengraf, 2004):

> "Tell me the story of your life, all the events and experiences that have been important to you up until now and that have made you into the person that you are today."

These uninterrupted interview segments varied markedly between the participants, some spoke for fifteen minutes and others were not able to speak at all without being prompted. Given that the interviews were conducted in English, the participants' second or third language, may have hindered some of the participants uninterrupted segments at the beginning of the interview.

The participants were also asked to bring their 'memory boxes' with them to the interviews. These 'memory boxes' are a form of therapy used by *Ithemba* counsellors whereby young people are given a box into which they are asked to collect all family memorabilia, photographs and items that elicit memories of their families or pasts. This process is an attempt to start a narrative process often lacking in young people attending *Ithemba* as many have lost or never met their family members. In

the second part of the interview the participants' art life timelines and the contents of their 'memory boxes' were used as prompts or 'generative codes' (Freire, 1970, 1996) not only triggering narratives of events but also enabling the participants to see the configuration of themselves in the stories of events thereby constructing their narrative identities through time.

Four months later, a second interview was conducted with the participants. In some cases this served as a continuation of their first narrative interview where I asked for clarification and prompted further discussion on certain issues and events and in other cases the interview served as a 'catch-up' on what had happened in their lives in the four months since I had last seen them. In both situations the second interview enabled the participants to further develop their narratives from both a depth and breadth perspective.

The participants in this study had never had an opportunity to tell their stories in this way before and as a result it was often difficult for them to talk about themselves and their lives in great depth without being prompted by me. This had the effect of drawing me, as the interviewer and researcher, into their narratives and the research process. In answering my questions and prompts I often felt that they were 'performing' their stories to me, not necessarily by telling me what I wanted to hear, but rather making me an integral part of the research as the audience of the narratives.

4.4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

> "Narrative analysis refers to a family of methods for interpreting texts that have in common a storied form" (Riessman, 2008, p. 11).

Two data sets were generated for analysis and interpretation; the first being the art life timelines and the second, the interview transcripts from the two interviews. Both data sets have a storied form and as such were well suited to narrative analysis and the determination of how 'knowledge' (Fay, 1996) is constructed in the everyday world through the ordinary communicative act of story-telling. The aim of the analysis was concerned with understanding the meaning attached to the experiences narrated by the participants and how this meaning is utilised and affects the construction of their narrative identities (Fay, 1996; Sandino, 2010).

4.4.1. First level of analysis: Narrative Portraits

> I see you, as you want to be seen
>
> I hear you, as you want to be heard

I speak you, as you tell me what to say

I write you, as you give me the words

Through your eyes, your words, your voice

I too, am revealed

(Dixson, Chapman & Hill, 2005, p. 23).

The first level of analysis and interpretation of the data involved a vertical analysis of each participant's life story through the creation of narrative portraits using each of the participants' interview transcripts, art timelines and items referred to from their memory boxes in a temporal form under the broad thematic time zones of 'past life', 'present life' and 'future life'. While it is impossible to neatly segregate a life into these compartments as past, current and anticipated life experiences are all inter-related, the art timelines were constructed this way, and as a result the discussions in the interviews were largely temporally focused.

A narrative portrait could be thought of as synonymous to a word picture and in this case represents a coherent and temporally arranged life story for each participant. The creation of the narrative portrait for each participant was guided by Lawrence-Lightfoot & Hoffman Davis' (1997) and Lawrence-Lightfoot's (2005) theory of portraiture which sets out to create "a text that [comes] as close to painting with words," that conveys the "authority, wisdom and perspective of the subjects" and reveals their "essence" (1997, p. 4). Thematic analysis using elements from Riessman's (2008) thematic research methodology, Squire's (2008) experience-centred approach, and Braun and Clarke's (2006) guideline of using thematic analysis in psychology was also used as a guide in the construction of the portraits.

Portraiture is an amalgamation of various qualitative methods such as narrative, naturalistic enquiry and ethnography in the quest to represent the crux of what researchers set out to achieve in social science research: "to (re)present the research participant through the subjective, empathetic, and critical lens of the researcher" (Dixon et al, 2005, p. 17). Portraiture requires that the portraitist listens 'for' a story as opposed to ethnography which requires that the ethnographer listens 'to' a story. As the researcher, I constructed a story out of the data using the participants' direct quotes to support my narration of their stories. The intention was to 'give voice' to the participants, but as Fine (2002, p. 218) argues, "a 'giving voice' approach involves carving out acknowledged pieces of narrative evidence that we select, edit and deploy to border our arguments", making me as the

researcher a central part of the portraits. The portraitist/ researcher seeks the story out and is central to its creation, "active in selecting the themes that will be used to tell the story, strategic in deciding on points of focus and emphasis, and creative in defining the sequence and rhythm of the narrative" (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005, p. 10). "The efforts to balance personal predisposition with disciplined scepticism and critique are central to the portrait's success" (p. 11). Portraiture as a methodology is inspired to move beyond traditional methods of social science research which have historically focused on "pathology and disease rather than health and resilience" (Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffman Davis, 1997, p. 8). This resonates strongly with the optimist in me. The aim was that if the participants were to read their portraits they would feel "fully attended to, recognised, appreciated, respected, [and] scrutinised" (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Hoffman Davis, 1997, p. 5). The resilience and hope displayed by majority of the participants in their life stories matches the spirit within which Lawrence-Lightfoot & Hoffman Davis (1997) developed portraiture as a methodology.

After reading through the transcribed texts a number of times in an active manner all potential themes that arose for each participant under the headings 'past life', 'present life', and 'future life' lives were noted. I then worked through each transcript line by line identifying and labelling (coding) the broad thematic time zones or patterns. In conjunction with the coding of the interview text, I used the art timelines and the memorabilia from the memory boxes mentioned and referred to in the interview to supplement the interview text. In many cases the art timelines were used as discussion prompts and as such were specifically referred to and discussed in the interviews.

In using the photographs as a prompt for the participants' narration, Riessman (2008) argues that visual analysis forms part of a narrative tradition as stories can be found in the moments of the research process captured in a photographic moment and in the reactions participants bring to the images at different points in time. This form of analysis further underpinned the phenomenological epistemology adopted as in addition to the participants verbally telling their stories, this method of using photographs to present themselves enabled them to give a more concrete method of description through the visual representations they created.

On completion of each narrative portrait from the interview text and with specific reference to photographs and memorabilia, I went back to the art timelines to ensure that all photographs and quotes included on each participant's timeline had been included in the portrait. Becker's (1986) and Riessman's (2008) techniques were used to analyse the art timelines. In analysing a photograph, Becker (1986) suggests that the researcher actively looks at it by naming and noting down everything in the picture followed by a period of fantasy where the researcher allows their mind to

wander and a story to develop thereby enabling the emotion and mood of the photograph to be evoked. This results in the photograph becoming more accessible to the researcher as a mental collection available for further work and corroboration with other research material (Riessman, 2008). In this study the photographs on the timelines not only prompted discussion in the interviews, but also acted as a data source used to supplement the interview data in the construction of the narrative portraits.

All the participants' narrative portraits and their art timelines are presented in Appendix D. Three narrative portraits are presented in Chapter 5. These portraits were specifically chosen for their ability to illustrate the use of imagoes, or personalised images of people, in the construction of these young people's identities. Imagoes are constructed around significant and influential people in our lives, both positive and negative, a way of internalising an 'other' into the construction of our identities. Imagoes could be considered "to be life-story derivatives of early object relations" (McAdams, 1993, p. 131).

4.4.2. Second Level of Analysis: Thematic Analysis Across the Narrative Portraits

Once each narrative portrait had been individually constructed, a second level of thematic analysis was conducted across the narrative portraits identifying the similarities and differences between the participants thereby extending the specific experiences discussed by the participants into generalised themes.

> The portraitist is very interested in the single case because she or he believes that embedded in it, the reader will discover resonant universal themes (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005, p. 13).

Literature and theory were not overtly engaged with in the process of developing the individual narrative portraits, but were strongly invoked in the understanding of the themes in the horizontal analysis across the participants' narratives. Particular attention was given to specific stories or particular incident narratives (PINs) (Wengraf, 2011), recollected of the momentous experiences or events (Pillemer, 2001). Georgakopoulou (2006a) refers to the analysis of narratives in context as the "second wave of narrative analysis" (p. 240) and raises awareness of the 'small' story within the 'big' story or autobiographical narrative. 'Small' stories are those we tell to specific audiences in passing, a "narrative-in-interaction" (p. 240), a description of identity performed, or what Wengraf' (2001) describes as a PIN. A PIN (Wengraf, 2011), or momentous event (Pillemer, 2001), represents an emotional or intellectual landmark, a significant or influential experience.

> Recent research has challenged the universal priority of the general over the specific. Memories of concrete episodes also can powerfully affect behavior, attitudes, and self-concept. When a person encounters a new, uncharted life situation, he or she is especially attentive to, and strongly influenced by, particular events. In the absence of general rules, memories of pinpointed events carry valuable information about how things work in the novel setting (Pillemer, 2001, p. 126).

PINs highlight that which is significant in individual lives, arising out of the vertical analysis in the first level of analysis. The themes arose from the horizontal analysis across the participants in the second level of analysis.

Three different dimensions of, or ways of thinking about, narrative identity were distinguished in the horizontal analysis. Chapter 6 discusses relationality and the sense of belonging or alienation experienced by the participants in their interaction with others. Chapter 7 analyses how at adolescence the participants indicate a desire to consolidate their life stories, providing temporal coherence in a search to uncover life meaning and purpose. Specific emphasis is placed on the participants' social positioning within systems of the structural identity markers of 'race', class, and gender. Chapter 8 addresses the participants' hopes and dreams, their narrative imagination and future-orientated lives.

4.4.3. Third Level of Analysis: Theoretically Informed Narrative Portrait

In the final stage of analysis, the vertical analysis of portraiture is re-invoked in greater depth, thinking about how the different theoretical dimensions of narrative identity explored thematically across the participants, coalesce in one particularly interesting case history of one participant. This portrait was specifically selected for its ability to illustrate the concepts of constructionist intersectionality and cultural creolisation. Constructionist intersectionality, the disruption of the hold of structural social positionings, facilitates cultural creolisation and adaption, offering new ways of being and belonging through narrative imagination and the possibilities for constructing a counteracting narrative (Squire, 2013).

Constructionist intersectionality (Prins, 2006) and cultural creolisation (Glissant, 1989; Nuttall & Michael, 2000; Erasmus, 2001, Martin, 2006) are inter-related. The disruption of social positionings as they intersect at certain points in time and history shifts the hold that social positionings have in isolation enabling individuals to exercise agency and insert new interpretations of culture and

themselves into existing cultural scripts with the effect of creolisation and the formation of something new (Nuttall & Michael, 2000; Cohen, 2007).

Chapter 9 presents a narrative portrait of Aviwe, a young, gay man who has struggled to find recognition and belonging within his family and community for as long as he can remember. A few recent moments of belonging and acceptance have enabled him to construct a counteracting narrative (Squire, 2013) and envisage the possibility that he may be recognised as an 'actional' (Biko, 2004) person in the future. Table 2 below provides a summary of the three levels of analysis.

Table 2: Levels of Analysis

Level of analysis	Type of analysis	Chapter title
1st – Narrative portraits for each participant (descriptive)	Vertical analysis	5 – Narrative Portraits
2nd – Thematic analysis across narrative portraits	Horizontal thematic analysis	6 – Relationality and Belonging
2nd – Thematic analysis across narrative portraits	Horizontal thematic analysis	7 – Structural Dimensions on Adolescent Identity Construction
2nd – Thematic analysis across narrative portraits	Horizontal thematic analysis	8 – Narrative Imagination
3rd – Narrative portrait of Aviwe (specific focus on constructionist intersectionality and cultural creolisation)	Vertical analysis	9 – Narrative Portrait - Aviwe

4.5. Reflexivity: The *'me'* in the room

> …we do not stand outside in a neutral position, merely representing 'what was said'. Rather, investigators are implicated at every step along the way in constructing the narratives we then analyse (Riessman, 2008, p. 28).

Although I have attempted to adopt a phenomenological epistemology thereby intending to 'give voice' to the participants' stories, it is impossible to ignore the fact that I am a white, middle-class, South African researcher in my late forties interviewing low socioeconomic, black, township adolescents and that the interaction between our different educational opportunities, racialised and socio-economic positions and age groups must have affected and even created the stories they told me.

There were times that I felt the participants "performed" their stories to me and that this performance had various agendas. My 'white guilt' as an economic and social beneficiary of South Africa's racialised history was very present in the interview room. The other issue present in the room, which I was acutely aware of, was the parental role I assumed as the researcher, and played into by the participants. Despite the parent-child interaction from an age perspective, there was also 'race' at play through the 'white' middle-class parent and the 'black', poor child.

These social positioning interplays must have created, through suppressing and enhancing, the narratives told to me by the participants, and the narratives I selected to analyse. Hollway and Jefferson's (2004) method of analysing researcher countertransference was useful to me in thinking about the narratives told by the participants and the narratives heard by me. My defences, experiences and ideological positions were undoubtedly very present in the interview room, and the transcription and analytical processes. This was further indication that it is impossible to truly 'give voice' to a narrative without some 'demystification' in the process, whether this demystification is of myself as the researcher or the participant through my interpretation (Josselson, 2004).

Similarly to Wengraf (2001) discussed above, Josselson (2006) encourages researchers to reject taking a modernist position in the analysis phase where interview data are treated as fact. Instead she argues that investigations should be considered to be "situated interpretation" (p. 6). I serve on the board of *Ithemba*, and, while I explicitly stated that this research project was independent to my board position, I was aware that the participants may have seen me in an authoritative position linked to possible resources and opportunities for the participants which may have influenced and altered the tone and content of the stories they told me.

The social world of the participants was very present in the interviews and analysis of the data. The participants represent a specific cohort of people from the same geographical area and socio-economic position, with the chance of a better life through the support of *Ithemba* that provides them with educational and health support. In being aware of 'situated interpretation', Josselson (2006) requires researchers to recognise that their final reports are interpretations and, as such, are reflections of themselves as 'knowers', cautioning that there are limits to knowing and thereby reflecting only one point of view. A researcher is limited by what the 'lenses' of their own particular 'spectacles' enable them to see.

The research process over a period of five years saw significant changes in me, and my own identity construction. Having spent most of my working life as an investment banker, my spectacles were

very different from what they are now; I ascribe a large part of this change to my interactions with the participants and the readings and texts I have engaged with through this research process. Being entrenched in investment banking capitalist economics for the first part of my career, my early training is commercial, with limited focus on the human aspects of business. Interacting with the participants' life stories in such an intimate way enabled me to develop deeper empathy and understanding of the interpellated (Althusser, 2000) lives of others. This resulted in me realising the lack of appreciation I have had up until now for how social structures undermine and oppress so many, purely as a result of their positioning on the 'race', class, gender and sexual orientation spectrums.

In conjunction with this academic journey, I also travelled a personal journey which afforded me greater understanding of the narrative process. At the time of the analysis of this study my mother sank into the final stages of Alzheimer's disease. Her detachment from the world of cognisance and rational thought increased and mostly she existed far away, inaccessible to us, other than for brief moments in time. This forced me to wonder whether in those mostly inaccessible times she was a person at all; devoid of memories, stories and recollections, incapable of answering the question 'who am I?' There are still brief times when she can be accessed with an old memory, but often she then 'moves' into this memory, and speaks of herself as a twelve year-old girl, calling for her own mother. This caused me to question, if we are our stories, what happens when our stories fade? Who are we then? Mark Freeman (2011), who himself has a mother who suffers from Alzheimer's disease, acknowledges that this situation challenges the limits of narrative and selfhood:

> Indeed, in some circumstances, there really *is* no lifestory "to speak of" – not least for the person whose story it was, for there may remain only the most minimal sense of what that life was about. There is not much room for hope here. And we are up against the limits not only of reopening a foreclosed narrative but also of narrative itself (Freeman, 2011, p. 13)

I either have to accept that my mother is no longer a self, or that narrative exists as a group of unstructured, random thoughts that Alzheimer's patients use to engage with the world and themselves (Falcus, 2014). Roberta Maierhofer (2010) proposes:

> In these terms, Alzheimer's disease patients can be seen as extreme paradigms of this postmodern condition, where memories and the past only exist in an unstructured, fluid condition. Like the decentered subject that is in Lacan's term of the mirror stage defined as constituted in and by its

> language, Alzheimer's disease patients use language without any referential meaning in order to establish relationships and connect to others (p. 2).

I get comfort from the fact that even if my mother doesn't remember her stories in a coherent way, or lives in her stories through a different form of consciousness, her life narrative lives on through my sister and me. We speak a lot about her life, and probably because she is ill and so vulnerable, we focus on the good stories and memories, immortalising her in a more positive way than perhaps she would be spoken of if she was not ill. Through this process her life assumes a different, more positive perspective through our compassion for her decline. McColgan, Valentine & Downs (2000) assert, "people with dementia have been a silent presence. If we hear their voice it is predominantly through others" (p. 99). Similarly with the participants of this study, through telling me their stories, a different audience, their stories live on in a different form with access to other people and audiences than would have had access to these stories before.

I was also able to see a life narrative in its totality from first-hand perspective during 2015. My stepfather, with whom I lived from the age of twelve until I left home at 21 years old, passed away. He had also been ill in his final days and it fascinated me how in his passing he transformed in my mind from an old, sick man with many ailments, completely exhausted from nursing and supporting my mother through her decline, into a younger man who had lived a full and varied life. My mind was able to focus on his entire life narrative once he had died, as opposed to just the everyday drudgery of being old and sick when he was alive, a relatively short phase in his total life narrative.

These thoughts and reflections have enabled me to think and challenge narrative and identity in deeper and more engaged way. The fact that narratives enable a perspective on life, selfhood and identity, dependent on the audience, the moment in history and the time in one's life when the narrative is constructed has been made so clear to me through my own recent life experience and narrative.

4.6. Ethical Considerations

This study was guided by four key ethical principles: "autonomy, non-maleficence, beneficence and justice" (Wassenaar, 2006, p. 65).

The first principle, autonomy, "finds expression in most requirements for voluntary informed consent by all research participants" (Wassenaar, 2006, p. 67). Participants were required to sign a letter giving their consent to participate (Appendix B) and another letter giving consent to record the

interview (Appendix C). Participants were invited to take part in this study and submitted a motivational essay explaining why they wanted to participate. This motivational essay served to confirm the participants' consent of participation.

The second principle, non-maleficence, requires that I, as the researcher, "ensure that no harm befalls research participants as a direct or indirect consequence of the research" (Wassenaar, 2006, p. 67). The fact that the participants are from a vulnerable population given their disadvantaged backgrounds was acknowledged and if sensitive, traumatic memories arose in the narrative interviews the *Ithemba* counsellor was available to deal with any of these incidences and ensure that post interview counselling was given. The skills I learnt in the two counselling courses I completed through FAMSA in Johannesburg (Basic Counselling Course (2010) and the Adolescent Counseling Skills Course (2009)) assisted me in demonstrating sensitivity to the needs of the participants, the ability to listen effectively and the ability to detect trauma and distress in the interviews. Many of the participants cried and showed emotion during the course of the interviews and these cases were followed up by the *Ithemba* counsellor post the interview. Given my own consciousness-raising throughout the process of the research enabled me to sensitively deal with the participants through this extremely personal and emotional journey of constructing a life narrative.

The third principle, beneficence, requires the researcher "to attempt to maximise the benefits that the research will afford to the participants in the research study" (Wassenaar, 2006, p. 67). Given the action research component of this study this principle was upheld. An evaluation was done after the yearlong identity programme was completed and all participants mentioned that the programme had benefitted them from a self-awareness and self-knowledge perspective. In accordance with the fourth principle, justice, all participants were treated "with fairness and equity during all stages of research" (Wassenaar, 2006, p. 68).

The participants all come from disadvantaged, disenfranchised backgrounds. Given that they are voluntarily enrolled in *Ithemba's* after school programme, which has strict attendance criteria, infers that education and improving their lives is a priority for them. It is also important to bear in mind that these participants benefit from *Ithemba* and as such 'a desire to please' me, as an extension of the NGO in their eyes, may have come through in the narratives they told me. While *Ithemba* featured prominently in most of the interviews, I did not have a sense that the participants were telling me what they thought I wanted to hear, rather their experience of the interview left me feeling that they had enjoyed and benefitted from the opportunity to speak about their lives in a safe

space and were encouraged and enthused by the fact that someone was taking a genuine interest in their life stories.

Chapter 5

Narrative Portraits

Three narrative portraits with selected images from the participants' timelines are presented in this chapter, with the image of the art timeline as an introduction to each portrait. All participants' portraits are presented in Appendix D. Each portrait in this chapter is presented in the broad thematic time zones of past life, present life and future life. The three portraits featured in this chapter were specifically chosen for their ability to illustrate how imagoes, or personified and idealised concepts of the self constructed in the image of people who have played significant roles in one's life, both positive and negative, contribute to the construction of identity (McAdams, 1993), indicating the importance of relationality in the construction of individual life stories, particularly the relationship with one's parents. Asanda immortalises images of her late parents in her life by carrying parts of each of them within her. Her father is a positive imago, one she would like to emulate and replicate, whereas her mother is not as positive, making her mindful of not replicating her mother's mistakes. Nandipha's life choices are also driven by a negative internalised imago of her mother, spurring her on to be a successful 'fly-kid'. Ayabonga carries a negative imago of his father, thereby inciting different choices and a drive to prove to the world that he can be different.

5.1. Asanda: In the Image of My Father



Figure 2: Asanda's Timeline

5.1.1. Past Life

Asanda is a slight, softly spoken, young woman who was born in a small town just outside Queenstown in the Eastern Cape into what she describes as "*a family with comfort*". She grew up with her maternal grandparents as her primary caregivers while her mother lived and worked in Johannesburg. Asanda's father died before she was born, and her mother died of an HIV related illness when Asanda was 14 years old. Despite this loss, Asanda's maternal grandmother provided her with a safe, secure upbringing in her early years. This, combined with her strong relationship with her brother and cousins, her achievement at school, her affiliation with the NGO and her many interests such as sport, dancing and church, provided her with strong support structures in her early teens.

Asanda moved to Port Elizabeth with her grandmother and younger brother when she was five to live with her aunt and cousin. She had clear boundaries growing up defined by her strict grandmother. Asanda describes her grandmother and her father as the two most important influences in her life, portraying her grandmother as self sufficient and inspirational. Asanda nostalgically remembers when she was the only grandchild, before her brothers and cousin were born. Her timeline includes a photograph of her as a baby with the caption *"in my times"*. She wistfully remembers this as a happy, simple time when it was only her grandmother and herself.

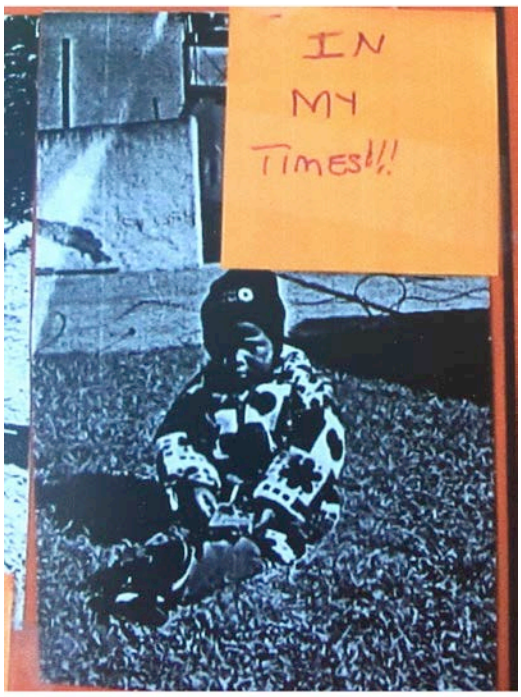


Figure 3: Asanda as a baby

Her parents' relationship was never sanctioned by either of their families as they were distantly related and a marriage between the two would never have been accepted. As a result Asanda's paternal family never accepted her as their grandchild when she was born.

> *The thing is [my mother and father] were not meant to be in a relationship because their clans are kinda like connected*

Asanda was introduced to her paternal grandparents when she was in grade 7 (12/13 years old). Her maternal and paternal grandparents lived in the same village and knew each other well. Her maternal grandmother's sister once remarked on how Asanda resembled her father ("*they say I look a lot like him")*, which piqued her interest in meeting his family. Her maternal grandmother was initially reluctant to allow Asanda to meet her paternal grandparents given the difficulties surrounding the union between Asanda's parents, but agreed when she saw how important it was to Asanda.

> *… (uhh), between my mother's family and my father's family there was like problems because like my father's family they didn't believe that I was (uh uh), his child cos I was born after he was, he was died. So they were like, no, we don't wanna like believe this and he was not there to say that this is my child so it took them a long time to accept me as their child - my mother's family are still like, you didn't accept her so like stay away from her - you don't know this person and they are not like your real family, what kind of family like like doesn't wanna know their child at the beginning until they have proof of it (hhh) ?*

Through meeting her paternal grandparents and hearing their stories and memories Asanda was able to develop a picture of her father in her mind, made that much more real through photographs and being able to see her own resemblance to him for herself. Her art timeline includes a photograph (overleaf) of her father with the caption "*The Man who Inspires Me, DADDY*".

> *And when I went there they were like telling me stories about him, and that reminded me how he would have been a father, like a father who is loving and then that, (uhh) - Like he was a quiet person, my, my grandmother describes him as a nerd always going to his room, and studying and never listens to anyone, he would lock the door for days, saying that he's sick or something and he was like, he was a tennis player and ja, he was a, he was studying law at Fort Hare University, he was, and then (uhh), that's the year he passed, and then he was on his way to East London for his first job that's when he was - They said he was killed by the apartheid era police*

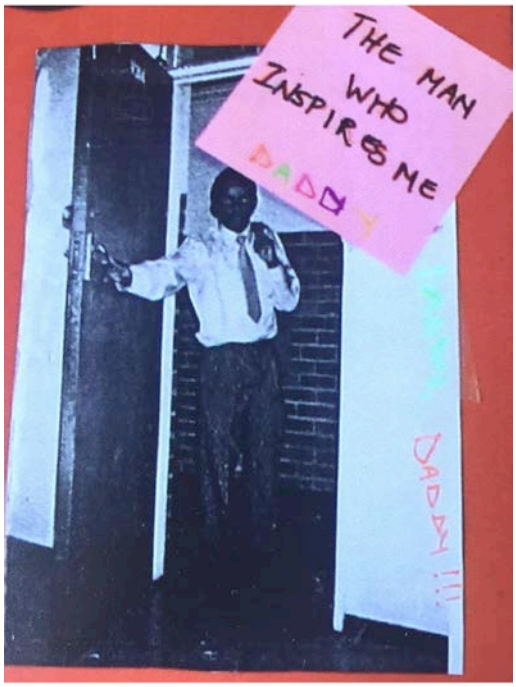


Figure 4: Asanda's father

Despite the fact that both her parents are dead, her relationship with them and the strong influence they had, and continue to have, on her life is present in her construction of imagoes or psychological images from memories, stories and photographs (McAdams, 1993). The character images of her parents function to guide her behaviours and feelings representing different parts of her as she accommodates "simultaneously being the many and the one" (McAdams, 1993, p. 122). While the dead remain with all of us through memories and narratives, Asanda demonstrates a compulsion to recollect memories that will keep her parents, particularly her father, alive in her mind, indicating how fragile and ephemeral her memories are and how desperate she is to hold onto these recollections that provide her with a link to the past and her legacy.

While Asanda's mother's imago is contradictory and often challenging, her father's imago is positive and inspiring and very present in her hopes and dreams and how she envisages her life in the future. Having never met him and only having heard positive stories and recollections of him, his existence and positive influence is amplified in her mind. Her father signifies hope and life for her, representing the 'future' in her mind; where she is 'going'. The fact that he was killed by the Apartheid-era police in a violent way heightens his hero-status in her mind. These images and memories provide her narrative with a foundation, a connection with her roots and the origin of her life and a feeling of belonging (Prins, 2006; Yuval-Davis, 2006).

One of her greatest sadnesses in her life is that she never met her father.

> *It kinda gets me when people ask me how was your father and I know nothing about him. I, I, I haven't met him, like face to face, I haven't touched him - I, I haven't heard his voice before (hhh).*

She tells me that from the age of five, long before she met her paternal grandparents, how she dreamt of becoming a lawyer.

> *Its even now I have dreamed of becoming a lawyer one day. I didn't know he was a lawyer, but when I was about five I think I started having this dream and my [maternal] grandfather used to say that you are following your father's path, I was like I don't know this person but I wanna be this person.*

The fact that her father died at the hands of the 'previous oppressor' provides her with national pride and a sense of belonging in the post-Apartheid, new South Africa. Her social position as a 'born-free' is recognised and legitimately conferred on her by the fact that her father died for this cause. This imago demonstrates her need to find her paternal roots through constructing an image of a person she can relate to and identify with, personalised and immortalised in her mind (McAdams, 1993).

Conflicting imagoes are common in identity construction, often formulated around "starkly polarized characters" (McAdams, 1993, p. 132), an indication of splitting as a defence in the creation of these either very good or very bad personalised aspects of identity. This is illustrated in Asanda's narrative and her imago of her mother, starkly compared against the heroic imago of her father. Perhaps given that her mother died of an AIDS related illness, this imago represents her past, what she is moving from, representing the history of her life, her country and the narrative she wants to change.

Following from her ambivalent relationship with her mother, her mother's imago personifies many contradictory emotions for her. Her mother was diagnosed HIV positive at the time she gave birth to Asanda's younger brother who was born HIV positive and died when he was 18 months old. Her mother died shortly after that. Asanda feels guilty about her mother's death, often wondering whether she could have done something to prevent it.

Her mother was not very present in her early years as she lived and worked in Johannesburg and as a young girl Asanda thought that her grandmother was her mother and her grandfather was her father.

Asanda describes her mother as an outgoing, party person who wasn't at home often.

> *She was much more outgoing. She was a person who loved doing things - she was the queen of [her friends], she used to have lots of friends, they would go out and - ja, most of the time she would be out - that we spend most of the time, (uhh), not being, (uhh), close in a couple of way of sharing things, she spend most of the time when at work and she would come late and go like partying with her friends so it wasn't like like close relationship with a mother that I should have had.*

The relationship between Asanda's mother and her maternal grandparents was fraught; Asanda remembers how her mother and her grandparents fought often.

> *They didn't get on so well, cos my mother would come in late which doing things that my grandmother didn't like, so like most of the time they would spend time arguing like "you have to be home, you don't have to be outside all the time. Ja you can spend much times with your friends but most you are a girl now, I know you are older, but you have to use your time wisely". Those kind of stuff, yeah.*

Asanda remembers that despite fighting with her mother, there were times that they were close.

> *(uhh) we kind of like used to fight a lot because we like so common, most things, we would mostly agree, we were close in some kind of ways, some people would be like, no guys, you just fought and now you like cuddling and stuff.*

Asanda's art timeline includes a photograph of her mother with a caption "*My Mom, my Sweetheart*". She has a lot of regret, guilt and loss associated with her mother's death.

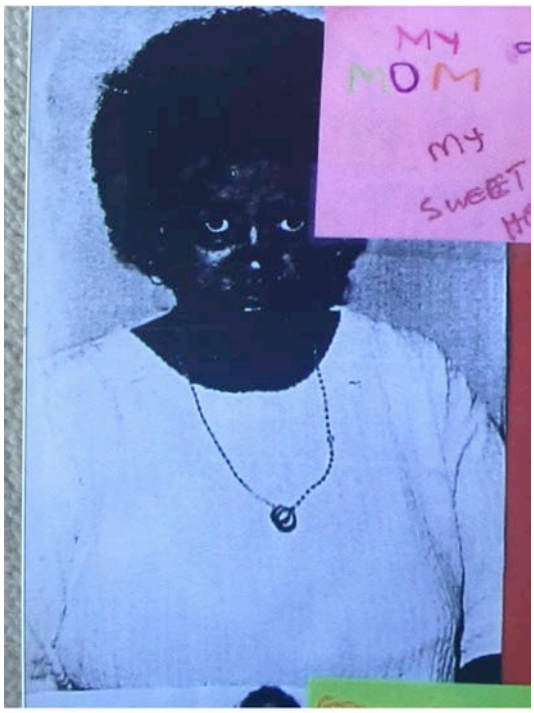


Figure 5: Asanda's mother

> *I still feel like I need her in my life. I still need that guidance from my mother, although I know that I have my grandmother here, I have my aunt, I still need her as a mother.*

Alongside her mother's imago of death, disease and loss, her mother also represents beauty in her life, indicating the complexity and ambivalence of a life. Her mother was a hairdresser and represents the pride Asanda takes in her physical appearance supported by the inclusion on her timeline of a photograph of herself with the caption, *"Africa's next top model"*.

Asanda tells a story of how proud she was when her mother surprised her by attending a beauty pageant that Asanda took part in.

> *I, I remember the time I was in grade 7 at primary school when I had to go to a pageant, so I was like ok, fine, parents were called, all my friends' parents were coming, so like my grandmother would come, and then I was like so surprised when I was on the stage that there was my mom in the crowd, I thought now I wanna win this pageant because my mother is here to watch me and this, like (uhh), she gave up her work just to see me, so I was like yeah, I was happy and I even went to the finals, but I didn't win, but I was happy because she was there, yes, it was amazing.*

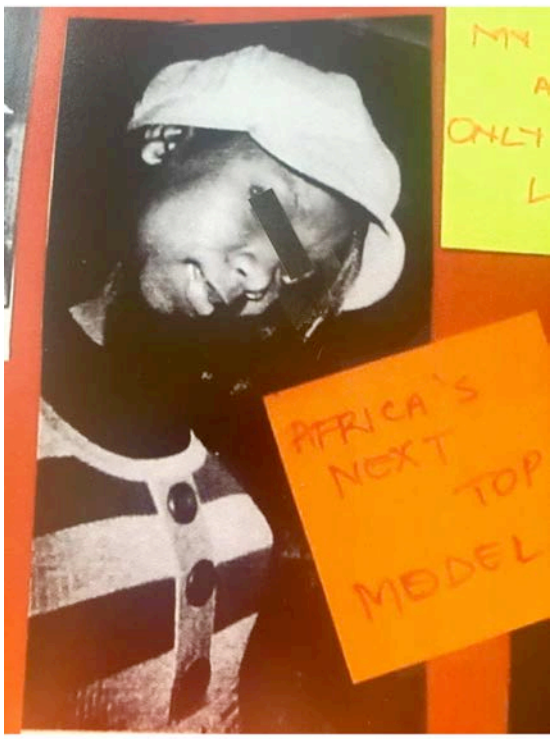


Figure 6: Asanda as a teenager

She holds this positive image in her mind and tells it to me after recollecting the horror of how her mother and brother died. It was almost told as a 'full stop', a closing image to her discussion of her mother who had often disappointed her, a positive moment of being beautiful that sat at the top of her psychological memory box which she appeared to want to close as she moved to discuss other parts of her life, not mentioning her mother again.

Asanda describes her primary school years as "*an experience of a lifetime*" with "*every teacher I got on well with*". In high school she was introduced to the NGO through a school camp and then started attending the NGO's after school programme. Asanda describes the camp as a place where "*we had to open up and do things that we really enjoy*". She chose dancing which has become an interest and passion of hers. In high school she played soccer and badminton and played in a championship in Cape Town. A number of photographs of this trip to Cape Town are included on her timeline, "*so it was like an experience so we had to go there not knowing how Cape Town is.*"

Through the NGO Asanda visited Cape Town again to visit the University of Cape Town. A photograph from this trip of a whole group of smiling NGO scholars taken in front of the SA Express counter at the airport is included on her timeline.

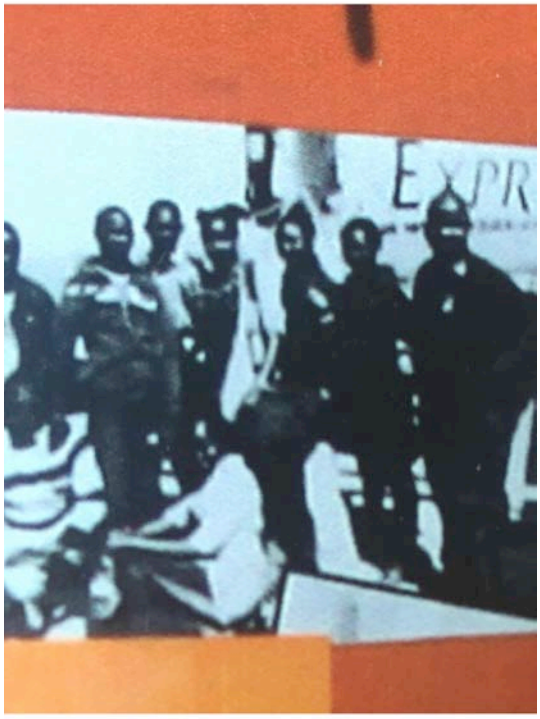


Figure 7: Asanda and her *Ithemba* friends on a plane trip to Cape Town

5.1.2. Present Life

Asanda receives support in her life from a number of sources. She has a close relationship with her female cousin, who lives with her, and while she says her brother, Lukhanyo, and her "*fight and kinda tease each other*" they also enjoy laughing together while watching comedy movies. A photograph of her brother is included on her timeline with the caption "*My One and Only Brother*", reference to the fact that her other brother has died.

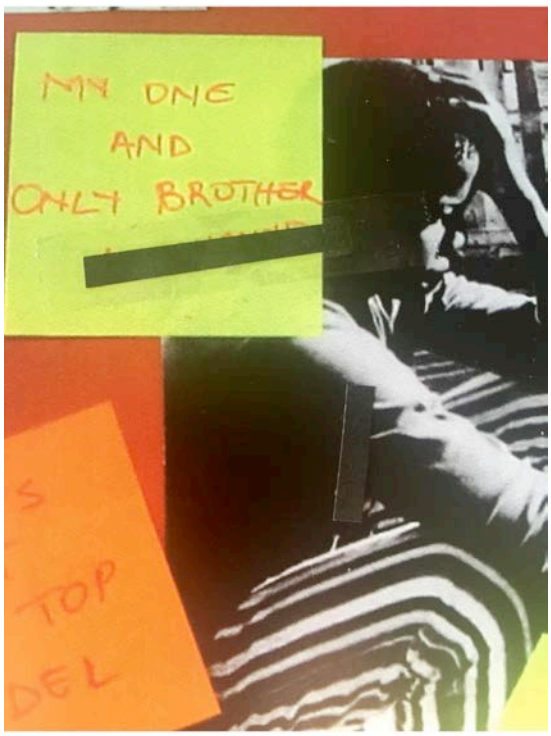


Figure 8: Asanda's brother

Asanda attributes her introduction of the NGO as one of most important, life changing events in her life. Church is another area in Asanda's life that provides her with support. She explains how her traditional, ancestral beliefs are overshadowed by her Christian beliefs. Despite the fact that Asanda doesn't value ancestral beliefs as much as her family, she acknowledges that it is important in identifying and connecting families.

> *But there's a very close relationship in that identification with ancestry worship because it has something to do with describing the family in terms of the forefathers and those who passed on many times ago. So if you are in ancestry worship it kind of like connects you.*

Asanda has many acquaintances but not many close friends, preferring to draw support from within herself.

> *Most of my friends - I have friends just to chat about things but not really friends like, I don't take them as friends, I take them as my chatters, just chat about life.*

Her timeline includes a photograph of her on her first bicycle with the caption "*Solo*" indicating her independence and self-sufficiency.

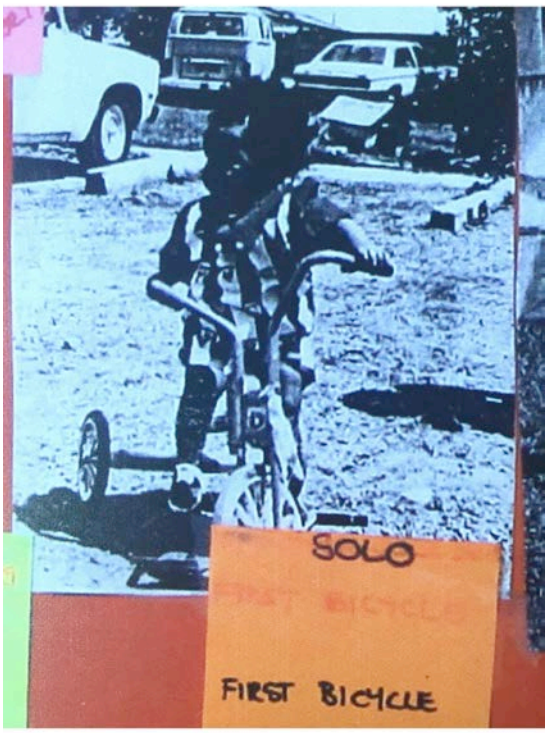


Figure 9: Asanda as a child

She keeps a diary that she uses to write down poems and problems she encounters in her life.

> *Yes, I write anything cos I, ja, whenever I write things get better, if I don't have something after I have written the problem then I get a solution… Its like when I've got a solution I don't need them anymore. I write them on my phone and when they done I delete them. In the notes or in the diary*

In the face of significant diversity, the loss of her mother and younger brother, and never knowing her father, Asanda remains optimistic and positive about her life, always seeing the bright side.

> *I'm still happy with the way things turn out, cos maybe I would have been a spoilt brat having both parents. Now I understand life better (hhh) - ja. I'm happy with the way things are… Well, everytime is my happy time ((smiles)). Like I'm a person who likes to have fun, I like to laugh, so whenever I see things going my way I'm happy. Even if they don't go my way, I know that somehow, some way some things are getting in life, so yes, I know which way is right for me. So, yes, I am always happy. I wake up in the morning and see myself in the mirror and say, "Hi Beautiful, yes, yes, you go getter, yes." I'm <u>always</u> happy.*

I think if [my parents] hadn't passed away I would have been a very difficult person, yes. But I think, that I am stronger than I was before. Now I am aware of many things that I wasn't aware of before and I never thought would happen in my life, because I grew up… OK I knew there was HIV and stuff, ok I saw people dying and stuff, but I never thought that in my own family my own flesh and blood, that something could happen like that.

In a demonstration of maturity, Asanda describes the happiest things in her life right now as:

I think its all the things that another person would always take for granted, like each day in the morning without no pain in your body, be able to speak cos I was listening to the radio the other day and this guy said that this child wrote to his dad cos he's not able to talk cos he's got an accident way back, this child wrote to his dad - on a piece of paper, "I'm happy to see you". So that made me be glad and be thankful for the fact that I can wake up and walk around and tell people the way that I feel. I always tell people the way that I feel.

Asanda describes herself as "*stubborn*", "*hardworking*" with a "*sense of humour*" and the "*ability to focus*".

I'm really stubborn ((laughs)). And I don't like debating because I'm always right all the time, I don't debate about things ((laughs))… I can focus, because I play different roles in different places so - I am very focused and demanding and determined when I find something I wanna do. Like hardworking - my cousin sister would say that whenever I'm there I make her laugh - we would do the funniest things.

5.1.3. Future life

By her own admission, Asanda has big, ambitious goals and plans for her future and me tells a story of an interaction with her grandfather that illustrates her ambition.

I dream <u>big</u> and I always want what I want when I want, it doesn't matter who. Because next year I said I want a car (uhh) before I go to university or I'll be staying at home. And [my grandfather] was like "What, Asanda are you serious?" Like yes, I'm serious. So [my grandfather] would say - everything Asanda wants, Asanda gets. He would say that.

A photograph of the time she first sat in a university lecture hall at UCT is included on her timeline under her future with the caption *"Being a first year student at UNIVERSITY"*. Asanda would like to study law or analytical chemistry at UCT.

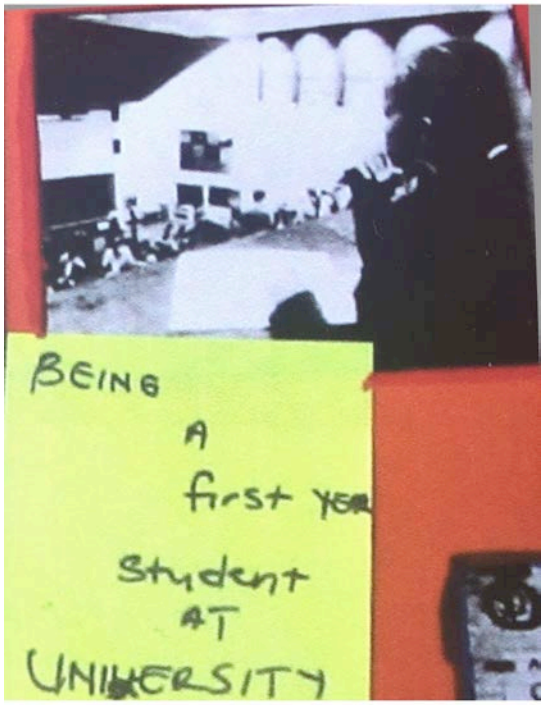


Figure 10: Asanda at UCT

There is no mention of marriage and children on her timeline unlike most of her peers who have included this goal under their futures. When asked whether she would like to have a family, she tells me she would like to concentrate on her career first before *"settling"*. Right now, she doesn't have a boyfriend, as she *"has other things to do."*

5.2. Nandipha: The *'fly kid'*



Figure 11: Nandipha's art timeline

Nandipha appears to be a self-assured, outgoing, friendly and vivacious young woman. Her introduction, "*I'm Nandipha, was born in Johannesburg in 1992, was raised by my mother and my father - loving to dance*," belies her difficult and lonely life.

Nandipha's confident, well-dressed exterior hides the sadness and loneliness that underpins her life. In the first interview I witnessed this mask. While she told me the story of her difficult life, she gave no indication of how vulnerable and fragile she actually was. In the second interview, which by her own admission was on a day that started by not waking up "*at the good side of the bed*", she let down the mask and her cheerful exterior and I saw the sadness, loneliness and vulnerability this young woman experiences in her life.

5.2.1. Past Life

In her early life Nandipha lived with her mother, and while she knew her father, his presence was erratic and as a result she didn't have a very close relationship with him. She last saw her father

when she was 11 years old and then in 2010 she heard from a distant relative that he had passed away. She has very little interest in contacting his family, who live in Pretoria.

Nandipha also had a fraught relationship with her mother and describes how they never had a *"mother daughter solid relationship"*. When she was 9 years old she moved to the Eastern Cape to live with her aunt and uncle.

> *Growing up without my mother was not a very pleasing thing because she was never around and my father as well.*

When Nandipha was 11 years old her mother died.

> *When I was going home from the sport I heard that, well, she passed on and that was the saddest thing in my life because I loved her very much even though we weren't that close….The biggest challenge in my life is losing my mom, I still expect her to come home from Joburg. The hardest part is accepting that she will never come back, she's gone - the last memory I have of her is when she was taking me to the bus in 2003, that was the last time I spoke to her, saw her*

Nandipha describes her mother as an outgoing person who partied a lot and wasn't a nurturing or motherly presence in her life. Nandipha was often the adult in the relationship, which frustrated her as she would have liked to have more maternal influence and support from her.

> *She was someone who used to love living the life, though - she didn't have that mother to daughter - you could know that when she was around me she was like "Do this, make yourself breakfast, do this and that". She will go to work and come back and you, still at weekends you don't get to have that connection with her cos she's still busy with her friends, they have to go there out and do this and do that, so it was sort of like a friendship not my mother. Its like she didn't want to have responsibility, she was just the person who says "I'm living just the way I want"*

Nandipha has an older half brother and a sister from her mother's side.

> *My older sister live with her dad and my brother (uhh) he's working in Joburg. Well we not close, we not that close as a brother and sister are. We only speak on facebook and sometimes*

if one of them get to think of me they call, because (uhh), I I I used to be the one who did all the calling. I would call to ask "how is Joburg? How is your life and everything."

Her relationship with her aunt and uncle that she lived with was also troubled; they had four children who they would treat very differently from how they treated Nandipha.

When I was living with my aunt, we never had a very good relationship because she had everything, she had a car, she had a beautiful, big flat, and she had children, four of them. If I go to school, she had a car neh, and then my school was quite far and she'll be like well you have to walk, you have to go to the school by yourself, you're not going to ride in my car. And I'll make like ok, alright. I used to do the house job by myself and if I ask for something from her, she will be like, stop asking me for things. I remember there was a day when she went to Princetown with her kids, Kawa [her aunt's son] loves talking. He came back and said, let me tell you something Nandipha, me and my mom went to Queenstown with the car and she took us to the Steers and she told us not to tell you.

Given her unhappy situation with her aunt and uncle, in 2012 Nandipha moved in with her maternal grandmother's sister who she refers to as her grandmother and who she describes as the most positive influence in her life.

Nandipha includes no photographs of any of her family members or places from her past on her timeline, primarily as she doesn't possess any, but also an indication of how her past life was not worth photographing and recording, best forgotten.

5.2.2. Present Life

Nandipha describes herself as someone who loves shopping, watching movies, "*hanging out*" with friends and having a braai. In the second interview, she discusses how she has very few friends and that her and her grandmother live off her grandmother's social grant of R800 a month. The mask that Nandipha has created for herself enables her to hide behind a positive, confident, well-dressed exterior, but also results in difficulty in showing vulnerability and attaching to others.

I don't have a lot of friends - No, because my friends are mostly here [at the NGO] because when it comes to where I live I don't have friends (xxx) than the ones I used to go to school with will be like "Hi, how you doing" and all that. So I only get to be inside of the house and I don't go out and well be with my friends, (uh uh). My only friends are here - I get to fix myself

with what I have I will wear it and be beautiful. So I am just that person. I don't talk to many people [about my problems], its wrong I know, but even now I don't get to talk to a person and get to cry and all that. I don't do that. Even to my grandma, if I want to talk I will have to first close the door and cry and cry and after that then I can come and be and talk - I like to sort it out before I tell anyone else, I don't ever show that part of me which cries.

In quiet times, on her own, Nandipha lets her mask down and admits to feeling lonely and enters into an internal fight so much so that she is concerned that she will "*lose [her] mind*".

A lot of people get to look at me and say "Whoo Nandipha is always like this happy so and all that. There are days when I can be happy during the day and… there's nothing bothering me, and when I go to sleep at night that where we get me and my body, my soul and my body, we get to have the fight. (uhh), I get to cry, I get to feel lonely, I get to, I don't know and when I get to that point it always makes me feel that I'm going to lose my mind. There are times really that I get to, like I don't know I feel sick, I feel, I don't know feel like just crying and crying, like cry out loud. And when I get to that point in my life I always realise that I go like mad.

Nandipha includes a quote "*was a blue soul*" on her timeline. When I ask her what this refers to she replies:

A blue soul is someone that was sad, a sad person who does not love talking, a very sad person. That refers to my mother and my upbringing which was lonely.



Figure 12: Quote from Nandipha's timeline

Nandipha is angry towards her family and feels profoundly let down. Most of her anger and shame is directed towards her mother.

> *So the loss and the anger are the two biggest challenges in my life, its just that I'm angry at her at, how do you just leave your kids, I mean, when you have kids you have a responsibility, you are not only living for yourself, you living for yourself and for your kids. How do you leave your, your kid with another woman cos that woman is not going to raise your kids the way you going to raise them… I just had a mom by name, I just had a mom who gave birth to me, sometimes … sometimes I get very angry… when you living with your grandmother, they not like your mom, they never get to be like your mom [sobs] and I'll never get to experience that chance with my mom. And I hate her…*

Her extended family also had a difficult relationship with her mother and this is often taken out on Nandipha.

> *I don't understand why does [my aunt] have to say all those cruel words to me like your mother doesn't take care of you. I did not ask her to take me to live with her and she will not buy me clothes during Christmas. [My aunt says] "Well, you, you not going to make it in life, your mother only had a grade 12 and she was a drunk and she never take care of you"… I remember one of the times I had a fight with my aunt, she was like "Even when your mother was pregnant with you, she she she will go to the taverns to go get drunk with you" and all that stuff.*

Nandipha's imago of her mother in her life drives her to be different, thereby creating her-'self' as an antithesis to her mother.

> *I do not want to repeat the mistake of falling pregnant and then having to go and work and live away from my children. I do not want my kids to be like, where is your mom, she lives in [city in Eastern Cape] and she left us here in Transkei, no that's not for me and my children. I wanna be there for them and the things I never experienced with my mother, I want them to experience with me… I don't wanna be like a failure in my life.*

In Nandipha's case, this negative imago, or villain of her mother motivates her to be different and rewrite her narrative with her mother representing everything she doesn't want to be (McAdams, 1993).

Nandipha also feels let down by her half brother and sister who don't invest in their relationship with her. Ever since her sister found her father (her and Nandipha have different fathers) and moved in with him she has lost interest in Nandipha.

> *And sometimes I just feel so lonely, you know when my mother died I was like "well, I have my brother, I have my sister" and now that my … what makes me feel lonely is that me and my sister we had a relationship, we were good …[but] last year when she founded her dad, I was like ever since she got her dad like now I really don't matter that much as I used to because now she, we we don't get to call one another that much and she's now, she's doing a nurse course and I remember I called her this Saturday and she was like "I'm on practicals, I'm busy. So I did understand and she was like "I'm going to call you back" and she didn't. So I was like, my brother he has his own flat and he's living with his girlfriend. So when it comes to them I just feel like well I just have a brother and sister by name. I was so astonished by [my sister], because she is now giving me the back of her hand. … So I came to a point where I was like "well, it seems like I'm the only one who is pushing the relationship, you guys are, your father is alive, you living in a good house, you have a stepmom who is a social worker, your father is also having a good job, you are now studying nurse and now its seems like you, you have no time to call me"*

Not only does Nandipha feel disappointed and let down by her family, but she feels let down and failed by God.

> *…and another thing was that I always prayed to God that [my mom] doesn't come back to me not breathing or anything because it has been years since I haven't seen her but well I guess it happened the opposite way, and what make me seem more angry is that, um,mm, I pray to God, "you know what God, I know my mum is sick, but what you shouldn't do, please do not bring her back to me dead, like I cannot even speak to her dead… and God did exactly that… I just hate God, because how do you like … [sobs] I grew up things not easy and still, I grew, grew up, I grow and still things are not even working out and then I get to be like, I don't know, I don't have a purpose in life, I try this, it doesn't work out, I try that it doesn't work out… I hate God, I don't know I just get to be so angry*

Despite her troubled life, Nandipha believes others would describe her as a "*great person, talkative and hyper-active*" but perhaps also a bit "*harsh*".

Ja, I'm one of those people that if this picture is like this that's it, I'm not going to say "Well, its kinda beautiful." Its beautiful if its beautiful, if its not its not. And then a lot of people will get to say "Well, Nandipha, you are harsh". So I'm like, "well, hey, that's me!"

She describes herself as someone who excelled at school:

I have these certificates for my achievements, peer educator, debating, top grade 12 learner and a Taibo trainer.

Nandipha has developed various coping skills in order to project a 'happy face' to the outside world. These include talking to herself in the mirror and crying which she says enables her to feel relief from the problems she faces.

I love looking at myself in the mirror and just talk. I love it. I am optimistic about my life, when I wake up me and mirror are like best friends. In the mirror I get to look at myself, like ok this is who I am, to talk with the mirror, we get to communicate, even if it doesn't talk back. I get strength from that. You will think that I am crazy, I talk to the mirror all the time, I portray, I do the whole crying thing, pull faces, like I have the act, the crying act, the presenting act, presenting Top Billing [a TV show], look into the mirror and do my thing. The mirror is like, we buddies.

Despite feeling let down by God, Nandipha describes church as a place where she gets "*strength, morals, values and how to behave.*" She says that her clan-name is not important to her as she doesn't have a relationship with her father, but also because the ancestry beliefs contradict the religious beliefs taught by her church.

Nandipha is critical of people who rely on their ancestors to make things happen for them rather than being proactive themselves.

… because I believe that when you dead you dead, like me going to your grave and saying "Can you do this for me mummy [high pitched voice], can you do that?" Why you can't do these things for yourself, why you want me to do that for you now. So I do not believe in ancestry.

5.2.3. Future Life

The hardships that Nandipha has experienced in her life have made her resilient, independent and ambitious.

> *I decided that sometimes things that happen to you that are in your past they are there to give you strength for the future so that when you get to meet challenges in your life you have this strength, you have this wisdom, you have that thing that you know what I have made it through before so what's stopping me from going on. Sometimes I think, maybe if I was living with my mother and had the whole family upbringing I have always wished for, maybe I wouldn't be the person that I am, maybe I would also be in the streets and not be as ambitious as I am because I believe my past is a reason why I am like this, because I am a fly kid, I love things to fly… Maybe if I had my mom and my dad, maybe I wouldn't be the Nandipha that I am. Yes!*

Nandipha appears to have wisdom and insight beyond her years, having witnessed her mother and father make mistakes, she is determined not to repeat these mistakes herself.

> *… and another thing that I've told myself is that I don't want to repeat the mistakes that were made on me on my kids. Like how do I fall pregnant knowing that I have no money, house or car, and cannot take care of this child because I seriously don't see how you cannot understand, you know your background, you know where you have been, know how the situation is at home living with grandmothers and aunts and uncles …you get to tell yourself that well there are things that you can change in you right, and there are things that you cannot change. You get to like have that peace (uh uh), actual spirit and you would be like you know what, its difficult, I cannot change it, I cannot make her live again, she is dead, she's dead, but what I have to do is like to let it go, sometimes you have to learn from other people's mistake without having to repeat that.*

On her timeline she includes a photograph of a wedding gown



Figure 13: Wedding gown photograph on Nandipha's timeline

> *The bride's dress [embarrassed laugh] says that I do believe that there will be a time in my life where I will want to settle and have my own family and have good husband and yeah.*

Nandipha's main interest is media and she would really like to study media studies at university and be a TV presenter, but her matric results were not high enough to get into university.

> *Yes, I have applied at [name of university] but it has turned me down... I want to be a TV presenter. I loved TV very much, love presenting and all that.*

Nandipha has a strong sense of community and a desire to help others in her future, but recognises that she needs to do this from a position of strength.

> *… when I'm making some money I'm going to go back to the community and the NGO companies that are helping underprivileged kids like me that I can do good things for those children.*

Nandipha describes her priorities as:

Going to school, getting educated and changing life to make it better… I will only feel the happiness or whatever when I'm working or I'm at school maybe because that's where I'll be living for myself.

Nandipha also has a strong sense of self-pride and desire to prove her worth to the outside world:

Yeah, I will make it, I know. Sometimes I see that other people don't have that belief in me so I want to prove them wrong. All those people that said I would not make it… I want to make it so that all those people who at the back of their mind said that she wouldn't make it will be wrong.

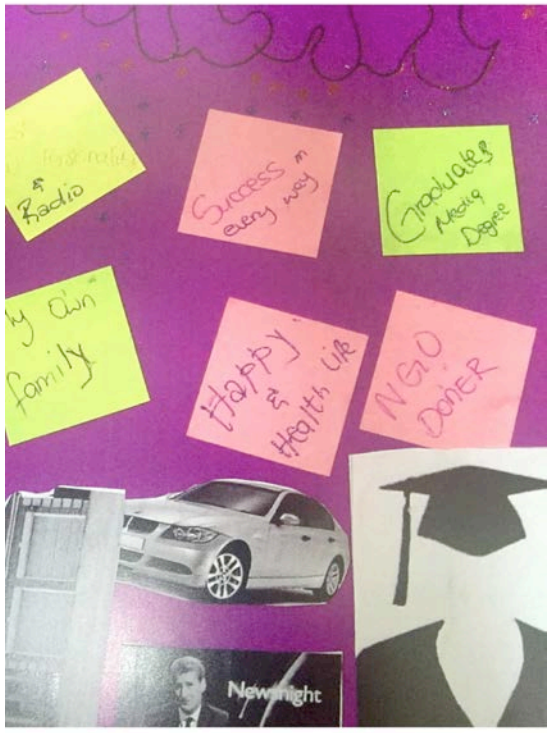


Figure 14: Nandipha's 'future' timeline

5.3. Ayabonga: Hard Work Brings Success



Figure 15: Ayabonga's art timeline

5.3.1. Past Life

Ayabonga is a softly spoken, sensitive young man who speaks emotionally and earnestly. His parents died before he was a year old and he grew up believing that his aunt was his mother. When he was 11 years old his maternal family told him that his aunt was not actually his mother, but rather that his mother had died when he was a baby. He was very shaken by this news.

When he was fifteen his neighbour told him that he knew his uncle, his father's brother, and took him to meet his father's family despite resistance from his maternal family. His uncle took him to his father's home in a rural area where he met his paternal grandparents. A man appeared that claimed to be his father, he tells me that he was very confused as he had been told that his father had died when he was a baby and now he didn't know what to believe. The fact that his 'father' did not discuss or describe his mother made Ayabonga even more sceptical.

Ayabonga has suffered many deaths of those close to him; in 2004 his aunt (who brought him up) died and in 2005 his uncle died. Ayabonga nursed his aunt until she died. His aunt would tell him how to cook and he would cook for the family when she was too ill.

> *…at that time I was a very little boy, she, my aunt, slept on the bed, she told me if you want to cook for me, do this and this and this, I will direct you. She showed, then I cook for her and I give her food….*

His aunt was the person Ayabonga was closest to and her death saddened him enormously. In 2008 the man that claimed to be his father also died, although he describes this death as less traumatic as he never developed a relationship with his father who he refers to as "*a cruel man"* who refused to acknowledge him as his child for so long. He carries a negative imago in his mind of his father, spurring him on to be successful to differentiate himself from this man.

> *I told my family that I didn't cry because I didn't know that guy, so I didn't have enough time to cry because the way he treat me, he was not, I thought that that guy I don't think was, was not my father. Then my family told me that that guy he refuse me, when I was, when I was born he said, this baby is not mine, but so and then to me that guy was, I told them that that guy was (uhh) was, was (uhh), a cruel guy - my father to me was my enemy at the same time, because I wish he to see my success one day.*

Despite Ayabonga's difficult relationship or lack of relationship with his father, his clan name from his father is important to him. He tells me in the second interview:

> *My clan name is important to me. My relationship with my father is difficult, but I have made a decision to have peace and love so I must forget about that and move on with my life. It is become easier to do that now. I feel better now.*

Ayabonga describes his upbringing as very poor, often going to bed hungry and cold, walking to school with no school shoes and sometimes "*being too tired to walk so far*." His uncle often used to beat the women and girls in the house, which unsettled Ayabonga and made him feel unsafe. After his aunt and uncle died Ayabonga lived with his cousin sister (the daughter of his aunt who raised him) in a squatter camp.

Ayabonga's timeline is divided into a 'past' and a 'future', with the 'present' reflected in the corner of the timeline with only one photograph of him and his friends with the quote *"I am very proud of*

myself". This under-represented 'present' section in comparison with all the other participants, who dedicate a bigger space to this part of their lives, could indicate how his 'present' life is overshadowed by the trauma of his 'past' and his focus on the hopes and dreams of his 'future'; Ayabonga is focused on what is to come as opposed to what is now. This representation is also illustrative of the moment in his life when he drew the timeline, a time when he was unsure of what the future would hold, he was looking for a job and had accepted that he would not be able to attend university as he had not been accepted. I suspect that if he had drawn up the timeline at the time of his second interview, when he had found a job, that his 'present' section would have received more prominence with the content of his job and his 'new' 'present' life.

Under the 'past' he draws a picture of himself at five years old crying with the quote "*No hope for my life. This is me when I was young boy, things make me feel so sad"*. He describes how hard it was for him when people in his community called him "*an orphan"*.

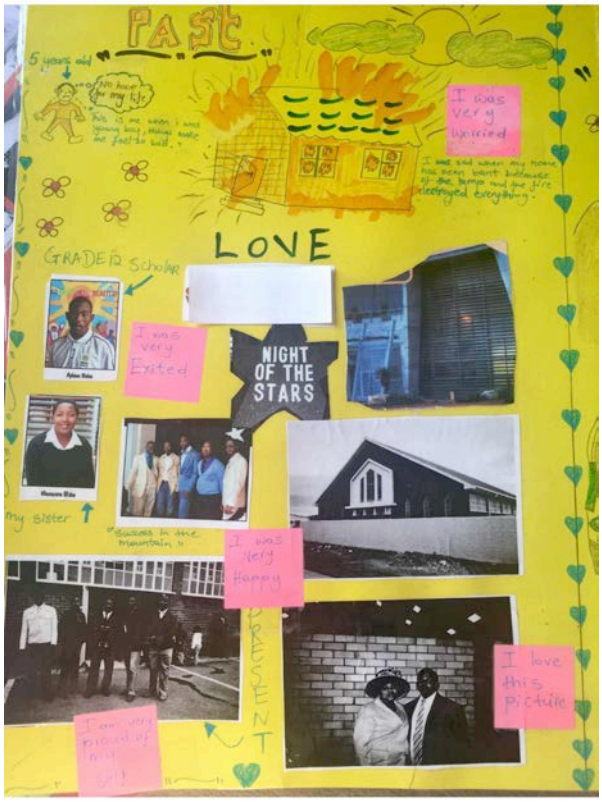


Figure 16: Ayabonga's 'past' timeline

Ayabonga struggled at primary school and failed a number of times, not surprising considering the difficulties he suffered and the responsibilities he had to take on. He eventually passed grade 7 and went to high school and was well liked by teachers and peers. One of the highlights of his school

career was participating in a play called 'Woman's Day' "*whereby we abuse woman as a man and act as a cruel man at the same time.*" This had a profound effect on him and he realised how often women are abused in his community.

In 2011, the year he was in matric he left a lamp burning unattended in his room and it fell over catching alight and spreading quickly through two makeshift (squatter camp) 'buildings'. He includes a drawing of his house burning down on his timeline, indicating the huge effect this event had on his life with the quote: "*I was very worried. I was sad when my home has been bant [sic] and the fire destroyed everything*". The fire destroyed their home resulting in the family having to move around throughout his matric year leaving Ayabonga with no place to study at night.

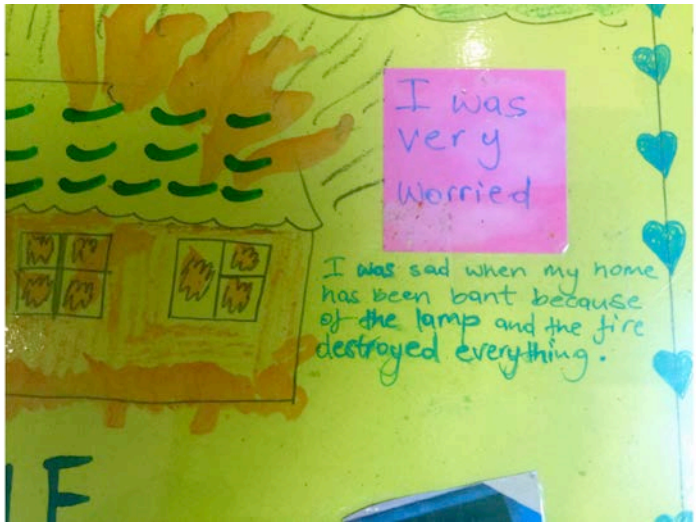


Figure 17: Ayabonga's drawing of his burning home

Ayabonga joined the NGO in 2008 and includes a number of photographs on his timeline indicating its importance in his life. The people he has met at the NGO have given him strength and showed him that in order to do well you have to work hard and be humble.

Ayabonga describes his initiation month as a very important event in his life.

> *To me it was good, I met good friends there so it explains many things. To be a man is not just easy, you need to be humble and you need to have respect, you need to understand the situation of other people, not only as such that you need to understand your own situation. You need to be able to help others.*

5.3.2. Present Life

Ayabonga loves drawing and writing poetry. His writings include many messages to himself and to the "*People of South Africa"* of hope and strength. The NGO encouraged Ayabonga to write and widened his horizons from their township origins:

> *They publish my poem in their magazine. The person I met at [the NGO] from Los Angeles she told me she like my poems. No one believe I have friends from overseas. I show them one these pictures when those people from America were here, but they still don't believe me.*

Church and the welfare projects run through the church are very important in Ayabonga's life. He is particularly close to the priest of his church and his wife and includes a photograph of them and his church on his timeline.

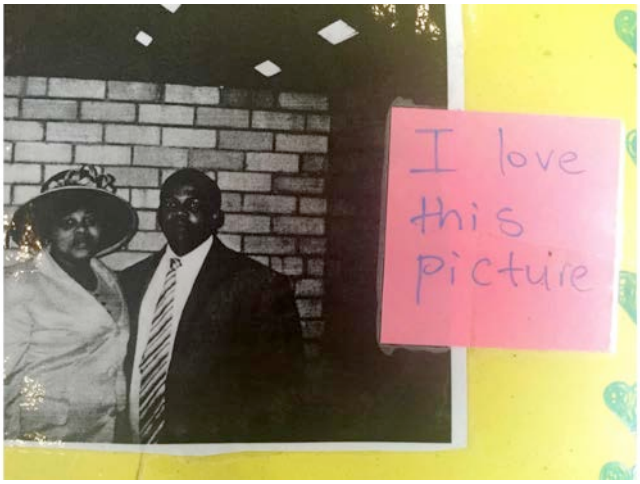


Figure 20: Ayabonga's church pastor and his wife

Ayabonga tells me that sometimes he finds interacting with his peers difficult:

> *All of them they like alcohol. But me, I don't like alcohol, I'm not smoking. When I was 18 I used to drink alcohol and 17, in December, but I saw that it is not the right thing so I stay away from that. I lost my girlfriend, she was cheating on me and I don't like that. So I move forward and stay away from her, I don't like those kind of thing. I saw a lot of things in her, she was drinking alcohol, I didn't know that before I met her, but I leave her now. I am speaking to another girl, that girl we were in the same school, I have a cell number and sometimes I call her, I'm just checking her! I would like to have a girlfriend. To have a*

girlfriend gives you someone to talk to, sometime if she is a good person, some of them can encourage you for things in your life and motivating you.

Ayabonga discusses emotional topics such as love eloquently with thought and reflection:

I believe in love, it's the nature, because God, as I believe that, because God he loved all people, so I must love all people too. God showed me I cannot just love my cousin, I must love all people. Don't say, aye I don't like this person, or this one cos he talk a lot. Don't just point fingers at other people. I would like to find a woman that I love. When you have a girlfriend you have someone you can talk to, someone, if a girlfriend is, some of them are good, if a girlfriend is a good person, they can encourage you about positive things in life, some of them can, can, can motivating you?

Ayabonga says going to church and exercising are the two things that make him happy:

Exercise make me happy… I make a push ups, stretching and sit ups, all that exercise make me feel happy, make me feel fresh.

Ayabonga is critical of people that do not want to learn or develop themselves:

She [one of his cousin sisters that moved to Johannesburg] failed grade 10, she don't want to study, she don't want to know, she is lazy.

5.3.3. Future Life

Ayabonga dreams of going to university to study social work, but he would have to re-write his matric and get a bursary, both of which he appears to understand are unlikely. Despite this he envisions a happy future illustrated on his timeline by drawings of '*me and my wife'*, smartly dressed in a suit and tie as he tells me he likes to be smart. He includes drawings of "*my dream car", "my dream house"*, with the description *"I love it"*.



Figure 19: Ayabonga and his 'future wife'



Figure 20: Ayabonga's dream house and car

At the time of the first interview, Ayabonga is looking for a job and has been active in this pursuit for six months having being rejected on a number of occasions. He hopes that if he is able to find a job he could then perhaps attend night school in order to improve his matric and reapply to university.

When I meet Ayabonga for the second interview three months later he proudly tells me that he has found a job as a shop assistant at a food retailer. His body language has changed dramatically from being tentative and unsure of himself to showing more confidence and happiness. He has also rented a flat near the shop and is living on his own which makes him feel independent.

> *It's very different because I used to stay with my cousin sister. So now I have to cook on my own, I have to do everything on my own. Washing, everything… I'm a good cook. Sometimes I can cook nice food for me.*

Ayabonga explains how he had to take the one-roomed flat as the transport costs were too high from where he lived and the company would not take him home after stock-takes as the area that he lives there are there are *"lots of criminals"*.

> *…it is very expensive [to stay in a flat], it's R500 a month. My salary is R2500 a month. I would prefer to stay with my cousin sister, but she encourage me because my manager want that, and she say if you want to please [his manager]. So I say I will do that. It's close to where I work so I can walk, I save the money from the transport. The bus fare would cost me R800 a month, so this way it is cheaper.*

Moving in on his own has matured Ayabonga in the three months and he has started to contemplate the next phase of his life:

> *It works, but I am lonely. I need a girlfriend! I don't want to live with her though, I want to visit her and her to visit me and eat together and watching movies at the cinema, buy some drinks and chips and something like that, but not to live together. I am still young, not to live like a woman and a man. I'm still young.*

Focused on learning from everything he does, Ayabonga tells me that one of the large benefits from his job is that he speaks English often and is able to improve his written and spoken use of the language.

Ayabonga tells me that his greatest wish is to have a crèche for orphaned children where him and his wife could provide them with everything they need thereby indicating his strong sense of community and 'giving back'. When he leaves his first interview I asked him where he was going: "*I help [my cousin sister's] children with their homework"*, indicating his desire to help and give back to those in need.

His closing remarks in his second interview encapsulate this young man's humility and positive attitude:

> *I feel lucky. You must forget about the past and focus on the present and move forward.*

5.4. Conclusion

These three portraits provide us with a window into the life stories of these three young people, with specific focus on the personalised images of their relatives and their influence on these young people's lives. The visual richness of the images and timelines affords us a glimpse into the life experiences and environment in which these young people live, positioning the reader/ researcher within the research through viewing the images, and creating a world around the participant. The timeline also illustrates the temporality of a life, visually evident in the contrast between where these young people have come from and where they intend to 'go' in the future. A 'moment' in life was also illustrated through how the participants' lives changed in the time between drawing up the timelines and the time of the second interview in an indication of flexibility, temporality and transience. I was left wondering whether their timelines would have been markedly different had they drawn them at the end of the second interview, specifically in the case of Ayabonga whose life

and identity changed markedly through finding a job. It was evident in the interviews that the art timelines helped to trigger and shape their stories and narrative identity construction, both from the perspective of providing the opportunity to reflect on their past lives giving rise to their memories of family relationships in the context of death and absence, exacerbated by the effects of HIV/AIDS and from having something concrete to refer to and base their lives on in the interviews. The art timelines as a visual aid appeared to be effective in assisting with the participants' narrative identity construction and the participatory action element of this research study.

Chapter 6

Relationality and Belonging

This first chapter of the second level of analysis, the thematic analysis across the narrative portraits, provides a background and exploration of the participants' narratives, particularly focused on their interactions with their families, 'surrogate' families and "imagined communities" (Anderson, 1991). Relationality, the state of being relational and interacting with others (Bradbury & Bergmann Lichtenstein, 2000), forms a key thread through which the participants attempt to consolidate their stories and construct their identities in the late stages of adolescence, a time when young people become aware of how they appear in the eyes of others (Erikson, 1968; Breger, 1974). A narrative approach to identity construction theorises a person in context by focusing on both the temporal arrangement of stories into a consolidated whole, and on how individual experiences and life events are connected to others in the social world (McAdams, 2001; Fay, 1996; Riessman, 2008). The social context into which a person is born might be thought of as the stage on which the 'play' of their life starts and is enacted; the scene of the action; the 'others' with whom she or he interacts, the characters of the play in relation to the formation of the individual character. The participants experience with others through the interaction with their families, communities, churches and schools, provides moments of belonging and recognition (Yuval-Davis, 2006; Taylor, 2004) through which identity is constructed (Fay, 1996).

For most of the participants, church and school features as an 'imagined community' (Anderson, 1991), a relational grouping that acts as an extension of their families, providing recognition and a sense of belonging. An additional 'imagined community' (Anderson, 1991) experienced by the participants is their interaction with staff and other young participants in the programmes of the NGO, *Ithemba*, providing an important context of relationality in their lives.

The high incidence of disease and death of the participants' family members as a result of HIV/AIDS features prominently in the stories of their family members, both present and absent, indicating the marked effect of this pandemic on these young people's early experiences of relationality. The participants' narratives reflect their feelings of guilt, and include descriptions of the alienation they experience as a result of stigmatisation and social exclusion.

6.1. Family Backgrounds

For all people, irrespective of their cultural and geographic location, 'family', as the central and original human social unit, provides the first interaction humans have with others and is foundational in 'self' and identity constructions (Ankrah, 1993). In African society, including among the isiXhosa speaking community to which the participants of this study belong, 'family' refers to a wider circle of people than conventionally recognised in the Western nuclear family structure. Marriage is based on the principle of collectivity and interdependence, comprising multiple generations, and part of a social system with a cultural heritage quite different from Western family organisation (Siqwana-Ndulo, 1998). This is evident in the participants' stories, which reflect the importance of extended family constellations. However, migrant labour and the effects of the HIV pandemic have had the effect of disrupting this traditional family structure. Further, family formations are becoming more flexible and fluid across the world and these global dynamics are also at play in the lives of these young participants.

For the participants who are fortunate enough to have mothers who are alive and available to them, this represents their primary caregiving relationship. However, the mothers of most participants are deceased and in these cases their primary caregiving relationship is with their grandmothers or older women in their extended families, considered to be the mainstay of township family life (Aubel, 2012). Fathers are mostly absent in the upbringings of the participants with none featuring in their narratives as a primary caregiver.

6.1.1. Biological Mothers

It appears common from the participants' narratives that even those that have close relationships with their mothers are critical of them, inserting a certain gendered expectation, scrutinising and interrogating these relationships and placing higher expectations of dependability and morality on them than on their fathers, as was noted in the study conducted by Bray et al (2010). The discourse of motherhood as nurturers and primary caregivers has left many of the participants disillusioned with their mothers, as they have fallen short of the societally imposed expectation of the 'good mother' through being forced by Apartheid and the continued cycle of structural racism and poverty to work far from where their children live and as a result unable to physically and emotionally nurture them (Walker, 1995). In addition, many of the participants' mothers had died from HIV related illnesses, some after having been forced to resort to prostitution in order to earn a living, thereby causing their children to feel shame and exacerbating the sense of failure of mothers in the

minds of their children against the contrast of the expectation of mothers to be 'good', present and nurturing.

> *So my biological mother took off to Johannesburg claiming she was going to find work to make her life easier but instead she became a prostitute… she came back in 2001 and she was very sick and she was diagnosed by HIV and AIDS* (Siphosethu)

Nandipha's mother also left for Johannesburg to find work and died of an AIDS related illness when Nandipha was 11 years old. Her aunt taunts Nandipha with stories of her mother thereby negating her existence as a person of worth and in the process negating and undermining Nandipha's existence through the fact that she had a 'bad' mother:

> *…your mother, the alcoholic, all those secrets, the alcoholic, your mother who does not take care of you, who doesn't give a care that she has children, who is you. She can't earn money to care for you because she is an alcoholic and a prostitute.*

Many of the participants, particularly the girls, displayed 'internalised oppression' (Gainor, 1992) through their harsh judgment of their mothers' mothering skills, their anger, judgement and resentment as ways in which these daughters attempt to defend and dissociate themselves from their mothers' HIV related deaths and the associated stigma from their communities. The stigma attached to HIV/AIDS and the notions of contamination, exclusion, fear and death (Wilton, 1997) together with the shame and social embarrassment of their mothers contracting the disease through the perceived sexual deviance of prostitution weighs heavily on these young people. Their dissociation from their mothers in the hope that they will not be tainted by their deaths drives their judgment of their mothers' choices (Goffman, 1963), a psychological attempt at ensuring that their lives will be different.

Both Asanda and Nandipha express disappointment in recalling how their mothers had no interest in being 'good mothers' (Walker, 1995), choosing rather to live active social lives as an outlet for their own difficult lives.

> *… she used to have lots of friends, they would go out and - ja, most of the time she would be out - she would just put her bag there and go out and come back maybe in the morning, yeah* (Asanda)

> *Like you on your 30's and 40's but you still partying like this, (uh uh) [shakes her head] - I just want a mother, someone that I can talk to … When you have kids you have a responsibility, you are not only living for yourself, you living for yourself and for your kids - what sort of a mother was a mother who could not even leave us a home, I hate this woman, I <u>hate</u> my mother.* (Nandipha)

Where the participants' mothers are alive and available, they are supportive and highly valued by the participants, who understand how fortunate they are to have their mothers present in their lives. Nobomi lives with both her parents. She realises that her mother has had a hard life and is appreciative of her encouragement.

> *My relationship with my mom is very special. I love my mom because I know she has been through a lot in the past, she didn't give up - I think [I get my strength] from my mom - because she is always tell me that everything is happening for a reason, so there will be my time, she gives me strength.*

Despite identifying her parents' intense dependence on alcohol as one of the major challenges she faces, Nobomi's display of a deep understanding of the complex reasons for her mother's reliance on alcohol, indicates the ambivalence these young people encounter in their lives. Despite being aware of her mother's weaknesses, Nobomi still sees her mother as a role model and is protective of her, particularly when her father reacts abusively, leaving her feeling vulnerable and unsafe:

> *I know [my mom] had a big problem when I was young and I heard from my father that she had always drunk. When they drunk they do fight. But I want [my mother] to be happy and to drink makes her happy, so she can drink, but they must not fight, not fight [weeps]… It's because of the things that they does, when I had to watch my dad pick up my mom. And I watch him beat up my mom, and she would cry, she would cry, and she bled and now she got a big scar [sobs]. [They last fought] about 3 months back. He didn't beat her, but they had a fight, but we, we stopped it. Me and my sister - I don't blame him, I just blame the booze and the drink. When they are sober they do not fight, they make jokes for us.*

These young people's need for recognition and belonging from their mothers as their primary caregivers drives the tension between loving their mothers and yet despising them for failing as parents. The resultant 'mother blaming' is informed by mothers' subordinate social positioning in terms of gender (discussed from an ideological perspective in the next chapter) within their

communities and the attached prejudice and disadvantage (Walker, 1995; Burman, 2008), despite the fact that mothers, and grandmothers, are left with the sole responsibility for childrearing.

6.1.2. Grandmothers

In many of the participants' lives, their grandmothers or the older women in their extended families offer the first form of positive recognition and belonging they experience. Asanda describes how her grandparents, particularly her grandmother, brought her up, not only providing her with strict boundaries, but also taking care of all her material needs enabling her to be brought up in *"a family with comfort"*, buffering and protecting her from the pain and vulnerability she suffered when her mother died of an HIV related illness within defined boundaries.

> *… every time as a child if I needed something like clothes, things at school they were always there to provide me with anything I wanted so I grew up in a family with such values that they were strict with me… Yes, so I knew what to do and at what time. Yes, even right now they are still strict. Like in timing, how I should get at home, how I should, at 6 o'clock unless I have informed my grandmother of something, so that they are always strict in every thing I do.*

Asanda describes her grandmother as self-sufficient and inspirational, a strong female role model despite the intergenerational gap and her grandmother's lack of formal schooling. She provides Asanda with structure and strong values, making her feel safe and secure (Aubel, 2012) and motivates her granddaughter to express agency and realise the dreams she had little opportunity of realising under Apartheid. Chazan (2008) suggests that the effects of HIV/AIDS in South Africa are not as dramatic as portrayed in academic and popular discourses, as a result of the nurturing and buffering effects from grandmothers.

> *She is an old lady ((laughs)), when she grew up she wanted to be a nurse, then now whenever I go to school she would remind me of her dream which must now be my dream. She's quite inspirational cos she didn't go to school she ended in grade 4, I think, and then she had to go and - get married to my grandfather and - So even though she's not educated most of the things she does is more like a person who is educated - my grandfather doesn't live with her but she can still support herself, she can still look after us, she can still gives us the guidance that we would need from an older person. Yes, I know for her it's quite a different world we live in than the world she used to live in but she doesn't change.*

Notwithstanding the trauma and pain of losing her mother and younger brother, Asanda's grandmother has provided her with stability and security and a foundation from which to move into her post Apartheid life. Despite the fact that traditions and cultures have changed markedly, and with limited educational background from Apartheid's Bantu education system, Asanda's grandmother is able to traverse these cultural and ideological changes sufficiently to be a relevant support for Asanda. Considering the disadvantages suffered by Asanda and the slow rate of transformation within her community, her grandmother may appear to be colluding with an impossible dream, but this support and love has provided Asanda with the recognition required to construct a foundation of identity despite the misrecognition she has experienced in other spheres of her life (Taylor, 2004)

Similarly to Asanda, Malusi was raised by his maternal grandmother who he describes as "*strict*", and "*the rock in my family*" who did everything for him.

> *…so everything I do was in order, I didn't have negative friends or anything like that. Yes, about my neatness and everything because my grandmother used to do my laundry, iron for me, polish my shoes everyday before I went to school.*

The reference to his grandmother making sure that he was always neat and respectable provided Malusi with a sense of security and control in his life. Malusi indicates the protective role his grandmother played in his life in his recall of a PIN (Wengraf, 2011) of when he was 16 years old she went into hospital and he was arrested, an indication of how she acted as a buffer between him as a young person and the world (Chazan, 2008).

> *…my grandmother was in hospital, so I thought to myself I had everything, every freedom that I need, because that person that restricted me was not at home. I was living there with my three uncles, my two aunts they were living separately from us. My three uncles didn't have much to say to me when I arrive at home at night, maybe I arrive at home at 10 o'clock at night, they can't shout at me, so the person that was doing that was in hospital, so I thought I had freedom and it was December.*

The protective role grandmothers play in their grandchildren's lives is echoed by Siphosethu. When she was 18 months old her mother told her grandfather that she was going to give her child up for adoption. Her grandfather's wife, *"a lovely woman, who is now my foster mother"*, offered to take

care of Siphosethu until such time as her mother could take care of her. When Siphosethu's grandfather sexually abused her, her grandmother believed her story and protected and nurtured her.

> *…my grandfather started abusing us he'd beat my foster mom and when my foster mom wasn't around he'd call me and sexually harass me.*

At the age of eight Siphosethu's teacher called her foster mother to say that Siphosethu's behaviour at school indicated that perhaps she was being sexually abused. Siphosethu described how she was scared to tell her grandmother about the abuse; concerned that she wouldn't believe her, especially as her grandfather was the primary breadwinner. Siphosethu describes how being silent on this issue was very frightening leading to high levels of stress and emotional fragmentation as was found in a study conducted Bray et al, (2010) where sexually abused children remained silent for fear of not being believed or being the cause of the removal of the bread winner from the family. Siphosethu described how her grandmother released her from this stress and emotional trauma through compassion and understanding, and providing her with love and support, believing her story of abuse as opposed to questioning and doubting her given she was a child, as she relays in the PIN below:

> *I thought that she was gonna take his side because usually at the time the child was being abused or raped they told their mothers and their mothers would usually say "Oh, my husband wouldn't do that". But then she told me that tomorrow when we wake up we gonna go to the police station, we not gonna tell him we going to the police station we gonna tell him that we visiting a friend. And then we went to the police station and I told them what was happening and then they sent me to be examined to find out if something was happening and then they found out that something really was happening so they took him, arrested him, but he was not put to jail, he was sent to live somewhere else…*

The way her grandmother handled this situation was a very positive event in Siphosethu's life providing her with recognition (Taylor, 2004) as a person of worth. She describes her grandmother on her art timeline as *"my pillar of strength, my mom, my everything"*.

When Nozuko's mother was diagnosed HIV positive and the family needed a place to stay it was her maternal grandmother who supported them.

[My grandmother is] just an amazing person and I can talk to her about anything that I want to talk to her and also I love her stories that she would tell that in the past what she did and how she, she just move on with life even though life has its obstacles and stuff and the stories that she usually told me is just amazing.

Gcobisa was initially brought up by her grandmother before returning to live with her parents. She describes her grandmother as *"her best friend"*, who she always turns to when she has dilemmas and needs someone to speak to.

…she was understanding and calming me down and making me understand the situation and all that sort of stuff. Ja, we like best friends, we talk about everything, Ja.

Similarly Nandipha's maternal grandmother's sister is her greatest confidant and support in an illustration of the relationality within the Xhosa family system which refers to a wider, inter-generational circle of relatives and community members based on collectivity (Siqwana-Ndulo, 1998). She describes how her grandmother encourages her, but through being firm with her.

… so I had no one to take me so my grandmother was like "well, you can come and stay with me" and that's how the relationship started… My grandmother motivates me, because she picks me up and motivates me every time I feel down and gives me the wise words, saying you're strong enough. She's my motivator.… my grandmother is like "Don't be like that Nandipha, you mustn't forget that you are not the only child that is facing this… when you get to face problem you get to be like as if God doesn't love you and all that… look at the bigger picture here, stop moaning…

While many of the participants live in poverty, lacking food, warm clothes and school shoes, there is a support system from their communities, most often lead by the older women, that protects against emotional poverty, providing younger people with recognition and a sense of value (Fay, 1996; Taylor, 2004).

Yeah, it's great, because even if there is no food, no like things…if you living with a person you know that when you feeling down you can always speak to them… when I'm facing difficulties I can always go to her and say "I need to talk to someone so will you help me, can I talk to you with this and that?" So she's a nice person, sort of like a friend (Nandipha).

Grandmothers provide the participants with love, support and strict boundaries, shielding them from the challenges and adversity they suffer in their lives, providing them with a stable, secure base. Through providing positive female role models of strength and competence and raising the image of women in the minds of their grandchildren, grandmothers appear to mitigate the disappointment many participants feel towards their own mothers. The sense of belonging and recognition (Fay, 1996; Taylor, 2004) grandmothers in South Africa afford to their 'born-free', "hinge generation" (Hoffman, 2005) grandchildren provides the initial basis on which they construct the 'self', a positive effect of the African extended family support structure (Siqwana-Ndulo, 1998).

6.1.3. Fathers

While most of the participants knew their mothers, even if they had died, many of the participants had not met, or even knew who their fathers were, adversely affecting them emotionally and economically. Adolescence is a time when the need for family belonging and the desire to trace one's roots is strong (Ramphele & Richter, 2006; Nduna & Jewkes, 2011). In many African cultures, if a child is not properly and ritually introduced to their patrilineal forbears, they are believed to be vulnerable to physical and spiritual dangers (Russell, 2003). Without a father it is not possible for the family to make an *imbeleko* sacrifice and the child is therefore unable to be formally introduced to his or her family and *abaphansi* (ancestors) (Mkhize, 2004), and as a result culturally prejudiced and relegated to orphan status (Townsend, 2002). This experience of non-recognition and alienation from one's roots hampers identity construction.

> *…my friends when they talk about their fathers, like it hits me hard, the fact that I don't know who my father is, because I would love to know my father. So when they talk about their fathers when they talk about the rituals, the um, the ritual that they have, they call it imbeleko where they do a necklace for you which means you are part of the family and stuff. When they talk about stuff like that it hits me very hard.* (Siphosethu)

The clan name system, an important patriarchal cultural tradition, is followed by the Xhosa people whereby a child takes on their paternal family's clan name unless the father is not known in which case the child takes on the maternal family's clan name (Lindgren, 2004). In cases where the participants knew their fathers, this patrilineal process was valued by them, their clan names identifying them, providing them with a form of formal recognition as a person of worth, belonging to a legitimate family structure with ancestral history and continuity (Mkhize, 2004). Malusi illustrates this in how he undermines his mother's involvement in this important identification

process, indicating the subordinate role the female gender plays in family matters and how patriarchy is entrenched.

> *The biological father in the Xhosa people is so important because I have to call myself with my father's clan. My father was [name of his clan name], so I am [name of his clan name] and a child of mine will become [name of his clan name], you know, so my mother doesn't know what my father's clan usually do when there's like a traditional ceremony or something like that. (*Malusi)

It is not only men that entrench this patrilineal process; Nozuko demonstrates how important this cultural practices is to her identity and the symbol of her roots and origin (Prins, 2006):

> *[My clan name] shows who I am. I think those people who say their clan name is not important to them have lost some of themselves and where they came from. (Nozuko)*

In cases where the participants did not know their fathers, they identified less with the clan name from their mothers' families indicating the significance of having an acknowledged father in terms of this important identifier that carries notions of history, context and 'roots' (Prins, 2006).

> *I think it identifies me, I think it is part of me, when you know where you're from and you know your roots, you know who you are, so ja… But the thing is my mother died without telling me who my father is, so I can't really know now, I can't really find someone who can find my father so it doesn't really matter now.* (Siphosethu)

Nandipha's father was on the periphery of her life until she was 9 years old when he disappeared. This has lead her to reject him and all that is associated with him: *"I don't know my father's clan name, so I'm like… don't really care… he didn't care, it's like he never existed at all."* This vehement denial of not caring about her clan name appears to be a defensive reaction to the rejection and misrecognition (Taylor, 2004) she feels from her father in the patrilineal society in which she lives (Russell, 2003).

However, clan names appear to be more crucial to the male participants than the female participants given that women change their clan names when they marry, furthering entrenching patriarchy:

> *…no, its not really important. To me it's just like a name which is going to fade because I will marry (Phozisa)*

6.1.3.1. Paternity

Ayabonga was introduced to his father when he was 15 and describes how he was confused by and suspicious of the event, especially as when he met his father he never spoke to him about his mother or offered to support him and pay for his school uniforms and books, both of which Ayabonga expected a father should do for his son, resulting in him feeling disappointed:

> *They like talking the bad things with me and as I sit there I look at him and I was, and he was just talking and talking and talking and talking and then he didn't tell me who my mother was, what kind of person she, he was supposed to told me that your mother was, she was a kind of person, like this and this and this, he didn't tell anything. And then, then (uhh), I was afraid to talk him that I need money, money to buy school uniform and clothes and something that I need - He told me that [he] don't have enough money to give.*

When Ghadeni was 14 years old her mother told her that the man she believed was her father, was not; instead her father was a Zulu man. She had been brought up to believe she was Xhosa and finding out that she was actually of Zulu descent confused her, causing her to question her history and her roots, leaving her questioning who she really was (Prins, 2006). These feelings of 'rootlessness' and being ungrounded resulted in her rebelling and falling in with a bad crowd.

> *…we were at our gran's, we were celebrating a birthday and then (uhh), two hours later there was a man… came as a shock, I didn't know him, he said I was a relative to him and my mom asked me to join them in the lounge and then my dad broke off the secret and that was it… I just ran off… [When] I found out my real dad was a Zulu and then that came as a shock actually and then I started doing bad things, I hung out with the wrong crowd, (uhh) I started to, (uhh), I took the thing in the wrong way and then I've done some bad things just to spite my parents for not telling me the truth.*

Contrary to postmodern theories which suggest that we have all assumed some form of psychological nomadic status in the world, an attachment to and understanding of one's roots and origins is important to people's psychological health and well-being (Prins, 2006) as is evident in the accounts of these young people. Ethnicity, as one aspect of a person's origin, concerns the construction of a collective history and sense of belonging, crucial in the understanding of 'who one is' (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1992). The importance of this 'groundedness' is demonstrated in the confusion displayed by the participants who are uncertain of their roots and family origins.

Supportive and involved fathers are very rare in the participants' lives, with only two participants describing their fathers as positive influences. Atypically, Gcobisa has two fathers, a Xhosa man who raised her and a Zulu man who is her biological father, who actively sought her out and has been involved in her life ever since. She still carries her Xhosa father's name as she believes changing it would be disrespectful to the man who brought her up.

Malusi's father was a positive influence in his life until he died when Malusi was 18. His father believed in the importance of tradition and education and encouraged Malusi to gain a skill that would make him employable. As a mechanic, he taught Malusi to drive and work on cars from the age of seven, providing him with paternal recognition, a rare phenomenon amongst the participants of this study.

> *He used to put me on top of him and I used to drive and each and every time I was trying to fix a car, (uhh) you know a CV joint, before he changed the CV joint he used to take a short drive with the car trying to turn left and right trying to feel if the CV joint was broken. So I used to watch him driving this car.*

Malusi carries a positive imago of his father despite the fact that he knew him for a short time. He would like to continue his father's legacy by having a large family.

> *You know my father had 3 childrens and I'm sure in the place that he's in he wanted to expand the family. So that's what I wanna do on his behalf, I wanna expand the family, so the [father's name] go to be strong.*

There is no doubt that absent and unknown fathers have caused distress for the participants in terms of lineage, and a sense of legitimacy and belonging in the world, and also from an economic perspective. In many cases though, grandmothers and mothers have made up for this lack of recognition. Those participants who were lucky enough to have fathers who were involved in their lives, such as Malusi and Gcobisa, or who know who their fathers, displayed self-confidence and a stronger sense of self, assured by their patrilineal roots and proud of their clan names and the cultural rituals that have afforded them a sense of belonging and acceptance as legitimate and 'actional' (Fanon, 1952, 2000) people of worth. In patriarchal societies, it is evident amongst the participants that children and adolescents are disadvantaged if they lack "access to the social position, labour and financial support that is provided by men" (Townsend, 2002, p. 270).

6.1.4. Confusion Surrounding Family Origins

> …if the quest for one's origins is frustrated, if the narrative of one's life lacks an account of the larger genealogy or collective identity into which it can be inscribed, this constitutes a serious obstacle to forging new routes (Prins, 2006, p. 289).

Confusion is evident in many of the participants' narratives in relation to the concealed truth about the identity of their biological parents, particularly fathers, as discussed above. In cases where this has occurred, this confusion and perceived deception appears to compromise and undermine the construction and consolidation of the participants' identities, leaving them grappling with their true origins, resulting in questioning *who* they really are. Ayabonga described how when he heard that his aunt was not his mother and that in fact his mother had died when he was a baby he felt that the foundations on which his life had been built had been a lie, leaving him both severely negatively emotionally and physically alienated (Prins, 2006).

> *…my aunt and my uncle and my whole family sitted with me and they told me that as I grew up, I thought my aunt she was my mom, but they told me the truth, that now, it was the time to tell you the truth, so I'm your aunt. At the same time I was surprised, how can they told me like that, my aunt, they told me, that time I didn't eat, I couldn't sleep, I was crying so bad…*

Despite experiencing love and support from her grandparents, when Asanda tried to piece her family configuration together in her mind she acknowledges she was confused and had many questions for which she struggled to find answers. This may have been because Asanda has been exposed to the Western concept of a nuclear family through the media and automatically assumed that the older female most present in her home must be her mother and the male, her father, as opposed to active deception.

> *I didn't know, think like, ok she [my mother] is younger and this father is also my grandmother's husband. Like I didn't put that together. Though, like, I was like, "Oh now I can see she is younger and they are saying that she is their daughter, Oh, where's my father?" And the question started to come up at that time. And my gran was so secretive about that.*

Siphosethu was brought up in a similar situation. When her mother died her family didn't take her to the funeral because they were afraid that she would then discover that the woman she thought was her sister was actually her mother. She is now left feeling that she never had a chance to develop a

relationship with her mother as she was a distant figure in her life and was also never given the chance to mourn her death:

> *… she'd come back to visit but I never knew she was my mom because I was being raised by her father which made her my sister, so I was told. I didn't go to her funeral cos they said at home that I was this bright child, I wanted to know each and every thing, so you know at black funerals they usually read an obituary to say she left a father behind, and a child, so my name was gonna be there…*

While the confusion as to the physical identity of the participants' biological parents could appear from the perception of the participants to be deceiving, my initial analysis led me to believe that this misrepresentation was instituted by the families as a protective mechanism for the children. But on further examination, together with a black, community psychologist colleague (personal communication with Mashigo, 2016), we concluded that the ancestral, cultural shame present in African children being born without acknowledged fathers, compels surviving relatives not to discuss the 'physical identity' of biological parents in an act of self-protection, relieving them from having to address the fact that a child has no traceable history and connection with their ancestral past. Mashigo (2016) pointed out that from the perspective of my whiteness, I as the researcher had assumed a parental role in my analysis by assuming that relatives would be driven to protect the *black* children. This was an important moment in the research for me, as it pointed out my own structural positioning, the intersection of the ideologies that unconsciously 'interpellate' me, thereby only enabling me to see one version of the 'truth'; my need to control and prescribe, driven by my white guilt to make things better, justified through the order of parents protecting the children. The participants' stories of confusion and alienation could be interpreted as anger towards their parents' deception and depriving them of traceable histories and ultimate belonging in their communities as having come from 'good', patrilineal identifiable families.

6.1.5. Abandonment

Many of the participants spoke of being abandoned and not 'feeling wanted' or recognised by their parents (Taylor, 2004). Aviwe's father's sudden departure when he was a young child left him feeling abandoned and lonely. He describes the years after his father left as isolated and fearful.

Siphosethu tells how she was born to a 17 year-old still at school, *"who didn't want me… I was taking away her teenage stage… and [she] couldn't bear the idea of becoming a parent."* Her mother tried various ways of *"getting rid of [her]"*, once hitting her over the head with a vase.

Nandipha feels very negative and angry towards her mother for deserting her and leaving her with people who neglected her:

> *I always feel angry with her because I get to ask, how do you just do that, how do you leave your child and go on with your life and not think that I have a child who is at home. When you leave your child with someone else, they will not love them like they should, especially if they have their own kids.*

This desertion and abandonment undermined these young people's construction of the 'self' leaving them insecure, grappling with who they are in the world having been born to parents who were themselves adolescents, anxious, insecure and ill-prepared to be parents. Abandonment represents the ultimate form of misrecognition (Taylor, 2004); failure to recognise one's own child is likely to jeopardise identity construction as an adolescent searches for acceptance and belonging in the quest to consolidate the parts of their lives into a coherent and integrated whole (Fay, 1996).

6.2. Surrogate Families and 'Imagined Communities'

In contrast to the displacement many of the participants experience as a result of the psychological insecurity, and in some cases physical insecurity, they experience within their families, the participants describe church, school and *Ithemba*, all socially constructed, "imagined communities" (Anderson, 1991). Church and *Ithemba* were described as places that afford them with a sense of belonging and recognition, providing an escape and a safe space of respite and peace in their often disjointed and dislocated lives. School provided the opportunity for the participants to achieve and belong to 'the clever camp', a mark of social mobility.

6.2.1. Church

The church provides the participants with a place to have fun and be with people their own age in a protected and secure environment within their communities, operating as a surrogate family or an "imagined community", an "image of their communion" (Anderson, 1991, p. 6) living in their minds.

> *Well its one of the places I feel much in hope, yes, and everytime I go to church I feel somehow connected to do something, I feel somehow being part of something. Yes, I think that's the highlight of my life… yes* (Asanda).

> *So church is number 1, it is one of the things that when I feel like when life is too much for me and then I go to church and I come away feeling very much better* (Nandipha).

> *Yes, [church is important to me]. Grooming my spiritual needs, it is important to me to have that connection with God. We meet on Saturday at 6 o'clock and then also on Sunday* (Nozuko).

> *(uhh) the one thing that make me happy is church. My family, and church* (Anathi).

Phozisa includes a photograph of her church with the quote *"My church where I go every Sundays"*.

Church also provides the participants with the opportunity to contribute to the people in need in their community providing them with a sense of purpose and meaning. Ayabonga describes how church is an integral part of his life and the welfare projects that are organised through the church provide him with an opportunity to help others, particularly in the township he lives where help is so desperately needed, thereby providing him with a purpose, recognition as a valued person with a sense of being needed, as opposed to always needing, and an extension of the family he doesn't have. His description of being *"the hands of the social workers"* is in reference to the value his work creates for his community.

> *…in my church, now, ok, I am involved in the project of the church, all of the welfare so we guys we are helping the poor families, we give them food and clothes so that they can be comfortable. We are not just helping the poor family, we have the children that have been raped by their fathers, or raped by their stepfathers. Some of them have been raped by cousin brothers, so all that information we hand to … our priest who go to the social workers, so the social work can see what they can do. The members of that project, we are the hands of the social workers.*

Church provides Ayabonga with a place to distance himself from, and perhaps even atone for, the sins of the men of his community and the high incidence of rape. Church as a structure gives him an opportunity to find belonging as a 'good man' with a purpose. Ayabonga is particularly close to his

parish priest and his wife and includes a photograph of them and his church on his timeline. This couple play a parental role in Ayabonga's life, lacking in his home life as both his parents have died.

Ayabonga describes church in terms of a physical and emotional release, mentioning church and exercise in the same sentence, indicating how the two provide him with the same benefit and positive feeling.

> *Exercise make me happy… I make a push ups, stretching and sit ups, all that exercise make me feel happy, make me feel fresh. Exercise and church are important to me.*

By contrast, Siphosethu sheds light on how church becomes integrated into the social lives of people in the townships, not necessarily, in her opinion, in a positive way. She prefers to conduct her spiritual life privately. But the insight illustrates how church becomes an integral part of the social lives of its members:

> *I believe in God, right, I know God is there, I go to church, I even have a small bible, like I have my conversations with God, but I didn't really go to church, because I think church becomes more like a competition, like people say, "I've got lots of people in my church, I've got money, I've got a car and a pastor and stuff". Like when you go to church in [name of place] you have to dress up, its like going to a fashion show, I don't think there's a sense of belonging for the right reasons. That's why I don't go to church. Like my mom, she reads the bible and she knows the Bible, I used to read the bible with her and then we would pray and sit in silence.*

One of the major attractions to the Church for the participants is that they attend on their own without their older family members making it a social environment, a safe place to interact with people of their own age in an expression of their independence, important at adolescence. This sense of independence and freedom from their families is somewhat ironic as the institution of religion is part of and often entrenches the inequalities of a society through preaching the acceptance of God's will, reducing the necessity to challenge the status quo and promote activism and change. This has the effect of the institution controlling and entrenching the participants' social positions of 'black' and 'poor', which in combination with its patriarchal dogma relegates women to a subordinate social position, and through the prescription of the sexual lives of its members, forbids homosexuality and sex before marriage.

In a further twist of irony given the controlling nature of the institution, the Church is also a space in which the participants attempt to express themselves as 'New' South Africans. Since the dismantling of Apartheid this discourse has been very pervasive and through the analysis of the participants' narratives I was left with the sense that they are desperately looking for a space in which to articulate this 'newness'. In an expression of a 'newness' of themselves, the participants have constructed "counteracting narratives" (Squire, 2013, p. 42) of their relationships and engagement with cultural and ancestral beliefs and their Christian faiths in a form of cultural assimilation and adaption. Counteracting narratives operate to "criticise or comment on the larger and more dominant narratives" present in a society (Squire, 2013, p. 42) and in essence result in the emergence of a different or counter-narrative. One of the most obvious articulations of a counteracting narrative in this study is shown through how the participants claim that their engagement with the Church and the adoption of Christian faith has caused them to set aside many of their cultural traditions and ancestral beliefs as these are considered contrary to the doctrine of the church.

In understanding the context within which the participants are constructing these counteracting narratives and their attempt to become 'New' South Africans, it is important to consider that in South Africa under Apartheid, African culture and rituals were used as weapons, tools and sites of resistance in demonstrating the differences between 'black' and 'white' South Africans (Barber, 2001). Strong affiliation and 'loyalty' to cultural values and rituals amongst the previous generation of black South Africans was encouraged by the Apartheid government as a way of demonstrating and enforcing the difference between black and white people. These differences seem less important for the generation of the participants of this study who have been exposed to global communications and mass consumer culture through the internet, television and cellular phones (Barber, 2001) and who are actively trying to carve their way in the world free from the atrocities and discrimination suffered by previous generations under Apartheid in a display of the complexities of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989, Prins, 2006). Attempting to 'set aside' their cultural rituals and beliefs, the participants entrench this 'newness', understood as a means to distance themselves not only from their and their parents' traumatic Apartheid pasts, but also depriving them of identification with their traditional roots and meaning-making systems, important in the construction of narrative identity.

As discussed above, church is a place of safety and belonging for many of the participants. Most of the participants attend church on their own without their families, an expression of their

independence and individuality, and a break from the traditions many of their families follow. The churches they attend are not traditional Catholic and Protestant churches which historically tolerated the co-existence of African cultural traditions and Christian faith, albeit it reluctantly, but rather charismatic churches which eschew cultural traditions of any kind, including those of traditional Western formal Christianity. The adoption of this 'new' church in their lives leaves no space for any other beliefs and in their desire to belong and take part in the social aspects of the church, the prescriptive teaching of the church has forced many of the participants to question the traditional, ancestral beliefs that their families hold and follow. The importance of clan names to many of the participants contradicts this notion of setting aside traditional, ancestral beliefs, although as discussed above a number of the participants are questioning the identification they derive from clan names.

Asanda explains how her traditional, ancestral beliefs are overshadowed by her Christian faith.

> *I know that everything comes from God, so I'm more like a Christian than a person who believes in ancestors. I believe in them because I grew up in a family that believes in ancestors, yeah, so I do it because I'm their family… its kinda like if you have the ancestral beliefs then you've kinda like got gods, instead of praising one God. Cos when you look at it in this way as a Christian you saying that they are praising a person who died years ago instead of praising God who's not living. It will be confusing like if you taking both, cos its kinda like you giving thanks to … let's take for example that you get a job, it depends who are you gonna thank for … are you gonna thank the ancestors, or you gonna thank God? So if you do both of them its kinda like, it will be confusing…*

The voice of her pastor is evident in her speech. She has heard this sermon many times and it has become part of her own rhetoric, finding resonance in her desire to change and become 'new', leaving the past and her traditional and cultural African identity behind.

Nandipha takes a similar stance in her belief that ancestry beliefs contradict the religious dogma taught by her church:

> *They believe that if you believe in Christianity then you can't mix the ancestors. It doesn't mix, it doesn't mix. You just have to stick on one thing, if you a Christian, then you a Christian, if you into your ancestors then do your ancestors. You can't mix them both…. That's one of the reasons why I don't believe in clan names because it is different to the Christian beliefs. I*

> *don't believe in the ancestor and all that stuff I do not perform those, I go to church and do the Christian life where … but when it comes to ancestors, it confuses me so I don't even wanna start it.*

The fact that Nandipha has been 'let down' and abandoned by her family throughout her life has resulted in her search for something to fill this void and well of disappointment. Charismatic church is positioned perfectly to provide her with support and a sense of belonging and calls on her to forgo her past traditions and beliefs in favour of "new" Christian dogma. Her shunning of the clan name system and its associated rituals and ancestral beliefs is not only because of her religious beliefs, it is also a reaction to not being recognised and abandoned by her father. Her affiliation to her church is a way of distancing from her family through identification and a sense of belonging and recognition from her surrogate church family.

Anathi attends traditional rituals that her family undertakes, but she says she doesn't believe in them because it contradicts her Christian faith and values:

> *I don't believe in those things… I think as time changes, then the traditions also changes … When you are a Christian you don't believe in your, like in your ancestors… I believe in things that are writing on the Bible.*

While the reasons for these young people searching for new ways to make meaning of their lives and in the process distancing themselves from their traumatic, insecure pasts, are understandable, there is sense of an over-reaction in an almost defensive way of moving on from their pasts with the effect of negating their African culture/s and identities. This setting aside of their African identities is 'encouraged' by Western media and the promise of capital assets, a way of reversing the 'lack' and the shame that black people have often been subject to through years of oppression (Fanon, 2000; Biko, 2004), in the process idealising all that is 'white' and rejecting all that is perceived to be 'black'. Moving away from traditional African cultures by young people could also be as a reaction to the Apartheid government's encouragement of African cultural rituals and traditions and the participants' desire to distance themselves from this.

In contrast with majority of the participants, Nozuko, who refers to herself as an African poet, expressly states how she worries that her peers are forgetting about their roots and their cultural traditions and in this process they will lose their sense of self if they throw the 'old out for the new' and in the process lose parts of their 'selves' (Prins, 2006).

> *…they have that mentality of taking the Western route and stuff. I think that's a bad thing because they are losing their roots and their history and their heritage and who they are and where they have come from. I think it is important to keep a foot in where you have come from.*

By the time I saw Siphosethu for her second interview she had moved to a school in Johannesburg for African students from across the continent. It is interesting to note in her story of interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds that she is compelled to defend her cultural traditions and rituals, despite many of her peers questioning and, in some cases, shunning these ancestral practices. Siphosethu demonstrates that although young people are questioning past cultural practices and belief systems, an allegiance to their ethnic and cultural practices appear to be upheld with different, audiences, particularly those from outside of their communities, thereby indicating their allegiance to their 'roots'.

> *Like the other day we were talking about initiation school and they were asking me, like why do I have to go home and I was telling them that my "cousin brother" is coming home from initiation school. They ask me what do they do there. And Sias was there and he was telling them no, we did this and this and this. Then they were like, "No, you are not supposed to do this. Like people are supposed to have [circumcision] done in hospital, not in the bush", so we had to argue about that and tell them why it is important and why we think it is important in South Africa to do that.*

This indicates that the counteracting narrative (Squire, 2013) of new practices as opposed to traditional, cultural practices of the past is not as clear-cut as alluded to by some of the participants in the shunning of their traditional African identities in favour of their Christian faith and new identities. While there is a need for the participants to be different and 'new', their reference to setting aside some of their ancestral beliefs may be driven by their desire to please their church pastors (and potentially me as an authoritative audience) who provide the participants with a safe place to socialise and belong as opposed to actually nullifying their traditional cultural beliefs. The *Ulwaluko*, or initiation month that male Xhosa adolescents attend is strongly linked to ancestral beliefs and traditions and there is no evidence of this practice abating, in fact quite the opposite, all of the male participants emphasised its importance to their manhood and sense of power linked to patriarchy, community and identification to other men, living and dead. Cultural practices, mostly created and upheld through narration, enable us to derive meaning from our experiences. Every person within a culture interprets and appropriates their cultural rites and practices and makes them their own through enculturation, resulting in culture being a contested space (Fay, 1996; Hammack,

2011). The setting aside of cultural practices, as described by some of the participants in an effort to distance themselves from their pasts, is understandable considering their painful histories and their search for new systems of meaning-making, but could also result in these young people losing parts of themselves to Western, capitalist ideology thereby compromising their identity constructions due to the non acknowledgement of their 'roots' (Prins, 2006) and misrecognition of them-'selves' as part of families and communities.

6.2.2. School

Despite the inferior education that the participants receive and how their lives conspire to make acquiring education difficult, as a space and a social system, school provides many with a sense of belonging and achievement. Most of the participants have performed above average academically and have been afforded recognition by their teachers and peers as 'achievers'. The support that the participants are afforded through their participation in *Ithemba's* after school programme provides them with the ability to outperform their peers, particularly in the subjects of Maths and English.

The participants found belonging in and were recognised by 'the clever camp'. Fay (1996) speaks of the "ever evolving cycle of awareness – response – self-awareness" (p. 46) whereby a person is aware of others' responses to them, which then enables a response to this awareness, resulting in a new self-awareness. The recognition that the participants receive for 'being clever' provides them with a foundation of identity on which they can build and be recognised for other achievements (Taylor, 2004). It is likely that the participants' academic achievement contributes to these young people's resiliency adding to the 'discourse of overcoming', as was found in a study conducted by Dass Brailsford (2005). In addition to academic achievement, many of the participants were recognised publically through the election of formal roles on student representative councils and others were presented with awards that provided external recognition. Ayabonga enjoyed school, although he was often absent because he did not have shoes to walk the long distance to school and he had to care for his dying aunt. But, when he was able to attend school, he enjoyed it and got support from his teachers. *"All of my teachers, they like me, especially my class teacher."* Asanda also enjoyed school and had positive relationships with her teachers, telling me how "*every teacher I got on well with."*

Malusi was elected to leadership positions throughout his school career. In primary school he was head boy and in high school he was the president of the Student Representative Council and sat on

the school governing body. Once again the word 'neat' is mentioned in conjunction with being in control and achieving.

> *I was like very neat at school and even the teachers they always like, compliment me… There's always an opportunity at school, everyone likes me, everyone wants something to do with me.*

Siphosethu was good at mathematics from an early age and this gave her confidence particularly as she was chosen to represent her school in a number of activities and Olympiads and got to interact with other *"clever kids."* Being awarded a scholarship to attend a school in Johannesburg to do A Levels was the ultimate recognition of her intellect and leadership potential, enabling her to identify with and be recognised as part of the clever, in-group, elevating her above her past.

> *…it was a great experience because I got to meet lots of children, children who are motivated, children who are inspired, children who are good at their academics. And I got a chance to go to Joburg.*

Nobomi was elected as a prefect in her matric year, which gave her the confidence to lead: "*I was a prefect, I was good in that one. The people do listen me when I tell them"*. Nandipha describes high school as a place where she achieved and was recognised as a participant in numerous school activities such as debating, drama, and netball and was elected the vice president of the Student Representative Council:

> *I went to high school and it is where I started shining, in 2009 I was chosen by my teacher to be one of the best learners, the top 5, who were taken by the Department of Education for a week to a camp and I received a certificate award for having a good behavior. I feel happiness at school because that's where I'm living for myself.*

Nozuko achieved well at school and was externally recognised through being selected for a Saturday School sponsored by a large South African corporate which provides extra help and support for students with potential. She is also the president of the poetry club at school. She proudly shows me certificates indicating excellent marks achieved in English, Maths, Business Studies and school attendance. She tells me that she is in the top 10 academically at her school.

> *… at school I was elected to be part of the [name of the corporate] Maths and Science School which is offered by [name of the corporate] and I'm attending their Saturday classes.*

Phozisa loves school, especially singing in the choir, taking part in debating, playing netball and *"I even like doing homework, and the work we do at school."* She is a member of the council of learning at school and sits on the school board. She takes pride in the fact that her peers elected her for this role.

> *I like to take control because I am a member of the RCL [Representative of the council of learning]. Like the school board. There are two from each class, I represent the students. The class chose me.*

Being affirmed and recognised at school has enabled the participants to bolster their views of themselves and re-construct their-'selves' through others' awareness of their achievements (Fay, 1996). The participants experience tension and ambivalence between being afforded recognition and belonging at school, but yet aware of the fact that their township education is sub-standard in comparison to metropolitan schools thereby positioning them from a racial perspective. This misrecognition doesn't hamper their dreams of educated futures though. The educational support that the participants receive from *Ithemba* elevates their prospects above their fellow township scholars in their minds. They see *Ithemba* as a lifeline, a chance to elevate them from an education perspective and as a result become more upwardly socially mobile relative to their peers, a positive effect of relationality. The fact that the participants work hard at *Ithemba*, by consistently attending classes four times a week after school, justifies their feelings of pre-eminence and eligibility for success, underpinned by the discourse that dictates that hard work produces success. This pre-eminence and eligibility provides the participants with internal recognition, reinforced by the recognition they receive from their teachers at school and the *Ithemba* workers, an important component of their identity construction.

6.2.3. The NGO - *Ithemba*

As discussed in the introduction to this thesis, the participants are affiliated with an NGO, *Ithemba*, that specifically assists orphaned and vulnerable children, and those who are affected by or infected with HIV. As would be expected, *Ithemba's* structure is a major influence in the attending children and adolescents' lives. The guidelines of *Ithemba* are that any child who has lost either one or both parents or is affected or infected by HIV/TB is able to gain support from and join in the NGO's activities. *Ithemba* do not turn away students and their families, but joining in the activities, such as the after school programme, requires consistent attendance and family support, thereby ensuring some form of accountability and sustainability.

Primarily *Ithemba* provides the participants with hope, a chance to access university education, which in the minds of the participants sets off a chain of prosperity and sustainability, a possible escape from precarity and being part of the precariat (Squire, 2013); a good job, a house, a car, and better education and parenting for their children. The participants have pinned their hope on this structure providing them with upward social mobility and alleviating the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS infection through being socially included and accepted. An important aspect of *Ithemba* is that it recognises the participants as people of value and worth (Fay, 1996), thereby providing them with belonging and recognition (Taylor, 2004).

Asanda was introduced to *Ithemba* when she was in grade 6 at the age of 12 years and found the extra-mural activities provided a diversion from her difficult life. Positive recreational activities offered by *Ithemba* such as sport, music and dancing have been found to be a protective factor against the negative experiences caused by the stigma of HIV/AIDS (Cluver et al, 2008).

> *…we started having camps, we started having after classes, where we would have fun and forget about the other kind of mixed stuff, so when, yeah, so that was the time of my life that (uhh) I really enjoyed. And the time that I had to go to places that I've never been before cos of [Ithemba]. I enjoy dancing so it was a time that you have to make a choice, there was a dance, there was drama, there was singing. So you do something you like to do…*

Through *Ithemba,* Asanda was taken to visit the University of Cape Town where she attended a maths lecture. "*Yo, it was awesome, firstly it was my first time on a plane, I got all nerves and stuff, but when we got there, UCT was a different world."* As a star student, Asanda was recognised in the *Ithemba's* annual "Night of the Stars". A photograph of the event with her award is included on her timeline highlighting its importance and the significance it holds for her . *"Ahhh, it was awesome, cos last year when we do matric in our school we didn't have a farewell, so like this was like my farewell for 2011. And I won the most committed scholar."*

Malusi's father believed in the value of education and gaining a skill that would make him employable and encouraged him to join *Ithemba's* after school programme. He tells me how initially he was a reticent attendant.

> *At the time I wanted to quit school, my father begged me to do at least something, maybe even if its going to be a course that would make me at least gain a skill that would get me work… So the ASP [after school programme] really changed my life a lot you know. And in the year-*

> *end last year after joining the ASP I received a certificate that says it's a year completion awarded to me. To me, you know, that was like an achievement because I really never thought I could even finish one week in the ASP but because I've got like the whole year completed to me it was an achievement.*

Nozuko attributes her improved academic results to *Ithemba*: *"I started attending the after school programme at [Ithemba] and that was when my grades at school started improving."*

One of the greatest benefits for the participants is *Ithemba's community* centre; a safe place to meet after school and interact with friends in similar situations to themselves thereby experiencing belonging and inclusion (Yuval-Davis, 2006). Gcobisa's 'past' section on her timeline includes photographs of herself and friends with captions of *"Joyful times with friends, Just happy"* and the words *"The [Ithemba] Centre, 2011 was our first year in our new home and we couldn't have been happier"* indicating how a space can provide recognition and a sense of belonging, and be instrumental in identity construction (Yuval-Davis, 2006). This sense of home provides the participants with a base and "rootedness" that they can branch out from and return to (Terkenli, 1995, p. 329).

Siphosethu describes how at *Ithemba* she met other children with similar backgrounds to her own providing her with a sense of belonging and a connection with her community.

> *I was part of [Ithemba] support group where there were girls who had the same problem as me and we used to meet up after school and share stories about things in our lives and stuff so we felt comfortable talking to each other… I am always happy! ((laughs)) I'm always happy, I'm happy when I'm at school or when I'm here at [Ithemba] because usually I wake up in the morning and I go to school, I come to [Ithemba] and I go home. So, yeah, I'm always happy because I know at school I laugh and talk with my friends and at [Ithemba] I always do the activities that I enjoy, I always learn and I'm always with the friends, I'm always with the people I like, I always see the counsellors that care for me, the people that give me that sense of belonging, so I'm forever happy and then I go home.*

Phozisa includes a photograph of two of her *Ithemba* friends on her timeline with the quote, *"These are my friends. They encourage me to good things. I share my secrets with them"*, indicating how recognition from her peers and making friends provides her with a sense of belonging.

Ithemba runs exchange programmes with international schools providing the participants with opportunities to meet people from other countries and extend and broaden their social boundaries as Malusi describes in meeting fellow students from a school in London:

> *The [name of school] in London kids came on a camp with us to Tsitsikama. I never thought I could share a seat with a person from another country but because I joined the ASP it showed me that anything is possible, I could like reach anything I want to do as long as I work hard for it.*

Siphosethu, Nozuko and Ayabonga describe how *Ithemba* has encouraged them to write prose and poetry that has enabled them to develop self-esteem and become more confident through the recognition their poetry has been afforded (Fay, 1996; Taylor, 2004).

> *I remember in 2006. I used to write, but I didn't know that I was good at writing. I remember this other time we had this camp… and I was writing, I was writing a poem and then Mr [name of teacher] from [Ithemba] he came over to me and he looked at what I was writing and then he said "you are good at writing" and I said "no, I'm not good, I'm just writing". And then he asked me to go in front of everyone and read out the poem. And I was so, I was so shy because at that time I had a low self-esteem,.. and then he told me "You can do it, you can do it, go there, go up there, go read the poem". Then I went there and I read the poem and everyone was impressed so that's where it started the motivation, here at [Ithemba], like they motivated me, they showed me who I am because I never that I'm good at writing and I never thought I could be good at talking in front of other people, in front of lots of people. (Siphosethu)*

> *They publish my poem in their magazine. The person I met at [Ithemba] from Los Angeles she told me she like my poems. No one believe I have friends from overseas. I show them one these pictures when those people from America were here, but they still don't believe me (Ayabonga)*

> *My talent for writing poems and stories groomed at [Ithemba], now I am the free spirited person. My journey from hardships to the new journey with [Ithemba]. (Nozuko)*

Asanda attributes her introduction to *Ithemba* as one of the most important, life changing events in her life, indicating her sense of belonging and recognition from this structure by implying that

without the NGO she would be *"an orphan"* with no future suggesting how *Ithemba* plays the role of a surrogate family. The negative meaning associated with the word 'orphan' is exacerbated through cosmological significance in African cultures, insinuating a discontinuity and the destruction of family life through not being properly introduced to the ancestors (Mkhize, 2004).

> *Well, I would say getting to [Ithemba] would be a highlight, cos maybe if I didn't know [Ithemba] I would use the words of an orphan, look at myself and see that I would put a blame on myself and do that or I would whine and say that I don't have parents cos they are not there so my future cannot go this way or I cannot proceed [with] life, maybe my life would lack. But now that they are there they are there as a support I see myself doing anything I wanna do cos I know anything is possible.*

Ithemba produces hope and possibility for Asanda, enabling her to dream and imagine how her life could be. The positive effects derived from *Ithemba* through providing the participants with a sense of belonging is pervasive in their narratives ranging from the support given to them in their past and present lives to the hopes and dreams *Ithemba* enables them to engage with in the possibility of their future lives. The fact that the participants feel as though they belong amongst others who have suffered from the same issues they have, made more positive by the fact that *Ithemba* centre is an uplifting, positive space to spend time in, provides recognition and enables these young people to re-construct and bolster their identities.

While *Ithemba* has significant positive effects on the participants' lives, in being affiliated with it also 'marks' these individuals as their communities assume that their affiliation means they are people who are affected by HIV/AIDS and 'who need help'. While it was not mentioned by the participants in their narratives, this 'marking' may contribute to a form of alienation from non-*Ithemba* members thereby highlighting the complexity and ambivalence with which these young, township adolescents live.

6.3. The Alienating Effects of HIV/AIDS

The high prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the participants' communities has resulted in death and illness being an everyday reality that pervades these young people's lives. In addition to the negative effects from the exposure to alcohol abuse, domestic violence and being treated badly by their extended families, the participants' narratives indicate how the effect of HIV/AIDS on their families brings about many different emotions for them; they speak of guilt, anger, frustration, sadness and

loss. AIDS orphans are exposed to numerous stressors that exacerbate and complicate the grieving process, especially if they have witnessed the decline and death of their parents or loved ones, and the dehumanising effects of loss of bodily functions and AIDS related mental illness, as is the case with a number of the participants of this study. AIDS orphans have been found to suffer from posttraumatic stress, depression, and relationship and attachment issues (Cluver & Gardner, 2006; Cluver et al, 2008). The resultant feelings of alienation suffered by the participants as a result of witnessing death and disease at such a young age is likely to have hampered the construction of integrated identity and their feeling of belonging in the world. Witnessing their parents in such vulnerable positions at such a young age reverses the natural order of parents protecting and nurturing children, resulting in children feeling defenceless and unsafe (Richter, 2004; Hartell & Chabilall, 2005). Nozuko's father contracted AIDS when she was 8 years old. She remembers visiting him in hospital:

> *He was so tiny you could see only his bones and that broke my heart to pieces to bitter death. That was the last time I saw him because my mom wouldn't allow me to go and visit him no more.*

6.3.1. Feelings of Guilt

The loss of parents and loved ones as a result of AIDS is related to psychological effects such as "anxiety, rumination, depression, social isolation, survivor's guilt and low self-esteem" (Richter, 2004, p. 23). The participants illustrate through their stories that in addition to the survivors' guilt they suffer as a result of their parents' deaths, the recent advancement in anti-retroviral drug therapy and increased incidence of testing for the virus leading to higher survival rates, has exacerbated their feelings of culpability, leaving them feeling that they could have done something to prevent their parents' and loved ones' deaths, given that prevention of death from HIV/AIDS is possible today. There is limited association in these young people's narratives to the origin of the pandemic being as a result of the deprivation of the poor and lack of medication, both as continuities of Apartheid.

Asanda lost both her mother and her younger brother to AIDS related illnesses. Her mother discovered she was HIV positive when she gave birth to her younger brother who died at 18 months, and she died soon after that. Asanda is saddened by the fact that if her mother had tested for HIV earlier perhaps she could have survived.

> *… the problem with my mom was testing. If she had known earlier then she would have lived. She only found out when she had my last brother. Yes, she knew about HIV, but she didn't take part in testing before then. 'Go test, know your status' and all those things, she didn't do that. If she tested earlier then maybe things would turn out differently. Ja [sighs].*

Children of AIDS victims often blame themselves believing that they have done something to cause their parents' infection and death, harbouring feelings of inadequacy as they are unable to help (Bond, Chase & Aggleton, 2002).

> *…for like a year or two I blamed myself for that because I was like, ok, there's like this virus and I think actually I've done something, I don't know what, I still like have that feeling that I'm the one to blame for this, I should have done something for her, I should have helped her, I don't know, I still have that feeling* (Asanda).

Nozuko demonstrates this overdeveloped sense of responsibility in her recollection of the guilt she feels for her father's death: *"I sometimes blame myself for his death that I am the reason why he splitted up with my mom and got himself AIDS."*

Nozuko spoke of the intensely negative feelings she harbours towards this 'intruder' that took her father from her and infected her mother. She felt as though she was waging an internal war against the disease that made her feel helpless.

> *It became my enemy; I started developing abomination against AIDS… My hatred against AIDS started growing and bottling up inside. I blamed my father for infecting [my mother]. But things got better, my mom got ARV's [antiretroviral drugs] that made her feel better but they had their side effects. I always wished I could take away her pain but I couldn't.*

This story indicates a host of different and conflicting feelings of blame and hate for Nozuko; she blames herself for her father's death, she blames her father for infecting her mother, she blames AIDS. These negative feelings contribute to her difficulty in finding a sense of belonging in the world, hindering her early identity construction.

The sense of responsibility of their parents' suffering with which the participants are burdened, and the belief that somehow they could have done something to prevent their infection and, in many cases, death was very evident in their stories. As noted by Burman (2008) in her observation that in their struggle for survival, children from poorer communities are not afforded the luxury of

innocence, many of the participants of this study were deprived of their childhood innocence, burdened with feelings of guilt, due to the death, trauma and insecurity they experienced as a result of HIV/AIDS. This deprivation of innocence and the opportunity to be children in the world with protection and security is likely to have undermined these young people's identity constructions and their experience of belonging in the world. The guilt and responsibility for the well-being of their parents that many of the participants took on as a result of their parents' HIV infection and related deaths in many cases caused anxiety, depression, low self-esteem and feelings of inadequacy and insecurity (Richer, 2004; Cluver & Gardner, 2006; Cluver, Gardner & Operario, 2008).

6.3.2. Stigma Exacerbates the Loss

Stigmatisation as a form of misrecognition "can inflict harm… a form of oppression and imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being" (Taylor, 2004, p. 269) states, and significantly hinders identity construction. AIDS orphans suffer from stigma and prejudice associated with their own and their parents' HIV infection and HIV related deaths through experiencing bullying, discrimination, and verbal abuse in the form of gossip and taunting, worsening their feelings of sadness and loss and causing shame and anger, and according to numerous studies, has the potential to cause psychopathology (Richter, 2004; Cluver et al, 2008).

Both Asanda and Nozuko spoke of how the stigma of the disease and being marked as different, and forced to feel as though they don't belong, considered as outsiders, exacerbated their pain and loss. Nozuko and her mother had to move to her grandparents' home in order to avoid the verbal abuse and exclusion they suffered from their community as a result of her mother's HIV positive status.

> *We had to move because everyone would peep in the room just to laugh at her, that used to make me angry and that bothered my mom. I could feel her pain inside of me but I couldn't take away the pain from her.*

Nozuko's grandparents were initially very judgmental of her mother, blaming her for becoming HIV positive.

> *My grandparents would ill-treat her calling her by names. Every time I saw my mom crying I would wipe away those tears telling [her] everything is going to be alright even though I knew that was a false belief for me too. But my grandparents came around and started supporting her.*

For Asanda, the fact that her grandparents never discuss her mother's death is difficult for her resulting in a lack of closure and feelings of shame and secrecy:

> *…they are not saying that she died because of HIV… She was just sick to them. They have not accepted that it was HIV, they don't even go there. It's not even a topic at home, we don't discuss it at home, it's hard. We never talk about it. There was never really a reason to them why she died other than she was sick. I think it's easier for them like that…*

In her discussion of the stigma of HIV/AIDS, Asanda remarks that in order to survive the alienation and find belonging requires self-worth and an inner resolve and strength despite the misrecognition and exclusion from one's community. While she acknowledges the difficulties in being 'marked' by the disease, she believes that in order to find belonging in the world it is necessary to adopt a positive self-view despite the fact that it is not being reflected back by the community around you.

> *… its not about knowing about HIV but its about your self-esteem, knowing yourself and the way that you wanna be treated is the way that you have to treat other people. So those kind of things don't depend on knowing about HIV, but it depends on who you are and what you believe in. So for me it's never about looking at other people and the way that they do, but it's all about yourself. Yes, it's about yourself. It's much more about yourself and the way you are than the disease.*

The exclusion from others that Asanda has experienced as a result of her mother's and brother's deaths from AIDS related illnesses has forced her to focus on her future in an attempt to escape from her past.

6.3.3. HIV and the Effect on Young People's Sexuality

It appeared to me in the discussions with the participants that there was a reticence to speak about love interests and sex. This may have been because they didn't feel comfortable speaking to someone who they perceived to be a parental figure about sex due to the combination of my age and relationship with *Ithemba*, but the refusal to engage with the subject at all seemed somewhat defensive and age inappropriate. Late adolescence is a time when young people start to experience feelings of sexuality and seek out a love interest. "To a considerable extent adolescent love is an attempt to arrive at a definition of one's identity by projecting one's diffused ego image on another and by seeing it thus reflected and gradually clarified" (Erikson, 1963, p. 262). One of the reasons

for the participants' reticence to enter into a discussion on their love interests and sex in the interviews may have been as a result of how sex, in their minds, has become tainted and inextricably linked with the discourse of HIV infection and prevention. Perceived by the participants to be a parental or authoritarian figure, I may not have been considered to be 'safe' to speak to about sex considering the discourse of HIV infection and prevention that has monopolised this topic (Kirby, 2008) together with the church's prescription of abstinence before marriage. Discussing the enjoyment and engaging with the playfulness of exploring love interests and sex may be denied to this cohort of young people in the face of the overarching seriousness of HIV prevention and infection inextricably linked to the topic.

Although I considered that a number of the participants may be HIV positive themselves given that so many of their parents had died of AIDS related illnesses and that they were born prior to the availability of medication that prevented mother to child transmission, only one participant openly discussed her HIV positive status. Anathi contracted the virus through sexual contact and described how difficult her life had been since then, particularly from a social perspective. When Anathi approached the man who she believed had infected her he refused to recognise her, "*he just make that thing fun, and he told all his friends, but he say he doesn't have it"*, refusing to recognise himself as the cause of her infection. *"He didn't show me his results, but he says he doesn't have HIV"*. She weeps telling me how she disclosed her status to a new boyfriend, telling me how she attempted suicide in an attempt to erase her tainted and blemished 'self':

> *And I met another guy. Then I told him about my status, then after 6 months, [weeps] After 6 months he treated me badly. Like abusing me emotional. Like saying bad things to me, that makes me feel sad. Like saying, he can't be with me anymore because I am HIV positive. And then he dumped me, and then I almost killed myself on 23rd. Like I ate pills. Somebody saw me, while it was too early. I was eating them at school. One of my friends saw me and they sent me to the hospital.*

Anathi's search for love and affirmation as an age appropriate effect of adolescence (Erikson, 1963) in combination with women's prejudicial social positioning relative to men and the reduced power in negotiating condom usage all come together in her story of how she contracted HIV and the experiences of alienation, stigmatisation and prejudicial identity construction as a result.

6.3.4. AIDS Discourse Changing Slowly

In moving from a death sentence to a treatable disease, it is evident that the HIV/AIDS discourse is slowly changing and taking on a more positive, survivalist stance having moved from a time of crisis and fear to a time of treating the disease as a routine and normal part of living as opposed to dying (Squire, 2013). This adaptation of the AIDS discourse is illustrated by two of the participants. Thembela's mother is HIV positive, but she was tested early and is now on antiretroviral (ARV) drugs. Thembela says her mother is "*not going to die anymore. My mother, yeah she's HIV positive, but she doesn't take that she's HIV positive, she's living her life, she's strong. I talk everything with my mother.*"

Thembela proudly displays the fact that she is HIV negative, and free from the direct stigma associated with the disease, by including a letter on her art timeline from the South African National Blood Service welcoming her as a blood donor, thereby indicating her negative status. In her mind, this physical, 'hard-copy' proof of her negative status exonerates and protects her from the stigma that negatively affects those in her community who are HIV positive.

Similarly Nozuko says that now that her mother is on ARV drugs "*Beyond AIDS there's life, beyond ignorance there's wisdom*". For those whose parents and loved ones are HIV positive and still alive, there is hope and possible recognition as '*actional*' people (Fanon, 2000) of worth despite their infection.

Unfortunately this altered HIV discourse of hope and acceptance and the potential reduction of stigma through the availability of ARV medication and treatment is not pervasive within the participants' communities resulting in the effects of HIV still hindering their feelings of belonging and inclusion in addition to the normal experience of pain and loss through death and illness. Given that adolescence is a time in one's life when self-concepts are cast out into the world in order to gain recognition and a sense of belonging, this results in a hampering of identity construction for HIV positive individuals and their families as they are disregarded and misrecognised (Taylor, 2004), their existence tainted and nullified in the minds of their community members (Goffman, 1963; Fay, 1996; Lindemann Nelson, 2001).

6.4. Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to analyse the participants' sense of belonging and alienation through the relationality they experience with others in their families, and in the contexts of church, school and *Ithemba*. It is clear from their narratives that the participants' sense of themselves is relationally constructed and that they highly value the connections and interactions they have with others in these important foundational spaces of belonging. Within each of the relational interactions discussed above, the moments when the participants were accepted and experienced belonging and recognition provided them with the opportunity to create the meaning-making systems fundamental to the construction of their fledgling identities.

It is evident from the participants' narratives that church is incredibly important in their lives, primarily functioning as a "surrogate family" in the absence of their own families, particularly through the loss of their parents, providing them with a safe place to socialise and belong. In addition, their interaction with church functions as a mechanism through which they can express independence and re-construct their identities. Church provides the participants with the prospect of breaking the links with their difficult personal and family pasts and perhaps even imagined as a way to overcome their wider and longer oppressive histories. Through their express need to be 'free' and 'new', several participants indicated a desire to alter, and in some cases entirely set aside, some of their traditional beliefs and a homogenous notion of 'African' identity. This is not as clear-cut as it may appear in some narratives as there is an acceptance of some traditional rituals and ancestral beliefs and a setting aside of others, indicating a more fluid relation to the resources of shared cultures. The counteracting narratives (Squire, 2013) that the participants construct to support their post-Apartheid identities produce diversity and fluidity resulting in more dynamic cultural constructions, assimilation and, in some cases, "creolisation" of cultures (Glissant, 1989) as opposed to the isolated ethnic enclaves found in South African townships and rural areas of the past. This results in various cultural practices living side-by-side as the participants straddle traditional cultures and creolised cultures. It is clear that the participants are pushing and extending cultural boundaries as they interpret what it means for them to be 'new' South Africans, an indication of culture as a contested and fluid space (Fay, 1996).

Despite the relational belonging discussed by the participants and their moments of agency expressed through the adaptation of their traditional cultures, it is also very apparent that the disruption and fragmentation of the participants' families caused by HIV/AIDS and other issues in the aftermath of Apartheid, in conjunction with the sub-standard township education they receive

(discussed in more detail in the next chapter) have socially positioned these young people as black and poor, and as a result have often left them feeling alienated, deprived of being 'actional' people of worth (Fanon, 2000).

This chapter is primarily phenomenological in orientation presenting the relationships and contextual world of the participants in their own words and from their own perspective, analysed predominantly from the perspective of the hermeneutics of faith (Josselson, 2004). It is clear from the participants' stories of their lives that narrative accounts are not just of isolated individuals, but rather reveal the intersections of others' narratives, thereby reflecting the fundamentally social and relational nature of identity construction.

Chapter 7

Structural Dimensions in the Construction of Adolescent Identity

Having analysed the relationality of the lives of the participants from a phenomenological perspective in the previous chapter, this chapter analyses the structural dimensions of the process of identity construction of these young people. The participants sometimes offered quite insightful interpretations of the power dynamics at play in their lives, but this chapter also moves beyond their interpretation to explicitly engage critical concepts to theorise the linkages between personal and political life (Josselson, 2004) and examine their hierarchical social positioning within the system of structural identity markers such as 'race', class, gender and sexuality. Adolescence brings these social dimensions of selfhood into focus as young people find their place in the world and locate themselves in relation to the social hierarchies of the adult world. Despite critiques levelled at Erikson's (1963) theory of the adolescent 'identity crisis', it strongly emphasises social context in the making of identity. Narrative theories of identity extend this notion of identity construction as a temporal and relational process in which the social world plays more than simply a background role of influence, providing and proscribing cultural resources or scripts from which to construct identity.

Adolescence is the period in which a young person strives to consolidate the disparate set of relationships and incidents of their lives into a meaningful and purposeful whole within the context of a social system (McAdams, 1985; 2011; Breger, 1974). At adolescence a person starts to perceive of their life as a whole as opposed to a disparate set of events and interactions. A life starts to be perceived as a narrative confluence of 'how the past was' and 'how the future is envisioned to be'. In striving to find their place in the world, it is evident from the participants' reflections and stories that there is a desire to find meaning and purpose, with a sense of belonging and recognition (Erikson, 1969). As the participants seek to consolidate their lives and reflect on how their childhoods affected and influenced their present lives and the perspective of their future lives, their narratives indicate their attempt to make sense of the social structures and power imbalances that act to socially position them, juxtaposed against the possibility for exercising agency and social mobility.

7.1. Narrative Consolidation at Adolescence

As discussed in chapter 2, the construct of adolescence is a relatively new phenomenon, arising out of the predominantly Western phenomena of industrialisation, increased access to education and, more recently, globalisation. The participants of this study aspire to be adolescents with the benefits of higher education, their route to social mobility, but are often deprived of this luxury, forced to take on adult roles through having to become responsible for themselves, and in many cases, their families, particularly younger siblings and older relatives, as a result of the death or absence of parents and guardians. In these situations, adolescence as a developmental stage, the interim, pre-adult phase where a child is able to develop adult thoughts and behaviour under the responsibility and guidance of a parent or guardian, contracts to a shorter time period and the 'would be adolescent' is forced to be an adult with no buffer. This is evident in the narratives of many of the participants of this study, even though they all aspire to the benefits of higher education, having been steeped in the discourse of university education as the route to upward social mobility. In most cases, the promise of this discourse remains a myth, as the township education the participants receive often does not equip these scholars with the basis of education required to gain access to and succeed at university level, as has often been noted by Alexander (2013).

There is no doubt that children from developing nations face different challenges and problems than those from developed nations, often deprived of the luxury of childhood and adolescence and forced to take on adult roles and tasks much earlier than their developed nation counterparts (Burman, 2008). In traditional societies where a rite of passage symbolises the transition from boyhood to manhood, as is the case in the Xhosa *Ulwaluko* ceremony or ritual, discussed later in this chapter, it could be considered that culturally the stage of adolescence is minimised (Krausman Ben-Amos, 1995).

Narrative as a paradigm offers an opportunity to see one's life as a whole, consolidated story in context, fundamental in the construction of identity as themes are identified, and life meaning is derived (McAdams, 1985; 2011). A number of the participants mentioned that in recollecting their life stories they were able to see links between their past lives and the way they envisaged their future lives, or their past lives and the perception of their present lives. The art timelines of the participants' lives include photographs the participants took of people, objects and places that were important to them, and assisted in making these links and in reflecting on their lives as a series of united stories as opposed to isolated events. These narratives provide a vehicle for identity

construction, constructed from the articulations of their thoughts, memories and perceptions, temporally arranged across past, present and future.

> *I can see how my past life has made me what I hope to be now. I want to be a mother to my children because I never had that mother I want to be* (Nandipha).

Nandipha's desire to 'self-recuperate' her childhood through being different to her absent and, in her mind, errant mother is made possible through thinking of her life as a story as opposed to just an isolated set of events. Adolescence as a transition from childhood to adulthood enables young people to reflect on how they would like their lives to be, possessing dignity and agency and an ability to act within a moral framework formulated through their past experiences (Taylor, 1989). These moments of the participants seeing their lives narratively through having the opportunity to talk about how their past, present and future lives intertwine, and how the physical and psychological interrelate, were illustrated in a number of stories the participants relayed in their interviews.

Through a simple childhood incident, Phozisa reflects on how markedly her past life infiltrates her present life and how the physical and psychological connect in the construction of her identity. When she was 6 years old she fell and cut her lip leaving her with a scar. This scar resulted in her having a slightly uneven, swollen top lip, not immediately obvious unless you looked attentively. Her raised lip represents a symbol of all that has disappointed her in her past life.

> *… in my area there are no ice blocks, there are nothings but, and the hospitals are too far, so I had to sit at home. Then this bump didn't go down it stayed like this, then I had to live with it. I wish I could change my lip, because I hate it. It reminds me of my past. Like when I was doing my timeline I even thought of it when I was doing my future. Its like it's that ugly part of me that I can't get rid of, always part of me.*

Phozisa's scar on her lip is a constant reminder of the past that she carries within her as she links her individual personal story to the social structural issues of poverty, lack of electricity and medical services. Freeman (2010) in his book *Hindsight* speaks of a similar incident when his daughter was very young and fell and injured her face. He recalls how devastated he was at the time that his daughter had been scarred, a physical indication that would constantly remind him of how he had failed as a parent in not being able to protect her, the physical inter-relating with the psychological. He wondered at the time how this trauma would play itself out in the future, impossible to know at

the time of the event. In Phozisa's case, the event has had long-term and deep-seated effects on her sense of self and identity construction. Drawing attention to her lip early in our interview, indicated the event's salience in her life, a constant reminder that her society and community failed her in 'not having ice blocks' or accessible hospitals. The event permeates her life linking her childhood to her present and future lives as she is unable to remove this mark of the past.

Siphosethu also experienced seeing her life in perspective when recalling how her grandfather sexually abused her and threatened to harm her if she told anyone and how this experience reverberates through her present life:

> *…every time he did that he'd threatened me and say "if ever you tell someone about this I'll kill you after ripping your face off". So usually when I looked at myself in the mirror I'd imagine him ripping off my face so I couldn't tell anyone. I was terrified I'd shake just by hearing his voice I couldn't say a word I was scared and he was the bread-winner.*

When she looks in the mirror and sees her face all she can think of was how her grandfather had threatened to 'rip it off'. This possible erasure and misrecognition (Taylor, 2004) of herself haunts her, an indication of meaning through the movement of time and the physical merging with the psychological. Being able to see her face has also made her more resolute to help others that have been sexually abused, fuelled by her gratitude for still being able to see her unharmed face every time she looks in the mirror; her unharmed face concealing a harmed and vulnerable psyche.

As with the physical markers of injuries, and potential injuries, discussed above, so too do structural identity markers such as 'race', gender and sexual orientation 'mark' individual bodies in the construction of identity. These structures position people socially depending on their blackness or whiteness, 'woman-ness' or 'man-ness', straightness or gayness. These "epidermal schemas" (Fanon, 2008, p. 96), impossible to hide, become the early building blocks of identity construction and the ability to be identified and labelled, positioned within the modalities of power. Through constructing their narratives the participants were given the opportunity to consider the effects of these structures on their childhoods, their present lives and their futures.

I have attempted to interrogate the ongoing tension between structure and agency in the construction of the adolescent participants' identities; the ways in which relationality, such as family, church and school, entrench the social structures that determine these young people's lives, juxtaposed against the agency they are able to express through the capacity to exercise choice and be free determining.

Social structures have the effect of positioning an individual, creating the relationships that confer or withhold power but, within these structures, the participants demonstrate that there are opportunities to exercise a modicum of agency, control and choice despite the adversity and poverty they experience. The remainder of this chapter analyses the social structures and structural identity markers present in the interviews and timelines, interrogating how 'race', class, gender and sexuality affect and underlie the participants' emergent adolescent identity constructions.

7.2. Structural Ideological Identity Markers

Ndlovu (2012) raises our awareness to how certain aspects of identity are "more ideologically charged than others" (p. 145). These aspects of ourselves such as 'race', class, gender and sexuality locate us within society either conferring power and status or imposing bias and prejudice. These structures are accompanied with societal behavioural expectations, the expectation that the bearers of these 'epidermal markers' (Fanon, 2008) will behave in certain ways, thereby interpellating (Althusser, 1971) and calling these young people into certain subject positions, positioning them into societal boxes.

7.2.1. 'Race' and Class

A person's 'race', and class, inextricably linked in the South African context, positions them within a social structure and significantly influences their identity construction, specifically within the South African context considering the country's racist past (Campbell, 1995a; 1995b; Franchi & Swart, 2003, Thom & Coetzee, 2004, Walker, 2005; Pattman, 2007). While the specific mention of 'race', Apartheid and politics doesn't often arise in the interview transcripts, 'race' and class underlies and infiltrates many of the participants' stories and memories. Given my position as a white woman who grew up under Apartheid, I was on high alert for stories of and references to 'race', dealing with my own 'white guilt', so present for me in our interactions. The stories told to me by the participants of their past lives and families alluded to how Apartheid had left their parents as shadows of what they could have been, depriving the participants of the mentorship and guidance children ordinarily benefit from in the interaction with older family members and, as a result, often catapulting them into feelings of insecurity and premature adulthood.

Eva Hoffman (2005) in her book *After such knowledge* notes that the first generation of Jews after the Holocaust carried the terrible events that the generation before them had experienced as "a kind

of fable" with limited ability to grasp it "as actuality" (p. 16). Freeman (2010) speaks of 'narrative unconscious', those parts of us that have been lived by us or those before us, but not yet told.

While the participants spoke to me openly of their pasts and the trauma and loss they have suffered, there is no reference to Apartheid or racialised inequality as the structures that precipitated this loss; the word 'Apartheid' was mentioned only once in the transcripts in reference to Asanda's father being killed by the *'Apartheid era police'*. This may be that, in speaking to me, a white woman, who in their minds is part of the group that instituted and enforced Apartheid, they found the subject too sensitive or confrontational to discuss with me.

Hoffman (2004) urges the 'hinge generation', defined as the generation post an oppressive past such as the first generation after the Holocaust or Apartheid, not to forget, but rather to confront their recent histories. I was concerned that the participants appeared hesitant to engage with Apartheid directly as part of their life-stories, even to and amongst themselves, a process of defensive denial. As 'born-frees', the participants' narratives, like those of most adolescents, are forward focused and indicate that they believe they should be free from the racial prejudice and disadvantage suffered by their forefathers, as Nozuko explains when she discusses a photograph of The Red Location Museum she includes on her timeline. The Red Location Museum commemorates one of the Eastern Cape's city's oldest black townships, deriving its name from a series of corrugated iron barrack buildings, rusted over the years into a deep red colour. Many prominent political and cultural leaders were born in this 'location' and a number of significant 'struggle' (*umzabalazo*) events occurred there (http://www.freewebs.com/redlocationmuseum/).

> *The Red Location Museum reminds me of people was departed from nature and make sure that I have a better life to live and …I have a better education. I embrace them. So many of them dies for the love of the freedom which makes me proud and continue with the legacy they left. I am forever grateful… knowing that I was the born free because I was born in 1994.*

'Race', as an aspect of an individual's identity, is salient and prominent as black people are psychologically connected through the invocation of a collective history and struggle against racism (Mama, 2006; Stevens & Lockhat, 1997; Gaganakis, 2004; Ndlovu, 2012). In Nozuko's case this 'post-ness' and the collective struggle against the racism her predecessors fought against so that she might have freedom, results in 'race' appearing to be an important aspect of her identity, perhaps not in every social interaction, but definitely in her interaction with me, a white woman.

While ‘race’ and Apartheid were not mentioned often, there were a few direct references to ‘race’ and class through the use of the words ‘black’ or ‘township’, referring to its ‘marked’ position, in contrast with ‘white’ and ‘city’ as ‘unmarked’ (Phoenix, 2006):

> *…we were the first black kids to play in the championships, and then we won third place, it was great. (Asanda)*

> *If you live in the township for you to meet a dietician you need to pay money and that’s one of the things we cannot afford, (Malusi)*

> *… growing up in the townships you grow up in a place where you’ve got to adapt to many environments that you see along your way (Malusi)*

> *…it’s rare to find a child living with their mothers in the townships, so rare (Nandipha)*

One of the most visible references to race in the participants’ narratives was evient in their stories of their experiences at school. While there were many instances where school provided the participants with a sense of belonging, particularly those participants who performed well academically and were recognised for this, as discussed in the previous chapter, the under-resourced, township schools the participants attend socially position these young people as black and poor. As Alexander (2013) asserts: “[e]ducation is embedded in class relations and reflects, reinforces and replicates the tendency of capital to produce and reproduce inequality” (p. 63). The participants are generally critical of the level of education they receive at the township schools they attend.

> *The education system in South Africa is so poor (Siphosethu)*

> *…the problem is finding the proper education at school because most of the teachers are quite basic, they just take their leave and not worry whether we have that better education, whether we are learning (Nozuko)*

Despite the fact that *Ithemba* assists the participants with maths and English, the participants’ schools with poorly trained teachers and high teacher absenteeism position the participants as inferior subjects, particularly noticeable in their low acceptance rates into universities straight out of school. Nozuko tells me how she tries to improve the situation her and fellow learners are faced with at school. She is highly critical of the education she receives, but attempts to exercise agency through helping weaker learners.

> *I'm the class rep so I tell the class if you have a problem with math then you can come to me or any other people who are good at math so they can assist you. We usually have a class in break time where you can just do physics or math, it depends on how the class would like to function. With my class we take charge for our education, teaching each other about certain things we don't know about. Some of the teachers support us, its our time though, break time. We sacrifice that time so we can learn and educate each other.*

While it is encouraging to witness the desire of learners to help each other, this is a clear indication that the education system is failing these children, literally and figuratively. This 'second rate' education system 'calls' or 'interpellates' (Althusser, 1971) the participants into a position of second-class citizenship, illustrating to them through their inferior education that black lives still don't matter.

The participants are further inferiorly socially positioned when the issues they are faced with in their racialised lives, such as HIV/AIDS and poverty, intersect with their involvement, or non-involvement, with school as illustrated by Nozuko. One of the long-term effects of AIDS on those orphaned by the disease is the disruption in their educational lives either through being forced to move schools on the death of their parents or though lack of concentration and focus as was found in a study conducted by Booysen & Arntz (2002). Soon after Nozuko's father died her mother tested positive for HIV and Nozuko describes how scared she was at the prospect of losing her mother in addition to her father, so much so that the responsibility of waking up every night to make sure that her mother was still alive took a toll on her schoolwork.

> *I was scared, frightened to lose her too. I couldn't concentrate at school because on my mind I was thinking about her, my grades started dropping. I didn't know what to do or what to say to make her feel better. I would wake up in the middle of the night to look at her if she was still alive feeling her heart beat, beating against my heart.*

The effects of 'race' and class, and the participants' racial positioning, is also very evident in the photographs included on the time lines and in the stories in their narratives, particularly read in conjunction with South Africa's history of Apartheid and post-Apartheid retribution attempts. A number of the participants included photographs of their homes, colloquially referred to as 'RDP' (Reconstruction and Development Programme) houses. These houses were built, and are still being built, in an attempt to provide shelter for low-income, black people, specifically those oppressed and marginalised by Apartheid.

(https://www.nelsonmandela.org/omalley/index.php/site/q/03lv02039/04lv02103/05lv02120/06lv02126.htm). These houses are generally four-roomed, simple structures, often with a single solar panel on a corrugated iron roof. Phozisa includes photographs of two of these houses on her timeline; the first photograph is of the back yard of an RDP house, under her 'past' section with the caption *"This is where we used to live with my folks and 3 siblings. We used to make shacks in people's back yards"*. The second photograph is of the front of an RDP house included in the 'present' section of her time line with the caption *"This is where I live now"*. This RDP house is very indicative of Phozisa's racial positioning.

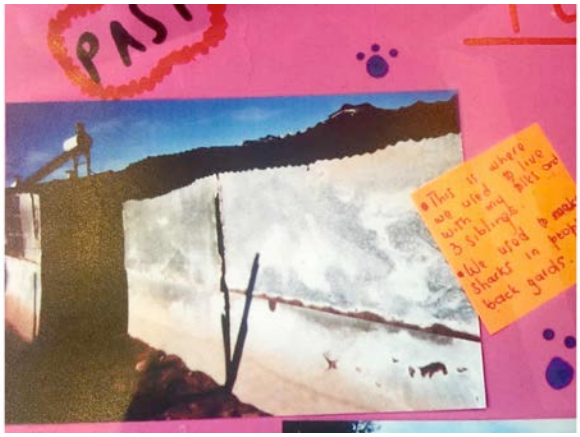


Figure 21: Phozisa's old house

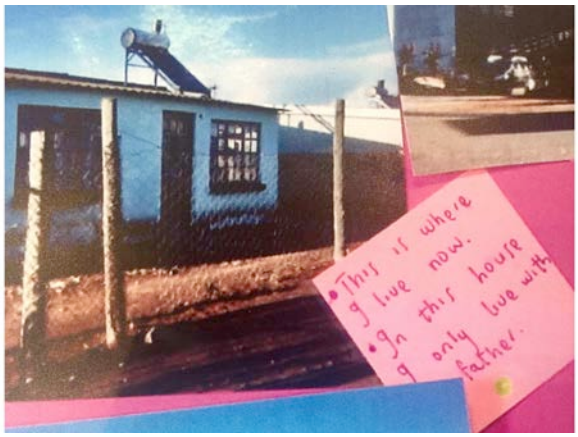


Figure 22: Phozisa's current house

Nozuko also includes a photograph of an RDP house under the 'past' section of her timeline with the caption *"There is no place like home, a place that I can hide my head, where I can share my love with my family"*. While the participants don't picture their homes as an indication of 'race' as they are their place of refuge and shelter, for me as the researcher these photographs of RDP houses situate the participants racially, starkly indicating and marking that they are poor and black, previously, and in many cases still, oppressed and marginalised.

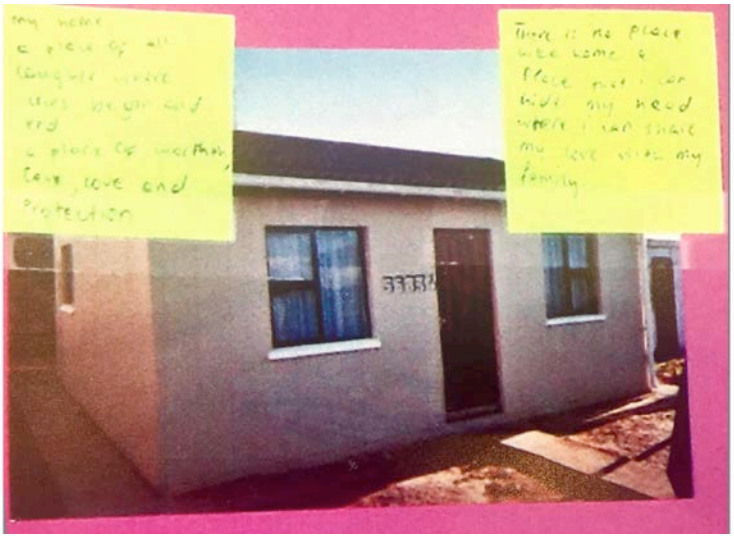


Figure 23: Nozuko's home

Similarly the participants' stories of being dislocated and homeless refer to a 'racial' and classed positioning in their narratives. Physical dislocation through constantly moving and not having a stable home base has negatively affected the identity construction of these young people through not having a place to physically belong. Terkenli (1995) refers to a home as a symbol of self and culture, by implication homelessness results in people feeling rootless and insecure, negating their existence and culture. While the fact that children and adolescents moving often in and of itself does not result in feelings of dislocation and insecurity, the negativity associated with constant physical moving has more to do with the lack of underlying secure relationships in their lives, feeling physically threatened and searching for a sense of belonging to a secure place (Ross, 2003, Yuval-Davis, 2006). This phenomenon has its roots in racism and Apartheid from the perspective that black people were prohibited from owning land outside of designated homelands, and from an economic perspective as Apartheid prejudiced black people from an economic and earnings-power perspective, resulting in homes and the stability associated with owning a home being unaffordable for most black people.

Phozisa's early years were fraught with uncertainty and involved many relocations as her family did not have their own home, rather they built 'shacks' on other people's properties. On her timeline she includes a photograph of a makeshift building with the quote *"We used to make shacks in other people's back yards"*. This was very unsettling for Phozisa growing up: *"It was so bad because, (uhh), people they owners … of the houses they used to, when they are drunk they used to shout and shout and shout and shout, then they would chase us away."*

Ross and Spiegel (2000) argue that the 'diffusion of domesticity', where impoverished residents of townships and informal settlements are forced to accept unstable domestic arrangements in order to meet short-term social and material needs, does not necessarily indicate a collapse of sociality, but rather could mean the opposite as communities are galvanised to support each other. Despite this possible positive consequence of a negative situation, the fluidity and lack of stability is destabilising and disruptive for children and adolescents when it is accompanied with physical insecurity and a lack of consistently nurturing relationships (Ross, 2003, Terkenli, 1995). In addition, continual moving makes regular attendance at school difficult, a further destabilising factor as was found in a study conducted by Booysen & Arntz (2002).

> *When I was growing up, I grew up staying in different homes because we don't have our own home… [We lived] in a shack home, or to other house, my sister's father gave us a home and then she chase us and we lived there and we lived to other peoples' houses. It has affected me badly, cos when we moved to [name of township], we have to go for a long way to school. When we lived in [name of another township], we had a school in there, but now it took long to go home. And we have to leave early in the morning to go to school, so it is not easy.* (Nobomi)

The precarious nature of many of the participants' homes and the fragility and non-permanent nature of 'shack' houses has had an effect on the participants' identity constructions, leaving many feeling vulnerable and unsafe with no sense of belonging. The metaphor of the participants' lives as shack houses does not escape them, the fragility and impermanence that have come to epitomise their lives. When asked to relay events in his life that have influenced who is he today, Ayabonga tells me a PIN about when he stayed in a shack house and left a lamp burning unattended. The lamp fell over causing the shack, and many other shacks in the vicinity, to burn down.

> *… everything was destroyed I saw a big fire on the, on the, on the door, so I didn't have enough time to put out that fire because the fire was moving… Everyone lost everything, the books, certificates of the, the young boy and other ID books… everything was destroyed.*

Ayabonga attributes his poor matric results to the fact that he had no place to study over this time. His lack of a stable base and a permanent structure to call 'home' growing up caused him distress. Despite the fact that his neighbours also lost all their possessions in the fire, they were not angry with Ayabonga for leaving the lamp burning; *"Yeah, they told me that everyone can make, everyone makes a mistakes"*. This positive reaction from his community indicates a camaraderie and support

network formulated through adversity as novel ways are sought to institute social links for survival (Ross & Spiegel, 2000). Ayabonga's greatest sadness of the fire is that it destroyed the few photographs he had of his family, *"they all burnt, it make me sad… I don't know what those people look like any more"*, further highlighting the transient nature of his life in his mind. His lack of a physical reminder in the form of photographs to remind him what his relatives who have died looked like has the effect of negating their existence in his mind and at the same time negating his past and making him feel 'rootless'.

For the participants of this study, the transience of their lives and the lack of recognition associated with this transience is often experienced in their lack of belonging to a physical place and the fraught social connections related to not having a fixed abode (Terkenli, 1995). This remnant of Apartheid, integrally linked to 'race' and class, is still a significant part of their narratives and contributes to a search for belonging in the world, both physically through having a fixed, safe and secure home, and psychologically in the construction of identity.

In contrast with the structural imposition that is foist onto on the participants from the perspective of 'race', these young people also demonstrate new meaning-making repertoires in the articulation of new discourses of being black and African. When I interviewed Siphosethu the second time she had won a scholarship to a school in Johannesburg that selects high potential African students from across the continent for a year in which they complete 'A Level' education. Siphosethu discussed how she had previously perceived being black and being African as one and the same thing but, in engaging with other Africans at the school and witnessing the wide array of cultures and ethnicities, her thinking on what it means to be African has broadened.

> *All of them are different. I never realise that African people could all be so different. I thought we would be much more similar. The way they do things, firstly the food they eat and how they greet people, some of them don't even touch each other when they greet, like the Muslims they don't hug or touch each other. That was new to me. Like even the way they see things is different.*

Siphosethu indicates in her dialogue of meeting other Africans, how culture is used to identify people through different practices and customs and how this broadens her view of being African beyond just being black.

> *So I for one have always considered Africans to be black people, like I thought that white people had just come to the country recently and like when I studied at school when they talk about African people they were always black… I think that really an African is a person who lives in Africa, a person who was born and raised in Africa, and a person who believes they are African.*

Siphosethu's realisation that there are multiple versions of being black in Africa and her magnanimous implied inclusion of white people into her definition of African (which may have been purely for my benefit) appears to have had the effect of widening her definition of being an African in her mind and how she engages with and thinks about 'race'. Her identification with being an African has made her critical of the 'West' and its paternalistic, patronising and 'racialised' treatment of Africa.

> *Just recently we were doing an assignment on Africa, how Africa is portrayed and how people from the Western side they come here and they tell our stories. We are not saying that in Africa we don't have problems, yes we do, but how they address them and how they tell stories, its just too much, they exaggerate and each and every time they do adverts overseas they always say at the end 'Donate a dollar', as if we Africans can't take care of ourselves, we can't solve our problems and all that… We've got great people in Africa, they forget about that and dwell on the negative things.*

This reflection indicates how Siphosethu is becoming politically conscientised through an awareness of the outside world and her own position within it. This development of consciousness occurs at the time of adolescence, a time of analysis of the world, in which a sense of justice and systemic understanding is sought.

The participants' diverse references to 'race', both overtly and covertly, in their interviews indicate how this structural identity marker functions to label people. In some cases, as with Nozuko, 'race' is mentioned upfront appearing to be a salient aspect of her identity, particularly in discussion with me, a specific audience. With other participants the mention of race is more indirect or covert indicating that it is likely to feature more prominently in their narrative unconscious (Freeman, 2010) as opposed to their spoken narratives.

In analysing how 'race' and class is reflected in the participants' narratives, it is interesting to note how some issues have not changed since the abolition of Apartheid, such as the issues of housing

and education and the alienation and hampering of identity construction caused by these persistent problems. In the participants' quest to move forward in their lives and focus on the future as opposed to the past, 'race' appears to take an under-represented part in their narratives considering the racialised histories these young people have come from. Similarly in the study conducted by Swartz et al (2012), young people do not connect the poverty and prejudice they live with to Apartheid as a structure, preferring to focus on the "hope-filled future of the 'New South Africa' (p. 32).

7.2.2. Gender and Sexuality

It is clear from the participants' narratives that patriarchy as an ideology is pervasive in their lives, with many societal and cultural traditions differentiated by gender.

7.2.2.1. *Ulwaluko* – Transition from Boys to Men

One of the rituals followed by the participants and their families that illustrates gender differentiation most starkly is evident in the stories told to me by the male participants of their *Ulwaluko*, the month in which boys are initiated into manhood which entrenches masculinity and, some argue, hyper-masculinity (Sev'er, 2012).

The stories of the male participants' initiation rituals were all told to me early in their first interviews, indicating the event's significance in their lives. Contrary to many reports on the dangers of death, infections and violence of the *Ulwaluko* (in the summer season of 2014/2015, 24 initiates across the Eastern Cape province died and in the winter of 2014, 36 initiates died) (http://www.dailysun.co.za/news/national/2015-01-09-summer-is-killing-abakwetha-says-chief), the participants spoke only positively about their experiences. The initiates are discouraged from discussing the intimate details of the rite (Vincent, 2008), and as such all discussions in the interviews were focused on what the ritual meant to the participants as opposed to specific details of the proceedings. The camaraderie and sense of cohesion gained from all present going through a difficult physical and emotional experience together was identified as the major benefit of the ritual.

> *It was very fun, you know, getting to be with people that (uhh), like you going through the same thing so even though, that's one of the things that I liked - so even if its your first time for seeing that person you just become best friends all of a sudden. It's click, you just [clicks a*

beat with his fingers] chat, just chat, just chat... And then the same, the next day, like you'll not see that person and then you meet someone else. (Aviwe)

When I went to the bush it was a good thing because you met different kinds of people some of them are short tempered and some of them like fighting, so you have to deal with the situation like that. You need to be patient, you have to love all people equal and you have to like to talk at the same time. And you have to talk to people about what they like and focus on the positive things in life. (Ayabonga)

Being in the bush was (uhh), like one of the things that played a big role in changing my life, it really changed my life. (Malusi)

The time in the 'bush' is also a time when young men interact closely with their fathers thereby further entrenching patriarchal traditions and rituals. Malusi, the only male participant that had a positive relationship with his father, spoke emotionally of this interaction indicating the importance of the continuity of African family traditions and rituals in identity construction:

So my father knows his own rules and when I go to the bush my father is passing his rules, like he's teaching me how they do things at his home. He's trying to teach you how to do things as [his clan name] so that when I also have a child I will walk him in this path of [his clan name], that's what happens. That's why I find it so important. My father went there everyday… and even my uncles, they also came. [My father] was there and that's exactly what makes me happy you know, before he passed away he made me a man, he was in my Mketi [the party on returning from the month away] and three months after that, then he passed away, knowing that I'm a man and he has already taught me a lot. The Mketi, it's the most wonderful day of your life, the one you never forget (Malusi).

The other two participants described how difficult it was to go through the *Ulwaluko* without their fathers thereby lacking the continuity of family rituals and traditions and indicating the importance of paternity within the Xhosa people. The lack of economic support over this period is difficult and puts a strain on mothers who have to finance their sons' month away from home on their own:

Before I went to the bush I went to my father and he said he didn't have any money. My cousin sister organised everything for me. But when I went my father had died. (Ayabonga)

Despite the financial strain this tradition puts onto families they still make a plan for the young men to attend this month away thereby indicating its importance and significance.

Many of the participants, both male and female, commented on the importance of this ceremony, and how it 'creates men out of the boys'.

> *My mother doesn't want me to be with those young boys, she only like me to go with the ones that have come from the bush* (Phozisa).

Phozisa's mother argues that young men who have been initiated into this particular version of manhood display adult behaviours and levels of responsibility lacking in the boys who have not been initiated. She trusts these men to treat her daughter better than those who have not spent time away in the 'apprenticeship of manhood'. The traditional aim of this rite of passage is that the young male initiates are provided with "emotional and psychological security" (Krausman Ben-Amos, 1995, p. 77) as adult roles are transferred unambiguously by community elders resulting in a brief, but focused, transition to adulthood as opposed to the lengthy, often indeterminate, adolescence in less traditional societies. The tradition's recognition of the transition from childhood into manhood may have more significance for black, South African men due to the emasculation they have historically been subject to under Apartheid.

7.2.2.2. Women living in reference to men

Nandipha explains how women's lives are often lived in reference to men in her description and criticism of the predominant discourse and belief system followed by her female peers. In contrast to Xhosa men's entry into manhood which is marked by a month away, and a ceremony and celebration on their return, women's assumed entry in adulthood through becoming sexually active is defined as problematic.

> *What I've realised about the girls at my age is that the biggest challenge is school, they do not like to get themselves educated, and teenage pregnancy. Some of them, I've realised that sometimes if the girls do not get love at home, they tend to go outside and look for it in guys in a wrong way because they do not have the resources they need and then they think that if I get myself a guy then they will take care of me, there is that mentality in township that if you get a guy with a car and money then he takes care of you and everything will be ok… some of them will be like well, my mother was never educated, so why do I have to bother myself with going*

to school and I'm underprivileged and poor and destined to be poor and everything like that, its so sad because you see that they do not have dreams and goals, ambitions or anything, they have this thing that you find out they don't want to change their living conditions.

Nandipha is critical of how women and girls compromise themselves by falling pregnant as teenagers and by relying on men for financial resources, failing to educate themselves in order to become financially independent and socially mobile (Macleod, 1999a; Macleod & Tracey, 2010). She also alludes to lower confidence and self-esteem in women and the need for affirmation from men. Her reference to 'uneducated mothers' and 'ambitionless' daughters in relation to men whom she describes as 'economic providers' and 'rescuers' reinforces women's inferior societal position relative to men.

Nandipha refers to patriarchal discourse in her discussion of how women see men as a 'meal ticket', lacking the confidence or ambition to become self-sufficient and seeking out 'sugar-daddies' to take care of their materials needs in exchange for sex through her reference *"use sex*". These common relationships in South Africa are often characterised by significant age-gaps and power imbalances resulting in women losing the ability to negotiate the circumstances of the sexual encounters (Kaufman & Stavrou, 2004), evident in high HIV infection rates, occurrences of rape and unwanted pregnancies.

The fact that women prejudice their own development and education accepting a position secondary to men who provide for them is, as Nandipha says, *"sad"* and disempowering, a product of living in a patriarchally driven society. In an environment of poverty and structural constraints, sex is used as a tool for material and economic gain, with the ultimate effect of disempowering women (Macleod & Tracey, 2010; Jewkes, Vundule, Maforah and Jordaan, 2001).

The use of sex as a tool is further confirmed in my discussion with Anathi who explains how she has had six or seven lovers who she hoped would make her feel wanted, needed and affirmed but instead resulted in her contracting HIV.

K: How many boyfriends have you had?

U: six or seven.

K: Did you want to sleep with them?

U: I sleep with them because I want them to love me.

K: And did you get their love, did they show you they love you?

U: They didn't show me the love that I wanted.

K: Did you feel close to them when you were sleeping with them?

U: No.

Given the difficult circumstances the participants were brought up in, it is not surprising that they attempt to find love, affirmation and recognition of their existence as *actional* people (Fanon, 2000) whenever the opportunity arises, putting these adolescents at risk for contracting HIV, particularly young women who live in patriarchal environments where men most often dictate the terms of sexual interaction through force or coercion (Rutenberg et al, 2001; Jewkes & Abrahams, 2002).

While there is no doubt that sex is used by women as a tool for material and economic needs, women's sexual desire cannot be completely discounted, despite the fact that this was not overtly claimed by the girls interviewed. I have no doubt that Anathi was attempting to gain affection and love through her sexual encounters, but there is also an indication of sexual desire in her encounters which dissipates after the act and the resultant feelings of emptiness and loneliness. In a qualitative study done by Howard (2011) young South African black women described how, despite the fact that rape and sexual assault is so prevalent in their communities, they experience sexual desire and enjoyed having sex and experimenting with desire, a completely age-appropriate response at adolescence. This should be kept in mind in this sensitive and politicised subject, but should also not divert one's attention from the occurrence of rape, sexual assault and coercion, and the gender power imbalance so prevalent in South Africa.

The dialogue with Nandipha and Anathi indicates how, on many occasions, girls and women's self-concepts and identities are constructed in relation to men; they position themselves in support roles to men, the main actors, thereby denying themselves the opportunity to construct their identities as individuals in their own right. From a discursive perspective, patriarchy entrenches young girls' "cultural preparedness for powerlessness" (Lips, 1994, p. 90).

Despite this disempowered gender discourse, a few of the young women participants' narratives demonstrate a desire to be financially self-sufficient through not wanting to get married and have

families ‘too young’, an encouraging sign in the empowerment of women, particularly considering the conservative, patriarchal environment in which the participants have been brought up and live.

Asanda, Gcobisa, Nandipha and Nozuko all indicate that they have no interest in having boyfriends and are in no rush to get married and have families indicating they would like to follow another path.

> *I’m not that kinda family person cos (uhh) I’ve taught myself from a young age that I’ll be a business woman. Yes I see myself getting married someday but for now it’s not in my thoughts, I’d like to be successful firstly. I have to do the things that I wanna do firstly and then (uhh) afterwards I’d think about settling - Yeah, ok - I know its kinda normal for youth to have boyfriends but I don’t see the purpose to have one, I have other things to do.* (Asanda)

> *[People] always tease me about the fact that I dress up and all that but I don’t have a boyfriend. When they approach me, I’m “Ooooh no”, and give them the look. Nah, I do get to have the crushes, but the thing with me… I’m not interested, not yet…* (Nandipha)

Gcobisa indicates in our discussion that she too has no plans to have a family; she is *“kind of tomboyish”* and does not have a boyfriend. Nozuko states she is not interested in having a boyfriend or necessarily getting married.

But in the ‘future’ sections of these young women’s art timelines most aspire to be married and have children thereby entrenching Hollway’s (1989) *Have/Hold,* heternormative discourse that serves to govern gender and sexual relations. Nandipha includes a photograph of a bride on her timeline and when I ask her about it she replies:

> *The bride’s dress says that I do believe that there will be a time in my life where I will want to settle and have my own family and have a good husband and yeah…* (Nandipha).

The social pressure from their families and community, particularly the church, to adhere to the traditions of marriage and family is high, indicated by both Asanda and Nandipha who, despite wanting to be financially independent, still aspire to be married and have children thereby echoing the *Have/Hold* discourse prescribed by the church (Hollway, 1989).

Nandipha’s reference to finding a *“good husband, someone who doesn’t drink and has a job,”* and who will provide for her family, could be construed as contradictory given that she is critical of girls

who sleep with men for financial gain. But given how few men have contributed to the upbringing of their children and been active fathers amongst the participants in this study, Nandipha's desire for 'a good man' could also be interpreted as her wanting to spend her life with a man who partners equally with her in bringing up a family, as opposed to her being, quite literally, left holding the baby! Siqwana-Ndulo (1998) reported in her study that surveyed 96 Xhosa people that a household was only considered to be a home when a man was present, thereby indicating the importance, and rarity, of the man in a Xhosa family.

The male participants also confirm this *Have/Hold* discourse through their discussion of wanting to get married to have children and leave a legacy, and unlike the female participants, they indicate the desire to want large, traditional families. Malusi would like to continue his father's legacy by having a large family entrenching patrilineal practice:

> *Ahhhh, its obviously a Xhosa, I'd like to have even 12 children… You know my father had 3 childrens and I'm sure in the place that he's in he wanted to expand the family! So that's what I wanna do on his behalf, I wanna expand the family, so the [his Xhosa clan name] got to be strong.*

While this discussion indicates the gendered, patrilineal practice prevalent in the lives of the participants, Malusi's desire to have a large family is also indicative of a desire for belonging, family lineage, community and ultimately recognition as a provider (Taylor, 2004).

In a discussion with Ayabonga on the drawing he has drawn on his timeline of *"me and my wife"*, both portrayed as smartly dressed with him in a suit and tie, it appears that getting married brings the promise of order and control to many of the participants' disordered and tumultuous lives; marriage is coupled in Ayabonga's mind with being smartly dressed and *"neat"* indicative of social adherence, harmony and control.

As in many cultures and societies in the world, household and domestic work is divided according to gender, largely the domain of women. Anathi describes her mother as someone who *"loves cooking and cleaning and washing."* Both Phozisa and Nobomi describe how their role in their homes includes cooking and cleaning. Phozisa says she cooks and cleans for her father and her brother when her mother is not there. By way of stark contrast, none of the male participants describe these tasks as part of their responsibility, other than Ayabonga who cooked for his aunt when she was dying. This situation is consistent with the Campbell (1995b) study which showed

that girls are focused more on the private spheres of home, family and lovers, whereas men are focused more on the public world outside of the home, indicating that the division of labour based on gender has not changed in twenty years.

7.2.2.3. Gender Discourse Evolving Slowly

Despite the entrenched presence of patriarchal and heteronormative discourse dominating the narratives of the participants, there were also moments where this discourse was challenged; moments where consciousness was raised through the disruption of the hold that social structures have on the lives of black people, women and homosexual people and counter-narratives were able to be imagined. Aviwe, a gay identified man, and Malusi, a physically strong, heterosexual, quintessential 'man's man' were forced to share a room as the only two men on a camp organised by *Ithemba*.

Despite Malusi "*draw[ing] some boundaries*" in an attempt to control the situation, thereby ensuring that Aviwe was 'gay' on his terms, he indicated acceptance and recognition of Aviwe as an 'actional' (Fanon, 2000), homosexual man.

> *I had to make sure in the conversation that there are certain things that we should not try to talk about, there are certain things that we can talk about. I didn't want to talk about relationships with him, guys' lifestyle or boys' lifestyle. If I'm talking to him about boys maybe he will in a way think I am trying to offend him or being gay or something like that so…we had to just pick general things and try to motivate one another on mainstream things, you know, that's the kind of conversation we had. Like how we spent the rest of the day, how did I found today, the things we did, like how to cook. I didn't say anything to him about not wanting to talk about these things, it was just in my mind. He also seemed to work things the way I wanted them to work out. I showed him respect.*

Despite referring to their discussion of cooking, a typically female activity which Malusi could have unconsciously chosen to discuss given that Aviwe was gay and, in Malusi's mind, his sexuality is linked to femininity, Malusi valued the opportunity to overcome his prejudices, especially as he would like to work with people within the community in his career and recognised that he couldn't discriminate against others and successfully do this job:

We became good friends, even [names of the two Ithemba counsellors] were kind of liking that too. It felt as though it was something good that I have gained. You know, I want to work with people. The kind of work that I do requires a person who does not discriminate, and sharing a room with a gay means that you cannot discriminate. I have to sleep with this person.

Given that he was forced to re-evaluate his prejudices against homosexuality, Malusi was also open to re-evaluate his gender prejudices. He tells me how he had a similar awakening and consciousness-raising experience to that of his interaction with Aviwe in being called to re-evaluate his view of women on the same camp, indicating how in certain moments the hold that social positionings have in isolation, are able to be disrupted when considered from an intersectional perspective, a display of constructionist intersectionality (Prins, 2006).

…you know psychologically or … really I was the only male… and I got to be exposed to an environment that I am not usually in. I got to be friends with a lot of girls, got to be involved in their conversations which is what I'm not usually been, girls talking, calling me. I had to show interest in what they talking about so we can have a common conversation, cos I'm the only male so I have to talk about what they want.

Given that Malusi was in the minority, a different position from what he is used to as a man in a patriarchal environment with power, the power shifted to the women, the majority at this particular juncture in time. This different positioning enabled a change in perspective for Malusi and changed his view of women, and as a result his own identity. As Hall (2000) asserts, "[t]he concept of identity deployed here is therefore not an essentialist, but a strategic and positional one… this concept of identity does not signal that stable core of the self, unfolding from beginning to end through all vicissitudes of history without change… It accepts that identities are never unified and, in late modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured, never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and traditions" (p. 17).

…I spent days with girls and I didn't discriminate anyone. [Girls are] just like us, they just like us males, they think like us, they do things like just like us… I learnt that like a person should not be stereotyped because males think that they are better than females and stuff like that but… ever since I've been to this camp I've that no one is better than you, its just a person who trains his mind or her mind to work the way he or she wants it to work. That's what I've learned about girls…

This moment in history had the effect of altering Malusi's existing cultural scripts in his mind, with the effect of him 'conceding power' through his altered conceptualisation of women, previously ordinarily relegated in his mind to the 'other'. It also brought about consciousness for Malusi of another part of him, a part he liked and as such is likely to keep and develop, hopefully effecting further change, and potentially producing cultural creolisation (Glissant, 1989; Nuttall & Michael, 2000, Erasmus, 2001, Martin, 2006) and constructionist intersectionality (Prins, 2006).

> *This camp was a life changing event, it made me realise a lot about me, like the things that I've been through, the things that I've seen, never thought I could do… I saw a lot of qualities about me that I liked. I found an opportunity to explore another side of me, you know, try to feel what they feeling.*

Being able to acknowledge how others are feeling, a higher form of cognition only available from adolescence, enabled Malusi to feel good about himself, a person of worth through others. This experience enabled Malusi to feel that his life was worthwhile, with the ability to act with a certain moral awareness within a moral framework (Taylor, 1989).

Despite some of the women participants indicating some shift in patriarchal discourse through their reference to wanting to be financially independent and the conscientisation of one of the male participants, Malusi, by and large, the participants indicate adherence to historical gender norms whereby heterosexual men are the standard and women and gay individuals in reference are the 'other', supportive of men as primary breadwinners and patrilineal bearers.

7.3. Narratives of Overcoming

> …everything can be taken from a man [sic] but one thing: the last of human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in a given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way (Frankl, 2014, p. 62).

Despite the adverse conditions, events and circumstances the participants of this study have been exposed to, and continue to be confronted with, many display the ability to adapt to their environments, cope with, recover from, and grow despite the stress and adversity they face. The discourse of 'that which does not kill us, makes us stronger' proposed initially by Nietzsche, but adopted widely from philosophers to pop stars, as in the case of Kelly Clarkson's song, 'Stronger, what doesn't kill you makes you stronger', has been bought into by the participants in a display of

resilience and positive thinking, fuelled by their forward focus and implicit belief that their future lives will be unrecognisable from their past lives.

> *It made me have a different view on how I look at life. It was hard… it taught me something that life isn't just about the drum roll, its about obstacles that you have to overcome and that's what I basically learnt* (Nozuko).

The adversity the participants have suffered in their lives has made them more adaptable through the discourse of overcoming, resulting in them adopting a positive view even on the grossest of human atrocities and exploitation.

> *I think the [sexual] abuse made me stronger, it made me tell myself that this will never happen to me again and I would never let it happen to other girls, it made me speak out about it, it made me make other girls aware that such things like this happen* (Siphosethu).

> *Sometimes I look at my past and I think you know what, that made me who I am, all those challenges that I went through have made me to be a better person, how can I put this, with even more purpose… Its life after all, you gonna meet those challenges, you gonna have to like look at them and defeat them… Sometimes I look at my life and feel lucky despite all the hardships.* (Nandipha)

In the case of Ayabonga, his positive self-talk has enabled him to acknowledge and accept that he will not be accepted into university on his matric marks, and as a result he should rather find a job, no matter how menial, and work his way up, perhaps studying at night. By the time of our second interview he had secured a job as a shop assistant.

> *I am a winner, I'm not a loser anymore and I am willing to face challenges in my lifestyle. [My job] gives me a strength and then I think I learn a lot and how to handle things well and how to learn… when you are new at work you don't know everything, you have to be patient, you have to listen, you have to be a good person, you have to talk when you don't understand things in order to understand things, so you have to talk and ask. You have to say, I don't understand this, can you explain? … I feel lucky, there are a lot of people that need this chance, this work, so I must be grateful and happy"* (Ayabonga).

The 'Post-Apartheid Dream' discourse, the belief that the abolishment of Apartheid will ensure that the next generation's lives will be markedly better than their predecessors, has provided hope and

unusually high levels of resilience amongst the participants, considering the continued structural inequalities in many of South Africa's societies. The resilience displayed by the participants is underpinned by strong religious beliefs and the religious discourse that God will make things better if people are strong and show faith. The religious doctrine these young people are taught at church preaches gratitude and the belief that suffering on earth is rewarded in the after-life, the origins of resilience and acceptance of the status quo in religiously observant people. It could be argued though, that perhaps if the participants were less resilient, they would rise up against that which should not be accepted, such as poor education and health services, to mention but a few areas in which they suffer prejudice and marginalisation. The level of resilience displayed by the participants is not unlike what Michelle Fine has experienced in working with children and adolescents from low-income schools in the U.S.:

> No matter how much betrayal, no matter how many institutions have turned on them, they yearn to connect, to be respected, to be recognised and actually, really to learn. And they yearn to give back. I've done this [work] now for 30 years and betrayal, betrayal, betrayal… They should say "get out of my face, you know, you represent everything that it so awful", but they are so generous (Michelle Fine, transcript from discussion in a student workshop at Wits, 11 July 2015)

7.4. Conclusion

It is evident from the narratives articulated by the participants of their lives, that they are searching to consolidate their fragmented stories into a 'whole' in order to find meaning and purpose. It is also evident that these young people straddle a number of different worlds; the traditional, cultural sphere in which the men participate in *Ulwaluko* rites of passage, and the world of higher education and the promise of the 'South African Dream' of abundance and prosperity. The world in which these young township dwellers are 'interpellated' (Athusser, 1969) into social positions such as black, poor, women or gay in a perpetuation of inequality, is juxtaposed against the world in which they have been promised that they can be whatever they want to be with no limitations imposed by their social positioning, results in these young people living with extreme levels of ambivalence and contradiction.

As these adolescents become able to view their lives narratively from the perspective of a consolidated 'whole', as opposed to just a set of isolated and disparate experiences, there is an indication of the tension between structure and agency present in their lives. While these young

people's lives are still 'racialised' and gendered, there is evidence of some points of resistance against these social positionings in the participants' narratively constructed identities, providing hope for change and agency and the creation of better lives for this and future generations through the construction of counteracting narratives (Squire, 2013), constructionist intersectionality (Prins, 2006) and cultural creolisation (Glissant, 1989; Nuttal & Michael, 2000; Erasmus, 2001). 'Choices' and the possibility for agency are moulded and formed by existent discourses, but these discourses are contradictory, forcing us to make conscious and unconscious choices between the various social and cultural scripts we could adopt and follow. Agency enables us to possess multiple subjectivities and to create creolisations and counteracting narratives between various social and cultural schemas.

The participants indicate that cultural construction in South Africa is showing signs of being more fluid than previously considered, exceeding the previously simplified "evocations of difference" that have dominated South African cultural studies (Nuttall & Michael, 2000, p. 5). Arendt (1998) proposed that action, or the ability to act and take initiative, and speech, are the way people exercise agency and insert themselves into the world, referring to this as a 'second birth' or natality. Despite the continued existence of inequality as a result of low government investment in South Africa's townships, specifically in terms of education and health, the participants of this study are showing signs of adopting various different subject positions through reconceptualising and rethinking the social structures within which they live resulting in the construction of post-colonial and post-Apartheid identities. This cultural contestation through constructionist intersectionality and cultural creolisation is illustrated in more detail in chapter 9 which presents the narrative portrait of one participant, Aviwe, a gay identified man, and his struggle for self-recognition, and the recognition and acknowledgement from those he lives amongst as a man of value and worth, so vital in the construction of identity, particularly the laying down of identity foundations at adolescence.

The participants' lack of the specific mention of the word 'Apartheid' and its implied link in their narratives to the cause of the hardships that they, and their families, suffer (and very limited explicit references to 'race' in accounting for themselves and their lives) is interpreted as an indication of their desire and need to move forward, embrace change, and perhaps even dismiss their pasts, through a "counteracting narrative" (Squire, 2013, p. 42). The participants see this 'setting aside' of their pasts as vital in the construction of what it means for them to be 'born-free', indicative of an advancement from the lives and identities of their parents and predecessors and the associated problems of poverty and HIV, with the effect of them distancing themselves to a greater or lesser extent from past cultural practices in an attempt to forge new paths and find new ways of meaning-

making. These future based narratives or “narrative imaginations” (Brockmeier, 2009; Andrews, 2014) are discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 8

Narrative Imagination

> South Africa is a microcosm of our modern world. It is one of a few countries where the relationships, proportions, and dispositions of the population reflect the global proportions, dispositions and possibilities for human interactions. For this reason, though it is 'an ordinary country'… it is one where hope for a better world remains alive (Alexander, 2013, p. viii)

This chapter analyses the participants' 'future-orientated' narratives, and the (im)possibility of narrative imagination to disrupt the links between past and future and enable a break in the structures that have constrained their past lives (and the longer intergenerational pasts of their families and communities), freeing them to imagine their futures as healthy, educated and prosperous adults. Narrative imagination and the ability to conceive of how life will be from the position of how life currently is provides human beings with the ability to engage with the possibility and language of agency and choice (Brockmeier, 2009; Andrews, 2014).

In drawing up their art timelines, many of the participants drew up lists of their goals and dreams. In the interview discussions the participants referred to these lists of their goals thereby entering into an imaginative world of how their lives could be or rather, how they believed they should be, in comparison with the pain and loss they have suffered in their past lives, and in many cases still suffer in their present lives. Many of the participants became visibly more animated and excited in the discussion of their future prospects and lives, indicating that they had actually envisaged and created mental images and stories of how their lives were going to be when their goals and dreams were realised. These visual images of their future lives were detailed and felt almost tangible, highlighting the focus and priority these young people place on their futures, attempting to relegate the 'prison of their pasts', filled with loss and trauma, to distant memories and escape into the future. This fantasy and imagination appeared to be spurred on by popular media and consumerism in their desire for upward class mobility.

Unlike the nihilism or 'contextless' global culture that Giroux (1996) speaks of in his commentary on 'slacker' and 'border youth' in the U.S. and Europe in which young people possess little hope for their futures and drift from job to job tied to no place or period, the narratives of the participants of this study display hope and excitement in respect of their future lives. The opportunity, in the minds of these young people, to 'break out' of the structural moulds that have constrained previous

generations under Apartheid, provides them with a chance to rewrite their 'past' narratives into exciting and prosperous futures. There is an overarching sense from the participants that, because of their position in history, born at the time of one of the "[g]reat social events of the late 20th century" (Norris et al, 2008, p. 52), at least from a legal, policy and political perspective, that their 'born-free' lives will be the beginning of a new story, one of hope and enthusiasm.

> *I dream so big, that I forgot that the earth is round. And for me there's like there's no (uhh), there is kinda no end, yes.* (Asanda)

> *I can't imagine my future without my shades on… cause its 2 bright anyway* (Gcobisa)

For the participants, their imagination of how their lives will be in the future represents their freedom (Andrews, 2014), an opportunity to transform from "current reality" to "a hoped for but as yet unrealised reality" (Andrews, 2014, p. 5), a narrative emplotment of how the past becomes the future. The participants visualise a mental picture of their future lives with detail of the physical spaces they will occupy and the characters with whom they will share these spaces. The participants describe where they see themselves working, where they envision they will live, and what cars they will drive. Narrative imagination enables the participants to dream and hope, a way to envisage their lives without poverty, free from the shackles of their past and present lives. Andrews (2014) states, "[t]he point here is not that everything we imagine is, in fact, realisable… but, rather, if something can be imagined it is not 'absolutely impossible'…" (p. 5). This is evident in the participants' hopes for their futures, the fact that many of their goals and dreams could be considered to be unrealisable from where they currently stand in their lives does not prevent these young people from imagining them. Dreams of finding a cure for HIV, becoming analytical chemists, forensic psychologists and published authors indicate, as noted by Swartz, et al (2012), "an unsustainable belief by young people in their own agency" and an "optimistic bias [and] a belief that these youth will have full access to the opportunities that are present in the 'New South Africa'" (p. 31).

The post-Apartheid South African discourse of 'The Rainbow Nation', and the 'New South African Dream' has 'promised' adolescents access to a middle class life. This often empty promise has resulted in the recent activism around 'Fees Must Fall' by students throughout South African universities. As students struggle to gain access to universities as the recipients of sub-standard township education there are rapidly rising levels of discontent.

This post-Apartheid promise and expectation of higher education, in combination with the undertaking made by *Ithemba*, the NGO to which the participants are affiliated, to pay for higher education if they are accepted into tertiary institutions, has resulted in almost all of the participants aspiring to go to university. As Andrews (2014) reminds us "[t]he imagining of possible futures emanates from a location in the present" (p. 6). While the participants' dreams appear to be grand and illusionary from the position I witness them in currently, they originate from the post-Apartheid discourse of prosperity and abundance and, in their minds, are grounded in the real world and, not only achievable, but *deserved* considering the injustices to which they and their predecessors have been subjected. The Freedom Charter's promise of the right to education, and the right to safe and comfortable housing should not be unrealistic or unreasonable expectations. Unfortunately the South African Government's service delivery to its populace, particularly to those most affected by Apartheid, and specifically in the areas of education and health, has not evolved sufficiently to support these dreams. Township education may not be sufficient to educate these young people out of the poverty in which they currently live and into the world of fast cars, large houses and university education that adorn the future sections of their timelines.

The participants' narratives of their futures are divided between their personal hopes and dreams and those that relate to their communities and the social collective. From the perspective of the individual, their future narratives envision tertiary education and being employed as their ticket to upward social mobility and the acquisition of "a house and a car" – the symbols of arriving in the world.

> "*Will study here next year*" attached to a picture of a sign of 'Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University' (Anathi).

Overwhelmingly, one of the greatest themes in the participants' future narratives was that their generation would be markedly different from previous generations due to their perceived freedom of choice and the ability to be agentic. 'I will do things differently from the way my parents did them' was the most resonant message that came out of the discussions with the participants about their futures. Underlying this generational difference was an implicit, and in some cases, explicit, critique of the way their parents lived their lives. I expected that the participants would have been more understanding of the fact that Apartheid had hampered their parents' lives, but this was never explicitly mentioned. Rather, their parents' lives were used as the yardstick for how their own lives would *not* be. As discussed in Chapter 6, daughters were severely critical of the way their mothers had lived their lives and failed them as nurturers. Fathers, were also criticised, although not nearly

as harshly, for having abandoned their families, and not taken on any financial responsibility to support their children. The prevalence of HIV infection is an area where this generation of young people are insistent that their lives will be different from those of their parents. Having witnessed their parents, close relatives and community members' horrific and undignified deaths, these young people are determined that they will not fall to the same fate, displaying high levels of knowledge of HIV prevention and ARV medication. Many of the young women participants aspire to have smaller families than traditional large African families, and specifically mentioned how they would like to be financially independent, having witnessed their mothers and grandmothers' struggle to support their families, an indication of the past and the present reflected in the future.

From the collective perspective there was a strong desire and willingness to support their communities, a definite appreciation of the fact that the group is stronger than the individual, and despite the antagonism that exists between those that are perceived to be more successful than others, as was noted strongly in the Swartz et al (2012) study, a desire to help each other. Phozisa tells me how she *"want[s] a big car, so [she] can give everyone a lift!"* The belief that everyone needs a lift, both literally and figuratively, came out strongly from the participants' stories of their futures.

8.1. Education and Being Employed – the Route to Freedom and Independence

All of the participants perceive that higher education is their route out of the poverty and marginalisation that they and their predecessors have suffered and as such, all of the participants aspire to attend university. As Cooper and Subotzky (2001) argue, the main factor that is driving transformation or "the student revolution" is not government policy, but rather "the middle-class aspirations of black students and their families" (p. 231). Despite the participants being aware that they have received sub-standard education as an aftermath of Apartheid's Bantu Education system, they do not believe that this is likely to hamper their chances of being accepted to study at university.

Generally the participants are strong students who academically outperform their peers as a result of the after school support provided by *Ithemba*, thereby offering them the opportunity to believe in their academic prospects and identify with being academically strong. Education and being employed is seen by the participants as their primary mechanism for achieving upward social mobility and independence. *"I want to be a graduate so I can be independent"* (Phozisa).

As mentioned above, as members of *Ithemba* there is an unwritten understanding that if the participants are accepted into a tertiary education institution, the NGO will fund this education. This is a significant differentiator between the participants of this study and the average township adolescent in South Africa in that the participants are afforded the opportunity to realistically dream of attaining tertiary education. Despite this, most of the participants have not achieved adequate 'points' for acceptance into university, resulting in a number taking a year post their matric to 'upgrade' their results by rewriting their matric exams. There is no doubt that this 'lifeline' from *Ithemba* has increased the levels of hope and optimism in the perceptions the participants have of their future lives.

> *"This is the place that is trying to make things like my future to happen (Phozisa)*

> *[Ithemba] always gives the best service to their clients and they are …my…present and …my future (Aviwe)*

Tamboukou (2006) recognises how education enables the descendants of those who were prejudiced and oppressed under Apartheid in South Africa to envisage how "another future can be possible" (p. 8) despite being restricted by locality, 'race' and class. The promise of new opportunities for black people post-Apartheid has had the effect of elevating education as a priority for black youth. Given that educational opportunities were restricted for black people under Apartheid and that schools were a focal point of anti-Apartheid protests, the attainment of education is perceived as vital for black youth in post-Apartheid South Africa. The high educational expectations black youth hold underpins their optimism for the future (Beutel & Anderson, 2007; Cooper and Subotzky, 2001).

Asanda has dreamt of becoming a lawyer, like her late father, since the age of five. More recently, since *Ithemba* took her on a visit to UCT where she attended a few lectures, she has become interested in analytical chemistry. It is clear that her choice to be a lawyer is an emotional one tied to the legacy of her father. The random nature of these two careers indicates how she has received limited career guidance, rather these two careers have been chosen as they are studied at university, her major goal. She includes the caption on her timeline in the future section of her timeline, *"Being a first year student at UNIVERSITY"*.

> *It will depend on my marks and which one I get into. If it happens that I get into both of them I will choose LLB, yes cos I grew up wanting to be a lawyer. Then I went to school and I was*

basically you can work at the lab, be a researcher, (uhh) and you can work at (uhh) pharmacies and be the helper in that kind of way, and yes you can be helping in medical detectives - yes.

The participants' random choice of university courses is evident in a number of their diversified career interests, underlying the desire of the participants to attend university in and of itself, as opposed to attending university to follow a particular career choice. Nozuko's dream is to study biomedical technology at the University of Cape Town as she loves working with chemicals and she would like "*to find a cure for HIV and AIDS.*" But she also dreams of publishing her own book of poetry. Her goal of finding a cure for HIV and AIDS is directly related to her first hand experience of the pain of the disease.

I have applied for that bursary in maths, science and English. Basically if you get that bursary then you have a guaranteed job at Transnet. I would have a better chance if I wanted to do engineering, but I'm not good at drawing and stuff.

Thembela's career interests include random and incommensurate options, reflecting little sense of the worlds of work that may be feasible or worth dreaming of in the active imaginative sense suggested by Andrews (2014).

The things that I want to do in the future, like be a nurse, went to university, mmmm being a flight attendant.

By contrast, after a discussion on vocational opportunities with his guidance teacher at school, Malusi is very specific about his future career choice:

Since my guidance teacher explained a lot about the (uhh) psychology, I've realised its who I want to be, you know, through the experiences that I've got I like to listen to people's stories and I always like to advise people, to comfort them, I've this is who I want to be, but I don't just wanna do any kind of psychology, I would like to do forensic psychology and forensic psychology is the one that deals with people who do crimes in a pattern

But this too is a goal quite disconnected from the 'real' possibilities of his life, nor is there any sense of how this goal might be achieved or the steps to be taken towards attaining it. Forensic psychology is not a disciplne on offer at any South African university, even at postgraduate level. He does however have a number of other career interests in mind as his guidance teacher has

advised him that *"if then something happens that I can't reach that goal of mine I have something to fall on."* He also has an interest in social work, the military and the police force.

> *I realize I wanted to go to the military or be a policeman. They also train people there to become professionals. So I can also study when I'm there.*

Media and TV is a career to which a number of the participants aspire indicating the strength of the celebrity culture that has been foisted on the youth through social media, television, mobile phones and other sources of media through technology (Dolby, 1999; 2000). This choice of a 'public' career is a chance for young people to display their success and agency to the world, an exhibition of their belonging "to the hope-filled future of the 'New South Africa' " and a "form of resistance and a weapon against [the] despair" that the previous generation suffered (Swartz et al, 2012, p. 32). Siphosethu would like to attend university and be an *"all rounder"* in the media world:

> *…my aim is to apply to university, I want to go to university and pursue a career in media. I wanna be an all-rounder media, I wanna be a journalist, I want to be an actress, wanna be a stage producer, a regular personality, I like multi-tasking because its not static and I get bored easily, so I wanna be an all-rounder*

Nandipha would also like to be a TV personality after achieving a degree in media studies indicating her desire to be publicly recognised as successful and admired, but also for helping others. Considering the abandonment Nandipha has suffered in her life, her father left the family when she was young, her mother died of HIV related illness when she was 8 years old, leaving her to be brought up by her aunt who begrudgingly took her in, it is not surprising that she dreams of being loved and adored in her future life and a career in media is a way of her envisaging this:

> *Yes, I want to be the best TV personality and have success wherever I can get it. I want to graduate from my media degree. … I'm gonna be a TV personality and I know that when I'm there people are gonna love me and when I get that chance I wanna use it in a positive way that's gonna touch peoples' lives so that I do believe when I get to network with people* (Nandipha)

The path is clear in the minds of the participants; the post-Apartheid discourse of 'education is the key to success' where education provides employment, and employment provides social mobility, independence and freedom from the poverty and marginalisation suffered from in the past.

Only one participant, Ayabonga, appeared to accept that he would not be able to attend university as he had no family to support him through an 'upgrade' year and his matric marks were not high enough to enable him to gain acceptance at university. In the first interview he seemed disheartened by this realisation, but when I meet him for the second interview three months later he proudly tells me that he has found a job at a food retailer as a shop assistant. His body language has changed from the first interview where he was tentative and unsure of himself to showing more confidence and optimism in the second interview.

> *So, at my job, ja, everything is good and everything is well. (uhh), I work hard each and every time. So in order for me to feel comfortable. So I feel comfortable, cos every time I'm pleasing them… It's good. I'm working as a labour there. So, I'm cleaning and then I'm serving customers. Yes ((smiles)) I'm very excited at the same time. But I don't think that, I wish that… that I will not spend all of my life there… I am happy though.*

Ayabonga tells me that he is proud of himself for having secured a job, and sees an opportunity to perform well and move up the ranks thereby providing him with the chance to learn and improve his skills base. In his narrative he shows how having this opportunity to develop himself has enabled him to write a different narrative from his past, an expression of constructionist intersectionality (Prins, 2006).

> *It gives me a strength and then I think I learn a lot and how to handle things well and how to learn… When I go to work I feel happy, I am doing something that I am interested in. I learn a lot. People, they trust me at work because I don't have any criminal record so my manager trust me. My manager she told me that I am still young, you work quickly and you work well and you are neat. So I was happy to hear that. Make me feel good. Every time she saw me she is motivating me and she say you do the good things, keep it up the good work.*

The discourse of 'hard work', and pleasing his superiors, is starkly evident in his reference to how good he feels when he is complimented for his good work. His specific mention that his manager trusts him because he doesn't have 'any criminal record' indicates the high level of distrust and criminality in his community and the problematic positioning and subordination of black men in South African society. His repeated reference to being 'neat' is the way that he externally expresses control, and in this context is an attempt to please his superiors. While this story indicates the productive nature of agency and achievement and young people's adherence to this discourse, its indication of the reproduction of social hierarchies of inequality across generations is disheartening.

Ayabonga's desire to move ahead and be socially mobile sometimes alienates him from his colleagues, but this only makes him more determined to prove that he is not *"the orphan"* he has often been labelled as. This division and differentiation between those that dream of success and attempt to access it through hard work and those that have foreclosed on this option and gain belonging from being an *ikasi* kid was similarly noted in the Swartz et al (2012) study.

> *Some people at work they are not talking to me. I saw in their eyes they are jealous, so I look at them and … I don't like to talk, let me just be quiet and do my job. I know that I am here to learn, I'm learning, everything that I do is a training for me. I don't worry about those people. When I was at school in grade 8 some of the people they call me' orphan'. But I don't mind about that, there are a lot of orphan around the world. I have a long time to live. Some of the people when they look at me they say it look like you live with both of your parents. When I told them that I don't have parents, both of my parent died, both of my parents passed away, when I tell them that they are surprised. They say, you are clean and you are neat and you don't look like those orphans. It's important for me to be neat, to look clean and to be smart at the same time.*

The reference to neatness, cleanliness and smartness indicates his need to project a sense of control and success to others which would enable him to belong to what Swartz et al (2012) refers to as the "New South African narrative" (p. 27) of success and forward focus. Once again the importance of not being seen as '*an* orphan' and all this implies; broken routes to the ancestral past, living in poor and socially unpresentable circumstances, is specifically mentioned. From this narrative excerpt it appears that Ayabonga understands that he needs to work hard and accept his position in the work hierarchy in order to be successful. His acceptance of his position as an inexperienced worker who has a lot to learn indicates that he doesn't expect to be given a new life without having worked hard for it and earned it thereby reinforcing the discourse of hard work, meritocracy and success. There is an indication of his respect for those that are older and more experienced than him. Ayabonga's reference to the fact that he has never changed could be linked to his search for coherence and consistency, an integration of him-'self' in the search for identity at adolescence.

> *As I see… I'm young in my work, the other workers are old, they treat me like a young boy and I accept that… I have never changed since I was born, I will always be like this. I feel lucky, there are a lot of people that need this chance, this work, so I must be grateful and happy and work hard.*

All the other participants believe that education is their only route out of poverty and the lives of their pasts. While I understand the origin of this dream, its attainment considering the adversity these young people have faced, and still face, particularly from the perspective of sub-standard high school education, is problematic. The 'university-entitlement discourse' which has been oversold to the youth of our society as the only way to become employable and upwardly socially mobile without consideration of the consequences of 'promising' university level education to the majority of a country's youth population, is likely to continue to fuel the current student uprising and discontent in the 'Fees must fall' dispute.

8.2. Acquisition of Assets: Houses and Cars

> Instead of a socialist Azania of our dreams not even 16 years ago, apartheid capitalism was succeeded by post-apartheid capitalism (Alexander, 2013, p. 41).

Driven by Western social and mass media, capitalism and the acquisition of assets, the outward, visible sign of social and class mobility, is one of the organising narratives and discourses which shapes the participants' individual narratives of hope. Aviwe includes two photographs of cars under the 'future' section of his timeline with the words *"this is my dream"* and *"this is one of my dream cars"*.



Figure 24: One of Aviwe's dream cars

Malusi's ambitions are illustrated by the inclusion of two photographs on his timeline of a Mercedes Benz motor vehicle and a photograph of a large house with a brightly lit swimming pool. *"This is my future hous [sic]!!!"*, *"This is my future car, no doubt"*.

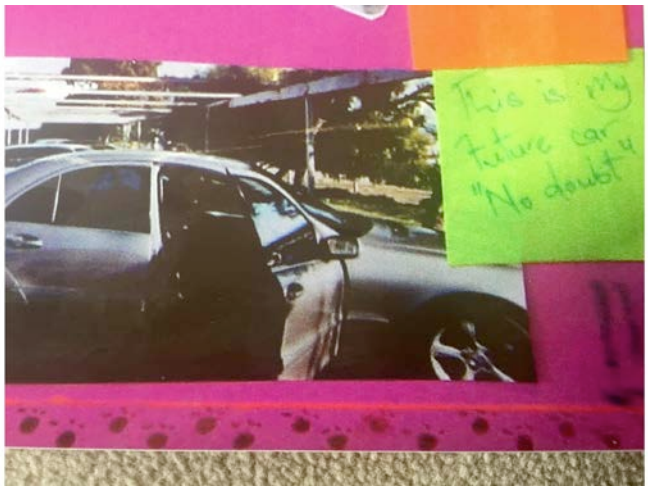


Figure 25: Malusi's dream car

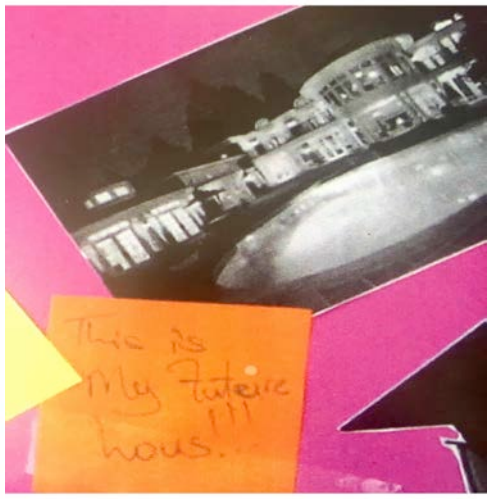


Figure 26: Malusi's dream house

Cars and houses featured often on the participants' timelines. While there was reference to the type of cars they would like thereby insinuating their purpose as status symbols, there was also a sense that having a car enables freedom of movement, an opportunity to extend their horizons beyond where they can walk or catch taxis.

> *I would like to have many cars not just one car. I would also like to have a car beautiful than this one* (Phozisa)

> *Owning my first car, a Dodge* (Asanda)

Given the transient and insecure nature of the participants' upbringings, often without a fixed abode, a secure home is a way to demonstrate social mobility and exercise control over their lives (Terkenli, 1995).

> *My dream car, my dream house* (Ayabonga)

Nobomi's timeline includes the caption: *"Build a home ([township she lives in])"* next to a photograph of a large home with a satellite dish and a front wall and *"Buy my dream car (BMW)"*.

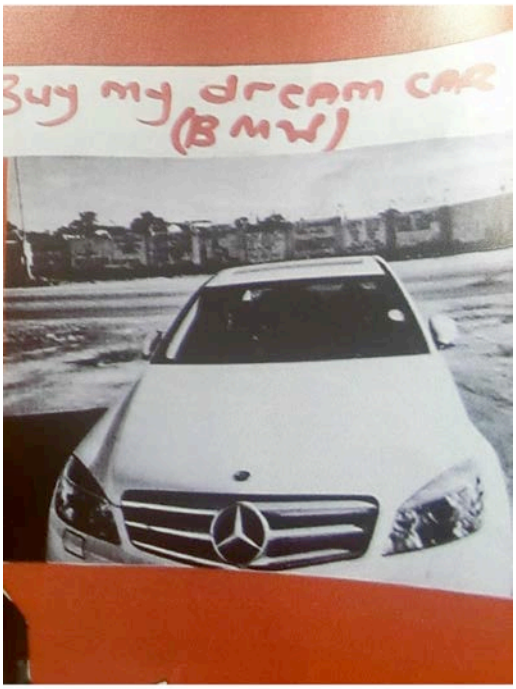


Figure 27: Nobomi's dream car

Phozisa includes a photograph of a car on her time line with the caption: *"I would like to have many cars not just one car. I would like to have a car more beautiful than this one"*.

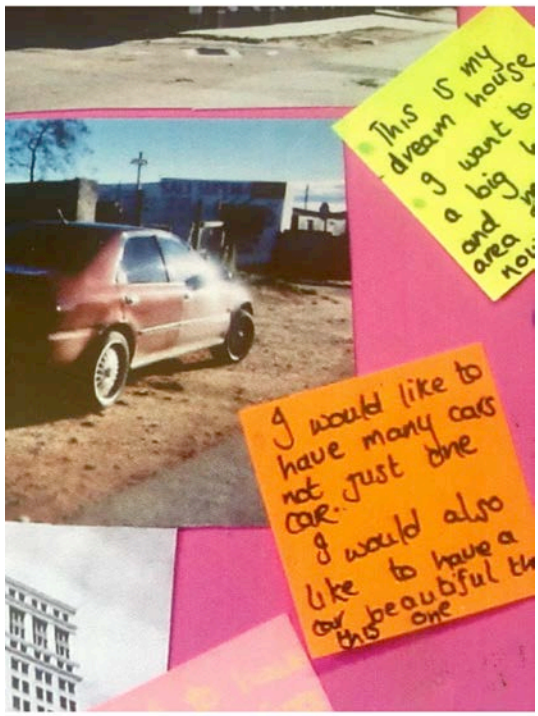


Figure 28: Phozisa's dream car

In an environment where the participants are flooded and bombarded with images of consumerism as measures of success, as Terreblanche (2002) notes in his statement that "American habits and ostentatious consumption have become the desired yardstick by which South African progress is measured" (p. 136), the participants aspire to symbols of status and social mobility. The houses and cars spoken of by the participants are signs of a new life, a life where they are perceived, by themselves and others, to have succeeded and to have moved out of their position of marginalisation into a space where they are free to move and make their own choices. Having lived in a world with limited comfort and convenience, cars and houses give 'born-frees' access to other symbols and commodities. A house is a place to raise a family safely and securely and create social connections associated with this space of belonging and safety. A car is a way to get to work and other places the participants currently have limited access to, and also enables the creation of social connections through being able to transport other people. Aviwe expressed how he would like to have a *"big car"* so he could take his friends *"to the beach"*,

The strong desire for social mobility is evident in the participants' desire for these status symbols, an outward indication of success and prosperity and participation in society in a way their parents and predecessors were unable to access. Belonging to and identifying with the 'New South Africa' for these young people is integrally connected to being able to demonstrate their belonging through the outward signs of success and prosperity (Terkenli, 1995; Ross, 2003). The participants perceive that by owning these assets they will be recognised by themselves and others as 'middle class'.

Cultural creolisation (Glissant, 1989; Nuttall & Michael, 2000, Erasmus, 2001, Martin, 2006) is implied in the participants' desires to expand the spaces in which they live from the township they have been brought up in, in an attempt to gain access to different areas and spaces as they aspire to become more socially mobile. Interestingly, the participants do not express a desire to leave their communities and domicile in favour of the city, but would rather like to create new spaces for themselves somewhere 'between the two'. This is consistent with the study undertaken by Donaldson, Mehlomakhulu, Darkey, Dyssel & Siyongwana (2013) which found that despite having the financial means to move into the suburbs of metropolitan areas, middle-class black people interviewed chose to remain in the townships or 'eKasies' for social and cultural reasons. "The township traditions and social networks constitute strong bonds which keep the BDs [black diamonds] shining in the townships rather than becoming invisible beings in the suburbs" (p. 118). It is clear that the participants of this study would like to extend their horizons, but they do not want to give up their township and community ties.

The future section of Phozisa's timeline includes a quote *"2 houses. One in the townships and 2nd one in suburbs."* She includes a photograph of a large house with the quote *"This is my dream house. I want to have a big house and near the area I live in now"*.



Figure 29: Phozisa's dream house in the township

When we discuss this in the interview she indicates that she and her husband (to be!), will live in the city near her township, but that she will have a second house in the township where she currently lives, indicating a reluctance to move away from her roots completely:

> *…the one in townships I wanna help people in a way that when they meet they can come to me, I want my people, the people I live with now to depend on me to come to me to ask for things. Like in town I'm gonna have the big, this big house with the family [refers to house on timeline] with all the rooms.*

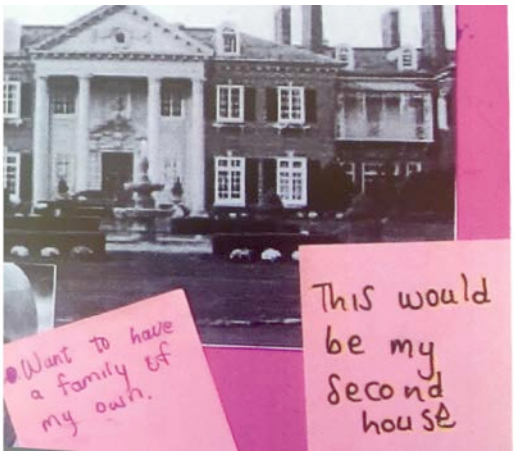


Figure 30: Phozisa's dream house in the suburbs

Ayabonga expresses a similar sentiment, reluctant to give up his past, but at the same time eager to indicate social mobility, when he says: *"After 5 years I can move, I can move, because I don't want to just stay there for the rest of my life, maybe I can have the new job and live close in town. I am happy though."*

It is clear from these narratives that the participants imagine 'place' as an articulation of social relations (Terkenli, 1995; Massey, 1999). The participants' desire to straddle two spaces provides "a view of space which tries to emphasize both its social construction and its necessarily power-filled nature" (Massey, p. 18). Moving into '*town*' is perceived by the participants to afford them power and social capital, but at the same time there is a reluctance to sever cultural ties to their histories and their pasts in the participants' desire to maintain a connection to this 'old' space, one of the few attachments to their pasts that they outwardly state they would like to keep. It also appears important to the participants from their narratives that by keeping ties to the township, they will be able to illustrate and display their success to the community that they have come from, through 'shining in the township' (Donaldson et al, 2013).

Despite the indications of the participants forging their own way through creolisation and counteracting narratives, the connection with their roots through having a tie to their pasts is important to them, specifically indicated through their reluctance to leave their place of birth entirely and in the defence of their cultural rituals and traditions to outsiders. Given the participants' grand dreams and hopes, I would have expected that the participants would want to leave the township with its stark reminders of their difficult and challenging pasts still so present today. But the township in which the participants live is made up of a small community, and while life is difficult here, it is their home, filled with people the participants know and with whom they have a shared history. In essence, it is a part of them and the space with which they most closely identify. The 'town' space may be associated in their minds with 'whiteness' which they are reluctant to embrace, either through fear of not finding belonging there or from the perception of 'selling out' to the 'other side' from the perspective of their fellow community members. Despite wanting to have access to this 'new' town space, the participants are not keen to give up their 'old' connections and roots.

8.3. Sense of Community

The participants all indicate a strong sense of community and a desire to help others. This is shown strongly by Ayabonga who has a desire to help others like himself:

It's only a wish, but I wish that one day… I could have my own crèche for the childrens so that… they can, be comfortable with what I give them, the clothes and the uniforms and food. And if the boys like to play soccer, I can organize some games for them. Others if they like to play rugby and the girls if they like to play netball then organize for them, if they like to play tennis. Sometimes I take them to movies something like that and the game football… To work with children, that is my dream.

Ayabonga describes how when he is at work he likes to dream, particularly about how he can help those less fortunate than himself, "*as I am working I like dreaming, I like thinking about positive things.*"

So, I'm thinking about me and my wife and my children, and when I was dreaming I saw that there was a young boy, this young boy he live with his mother and his mother is not working, and I took that boy to my house and I told my wife that I want to give this boy everything he want so I do that things and this boy now, I was dreaming I was just thinking that this boy would become a leader would become something in his future for his family. This boy came to me and say "thanks you Mr [his surname], everything you have done for me, you have done a lot for me, keep it up you do a great job." I like dreaming, something like that make me happy.

This dream indicates, as for many of the participants who aspire to help others, that by assisting their community they will gain a sense of meaning in their own lives and will feel needed and appreciated by others. It is also interesting how Ayabonga uses the past tense to describe the future as though he is describing his future life as though it has already happened through a process of 'subjunctivisation' (Bruner, 1986; Brockmeier, 2009). Ayabonga indicates through his recollection of his 'daydream', his 'possible castle', that he is living in the hypothetical, the 'yet to come', so vividly in his own mind its almost as though it has actually occurred. He can touch it and feel it as though the 'future is now'.

Malusi also displays a strong sense of community demonstrating his belief that the group is stronger than the individual, and his appreciation of the collective as opposed to the individual. Once again the theme of criminality is raised in the discussion of his community:

…you know even if you might not realize it, you are not living alone and when you live in a community like this,… the community is doing something for you, like if they are, like fighting

crime against the community, even if you are not the one that is being robbed or you are not the one whose house is being broken into, but its because of the community's fighting that they are also fighting that for you because once the criminals realise that the community is fighting against crime they will not do crime and you will also not be a victim of that crime because the community fought for you, you know, so this is what I wanna do back for the community.

The reference to 'fighting' and 'crime' is interesting considering its reference to community work and could indicate the divisive and threatening nature of the community in which Malusi lives, and his desire to change this by 'fighting against crime'.

Similarly to how Malusi indicates that the group is stronger than the individual, Thembela indicates her own desire for social mobility by extending this to wanting the same for others: *"I want to be a person that is helping others, in a way that they can be something else, something bigger.*

Nobomi tells me how helping others makes her feel good:

Its when I am helping someone, because when I was in [name of place] there was a lady that was calling me and she say I should help her pick up her bags. She called me to help her. So I feel good about to help her. Some other people I help to fetch water for them and I said to my sister I think that makes me very happy.

In addition to the importance of assisting her community, through the reference to her 'fetching water', Nobomi infers how many in her community do not have access to running water in their homes, indicating the poor service delivery in the township in which she lives and a glimpse into the poor, under-resourced environment in which the participants live in the township.

The fact that the participants are aware and conscious of the fact that they have been helped and supported by *Ithemba* increases their awareness of the benefits of this support to others. Nandipha shows her appreciation for the help and support she has received from *Ithemba* in her desire to do the same for others:

In my future the NGO donor is very important. I think like [Ithemba], when I have like my media degree and I'm working, I have money and everything and I know how to network with bigger people and bigger companies, I wanna be able to give back to the community, I wanna be able to give to the NGO's and be like, this is what I have, this is what I want to do, this is

> *what I want to offer… people and when I'm making some money I'm going to go back to the community and the NGO companies that are helping underprivileged kids like me that I can do good things for those children.*

For Nandipha, individual social mobility is perceived by her to bring access to a larger network of influence suggested by her mention of networking with *'bigger people'* and '*bigger companies'*.

Similarly Phozisa would like to help her community by creating a similar NGO to *Ithemba*. Nozuko dreams of writing a book, but "*it isn't just a book, but a book that can motivate others*', and would also like to start an organisation to help people to write 'properly' as she worries that social media is destroying people's ability to write, *"you know, like most people are in social networks which they don't have that proper writing so I want to help them to write."* Upholding 'proper' use of a language seems like a noble gesture from an 18 year old. Nozuko sees this as her contribution to the social upliftment of her community and her belief that her community members should uphold high standards, an illustration of their worth in her mind.

There is a tension between the participants' individual narratives (their hopes and dreams of security, greater access to spaces and places they are currently prevented from accessing due to poverty, and the acquisition of outward signs of success) and how this 'excess' would be shared with others through being the hero figure through philanthropy, with the chance to gain deeper meaning and purpose, feeling 'needed' and recognised by those they help and support. Given the adversities of their past lives, the desire to help others and be recognised as valuable is important in the construction of identity in these young people.

8.4. Different Choices - Breaking the Links

One of the quintessential ways the participants attempt to rewrite the narratives of their pasts and exercise agency is evidenced in their express desire to make different choices from those that township scripts and meaning-making systems have offered them in the past, indicating that the notion of choice and agency are discourses they strongly buy into. This was evident in the findings reported by Swartz et al (2012), in which township dwelling youth had either bought into the 'New South African Dream', a narrative of success through making different choices and exercising agency; or *Ikasi Style* which provides a sense of belonging and identification without social mobility or real opportunity, identified with sex, alcohol, music and recreation (Swartz et al, 2012). The participants of this study aspire to belong to the narrative of success and the New South African

Dream, which they believe is accessed through revising the meaning-making systems and scripts of the past and by setting "potential and elevated goals" (Swartz et al, 2012, p. 28). The participants attributed this desire to be new and different to the fact that they had witnessed the effects of the *"bad choices"* (Malusi) that the previous generation and many township youth of the current generation have made, referred to by Swartz et al (2012) as '*Ikasi* kids'. In stark contrast with the hardships and adversity they have personally experienced and witnessed, the participants of this study indicate that they feel they now have a chance to make alternate choices and, quite literally, live another life (Bradbury & Clarke, 2012).

The harshness of the participants' lives and the lack of parental protection have caused the participants to come face to face with difficult scenarios early in their lives. For those fortunate enough to have some support from the outside, such as *Ithemba*, some adolescents can make positive choices and alter the path of the lives they have come from. This is illustrated through the PIN Malusi tells me in which he describes his move from the safe environment of primary school with his grandmother watching over him into high school as difficult and admits he 'fell in' with the wrong crowd and succumbed to negative peer pressure. He provides a detailed background to the PIN:

> *I'd say I didn't make the right choices of friends when I arrived at the high school. … most of the boys in my neighbourhood, I used to hang around with them even though they are older than me, that was when I got that bad mind… those boys they smoking cigarettes on school premises, some of them they even bring alcohol on the school premises, they shout at teachers, you know they, they break all the school rules, they bunk the classes and they skip the, the, the school, they skip the school line, the school fences during break time and they don't come back after break.*

On the night of the story, Malusi, then only 16 years old, attended an *mketi* (a large welcoming party for male initiates (*Abakwetha*) returning from their *Ulwaluko*). As he had older friends, Malusi was allowed to be with the men, despite being a boy and uninitiated himself.

> *So I even went into that room and they tried to chase me out, so I went to call this old guy named Zedid, and this guy was armed, so he went back to the room and told each and every one that no one will chase me, if anyone chase me from that room he would go and speak to him first. So nobody wanted to chase me then… So I stayed in that room and we drank a lot of alcohol.*

The older man then asked Malusi to take a bag to his house and leave it in his yard.

> *So I took this bag, I didn't even search what's inside the bag and I just walked and I saw this police van coming, it was very far, if I knew what was in the bag or if I did anything I still have a chance to run away, but I knew that I did not have any knife, anything that was against the law so I just walked so slowly until the police reach me.*

The police searched the bag and found stolen goods and arrested Malusi. He stayed in prison for four days at the age of 16. After being interviewed by a social worker and appearing in front of a magistrate he was released.

> *When [the social worker] came back she told me that she believes my story and that this is the first time I got arrested and when I went to the court of law the magistrate told me that (uhh), I should never set my foot in prison again or else he would bring up this case again. And I told him that this is not a place for me, I will never set my foot here again.*

The event, which presents a 'conversion narrative' (Caldwell, 1983) (an epiphany, or a change in course and enables the construction of a counter-narrative), forced him to re-evaluate his life and choice of friends and made him realise he does have choices, and its up to him to make the right ones.

> *…I don't wanna hang around with the friends that I used to hang out with because I even got arrested for hanging around with the wrong guys, you know, so to me being arrested, I know it is a bad thing, but it taught me something about my life, it was a lesson in disguise.*

It is interesting how Malusi 'chose' to use the word 'lesson' instead of 'blessing', further indication of choice and agency. This incident represented a fork in Malusi's life-road, one where he could have chosen to become an '*Ikasi* kid', in the way to which Swartz et al (2012) refer, or follow the New South African Dream. Malusi was fortunate enough to have had support from an involved grandmother, and a father figure he respected that made him feel secure in his early life, thereby providing him with the self-worth to be able to navigate himself out of a potentially adverse and destructive situation and make conscious changes.

Phozisa displays a 'Good Girl discourse' through the inclusion of a photograph of herself on her timeline with the quotes: *"This is myself. I am now in grade 11. My parents raised me to be a responsible person and I am working on that. I am proud of who I am"*. She tells me that *"the way I*

see other children who are in the exact age I am in, I am better than them. Ja. Others they don't go to school, there's drinking and I don't."

> *…I believe in myself, I am confident… Independence is important to me. I like to be in control of my own life. (Phozisa)*

Nobomi had recently taken on the responsibility of looking after her 4 year old niece whose mother, Nobomi's 'cousin sister', was recently admitted to hospital with Tuberculosis. This child appears to have given Nobomi a purpose and an opportunity to provide someone else with the care and nurturing she never had herself; playing the maternal role she was never the recipient of in a form of self-recuperation.

> *This is my sister [referring to the photograph on her timeline of a little girl with the quote "changing lives"] whose child she, my sister gave her to me, but she didn't gave her to me, I took her from her because she did not care for her she didn't feed her or take her to school, so I do that. I took her to my home so that she went to school and I give her every, everything and I give her pap and tea.*



Figure 31: Nobomi's niece

When I asked her whether it was a challenge to look after her young niece she said she didn't find it a challenge at all, rather she enjoys looking after her and *"loved her a lot"*. Nobomi's voice lifts and she becomes more animated when speaking about the young girl. The chance of giving a child love and security, something that Nobomi herself never had as she has two alcoholic parents, has given her purpose, a chance to make a difference and an opportunity to rewrite a maternal narrative and in the process 'mother' herself.

Nandipha presents herself as a confident, outgoing, assertive young woman with a well-dressed, well-groomed appearance and a warm smile and laugh. She has self-pride and initially doesn't show vulnerability in our discussion. She describes herself as someone who loves shopping, watching movies, hanging out with friends and having a braai. In the second interview she acknowledges to me that she has very few friends and limited access to money as she and her grandmother live off her grandmother's social grant of R800 a month. This sad, connected moment is short lived, almost as if she allows herself to feel sadness and loneliness and 'wallow in her difficulty' it will swallow her up and she will lose her resolve to be strong and move forward. The need for Nandipha to project a life of hope and promise without her problems visible to the external world is extremely important to her.

> *I have always been out-going and able to speak easily and with confidence. I like to dress up and do my hair and look nice. I don't want my problem to be written on me (uh uh) [shakes her head] - I don't want when I walk there you get to be "Oooooh that child is so poor, oooooh, that child doesn't have." Noooo - I remember when I first met my friend, he was surprised when I told him that well if you knew it I don't even have both of parents, he was "you lying Nandipha! Cos its seems like you have everything - who you have this and that." So I'm that sort of a person - I get to fix myself with what I have. I will wear it and be beautiful. So I am just that person.*

Some of the participants express agency through questioning and challenging the dynamics and structures of power in their lives, displaying high levels of integrity and signs of resistance against the status quo in an illustration of the relations of disciplinary power (Foucault, 1979). Malusi had an experience in his matric year where he displayed high moral standards and was forced to question the ethics and morals of the leaders of his school. The teachers charged each matric student R200 to attend their matric dance and as the chairperson of the student representative council and a member of the school governing body, Malusi knew that most of this money was being taken by the

teachers for personal gain as the students had raised the majority of the money required for the dance through fundraising.

> *So I've found it (uh, uh), a lot of corruption happening, so I was not interested because I didn't wanna pay 200 for corruption, the teachers were taking that 200 for themselves - such criminal activities.*

On principle, Malusi did not attend the dance despite the teachers' attempts to coerce him to attend.

> *They tried [to get me to come], they even gave me a chance to come even if I didn't pay that 200 Rands. But that would have been worse because then all my friends would be losing their money and not me. Ahh, some, they went to that matric farewell and they didn't even pay a cent. It's because they are good friends with those teachers…*

Along similar lines, Siphosethu is critical of President Zuma, and while she reiterated much of the common media rhetoric and criticism, her criticism illustrated her dissatisfaction with the situation, which since the interview in 2012 has escalated markedly, thereby raising the possibility for political awareness and resistance by her and others in the future.

> *I think there is a lot of corruptions and nepotism, they just talk, they don't do anything, they just talk. You know like Nkandla, Zuma was the first president to be given money to build this fancy house, for me they spending all this money on themselves and not on the voters. On unnecessary things that are not going to make any difference in our lives. There are still people in shacks and Zuma lives in a palace. There are lots of things that need to be done in South Africa, but Zuma just uses the money to get things that are not necessary. Like having a big tank and the tap just lets everything out and the people get nothing.*

Nandipha explains how the fragility and temporality of township life has made her action driven, appreciative and grateful that she is alive and can exercise agency and act when so many others cannot.

> *Well… life is too short and you just have to like… do what you wanna do and just be grateful that you are living because there are people that …like we all don't wanna die and death is something that just comes and take your life away while you were still like "I'm gonna do this next year and do that". If you do have a chance to do a certain thing at a certain time I think*

it's very important for you to just do that thing. Don't wait for another day because you don't know what tomorrow has for you.

8.5. Conclusion

The animation that the participants displayed in discussing their futures, in relation to the despair often linked to their discussion of their past lives or description of their present circumstances, led me to believe that the participants are eager to make a distinct break with their past and focus firmly on the future, spurred on by their dreams and goals. Swartz et al (2012) found that there was reluctance among the participants in their study to link Apartheid or the government to the poverty they experience in their current lives and that references to Apartheid were seen as an "excuse for black people not achieving" (p. 31). The optimism of the participants in this study leaves no space for not achieving in the future, in their minds they are convinced that they will achieve success. The discourse of the 'New' South Africa (the word 'new' was used by the ANC in its founding principles of 1994 and has been a promise to the electorate ever since), and the sentiment of 'newness' and 'natality' (Arendt, 1998), represent a distinct shift from the past and are apparent in many parts of the participants' narratives. Swartz et al (2012) shared my unease with this unbridled enthusiasm: "[t]his double-edged sword, of high aspiration coupled with slim chances of success, is what we term 'the quiet violence of dreams' – a phenomenon that asks whether dreaming is itself a 'weapon of the weak'… or a weapon *against* the weak" (p. 32, italics in original).

Despite my concern of the participants' 'exaggerated archetypal hope' (Bradbury & Clarke, 2012), I was also hugely buoyed by their enthusiasm for the lives they envisage for their futures, without which South Africa would be immeasurably poorer. Andrews (2014) reminds us that "[r]eality is always narratively constructed; that is to say, it is grounded in temporality… bound up with a construction of the past, with one eye to the future" (p. 108). Brockmeier (2009) proposes that narrative imagination enables humans to exercise agency fuelled by the hope of what is to come, creating and providing meaning in their lives. Sartre (1966) refers to this as 'the not-yet' and Bruner (1986), metaphorically refers to 'possible castles'. "Our ability to locate a role for ourselves in the task of creating new realities rests with the narrative imagination – the bending of the arc of the moral universe, with our own two hands" (Andrews, 2014, p. 109).

The participants have two eyes firmly on their futures, their 'possible castles', with the effect of elevating them above the horrors and insecurities of their past lives, in which they and their parents experienced precarity (Squire, 2013), limited certainty, safety and trust in the world around

them, to a life of education and respectful employment in the hope that it will provide them with material security and the chance of a life way better than that in which they grew up.

Without imagination, the meaning we attach to any given experience is by definition limited to what we already know. It is the narrative imagination which gives us the possibility of extending the boundaries of our world, as we have lived them and as they will hold us in the future (Andrews, 2014, p. 109).

It is evident from their narratives that the participants intend that their individual dreams of success will extend into societal success resulting in a better life for all. In *Daring to Dream*, Freire (2007) believes that it is not possible for humans to live without dreams and argued that as long as people are fatalistic about their lives, attributing "the hunger and poverty that destroy them to destiny, to fatality, or to God", viewing the world through structural and deterministic eyes, "there will be little chance to promote collective action" (p. 4). A society only has a chance of upgrading its living conditions if people possess societal dreams, yearnings and desires. Overcoming a fatalistic understanding of our own situations and contexts requires "discovering the role of consciousness, of subjectivity in history" (p. 6).

> … Nor yet can dialogue exist without hope. Hope is rooted in men's (sic) incompletion, from which they move out in constant search – a search which can only be carried out in the communion with others. Hopelessness is a form of silence, of denying the world and fleeing from it (Freire, 1996, p. 72).

Chapter 9

Narrative Portrait: Aviwe

This chapter presents the third level of analysis, undertaken with just one participant. Aviwe's narrative portrait was specifically chosen for its ability to illustrate the theoretical constructs of constructionist intersectionality (Prins, 2006) and cultural creolisation (Glissant, 1989; Nuttall & Michael, 2000, Erasmus, 2001, Martin, 2006) displaying the ambivalence and tension between structural dimensions and the fluidity of culture. Through the engagement with theory and literature and the consolidation of the smaller stories, PINs (Wengraf, 2011) and momentous events (Pillemer, 2001) into a coherent, temporal plot, this chapter presents four temporal phases of Aviwe's life. The first phase presents his experience of his childhood and his early family relationships where, as a young boy, he experienced a sense of belonging, primarily through the love and acceptance of his mother, juxtaposed against experiences of alienation, which arose primarily as a result of abandonment by his father.

The second phase presents his life from around the time of his realisation of his sexual orientation as a gay man and the associated social alienation and judgment he experienced due to not conforming to the societal expectations of his community. Through the interaction with his family members and school peers he realised that he was positioned as an 'other', and as a result struggled to find belonging and recognition.

The third phase of his life thus far, from late adolescence, examines how Aviwe has learned to live with the tension between moments of recognition and misrecognition and find sites of belonging. Through experiencing isolated moments of recognition from his peers, which have enabled him to recognise himself as an *actional* (Fanon, 2000) person, he has been able to re-construct his identity. The moments of acceptance by and belonging from others, particularly his peers, even if just momentarily, have enabled Aviwe to imagine the possibility of a counter-narrative and the re-construction of his narrative identity through constructionist intersectionality. Through these moments of belonging it is evident that cultural creolisation, the insertion of new interpretations of culture and the adaptation of existing cultural scripts, is occurring in township life, albeit gradually and slowly. The fourth and last phase indicates, through the sites of belonging and moments of acceptance, Aviwe's engagement in the process of narrative imagination. Through imagination, Aviwe's mind has been opened to new ways of meaning-making that have enabled him to dream of a life of acceptance and belonging.

The narrative interview process provided Aviwe with the opportunity to conceive of his life as a whole story, and gain perspective through the consolidation of the smaller stories and events of his life through emplotment. This insight has provided him with new systems of meaning-making and an interpretive entry point into understanding the intersection between his individual psychological life and the social reality within which he lives (Hall, 2000).

Aviwe, a young, poor, black, gay man, living in a semi-urban township in the Eastern Cape, is subordinately positioned within the social structures of 'race', class, gender and sexuality, making him a 'victim' of racism, capitalism and patriarchy. Born in 1994, the year Apartheid was abolished in South Africa, the seventh of nine children, Aviwe lives in a house of two rooms with his mother, six siblings and two of his siblings' children, sleeping in a tinshack in the backyard. One of the few participants not directly affected by HIV/AIDS, Aviwe carries another stigma, the 'stigma of homosexuality'. Aviwe has experienced misrecognition and non-recognition (Taylor, 2004) throughout his life; misrecognised by others who consider him to just be 'going through a phase', and non-recognised by being completely disregarded, his existence not recognised, his presence often unacknowledged and ignored.

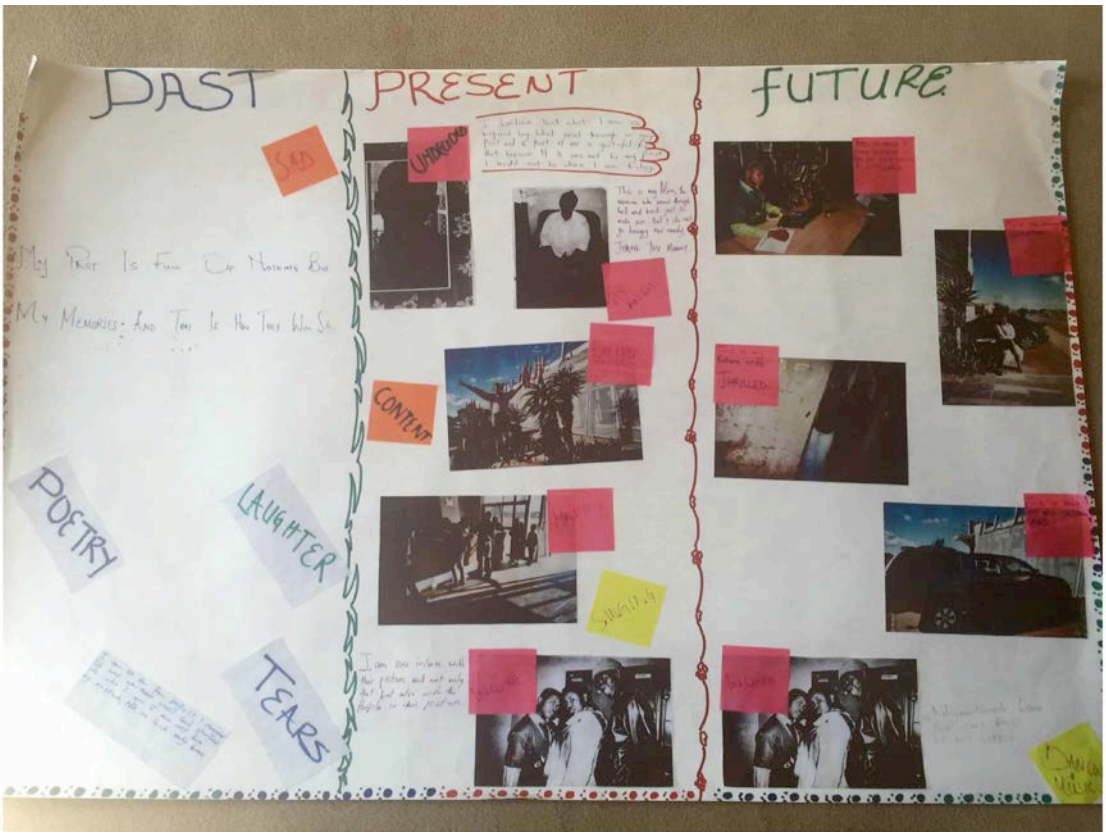


Figure 32: Aviwe's art timeline

The distribution of the photographs on his timeline, which are all focused on the present and the future sections, is indicative of Aviwe's difficult past and the fact that he is positioned as an 'other' within the social structures that dictate and prescribe the master social narrative and culture within which he lives. This suggests more optimism towards his future and negative, empty connotations with his past.

Aviwe arrives for all four of our meetings (the introduction of the project, the group session to create the art timelines, and two interviews) appearing enthusiastic and keen to engage and speak. He presents as a friendly, articulate and intelligent young man, taking a long pause after my introductory question to *"find the format to say [his story] in his mind"*. He appears to be looking forward to having a 'safe space' in which to construct his narrative and tell his story for the first time. We establish a good rapport early in our interaction, and unlike many of the other participants, he addressed me by my first name often in our discussion, establishing eye contact as he spoke, which engendered familiarity and enabled an open and connecting discussion. At 18 years of age, in late adolescence, Aviwe's narrative indicates that he is striving to consolidate his life in his mind, searching for 'wholeness, unity and integration" (Breger, 1974, p. 330), self-conscious of how he appears in the eyes of others (Erikson, 1968) and responding to this in an "ever evolving cycle of awareness – response – self-awareness" (Fay, 1996, p. 46) through his desire to belong.

9.1. Phase 1: Family Relationality

The Ideological State Apparatuses (Althusser, 2000) within which Aviwe lives of family, school and church subordinately position him within the hierarchical social power-grid of 'race', class, gender and sexuality. The ambivalent tales of both belonging and being alienated as an 'other' provide the content of his narrative and the construction of his identity.

Family is the origin of relationality, the original and central human social unit (Ankrah, 1993), and the foundation of the self-concept and the origin of relationality and identity construction. Aviwe succinctly summarises his family structure in the first minutes of his first interview, mentioning the most positive (his mother) and most negative (his father) influences in his life as the introduction to his narrative. In this form two polarised, 'split' imagoes are introduced; his mother embodies recognition and belonging through her love and acceptance, and his father embodies misrecognition and alienation through his abandonment and neglect, the antithesis of his mother. This is a similar story to many of the participants in this study as discussed in Chapter 6.

Ok, well, start with my mother. Yo, I love that woman. I love her a lot, she means the world to me, um, you know, growing up my dad left us so she has been there, she had made me who I am today, so, when I look back I just know that my mother, she's my hero, if I can put it that way, she is really my hero… The reason like I say I am close with my mother is like, when I'm with her I feel so much free… You know my mother has been there for me always… And you know, living with my siblings in the same house can sometimes be very stressful and irritating, but family you know, with its ups and downs. Sometimes I would just like to run away, I'd take my mother of course… and just be free, cos its like a lot of fightings, you know…

Aviwe often speaks of 'being free' and striving for freedom in his interviews, free from his family (other than his mother), free from the judgment of his community and free to live his life the way he chooses to. In this context 'free' refers to acceptance, recognition and no judgment, all of which he experiences with his mother.

Aviwe's mother sells sweets and cigarettes on the roadside in the township and has struggled since her husband left the family. Aviwe is aware of this and appreciative of his mother's hard work and support. He includes the following quote with a photograph of his mother on his timeline:

This is my mother, the woman who went through hell and back just to make sure that I do not go hungry or needy, THANK YOU MOMMY, My Angel.

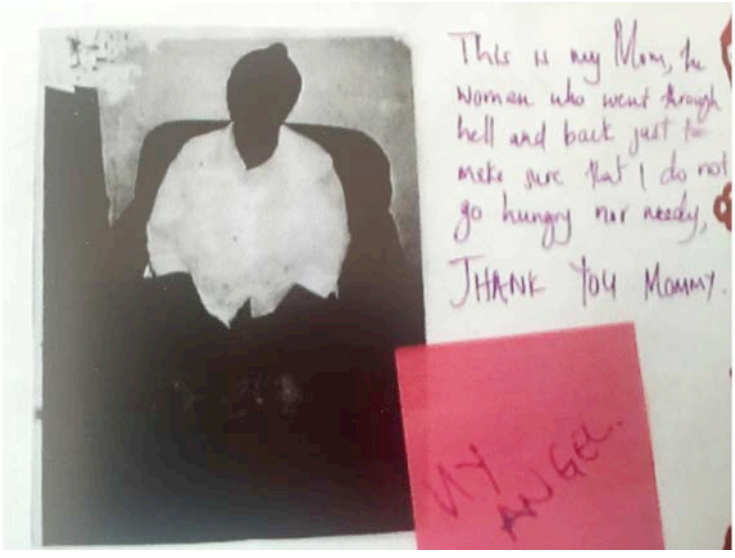


Figure 33: Aviwe's mother

Aviwe's mother was the first positive influence in his early life, her levels of protection are indicative of a mother who wanted to shelter her son from the judgment and discrimination his effeminate mannerisms engendered amongst his siblings and the outside world. She also compensated for the fact that Aviwe's father had left the family when Aviwe was so young (*"my mother was always there for me when my father left"*) and was aware of the fact that his father leaving hurt Aviwe deeply, resulting in him feeling abandoned, the beginning of the alienation and misrecognition he has experienced throughout his life.

> *The reason I don't like to think about this a lot, you know one of the things about [my father], I get angry and I still cry, cos I don't understand why he had to leave us. Like I remember when he left, he said he was going to find a job and, and that was the last time that I saw him. So a part of me wants to know why didn't he tell us that he was going - maybe he didn't trust me to tell me, maybe I was too young.*

Aviwe's link to being young as the reason that he couldn't be trusted with the information of where his father was going insinuates that he feels culpable for his father's departure. Often children are left to feel that it was their fault that parents left or died, exacerbating the alienation and feelings of loss (Bray et al, 2010).

His mother's protection and over-compensation was evident when Aviwe went to 'the bush' for his *Ulwaluko*, the male circumcision rite. His mother contacted his father to ask him to be involved as *"this is the time that a boy needs his father the most, you know"*. His father promised to buy him the things he needed for the month away and to be present for the parts of the rite of passage when a father's presence is required. But his father reneged on both parts of this agreement.

> *You know one of the things that angered me the most was that he didn't come… I was like for the first time in a very long time, number one, I'll see him, cos I hadn't seen him for a long time, like years, since I was in primary, ja, and he was like going to see me. I was excited to have him there for me at this time that you need a father.*

Luckily his mother had the foresight to know, given history, that his father would probably let Aviwe down, and in compensation, she purchased the things Aviwe needed for his month in the bush. Aviwe experienced this as further misrecognition from his father, causing him to no longer recognise him as his father, a response to his awareness of others' awareness, or rather non-awareness, of him (Fay, 1996).

> *…one of the things that hurt the most was why did he tell my mother not to buy this certain things cos he said he was gonna buy them and he didn't. Did not buy them and did not come. And I've been thinking about this that, like what if my mother used the money to buy other things and didn't buy the things that my dad said he was gonna buy, you know, and, I don't know. He's only my father in name now.*

As a result of the compensation and protection from his mother, amongst his siblings Aviwe is often perceived to be his mother's favourite. The fact that he is a diligent student gives her a 'legitimate' reason to favour him. This is the first, and most consistent, form of recognition in Aviwe's life, providing him with the foundations for the construction of identity and sense of belonging (Crites, 1986; Taylor, 2004).

> *…jealousy, you know, cos some of my sisters and brothers, some they drink and didn't take school seriously so its like when I ask something from my mother and my mother gives it to me, like I remember last year when I was asking like at school we were going out or we going to a museum and I was asking for money from my mother and my mother gives it to me and they will start talking that you always get money and when we ask for money we never get money, so its sometimes like I feel that I do not fit in.*

His mother's recognition of him is in stark contrast with his brothers' misrecognition, thereby causing him to infer that men are hostile and women are accepting, resulting in him identifying more with the female gender early in his life.

> *…even you know like for example today my bigger brother he was working and he build, he was building a wall, and then I was coming out of my house - and the other people that were helping him - they all turned and then they looked at me and my bigger brother was like - looking down, won't look at me, or greet me, like ok, why, it's like he's ashamed of me or something and I was like okay, and then I just greeted them , I passed. When my brother sees me in the street he doesn't greet me anymore you know. He's never been there for me, never been an older brother.*

Not being greeted in the street by his own brother for Aviwe is the ultimate form of misrecognition and alienation, affecting his gender orientation and identity construction. This misrecognition by his brothers shuts off the possibility of certain life roles in his life. Early in his life Aviwe was prevented from identifying with the roles of 'male', and 'brother', forced through the actions of others towards

him to identify with being a ~~'male'~~, (an erased male) (Derrida, 2000) and by implication, more female. His close relationship with his mother resulted in him identifying more positively with his mother's imago (McAdams, 1993) as opposed to his father's imago, which represents abandonment and disappointment. The combination of having male roles denied to him and his positive connection with his mother's imago results in a closer affinity to and identification with the female gender.

> *…why I like, like my clothes - more feminine, my voice and the way I walk and everything - I was like maybe I take from my mother.*

The contrast between Aviwe's mother's love, acceptance and her compensation for the 'lack' of love and acceptance from his father and his brothers creates an ambivalence in his life, a 'split' (very 'good' versus very 'bad') set of emotions to experience so young in life. This confusing repertoire of foundational meaning-making makes the construction of his identity problematic, resulting in him struggling to recognise him-'self' as a consequence of not being recognised by his male family members as an 'actional' person (Fanon, 2000) or 'person of worth' (Fay, 1996).

9.2. Phase 2: Aviwe's Structural Position as 'Gay'

> The experience of being rejected by the society that they were brought up to 'fit into' provokes an interrogation of their own identity, and, for some, a quest for roots: for a place they can claim as their own without challenge (Mama, 2006, p. 113).

The intersection of 'race', class, gender and sexuality and Aviwe's position at the extreme poles of 'otherness' and subordination in all of these structures is very apparent, he is 'epidermally' marked (Fanon, 2000). Aviwe appears to take great care of his appearance and his clothes, and speaks in a theatrical way with effeminate mannerisms, thereby outwardly positioning himself as gay and perceived by others to be 'feminine'. Aviwe has always felt like an outsider, different from his peers: *"I feel that I do not fit in… And like in my community I will say that like to even start with in my area, I'm like the only person that is like this…"* This misrecognition is linked in his narrative to the fact that he *"dates guys."* Aviwe's aspirations for how he would like to live his life do not fit within the master narrative and cultural norm of his community (Hammack, 2011). This misrecognition limits Aviwe's actions and agency within his community, imposing an identity as a member of a lesser-perceived group, hindering his identity construction and resulting in a fragmented rather than an integrated identity (Lindemann Nelson, 2001; Taylor, 2004).

Narratives are constructed and life-stories are told within the context of cultures and communities that afford their subjects with the basis from which to make meaning of their lives and describe themselves, thereby providing the foundation of their ideologies, narratives and identities (Fay, 1996). From a young age Aviwe has made sense of his experience as a gay person through the eyes of his community and their culturally accepted behavioural patterns (Hammack, 2011; Lindemann Nelson, 2001), thereby positioned as an 'other', and ostracised, alienated, and misrecognised (Tayler, 2004). A culture provides its inhabitants with directions on how to live, and Aviwe's life and desires fall outside of these guidelines and parameters (Fay, 1996). This rejection and invalidation results in Aviwe constantly searching for acceptance and recognition, but, as he acknowledges, this 'is a waste of time', as he hasn't been offered recognition on his terms, instead he has been nullified and excluded.

> *…I'd say 80% of my past is, is - me trying to fit in, me trying to be what other people want me to be, me trying - me just trying for the next person to look at me and say "Aviwe, you looking good, Aviwe can you be friends with me - so - my past has been trying to fit in mostly - you know - and - looking back it was, it was just a waste of time.*

Systemic intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; Prins, 2006), the intersection of multiple lines of discrimination and simultaneous positioning of subjects within various social structures and the politics of naming, is very apparent in Aviwe's story. His community refer to him as *"that one is not a full guy"*, verbally abusing him and openly hostile towards him, language being one of the most powerful tools in the entrenchment of homophobia and heterosexism (Msibi, 2012). In terms of social positioning, Aviwe carries the vestiges of Apartheid in his 'race' and class, is considered less of a man and more of a woman in terms of gender and lives a life that is judged to be 'wrong' as a result of his sexual orientation. He is reminded of his subordinate social positioning, specifically from the perspective of sexual orientation, on a daily basis, as is indicated by this PIN of the verbal abuse he experiences.

> *I remember - I had my cap - opened up and I was walking and then this other guy just screamed out my name across the street and there were a lot of people and it was a shock. And he screamed and then he started to throw tantrums at me and everybody was looking and he screamed "<u>you know what you are doing is wrong</u>" and everything, and I said to my friend, "lets just walk" and I left him screaming at me.*

Aviwe's specific mention of how he had his cap opened up or tilted up as young urban youth often do, perhaps infers that this is one of the reasons he attributes to being chastised, daring to draw attention to himself, living 'actionally' (Fanon, 2000) and expressing himself. The fact that the 'guy' screamed out his name across the street made the incident undeniably personally afflicting, witnessed by everybody looking at him as he was accused and judged of wrong-doing, resulting in feelings of embarrassment and being exposed, 'recognised' as a lesser or non-person. The 'guy' didn't just shout at him, Aviwe describes how he 'started to throw tantrums', highlighting the emotional abuse to which he was subjected. The fact that he could in no way defend himself against this abuse, choosing rather to 'just walk', indicates the limited "social capital" (Portes, 2000, p. 43) he has in his community. Aviwe doesn't feel socially empowered in any way, fearing to wear his cap in a certain way, positioned rather as an outsider and a dissident. As a result, he does not contest a confrontation from someone he perceives to be culturally included possessing social capital and asserting cultural authority. His only defence in this situation, his only expression of agency, is to remove himself from the situation. This incident demonstrates the power of language in its ability to alienate gay identified people causing misrecognition (Taylor, 2004) as was found by Msibi (2012) in his study of homophobia among queer youth in South African township schools.

Despite South Africa's explicit constitutional prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, in stark contrast with many of its neighbouring African countries where homosexuality is illegal, stigmatisation and harassment of gay identified people is still rife, particularly outside of the country's major metropolitan areas (Lock Swarr, 2004; Lane et al, 2008; Msibi, 2012). In the poor, conservative, patriarchal township environment in which Aviwe lives, homosexuality is not tolerated, and as a result Aviwe is 'othered' and ostracised through the accusation, *"what you are doing is wrong"*. This form of 'othering' and exclusion could be compared with the stigma suffered when the "vestigial sense of shame [is] felt when moments of sexual connection and release are marked by and evidenced" in being HIV positive or having AIDS (Cameron, 2005, p. 97). The social effects of homosexuality and HIV/AIDS are similar in that they are both associated with sexual 'nonconformity' and shame and as a result carry a social stigma.

On the few occasions that Aviwe has discussed the fact that he is gay with people they have negated his existence and misrecognised him through their insinuation that his sexual orientation is not legitimate, implying that his choices are not real, rather it is a phase he is going through.

> *This lady, one of the people that I talk to you know, and when I told her about me being gay and dating guys and everything and then she said its fine, but one day you will get over that*

and everything - when you grow older you see that you know it was just something that was when you were growing up you were just playing and everything…

A similar exclusionary and discriminatory effect was demonstrated by the counsellor present in Aviwe's first interview when he referred to gay people as *"you guys"*. In what I'm sure was intended to be an innocuous comment, it demonstrates just how often societal 'othering' is experienced by homosexual people, by both 'friendly' and hostile audiences.

These experiences undermine Aviwe's existence as a person of worth and value, resulting in misrecognition and hampering identity construction, as those around him reduce his life to a game that he will 'grow out of', diminishing him to the position of a 'child', inferior in the eyes of others. He describes how in his early teens this misrecognition made him desperate for someone to notice and validate him, but yet how futile this process has been due to being pre-subjected and 'interpellated' into certain social positions (Althusser, 2000), not able to gain access to and recognition from groups to which he aspires to belong. Aviwe describes how he was acutely aware of how people around him were accepted and recognised, but, by contrast, he never received this acceptance and recognition, always treated differently.

…when another person talks you will see that they will embrace what a person is saying, they comment. But when people talk to me then its like "Aviwe, ok we understand", but when another person is talking they gonna be like, "<u>wow</u>, seriously cool", Why can't they be like that with me? I'm like, ok, fine, I'm different, so they don't like me, so what, but at the very same time it really, really hurt me… When I got to high school then I saw that ok I'm being isolated as an outsider as I don't belong here… Its not like I'm rude or anything, they just excluded me, I was never part of a group.

Despite being recognised as a person of worth at primary school which he describes as *"his playground"*, a place where he made friends and achieved well academically, Aviwe's narrative became one of misrecognition when he went to high school as he struggled to make friends and found the academic programme more challenging, resulting in a hindrance to the construction of an integrated identity and feelings of isolation, alienation and exclusion. School, as an ideological state apparatus, entrenches the ideological structures that govern a society, positioning and controlling subjects' ways of being (Althusser, 1971), and institutionally replicating and embedding patriarchy and homophobia as found by Msibi (2012) in his study on homophobia.

I was ok, fine I have to go to high school. And when I got there I lost all my friends. When I got to high school all I wanted to do was go back to primary school. When I went to high school I felt like I don't belong here, maybe it was the school, it was hard. I have to work hard.

At high school Aviwe was ostracised for not taking part in the activities that other boys naturally took part in and for not conforming to the norms of a socially constructed male, perceived to be contravening socially informed gender scripts. This had the effect of alienating him from other men, labelled as *strange* and *different* resulting in him feeling like an 'other' and an outsider. He felt as though he didn't belong to being 'male' from the biological sex perspective, resulting in a fragmentation of the self and compromising his identity construction as he struggled to find fundamental human belonging in the binary of male or female. Aviwe struggled to make friends and find belonging in any group, as illustrated in the following quote:

…its like I've been hated, I've been misunderstood, cos I remember like at high school I only had one friend, and it was a girl, Sinepore, cos everyone else was like, we don't wanna be friends with you, you strange… Sine was my only friend, she used to go with me everywhere, we used to eat together during lunchtime - I thought maybe I'm blocking her view, how can I put it, like she has friends and I was not part of her friends, and I didn't have other friends, she was just my friend. So its like during breaktime I'll have to make sure that before we go to break I have to talk to her and you know when they ring the bell for breaktime we still together or else she will go to her other friends which are not my friends who find me strange.

From a gender perspective, Aviwe experiences "dominant gender binarism" (Henderson & Shefer, 2008, p. 16), where he is socially positioned as a woman, undermined and criticised for not being interested in the things boys and men 'should be' interested in, such as sport and women, an illustration of the subordinate social positioning of women and homosexuals within the structures of gender and sexuality.

…everybody else was like, we don't want to be friends with you, you strange - I was like, what does that mean? Like you always walking with girls, you don't play sport, like the guys used to say that I'm strange. And I'm like, ok, the things like you find like fun are not fun for me and that does not make me strange, it just makes me different. So I didn't have friends - I was like ok, fine, I'm different, so they don't like me, so what…

Aviwe's life as a gay man contradicts the predominant patriarchal, heteronormative discourse through which communities and individuals "assume identities and become subjects" (Weedon, 2004, p. 6). Patriarchal, heteronormative discourse is underpinned by the 'Have/Hold' discourse (Hollway, 1989) and the church's prescription of the marriage of heterosexual, monogamous couples who remain together in order to raise children. Despite being openly gay, in a demonstration of his need to conform to structural norms and master cultural narratives, Aviwe refers to heterosexual marriage and his 'need', as opposed to his desire, to be married and leave a legacy by having children.

Aviwe includes a photograph on his timeline of a girl with the comment *"This is my future wife. THRILLED…"*

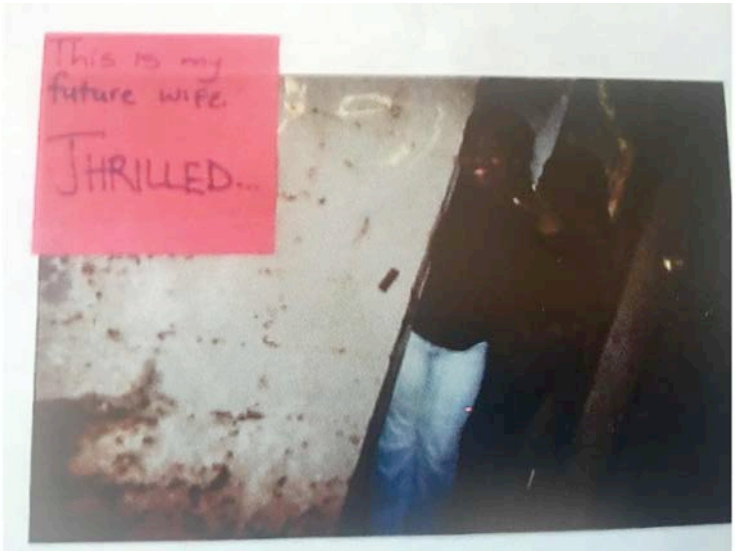


Figure 34: Aviwe's 'future wife'

In the first interview he enters into a discussion with himself highlighting the ambivalence, contradiction and confusion he lives with in trying to balance the social requirements of his community with his personal desires.

> *Adore, I adore her. You know one of the things is - I like the things I like [referring to being gay] but - sooner or later I have to settle down and start a family and that lady there, I don't know but she has, she has a way of giving to me, if I can put it that way, and, ja, I go for her. I don't believe it, believe it, but, for me personally, I don't, I wouldn't do it seriously, I wouldn't, but, I'll do it, but I don't want to do it ((laughs)) [in acknowledging the confusion], its just, so much to think of, cos yes, I'm going to be a great person, I'm going to be rich and everything,*

> *but I'm thinking so when I die, my legacy, my things, to whom I'm giving them to, ok, let me settle down and have my kids and have a normal family, you know, mother, father and the children, Ja, [getting married] will be living a lie though, but I'm also thinking about like sooner or later I have to think about it.*

In this dialogue, Aviwe introduces a number of contradictory sentiments; his feeling of belonging with women (*'Adore, I adore her'*), his need to conform patrilineally (*'my legacy'*), and his need to conform 'capitalistically' (*'I'm going to be a great person, I'm going to be rich and everything'*). The contradictory statements of *"I'll do it, but I won't do it"*, illustrate the contradictions he experiences in trying to assimilate societal ideals and norms, an attempt to conform with what society prescribes as *"the right thing"*, against living the life he desires and is comfortable with as a gay man.

The fact that Aviwe is considering setting aside his 'desires' as a gay man to conform to social structure and cultural scripts indicates his strong need for the inherently human qualities of belonging, recognition and validation (Fay, 1996). Aviwe's desire to 'fit in' and be socially recognised outweighs his individual, sexual desire. The words "*my legacy*" evoke social pressure and the need for recognition from others, as well as the patrilineal and ancestral ideologies of his community who value men as the origin of legacy through fathering offspring (Townsend, 2002; Mkhize, 2004; Richter, 2006). His aspiration to be married could also imply that he too believes being gay is a phase he will 'grow out of'.

Marriage could also be a way that Aviwe could 'atone' for being gay through conforming to social practice by 'settling down and having children' with a woman according to the predominant *'Have/Hold'* discourse (Hollway, 1989). Marriage and its gendered script dictated by religious dogma makes him feel as though his life is 'wrong' resulting in a fragmentation of his-'self' and hindering his identity construction:

> *I'll have to do the right thing, cos, its like, even when I read the Bible sometimes like ok, I know that, for me to have sex when I'm not married its not right so I'm like, OK, I have to get married so that I'll not feel like I'm doing something wrong or anything like that, you know.*

The possibility of marrying a man, despite the fact that it is legally possible in South Africa, has not entered his mind as a possibility in the conservative, heteronormative and homosexually intolerant environment in which he lives:

…that's why I feel that I'm, I'm sooner or later, I'll have to settle down and get married, because one thing is for sure, marrying one of these [points to photograph of a man] is out of the picture.

Aviwe acknowledges that his environment dictates that he disregards what he considers his 'real' or 'true' self. *"I've reached a stage where I can tell myself that, like, around my community and everything, I'm not living for myself"*, resulting in him often hiding and living a lonely, alienated existence.

Most likely as a result of being ostracised and excluded from his community, and in an effort to claim some 'actional' status, Aviwe distances himself from his fellow black community members who he feels have misrecognised him, and aligns himself with a new 'in-group' (Taylor & Moghaddam, 1994) - English speaking, white people. This new 'in-group' represents the 'other' from his own black, poor, fellow community members; his distancing from blackness is evident in a number of ways. The most evident is in how Aviwe chooses to speak English, he appears to make an effort to enunciate his words without a hint of an isiXhosa accent, markedly different from the other participants. He ignores the counsellor present in the interviews, answering the counsellor's questions, posed in isiXhosa, directly back to me in English, avoiding eye contact with the counsellor. This distancing from his community is interpreted as a defence against the misrecognition and 'othering' he has experienced from his community, forcing him to seek belonging and identification elsewhere.

9.3. Phase 3: Sites of Belonging

While social structures attempt to control and influence Aviwe's life, often causing judgement and alienation from his community, within these structures there are occasions where he is able to exercise agency, control and choice, through expressing his difference as opposed to hiding and conforming in a dialectical demonstration of the relation, as opposed to the object, of power (Foucault, 1979; Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982; Flyvberg, 2001). One expression of his difference is the effort he puts into the way he dresses and how he uses lip balm; pink, strawberry lip balm at that! *"You know when I put it to my mouth, it will just glow!"*

I sewed these patches on [to my pants] to look different - the truth is, guy's clothes, I wear them, but, ja, I like the [sighs] you know, the, the difference, ja, its like when I'm wearing my clothes I want to feel comfortable in them, so its like, for me to feel comfortable in my clothes it

has to be something feminine in my clothes… I like my fashion sense, like its feminine… when I take my lip balm out, my brother would like say, "why don't you buy some Zambuk or Vicks?

This external assertion of his gay identity, demonstrated through his appearance, is an expression of what he believes his 'real' and 'true' self is, a display of agency.

Aviwe has a wire and beaded rose in the possessions in his memory box and when I curiously ask him who gave it to him, he answers, *"hooo, no, its nothing fancy behind the rose, just that you know, growing up I have never pampered myself, you know its something, and I bought this rose for myself!"* This illustration of a moment of freedom, the fact that he values himself enough to consider himself worthy of 'pampering', made so much more meaningful as it is a red rose with its symbolism of love and romance, is an indication of agency and identity construction.

Despite the isolation and sense of alienation Aviwe experienced at high school, he was an involved student and found areas in which he could belong, and be recognised, particularly by the teachers, similarly to the way he is a favourite with his mother. This had the effect of further alienating him from his peers as the groups of 'children' and 'teachers' were pitted against each other, an 'in-group' and 'out-group' from each perspective.

It's like everything I want to be a part of. Like at school if visitors come then one student should stand up and look after them. That was me. Like everything that happened at school I want to be a part of. I became a favourite with the teachers. It was ok, cool that's fine with me, a part of me was like think about the good things that have happened in your high school like, even though you were hated. If Sine is not there then I go to sit with the teachers or I just go to the SCO [Student Christian Organisation].

Aviwe's sense of belonging and recognition was further strengthened at school through community and social work, and receiving prizes and awards. By doing good work for others gives him a sense of being needed and recognised, providing purpose and meaning.

I was involved in Youth for Christ which is this organisation that help HIV and AIDS orphans. I was also involved in an environmental club which made me known for my school because I went for a competition and I came second and won R4000 for my school. Ja, and they bought blankets and irons for them last year, so it was very cool… I also got a certificate for maths in grade 10, grade 11 and grade 12.

Despite all the hardship and alienation Aviwe has experienced at school, he has always had confidence in his intellect and the ability to achieve academically. This has enabled him to face those that undermine and alienate him with a sense of self worth (Taylor, 1994, Msibi, 2012).

> *When people look - like they are sick of me, like "okay, you looking at me like that, you 18 and you doing grade 8 and I've passed my matric and I'm also 18 so - I'm I'm too far in a way for you, for me to mind you, so I'll just walk my way.*

Aviwe also refers to this origin of self worth when he speaks of his brothers who *"dropped out of school and [he] continued."* The confidence he attains from his achievement at school and not having dropped out like his brothers provides him with recognition and belonging to 'the clever camp' (Msibi, 2012) versus the errant *ikasi* (township) camp, a stark division evident between township adolescents as was distinguished in the study by Swartz et al (2012).

As part of his narrative and system of meaning-making, Aviwe, potentially defensively, but identity constructively, goes so far as to express relief that the *ikasi* camp rejected him, referring to how if he had become friends with them perhaps he *"may have also fallen to the things that they do",* referring to smoking and drinking alcohol, 'bunking' school and underperforming academically:

> *But at the very same time I thank them for discriminating against me because if I was part of their group I would have not achieved what I have. Most of them they didn't finish their matric… I can see that they have helped me to become the person that I am today because I don't care what other people say about me, I don't care anymore what they think of me and part of me thinks cos maybe if they had befriended me and they liked me, maybe I wouldn't be where I am today like I am [referring to passing matric].*

This dichotomy of attaching meaning to either being an achiever or an '*Ikasi* kid' is a mechanism of attaining belonging to a particular group and constructing identity (Swartz et al, 2012). While he engages with this schema as a dichotomy, in reality it is much more 'messy' than this. From an identity perspective, Aviwe is able to justify the misrecognition he was subject to from these peers through his achievement, but knows that the rejection came from them first providing a somewhat 'hollow' identity victory. I suspect that by focusing on these peers' transgressions of smoking, drinking and bunking school, he is able to justify and feel more comfortable about his 'transgressions' as a gay person and thereby 'recognise' himself as a person of worth and moral agency.

Despite school being one of the sites where Aviwe was most aware of his difference and alienation, it was also one of the places in his life where he was able to develop a sense of belonging and strengthen his sense of self and self-confidence through comparing himself positively to others. As Taylor (1994) notes, "in a system of hierarchical honor, we are in competition; one person's glory must be another's shame, or at least obscurity" (p. 54). This "system of hierarchical honor" (Taylor, 2004) provided Aviwe with a sense of belonging and recognition at school and the experience of being in an 'in-group', moving the previous 'in-group' who he had strived to be a part of, to an 'out-group' in his mind, and in the process enabling a re-construction of his identity (McAdams, 2011).

Aviwe displays his inclination to focus on the positive in the summary of his experience at high school by concluding, *"I realised that things weren't going to change, I'm not going to get more friends, but with my studies I was doing well, which is what I came to school to do."* This "system of hierarchical honor" (Taylor, 2004, p. 54) is an inherent part of Aviwe's system of meaning-making, providing him with the recognition, from himself and others, as a person of worth thereby enabling a sense of belonging and narrative identity construction.

Despite its conservative, overtly anti-gay dogma, church is the area in Aviwe's life where he has friends who love and accept him and where he experiences recognition and belonging most strongly. "*My friends, mainly they're from church."* While Aviwe is not able to be open about his sexuality within the church setting, he finds a greater sense of belonging in this space than in any other sphere of his life. This raises an interesting tension, the contradictory nature of spaces and meaning-making repertoires. A place like 'church' represents a closed space, but in Aviwe's life it offers belonging, illustrating the malleable nature of inclusion in social spaces, provided one abides by the 'rules' of the institution. Aviwe offers the church commitment from an attendance perspective. "*I go Tuesdays, Thursdays, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, ja, so its like church, church, church."* Aviwe is also an active member of the church choir and considers himself a talented singer and performer, and describes one of the things he loves most about church is that he is able to sing and perform and be recognised for something he loves and he believes he is good at. Aviwe is a committed and contributory member of the church congregation, playing and excelling within all the institution's rules and guidelines for inclusion, except one, homosexuality, which he tries to conceal and they choose not to overly notice.

> *Shoo! I'm part of the church choir; I'm part of the worship team… I'm doing something that I love, you know, cos, like singing is my gift, so to actually get a chance to sing in that kind of platform is very, very overwhelming… This weekend we gonna have a concert, the gospel explosion, here let me show you a poster - See I'm singing there, the one in the blue jersey.*

Church, unlike any other site in his life, is a place where he takes on a leadership role and gets to feel that people need him, look up to him, respect and want to emulate him. These are feelings that he doesn't experience in any other sphere of his life; he is able to feel like a person of worth and value through the recognition of others in his role as a leader.

> *I'm like a leader - and they don't just put anyone, the authorities, they don't just put anybody to be a leader - there are people that look up to me and see me as like a figure, like ok Aviwe is my role model - when they look at you its like they think "I want to be like you one day, I want to do the things you do one day." So every time, even if I don't want to go to church, I'm like, "Oh, my Lord, if I don't go to church, what is this person going to say, cos the person expects me to be in church, so ja, like having people under you that you have to take care of its very, very, very nice.*

Aviwe attributes his ability to lead, and be confident and assertive to the training and experience he has had at church providing him with recognition and an endorsement of his self-worth, and a belonging at church from the perspectives of both a physical and psychological space.

> *When I started to become a leader you know, at church, and then we had to run meetings, and I realised - you have to show a certain like level of confidence and everything like that and we were trained and groomed, so that's where I got it from. When you come to my church you will see a different Aviwe, cos when I'm in church, I'm the boss! Its like, ok, this is my zone, this is what I am good at, its like the moment I enter, "Oh, Lord!" I forget about every problem that I have.*

Aviwe's intellect and desire for knowledge, an area of his life in which he feels confident and capable, also draws him to church.

> *…also at my church they teach - So that's one of the reasons I like my church a lot cos they teach us a lot about the Bible, about the things that happen so its like, its not only about church, but its also about getting the information - which is very cool.*

Aviwe is particularly close to the pastor at his church who he refers to as *"Rev"*. This man fulfils a paternal role in Aviwe's life, lacking in his home life and family constellation. *I spend most of my time at church, sometimes Rev will say "Aviwe you have to go home". And I'm like yes Rev I'll go, like in time - Cos I know like when I get home, ok I'll go to my room and I'll just sit.*

Along with school and education, Althusser (1971) refers to religion as an Ideological State Apparatus, producing an ideological position within a power-grid that socially positions subjects according to the structures of 'race', class, gender and sexuality. A gay man within a conservative religious setting is compromised within this power-grid thereby negatively affecting his sense of belonging and identity construction. From a traditional, sovereign power (Foucault, 1979) perspective his pastor is very controlling and manipulative, critical of Aviwe's life and feminine dress style. But from another, more disciplinary power (Foucault, 1979) perspective, the two men appear to have an open relationship where they are both able to display a modicum of honesty and openness. Despite the pastor being the more sovereignly powerful, father-figure, Aviwe appreciates the time and recognition the pastor affords him, enabling him to feel like a person of worth. In a display of agency and constructionist intersectionality (Prins, 2006), Aviwe doesn't just capitulate to the pastor's demands. His pastor is also afforded an opportunity to become more accepting of a person who challenges his beliefs and the rules of the church in an illustration of cultural croelisation (Erasmus, 2001)

> *I've got a very close relationship with my pastor, and um, when he didn't understand me, then instead of talking behind my back and everything like the schoolkids, he called me and he ask me to tell him about myself. Like, so I told him and then he was like ok, we need to change this, and this, change this. He ask me about, why I like, like my clothes - more feminine, my voice and the way I walk and everything - He ask me like, one of the questions he ask me was, do I date guys? And I was like, ok, that, question, um, is a little bit personal. He told me I can tell him anything. And I said, "Ja, I do date guys." And then he was like, ok, how about you do it like this, do not date guys, they are… and he started to counsel me, like so many questions. And then he started to advise me that there is nothing wrong with that, but if you change this and change that, and I was like ok, ok, and then I was happy.*

Aviwe's relationship with his pastor illustrates the dialectical relationship of disciplinary power, and how through language power becomes a relation as opposed to a property, with the capacity for push-back through dialogue and negotiation resulting in productive change and acceptance from both parties (Foucault, 1979; Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982; Weedon, 2004).

While Aviwe says he has not told his pastor that he is still seeing his boyfriend, he gets the sense that "*sometimes now I think he understands, he hasn't asked me again. If he does I will say, "Ok, Rev, we have a problem. I can't do that [break up with my boyfriend]"*. This indicates that despite the controlling nature of the church rules and his pastor's attempts to control his sexual orientation,

Aviwe is able to push back against them through mobile and temporary points of resistance (Flyvberg, 2001). It also indicates how the pastor has become more accepting and open to change, even though not explicitly shown or stated.

> *[My pastor] has accepted the fact that I like to wear feminine clothes now - and the fact that I date guys, that one - we talk about it cos, you know, when we talked about it and then he told me to change that cos its against the will of God and everything, but I can't do that. I was like how on earth am I going to do that cos you know when you've done something for a very long time, you know for me its hard to just walk away from it and just leave it.*

The acceptance and recognition Aviwe receives from his pastor, despite it being conditional on Aviwe not openly 'dating guys' and abiding by the social contract of the institution of church, provides the first indication and possibility for Aviwe to perceive of and envisage a life that accommodates his socially conflicting desires (being gay and being an active church congregant). Aviwe's acceptance and belonging at church enables him to include the imagoes (McAdams, 1993) of 'singer', 'performer', 'leader', 'scholar', 'friend' and 'son of a father' (his pastor) in his identity construction as opposed to the labels he endures in his community of ~~'male'~~ and 'gay'. This new system of meaning-making enables the construction of counter-narratives where identity is not just a matter of naming and labelling, but rather one of narrative possibilities and narrative imagination (Andrews, 2014), including the story of the singer, the story of the leader, the story of a friend, roles and stories that have previously been unavailable to Aviwe. The hold of social structures is disrupted through the ability of being able to perceive of one's life differently, with the effect that culture is creolised and new ways of interpretation and meaning-making are conceptualised (Nuttall & Michael, 2000).

"*When I am at church I have people that love me, understand me, people that want to be next to me, people that want to be around me."* Aviwe is able to conceptualise of a life of recognition, acceptance and belonging underpinned by the acceptance and recognition of his pastor, a man he values. "*He's my best friend, you know we sit and talk for hours, you know, we walk together*."

Aviwe's ability to precariously balance the conflict between religion and homosexuality within a conservative, patriarchal, South African township demonstrates that he has managed to narratively construct a positive identity through the recognition of his mother, his pastor and his friends at church, despite the misrecognition he has experienced from the rest of his family, particularly his brothers, and the greater community. Despite his prejudicial positioning within the social structures

of ‘race’, class, gender and sexuality, he manages to exercise agency through the construction of a counteracting narrative (Squire, 2013) of acceptance and belonging. Even although he is not able to be openly gay at church by showing external affection to a man, he is still able to be included and belong in this space. Despite his pastor being open about his opposition to Aviwe *“dating guys”*, Aviwe still feels accepted and loved by him providing him with the recognition and sense of belonging to enable identity re-construction.

In a further demonstration of agency, Aviwe also manages to balance his life through the acceptance and recognition from his gay friends who do not attend church and like to party and drink. As a result of his commitment to the values of his church, Aviwe does not drink alcohol. His gay friends seem to accept this thereby enabling him to be positioned in both lives; church and the gay party scene. This illustrates how Aviwe simultaneously belongs, yet doesn’t traditionally belong (a gay man at church and a Christian observant man at a gay club), in both of these contradicting spaces. Yuval-Davis (2006) describes belonging as “an emotional attachment, feeling ‘at home’ and feeling safe” (p. 197). According to this definition, Aviwe simultaneously ‘belongs’ in both worlds from a narrative perspective and yet doesn’t belong in either world (Yuval-Davis, 2006) from a traditional social structure perspective, an indication of how the process of cultural creolisation is made possible through narrative possibilities and constructionist intersectionality.

> *…there are things that I don’t do naturally, you know, like I don’t like to, I don’t drink - I don’t, you know, do that, and sometimes I know if I’m with my other friends not from church, maybe it’s a Friday, and they say, “come let’s go out partying” and then one of the things they always say is “you will not drink alcohol, we’ll buy you a colddrink, but come just to get the vibe and everything”.*

Yuval-Davis (2006) reminds us that belonging reflects emotional investments and a desire for attachment. This is illustrated in Aviwe’s stories and how his attachment to his church through the congregants and his pastor, and his emotional investment and attachment to his gay friends at a gay club provide him with a sense of belonging in both spaces. This belonging is precarious though and conditional on following the ‘rules’ in both spaces; not being openly gay at church and accepting that people drink at a club. Given Aviwe has suffered so much rejection and misrecognition in his life he knows this ‘acceptance’ and belonging to these contradicting places could dissipate quickly as they are *“too good to be true.”* While Aviwe experiences acceptance and agency in the church environment, there is a sense of fragility in these moments; “there are strong intersections that exist between different forms of identification and discrimination to keep sexism and homophobia in

place" (Msibi, 2012, p. 527), culture and religion being two primary mechanisms that entrench these ideologies. As a result Aviwe has to be secret about his gay relationships, as, as much as his pastor may turn a 'blind eye', there is a chance that he may not, and as a result, prevent Aviwe's belonging to and recognition from this important institution in his life.

The early recognition from his mother, the sense of confidence derived from academic achievement, the sense of belonging from his church and the support, albeit somewhat controlling and manipulative, and interaction he experiences from his pastor as a father figure have afforded Aviwe a sense of belonging and psychic strength despite the ostracisation and alienation he experiences, from his community. As a result, Aviwe has managed to avoid a complete "collapse of the ego" (Fanon, 2000, p. 206), and a disintegrated self, a form of severe psychological damage, that occurs in the face of severe alienation and misrecognition, and is able to demonstrate a form of agency, the ability to be an "*actional* person" (Fanon, 2000, p. 206, emphasis in the original), vital in constructing an integrated identity.

Aviwe narratively describes two influential events that have significantly contributed to the construction and re-construction of his identity despite the alienation and misrecognition he has experienced throughout his life. These two PINs (Wengraf, 2011), discussed below, were significant as they were the first two occasions in Aviwe's life where he was recognised and accepted as a person of worth by his peers, fellow human beings of his age that he values and from whom he desires recognition. Previously he has been recognised from the generation above him (his mother, his teachers, his pastor), but never from his own generation, the group that have been most critical and alienating of him. These experiences, in which he was accepted as an openly gay man, enabled him to accept him-'self' for who he is through the acceptance and recognition of others. Through the awareness of this acceptance he is able to imagine a counter-narrative from the misrecognition and alienation that dominates his 'past' narrative. As a result of this, his narrative identity takes on a positive turn of construction and productivity as his life story projects hope and promise through actual experiences. "I am human because I belong, I participate, I share" (Tutu, 2015, p. x).

9.3.1. PIN Number 1: Aviwe's *Ulwaluko*

Aviwe describes how he had been extremely apprehensive about attending his *Ulwaluko*, which involves spending a month with people from his community who, in the past, had often verbally abused him for being gay. In Aviwe's social environment he feels less judged and more included by

women, so the prospect of being in male-only company for a month and the associated potential for verbal and physical abuse made him very anxious.

> *I got really scared, I don't wanna lie, I got really scared and a part of me wanted to run away… on my way to the bush, hey, you know we were driving, a lot of thoughts were going through my mind, I remember I wanted to jump off the van… I have never been to a place like this, so male, I mean you go this side, male, that side also male. I have never been to such a place where there's just males and secondly they coming to kill me here, to, to, to torture me here and I was like how am I gonna survive?*

Contrary to his expectations, his fellow initiates were inclusive and friendly, and Aviwe felt safe and comfortable and included.

> *We all brothers, its like we all coming from the same family - ok, I'm different, but they all here for the same thing, so instead of like discriminating or like being "you go there" we were all united… I got to make friends (uhh), like guys that, I was like ok, if I was at home this person wouldn't be my friend but there I made friends, I got to relate with people that don't normally talk to me and it was very fun, it was very fun.*

This time away, separated from everyday life and experiencing acceptance by and recognition from his peers provided him with the opportunity to narratively envisage his life differently enabling him to consider and reflect on the possibility of a counter-narrative or "counteracting narrative" (Squire, 2013, p. 42). This incident illustrates 'constructionist intersectionality', where the intersectionality of positions within social structures provides narrative opportunities as opposed to a set of labels and names, enabling the formation of new narratives and meaning-making systems (Prins, 2006). Aviwe was able to push back against patriarchal, heterosexual normative discourse and express himself openly, and in the process exercise power and agency, and gain acceptance from those that had previously discriminated against him (Foucault, 1979; Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982).

> *Actually neh, one of the reasons I like [my ulwaluko] the most is that one of the things they used to say is that when you there its your territory, its like you can do whatever you like… And I was like "deal with it", after I got my power, after I realise that this is my place, I own it as much as anybody else does.*

Aviwe had never experienced an opportunity of being able to 'do whatever he liked', acting as an adult man, rather his life had always been constrained by having to try and fit in and suppress his exuberance and homosexuality. For the first time he was able to 'be himself', able to do the things he loved and was confident to do, such as sing, entertain people and teach Bible studies.

> *I realise that this is my place, I own it, you know and that's when I realise that I can do anything I wanna do, you know… I think one of the reasons why they liked me the most is that I was the entertainer, cos like they will sit and I will come with my Bible and then we will be sitting down and then I'll teach them the Bible or I'll just come and tell them stories and everything, so I'll say that's one of the reasons. And, oh Lord, I was, I was 'me'!*

This opportunity to do what he liked and freely express himself externally was also experienced in the way he wore the blanket that the *Abakwetha* (initiates) wear as clothing.

> *…you know, you know when you here you have to wear clothes and everything, but when you there - I mean ((smiles)) you can do anything you want to do ((laughs)). So its like you just take your blanket - if you like wanna design you something then you just design it, you take your blanket and you cut it and you design it, so it was very fun.*

In an illustration of how culture is a 'contested space' (Fay, 1996), this simple incident of agency and expression demonstrates cultural creolisation (Glissant, 1989; Nuttall & Michael, 2000, Erasmus, 2001, Martin, 2006). The blanket represents the traditional, but it is cut and designed into something that 'creolises' it and makes it into a new form, a third space, through a new meaning-making system (Nuttall & Michael, 2000; Martin, 2006). While in a different context, Bogatsu (2002) noted how cultural creolisation is expressed through the adaption of clothing that was previously associated with migrant labour into something cool that young people aspire to wear. Young people wearing these clothes were fully cognisant of the cultural statement the adapted clothing makes in "celebratory representations of what were once framed as oppressed images" (p. 8).

The irony of a gay man being 'free' to express himself through clothing, socially considered to be a 'female' domain, within a patriarchal environment, such as a male circumcision ritual, illustrates the relation of power available through constructionist intersectionality (Prins, 2006). This incident of being accepted as one of the men in this all male environment, as opposed to one of the women by the men in his community, enables Aviwe to perceive of him-'self' as one of the men irrespective of his sexual orientation, allowing him to consider a different narrative for his life going forward.

Considering the physical nature of male circumcision as central to *ulwaluko*, by definition there is emphasis on the phallus as the central physical part of the rite. While not the traditional purpose of the practice, which historically has been focused on group learning and entry into the ancestral line of adult men, it has been argued that this rite of passage inscribes and entrenches masculinities and hyper-masculinities through its emphasis on being strong, resisting pain and 'becoming a man' (Sev'er, 2012). Aviwe did not experience his *Ulwaluko* in this way, thereby permitting him, as the antithesis of a hyper-masculine man, to be able to gain access to the role of 'man' within his identity through new perceptions of being recognised as a man. Aviwe remarked that in fact some of the most physically strong, 'hyper-masculine' men suffered and struggled more than less masculine men, like him, through the physical circumcision process. This enabled the opening up of another meaning-making system for Aviwe, and encountering new ways of being a man, with new narrative possibilities of acceptance.

> *I think it depends on how sore you are emotionally, not really physically, cos I saw guys that had muscles and everything and we had just come from the same thing and you see how they are walking, like crawling and then you see skinny guys like me and they just fine, walking like nothing has happened.*

Aviwe's reference to 'how sore you are emotionally' could be an insinuation that the alienation, exclusion and the negative emotional issues he has experienced have provided him with more emotional strength than men who have not experienced adversity, alienation and hardship. Teeming with numerous ideological ironies; sexual orientation, hyper-masculinity, religion, and gender, this story illustrates how, at certain moments in time the social axes of power can shift; in this case where men have been removed from their communities and away from women, feeling physically and emotionally vulnerable, agency can result in the intersection of subordinate social positionings; a gay man using a Bible to entertain heterosexual men who historically have discriminated against him at a patriarchal ritual.

As suggested by Henderson & Shefer (2008) in their study of a gay Xhosa man, the acceptance and sense of belonging that Aviwe experienced at his *Ulwaluko* could suggest a social change and an opportunity for gay men to participate equitably with all men in traditional, patriarchal rites of passage, an illustration of cultural creolisation (Glissant, 1989; Michael & Nuttall, 2000; Erasmus, 2001) and constructionist intersectionality (Prins, 2006) through the imagination of narrative possibilities.

However, despite connecting with and being accepted by the young men from his community during their time away at their *Ulwaluko*, when they returned home Aviwe's peers resumed their old ways and were dismissive of him. This indicates how at a certain moment in time, the intersection of various social positionings produces the opportunity for agency and power, and yet in another moment this agency and power dissipates, as was the case when these men returned to their communities. The only difference between the time at his *Ulwaluko*, and life back at home is the presence of women. One of the reasons the men may have reverted to their discriminatory ways may be that through accepting a gay man in the presence of women may undermine their masculinity. The physical discomfort of the rite may also have been a bonding experience then lacking on their return home.

The alienation Aviwe experienced on his return didn't seem to bother him, he replied in four words to me asking how his peers were on their return, *"back to the same"*. The opportunity Aviwe has had to experience acceptance and envisage a story and system of meaning-making for himself, enabled him to perceive that his life could be different through the acceptance of his peers, irrespective of its brevity (Prins, 2006). This provided him with the opportunity to construct a counter-acting narrative (Squire, 2013) for his life.

9.3.2. PIN number 2: Camp Organised by *Ithemba*

The other significant event in Aviwe's life that enabled self-acceptance, and self-recognition, permitting him for the first time to say the words, *"I am gay"*, was his experience at a camp organised by *Ithemba*, which he had returned from just before his second interview.

> *I think I've reached the stage where I can say that I am gay, you know, without having to like, be ashamed… A part of it had to do with the camp that we have just been to.*

Eight adolescents, two male and six female, from *Ithemba* attended a camp for five days on a gamefarm in the Karoo, thereby providing a spatial shift from the semi-urban township in which the adolescents live. Aviwe describes the camp as the time when:

> *I just came out of my shell, like [snaps his fingers and raises his voice], Out!*

The word 'out' is an interesting choice of word, indicative of his 'coming out', accepting his sexuality and no longer hiding it from the world.

Kim: Did you come out of your shell more so than when you went to the bush?

A: Yo! Yes. Like I'll do anything, you know - dance - you know, anything. That's one of the things that got me to enjoy the camp the most. You know, I was free. Like at the camp, you know I could see who I am, you know, how happy I can be. I did not want to come back.

Similar to his *ulwaluko,* the acceptance of himself was as a result of his peers' acceptance of him. He was able to live the life that his *ulwaluko* had made possible for him to envisage, but this time in a heteronormative space in which both men and women were present. The historically dominant social positioning within the structure of gender, the heterosexual male, was unusually in the significant minority and as a result, subordinately positioned, amongst six females and one homosexual male, in an encapsulated space for a week. This shift in the 'normative' power-grid, once again provided the possibility for Aviwe to perceive a counteracting narrative (Squire, 2013) of acceptance and belonging in a heterosexual, inter-gender environment. For Aviwe, the most influential shift was interacting with the only other man present, particularly when they were 'forced' together through the circumstance of being the only two males at the camp. Malusi, the epitome of a socially constructed 'man's man, a 'hyper-man' and Aviwe, the openly effeminate 'anti-hyper-man', shared a room, as discussed in Chapter 7 from Malusi's perspective who referred to it with similar significance, levels of acceptance and reflective change in himself and his views of gay people. Aviwe describes the experience as "*life changing*"; being afforded acceptance and recognition from Malusi, as *"one of the boys"*, amongst the girls.

He described the prospect of sleeping alone in the same room with a strong, heterosexual man, as a threat for him, both physically and psychologically.

Ja, and my roommate - this guy Malusi, ja, he was my roommate. You know, at first I felt that its gonna, like the sleeping time was going to be, one miserable time for me, you know.

But he was pleasantly surprised when Malusi was friendly and open.

And when we got to the room, like, on the first day, before to sleep we spent like two hours chatting you know and I was like "Okaaay"- like I am who I am and then he is who he is… The way he was chatting back to me you know, it was like, we have been friends for a very long time in a way, like he's showed a certain sense of accepting who I am you know, and I was like, if [Malusi's nickname] accepts me then - almost everybody in the camp has accepted me, like ok,

> *those who have not accepted me this camp, now they will accept me. Now and from then I just, I just became cool - You know, I was free.*

Referring to Malusi by using his nickname indicates that the recognition has afforded him 'inner-circle' status and social acceptance from this man, who represents the archetype of heterosexual acceptance, an illustration of constructive intersectionality (Prins, 2006). The acceptance from Malusi enabled Aviwe to behave as an *actional* person (Fanon, 2000) and express agency. This was displayed when it was his turn to make a meal on the camp, and he demonstrated the confidence to push traditional cultural boundaries. The counsellor present in the interview, who had also been present at the camp, commented that, *"Aviwe made the most unfamiliar meal of the camp, traditional roasted meat, but there was no rice or pap, just vegetables. He called it a carb-free meal!"* In a display of cultural creolisation, where new interpretations and systems of meaning-making are inserted into existing cultural scripts (Nuttall & Michael, 2000, Martin, 2006), Western culture (a carb-free meal following recent Western dietary trends) was inserted alongside a traditional African method cooking of meat. Aviwe comments on the counsellor's comments, *"Pap isn't that healthy for you, you know!"*. This incident indicates Aviwe's creativity, his desire to push cultural boundaries and express agency. This may also be an outward expression of rejecting the culture that has historically excluded and misrecognised him, and an indication of identifying and 'acculturising' with another culture and new 'in-group'.

The external indication of Aviwe's 'coming out', a shift in his mind from envisaging himself as one thing and now recognising himself as another (Plummer, 1995), was signified by how he got out of the bus when he returned home from the camp in a display of assertion, confidence and narrative identity construction.

> *When the transport arrived back and I was coming out of the transport and this other guys which came from the bush was coming down the road with his grandmother, and ok, if I may say so, I dramatised even my, you know, coming out of the transport. I take my bag and 'cat-walked' down the road, like I was on the ramp, I had swag! I just had my bag over my shoulder and I thought of all those people that were looking - "Just deal with it"*

Plummer (1995) notes how in stories of 'coming out' "[t]he narrative plot is driven by an acute suffering, the need to break a silence, a 'coming out' and a 'coming to terms'. These are always stories of significant transformations" (p. 50). This 'coming out' and 'coming to terms' is very evident in Aviwe's narrative and the two PINs discussed above. At the end of his second interview

his description of his feelings when he is with his boyfriend encapsulate his 'significant transformation' and his narrative identity constructed through self-acceptance and self-recognition and an ability to imagine a counteracting narrative.

> *…its like when I'm not doing what I know I should be doing I'm living a lie or something cos who am I trying to please? I'm not happy when I'm walking the streets. That's not me (hhh) - I love him (hhh) - I feel so very much happy when I'm with my boyfriend, you know.*

While there is evidence of discrimination, stigmatisation and harassment of gay-identified individuals in all spheres of life in South Africa (e.g. Lock Swarr, 2004; Lane et al, 2008; Msibi, 2012), there is also evidence of fluidity and agency through resistance and assertion in the identity constructions of gay-identified people providing hope for the possibility of shifting dominant heterosexist discourse. As Msibi (2012) notes in relation to his study on gay-identified learners, "[g]iven all the struggles noted,… one would expect passive, powerless learners with no hope. This was not the case at all. The learners expressed great pride in themselves and their abilities. This pride largely had to do with self acceptance" (p. 529). This self-acceptance originates in acceptance from others, particularly young men and women from one's own generation (Fay, 1996), enabling Aviwe to envisage a counter-narrative of recognition and belonging in the construction of narrative identity.

Through all of the sites of belonging discussed above, Aviwe has managed to find a place in the world, through the acceptance and recognition of himself through moments of acceptance by valued others. *"If I feel like singing then I sing, if I feel like dancing then I dance, whichever way I want to walk, I walk… And I've told myself that if God knows about me, my pastor knows about me, anybody else I do not care what they think."* Fay (1996) reminds us that selves are able to change and develop, possessing "the capacity to become other than what they are" (p. 34). This is evident in Aviwe's narrative which reveals that through self-consciousness and intelligence, curiosity and reflection he has been able to change himself and begin the construction of an integrated identity from the disintegrated and fragmented 'selves' or parts of him-'self', a process that will continue throughout his lifetime (Fay, 1996; McAdams, 1985).

9.4. Phase 4: Narrative Imagination

Aviwe's description of a photograph he keeps in his 'memory box' of a blue sky with white clouds describes the dialectic between the recognition and misrecognition he experiences in his everyday life and how this influences the construction of his future narrative. The white clouds represent the

adversity, or alienation, he has come to expect and be comfortable with to the extent that if his life gets too easy he becomes uncomfortable. *"I've gotten so used to my fighting you know such that when everything is going smooth, I get unevens - you know."* The clear blue sky represents recognition and acceptance enabling him to conceive and visualise hopes and dreams of a better life than the one he has come from, his narrative imagination (Andrews, 2014). He points out though, that amidst the blue sky of hope, the clouds never go away, they represent his prejudicial social position. He acknowledges that he has accepted these difficult times as part of his life and that they make him appreciate the 'blue sky' periods, or moments of recognition in the eyes of others and himself, that much more. *"The most important thing is that I have to keep an open mind to deal with whatever comes my way"*. While this description demonstrates Aviwe's resilience and a level of maturity and psychological integration through the acceptance that his life is dialectical and ambivalent, as opposed to binary, it could also be considered that it has resulted in Aviwe accepting that which should not be accepted, not only does he 'roll with the punches' when they are thrown, but he often expects to be punched, indicating how his community has failed him and in many cases, still fails him. The dialectic of recognition alongside misrecognition and the precarious nature of his experiences of acceptance and belonging is integral in the construction of his identity.

Aviwe is ambitious and would like to study media at the local university. His dream is to be a TV presenter. He includes a photograph of himself posing at a desk in front of a laptop on his timeline, visualising his success and becomes visibly more animated when he envisages his future.

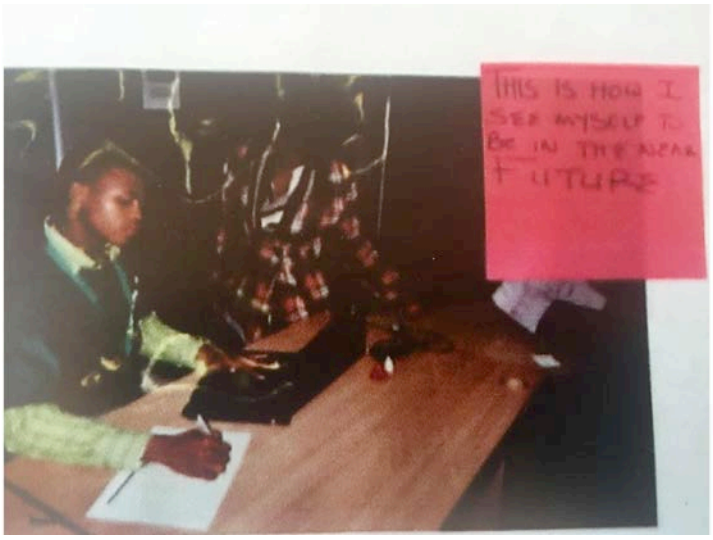


Figure 35: Aviwe in his 'future job'

The fact that he has chosen a public facing career is not surprising. Aviwe strives to prove his worth to others, and a career as a TV presenter would provide him with a chance to openly demonstrate his success to others.

> *Yes, I want to work at a desk, and there'll be a camera there, and I'll be reading the news, or I'll be presenting a show, you know, and my laptop will be there and you know, and then during the break time they will come and they will give me the microphone – Oh Lord, I can see it right now ((laughs)).*

Aviwe was the only participant who expressed a desire to leave the township completely as, while he has moments of recognition and belonging, he believes his community will never fully accept his sexuality and that in order to be the person he would like to be, free from prejudice, he needs to move to a large city. "*… I think that's why I want to leave this place. - Where I can be what I wanna be.*" Constructionist intersectionality and cultural creolisation have enabled Aviwe to construct a counter-narrative through his narrative imagination and visualise how life could be.

9.5. Conclusion

Aviwe's life-story has provided an interpretive entry point into understanding the intersection between his individual psychological life and the constraining social reality within which he lives (Hall, 2000). This intersection illustrates the contrast between the prescription of structural forces and moments where one is able to push back against these structures and master narratives, and exercise agency in the visualisation of new narrative possibilities through new systems of meaning-making (Andrews et al, 2008). From Aviwe's narrative it is clear that he is both shaped by the world, and yet also shapes his world, simultaneously the actor and the co-author of his life narrative (Hall, 1996, 2000; Andrews et al, 2004; Weedon, 2004).

Through interacting with this young man over a period of nine months I have attempted to analyse how he makes meaning of his life experiences through his life story and his perception of belonging and being recognised, against his experiences of alienation and misrecognition, within both his social and inner, psychic spheres. While Aviwe seems to accept that he will never be completely socially accepted through experiencing a position of social equality in relation to heterosexual people within his community, he has experienced moments of recognition and belonging that have altered and changed his meaning-making systems. Narrative possibilities have become narrative realities and as a result, his self-consciousness and interpretation of meaning have changed. The process of identity

construction and self integration through a sense of belonging, acceptance and recognition by those he values and respects have enabled him to develop self-worth and recognition of him-'self' through the recognition of valued others (Fay, 1996), such as his pastor, and his peers, both young men and women.

> Although I have argued that no one can recognize another simply by virtue of special psychological or critical skills… that norms condition the possibility of recognition, it still matters that we feel more properly recognized by some people than we do by others (Butler, 2005, p. 33)

Compared with the man I met in our first meeting nine months earlier who hesitantly described his sexuality, the man that leaves at the end of the second interview, having had the chance to reflect on what he has described as life shifting events and moments of consciousness, appears to have come some way in accepting himself, finding a more comfortable place for himself in the world through the acceptance, acknowledgement and validation of his existence by others that he values and considers important.

As he walks out of the interview room with a spring in his step and his head held high I was left with conflicting emotions; huge admiration and respect for a man who has grown up with so much alienation, misrecognition and hardship, and yet, sadness for the constraining effects of the structural dimensions on his identity construction and overall sense of belonging in the world. Despite the moments of belonging he describes in his narrative, Aviwe's desire to conform to patriarchal and heterosexual norms, indicated through his reference to heterosexual marriage and having a family, suggest how intersectionality and cultural creolisation do not produce single, noncontradictory narratives, but rather ambivalent versions of the self in a display of the tension between structure and agency and contradictory discourses.

Chapter 10

Concluding Discussion

Through listening to and analysing these young people's past, present and future stories, it was hoped that some insight would be gained into the ambivalence and contradictions that exist within their lives. The study sought to analyse the tensions these young people face, distinguishing between their moments of belonging and their moments of alienation and how all these experiences inform and contribute to their identity constructions. Identity, the way in which an individual perceives her or himself through their own eyes, and how they believe they are perceived through the eyes of others, determines her or his moral agency and influences their ability to act. This thesis presents the self as both a narrated and narrating subject in which identity is consolidated through telling stories and constructing a temporally coherent life narrative in relationship with others in the social context.

By way of concluding this study, a summary of its findings, in accordance with the following research aims, are presented below.

This research project aimed to:

1. Enable the researcher to gain an understanding of the participants' everyday experiences, how these define and shape the construction of their identities, affecting how they perceive themselves and how they believe others perceive them.
2. Provide the participants with an opportunity to reflect upon their own lives in a positive, empowering way thereby providing an understanding of their past lives, strengthening a realistic power of agency for their future lives, balanced between self-identity and self transcendence in the present (Crites, 1986).

The second aim, integrated with the first aim, related to the participatory action element of this study, the results of which were not specifically measured or analysed. A number of the participants anecdotally and informally thanked me for the opportunity to tell their stories, commenting on the usefulness and therapeutic nature of this process, despite the fact that many of the participants found the process of engaging with their challenging, and in many cases, traumatic, 'past' lives emotionally challenging. None of the participants sought counselling post their interviews, despite the *Ithemba* counsellor present in their interviews contacting them afterwards to offer this. The

Ithemba counsellor believed that the reason for this was because each *Ithemba* client engages in routine counselling on a bi-annual basis and would discuss any issues that arose in the interview at that session.

The first aim related to the analysis of the two datasets described in chapter 4; the art timelines and the transcripts of the two interviews conducted with each of the twelve participants. Three levels of analysis were conducted in accordance with this primary research aim: firstly, the construction of each participant's descriptive narrative portrait under the headings 'past' life, 'present life, and 'future' life; secondly, further thematic analysis was conducted across the narrative portraits identifying the similarities and differences between the participants thereby extending the specific experiences discussed by the participants into generalised themes; and thirdly, the vertical analysis of portraiture was re-invoked in greater depth, examining how the different theoretical dimensions of narrative identity explored thematically across the participants, coalesce in one particularly interesting case history.

The first level of analysis, the construction of the narrative portraits, was descriptive in nature and, other than specifically analysing the imagoes present in each of the three narrative portraits presented in chapter 5, present a phenomenological account of the participants' lives according to the hermeneutics of faith (Josselson, 2004) as opposed to engaging in critical debate. These portraits describe the participants' lifeworlds from their perspectives, in their own words. The visual analysis was primarily used as a trigger to collect data and aid the participants in speaking about their lives in a narrative way. The photographs were not separately analysed given space and scope constraints. Additionally, the photographs provided a difficulty in ensuring anonymity as they are very personally revealing.

In the second level of analysis three different dimensions of, or ways of thinking about, narrative identity were distinguished: relationality and the sense of belonging or alienation experienced by the participants in their interaction with others; the consolidation of life stories at adolescence and the participants' social positioning within the systems of structural identity markers of race, class, gender, and sexual orientation; and lastly the participants' hopes and dreams, their narrative imaginations and future-orientated lives.

In the third level of analysis the general themes were revisited in a thematically informed narrative portrait of Aviwe, a young, gay man who has struggled to find recognition and belonging within his family and community for as long as he can remember. A few recent moments of belonging and

acceptance have enabled him to consider a counteracting narrative (Squire, 2013) of his future life, thereby envisaging the possibility that he may be recognised as an 'actional' (Biko, 2004) person.

The key contributions of the second and third levels of analysis, presented in chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9, are noted below:

10.1. Relationality and Belonging

In chapter 6, I presente~~d~~ the results of the thematic analysis across the participants in relation to their experiences of interacting with others, specifically noting where they found belonging and recognition, or experienced alienation and misrecognition, integral to their identity constructions. The social interactions analysed centred on the participants' relationships with their families, specifically their primary caregivers; their parents and their grandmothers. Issues pertaining to the participants' relationships with their families such as paternity, HIV/AIDS related death and illness, confusion surrounding their origins, and abandonment by parents, are also discussed in this chapter.

Despite being critical of their mothers, inserting a certain gendered expectation (Hollway, 1989), in cases where the participants' mothers were alive they provided the participants with a sense of belonging and recognition. Very few of the participants had interactive relationships with their fathers, a number were even unaware of who their fathers were, and as such, fathers generally did not represent ~~not~~ a site of belonging (Taylor, 2004) for these young people, often hampering and prejudicing their identity construction. Grandmothers, described as the 'rock of township life' (Jansen, 2015), offer a number of the participants the first form of positive recognition and belonging they experience, shielding them from the challenges and adversity they suffer in their lives, and providing them with boundaries and stable, secure bases. For many of the participants, their grandmothers were integral to their sense of belonging and safety in the world, laying the foundations of their identity constructions.

Growing up, a number of the participants were confused as to the identity of their biological parents. This appeared to compromise and undermine the construction of their identities, leaving them grappling with their true origins, resulting in them questioning *who* they actually are. The participants' stories of confusion and alienation could be interpreted as anger towards their parents' deception and the deprivation of traceable histories and ultimate belonging in their communities as having come from 'good', patrilineal identifiable families (Russell, 2003).

Abandonment by their parents, particularly by their fathers, but also a number of the participants' mothers who left to work in Johannesburg and returned to die from AIDS related illnesses, undermined the identity constructions of these young people. Abandonment represents the ultimate form of misrecognition (Taylor, 2004); failure to recognise one's own child is likely to jeopardise identity construction as an adolescent searches for acceptance and belonging in the quest to consolidate the parts of their lives into a coherent and integrated whole at adolescence (Breger, 1974; Fay, 1996).

The high prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the participants' communities results in death and illness being an everyday reality that permeates the lives of these young people often resulting in children and adolescents feeling defenceless and unsafe and hampering the construction of integrated identities. Given that adolescence is a time in one's life when self-concepts are cast out into the world in order to gain recognition and a sense of belonging, this results in a hampering of identity construction for HIV positive individuals and their families as they are disregarded and misrecognised (Taylor, 2004), their existence tainted and nullified in the minds of their community members (Goffman, 1963; Fay, 1996; Lindemann Nelson, 2001).

Despite the physical and psychological insecurity many of the participants feel as a result of these destabilising experiences, they describe church and *Ithemba* as places of refuge where they feel safe and secure. These socially constructed, "imagined communities" (Anderson, 1991) afford the participants with a sense of belonging, recognition and inclusion, functioning as surrogate families. The churches the participants attend are not traditional Catholic and Protestant churches which historically tolerated the co-existence of African cultural traditions and Christian faith, albeit it reluctantly, but rather charismatic churches which shun cultural traditions of any kind, including those of traditional Western formal Christianity. The adoption of this 'new' church in the participants' lives leaves no space for any other beliefs, and in their desire to belong and take part in the social aspects of the church, the prescriptive teaching of the church has forced many of the participants to question the traditional, ancestral beliefs that their families hold and follow. Church provides the participants with the prospect of breaking the links with their difficult and oppressive pasts through their need to be free and 'new', resulting in the participants indicating a desire to moderate, and in some cases set aside, some of their traditional beliefs and African identities, identifying more with the future than the past.

In addition to providing the participants with belonging and the chance to interact with people who experience similar issues, their involvement with the NGO, *Ithemba,* provides them with the hope

of upward social mobility primarily through after school educational support and the chance of attaining bursaries to university if they are accepted.

Being affirmed and recognised at school has also enabled the participants to bolster their views of themselves and re-construct their 'selves' through others' awareness of their achievements (Fay, 1996). The participants experience tension and ambivalence between being afforded recognition and belonging at school, but yet also being aware that the township education they receive is sub-standard in comparison to metropolitan schools, thereby positioning them racially. Despite this misrecognition, their dreams of educated futures are not diminished, primarily due to the educational support that the participants receive from *Ithemba*, which elevates their prospects above their fellow township scholars in their minds. The participants see *Ithemba* as a lifeline, a chance to elevate themselves from an education perspective thereby increasing their chances of being employed and independent.

Despite the misrecognition and alienation the participants experience in their challenging everyday lives, within each of the relational interactions they experience, they describe moments when they are accepted and experience belonging and recognition, thereby providing these young people with the opportunity to create new meaning-making systems and reconstruct their identities through counter-narratives as opposed to a set of labels in an illustration of constructionist intersectionality (Prins, 2006).

10.2. Structural Dimensions in the Construction of Adolescent Identity

In chapter 7, I presente~~d~~ the results of the thematic analysis across the participants that relate to their structural positioning in terms of the structural identity markers of 'race', class and gender. Ndlovu (2012) raises our awareness to how certain aspects of identity are "more ideologically charged than others" (p. 145). These aspects of ourselves such as 'race', class, gender and sexuality locate us within society either conferring or denying power and status.

While there were few direct references to 'race' in the participants' narratives, it is evident through their stories that their lives are both racialised and 'classed'. One of the most visible references to race in the participants' narratives was evident in the stories of their experiences at school. While there were many instances where school provided the participants with a sense of belonging, particularly those participants who performed well academically and were recognised for this, the

under-resourced, township schools the participants attend socially position these young people as black, poor, and inferior subjects.

The effects of 'race' and class, and the participants' racialised economic positioning, are also very evident in the photographs included on their time lines and the description of their homes. The photographs of RDP houses situate the participants racially, starkly indicating and marking that they are poor and black, previously, and in many cases still, oppressed and marginalised. Similarly the participants' stories in their narratives of being dislocated and homeless refer to a racialised and classed positioning. The precarious nature of many of the participants' homes and the fragility and non-permanent nature of 'shack' houses undermine the participants' identity constructions, leaving many feeling vulnerable and unsafe with limited sense of permanence or belonging in the world. A home in the physical sense extends into the psychological realm through providing a site of belonging, a place where one feels recognised (Terkenli, 1995) and safe.

In the participants' quest to move forward in their lives and focus on the future as opposed to the past, 'race' as a structure that continues to constrain and limit these young people appears to be under-represented in their narratives considering their racialised histories and lives. Even more than is age appropriate for adolescents, these young people appear to be focused solely on their futures as opposed to their pasts. Despite the structural impositions of 'race' and class that are imposed onto the participants, a few of the participants demonstrate new meaning-making repertoires in the articulation of new discourses of being black and African.

From the perspective of the social structure of gender, it is clear from the participants' narratives that patriarchy, as an ideology, is pervasive in their lives, with many societal and cultural traditions differentiated by gender positioning 'female' secondary to 'male'. One of the rituals followed by the participants and their families that illustrates gender differentiation most starkly is evident in the stories told to me by the male participants of their *Ulwaluko*, the month in which boys are initiated into manhood in an entrenchment of masculinity and, as some would argue, hyper-masculinity (Sev'er, 2012). The prominence of the participants' stories of their *Ulwaluko* in their narratives indicates the ritual's salience in these young men's lives. While this tradition's recognition of the transition from childhood into manhood may have more significance for black, South African men due to the emasculation they have historically been subject to under Apartheid, the ritual has been criticised for its role in contributing to male sexual entitlement, evident in South Africa's high rape and sexual violence statistics (Vincent, 2008).

A number of the women participants were critical of how many of their female peers live their lives dependent on men, often using sex as a transactional device. In contrast to Xhosa men's entry into manhood, which is marked by the month-long *Ulwaluko* away from society, and a ceremony and celebration on their return, women's assumed entry into adulthood through becoming sexually active is defined as problematic. Despite these disempowering gendered discourses, a few of the young women participants' narratives expressed a desire to be financially self-sufficient through not wanting to get married and have families 'too young'. This is interpreted as an encouraging sign in the empowerment of women, particularly considering the conservative, patriarchal environment in which the participants have been brought up and live. Most of the participants, both male and female, imagined marriage and nuclear family futures.

Despite the entrenched presence of patriarchal and heteronormative racilalised discourses dominating the narratives of the participants, there were moments where these discourses were challenged; moments where consciousness was raised through the disruption of the hold that social structures have on the lives of black people, women and homosexual people and counter-narratives were able to be imagined and articulated. The participants appear to want to 'set aside' and overcome their pasts in the construction of their 'born-free' identities, indicative of an advancement from the lives and identities of their parents and predecessors and the associated problems of poverty and HIV. This has the effect of these young people distancing themselves to a greater or lesser extent from past narrative versions of the world in an attempt to forge new paths and find new ways of meaning-making resulting in cultural creolisation (Glissant, 1989; Nuttall & Michael, 2000, Erasmus, 2001, Martin, 2006).

10.3. Narrative Imagination

In chapter 8, I examined four themes raised by the participants relating to their future-orientated narratives, or narrative imaginations, their vision of freedom. Narrative imagination, the ability to conceive of how life 'will be' from the position of how life currently is, provides human beings with the ability to engage with the possibility and language of agency and choice (Brockmeier, 2009; Andrews 2014). In contrast with the 'postmodern' global culture that Giroux (1996) speaks of in his commentary on 'slacker' and 'border youth' in the U.S. and Europe, where young people possess limited hope for their futures and drift from job to job tied to no place or period, the narratives of the participants of this study display hope and excitement in respect of what these young people perceive will be productive future lives.

Education and being employed, as the first theme, was perceived by the participants to be their route to freedom and independence. These young people aspire to be middle class, and believe that university education is the only means to becoming adequately employed to achieve this. The 'university-entitlement discourse' has been oversold to the youth of our society as the only route to becoming employed and independent, underpinning the current student discontent and uprising in the 'Fees must fall' clash between students and the government in South Africa.

In the second theme the participants expressed how, driven by a desire to emulate the capitalist trends and cultures featured in Western social and mass media, their aspiration to display visible signs of social and class mobility through the acquisition of assets. Cars and houses featured often on the participants' timelines. While the participants referred to the type of cars they would like to have, insinuating their purpose as status symbols, there was also a sense of how these assets represent utility and freedom for the participants; a car enables freedom of movement and a home provides security and comfort. The houses and cars spoken of in the participants' narratives are signs of a new life, a life where they are perceived, by themselves and others, to have succeeded and to have moved out of their position of marginalisation into a space where they are free to move independently and be agentic. This forward, productive discourse in the minds of these 'born-free's' enables them to find belonging in and identification with the newness of post-Apartheid South Africa and the opportunities it provides in their minds to be middle-class and prosperous. Being able to demonstrate belonging and social mobility through the outward signs of success and prosperity enforces and confirms this discourse, presenting these young people with the opportunity to enact the process of cultural creolisation and express agency.

Cultural creolisation (Glissant, 1989) is articulated in the participants' narratives and their desires to expand the spaces in which they live from the township they have been brought up in, in an attempt to gain access to different areas and spaces in the hope of becoming more socially mobile. Interestingly, the participants do not express a desire to leave their communities and domicile in favour of the city suburbs, but would rather like to create new spaces for themselves somewhere 'between the two'. Moving into '*town*' is perceived by the participants to afford them power and social capital, but at the same time there is a reluctance to sever the cultural ties to their histories and their pasts visible in the participants' desire to maintain a connection to this 'old' space; one of the few attachments to their pasts that they expressly state they would like to keep.

A 'strong sense of community and a desire to help others' as the third theme in the participants' future narratives is linked to their desire to maintain ties to their communities and 'their people'. A

tension exists between the participants' individual narratives (their hopes and dreams of security, greater access to spaces and places they are currently prevented from accessing due to poverty, and the acquisition of outward signs of success) and how this 'prosperity' would be shared with others through identification with philanthropy and 'embettering' the lives of their fellow community members. It is implied in the participants' narratives that by helping and supporting their communities will provide them with the chance to gain deeper meaning and purpose in their own lives through the experience of being 'needed' and recognised by those they help and support. Given the adversities of the participants' past lives, the desire to help others and be recognised as 'people of value' receives prominence in the identity construction of these adolescents.

Overwhelmingly, the greatest theme articulated in the participants' future narratives, raised by all the participants, was that their generation would be markedly different from previous generations due to their perceived freedom of choice and ability to exercise agency. Several of the participants spoke about breaking the links to the loss and abandonment experienced in their past lives and altering and modifying the township scripts and meaning-making systems that have been historically offered to township youth. This stronger identification with the future than the past is age appropriate at adolescence, but perhaps exaggerated in these young peoples' narratives due to their insecure and fragmented individual and collective 'pasts'.

The notion of being 'born-free' is articulated in different ways by these young people. The visual timelines make evident the aspirations of neoliberal materialism in the symbolism of the attainment of education, cars and houses and a chance to be socially mobile and independent. In a context where this social mobility remains possible for only a very small elite and health and education services in South Africa are highly unequal, this form of 'freedom' is likely to be largely unattainable for these young people. However, other more creative interpretations of freedom are also nascent in their narratives, for example, in notions of creolised identities and new intersectional possibilities that were simply unavailable as ways of 'being black in the world' (Manganyi, 1973) for their parents' generation.

10.4 Theoretical Constructs Illustrated in One Narrative Portrait

In the final chapter of this thesis, one participant's narrative was selected for its ability to illustrate the theoretical concepts that underpin the construction of narrative identity expressed through the life experiences of the participants of this study, particularly constructionist intersectionality and cultural creolisation. In this chapter, four temporal phases in the life of Aviwe, a gay identified,

young man, are discussed. The first phase, illustrates his experiences of relationality in respect of belonging and alienation, and presents his early family interaction where, as a young boy, he experienced a sense of belonging, primarily through the love and acceptance of his mother, juxtaposed against experiences of alienation, primarily as a result of the abandonment by his father.

The second phase presents his life from around the time of his realisation of his sexual orientation as a gay man and the associated social alienation and judgment he experienced as a result of not conforming to the societal expectations of his community. This phase illustrates the mechanisms of social structural positioning and how subordinate social positionings hamper and prejudice identity construction. Aviwe, ~~as~~ a young, poor, black, gay man, living in a semi-urban township in the Eastern Cape, is subordinately positioned within the social structures of 'race', class, gender and sexuality, prejudiced by the ideologies of racism, capitalism and patriarchy.

The third phase of his life thus far, representing late adolescence, examines how Aviwe has learned to live dialectically between recognition and misrecognition and within this tension find isolated sites of belonging thereby starting a process of productive identity construction. These moments of belonging provide Aviwe with the inkling of seeing himself as an actional person of worth, both through his own eyes and the eyes of others, and in a display of constructionist intersectionality, he is able to perceive of his life through a counternarrative or counteracting narrative (Squire, 2013) as opposed to a set of subordinate social positionings and labels. This expression of agency underpins the process of cultural creolisation, an ongoing, dynamic process inherent in all forms of cultural encounter, implying that everyone participates in the modification and adaption of culture and that no new form takes precedence over the old, in a demonstration of productivity, creativity and agency (Michael & Nuttall, 2000).

The last phase indicates how, through Aviwe's moments of belonging and acceptance, he has been able to engage in the productive process of narrative imagination (Andrews, 2014). Through constructionist intersectionality and the opportunity of cultural creolisation, Aviwe's mind has been opened to new ways of meaning-making that enable him to dream of life as an actional (Fanon, 2000) person of worth (Fay, 1996). While Aviwe acknowledges that he will never be completely socially accepted through experiencing a position of social equality in relation to heterosexual people within his community, he has experienced moments of recognition and belonging that have altered and changed his meaning-making systems and contributed productively to his identity construction.

10.5 Conclusion

Narrative Theory's assertion that an integrated identity requires consciousness and awareness of one's whole life, not just the told life, but also the untold life or the "narrative unconscious" (Freeman, 2010), underpins the participatory action orientation of this research. The necessity for the born-free generation to engage with their *whole* life narrative, not just their future lives, but their past lives too, as painful as this is for many of these young people to contemplate, is fundamental in the construction of an integrated identity. Eva Hoffman (2004) describes how as a child and an adolescent she was always conscious of the fact that she was a child of Holocaust survivors, aware of the "inescapable facts" and "inescapable knowledge" she had come into, but that "the knowledge had not always been equally active, nor did [she] always want to make the inheritance defining" (p. x). It was only when her parents died that she felt that the legacy of the atrocities her parents had experienced now rested with her.

> We were closest to its memories; we had touched upon its horror and its human scars. If I did not want the "memory" of the Holocaust to be flattened out through distance and ignorance, if I wanted to preserve some of the pulsing complexity I had felt in survivors' own perceptions, then it was up to me (Hoffman, 2004, p. xi).

Despite the fact that the participants' lives are still inherently racialised, their lack of the specific mention of Apartheid may indicate that they feel, as was the case for Hoffman (2004), that Apartheid is their parents' or older generation's story and despite it's strong psychic presence in their narrative unconscious, it will only be their story to tell when their parents have passed on. Adolescence is a time to live for 'what is still to come', cognisance and full acknowledgement of the past, and the time to live for 'what has been', is perhaps reserved for a later period in one's life? The participatory action element of this study attempted to encourage the participants to engage with their whole life stories in the construction of the art timelines and in the interviews thereby attempting to contribute productively to the process integrated identity construction.

One cannot help feeling, as did Bradbury & Clark (2012), that there is "an exaggeration of the archetypal hope invested in the youth, who, we wish to believe, will make the world a better place" (p. 176). As the researcher, I was left struggling to 'buy-in' to the participants' enthusiasm, but also wondering whether my discomfort and cynicism lay in the fact that the world is not glistening with

hope and abundance right now, suffering from economic, environmental and political uncertainty and unrest, driven by continued inequality, and political and consumerist greed. In the dismantling of Apartheid as an abhorrent structure, perhaps we as a post-Apartheid society have 'oversold' and 'overpromised' prosperity that the poor and sub-standard resources currently available to young people, particularly in terms of the health and education services in rural and semi-urban areas, are currently unable to deliver. The socialist Azania (Alexander, 2013) envisaged by many as achievable in the dismantling of Apartheid through conscientised political action as opposed to individual 'progress' and mobility appears to have been set-aside in the desire to acquire assets and externally demonstrate wealth and social mobility, enforced by Western consumerist social media young people are exposed to.

There is a strong sense among the participants that the 'born free' generation's future will be significantly better than their past lives, instilled by the 'New South Africa' discourse. South African society bears a huge responsibility to the youth of this country, specifically in terms of supporting and enabling the hopes and dreams of the youth of previously disadvantaged generations, supposedly 'born-free'. If we do not have structural change, particularly in the areas of education and health, these vital dreams and hopes will be broken.

Appendix A

Transcription Conventions

(Adapted from Jefferson (2004))

Symbol	Description	Meaning
-	Hyphen	Indicates a halt, pause, interruption in utterance
underline	Underlined text	Indicates emphasis or stressed speech
(uhh)	Interjection	Audible hesitation
(uh uh)	Interjection	Audible disagreement
(hhh)		Audible exhalation/ sigh
(.hhh)		Audible inhalation
((text))	Double parentheses	Annotation of non-verbal activity
(xxx)	Parentheses	Speech is unclear
…	Ellipsis	Omission of speech text without altering original meaning
[text]	Square brackets	The researcher's words added for clarification

Appendix B:

Psychology
School of Human & Community Development
University of the Witwatersrand
Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050
Tel: (011) 717 4500 Fax: (011) 717 4559

I, ... hereby consent to my participation in an interview by Kim Howard for her study on adolescent identity.

I understand that:

- Participation in this interview is voluntary;
- I may withdraw from the study at any time;
- No information that may identify me will be included in the research report;
- I understand that direct quotes may be used in the research report, but that I will not be identified by name;

Signed..... Date.....

Appendix C:

Psychology
School of Human & Community Development
University of the Witwatersrand
Private Bag 3, WITS, 2050
Tel: (011) 717 4500 Fax: (011) 717 4559

I, ... hereby consent to my participation in an interview by Kim Howard for her study on adolescent identity being recorded.

I understand that:

- The recordings and transcripts will not be seen or heard by any person in this organisation, other than the researcher and her supervisor (once the participant's identity has been removed).
- All recordings will be safely stored, so that only the researcher and supervisor can access them.
- All recordings will be destroyed after the research is complete.
- No identifying information will be used in the transcripts or the research report.

Signed..... Date.....

Appendix D

Narrative Portraits and Art Timelines

This appendix contains the narrative portraits and art timelines of the eight participants whose narrative portraits and art timelines are not included in the body of this thesis:

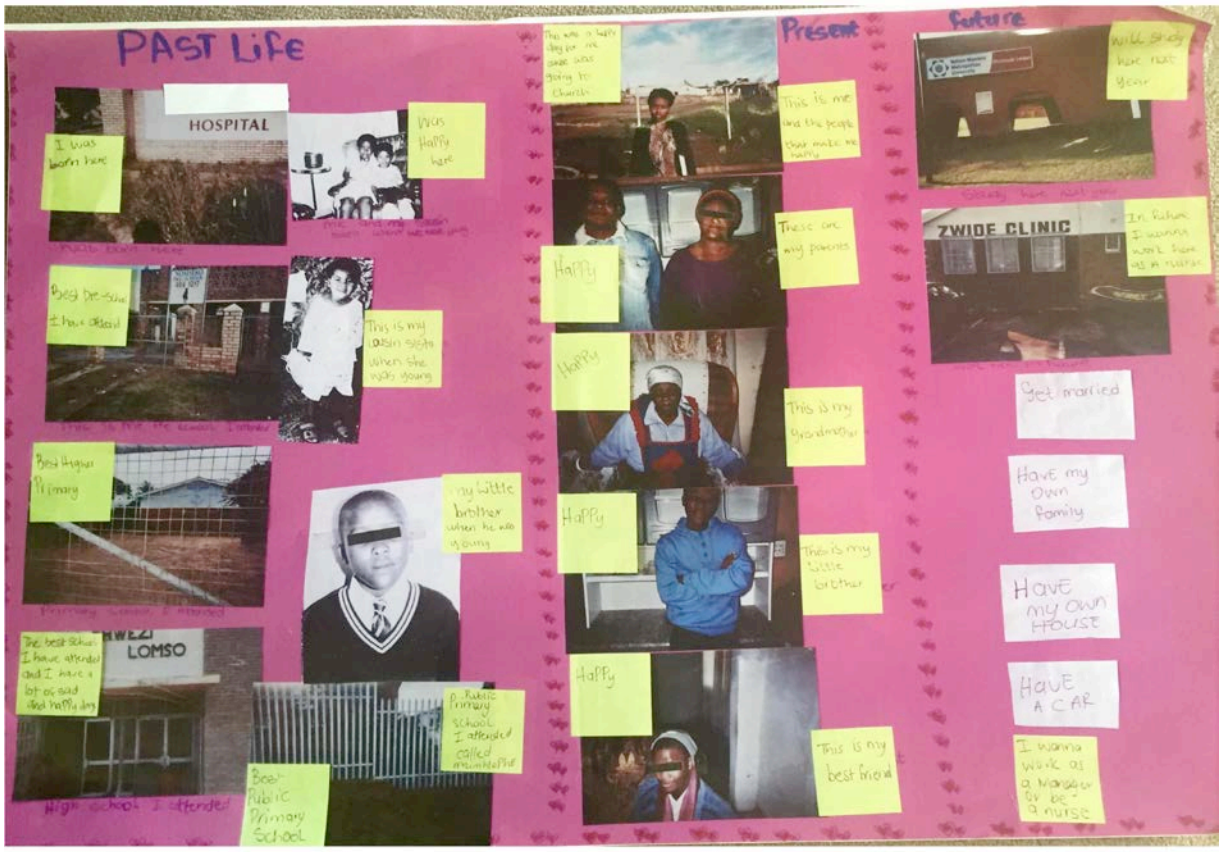
Included in the body of the thesis:

- Asanda Chapter 5
- Ayabonga Chapter 5
- Nandipha Chapter 5
- Aviwe Chapter 9

Included in this appendix:

- Anathi
- Gcobisa
- Malusi
- Nobomi
- Nozuko
- Phozisa
- Siphosethu
- Thembela

Anathi - Looking for love



Anathi presents as a depressed and despondent young woman.

> *Like when I'm at home I think about all the bad things that have happen to me. All the hard problems, all the things that have broken my heart*

Anathi finished upgrading her matric results in 2011 and has "*done nothing*" in 2012 as she received her results too late to apply for university. She tells me in the interview that she is HIV positive, through sexual contact as opposed to being born with the virus. Understandably this has negatively affected her entire life, particularly her social interaction, as she feels isolated and stigmatised.

As a result of her depressed state it was difficult to engage with Anathi and entice her to speak to me. I had to ask more questions than in other interviews and used the timeline often as a prompt for discussion.

At first glance, her timeline looks as though Anathi is very happy in her past and present life. She has the word "*happy*" attached to pictures of all the important people in her life; her parents, grandmother, brother and best friend with the overall quote "*This is me and the people that make me happy*" attached at the top. Under her 'past' section she has included a photograph of her and her cousin sister as young children with the quote "*was happy here*". On meeting Anathi in person it is obvious that she is not happy and content at all, rather the opposite is true. The operative word on this timeline in reference to happy is "was". Prior to being diagnosed HIV positive, Anathi *was* happy.

Past life

Anathi spent the first years of her life with her grandparents as her parents were both working in Johannesburg. She was close to her grandmother as a child but is no longer.

> *Not anymore. I was close to her when I was a girl.*

Anathi now lives with both her parents and her brother. She describes her parents' relationship as "good" and says they are happy together. Anathi says she has a good relationship with her parents.

> *…but I don't talk to them about my privacy*

Anathi is close to her mother who she describes as someone who "loves cooking and cleaning and washing." Her father is the breadwinner, and works a spray-painter.

Anathi is very close to her younger brother and says she loves him a lot. She includes two photographs of him on her timeline. She was close to her cousin sister when she was growing up, but now doesn't see her very often as her cousin sister is working hard at school.

Anathi says she had friends at school but doesn't see them now since she has been diagnosed HIV positive and everybody seems to know. Her favourite thing to do with her friends at school was:

> *…me and my friends like during break time we were telling each other stories and then sharing some Bible verses, and then sing on break time*

Now that she has left school she no longer see these friends anymore.

I don't have friends anymore. I have only got one friends… Cos, he's the only one that can understand me. Like some people say that I'm a complicated person… I'm too secretive and I don't talk a lot… I'm shy…Like he, he understand me a lot… I feel comfortable with him… I talk [to him] about my private life and everything that has is happening to me… he has knowing me for a long time

Anathi enjoyed school especially when she won an award for being the third top learner in media studies.

I could say that the happy days are when I won the awards at school.

She didn't always achieve well at school though.

…the sad days was in grade 12 when I have, when I have gotten a low symbol… Some of the subjects that I have got H. And then last year I have upgrade my marks since I have H and then I've got like a, I got a D now.

School features prominently on her timeline with photographs of four schools she attended included under her 'past' section. On all photographs she refers to her school as the "*best*".

Anathi says she wasn't very good at sports and didn't take part in any other extra-mural activities. When asked what her interests are she doesn't appear to have any.

She is currently "*not doing anything*" and appears to be bored and despondent.

Anathi says that her clan name from her father's clan is important to her and that her family carry out the rituals and traditions according their clan.

My family do the traditional stuff.

She describes a few of the traditions and rituals like an initiation for girls where the family build a special room for the girl and for a month all the girl's food is prepared and the young girl stays in the room during the day as she shouldn't be seen during this time. Anathi says her family would like to do that for her when they have money, but she would prefer not to do it.

The last ritual her family conducted was when "*they have slaughtered a cow it was when after my granddad's, my granddad's dead.*"

While she attends these rituals and traditional events, she says:

> *I don't believe in those things - I think as time changes, then the traditions also changes. When you are a Christian you don't believe in your, like in your ancestors - I believe in things that are writing on the Bible.*

When asked what makes her happy:

> *(uhh) the one thing that make me happy is church. My family, and church and the fact that I'm going to university next year*

She attends church on "*like Tuesday and Wednesday. And Thursday and Friday, Saturday and Sunday.*"

Present life

At the beginning of the interview Anathi told me that she was she was sad because of "all the hard problems, all the things that have broken my heart." When I asked her why she replied:

> *Like I'm alone, I don't have a boyfriend - The bad things - I cannot discuss it*

Later in the interview Anathi disclosed to me how in 2009, when she was 18, she had an HIV test and it came back positive.

> *(uhh) like on 2000, 2000 and 9, - I got tested for HIV - And it was positive [weeps].*

She said she had contracted HIV through sex. When I asked her how many lovers she had in her life she said she had had six or seven and had slept with them "*because I want them to love me*" but "*they didn't show me the love that I wanted*" and she didn't feel close to them when sleeping with them.

Anathi is not on ARV's at this stage, but her T-Cell count (an indication of the strength of her immune system) is being monitored by the *Ithemba* clinic. She has confided in her mother and her friend.

> *When I first - told [my mother], that day [she] cried. But now she supports me.*

She hasn't told her father because

I'm worried that he will have a heart attack, cos he takes things serious

When she was diagnosed she approached the person who she believed had transmitted the disease to her.

He just make that thing fun. And he told all his friends. But he say he doesn't have it. He didn't show me his results, but he says he doesn't have HIV

Since being diagnosed she has had one boyfriend

And I met another guy. Then I told him about my status and then he become - Ok, then after 6 months, ((weeps)) … After 6 months he treated me badly… Like abusing me emotional… Like saying bad things to me, that makes me feel sad… Like saying, he, like since he was saying to me, he can't be with me anymore because I am HIV positive… And then he dumped me, and then I almost killed myself on 23rd… Like I ate pills… Somebody saw me, while it was too early. I was eating them at school. One of my friends saw me and they sent me to the hospital.

She weeps all the way through telling this story and at the end says that sometimes she would rather not be alive. Sometimes she still sees the man who "dumped" her.

Like I talk to him on mixit and then, and then I also, I see him when I'm going to the complex in [name of township], we stay near the complex… He's nice.

She has slept with him again and

…now he wants love back, but I don't trust him

When I ask Anathi about how she feels about being HIV positive she seems more concerned about her relationships than she does about the ramifications of the disease or treatment. The social isolation and castigation she has faced has affected her badly causing her to feel isolated and depressed.

Future life

Anathi would like to be a nurse and work at the local township clinic.

[I would like] become a nurse – (uhh), I love helping people. And I'm good at working with people.

On her timeline she includes seven sentences under the 'future' section:

"Will study here next year" attached to a picture of a sign 'Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University'

"In future I wanna work here as a nurse".

"Get married"

"Have my own family"

"Have my own house"

"Have a car"

"I wanna work as a manager or be a nurse"

Gcobisa - The model



Gcobisa's art timeline does not reflect that she is from a low socio-economic environment. Unlike many of the other participants, she portrays herself as a middle class teenage girl through the poses she strikes, her interaction with the camera, and no inclusion of pictures of the poor township she lives in in her photographs. Irrespective of socio-economic positioning, the 'facebook generation' elevates everyone to middle class through photographs.

Past life

Gcobisa's timeline is arranged differently from the other participants, with the major part representing the present, labelled *"currently"*, with smaller sections represented by present and future. There are no photographs of her family in her 'past' section, when I ask her why this, she replies

> *I don't have, I don't have much to spoke about because my past is a mess, it's complicated, I don't know how to spell it out on there… I've moved on from my past…*

Her 'past' section includes pictures of her and her friends with captions of *"Joyful times with friends, Just happy"* and the words *"The [Ithemba] Centre, 2011 was our first year in our new home and we couldn't have been happier".*

Gcobisa spent the early part of her life in Newscastle, KZN with her grandmother. When she was 10 years old she moved to Port Elizabeth with her mother and father, both from Xhosa descent. When she was 14 years old she was told that her father was not her biological father and that her actual father was a Zulu man. This had a profoundly destabilising effect on her as a young teenager.

> *I found out my real dad was a Zulu and then that came as a shock actually and then I started doing bad things, I hung out with the wrong crowd, (uhh) I started to, (uhh), I took the thing in the wrong way and then I've done some bad things just to spite my parents for not telling me the truth and all this stuff.*

Her biological father traced her family and came to find her.

> *…we were at our gran's, we were celebrating a birthday and then (uhh), two hours later there was a man, came as a shock, I didn't know him, he said he was a relative to him and my mom asked me to join them in the lounge and then my dad broke off the secret and that was it… I just ran off.*

Gcobisa described how this news made her rebellious and forced her to find solace in new friends who were a bad influence on her.

> *At that time I was schooling at [name of school] in [name of suburb in Eastern Cape city] and my friends and I… Ok, I started to hang out with the wrong crowd and then we were started bunk school, drinking, smoking all sort of stuff. That sort of stuff to me, that kind of calmed me down. And with my friends, my new friends I felt nothing then. I didn't felt as though I had this bunch of load in me…*

The turning point in her rebellion occurred when her biological father found her bunking school:

> *…my dad, my biological dad saw me at some club in [place] (uhh), he was walking by with these guys during school hours and ask me what was I doing there. And then (uhh), that was then, and then he told my mom that I was bunking school and all sort of stuff and hen (uhh)*

my mom decided to took me to school here in [name of township], so I went to therapy to sort out my problems.

Gcobisa described how the therapy from the school therapist enabled her to *"realise who I am"*.

…it helped me to realise that the way I handled it was wrong of me and then (uhh) and how I reacted was wrong and to realise what is important and what is not and um, the whole thing was, the way I handled it, I think it was a manner of how to react. I didn't know how to react then. And then(uhh), I don't know man. But then again um the therapy helped me to realise who I am. Ja - I was 14 years, I don't plan, I just do. Ja.

Gcobisa describes how being brought up Xhosa, but being biologically Zulu was confusing for her at first but then she realised that she is actually fortunate to have two dads when most others in the township don't have fathers.

Biologically I am Zulu, but I set out to be Xhosa, when people ask me, I just say I'm Xhosa… I would probably change the fact that I grew up as a Xhosa, into the matter of knowing my actual family Zulu, and grow up with them… there is a big difference between Xhosa and Zulu, starting from culture, um, their habit, everything, and their lifestyle, everything is different, totally different

She carries her Xhosa father's clan name, but explains that when she introduces herself to new people, who do not know her past, she uses her Zulu clan name. She believes that to disregard her Xhosa clan name would be disrespectful to her Xhosa father. Gcobisa describes how initially this situation was very confusing for her, but through therapy at school she has come to accept that she is lucky to have two fathers. Although she describes herself as *"someone that is not so traditional when it comes to ancestral stuff"*, she describes how her Zulu family introduced her to the community in a welcoming party:

I was introduced to the clan in Zulu and they were, they slaughtered some cows to welcome me, it was a welcoming party to the clan. They called Um Umkhato… And then I was made up some bracelet, but it went off now. It was a cow skin skin bracelet, ja… It was big, there were lots of people. Like everyone wanted to see me, who is this girl? And they were, and I was given a Zulu name, and all sort of stuff, ja…

The closest person to her in her family is her grandmother, her Xhosa father's mother, who Gcobisa describes as her best friend and who helped ground her through her confusion with her fathers.

> *She didn't show much emotions or she had nothing to say except that she was understanding and calming me down and making me understand the situation and all that sort of stuff. Ja, we like best friends, we talk about everything, ja.*

Present life

Gcobisa's 'present' section of her timeline dominates. She includes many photographs of herself posing for the camera and of herself with friends with the words:

> *Sharing a laughter with my cousin*
>
> *Candy times (all by myself)*
>
> *Chilled*
>
> *Cool*
>
> *The reason I woke up with a positive mindset of a bright future*
>
> *Depressed.*

Other than photographs of her posing for the camera and her with her friends, a photograph of the library in her township is included with the caption *"A pleasure that gives home to so many ppl ☺*", indicating her love of books, knowledge and reading.

Gcobisa is currently upgrading her matric results in the hope of being accepted into university. She describes herself as *"I'm a coffee person, I play tennis, I love to watch reality shows, (uhh), I like to write my thoughts, I always sleep with a pen and a book under my pillow"* and someone who likes to look good and present herself well confirmed by the photographs of herself posing in various different outfits.

She says that she gets relief from writing down her thoughts and feelings:

…its like a relief, sometimes its actually, it actually reflects me when I go back to my scriptures and read them out aloud, my scriptures and my thoughts describe and the way I come from.

Future life

Gcobisa's 'future' section of her timeline is similar to her past and present dominated with pictures of herself, and one with her friends. She includes the captions:

I can't imagine my future without my shades on… cause its 2 bright anyway

This is how I see myself in a couple of years to come [in a pose showing her leg in a provocative way]

4 eva young

A photograph of a blue sky is included with the caption *"This is how I see my future bright and clear"*.

Despite the very optimistic outlook portrayed on her timeline, when discussing her future with her she appears confused.

I don't know which career path to follow… I think I would like to work in the health faculty. But I don't know, but I believe it's where it's where my passion is at…

Gcobisa indicates in our discussion that she has no plans to have a family and as she is *"kind of tomboyish"* she doesn't have a boyfriend

Malusi - The leader



Malusi is a tall, good-looking man, with a distinct presence. In both interviews, he spoke openly about his life with relatively little input from me as the interviewer, displaying unwavering self-assuredness, derived from a very defined set of values and ethics.

In his early years Malusi's had a strong support structure in the form of close family, and in his teenage years he drew support from friends, interests and passions. He values his cultural heritage and traditions and is a "doer" who enjoys physical activity. Malusi's found it easy to tell stories of his life, not only was his overarching narrative well chronologically structured, but within this narrative he tells three self-contained stories of life changing incidents he experienced. As a result of Malusi's open and frank manner, as a researcher you are left feeling that you were afforded an opportunity to really get to know this man.

Past life

Malusi includes a photograph of himself on his time-line taken at two weeks old, well dressed in white, woollen baby clothes, surrounded by soft toys. Malusi's life began with the strong support of

his maternal grandmother as his primary caregiver. A photograph of her, smartly dressed looking serene and composed, is included on his time-line.

> *I was raised by my grandmother, that is my mother's mother, she raised me up, she used to do everything for me while I was still in primary school, wash my clothes, like do everything for me, you know, in my mother's absence.*

Malusi describes his grandmother as a strong woman who raised him and his cousins:

> *(uhh), grandmother, (uhh), there she is [pointing to timeline] she passed away, (uhh), in 2009, 17th of December, (uhh), she is a, I'd say, a very strong person, she likes children a lot, she raised her children, 6 of them, my 3 uncles, and my two aunties and my mother, she had 6 children and all of her kids have children like her grandchildren, all her grandchildrens are raised by her… She really truly loved her grandchildren.*

Malusi describes his grandmother as a strict presence who was involved in all aspects of his life in primary school.

> *In primary school I was raised by my grandmother, she was very strict, so everything I do was in order, I didn't have negative friends or anything like that. (uhh), I was doing grade 3, I was a prefect from grade 3 up until grade 7… She was the rock in my family - Yes, about my neatness and everything because my grandmother used to do my laundry, iron for me, polish my shoes everyday before I went to school,*

Malusi's mother was not very present in his life growing up, she lived and worked in Johannesburg and only came home in December. There is no photograph of her in the past section of his time-line. A recent photograph of her is included under the present section together with his sister and niece.

> *She used to come in December holidays… I call my mother my aunt and my grandmother, I don't say grandmother, I say mom.*

Malusi's parents were separated early in his life, but despite this, his father played an active and supportive role in his life. Through his relationship with his father he acquired a strong sense of cultural and traditional heritage. At the beginning of the first interview he introduced himself to me as:

I was born in 1993, 17th of June by [name of his mother] and [name of his father] from a clan known as [name of clan name].

The biological father in the Xhosa people is so important because I have to call myself with my father's clan. My father was [name of clan name], so I am [name of clan name] and a child of mine will become [name of clan name], you know, so my mother doesn't know what my father's clan usually do when there's like a traditional ceremony or something like that.

His father was actively involved in his initiation/ circumcision and "*insisted that [Malusi] should go to the bush at the age of 17, instead of 18 when most boys go*".

…my father always wanted to see me as a man before he dies and (uhh) that exactly what happened (hhh) - three months after that when I came back, three months after that my father passed away – (uhh) he just fell down and passed away the doctors say, in the post mortem, they say he had heart attack.

Malusi's father was a mechanic and taught him to drive and work on cars from when he was 7 years old.

He used to put me on top of him and I used to drive and each and every time I was trying to fix a car, (uhh) you know a CV joint, before he changed the CV joint he used to take a short drive with the car trying to turn left and right trying to feel if the CV joint was broken. So I used to watch him driving this car.

Malusi's father believed in the importance of education and gaining a skill that would make him employable, this led to him applying to attend *Ithemba's* after school program.

At the time I wanting to quit school my father begged me to do at least something, maybe even if its going to be a course that would make me at least gain a skill that would get me work.

So when I came to [Ithemba] I thought they would maybe help me find this course at the college, but when I got here I got the explanation so I realised I need to go back to the high school and finish up the high school then go to the tertiary institution, so that's how I got to [Ithemba].

So the ASP [after school program] really changed my life a lot you know. And in the year end last year after joining the ASP I received a certificate that says it's a year completion awarded to me. To me, you know, that was like an achievement because I really never thought I could even finish one week in the ASP but because I've got like the whole year completed to me it was an achievement.

Malusi's appreciation of the exposure and opportunities that *Ithemba* has afforded him is humbling:

After I joined the ASP I got exposed to many opportunities, to many things that I thought I would see myself you know.

The [school in London] kids came on a camp... I never thought I could share a seat with a person from another country but because I joined the ASP it showed me that anything is possible, I could like reach anything I want to do as long as I work hard for it.

…this shows the garden at Ithemba, the nutrition that we have been provided with at Ithemba you know. I have never met a dietician before but until I joined the ASP I got that opportunity to meet the dietician. If you live in the township for you to meet a dietician you need to pay money and that's one of the things we cannot afford, we also see the dentist, because if you feel sore then you have to see them. If you feel like you have to meet the dentist or the doctor you can.

Ithemba features twice on Malusi's timeline under his present life, with the caption *"first grade nutrition offered by [Ithemba] Education Fund"*.

Malusi has many interests and passions and likes physical exercise. He is passionate about ballroom dancing and came third at the South African Championships in 2011. Two photographs of Malusi and his dancing partners winning these awards are included on his timeline.

I have also done basketball, I have played rugby, I played soccer, but the only thing I love is dancing. I'm so in loving with it.

I like to do physical activities. I usually wake up and jog to do some exercise before I go to school. And then when I go to school I do a fast walk to school. Like when I came here, I walk fast. In the rain! I like to walk fast.

That's why I like dancing. That's the fun physical activity that I do.

Through the support of his grandmother in his early years and the encouragement of his father, Malusi did well at school and was well liked by his teachers and friends. Malusi's timeline features seven photographs with him and different friends along with the captions "*happy moments*", "*My valueable friend*", "*These are the happy moments*".

Malusi won numerous awards at school and described primary school as "a good time". His school life features prominently on his timeline with photographs of his high school and his grade 12 accounting teacher.

Malusi describes three distinct life-changing events over the course of the two interviews. The first is a story of how he fell in with the wrong crowd while at high school and had a brush with the law at the age of 14:

The story begins with his grandmother being admitted to hospital with TB where she stayed intermittently for two years before passing away.

It was (uhh) 2000, I think it was 2007, December, (uhh), yes 2007 December, grandmother was in [name of TB hospital], so I thought to myself I had everything, every freedom that I need, because that person that restricted me was not at home… I was living there with my three uncles, my two aunts they were living separately from us. My three uncles didn't have much to say to me when I arrive at home at night, maybe I arrive at home at 10 o'clock at night, they can't shout at me, so the person that was doing that was in hospital, so I thought I had freedom and it was December.

Malusi also describes his move from the safe environment of primary school into high school as difficult and admits that he fell in with the wrong crowd and succumbed to their peer pressure.

I'd say I didn't make the right choices of friends when I arrived at the high school.

… most of the boys in my neighbourhood, I used to hang around with them even though they are older than me, that was when I got that bad mind.

… smoking cigarettes on school premises, some of them they even bring alcohol on the school premises, they shout at teachers, you know they, they break all the school rules, they bunk the

classes and they skip the the the school, they skip the school line, the school fences during break time and they don't come back after break.

On the night of the story, Malusi attended a mketi [a large welcoming party for those men returning from their month in the bush]. Because of his older friends he was allowed to be with the men, despite being a boy himself.

So I even went into that room and they tried to chase me out, so I went to call this old guy - and this guy was armed, so he went back to the room and told each and every one that no one will chase me, if anyone chase me from that room he would go and speak to him first. So nobody wanted to chase me then - So I stayed in that room and we drank a lot of alcohol.

The older man then asked Malusi to take a bag to his house and leave it in his yard.

So I took this bag, I didn't even search what's inside the bag and I just walked and I saw this police van coming, it was very far, if I knew what was in the bag or if I did anything I still have a chance to run away, but I knew that I did not have any knife, anything that was against the law so I just walked so slowly until the police reach me.

The police searched the bag and found stolen goods and arrested Malusi. He stayed in prison for four days. After being interviewed by a social worker and appearing in front of a magistrate he was released.

…when [the social worker] came back she told me that she believes my story and that this is the first time I got arrested and when I went to the court of law the magistrate told me that (uhh), I should never set my foot in prison again or else he would bring up this case again. And I told him that this is not a place for me I will never set my foot here again.

The event forced him to re-evaluate his life and choice of friends.

…I don't wanna hang around with the friends that I used to hang out with because I even got arrested for hanging around with the wrong guys, you know, so to me being arrested, I know it is a bad thing, but it taught me something about my life, it was a lesson in disguise.

The second life-changing event was Malusi's *ulwaluko* in which his father played an active and supportive role.

Being in the bush was (uhh), like one of the things that played a big role in changing my life, it really changed my life…. So my father knows his own rules and when I go to the bush my father is passing his rules, like he's teaching me how they do things at his home. He's trying to teach you how to do things as Ntoqwenas so that when I also have a child I will walk him in this path of Ntoqwena, that's what happens. That's why I find it so important.

My father went there everyday - and even my uncles, they also came

[My father] was there and that's exactly what makes me happy you know, before he passed away he made me a man, he was in my Mketi and three months after that, then he passed away, knowing that I'm a man and he has already taught me lot

[The mketi] it's the most wonderful day of your life, the one you never forget.

The month in the bush gave Malusi time to reflect on his life and make some important decisions.

And in the bush was when I first I need to like take a responsibility for my life I need to exclude myself from friends like this and this and this, these are the things that I need to do, these are the things that I don't need to do.

I in the bush that I still need to go back to school before I even came to the ASP [after school program at Ithemba] and when I came to ASP I would say that the facilitators in the ASP they didn't have to work that much in getting me straight to the line because I was already a man and I know what a man's behaviour should be. If you understand what I'm saying.

The last life-changing story Malusi told was of a camp he attended with Ithemba on a game reserve in the Karoo. He was the only straight man amongst a gay man and six young women. Given the paternalistic world he comes from this interaction gave him insight into and exposure to people he doesn't usually interact with in such close confines.

…you know psychologically or - really I was the only male - and I got to be exposed to an environment that I am not usually in. I got to be friends with a lot of girls, got to be involved in their conversations which is what I'm not usually been, girls talking, calling me. I had to show interest in what they talking about so we can have a common conversation, cos I'm the only male so I have to talk about what they want.

Malusi had to share a room with the gay man which took him out of his comfort zone, but enabled him to review his prejudices and change his views:

> *And (uhh) sharing a room with a gay guy was one of the things I never thought I would do, before we go to the camp we were chatted with Aphiwe [Ithemba counsellor] and he told me that I was (uhh) going to share a room with a gay guy. I never thought I would - I also told him that its impossible, that would never happen, I would not be able to do that. - But then we got there and (uhh), I had to, there was no one else. I didn't complain, I just shared the room with him.*

In a very mature way, Malusi discusses how in his own mind he drew boundaries around the conversations that he was prepared to have with the gay man for fear of offending him.

> *I was comfortable. (uhh), but I told myself I'm going to draw some boundaries. (uhh), I had to make sure in the conversation that there are certain things that we should not try to talk about, there are certain things that we can talk about. I didn't want to talk about relationships with him, guys' lifestyle or boys' lifestyle. If I'm talking to him about boys maybe he will in a way think I am trying to offend him or being gay or something like that sooo… we had to just pick general things and try to motivate one another on mainstream things, you know, that's the kind of conversation we had. Like how we spent the rest of the day, how did I found today, the things we did, like how to cook. He seemed to work things the way I wanted them to work out. I showed him respect. We became good friends. It felt as though it was something good that I have gained.*

Malusi valued the opportunity to overcome his prejudices, especially as he would like to work with people and within the community in his career and recognised that he couldn't discriminate against others and successfully do this work:

> *You know, I want to work with people and during my work I will - The kind of work that I [want to] do requires a person who does not discriminate, and sharing a room with a gay means that you cannot discriminate. I have to sleep with this person…*

Intimating that the ultimate vulnerability is to sleep next to someone.

Malusi admits that the camp also changed his view of women:

I spent days with girls and I didn't discriminate anyone. [Girls are] just like us, they just like us males, they think like us, they do things like just like us, (uhh), its like, (uhh), a person should not be, I learnt that like a person should not be stereotyped because males think that they are better than females and stuff like that but - ever since I've been to this camp I've that no one is better than you, its just a person who trains his mind or her mind to work the way he or she wants it to work. That's what I've learned about girls

He says that the camp also taught him to control his anger through an incident where he was pushed into a pool by one of the rangers and couldn't swim. He wanted to get into a physical fight with this ranger who thought the incident was funny. But Malusi managed to control himself and remove himself from the situation. He also had to participate in activities that he thought were "boring" but had to persevere "just for the sake of respecting the person who is in charge of this activity"

Malusi concluded:

This camp was a life changing event, it made me realize a lot about me, like the things that I've been through, the things that I've seen, never thought I could do… I saw a lot of qualities about me that I liked. I found an opportunity to explore another side of me, you know, try to feel what they feeling.

Malusi displays numerous characteristics and traits through his open and generous discussion. He assumes leadership roles at school, in his interests and in his relationships. He was head boy in primary school and is the president of the student representative council at high school. He is an award winning ballroom dancer and respected as a leader amongst friends and peers. Malusi is self-assured and despite being aware of his achievements, not arrogant.

…yeah, and I was very bright, I had too many certificates but I don't know where they are now. I thought I should have bring them, but… my grandmother know where they are, the sad part is that I can't go to her grave and ask her where did she put them.

(uhh) what makes me really happy - its achieving, each and every time I achieve something then I become happy.

In his narrative he displays responsibility, good organisation skills and emotional intelligence. He has a detailed timetable of his exams and study schedule up to his exams. He remarks on how when he was taken to a class at UCT by Ithemba that you have to be responsible for yourself.

> *…some of them [students] are chatting about what happened in the party yesterday, some of them are busy with their facebook pages, some of them are busy on Mixit, while the lecturer is busy with his or her question down there, like I've seen that you've got to be responsible for yourself, you know, nobody is pushing you from behind, if you wanna come 5 minutes before the class leaves, its up to you.*

Malusi prides himself in his ability to think independently. He is critical of his girlfriend's father who presides over his household because he is the father and man of the house:

> *He is that kind of a person that says something and expects it to be done. Its either things are done his way or nothing else can be done and nobody has a right to ask questions on how he does things in his house. That's the kind of man he is ((quietly and seriously spoken)). It's hard for me to take it like that.*

Malusi's name and the pride attached to his name are important to him. As mentioned above, he introduces himself to me by his full name and clan name. He also refers to his name when he speaks of his matric results:

> *My teacher said that our names will be in the newspaper, but if we don't study hard and do well our name will lose letters and be incomplete. So I need to study hard so my full name can be in the newspaper.*

Malusi has a natural curiosity and desire for knowledge. He takes pride in the fact that he can fix things, a skill learned from his father and uncle.

> *(uhh), my uncle is an electric student at, (uhh), [name of school] and he also did electricity at [name of school]. So each and every time I try to fix something I used to be there and I got to learn how to fix things. And also my father was a mechanic, so he used to do cars right in front of me and I used to sometimes help him to do the cars, so that's where I got to learn some part, some kind of a things in fixing a car.*

Malusi displays clearly defined values and boundaries in his life, illustrated through the story of why he didn't attend his matric dance. He was involved with the fundraising for the dance and despite raising almost enough money to pay for the venue and the food the teachers wanted an extra R200 per learner.

…so I've found it (uh uh), a lot of corruption happening, so I was not interested because I didn't wanna pay 200 for corruption, the teachers were taking that 200 for themselves.

The teachers tried to get him to come to the dance, but he refused.

They tried, they even gave me a chance to come even if I didn't pay that 200 rands. But that would have been worse because then all my friends would be losing their money and not me. Ahh, some, they went to that matric farewell and they didn't even pay a cent. It's because they are good friends with those teachers.

Malusi displays a strong sense of community.

*…you know even if you might not realize it, you are not living alone and when you live in a community like this, (uhh) - the community **is** doing something for you, like if they are, like fighting crime against the community, even if you are not the one that is being robbed or you are not the one whose house is being broken into, but its because of the community's fighting that they are also fighting that for you because once the criminals realise that the community is fighting against crime and they will not do crime and you will also not be a victim of that crime because the community fought for you, you know, so this is what I wanna do back for the community.*

On his timeline he refers to "the important services that are rendered to me by the Government" with pictures of the [name of township in which he lives] library and a picture of the [name of township in which he lives] Clinic where *"I used to get my healthcare when I was young"*.

Future life

Following on from Malusi's strong sense of community is his desire to work amongst the community and protect them.

I would like to protect my community [from] crime.

His timeline features a photograph of a police-van with the caption *"This is what I wanna do (Protect the Community)"*

He has a number of options with this as his goal to choose from. In the first interview he spoke specifically about wanting to become a forensic psychologist. His paternal grandfather, who died

when Malusi was less than a year, worked in the Government forensic department. The interest in psychology arose from a guidance teacher who spoke about psychology.

> *Like what does the word psychology mean, like what is psychology and I've, since my guidance teacher explained a lot about the (uhh) psychology, I've its who I want to be, you know, through the experiences that I've got I like to listen to peoples' stories and I always like to advise people, to comfort them, I've this is who I want to be, but I don't just wanna do any kind of psychology, I would like to do forensic psychology and forensic psychology is the one that deals with people who do crimes in a pattern.*

He also has a number of other career interests as his guidance teacher advised him that *"if then something happens that I can't reach that goal of mine I have something to fall on."* He also has an interest in social work, the military and the police force.

> *I realise I wanted to go to the military or be a policeman. They also train people there to become professionals. So I can also study when I'm there.*

It is very evident that Malusi has an appreciation of hard work and commitment, especially when speaking about the "bad friends" he got involved with in high school.

> *[Those bad friends], some of them are still in the township, some of them are in prison, some of them are working but they don't earn as much as they need*

Malusi would like to continue his father's legacy by having a large family

> *Ahhh, its obviously a Xhosa, I'd like to have even 12 children… You know my father had 3 childrens and I'm sure in the place that he's in he wanted to expand the family! So that's what I wanna do on his behalf, I wanna expand the family, so the [name of clan] got to be strong.*

While he intends to continue supporting his community in the township in which he lives, he would like to live elsewhere for the sake of his children.

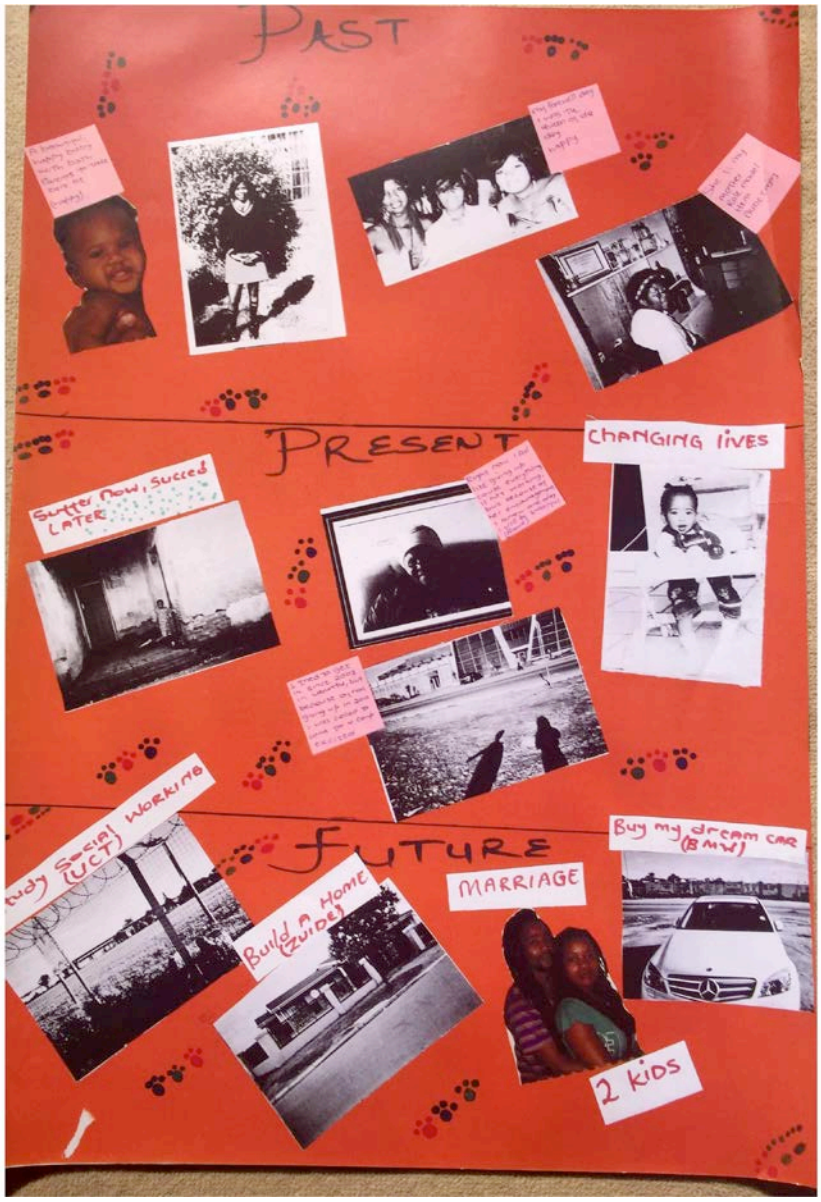
> *Ahhh, when I've reached my goals and I'm successful, I don't think I'll stay in [name of township], but I would like to work for [name of township] not to stay in [name of township]. I don't want my children to grow up in the environments that I grew up on, you know, growing up in the townships you grow up in a place where you've got to adapt to many*

environments that you see along your way. If you see like, the problem that the youth faces today is wanting to adapt to the environment they are in at that moment, you know, when you grow up in a place where there are a lot of people doing bad things, you also wanna be cool or you also wanna be recognised as the best person, so you also wanna do that. So I want my children to grow up in a place that there's not all these things that's happening around you. Like most of the children in the township they go to the taverns, they wanna be cool because other kids like in the same age groups as us in the taverns also wanna do that.

Malusi's ambitions are illustrated with the inclusion of two photographs on his timeline of a Mercedes Benz motorcar and a photograph of a large house with a brightly lit swimming pool. *"This is my future house!!!" with the exclamation marks signally some humour! "This is my future car "no doubt"*. He ends the second interview by saying:

Yes, I am excited about my future

Nobomi – Caring for others



Nobomi appears to be a quietly spoken, sullen and despondent young woman whose appearance was unkempt. This is very different from the two photographs she has included of herself on her timeline both illustrating an attractive, smiling, well-dressed young girl.

Nobomi matriculated at the end of 2011 and has no money to upgrade her matric results, which were not good enough for acceptance into university. She is currently unemployed, carrying out small jobs wherever she can find them.

Nobomi is one of the few participants that lives with both of her parents, albeit a difficult and tough living arrangement. She remained silent for a long time after I asked her the standard opening

question and eventually asked me to ask her specific questions, as she didn't know where to start. As it was difficult to entice Nobomi to speak about her life I referred to her timeline often in the interview. She had very little energy and enthusiasm about her life and her future.

The only time Nobomi became animated and laughed was when she told stories that depicted herself in a negative light. While these stories demonstrated that she has a sense of humour and an ability to laugh at herself, they left me as the interviewer feeling slightly uncomfortable.

Past life

Nobomi was born in the township in which *Ithemba* operates and lives with her *"two parents"* and her younger sister. It is unusual for a child from this township to live with both parents, normally children live with only one parent, a grandmother or in a child-headed household. Nobomi includes the following quote on her timeline next to a photograph from a magazine of a baby:

> *A beautiful, happy baby with both parents to take care of (happy).*

Nobomi has eight 'cousin sisters' from her father's side and two from her mother's side.

She describes her relationship with her mother as close.

> *My relationship with my mom is very special I love my mom because I know she has been through a lot in the past, she didn't give up.*
>
> *I think [I get my strength] from my mom - because she always tell me that everything is happening for a reason, so there will be my time, she gives me strength.*

On her timeline under the 'past' section she refers to her mother as *"my role model, my hero, my pride"* next to a photograph of her mother. When asked what makes her mother her role model she replies:

> *Cos she has two older children and she left them with her mother, but she didn't do that with us, she kept on supporting with us and didn't abandon us. She abandon the two children, but I think it's right that she didn't do that with us*

Present life

On her timeline under her 'present' section attached to another photograph of her mother she has written a quote saying:

> *…right now I feel like giving up because everything is not working, but because of her [mother's] encouragement I know one day that I will be successful"*

She gives an inkling of her mother being neglectful by pointedly telling me that

> *…when I was young I had a colic and she gave me a drink and I slept for two days without wake up*

Her mother has a job, but her father is unemployed

> *…my father is supporting us by his by his grant, he is getting a grant.*

Nobomi's relationship with her father is not as close as it is with her mother, she is scared of him. When asked why there is no photograph of her father on her timeline she replies:

> *No, I didn't take a picture of him*

Both sets of her grandparents have passed away.

Nobomi has recently taken on the responsibility of looking after her 4 year old niece whose mother, Nobomi's 'cousin sister', was recently admitted to hospital with TB. This child appears to have given Nobomi a purpose.

> *This is my sister [referring to the photograph on her timeline of a little girl with the quote "changing lives"] whose child she, my sister gave her to me, but she didn't gave her to me, I took her from her because she did not care for her she didn't feed her or take her to school, so I do that. I took her to my home so that she went to school and I give her every, everything and I give her pap and tea.*

When I asked her whether it was a challenge to look after her young niece she said she didn't find it a challenge at all, but rather that she loved looking after her and *"loved her a lot"*. Nobomi's voice lifts and she becomes more animated when speaking about her.

Despite being a prefect at school she doesn't regale me with her achievements, rather mentioning her shortfalls and that she was not very good at sport.

Nobomi refers to the fact that her friends are very important to her but that she hasn't seen many of them since leaving school. She says she doesn't like to party, but drinks sometimes although once when she drank she *"was not well in the morning"*. She refers to two friends in the interview.

> *I have a friend - she is studying to be a chemist so she comes here on holiday, and we do go to Mvela and she buy me a Coca Cola and herself her alcohol and we go to braai and then we go home at 10 o'clock*

When asked what makes her happy, Nobomi says that helping other people and playing a card gambling game on the streets makes her happy.

> *Its when I am helping someone, because when I was in [name of place] there was a lady that was calling me and she say I should help her pick up her bags. She called me to help her. So I feel good about to help her. Some other people I help to fetch water for them and I said to my sister I think that makes me very happy.*

> *…(uhh), we play cards, and we play money, like if the number is 8 and you have 8 then you take the money. I made ninety-five rand the other day. [It makes me feel] happy and I do my hair with the money.*

> *I probably play 5 days a week. It depends when I do have the money. If I do not have the money I will stay at home.*

The players hide the fact that they are gambling otherwise the police would chase them away. When asked how she feels when she loses the ten rand it costs to play the game she replies:

> *I just say I want to go back there*

When asked whether she plays the game only to win money or whether it is for entertainment, she replies:

> *In [name of place] the people they stand on corners and gossiping, so I want to be away from that, that's why I play. And to win money. After that I go home and cook and sleep.*

Nobomi says that her clan name is important to her and that her family practice the ancestral traditions and rituals of their clan when they are invited to other peoples' homes as her family doesn't have a home of their own.

Nobomi's life appears to be full of challenges and hardships. Under her 'present' section on her timeline she includes a photograph of a derelict building with a small child in the foreground with the words "suffer now, succed [sic] later." When I ask what she means by this she says

> *If, if you expect anything on a silver platter you don't achieve anything because you know how to work you become stronger.*

The first challenge she mentions is that her family have never had their own home and have moved at least seven times in her life.

> *When I was growing up, I grew up staying in different homes because we don't have our own home.*

> *[We lived] in a shack home, or to other house, my sister's father gave us a home and then he chase us and we lived there and we lived to other peoples' houses.*

The constant moving has made attending school difficult.

> *It has affected me badly, cos when we moved to [name of place], we have to go for a long way to school. When we lived in [another township], we had a school [there], but now it took long to go home. And we have to leave early in the morning to go to school, so it is not easy.*

The family now stay in a flat which *"doesn't belong"* to them.

> *And the home we have now, its raining there, its very cold and it only has two rooms, no privacy, if we have to wash we have to wash in front of everyone.*

The second major challenge in Nobomi's life is that her parents both drink and her father is abusive when he drinks. Discussing this makes her very distressed and tearful.

> *I know [my mom] had a big problem when I was young and I heard from my father that she had always drunk*

When they drunk they do fight

I want [my mother] to be happy and to drink makes her happy, so she can drink, but they must not fight, not fight. [weeps] It's because of the things that they does, when I had to watch my dad pick up my mom. And I watch him beat up my mom, and she would cry, she would cry, and she bled and now she got a big scar [sobs]. [They last fought] about 3 months back. He didn't beat her, but they had a fight, but we, we stopped it. Me and my sister.

I don't blame him, I just blame the booze and the drink. When they are sober they do not fight, they make jokes for us.

When asked if she is scared of her father she replies:

Yes, but not too much. He never beaten us. I'm just worried that one day he will beat us.

Nobomi appears to be hopeless and often refers to "*things not working out*" for her.

I feel like giving up because not everything is working the way I want to. I don't see how I am going to go to university. I don't have the money [to upgrade my matric results], my parents don't have the money. My parents want me to work but I can't find the job.

She manages to find small jobs infrequently but says other than when she is playing cards for money she is bored.

There are elderly people that like to call me and and give me money so when they they need to shop or get things.

Ehh, there is a man, whose wife is living in in Cape Town, so he calls me to clean his home and gives me 20 rand

Nobomi has very few support structures. She doesn't see friends and doesn't go to church often.

Its not that I don't like church, I get lazy

When prompted to tell specific stories of her life, Nobomi tells a few stories at her own expense. While these stories indicate that she has a sense of humour and the ability to laugh at herself they do not leave her in a positive light.

The first story she told was when she was made a prefect and her mother sheared off her hair before the assembly where she was called up to receive her prefect's badge.

> *At the hall, assembly, the morning after [I was appointed a prefect], my father, my mother I told her I was going to be called up at the assembly so I should be neat. My mother took a scissors and cut my hair. Because she wanted me to be beautiful when I go up there. And then my name was called and (uuh), yo, the whole school laughed at me. The whole school laughed at me because of the way my hair was. And I thought I was beautiful, but I was laughed and then the other teacher said, she looks beautiful, she stood up for me and she said I looked beautiful and they all looked ugly, I'm beautiful more than them. So I feel good because she stood up for me.*

The second story she told was how she was good at spelling because she read the newspaper on the toilet.

> *I'm good at spelling because when I grow up I love to read the newspaper. Yes, when I go to the toilet, I take a newspaper… And then you get the smell, you don't hear the smell.*

She also told me how when she was a prefect she used to take the younger childrens' lunch.

> *The stories that when I was a prefect, I like that, I will eat their lunches off the younger children ((laughs)) - I will eat the children's lunch. Yes ((laughs)) I will call them and if they have cake then I will take from them - Not all of them, I take one slice.*

Future life

While Nobomi has dreams and plans for her future, she appears unconvinced that these plans will come to fruition.

> *I want to study social working, if not social works, a career where I'll be helping people. So I build a home for my parents, get married and have two kids.*
>
> *[I want to do] some job where I can serve people.*
>
> *I'm looking for (uhh), looking for a job so that I can save [to go to university]*

On her timeline under the 'future' section she includes a number of quotes next to photographs:

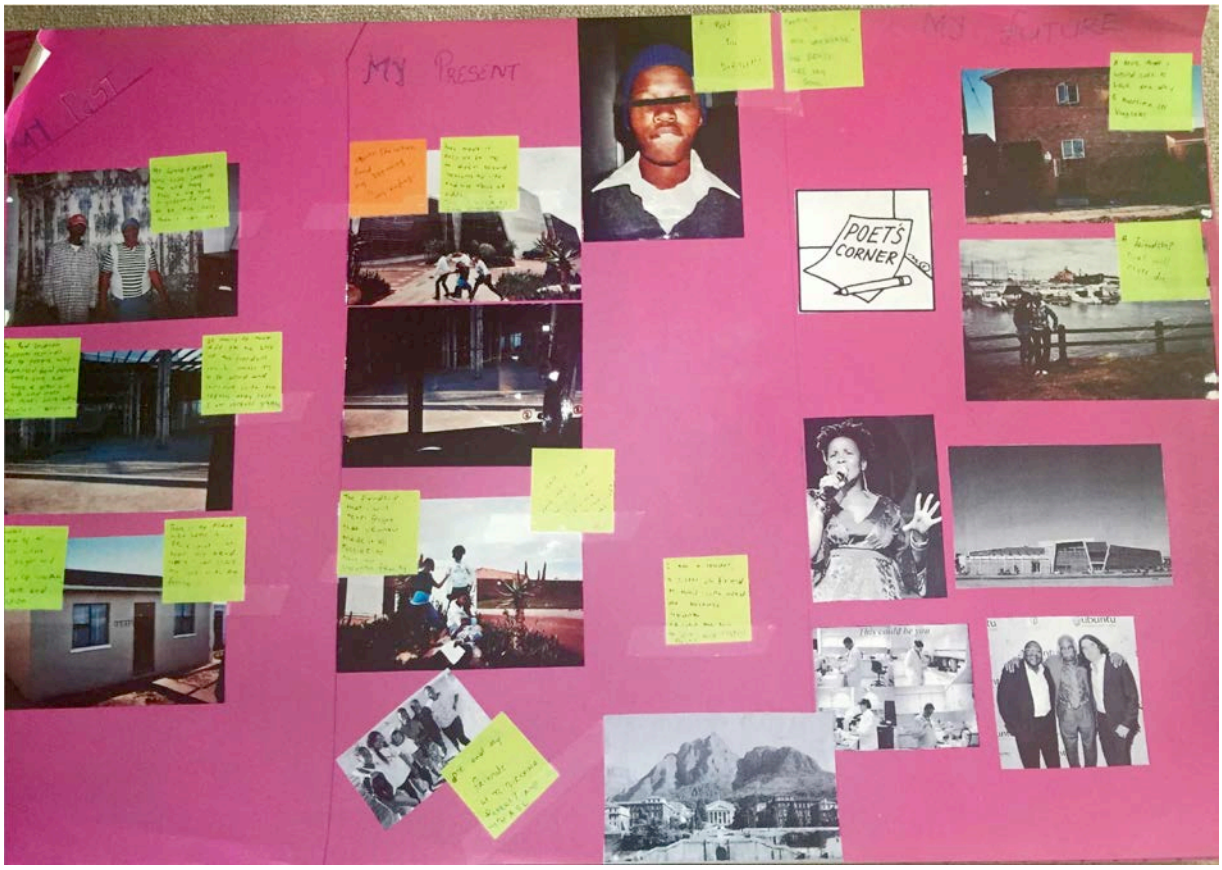
“Study social working (UCT)”

“Build a home [name of township]” next to a photograph of a large home with a satellite dish and a front wall.

“Marriage”, “2 kids” next to a photograph of two children taken from a magazine

“Buy my dream car (BMW)” next to a photograph of a Mercedes Benz.

Nozuko – The poet



Past life

Nozuko is a softly spoken girl who projects a sense of strength, inner confidence and resilience. She wears a hat which the *Ithemba* counsellor tells me she wears because she believes it makes her look like a poet; one of her favourite pastimes is writing

She very pointedly tells me how she was the planned baby of two loving parents, an unusual occurrence amongst her community members:

> *I am the gift to them - I am their only child, they love me to bits, shooo… How grateful I am to have amazing parents that are willing to give up everything they have to make sure that I am happy and healthy. I have parents who never abandoned me just to fulfil their own pleasure. I am grateful that I am not the product of mistake that I am not the child of acident and that I am the most important person in their lives… They were there when I said my first word, when I took my first step they were there*

She describes how the first 8 years of her life were happy and content:

> *I had everything that I could ever wish for, my life was going so smooth. On my 8th birthday 2002 that was the last celebrated birthday that I had with my father.*

A month after her 8th birthday her father got sick and was diagnosed HIV positive and was hospitalised.

> *I still remember the time I visited him in hospital in (xxx). He was so tiny you could see only his bones and that broke my heart to pieces to bitter death. That was the last time I saw him because my mom wouldn't allow me to go and visit him no more.*

Nozuko feels guilty about his death:

> *On the 15th of Novmber 2002 the last thing he said before he died he said "Call my daughter Nozuko I want to see her." I wasn't there to say goodbye. I sometimes blame myself for his death that I am the reason why he splitted up with my mom and got himself AIDS.*

Nozuko describes how it took a long time for her to accept as an 8 year old that her father wasn't coming back:

> *I lived in denial saying that he was still alive and he was looking upon me and I could feel his spirit and presence within me. On the day of his burial seeing his face I couldn't believe he was gone forever that I would no longer be seeing him by flesh but with spirit. I could feel seeing his coffin going down the ground, it took my breath away. Paying my last respect to him was the painful thing for an 8 year old to experience.*

Her father's family promised to take care of her now that her father had gone, but they never kept this promise resulting in Nozuko and her mother often going hungry as her mother struggled to find work.

> *His family promised to take care of me, but they said such empty words, broken promises that they could never fulfil.*

In 2005, three years after losing her father her mother became ill, Nozuko was 11 at the time and describes how she was struck with fear at the thought of losing her mother as well.

I was scared, frightened to loose her too. I couldn't concentrate at school because on my mind I was thinking about her, my grades started dropping. I didn't know what to do or what to say to make her feel better. I would wake up in the middle of the night to look at her if she was still alive feeling her heart beat, beating against my heart.

Due to her mother's illness, their desperate financial position and the castigation they suffered from their community they had to move to stay with her maternal grandparents which meant she had to move schools which didn't help her grades.

We had to move because everyone would peep in the room just to laugh at her, that used to make me angry and that bothered my mom. I could feel her pain inside of me but I couldn't take away the pain from her.

Initially her grandparents were not very supportive of her mother:

My grandparents would ill-treat her calling her by names. Every time I saw my mom crying I would wipe away those tears telling everything is going to be alright even though I knew that was a false belief for me too. But my grandparents came around and started supporting her.

Nozuko describes her anger towards the disease that took her father and was threating to take her mother, but also displays strength way beyond that expected from an 11 year old

It became my enemy, I started developing abomination against AIDS… My hatred against AIDS started growing and bottling up inside. I blamed my father for infecting her. But things got better, my mom got A.R.V's that made her feel better but they had their side effects. I always wished I could take away her pain but I couldn't. Instead I motivated her to get stronger because I was the reason for her to live. My childhood was hard.

In 2006 Nozuko met one of the founders of *Ithemba* who was a Geography and IsiXhosa teacher.

My mom somehow met him and she told him about her story. He told her to go to [Ithemba]and my mom did and she got assisted at [Ithemba], they build her up again to know that Beyond AIDS there's life, Beyond Ignorance there's wisdom. We got enrolled at [Ithemba] since 2006 and [Ithemba] has been the biggest part of our lives. They transformed our lives and I am forever grateful.

Since 2006 I have been part of the [Ithemba] family, I started going to camps engaging with other students that were in a similar situation as mine and that actually made me believe that it was not only us who were in the same situation.

[Ithemba] started providing food parcels, support group for my mom, uniform, stationary, ASP [after school program], camps for me etc. In 2009 I started attending ASP which had helped me a lot in my academics and self growth. My talent for writing poems and stories groomed at [Ithemba], now I am the free spirited person. My journey from hardships to the new journey with [Ithemba].

[Ithemba]will provide bursary for me to study biomedical technology in UCT [University of Cape Town], and [Ithemba]is helping me to publish my first book. I have books and pens in my bag and I have a uniform to wear and I have a smile on my face. It's all thanks to [Ithemba].

I was elected to be part of the Engen maths and science school which is offered by Engen and I'm attending their Saturday classes on Saturdays. They offered me English, Maths and (uhh) science. So that is, [Ithemba]has given me the opportunity to view that life is not just about obstacles but life is good, that there is life beyond that I can live within the measures of life. Every time [Ithemba]has a function I'm always performing that helps me to, helps me to have confidence to speak in front of people.

Nozuko's timeline includes three photographs under her 'past' section. One of her grandparents, with the quote "*My grandparents who took care of me and they play a big role in grooming me to be the best that I can be.*" In my discussion with Nozuko she tells me how close she is to her grandmother and how she has inspired her:

She, she's just an amazing person and (uhh) I can talk to her about anything that I want to talk to her… she told me that life is not just about living that life is also about knowing that in order to be human you must have a support system around you and you needed to love yourself and respect. If you can love, if you can love yourself and just respect yourself then you can respect others as well so yeah

She also includes a photo of her home, a one roomed RDP house, with the quotes, "*My home is a place of all laughter, where cries begin and end. A place of warmth, care, love and protection.*

There is no place like home, a place where I can hide my head, where I can share my love with my family." She currently lives in this home with her grandparents, her mom, and her four uncles.

The third photograph included under the 'past 'section is of The Red Location Museum. The Red Location was one of the oldest black townships in Port Elizabeth and a site of many significant struggle events. MK (the former military wing of the ANC was established here. Nozuko includes the quote "*The Red Location Museum reminds me of people was departed from nature and make sure that I have a better life to live and make sure that I have a better educations. I embrace them. So many of them dies for the love of the freedom which makes me proud and continue with the legacy they left. I am forever grateful."* When I ask her about the photograph she replies that it is important to her "*knowing that I was the born free because I was born in 1994.*

Nozuko's family and the traditions that her family follow are important to her. She says her clan name identifies her despite the fact that her father's family don't care about her.

> *[My clan name] shows who I am. I think those people who say their clan name is not important to them have lost some of themselves and where they came from*

Present life

The present section of her timeline has a prominently positioned photograph of herself with the quote "*A poet by birth"*. *Ithemba* and the friends she has made at *Ithemba* feature in three photographs with quotes stating how important *Ithemba* is in her life (*"[Ithemba]Education Fund, my beginning and my ending"*), and how it has enabled her to make special friends (*"I am a leader, a sister, a friend to those who need me because [Ithemba]taught me how to love and respect others."* She tells me that without *Ithemba* she "*would be like all the others kids in the location."*

At the time of the interview Nozuko was in grade 11. She is critical of the education system, the large classes (44 children in her class and 11 grade 11 classes in the school), and particularly the teachers:

> *…the problem is finding the proper education at school because most of the teachers are quite basic, they just take their leave and not worry whether we have that better education whether we are learning.*

She describes how her class have to take responsibility for their own education rather than expecting that it will be provided for them.

> *I'm the class rep so I tell the class if you have a problem with math then you can come to me or any other people who are good at math so they can assist you. We usually have a class in break time where you can just do physics or math, it depends on how the class would like to function. With my class we take charge for our education, teaching each other about certain things we don't know about… Some of the teachers support us, its our time though, break time. We sacrifice that time so we can learn and educate each other.*

Nozuko takes on leadership roles and is a proactive, self-starting young woman:

> *I'm the president of the poetry club at school and I'm also involved in the SCA which is the School Christian Association and I can't do basketball cos I'm coming to the after school program [at Ithemba]. I'm thinking of starting a poetry club which I can share my talent with others, but lots of people have that mentality that poetry is not for everyone, so I'm trying to find a way to connect them with poetry cos it's the way of motivating yourself to just live on with life.*

She shows me certificates of achievement in debating, school academics, attendance at *Ithemba*. She has just returned from a camp organised through *Ithemba* which was difficult, but taught her lessons:

> *It made me have a different view on how I look at life. It was hard, the camp, it taught me something that life isn't just about drum roll, its about obstacles that you have to overcome and that's what I basically learnt. And also that I can connect with nature which was awesome. The camp was the hardest camp that I went to but it was worth it, I enjoyed it.*

Church is important to Nozuko as the 'grooms' her spiritual needs and gives her a connection with God. She attends church on Saturdays and Sundays.

Her mother's health is now stable and she has a job washing dishes at a restaurant.

Her role models are her mother and her grandmother, one of the *Ithemba* founders, Nelson Mandela and Lebo Mashile, a poet.

Nozuko worries that the youth are forgetting about their roots and their culture

> *…they have that mentality of taking the Western route and stuff. I think that's a bad thing because they are losing their roots and their history and their heritage and who they are and where they have come from. I think it is important to keep a foot in where you have come from.*

Future life

Nozuko's dream is to go to UCT to study biomedical technology as she loves working with chemicals and she would like "*to find a cure for HIV and AIDS.*" She also dreams of publishing her own book, "*it isn't just a book, but a book that can motivate others.*' And opening an organisation to help people to write properly as she is worried that social media is destroying people's ability to write.

Nozuko's 'future' section of her timeline include photographs of a large house she would like to own one day in the township she currently lives, the *Ithemba* centre, the two *Ithemba* founders, her and a close friend, and the UCT campus. She tells me that *Ithemba* is as much part of her past as it is her future, for her *Ithemba* represents "*a place of joy and a place of hope*".

She has recently applied for a Transnet bursary

> *I have applied for that bursary in maths, science and English. Basically if you get that bursary then you have a guaranteed job at Transnet. I would have a better chance if I wanted to do engineering, but I'm not good at drawing and stuff.*

Nozuko states she is not interested in having a boyfriend or necessarily getting married

Phozisa – ‘Marked’ by the past



Past life

Phozisa was born in Umtata and lived with her mother and father, brother and sister until she was four years old when she moved to a city in the Eastern Cape to live with her grandmother. Recently she moved to live with her father. Her family members have moved often, her mother still lives in Umtata taking care of her blind aunt, her sister has recently moved to live with her mother and her brother has moved often between his father and his uncle.

One of the first stories Phozisa relays about her life is how she came to have a slightly scarred lip which clearly bothers her as she has been teased by other children growing up despite the fact that it is not highly noticeable.

> *… when I was 6 years old I was playing with my friends um in step, in the steps, in the steps (uhh), then we were climbing up and then jumping down and then it was my turn to jump down, I jumped and I fell with my face and I got, that’s when I got this [points to raised part on her lip, that I had not noticed before]. Yeah, then I cried a lot and they took me to my*

mother's place (uhh), in my area there are no ice blocks, there are nothings but, and the hospitals are too far, so I had to sit at home. Then this bump didn't go down it stayed like this, then I had to live with it. - it does [bother me] I think 4 years ago I went to do the operation, ja, but, I did it, but it failed. A lot of people don't see it. Sometimes I sit with them for about a week and only after that do they say, what happened to your lip? I would say, I'm like this. Then we I came here I went to [name]Primary School, all the kids were teasing me.

Despite this teasing she indicates that it made her stronger:

Ja, about my lip and that didn't push me down – (hhh) my friends they like to tease me a lot, but I don't mind what they say. Sometimes I wish I can leave school because of them because but I told myself that no one is going to make me fail.

Phozisa's early years were fraught with uncertainty and involved many moves as her family didn't have their own home so they would build 'shacks' on other people's property.

It was two house with, where we made shacks, two, then we went to live with my grandmother and we made a shack there and then my father got a shack house in [name of township].

On her timeline she includes a photograph of a makeshift building with the quote *"This is where we used to live with my folks and my 3 siblings. We used to make shacks in other people's back yards."* This was very unsettling for Phozisa growing up, she tells me *"It was so bad because (uhh) people they owners of the house of the houses they used to, when they are drunk they used to shout and shout and shout and shout, then they would chase us away."*

She includes a photograph of The Cosby family to depict her family with the quote *"In my family it is my mother, father, ~~2 6~~ 3 siblings and myself."* When I ask her why she has crossed the numbers out there is a long pause and no answer.

Present life

At the time of the interview Phozisa is in grade 11. She says the things that make her happy are playing, singing, watching TV. Her studies are important to her; she mentions often how important it is for her to do well at school.

Under the present section of her timeline she includes a photograph of her home *"This is where I live now. In this house I live only with my father."* In the interview she tells me though that her family life still involves a lot of uncertainty, she seems to move often between her father, her grandmother, and her mother who lives in Umtata. She is closest to her sister who is 9 years older than her.

Despite this disruption in her life, Phozisa is an involved student, taking part in debating, playing netball and singing in the choir. She has also recently started playing soccer, which she laughs about when she tells me saying *"its funny, like it's for boys, but I like it. I like to run and I like the coach. He makes us laugh, he's a jokester and a prankster."*

Ithemba and her friends are the other two inclusions on her timeline. A photograph of the *Ithemba* centre is included with the quote *"This is the place that is trying to make things like my future to happen. Where I get help with the things I suffer from."* And a photograph of two of her friends from *Ithemba* with the quote *"These are my friends. They encourage me to good things. I share my secrets with them."*

She also includes a photograph of herself with the quotes: *"This is myself. I am now in grade 11. My parents raised me to be a responsible person and I am working on that. I am proud of who I am."* She tells me in the interview that *"the way I see other children who are in the exact age I am in, I am better than them. Ja. Others they don't go to school, there's drinking and I don't."*

Phozisa also includes a photograph of her church with the quote *"My church where I go every Sundays."* When I ask her about church she says she loves it but doesn't go often.

Phozisa doesn't identify with her clan name and says that *"no, its not really important. To me It's just like a name which is going to fade because I will marry."*

When I ask Phozisa what the things in her life that are most important to her she replies: *"My family, that is the biggest. I believe in myself, I am confident. My friends, school. I even like doing homework, and the work we do at school. I like to take control because I am a member of the RCL (Representative of the council of learning). Like the school board. There are two from each class, I represent the students. The class chose me… Independence is important to me. I like to be in control of my own life.*

Future life

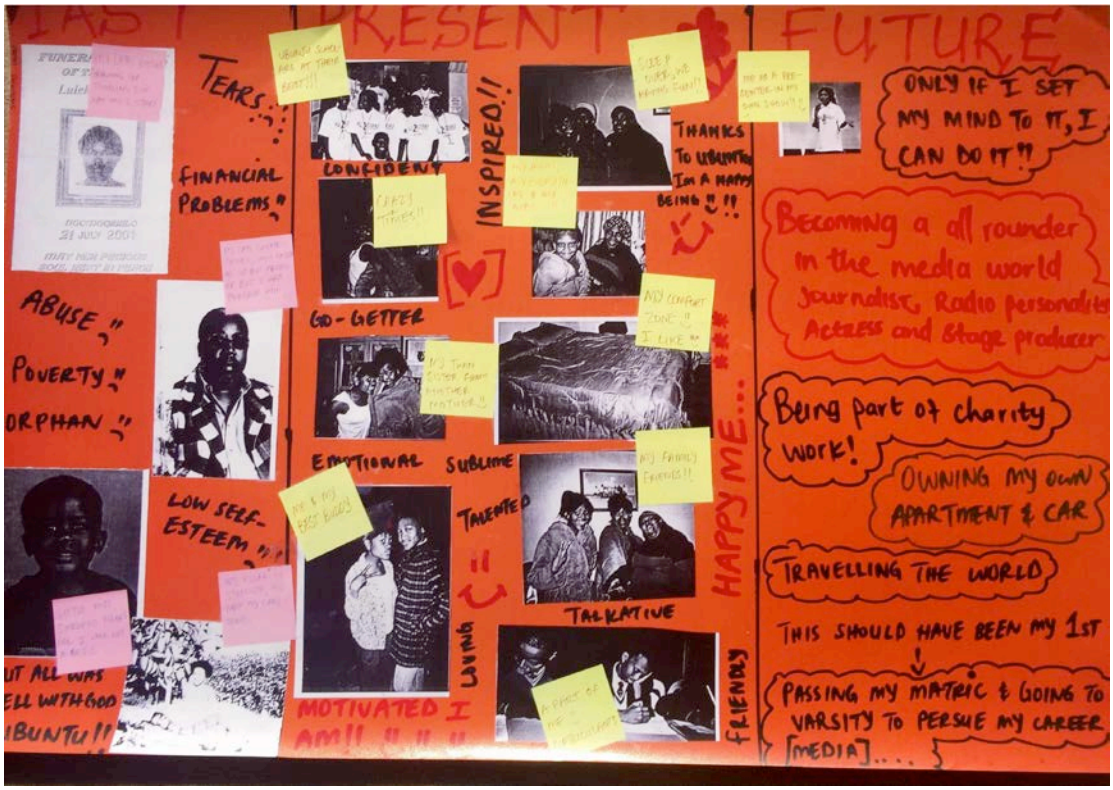
The future section of Phozisa's timeline includes a quote *"2 houses. One in the townships and 2nd one in suburbs."* She includes a photograph of a large house with the quote *"This is my dream house. I want to have a big house and near the area I live in now."* When we discuss this in the interview she indicates that her and her husband will live in the city, but that she will have a second house in the township where she currently lives, *"the one in townships I wanna help people in a way that when they meet they can come to me, I want my people, the people I live with now to depend on me to come to me to ask for things"*, displaying a reluctance to move away from her roots completely and not wanting to let down the people in her community. *"Like in town I'm gonna have the big, this big house with the family [refers to house on timeline] with all the rooms…"*

The other inclusions on her timeline for the future include photographs of a car *"I would like to have many cars not just one car. I would also like to have a car beautiful than this one"*; a magazine photograph of a smiling family, *"want to have a family of my own"*; a magazine shot of a graduate, *"want to be a graduate so I can be independent."*

Phozisa is unsure of what she would like to study at university, but says that ultimately she would like to run a business like *Ithemba* that helps people. She says she would like to study at UCT because she *"would like to see some other places and how they are doing things there."*

> *I would like to go on London because I saw the other group that were in South Africa from London and they were nice to us, so I thought that everyone in London must be nice. They were all friendly, so I think the people there are friendly like them. I don't want to go to America because those people from America wouldn't be nice to us. They wouldn't share with us*

Siphosethu – The survivor



Past life

Siphosethu tells a story of a girl born to a 17 year-old still at school, *"who didn't want me… I was taking away her teenage stage… and couldn't bear the idea of becoming a parent."* Her mother tried various ways of *"getting rid of [her]"*, once hitting her over the head with a vase. When Siphosethu was 18 months old her mother told her grandfather that she was going to give her up for adoption. Her grandfather's wife, *"a lovely woman… who is now my foster mother"* offered to take care of Siphosethu until such time that her mother could take care of her. Her mother left for Johannesburg to find work. When she returned home Siphosethu was told that her mother was her sister.

> *So my biological mother took off to Johannesburg claiming she was going to find work to make her life easier instead she became a prostitute, she'd come back to visit but I never knew she was my mom because I was being raised by her father which made her my sister so I was told.*

When Siphosethu was 3 years old her grandfather started sexually abusing her. He threatened to kill her with the gun he showed her if she told anyone.

> *When I was 3 then my grandfather started abusing us he'd beat my foster mom and when my foster mom wasn't around he'd call me and sexually harass me to some extent I'll never forget for the rest of my life and every time he did that he'd threatened me and say "if ever you tell someone about this I'll kill you after ripping your face off". So usually when I looked at myself in the mirror I'd imagine him ripping off my face so I couldn't tell anyone. I was terrified I'd shake just by hearing his voice I couldn't say a word, I was scared and he was the bread winner.*

At the age of 8 her school told her foster mother that they suspected she was sexually abused. Siphosethu described how scared she was to tell her foster mother about her grandfather sexually abusing her, concerned that she wouldn't believe her.

> *I thought that she was gonna take his side because usually at the time the child was being abused or raped they told their mothers and their mothers would usually say "Oh, my husband wouldn't do that." But then she told me that tomorrow when we wake up we gonna go to the police station, we not gonna tell him we going to the police station we gonna tell him that we visiting a friend. And then we went to the police station and I told them what was happening and then they sent me to be examined to find out if something was happening and then they found out that something really was happening so they took him, arrested him, but he was not put to jail, he was sent to live somewhere else.*

The way her foster mother handled this situation was hugely influential in Siphosethu's life and despite the fact that her grandfather was the major breadwinner which resulted in Siphosethu and her foster mother suffering financially, she describes it as a majorly positive event in her life, describing her foster mother on her art timeline as *"my pillar of strength, my mom, my everything"*.

> *Things started to change at home financially I had to move from an urban school to a local school, there were days where we'd go to bed without having supper.*

Around the same time, her biological mother, who Siphosethu thought was her sister, developed an AIDS related illness and died.

…I didn't go to her funeral cos they said at home that I was this bright child, I wanted to know each and every thing so you know at black funerals they usually read an obituary to say she left a father behind, and a child, so my name was gonna be there… I know I would have understood [that she was my mother]. So I didn't go to the funeral.

I never really cared because she was never really around and I had never met my biological father but he had also passed on. I saw her when she came back and I saw her when she was sick and saw her before she died, I only, I think I only saw her five times or four times…

Despite this trauma and being a *"very aggressive child who had a low self-esteem and didn't have any social skills"*, Siphosethu continued to perform well academically.

…funny thing is I was doing great with my academics and I had a diary where I'd write how I feel everyday, its during that period of time when I released my passion for poetry.

When Siphosethu was 10 she joined the *Ithemba* Education Fund as part of their after school program. The fund helped with school uniforms, securing grants and food parcels. They encouraged her to write poetry, which helped improve her self-esteem and confidence.

I remember in 2006. I used to write, but I didn't know that I was good at writing. I remember this other time we had this camp… and I was writing, I was writing a poem and then Mr B from [Ithemba] he came over to me and he looked at what I was writing and then he said "you are good at writing" and I said "no, I'm not good, I'm just writing". And then he asked me to go in front of everyone and read out the poem. And I was so, I was so shy because at that time I had a low self esteem, I was so shy I told him that I can't go up there with that poem and then he told me "You can do it, you can do it, go there, go up there, go read the poem". Then I went there and I read the poem and everyone was impressed so that's where it started the motivation, here at [Ithemba], like they motivated me, they showed me who I am because I never that I'm good at writing and I never thought I could be good at talking in front of other people, in front of lots of people.

She describes how at *Ithemba* she met other children with similar backgrounds to her own.

I was part of [Ithemba] support group where there were girls who had the same problem as me and we used to meet up after school and share stories about things in our lives and stuff so we felt comfortable talking to each other.

When Siphosethu was 15 her grandfather, a diabetic, who had been living elsewhere, had a stroke. He would walk past the house she shared with her foster mother on his way to the clinic. Siphosethu often saw him walking past becoming increasingly sick and frail.

> *… he would call me and I would want to go to him because I still loved him even though he abused me, I still loved him, he was still my father, but then I was scared, but then at some point I found myself forgiving him so I would usually walk with him to the clinic and I'd usually talk to him. And then he went to the old age home here at [name of township] and one day I visited him there and he asked for forgiveness and he was crying. That was the last time I saw him and then he died. Then I went to his funeral and I cried. I never thought I would cry over him I never realised that he was so important to me and I found out something about myself that I was such a forgiving person because I forgave him even though he did that to me.*

Siphosethu found it difficult to understand how she forgave her grandfather, but found peace in the fact that she could.

> *It was surprising for me, its just, I don't know. Some people find me crazy when I tell them that [I forgave him]. Some people think I'm just lying when I say that. But I really forgave him - I don't know, I really don't know. I really forgave him. I guess I started to feel sorry for him when I saw him sick and all that.*

Her foster mother was supportive of her forgiveness of her grandfather, but stressed that she should not forget.

> *So she was waiting for me to forgive him, so she didn't have a problem with it and after all we are family, she told me, after all we are family, ja, but she told me that even if I forgave him I should not drop the case, because if you drop a case, you can't open up another case against him.*

Siphosethu continued to perform well academically, supported by foster mother and *Ithemba* her self-esteem and self-belief continued to grow. She was chosen to attend a mathematics camp at a leadership academy in Johannesburg and told her life-story to 700 people at an *Ithemba* fundraising gala in New York.

Siphosethu's art timeline illustrates two halves to her life. Her past is filled with negatively emotional words such as *"tears, financial problems, abuse, poverty, orphan, low self-esteem"*. She includes a funeral notice of her biological mother's with the words *"My late mother, growing up thinking she was my sister"*, and a photograph of her grandfather with the words *"My late grandfather who raised me up but abused me, but I forgave him"*.

Present life

Her present life indicates a distinct shift in her psyche from her past with words such as *"Inspired, go-getter, confident, emotional, sublime, talented, motivated I am, talkative, friendly, happy me"*. The photographs feature happy snaps of her friends, her mother *"my mom, my everything"*, and *"my comfort zone, I like"* next to a photograph of her bed indicating her safe place. It is clear from her timeline that she regards her foster mother and *Ithemba* as the two major positive influences in her life. Both enabling her to feel joy, make friends and be a happy teenager.

> *…my foster mother she has been there for me. She told me that only me can do it and do it best and she has believed in me, she has always motivated and supported me and there's [Ithemba] with the motivation and the inspiration, they the ones that groomed me and supported me to be this girl that I am, cos I was a very shy girl but from [Ithemba] I gained confidence and I now have a high self esteem, ja - those are the most important people in my life. Ja and my teachers, my primary teachers, yes, ((smiles)) my teachers also played a big role in my life.*

Siphosethu regards her clan name as being important to her as it identifies her, but not central to her identity as she never met or knew who her father was so as a result she carries her mother (and grandfather's) clan name.

> *I think it identifies me, I think it is part of me, when you know where you're from and you know your roots, you know who you are, so ja - But the thing is my mother died without telling me who my father is, so I can't really know now, I can't really find someone who can find my father so it doesn't really matter now.*

Not ever having met, or even knowing who her father was, is very difficult for Siphosethu at times, especially when her friends discuss their relationships and the rituals and traditions they share with their fathers.

…my friends when they talk about their fathers, like it hits me hard, the fact that I don't know who my father is, because I would love to know my father. So when they talk about their fathers when they talk about the rituals, the um, the ritual that they have, they call it imbeleko where they do a necklace for you which means you are part of the family and stuff. When they talk about stuff like that it hits me very hard.

Despite her difficult background, Siphosethu describes herself as a happy person:

I am always happy! ((laughs)) I'm always happy, I'm happy when I'm at school or when I'm here at [Ithemba] because usually I wake up in the morning and I go to school, I come to [Ithemba] and I go home. So, yeah, I'm always happy because I know at school I laugh and talk with my friends and at [Ithemba] I always do the activities that I enjoy, I always learn and I'm always with the friends, I'm always with the people I like, I always see the counsellors that care for me, the people that give me that sense of belonging, so I'm forever happy and then I go home. And you know home, home is the place to be so, ja. I'm forever happy, except if I have a fights at school or something or maybe there's something that reminds me about my past and then I get a bit sad, but it doesn't put me down for a long time its only something for like two minutes and then I go back to my normal self.

She has an incredible way of taking the positive out of a bad situation illustrated by the following quote:

I think the abuse made me stronger, it, it made, it made me tell myself that this will never happen to me again and I would never let it happen to other girls, it made me speak out about it, it made me make other girls aware that such things like this happen.

In between the two interviews conducted as part of this research Siphosethu was awarded a scholarship to attend a school in Johannesburg to complete A-Levels. I visited her at there for the second interview and witnessed her further increased confidence and self-esteem.

She described how surprised she was to have been selected to this school that selects students from across Africa, as she doesn't hold the education she received from her local school in particularly high regard and didn't think that her grounding had been sufficient enough to gain access to this reputable school.

So they didn't call, so I thought I obviously didn't make it, as it is very competitive, all the children from Africa entered - I just thought their education must be better than ours. The education system in South Africa is so poor.

She described how being in such a diverse community has enabled her to grow enormously.

It's been great because I have never been in a diverse community before, like in [city in Eastern Cape] everyone is the same, the language is the same, the things we do is all the same. It's a small city and you know everyone. So when I came here it was different, the way people dress, the way people greet each other, the way they talk, the way they have different opinions and perspectives and things like that. It's just overwhelming, but its just fun and exciting… The way they do things, firstly the food they eat and how they greet people, some of them don't even touch each other when they greet, like Muslims they don't hug or touch each other. That was new to me. Like even the way they see things is different. Like they usually argue about everything, not argue to fight, but like we have different views about each and everything. Like the other day we were talking about initiation school and they were asking me, like why do I have to go home and I was telling them that my cousin brother is coming home from initiation school. They ask me what do they do there. And S [another Xhosa man from the same area as Siphosethu] was there and he was telling them no, we did this and this and this. Then they were like, "No, you are not supposed to do this". Like people are supposed to have [circumcision] done in hospital, not in the bush, so we had to argue about that and tell them why it is important and why we think it is important in South Africa to do that. Like we don't always see things the same way. Even when we are in our teams doing the community project we fight a lot. Because everyone wanted to go with their own idea, think theirs is the best. But it was fun and it has opened my mind to other ideas.

Subjects such as Entrepreneurial Leadership have taught her an enormous amount about herself.

The most subject that has helped me a lot is the EL, the entrepreneurial leadership, I don't know it builds you and taught us about self- awareness and self-regulation, emotional intelligence. So I learned that I have been a short-term preparer person and I usually get my emotions involved, so learning about emotional intelligence has helped with that, to put my emotions aside and self-regulation so I can regulate myself. First thing, like think before I speak, think as if I was the person I was listening to, like how would I feel if I was listening to myself.

She described how she had learned to help others through community work which she had never had an opportunity to do before as historically she had always been on the receiving end of this help and how empowering it was for her to reverse the roles.

> *…we had to come up with a project that would benefit the community and come up with a budget. So my group came up with hygiene and sorting out an environment in a crèche. This helped a lot with team building and helped me. What they told me like when you go to a place to help, don't go with assumptions, just go there, go there with the fact that 'I'm going there to help', go with an open heart and feel the experience. Cos one mistake a person can make is to think you know the cause of the need. They showed us not to assume that we know what the cause is, just be open.*

Siphosethu also commented on how African studies had provided her with a sense of self through an opportunity to consider what its means to her to be 'African'.

> *… before I came here, I don't want to lie, but I never thought about Nigeria, I never thought about Kenya, Ghana, for me it was just South Africa. So being, like, I never thought about Africa the continent, so now when I think about Africa I don't just think about South Africa I think about the continent. So African studies has helped me a lot with that.*
>
> *Just recently we were doing an assignment on Africa, how Africa is portrayed and how people from the Western side they come here and they tell our stories. We are not saying that in Africa we don't have problems, yes we do, but how they address them and how they tell stories, its just too much, they exaggerate and each and every time they do adverts overseas they always say at the end 'Donate a dollar', as if we Africans can't take care of ourselves, we can't solve our problems and all that.*
>
> *And when they look at Africa, when they say Africa, they say Africa as though Africa is a country, like forgetting the fact that Africa is a diverse continent, we have different people with different cultures and different beliefs and all that and when they look at Africa its just the place that they can get all their resources and stuff, not like, like forgetting about all the tourist attractions we have, forgetting about the people. We've got great people in Africa, they forget about that and dwell on the negative things.*

They encourage us to tell our stories, we are the ones that live here, we are the ones that know our stories, but it seems that everyone thinks they know our stories without talking to us. The media should focus on the positive things that are happening in Africa and we must work together as one for us to portray the positive.

And I don't only blame it on the Western people, even sometimes us Africans don't know what's going on in the rest of Africa, we only know our small area, and we tend to criticise against each other. So we have to come together as one and see the problem and sort our problems out together and see the positive as well.

So I for one have always considered Africans to be black people, like I thought that white people had just come to the country recently and like when I studied at school when they talk about African people they were always black. Black even if you a criminal for me you just African.

I think that really an African is a person who lives in Africa, a person who was born and raised in Africa, and a person who believes they are African. Cos a person can be born and raised in Africa, but if they don't believe they are African then they are not. It's an individual thing.

Its funny, like the North Africans here they don't consider themselves Africans. I'm like, excuse me you live in North Africa, how can you not consider yourself to be African? It's called Africa. They see North Africa as different from Africa; they refer to it as <u>North</u> Africa. They separate us out from them, Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt. They don't think they are African, so then we ask them what they are doing here. Because here they are grooming people to be the leaders of Africa. They don't have real empathy for Africa. They feel different from us. [Ithemba] helped me a lot to feel empathy for others and not feel as though I'm different or better than anyone else. I've seen things that make me understand people. These people feel because North Africa is wealthier and richer than the rest of Africa that they are different and more special than us.

Many of the scholars at the school come from wealthy backgrounds, which she reflects on:

Most of the people are from rich backgrounds. To me that doesn't really matter, it doesn't affect me. I don't care about that because I have always like growing up, I have always been

thankful for the situation I am in, I know that Jesus put me in the situation I am in, I have always just accepted that, so I don't want to be like other people, or I don't feel sad because other people have more than me or can afford more than me. I don't feel bad for that. My time will come; I know that my time will come so it doesn't really matter to me. What matters is just the person and their personality and being there for me and being friends and all that. Them having money or not having money doesn't really matter.

The guy that runs this school is very good. He is an entrepreneur and has this entrepreneurial mind and he sees that if the kids have got money, that helps to fund the school sustainably.

Siphosethu has strong views on Government and President Zuma:

I think there is a lot of corruptions and nepotism, they just talk, they don't do anything, they just talk. You know like Nkandla, Zuma was the first president to be given money to build this fancy house, for me they spending all this money on themselves and not on the voters. On unnecessary things that are not going to make any difference in our lives. There are still people in shacks and Zuma lives in a palace. There are lots of things that need to be done in South Africa, but Zuma just uses the money to get things that are not necessary. Like having a big tank and the tap just lets everything out and the people get nothing.

Like the spear painting, I thought it was funny, but I also thought it was very disrespectful. But the artist is allowed to draw what he wants. I also think it was Zuma's behavior that led the artist to draw that, like his history, the rape thing and all that, for me at some point he does deserve that, the way he acts stops us from giving him the respect that a president deserves, like the things he's done. Like when he said he went to the shower after he had slept with that girl to wash off the HIV and AIDS, to me its just like a normal person wouldn't say that, especially a president, he should know better, the president of South Africa should be better than that. So I didn't think that the artist was so wrong, I think Zuma deserved that, he should behave better. I'm sure the artist wouldn't draw his parents like that, but at some point Zuma's actions they led the person to do that.

Other than her foster mother, *Ithemba* and her friends, Siphosethu describes writing as a source of strength, particularly the diaries she keeps.

Any writing, anything, anything that comes to mind, I just put pen and paper together and then I write and most of the time I write because of the things that happen in my life, the events that take place and stuff, yeah. Or when I talk with someone and I hear something interesting I go and I write about it.

I have lots of diaries, I have, I think I have three diaries, I have a school diary, and then I have a personal diary and then I have a diary that I scribble in.

Siphosethu described how being at the school in Johannesburg has changed her and worries about how when she returns home her relationships with her old friends may have changed.

I never thought about myself as a leader. I have always thought of myself as a follower, I have never thought about myself as a leader with leadership characteristics, like leadership traits and all that. I never thought about that, but then when I came here, I don't know, this school, it changes you… It has changed me, like I'm not ashamed of that, but even people when I go back home, they gonna find me weird now, they gonna think that I think I'm better or whatsoever.

Being away from home has enabled her to gain new perspectives on a number of things, such as religion and attending church:

…church wasn't a big part of my life. The funny thing is that I believe in God, right, I know God is there, I go to church, I even have a small bible, like I have my conversations with God, but I didn't really go to church back at home, because I think church becomes more like a competition, like people say, "I've got lots of people in my church, I've got money, I've got a car and a pastor and stuff". Like when you go to church in [city in Eastern Cape] you have to dress up, its like going to a fashion show, I don't think there's a sense of belonging for the right reasons. That's why I don't go to church. Like my mom, she reads the bible and she knows the bible, I used to read the bible with her and then we would pray and sit in silence. But when I came here they go to church, there are a lot of Christians here at school, so I also go to the school church now. It's better here than at home.

Interacting with the other scholars has made Siphosethu realise that many people have had difficult lives:

Its funny when I came here I thought I wouldn't relate to anyone else because my story was so hard. But I realise like there's no difference, everyone has their own hard story. There's this girl whose father was a drunkard and stuff and was always in prison and one day her and her mother ran away from her house, and then her mother chose her new boyfriend over her and now she lives alone. She paid for her own education. It made me realise than even although my story was hard, at least I have always had a mother who takes care of me and looks after me and loves me, and this girl who had less than me could make her own way then I should be able to do so as well. Like why am I complaining? It made me think about a lot of stuff. She is so optimistic and confident, she's always got a smile on her face. So it made me think why should I be sad, I have a mother that loves me. There are people out there that have far greater problems than me, so I must be positive.

After her there was another girl from Kenya who lost her mother from heart disease. I was just assuming I have no people to relate to here, but there are a lot of people who I can relate to. I have learned that with each and every person there is a story to tell, and one should give people a chance to get to know me and stop being afraid that people will look at me differently, judge me or find me boring. That's one of the biggest fears at this school, that people will find me boring. But I've got a lot of friends now from all over the world.

Future life

Siphosethu is optimistic about her future and has many dreams and plans. Her timeline includes a photograph of her presenting at *Ithemba* with the words *'me as a presenter in my own show'*.

She includes a list of her plans and dreams on her timeline:

Only if I set my mind to it, I can do it

Becoming an all rounder in the media world, journalist, radio personality, actress and stage producer

Being part of charity work

Owning my own apartment and car

Travelling the world

This should have been my 1st – Passing my matric and going to university to pursue my career [media].

Siphosethu's interest in media started when she was given the opportunity to report on the 2010 soccer World Cup as a young journalist:

I went to Joburg to be part of the global media program where we were to be young journalists and we were asked to capture news that was taking place during the World Cup, so we were working with ESPN, you know ESPN

She has modelled her future on a local TV presenter:

We have a lot in common - she is talkative and I am also talkative. I admire her because she is confident and outspoken and she is in media which is where I want to be, and she is an all-rounder and in the media industry at a very tender age and she's always believed in herself, she's always told herself that she can do it no matter what, so that's why I like her and look up to her.

Having spent time at the school in Johannesburg has enabled her to consider her life outside of her hometown:

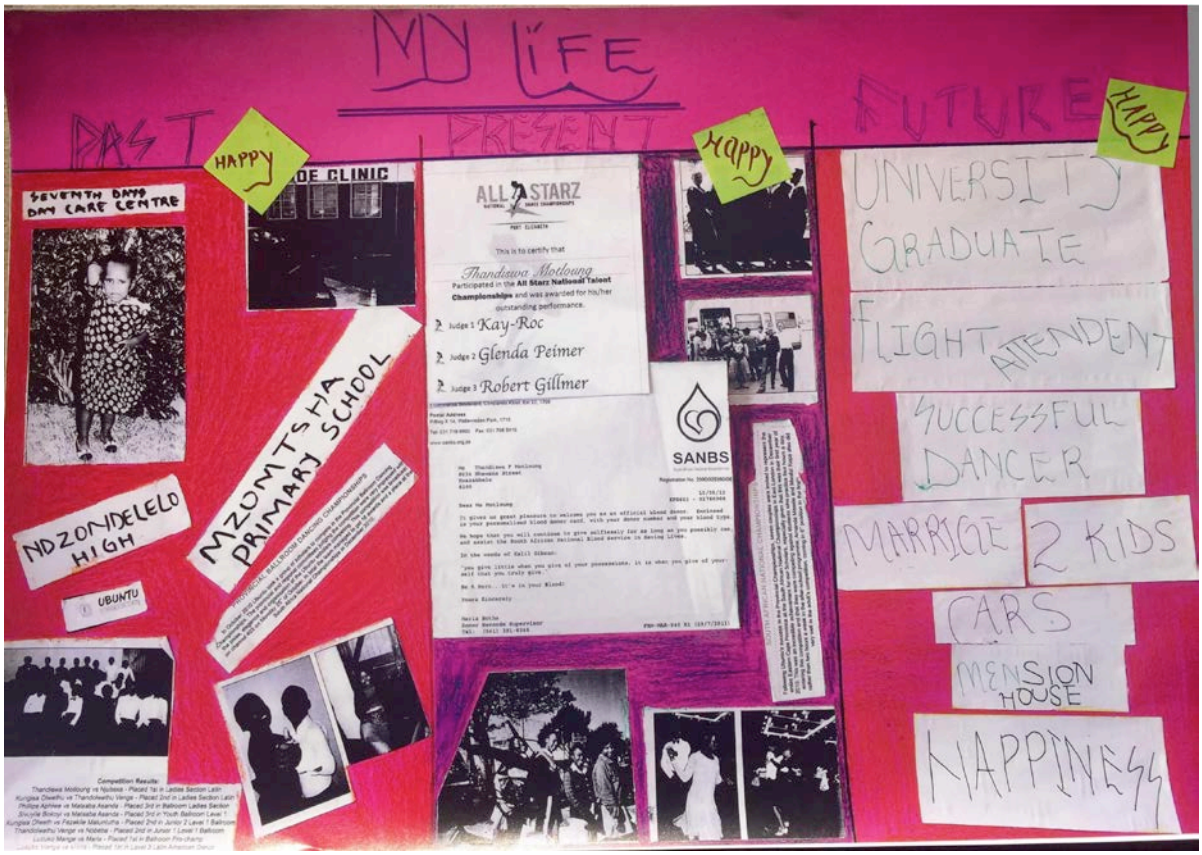
I don't think I want to go back to [city in Eastern Cape], as much as its my homeground, I don't think I wanna go back there.

Siphosethu is focused on attending university when she finishes her year at school in Johannesburg.

They had a meeting with us South Africans, and then they told us if you want to apply for university they will help us. And then they told us about all the points for each and every university.

…my aim is to apply to university, I want to go to university and pursue a career in media. I wanna be an all-rounder media, I wanna be a journalist, I want to be an actress, wanna be a stage producer, a regular personality, I like multi-tasking because its not static and I get bored easily, so I wanna be an all-rounder

Thembela – The optimist



Past life

Thembela is a shy, friendly young girl with a warm smile who was born to a single mother at 18 years old. She is in contact with her father who "*is supporting me, I go to his house, spend much time with him*". She also spends time with her paternal grandparents, but carries her mother's name, a Sotho name.

> *…what is important from my past is that I was raised by a single mother, always be protected about everything. I was born here at [city in Eastern Cape], in [Name of] hospital. I'm old in my mom, I have two siblings, my brother 12 years old and my little sister 2 years old. I'm living with my mother, two uncles and my cousin. My mother is 44 years old, she is working on laundry at the hospital. Yeah, I love her very much.*

Thembela's mother is HIV positive:

My mother, yeah she's HIV positive, but she doesn't take that that she's HIV positive, she's living her life, she's strong. I talk everything with my mother and she gave me good advices, everytime I need some advice, she gave it to me.

It is clear that Thembela is close to her family and feels loved *"I am lucky, my dad and my mom love me very much"*. Having her uncles living with her makes her feel safe and secure:

…my mother's brothers, they are cool, friendly. It's safer to have them there. People don't come and cause trouble.

When she tells me how much she loves her siblings and how they spend time together she has tears rolling down her cheeks.

I love [my baby sister], when she calls me mom, I say I am your small mom, you also have a big mom . She is like my doll, I comb her and dress her and all that stuff.

Thembela has labelled all three sections of her timeline, past, present and future as *'happy'*. When I ask her if she ever gets sad she replies:

I never been sad or angry at some - always smiling, when there is something wrong I'm not getting angry, I just take it, I say this is mine, this is a test this is not going to haunt me again, I will beat it. I think the strength comes from my mother… [What makes me smile is] when I wake up and I'm here with my mom and she tells me she loves me, and my siblings are smiling.

Thembela's timeline includes photographs of her at 3 years old, the clinic where she was born and spent time as a sickly child, a group of children from a camp she attended, and of her ballroom dancing.

When asked to recall events of her childhood she remembers how when she was 11 years old she had pain in her stomach and spent 5 months in hospital. *"I don't know why, I can't remember what they said what was wrong, what was going on"*.

Present life

Thembela describes herself as:

I'm a kind person, loving, don't want to be nasty to people… [My family would describe me as] I am a humble girl, I have strong values, such as respect for them. [My friends would say] that I am moody a lot, I don't like noisy, I like quiet.

Dancing is very important to Thembela, photographs of her dancing competitions and a certificate for outstanding dancing performance are prominent in the 'present' section of her timeline:

I placed first in ladies section in ballroom dancing, in Latin actually… I was in All Stars competition, so I placed number 3, so I won high gold - My dancing makes me very happy

She competed in national dance championships in 2010, which was a seminal event in her life.

Yo, it was cool, it was my first time when I went to a hotel, spending time with my friends, doing something like I never do, like going to the beaches in that other way, yeah. The competition was like sho, sho, I was very nervous. There were 9 provinces there, meeting new people, new people who talk the language that I never talk, like Zulu, Tswana, Sotho, yeah. We make lots of friends. I talk to them now on facebook and mixit.

The other prominent feature on her timeline is a certificate from the South African National Blood Service welcoming her as an official blood donor with the message '*Be a hero… It's in your Blood!'* Given that her mother is HIV positive makes the fact that she is HIV negative pertinent and the blood donor certificate is proof of her negative status. She also shows me a medal that indicates her blood type.

Here it was this year when I was donating blood [points to certificate from SA blood donor service.] The reason why I donated my blood is because I want to help those who are need for it… I done it three times.

Ithemba also features prominently in her narrative, having introduced her to dancing lessons and organised the transport for her to get to the National Championships. She also went with *Ithemba* to Cape Town to visit UCT which she describes as an important event in her life.

My other thing that is important is when last year September I went to UCT visiting with [Ithemba], it was my first time to, to ride with a plane. Eh, yo, I was nervous at first, but it was important to me, I really appreciate that.

Thembela's favourite subject at school is tourism and mentions that she would like to travel to England:

> *Tourism, about the environment. We learn how to attract tourists to our country. It is a area that is growing in South Africa. We give them excellent service, so that is why tourism is growing… I would like to see they way they do things in [England]. I met some English girls through the camp and I would like to go there.*

Her second interview is dominated with stories of her matric farewell, she shows me photographs of the evening with great pride.

> *We were wearing clothes that I never though we would wear, like high heels, I never saw myself in that. It was so fun. I put the photos on facebook*

Future life

Thembela is hoping to be accepted into university to study nursing. Her second choice would be to be a flight attendant.

> *The things that I want to do in the future, like be a nurse, went to university, mmmm being a flight attendant, I want to be a person that is helping others, in a way that they can be something else, something bigger.*

The 'future' section of her timeline includes the following dreams and plans:

> *University Graduate*
>
> *Flight attendent*
>
> *Successful dancer*
>
> *Marrige 2 Kids*
>
> *Cars*
>
> *Mension House*
>
> *Happiness*

Thembela realises that she needs to work hard in order to gain access into university:

> *School is great, I love being in school, doing grade 12 this year, it's a wonderful thing, yes. I want to go to university next year, but I need to work hard, especially in maths, I'm struggling in maths*

Reference List:

Acker, J. (1992) Gendered institutions: From sex roles to gendered institutions. *Contemporary Sociology*, 21(5): 565-569.

Alexander, N. (2013). *Thoughts on the New South Africa.* Johannesburg: Jacana.

Althusser, L. (2000). Ideology interpellates individuals as subjects. In P. du Gay, J. Evans, & P. Redman (eds). *Identity: A reader*. London: Sage.

Althusser, L. (1971). On ideology and ideological state apparatuses. In *Lenin and philosophy and other essays.* New York: Monthly Review Press.

Anderson, B. (1991) *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism.* London: Verso.

Andersen, M.L., & Hill Collins, P. (2007). Systems of power and inequality. In M.L. Andersen & P. Hill Collins (Eds.) *Race, class and gender: An anthology.* Belmont: Thomson.

Andrews, M,. Sclater, S.D., Squire, C., & Treacher, A. (2004). *The Uses of Narrative.* New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Andrews, M., Squire, C,. and Tamboukou, M. (2008). *Doing Narrative Research.* London: Sage.

Andrews, M. (2014) *Narrative imagination and everyday life.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ankrah, E.M. (1993) The impact of HIV/AIDS on the family and other significant relationships: The African clan revisited. *AIDS Care: Psychological and socio-medical aspects of AIDS/HIV* 5(1): 5-22.

Anthias, F., & Yuval-Davis, N. (1992) *Racialized Boundaries: Race, Nation, Gender, Colour and Class and the anti-racist struggle.* London: Routledge.

Appiah, K.A. (2007). *Cosmopolitanism*. London, Penguin.

Arendt, H. (1998). *The human condition.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Ariès, P. (1962). *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life,* translated by Robert Baldick. New York: Vintage Books.

Arnett, J.J. (1999). Adolescent storm and stress, reconsidered. *American psychologist* 54(5): 317-326.

Aubel, J. (2012) The role and influence of grandmothers on child nutrition: culturally designated advisors and caregivers. *Maternal & Child Nutrition* 8(1): 19-35.

Bagnol, B., Matebeni, Z., Simon, A., Blaser, T., Manuel, S., & Moutinho, L. (2010). Transforming Youth Identities: Interactions across "Races/Colors/Ethnicities," Gender, Class, and Sexualities in South Africa, South Africa. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy* 7: 283-297.

Bakhtin, M.M. (1981). *The Dialogic Imagination.* London: University of Texas Press

Ban Ki-Moon (2008). *The Stigma Factor*. Iran: UNDP.

Barber, K. (2001). Cultural reconstruction in the new South Africa. *African studies review 44(2):* 177-185.

Bauman, Z. (2011). "From pilgrim to tourist – or a short history of identity". In S. Hall, & P. du Gay (eds). *Questions of cultural identity.* London: Sage.

Becker, H.S. (1986) *Doing things together: Selected papers.* Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Benhabib, S. (1990). Hannah Arendt and the redemptive power of narrative. *Social Research 57(1)*: 167-196.

Beutel, A.M., & Anderson, K.G. (2007). The educational expectations of South African youth. *Sociological Focus, 40*(4): 348-369.

Bhabha, H.K. (1990). DissemiNation: time, narrative, and the margins of the modern nation. In H.K. Bhabha (ed). *Nation and Narration.* New York: Routledge.

Bhabha, H.K. (1994). *The location of culture.* New York: Routledge.

Bhabha, H.K. (2000). http://web.stanford.edu/dept/news/news/2000/march8/bhabha-38.html Retrieved 17 November 2016

Biko, S. (2004). *I write what I like.* Johannesburg: Picador Africa.

Block, J.H. (1984). Psychological development of female children and adolescents. In J.H. Block, *Sex role identity and ego development.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Boer, H., & Mashamba, M.T. (2007). Gender power imbalance and differential psychosocial correlates of intended condom usage among make and female adolescents from Venda, South Africa. *British Journal of Health* 12(1): 51-63.

Bogatsu, M. (2002). Loxion Kulcha: Fashioning black youth culture in post-apartheid South Africa. *English Studies in Africa* 45(2): 1-11.

Bond, V., Chase, E., & Aggleton, P. (2002). Stigma, HIV/AIDS and prevention of mother-to-child transmission in Zambia. *Evaluation and program planning*, 25 (4): 347-356.

Booysen, F. & Arntz, T. (2002). Children of the storm: HIV/AIDS and children in South Africa. *Social dynamics* 28(1): 170-192.

Bradbury, H., & Bergmann Lichtenstein, B.M. (2000). Relationality in Organizational Research: Exploring *The Space Between. Organization Science* 11(5): 551-564.

Bradbury, J. & Miller, R. (2010). Narrative possibilities: Theorising identity in a context of practice. *Theory & Psychology.* 20(5): 1-16.

Bradbury, J. & Clark, J. (2012) Echoes of the past in imaginings of the future: The problems and possibilities of working with young people in contemporary South Africa**,** *Global studies of Childhood*, 2(3): 176 – 189.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology* 3(2): 77-101.

Bray, R., Gooskens, I., Kahn, L., Moses, S., & Seekings, J. (2010). *Growing up in the new South Africa: childhood and adolescence in post-apartheid Cape Town.* Cape Town: HSRC Press.

Breger, L. (1974). *From instinct to identity: The development of personality.* Engelwood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Brigden, S. (1982). Youth and English Reformation. *Past and Present* 95: 37-67.

Brockmeier, J. (2009) Reaching for meaning: Human agency and the narrative imagination. *Theory and Psychology* 19(2): 213-233.

Bruner, J.S. (1986) *Actual minds, possible worlds.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Butler, A. & Astbury, G. (2005). Over the rainbow: Recommendations for service provision as voiced by post-apartheid South African gay and lesbian youth. *Journal of Child and Youth Care Work* 19: 126-136.

Butler, J. (2005). *Giving an account of oneself*: New York: Fordham University Press.

Burman, E. (2008). *Developments, child, image, nation.* London: Routledge.

Caldwell, P. (1983). *The Puritan Conversion Narrative: The Beginnings of American Expression.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cameron, E. (2005). *Witness to AIDS*. Cape Town: Tafelberg Publishers.

Campbell, C.M. (1995a). The social identity of township youth: an extension of social identity theory (Part 1). *South African Journal of Psychology,* 25: 150-159.

Campbell, C.M. (1995b). The social identity of township youth: social identity theory and gender. *South African Journal of Psychology.* 25:160-167.

Chazan, M. (2008). Seven 'deadly' assumptions: unraveling the implications of HIV/AIDS among grandmothers in South Africa and beyond. *Ageing and Society* 28(7): 935-958.

Clark-Ibáñez, M. (2004). Framing the social world with photo-elicitation interviews. *American Behavioural Scientist.* 47(12): 1407-1527.

Cluver, L. & Gardner, F. (2006). The psychological well-being of children orphaned by AIDS in Cape Town, South Africa. *Annals of General Psychiatry* 5(8): 1-9.

Cluver, L., Gardner, F. & Operario, D. (2008). Effects of stugma on the mental health of adolescents orphaned by AIDS. *Journal of Adolescent Health 42*: 410-417.

Cohen, R. (2007). Creolization and cultural globalization: The soft sounds of fugitive power. *Globalizations* 4(3): 369-384.

Collins, T. (1997). "Models of health: Pervasive, persuasive and politically charged." In M. Siddel, L. Jones, J. Katz & A. Peberdy (eds), *Debates and dilemmas in promoting health: A reader.* London: Macmillan Press Ltd.

Cooper, D., & Subotzky, G. (2001). *The skewed revolution: Trends in South African higher education, 1988-1998*: Education Policy Unit, University of the Western Cape.

Craib, I. (2004). Narratives as bad fait. In M. Andrews, S.D. Sclater, C. Squire, & A. Treacher (eds.). *Uses of Narrative.* New Jersey: Transition.

Crenshaw, K.W. (1989). *Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex.* The University of Chicago Legal Forum. 139-167.

Crenshaw, K.W. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review* 43(6): 1241-1299.

Crites, S. (1986) Storytime: Recollecting the Past and projecting the Future. In T.R. Sarbin. *Narrative Psychology: The Storied Nature of Human Conduct*. New York: Praeger.

Dass-Brailsford, P. (2005). Exploring resiliency: Academic achievement among disadvantaged black youth in South Africa. *South African Journal of Psychology* 35(3): 574-591.

Davies, B., & Harré, R. (1999). Positioning and personhood. In R Harré and L van Langenhove (eds.) *Positioning theory: Moral contexts of intentional action.* Oxford: Blackwell.

De la Rey, C. (1997). South African feminism, race and racism. *Agenda.* 32: 6-10.

Derrida, J. (2000). *Différance.* In P. du Gay, J. Evans, P. Redman (Eds.). *Identity: a reader.* London: Sage.

Deutsch, F.M. (2007). Undoing gender. *Gender and Society*, 21: 106-127.

Dixson, A.D., Chapman, T.K. & Hill, D.A. (2005). Research as an aesthetic process: Extending the portraiture methodology. *Qualitative inquiry* 11(1): 16-26.

Dolby, N. (1999). Youth and the global popular. The politics and practices of race in South Africa. *Cultural Studies* 2(3): 291-309.

Dolby, N. (2000). The shifting ground of race: The role of taste in youth's production of identities. *Race, ethnicity and Education* 3(1): 7-23.

Donaldson, R., Mehlomakhulu, T., Darkey, D., Dyssel, M., & Siyongwana, P. (2013). Relocation: To be or not to be a black diamond in a South African township? *Habitat International* 39: 114-118.

Dreyfus, H.L., & Rabinow, P. (1982). *Michel Foucault. Beyond structuralism and hermeneutics.* New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Dunkle, K.L., Jewkes, R.K., Brown, H.C., Gray, G.E., McIntyre, J.A., & Harlow, S.D. (2004). Gender-based violence, relationship power, and risk of HIV infection in women attending antenatal clinics in South Africa. *Lancet* 363(9419): 1415-1421.

Epstein, C.F. (1986). Inevitabilities of prejudice. *Society* 23(6): 7-15.

Erasmus, Z. (2001). *Coloured by history, shaped by place: New perspectives on coloured identities in Cape Town. Cape Town*: Kwela Books.

Erikson, E.H. (1959). *Identity and the life cycle*. New York: Norton.

Erikson, E.H. (1963). *Childhood and Society*. New York: Norton.

Erikson, E.H. (1968). *Identity: Youth and crisis*. New York: Norton.

Falcus, S. (2014). Storying Alzheimer's disease in Lisa Genova's Still Alice*. University of Huddersfield Repository* 12: 73-94.

Fanon, F. (2000). "The negro and psychopathology". In P. du Gay, J. Evans, & P. Redman (eds). *Identity: A reader*. London: Sage.

Fanon, F. (2008). *Black skins, white masks.* New York: Grove Press.

Fay, B. (1996). *Contemporary philosophy of social science.* London: Blackwell.

Fine, M. (2002). *Disruptive voices: The possibilities for feminist research.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Fine, M. & Torre, M.E. (2006) Intimate details: Participatory action research in prison. *Action Research* 4(3): 253-269.

Flyvbjerg, B. (2001). *Making social science matter: why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Foucault, M. (1979). *Discipline and punish: The birth of a prison.* New York: Shocken.

Foucault, M. (1980). The confession of the flesh*.* In C Gordon (ed.). *Power/Knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings by Michel Foucault.* New York: Pantheon Books.

Foucault, M. (1990). *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1.* London: Penguin.

Franchi, V. & Swart, M.S. (2003). From apartheid to affirmative action: the use of 'racial' markers in past, present and future articulations of identity among South African students. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 27: 209-236.

Frankl, V. (2014). *Man's Search for Meaning*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Freeman, M. (1993). *Rewriting the self: History, memory, narrative.* London: Routledge.

Freeman, M (2010). *Hindsight.* New York: Oxford.

Freeman, M. (2011). Narrative foreclosure in later life: Possibilities and limits. In G. Kenyon, E. Bohlmeijer, & W.L. Randall (eds.) *Storying Later Life: Issues, Investigations, and Interventions.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Freire, P. (1996). *Pedagogy of the oppressed.* London: Penguin.

Freire, P (2007). *Daring to dream: Towards a pedagogy of the unfinished.* London: Paradigm.

Frosh, S. (2013). Transdisciplinary Tensions and Psychosocial Studies. *Enquire* 6(1): 1-15.

Gainor, K.A. (1992). Internalized oppression as a barrier to effective group work with black women. *The Journal for Specialists in Group Work* 17(4): 235 – 242.

Gelderblom, D. & Kok, P. (1994). *Urbanization. South Africa's challenge. Volume 1: Dynamics.* Pretoria: HRSC.

Georgakopolou, A. (2006). Thinking big with small stories in narrative and identity analysis. *Narrative Inquiry* (16(1): 122- 130.

Gaganakis, M. (2004). Imposed identities: Adolescent girls' perceptions of being black and being white. *Perspectives in Education,* 22(4): 59-70.

Giroux, H. (1994). Doing cultural studies: youth and the challenge of pedagogy. *Harvard Educational Review* 67: 285-320.

Giroux, H. (1996). Slacking off: Border youth and postmodern education. In H. Giroux, C. Lankshear, P. McLaren, & M. Peters (eds.) *Counternarratives: Cultural Studies and Critical Pedagogies in Postmodern Spaces.* New York: Routledge.

Glissant, E. (1989). Trans. Dash, J.M. *Caribbean discourse: selected essays.* Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia.

Goffman, E (1963). *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Gold, S.J. (2004). Using photography in studies of immigrant populations. *American Behavioral Scientist* 47(12): 1551-1572.

Gordon, N. (2002). On visibility and power: An Arendtian Corrective of Foucault. *Human Studies 25:* 125-145.

Haley, J.F., & Bradbury, J. (2015). Child-headed households under watchful adults eyes: Support or surveillance? *Childhood* 22(3): 394-408.

Hall, S. (2000) Who needs identity? In P. du Gay, J. Evans, & P. Redman (eds). *Identity: A reader*. London: Sage.

Hammack P. L., (2011) *Narrative and the politics of identity.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Harré, H.R. (1998). *The singular self: An introduction to the psychology of personhood.* London: Sage.

Hartell, C.G., & Chabilall, J.A. (2005) HIV/AIDS in South Africa: a study of the socio-educational development of adolescents orphaned by AIDS in child-headed households. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth* 12: 213-229.

Hayes, G. (1989). Psychology and ideology: The case of Althusser. *South African journal of psychology.* 19(2): 84-90.

Haffejee, F. (2015). *What if there were no whites in South Africa?* Johannesburg: Picador Africa.

Henderson, N. & Shefer, T. (2008). Practices of power and abuse in gay male relationships: An exploratory case study of a young, isiXhosa-speaking man in the Western Cape, South Africa. *South African Journal of Psychology,* 38(1): 1-20.

Hill Collins, P. (1998). *Fighting words: Black women & the search for justice.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Hoffman, E. (2005). *After such knowledge: A meditation on the aftermath of the Holocaust.* London: Vantage.

Hollway, W. (1989). *Subjectivity and method in psychology.* London: Sage.

Hollway, W. and Jefferson, T. (2000) *Doing Qualitative Research Differently: Free Association, Narrative and the Interview Method*. London: Sage.

Hooks, B. (1990). *Yearning: Race, gender, and cultural politics.* Boston: South End Press.

Hooks, B. (2006) https://www.youtube.com/watch?t=360&v=KLMVqnyTo_0 Retrieved 7 March 2016.

Howard, K. (2011). *Sexual experiences of a group of young, low socio-economic, South Africa females.* Unpublished Psychology Honours Research Report: University of the Witwatersrand.

Jefferson, G. (2004). Glossary of transcript symbols with an introduction. In G.H. Lemer (Ed). *Conversation Analysis: Studies from the First Generation.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Jewkes, R., Vundule, C., Maforah, F., & Jordaan, E. (2001). Relationship dynamics and teenage pregnancy in South Africa. *Social Science & Medicine, 52*(5), 733-744.

Jewkes, R., & Abrahams, N. (2002). The epidemiology of rape and sexual coercion in South Africa: an overview. *Social science and medicine* 55: 1231-1244.

Joffe, H. (1999). *Risk and 'the other'*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Josselson, R. (2004). The hermeneutics of faith and the hermeneutics of suspicion. *Narrative Inquiry.* 14(1): 1-28.

Josselson, R. (2006). Narrative research and the challenge of accumulating knowledge, *Narrative Inquiry*, 16(1), 3 – 10.

Kallaway, P. (1984). *Apartheid and education: The education of black south africans*: Ravan Press of South Africa.

Kaufman, CE & Stavrou, SE (2004). Bus fare please: the economics of sex and gifts among young people in urban South Africa. *Culture, Heath & Sexuality* 6(5): 377-391.

Kirby, D.B. (2008). The impact of abstinence and comprehensive sex and STD/HIV education programs on adolescent sexual behavior. *Sexuality Research & Social Policy* 5(3): 18-27.

Krausman Ben-Amos, I. (1995). Adolescence as a cultural intervention: Philippe Ariès and the sociology of youth. *History of the Human Sciences* 8(2): 69-89.

Krog, A. (1999). *Country of My Skull: Guilt, Sorrow and the Limits of Forgiveness in the New South Africa.* New York: Three Rivers Press.

Kuzwayo, E. (1985). *Call me woman.* New York: Spinsters Ink Books.

Lane, T., Mogale, T., Struthers, H., McIntyre, J., & Kegeles, S.M. (2008). "They see you as a different thing": the experiences of men who have sex with men with healthcare workers in South African township communities. *Sexually Transmitted Infections,* 84(6): 430-433.

Lawrence-Lightfoot, S. (2005). Reflections on portraiture: A dialogue between art and science. *Qualitative inquiry.* 11(1): 3-15.

Lawrence-Lightfoot, S. & Hoffman Davis, J. (1997). *The art and science of portraiture.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Leibowitz, B., Bozalek, V., Rohleder, P., Carolissen, R., & Swartz, L. (2010). 'Ah, but the whiteys love to talk about themselves': discomfort as a pedagogy for change. *Race, Ethnicity and Education* 13(1): 83-100.

Levine, S., & Ross, F. (2002). Perceptions of and attitudes to HIV/AIDS among youth adults in Cape Town. *Social Dynamics* 28(1): 89-108.

Lindemann Nelson, H. (2001). *Damaged identities, narrative repair.* New York: Cornell University.

Lindgren, B. (2004) The internal dynamics of ethnicity: Clan names, origins ad castes in Southern Zimbabwe. *Africa* 74(2): 173-193.

Lips, H.M. (1994). Female powerlessness: a case of 'cultural preparedness'. In H.L. Radike. & H.J. Stam (eds). *Power/ gender: social relations in theory and practice.* London: Sage.

Lock Swarr, A. (2004). Moffies, Artists, and Queens: Race and Production of South African Gay Male Drag. *Journal of Homosexuality* 46(3-4): 73-89.

Low, J.M., Akande, D., & Hill, C. (2005). A cross-cultural comparison of identity development: South Africa and the United States. *Identity: An international journal of theory and research 5(4):* 303-314.

Mabokela, R.O., (2000). *Voices of conflict: Desegregating South African universities*. New York: RoutledgeFalmer.

MacIntyre, A. (1981). *After virtue: A study in moral theory.* Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

Macleod, C. (1999). Teenage pregnancy and its 'negative' consequences: review of South African research. *South African Journal of Psychology 29(1)*: 1-7.

Macleod, C.I., & Tracey, T. (2010). A decade later: Follow up review of South African research on the consequences of and contributory factors in teen-aged pregnancy. *South African Journal of Psychology* 40(1): 18-31.

Maierhofer, R. (2010). Generations in connecting: Alzheimer's disease and changes of cultural values. *Gender Forum* 28: 2-20.

Magona, S. (1990). *To my children's children.* New York: Interlink Books.

Mama, A. (2006). *Beyond the masks: Race, gender and subjectivity.* New York: Routledge.

Manganyi, N.C. (1973). *Being Black in the World.* Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

Mannheim, K. (1952). The Problem of Generations. In P Kecskemeti (ed.) *Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge by Karl Mannheim.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Marcia, J.E. (1966). Development and validation of ego-identity status. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 3(5): 551-558.

Markus, H., & Nurius, P. (1986). Possible selves. *American Psychologist*, 41(9): 954 – 969.

Martin, D.C. (2006). A creolizing South Africa? Mixing, hybridity, and creolisation: (re)imagining the South African experience*. International Social Science Journal* 58(187): 165-176.

Mashigo, T. (2016) Personal discussion with the researcher in Johannesburg, March 26, 2016.

Mashinini, E. (1989). *Strikes have followed me all my life.* Minnesota: Women's Press

Massey, D (1999). A space of politics. In D Massey, J Allen & P Sarre, *Human geography today.* Oxford: Polity Press.

Mbembe, A. (2012). Metamorphic thought: The works of Frantz Fanon. *African Studies.* 71(1): 19-28.

McAdams, D.P. (1985) *Power, intimacy, and the life story: Personological inquiries into identity.* New York: Guilford Press.

McAdams, D.P. (1993). *The stories we live by. Personal myths and the making of the self.* New York: The Guildford Press.

McAdams, D.P. (2001) The psychology of life stories. *Review of general psychology 5(2):* 100-122.

McAdams, D.P. (2011). Narrative identity In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of identity theory and research*: Springer.

McColgan, G., Valentine, J., & Downs, M. (2000). Concluding narratives of a career with dementia: Accounts of Iris Murdoch as her death. *Ageing and Society* 20: 99-111.

McKinney, C. (2007). If I speak English, does it make me less black anyway?" 'Race' and English in South African desegregated schools. *English Academy review,* 24(2): 6-24.

McKinney, C. (2010). Schooling in black and white: assimilationist discourses and subversive identity performances in a desegregated South African girls' school. *Race, Ethnicity and Education,* 13(2): 191-207.

Mkhize, N. (2004) Who is a father? *Children First,* 56, 3-8.

National Treasury (2015) http://www.treasury.gov.za/publications/igfr/2015/prov/03.%20Chapter%203%20-%20Education.pdf (Retrieved on 8 June 2016).

Msibi, T. (2012). 'I'm used to it now': experiences of homophobia among queer youth in South African township schools. *Gender and Education* 24(5): 515-533.

Mouton, J., & Gevers, W., (2009). Introduction. In R. Diab and W. Gevers (eds.), *The State of Science in South Africa.* Pretoria: Academy of Science of South Africa.

Ndlovu, S. (2012). "I am more (than just) black": Contesting multiplicity through conferring and asserting singularity in narratives of black. In R, Josselson & M, Harway (eds). *Navigating multiple identities.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Nduna, M., & Jewkes, R. (2011). Undisclosed paternal identity in narratives of distress among young people in Eastern Cape, South Africa. *Journal of Child and Family Studies* 20(3): 303-310.

Norris, S.A., Roeser, R.W., Richter, L.M., Lewin, N., Ginsburg, C., Fleetwood, S.A., Taole, E. & van der Wolf, K. (2008) South African-ness Among Adolescents: The Emergence of a Collective Identity within the Birth to Twenty Cohort Study. *Journal of early adolescence*. 28(1): 51-69.

Nuttall, S., & Michael, C. (2000). *Senses of culture.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nuttall, S. (2004) City forms and writing the 'now' in South Africa. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 30(4): 731-748.

Patterson, W. (2008). Narratives of events: Labovian narrative analysis and its limitations. In M. Andrews, C. Squire & M. Tamboukou (eds). *Doing narrative research.* London: Sage.

Pattman, R. (2007). Student identities, and researching these, in a newly 'racially' merged university in South Africa. *Race, Ethnicity and Education* 10(4): 473-492.

Peires, J.B. (1982). *The House of Phalo. A history of the Xhosa people in the days of their independence*. Berkeley*:* University of California Press.

Peires, J.B. (1992). The Implosion of Transkei and Ciskei. *African affairs* 91(362): 365-387.

Phoenix, A.F., (2006). Interrogating intersectionality: Productive ways of theorizing multiple positioning. *Kvinder, Kon & Forskning,* 2(3): 21-30.

Phoenix, A. F. (2008). "Analysing narrative contexts". In M. Andrews, C. Squire & M. Tamboukou (eds). *Doing narrative research.* London: Sage.

Piaget, J. (1952). *The origins of intelligence in children*. New York: International Universities Press.

Pillemer, D.B. (2001). Momentous events and the life story. *Review of General Psychology,* 5(2): 123-134.

Plummer, K. (1995). *Telling sexual stories: power, change and social worlds.* London: Routledge.

Polkinghorne, D.E. (1988) *Narrative knowing and the human sciences.* New York: State University of New York Press.

Portes, A. (2000). Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology. In E.L. Lesser (Ed). *Knowledge and Social Capital: Foundations and Applications.* Boston: Butterworth Heinemann.

Posel, D. (2001). Race as common sense: Racial classification in twentieth-century South Africa. *African studies review 44(2)*: 87-113.

Potgieter, C. (2003). "Lesbianism". In K, Ratele & N, Duncan (eds). *Social psychology: Identities and relationships.* Cape Town: UCT Press.

Preston-Whyte, E. (1991). *Teenage pregnancy in selected Coloured and black communities.* Unpublished report, Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria.

Prins, B. (2006) Narrative accounts of origins: A blind spot in the intersectional approach? *European Journal of Women's Studies* 13(3): 277- 290.

Qvortrop, J. (2001). *The Relationship between protection and participation: Risk or opportunity for young people or adult society?* Trondheim: Norwegian Centre for Child Research.

Ramphele, M. (1993). *A bed called home: Life in the migrant labour hostels of Cape Town.* Cape Town: David Philip Publishers.

Ramphele, M. (2002). Steering by the stars: Youth in cities. In Tienda, M. & Wilson, W.J. (eds.). *Youth in Cities: A Cross-National Perspective.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ramphele, M. (2014). *A Passion for Freedom: My Life*. London: IB Tauris.

Ramphele, M., & Richter, L.M. (2006). Migrancy, family dissolution and fatherhood. In L. M. Richter & R. Morrell (Eds.). *Baba: Men and fatherhood in South Africa*. Cape Town: HRSC Publication.

Richter, L.M. (2004). *The importance of caregiver-child interactions for the survival and healthy development of young children*. Geneva: World Health Organisation.

Richter, L.M. (2006) The importance of fathering for children. In L M. Richter and R Morrell (eds.) *Baba: men and fatherhood in South Africa.* Pretoria: HSRC Press.

Ricoeur, P. (1984). *Time and narrative*, *volume 2*: Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

Riessman, C.K. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences.* London: Sage.

Rose, P. (1983). *Parallel lives*. New York: Knopf.

Rose, N. (1998). *Inventing our selves: Psychology, power and personhood.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rose, N. (2000). Identity, genealogy, history In P. Du Gay, J. Evans & P. Redman (Eds.), *Identity: A reader*: London: Sage.

Ross, F. (2003). Dependents and Dependence: A case study of Housing and Heuristics in an Informal Settlement in the Western Cape. *Social Dynamics* 29(2): 132-152.

Ross, F., & Spiegel, A. (2000). Diversity and fluidity amongst poor households in Cape Town and the heterogeneity of domestic consolidation practices: some cases. *Tanzanian Journal of Population Studies and Development* 7(2): 147-169.

Rushdie, S. (1992) One thousand days in a balloon. In *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and criticism 1981 – 1991.* London: Penguin.

Russell, M. (1995). *Parenthood among black, migrant workers to the Western Cape.* Pretoria : Co-Operative Research Programme on Marriage and Family Life, Human Sciences Research Council.

Russell, M. (2003). Are urban black families nuclear? A comparative study of black and white South African family norms. *Social Dynamics* 29(2): 153-176.

Rutenberg, N., Kehus-Alons, C., Brown, L., Macintyre, K., Dallimore, A., & Kaufman, C. (2001). *Transitions to Adulthood in the context of AIDS in South Africa: Report of Wave I.* New York: Population Council/ Horizons.

Salmon, P., & Riessman, C.K. (2008). Looking back on narrative research: An exchange. In M. Andrews, C. Squire & M. Tamboukou (eds). *Doing narrative research.* London: Sage.

Salo, E. (2003). Negotiating gender and personhood in the new South Africa. *Cultural studies 6(3):* 345-365.

Sandberg, S. (2013). *Lean in. Women, work and the will to lead.* New York: WH Allen.

Sandino, L. (2010) Artists–in–progress: Narrative identity of the self as another. In: M. Hyväarinen (ed.) *Beyond Narrative Coherence*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Sarbin, T.R. (1986). The narrative as a root metaphor for psychology. In T.R. Sarbin (ed). *Narrative psychology: The storied nature of human conduct.* New York: Praeger.

Sartre, J. (1966). *Of human freedom.* New York: The Philosophical Library.

Sev'er, A. (2012). Male circumcision: Sharpening the phallus, constructing masculinities, some implications for men & women. *Women's Health and Urban Life*, 11(2): 64-87.

Scheibe, K.E. (1986) Self-narratives and adventure. In T.R. Sarbin (ed). *Narrative Psychology: The Storied Nature of Human Conduct.* New York: Praeger.

Shefer, T. (2004). "Heterosexuality". In K, Ratele & N, Duncan (eds). *Social psychology: Identities and relationships.* Cape Town: UCT Press.

Shefer, T. & Ratele, K. (2006). "New questions, old answers? Gender and race in post-apartheid South Africa". In G. Stevens, V. Franchi & T. Swart (eds). *A race against time: Psychology and challenges to deracialisation in South Africa.* Pretoria: Unisa Press.

Shotter, J.E., & Gergen, K.J. (1989). *Texts of identity*: London: Sage.

Siqwana-Ndulo, N. (1998). Rural African family structure in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies.* 29(2): 407-417.

Smit, R. (2001). The impact of labor migration on African families in South Africa: Yesterday and today. *Journal of comparative family studies* 32(4): 533-545.

Soudien, C. (2004). 'Constituting the class': An analysis of the process of 'integration' in South African schools. In L Chisholm (ed.) *Changing class: Education and social change in post-apartheid South Africa*. Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council (HRSC).

Soudien, C. (2007). The asymmetries of contact: An assessment of 30 years of school integration in South Africa. *Race Ethnicity and Education* 10(4): 439–456.

Spiegel, A. (1996). Introduction: Domestic fluidity in South Africa. *Social dynamics: A journal of African studies* 22(1): 5-6.

Squire, C. (2008). Experience-centred and culturally-oriented approaches to narrative. In M. Andrews, C. Squire & M. Tamboukou (eds). *Doing narrative research.* London: Sage.

Squire, C. (2012). Narratives and the Gift of the Future. *Narrative Works: Issues, Investigations & Interventioned* 2(1): 67-82

Squire, C. (2013). *Living with HIV and ARVs. Three letter lives*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Squire, C., Andrews, M., & Tamboukou, M. (2008). "Introduction: What is narrative research?" In M. Andrews, C. Squire & M. Tamboukou (eds). *Doing narrative research.* London: Sage.

Stanczak, G.C. (2004). Visual representation. *American Behavioral Scientist* 47(12): 1471-1476.

Statistics South Africa (2014). http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0441/P04413rdQuarter2014.pdf (Retrieved 17 March 2016).

Stevens, G., & Lockhat, R. (1997). 'Coca-cola kids' reflections on black adolescent identity development in post-apartheid South Africa. *South African journal of psychology*, 27: 250-255.

Swartz, S., Hamilton Harding, J., & De Lannoy, A. (2012). Ikasi style and the quiet violence of dreams: a critique of youth belonging in post-apartheid South Africa. *Comparative Education* 48(1): 27-40.

Taleb, N.N. (2010). *The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable.* London: Penguin.

Tamboukou, M. (2006). Power, desire and emotions in education: Revisiting the epistolary narratives of three women in apartheid South Africa. *Gender and Education, 18*(3): 233-252.

Taylor, C. (1992). *Sources of the self: The making of the modern identity*: Harvard University Press.

Taylor, C. (1994). The politics of recognition. In *Multiculturalism: Examining the politics of recognition.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Taylor, C. (2004). The Politics of Recognition. In C Farrelly (Ed). *Contemporary Political Theory: A reader.* London: Sage.

Taylor, D.M., & Moghaddam, F, M., (1994). *Theories of intergroup relations.* London: Praeger.

Terkenli, T.S. (1995). Home as a region. *American Geographical Society* 85(3): 324-334.

Terreblanche, S.J. (2002) *A history of inequality in South Africa, 1652-2002.* Durban: University of KwaZulu Natal Press.

Thom, D.P. & Coetzee, C.H. (2004). Identity development of South African adolescents in a democratic society. *Society in transition.* 35(1): 183-193.

Thurman, T.R., Brown, L., Richter, L., Maharaj, P. & Magnani, R. (2006). Sexual Risk Behavior Among South African Adolescents – Is Orphan Status a Factor? *AIDS Behaviour* 10(6): 627-635.

Townsend, N. (2002). *The package deal. Marriage, work and fatherhood in men's lives.* Philadelphia: Temple.

Vandeyar, S. (2008). Shifting selves: The emergence of new identities in South African schools. *International journal of educational development.* 24(3): 286-299.

Vincent, L. (2008). 'Boys will be boys': Traditional Xhosa male circumcision. HIV and sexual socialization in contemporary South Africa. *Culture, Health & Sexuality,* 10(5): 431-446.

Walker, C. (1995). Conceptualising motherhood in the twentieth century South Africa. *Journal of Southern African Studies*21(3): 417- 438.

Walker, M. (2005) Rainbow nation or new racism? Theorizing race and identity formation in South African higher education. *Race, Ethnicity and Education* *(2): 129-145.

Watkins, M. (1986). *Invisible guests: The development of imaginal dialogues.* Hillside, NJ: The Analytic Press.

Wassenaar, D. (2006). Ethical issues in social science research. *In M. Terreblanche, K. Durrheim and D. Painter (Eds.), Research in Practice (2nd edition)*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Weedon, C. (2004). *Identity and Culture.* London: Open University Press.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of Practice: Learning, meaning, and identity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wengraf, T. (2001). Qualitative Research Interviewing: Biographic narrative and Semistructured Methods. London: Sage.

Wengraf, T. (2004). *Qualitative research interviewing.* London: Sage.

Wengraf, T. (2011). *Interviewing for life histories, lived situations and personal experience: The biographic-narrative interpretive method (bnim). Short guide to bnim interviewing and interpretation*: London East Research Institute, University of East London, UK.

Wilbraham, L. (2009). Manufacturing willingness: Parents and Young People talking about sex in an HIV & AIDS epidemic. *South African Journal of Psychology* 39(1): 59-74.

Wilton, T. (1997). Engendering AIDS: Deconstructing sex, text and epidemic. London: Sage.

Yuval-Davis, N. (2006). Intersectionality and Feminist Politics. *European Journal of Women's Studies* 13(3): 193-209.