

**PASTORAL CARE AND THE CHALLENGE OF POVERTY:  
WHEN OPENING HEARTS AND MINDS CREATE  
POSSIBILITIES IN  
A MARGINALISED SCHOOL COMMUNITY**

by

**THÉRÈSE HULME**

submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of

**DOCTOR OF THEOLOGY**

in the subject

**PRACTICAL THEOLOGY**

with specialisation in

**PASTORAL THERAPY**

at the

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**PROMOTER: DR D J KOTZÉ**

**JOINT PROMOTER: PROF. A P PHILLIPS**

**JUNE 2009**

**PRETORIA**

## **DEDICATION**

**I dedicate this thesis, with love and gratitude**

**to Elizabeth Cupido of Scottsville, who wanted to, but could not,**

**go to high school because of apartheid,**

**and**

**to my partner, Victor.**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / BEDANKINGS

Granville, Zulrich, Thelton, Thelren, Michael, Juclite, Verona, John, Esmé, Jonathan, Tracey, Elnico, Keenan, Embrentia, Cheneibra, Levine, Erin, Eleanor, 'Llwellyn', Ashvian, Justin, Timothy, Maxwell, Winston, Zandré, Franklin, Brondine, Jayleen, Jamie-Lee, Ricky, Ashwill; mnre Tyler, Claassen, Leech, Matthee, Mentoor, Fortuin, Noach, Julies, Temmers, Toerien, Smith; me. Jacobs, Pillay, Opperman, du Plessis; Helena, Ant Baai, Ant Liz, Ant Lizzie, Priscilla, Doreen, Anna, Joan, Lena, Nerine, Hildegarde, Mari, Estelle, Willemine, 'Anne', Gawie, Wendy, Terence, Jennifer, Yolandi, Phia, Amanda, Conrad, George, Marina, Heerden, Hennie, Anne-Sofie, prof. Carel Jansen, Ronelda, Idette, Johann, Lindi-Lee, prof. Philips, mnr Foster, Elize, Alta, Willemien, Lydia, Susan, Alten, Reynard, Ma, Pa, Wiesie, Denise,

Dirk...

thank you...dankie.

Thérèse

Junie 2009

## DECLARATION

‘I herewith declare that *Pastoral care and the challenge of poverty: when opening hearts and minds create possibilities in a marginalised school community* is my own work and that I have indicated all sources that I have used by means of full references. I declare that the research participants have had opportunity to familiarise themselves with their contribution as it is reflected in this document and have given their consent.’

.....

THÉRÈSE HULME

DATE

## ABSTRACT

In the 'coloured' community of Scottsville in the Western Cape, the historical legacy of political violence and abuse, combined with the current social hierarchies of violence, control and abuse, have serious consequences for Scottsville's young people. These traumas and the associated discourses create a culture of fear, distrust, hopelessness, humiliation and silence amongst the majority of the young people.

I have employed feminist-poststructuralist analyses in order to grasp the complex nature of the challenges of 'coloured' poverty. Foucault's analyses of power relations also offered this research ways to critique pastoral power. Because of Foucault's analyses, I became aware that 'coloured' people's experience of poverty and invisibility could not be separated from my own experience of the power of privilege and visibility. The operation of unjust power relations in the 'coloured' community therefore compelled me to use my education and privileges to work for the restitution of the voices and of relational and physical possibilities in the lives of 'coloured' young people. What started out as a research project became a cross-cultural journey of reparation and of my own humanisation. I argue that the praxis of embodied solidarity with the 'other' is the challenge that poverty ultimately poses to people of privilege and to the ways in which theology defines itself.

In doing the work of reparation I was supported by the relational theme of solidarity with the marginalised provided by a feminist theology of praxis. The knowledges of the women in the community in particular served as resources of faith.

The research methodologies I used in this research combined the practices of narrative therapy, creative writing, mentoring and drama. The purpose of these methodologies was to invite young people into various meaning-making processes which enabled them to become the agents of their own lives and of a culture of possibility. Derrida's work on deconstruction and the *aporia* provided this research with a framework for the theory of possibility. Through the methodologies of networking and advocacy, other people have joined us in going beyond the physical and relational limitations of poverty to create possibilities for the young people and their schools.

**Key terms:** violence, poverty, 'coloured' community, young people, school, cross-cultural relations, pastoral power, humanisation, participatory ethics, feminist-poststructuralist analyses, feminist theology, narrative therapy, embodiment, reparation, deconstruction, *aporia*, poetry, justice.

# CONTENTS

Dedication	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Declaration	iii
Abstract	iv
Photographs	xiv
<b>CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH DESIGN</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 DECIDING ON A RESEARCH CONTEXT	1
1.2.1 What does ‘poverty’ refer to?	2
1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION AND AIMS	4
1.3.1 Research aims	4
1.3.2 The first research aim: describing the challenges of poverty	5
1.3.3 The second research aim: participation	7
1.3.3.1 <i>Participation towards possibilities</i>	8
1.3.3.2 <i>Forms of participation</i>	9
1.3.3.3 <i>Participation and the possibilities it created for the researcher</i>	10
1.3.3.4 <i>The colon as pastoral metaphor</i>	11
1.3.4 The third research aim: <i>shalom</i> and ‘the creation of possibilities’	12
1.4 EPISTEMOLOGICAL(RE)SOURCES: MY RATIONALE FOR CHOOSING A POSTMODERN HERMENEUTICS AND FEMINIST-POSTSTRUCTURALIST PARADIGM FOR THIS RESEARCH	15
1.4.1 A ‘postmodern’ hermeneutics and its role in this research	15
1.4.1.1 <i>The position of the researcher in postmodern research</i>	20
1.4.2 Working in a feminist-poststructuralist paradigm	22
1.4.2.1 <i>Poststructuralist analyses</i>	24
1.4.2.2 <i>Feminist theology</i>	33
1.5 NARRATIVE THERAPY	38
1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	41
1.6.1 Methodological practices	41
1.6.1.1 <i>Therapeutic conversations</i>	42

1.6.1.2	<i>Group sessions with teachers</i>	42
1.6.1.3	<i>Dialogue with individual teachers</i>	42
1.6.1.4	<i>Presenting a lay counselling training course in the community</i>	43
1.6.1.5	<i>Interviews</i>	43
1.6.1.6	<i>Reality checks</i>	43
1.6.1.7	<i>Using language creatively</i>	43
1.6.1.8	<i>Drama</i>	44
1.6.1.9	<i>The creation of youth societies</i>	44
1.6.1.10	<i>Creating witnessing events</i>	45
1.6.1.11	<i>Documents of appreciation</i>	45
1.6.1.12	<i>Letters</i>	45
1.6.1.13	<i>Getting our hands dirty</i>	46
1.6.1.14	<i>Serving on a community forum</i>	46
1.6.1.15	<i>Caring for the caregivers</i>	47
1.6.1.16	<i>Facilitating between communities</i>	47
1.6.1.17	<i>Keeping a research journal</i>	47
1.6.1.18	<i>Consultation</i>	47
1.6.2	Summary	48
1.7	THE FORMAT OF THE RESEARCH DOCUMENTATION	48
1.7.1	Narratives	48
1.7.2	Plural text	49
1.7.3	Language	49
1.7.4	Making the context visible	50
1.7.5	Chapter content	50
1.8	A CHRONOLOGICAL ACCOUNT OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS	51
1.9	CONCLUSION	55
 <b>CHAPTER 2: POWER RELATIONS IN A CONTEXT OF POVERTY: A FOUCAULDIAN ANALYSIS</b>		<b>57</b>
2.1	WHICH KINDS OF KNOWLEDGE DO WE INCLUDE TO DESCRIBE 'POVERTY'?	57
2.2	ARCHAEOLOGY	60
2.2.1	Historical conditions and discursive formation	
2.2.2	The challenges of poverty in the coloured community of Scottsville: an archaeological analysis	64

2.2.2.1	<i>Lack of resources</i>	66
2.2.2.2	<i>Alcohol abuse</i>	67
2.2.2.3	<i>Drug abuse</i>	68
2.2.2.4	<i>Housing and gangs</i>	70
2.2.2.5	<i>Guns and violence</i>	71
2.2.2.6	<i>Reporting of violence and crime</i>	72
2.2.2.7	<i>Problems in education</i>	74
2.2.2.8	<i>Summary</i>	75
2.3	GENEALOGY	76
2.3.1	‘Bio-power’: A poststructuralist analysis of the body as the object and location of power	77
2.3.2	A genealogy of the violence on and violations of young people’s bodies in the Western Cape	78
2.3.3	Technologies of power	78
2.3.3.1	<i>The power of drugs and alcohol over the bodies of the young</i>	79
2.3.3.2	<i>Interpersonal violence</i>	80
2.3.4	Normalising of violence and abuse and its effects	115
2.3.5	Community responses to violence directed at young people	117
2.3.6	Neglect and the discourse of the family	119
2.4	FOUCAULDIAN ANALYSIS: ITS ETHICAL IMPACT	120
<b>CHAPTER 3: PASTORAL POWER: A POSTSTRUCTURALIST ANALYSIS</b>		<b>123</b>
3.1	INTRODUCTION	123
3.2	THE EMERGENCE OF PASTORAL POWER	123
3.3	CLASSIFICATION	129
3.3.1	‘Knowing your place’ in Scottsville	132
3.3.2.	Political and social shaming	134
3.3.3	The ‘baggage’ of humiliation	135
3.4	THE (PASTORAL) POWER OF LANGUAGE	137
3.4.1	Afrikaans	139
3.4.2	Language: ‘the new strategic possibility’	140
3.5	HISTORY OF THE DISCOURSES OF POVERTY AND SUBJUGATION: A PERSPECTIVE FROM THE SUBJUGATED	141
3.5.1	Elizabeth Cupido narrates history	143
3.5.2	A poststructuralist reading of Aunt Liz’s story	148

3.5.2.1	<i>Laws and their intentionality</i>	149
3.5.2.2	<i>Pastoral power and the intention of docile bodies</i>	151
3.5.2.3	<i>The white church and pastoral power</i>	152
3.5.2.4	<i>Personal implications</i>	153
3.5.3	Presentation at a theological conference	156
3.6	THE RETRIEVAL OF PASSION: THE PASTORAL CHALLENGE	156
3.7	RECOGNISING THE PASTORAL PEDESTAL AND GETTING OFF IT	159
<b>CHAPTER 4: A FEMINIST THEOLOGICAL EPISTEMOLOGY AS RESOURCE AND POINT OF REFERENCE</b>		<b>161</b>
4.1	INTRODUCTION	161
4.2	THE RESEARCH JOURNEY THAT LED ME TO THE SCOTTSVILLE WOMEN	162
4.3	SOURCES IN FEMINIST THEOLOGY	165
4.3.1	The daily experiences and pastoral knowledges of women and other marginalised people	165
4.3.1.1	<i>The role of language in feminist-poststructuralist research</i>	169
4.3.2	Scripture and a critical stance to the Christian tradition	174
4.3.2.1	<i>Feminist theology as liberation theology</i>	175
4.3.3	‘Beloved community’	194
4.3.3.1	<i>Care shown towards me</i>	195
4.3.3.2	<i>Supporting one another</i>	196
4.3.3.3	<i>Creating community: the stories of Granville</i>	199
4.4	PRESENTING A WORKSHOP AT SAAP	202
4.4.1	How the workshop was conducted	204
4.4.2	The significance of the SAAP presentation	206
4.5	SOME REFLECTIONS ON CURRENT THEOLOGICAL METAPHORS (IN THE LIGHT OF A FEMINIST-POSTSTRUCTURALIST HERMENEUTICS) AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR PASTORAL PRAXIS	207
<b>CHAPTER 5: THE POSSIBILITY OF ETHICAL RELATIONS IN A CONTEXT OF POVERTY – A FEMINIST-POSTSTRUCTURALIST EXPLORATION</b>		<b>211</b>
5.1	INTRODUCTION	211
5.2	THE ETHICS OF DECONSTRUCTION	213

5.3	DEALING WITH DIFFERENCE	215
5.3.1	The relational implications of caring for difference	218
5.3.1.1	<i>Coming up against my own partiality: an ethical challenge</i>	218
5.3.1.2	<i>The concrete other</i>	220
5.3.1.3	<i>Cultural consultants</i>	223
5.3.1.4	<i>Openness to context</i>	224
5.4	THE ETHICS OF SYMMETRICAL RELATIONS	231
5.4.1	Symmetrical pastoral relations in the research	233
5.5	THE ROLE OF THE BODY IN FEMINIST THEOLOGY	235
5.5.1	The body – a Christological perspective	236
5.5.1.1	<i>Aunt Baai embodies justice</i>	238
5.5.2	The body as a resource for faith: the challenge to the Christian pastoral tradition	239
5.5.2.2	<i>The challenge of vulnerability</i>	241
5.5.2.3	<i>Seeing from ‘the underside’</i>	244
5.5.2.4	<i>Listening from ‘the underside’</i>	246
5.6	NARRATIVE THERAPY	251
5.6.1	Narrative therapy and a deconstructive stance in a therapeutic context	251
5.6.1.1	<i>‘Lwellyn’ and I challenge the discourse of inferiority</i>	252
5.6.2	Taking a deconstructive stance in a pastoral context	254
5.6.2.1	<i>Anna deconstructs and reconstructs her relationship with her son</i>	254
5.6.2.2	<i>A deconstructive conversation with boys about gender discourses</i>	256
5.6.3	Witnessing practices	259
5.6.3.1	<i>I speak at a witnessing ceremony</i>	260
5.6.3.2	<i>Creating conditions of possibility: young people participate in a witnessing ceremony of their own</i>	261
5.6.3.3	<i>Reflections on the ethical implications of witnessing</i>	264
5.6.4	Letter writing in the research	265
5.7	REFLECTIONS ON THE RELATIONAL STRUGGLES OF THE RESEARCH	267

<b>CHAPTER 6: WHEN OPENING HEARTS AND MINDS CREATES CULTURAL POSSIBILITIES WITH AND ON BEHALF OF SCOTTSVILLE'S YOUNG PEOPLE</b>	<b>271</b>
6.1	'POSSIBILITIES' – AN INTRODUCTION 271
6.1.2	'The possibility of the impossible': the political and cultural significance of Derrida's <i>aporia</i> 272
6.2	WHY FOCUS ON CULTURE? A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE 273
6.2.1	The experience of culture in a poor 'coloured' community 274
6.2.2	The cultural task of theology 277
6.3	A POSTSTRUCTURALIST APPROACH TO LANGUAGE 278
6.3.1	Researcher de-centering: not being afraid to 'see the world unveiled' 280
6.3.2	Using language to create possibilities 282
6.3.2.1	<i>The relationality of poetic language: 'When I read this poem it feels as if my mom is holding me'</i> 283
6.3.2.2	<i>'Can I choose anything?'</i> John discovers the possibility of languaging his own experience 287
6.3.2.3	<i>'Bolle – the drawing-genius is dead': Poetic language as resistance</i> 292
6.3.2.4	<i>'What does not worry me...': Michael's poem becomes a play</i> 293
6.3.2.5	<i>'...os het altyd skaloeloe gespeel, boemby, driestokkies' – Verona creates new possibilities for Afrikaans</i> 295
6.3.2.6	<i>'Die Testament': Publication and accountability</i> 296
6.3.2.7	<i>Play-writing</i> 298
6.4	A POSTSTRUCTURALIST PERSPECTIVE ON CRITICISM 302
6.5	DRAMA PERFORMANCE 305
6.6	YOUTH WHISPERING 310
6.7	IMAGINATION AS CULTURAL APORIA 316
6.7.1	A culture of the imagination takes root 319
6.8	PARTICIPATION TOWARDS A DIFFERENT KIND OF COMMUNITY 321
6.8.1	Participation of young people 322
6.8.2	Participation with young people 324
6.8.3	Advocacy and networking 328
6.8.3.1	<i>Developing the library project: mutual participation</i> 328
6.8.3.2	<i>Doing pre-participatory work in Welgemoed</i> 331
6.8.3.3	<i>'Anne' and friends participate</i> 332
6.8.3.4	<i>Participation by men of faith from Welgemoed</i> 332

6.8.3.5	<i>Gawie Niewoudt creates physical possibilities for Petunia Primary's young people</i>	333
6.8.3.6	<i>Hildegarde Malherbe reaches out</i>	333
6.8.4	Participation by Scottsville's teaching staff	334
6.8.5	Asking and giving consent as a participatory methodology	335
6.8.6	Cultural re-imagining through participation	337
6.9	CONCLUDING REMARKS	338
 <b>CHAPTER 7: REFLECTING ON THE RESEARCH AND THE CHALLENGES OF 'COLOURED' POVERTY FOR PRACTICAL THEOLOGY</b>		<b>341</b>
7.1	OUTLINE	341
7.2	HOW THE RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION IS DESCRIBED	342
7.3	REFLECTING ON THE CHOICE OF A FEMINIST- POSTSTRUCTURALIST EPISTEMOLOGY TO INFORM THIS RESEARCH	343
7.3.1	Foucault and the description of the 'challenges of poverty'	343
7.3.2	Derrida and the possibility of deconstruction	349
7.3.3	The challenges of relating – a feminist theological perspective	351
7.3.3.1	<i>Experiential and embodied knowledge of women as a resource for theology</i>	354
7.4	REFLECTING ON THE RESEARCH AIM OF PARTICIPATION	357
7.4.1	Researcher experiences as a resource in the research	358
7.4.1.1	<i>An archaeological analysis of my participation as a researcher</i>	359
7.4.2	Participatory praxis and the aim of <i>shalom</i>	363
7.4.3	Pre-participatory praxis	364
7.4.4	Traversing the <i>aporia</i> of community participation	367
7.4.5	Research as care: a response to the challenge of embodiment	368
7.4.6	Research as a response to the challenge of participating in relationship	371
7.4.6.1	<i>Questions and 'an openness to the unexpected'</i>	373
7.4.7	A promoter's 'caring with' participation	378
7.4.8	Accountability – the research participants evaluate the research and its contribution	378
7.5	RETRIEVING PASSION	385

7.5.1	Protecting the passion	385
7.6	THE ‘NOT YET’ OF JUSTICE	387
7.7	RETHINKING THE USE OF THE WORD ‘PASTORAL’	390
7.8	ARGUING FOR POSTSTRUCTURALIST TRAINING FOR AND CROSS-CULTURAL PARTICIPATION BY PRACTICAL THEOLOGIANS	393
7.9	MENTORING	395
7.9.1	Drug use and the <i>aporia</i> of HIV/AIDS amongst poor ‘coloured’ teenagers	397
7.9.1.1	<i>HIV/AIDS: How participatory theologians can and should respond</i>	397
7.10	TAKING THE RESEARCH FURTHER	399
	REFERENCES	401
	Addendum 1: Invitation to presentation posted at Joint Conference	433
	Addendum 2a & 2b: Klaaglied vir Douglas / Lament for Douglas	434
	Addendum 3: Presentation delivered at the Joint Conference of Academic Societies in the Fields of Religion and Theology, Faculty of Theology at the University of Stellenbosch, 25 June 2009	436
	Addendum 4: DVD which formed part of the presentation discussed in Addendum 3	444
	Addendum 5: The young participants of the drama society are invited to a celebratory lunch	445
	Addendum 6: Letter to Thelren	446
	Addendum 7a: Letter to parents / grandparents / guardians setting out the rationale for the consent forms	447
	Addendum 7b: Consent forms	448

**A PREVIEW: PHOTOGRAPHS FROM MY RESEARCH JOURNAL**



Photo 1: Scottsville, late afternoon.



Photo 2: Mr Foster standing in front of Petunia Primary school.



Photo 3: The Scottsville women, 'beloved community' (from left to right): Aunt Liz, Doreen, Anna, Lena, Aunt Baai and Joan.



Photo 4: Tracey receives her award from me in the corridor at Petunia Primary that we used as a stage, while Maxwell, Granville (seated), Michael and Juclite wait their turn



Photo 5: Michael and Thelton help to clear the shelves of the library at Scottsville Secondary School



Photo 6: Mr Foster and Mr Noach at the inauguration of Petunia Primary's uprights



Photo 7: Mr Foster and the uprights



Photo 8: Ricky's 'Pumas'

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, I introduce my research and describe how the research was designed in terms of my practices and my theoretical reflections on that practice. This chapter therefore explains how the context of poverty (as the chosen context of my research) influenced my choice of epistemologies, methodologies and the practical theological position I adopted in this research. The three main aims (see Sections 1.3.1 to 1.3.3) of this study are also introduced. Finally, the format of this thesis and the rationale for the choices I made regarding formal aspects of the writing of the thesis itself (see Section 1.7) are explained.

### **1.2 DECIDING ON A RESEARCH CONTEXT**

This research project was motivated by a personal commitment to work as a pastoral therapist in a community that has little or no access to such a professional service. As a white South African who has benefited from apartheid, I decided to use the skills that my education has provided me with to contribute to a community that suffered and continues to suffer the effects of that same unjust political system. The practices of this research and the way in which I positioned myself as a researcher in relation to my South African poor ‘others’ became my way of doing restitution. This study was therefore intended to become an embodied form of restitution in a context of deprivation.

When I started working on my master’s research project in 2000, I was working at the Fanie Theron Primary School in Kraaifontein. My master’s research project (Hulme 2002) was conducted as an Appreciative Inquiry with a group of white teachers at this school. In the course of that study, it emerged that, apart from their wish to care for the young people they taught, teachers expressed a need for practical guidance with regard to the provision of therapeutic support to young people who

suffer the effects of poverty. I wanted to support teachers who work in contexts that are even more deprived and less resourced than the school I had become familiar with, so I approached the principal of Fanie Theron Primary, with whom I had built up a relationship of trust in 2004, for advice. He suggested Petunia Primary – a school with mainly ‘coloured’<sup>1</sup> and some black learners, on ‘the other side of the N1 highway’. Petunia Primary is located in the low-income area of Scottsville, in Kraaifontein, one of Cape Town’s northern suburbs. I then introduced myself to Mr Foster, the principal of Petunia Primary, in October 2004. The research commenced in February 2005. When the children from Petunia Primary with whom I built relationships in the course of the research eventually went to the Scottsville Secondary School nearby, I ‘followed’ them. My research then also expanded to create possibilities in the broader Scottsville school community.

### **1.2.1 What does ‘poverty’ refer to?**

Although it should be understood that descriptions of what constitutes poverty depend on how the term is defined and measured in a specific context and on who is asking the question (Chambers 2002:3), it is generally agreed that poverty implies or is associated with a lack of resources (Harrington, Marshall & Müller 2006:455; Terreblanche 1977:62). Moreover, according to Chambers (2002:3), the following clusters of meanings can be used in defining poverty:

The first is income-poverty or consumption-poverty...the second cluster of meanings is material lack...a third cluster of meanings derives from Amartya Sen, and is expressed as capability deprivation, referring to what we can or cannot do, can or cannot be. This includes but goes beyond material lack or want to include human capabilities, for example skills and physical abilities, and also self-respect in society. A fourth cluster takes a yet more broadly multi-dimensional view of deprivation.

The *Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology* (Lister 2006:462) also distinguishes between material and non-material aspects of poverty. Material poverty includes the absence or scarcity of material resources such as income, housing and social

---

<sup>1</sup> The word ‘coloured’ is used in this research to refer to a specific South African community with a specific social location and history which is ‘not white’ and ‘not black’. Because this is a ‘description that was not chosen by a group of people, but forced upon them’ (Foster 2009), I would have preferred to use the term ‘so-called’ in front of the word ‘coloured’. However, for the sake of readability of this document, I eventually opted to place the word in inverted commas to reflect the historical subjugation that this term speaks of.

services. The recommendations of the Theron Commission (Theron & Du Toit 1977) regarding the ‘coloured’ community in the 1970s focused mainly on researching, describing and improving the material aspects of ‘coloured’ life, which included poverty. Consequently, the Commission recommended steps that would materially improve the social-economic, administrative and political position of the ‘coloured’ community (Theron & Du Toit 1977:107-114). It also made recommendations regarding the opening of services and opportunities and the scrapping of certain apartheid laws. Moreover, in the course of its research, the members of the Theron Commission often cited the effects that material aspects (such as laws) had on ‘coloured’ people’s non-material experience as citizens and as persons.

In defining poverty, the current literature (Abercrombie, Hill & Turner 2006; Lister 2006) also highlights the non-material aspects of poverty – these relate to ‘capability deprivation’, which refers to ‘disrespectful treatment, loss of dignity, lack of voice, and of power’ (Lister 2006:462) and ‘social exclusion’ (Abercrombie et al 2006:304). These definitions were significant in formulating aims for this research that may be able to offer responses to the conditions described.

Definitions of poverty also allow for differences in terms of the severity with which poverty is experienced. Therefore poverty is also sometimes described according to degrees (extreme, moderate, relative):

*Absolute poverty* implies that households are unable to meet the basic needs for survival. They are chronically hungry, unable to access health care, lack the amenities of safe drinking water and sanitation, cannot afford education for some or all children, and perhaps lack rudimentary shelter, and basic articles of clothing. ...  
*Moderate poverty* refers to conditions of life in which basic needs are met, but just barely. *Relative poverty* is generally perceived to be a household income level below a given proportion of average national income.

(Triegaardt 2006:3, Triegaardt’s italics)

All three descriptions of poverty apply to the young people in Scottsville’s schools. Those who come from the Wallacedene and Bloekombos squatter camps live in absolute poverty. It would be fair to say that the majority of the young people attending school in this area experience at best ‘moderate poverty’.

These definitions of poverty are relevant to this study in that the study recognises that attempts at changing a culture of poverty have to address both its material and its non-material aspects. In line with the description of poverty as experiencing a lack of resources, pastoral care as a response to the challenges of poverty therefore has to establish, uncover and facilitate the creation of both material and especially, non-material, resources. Feminist theologian Pamela Couture (2000:23) distinguishes between material poverty and what she refers to as the ‘poverty of tenuous connections’. When human relationships become ‘tenuous’, the poor, and especially poor children, often experience loneliness and powerlessness (Pieterse 2001:44; White & Tiongco 1997:24). These children are therefore often most in need of relationships of care (White & Tiongco 1997:25).

### **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION AND AIMS**

The need to recognise poverty as a challenge and the aim to respond to it by way of pastoral care (as it is reflected in the title of this thesis) led me to formulate the research question as follows:

**How can participatory pastoral practices be developed through caring *with* relationships, with the purpose of taking on the various challenges that the effects of poverty pose to young people<sup>2</sup> in a ‘coloured’ community?**

Three central research aims emerged from this research question.

#### **1.3.1 Research aims**

The three central research aims are all interlinked and highly contextual in nature. The aims are, first, describing the challenges of poverty, second, describing the ways in which participation by poor people gave direction and meaning to the research and, third, the creation of pastoral possibilities in a spirit of *shalom*. These aims are described in more detail below. They encapsulate my understanding of the contextual and creative role that theology as praxis can play in a context of poverty. In view of the research question stated above and the title of this thesis, the three distinct aims for this research that are discussed below emerged.

---

<sup>2</sup> I prefer the term ‘young people’ to ‘children’ for general use in this study. ‘Young people’ is an inclusive term that refers to both children and teenagers, as both groups participated in this research.

### **1.3.2 The first research aim: describing the challenges of poverty**

I was guided in my choice of research aims by Denzin's (1989:248) multifaceted description of research as 'a process of symbolic interaction that involves interpretation...and the planning and doing of action'. Denzin regards research as 'a dialectical act that turns back upon itself...and moves forward into uncharted fields of experience'. For me, poverty constituted an uncharted field of experience. In order to know what relevant research would mean in this context, I first needed to investigate the experience of poverty itself.

The first aim of the research is therefore outlining and defining the term 'challenge of poverty' that the title of the thesis refers to, as it is experienced in the poor 'coloured' community of Scottsville in the Western Cape. Chapters 2 and 3 offer local descriptions of poverty as experienced by poor 'coloured' people in the Western Cape, and specifically in Scottsville. In these chapters, I also analyse the effects of poverty and the historical and social conditions that maintain 'coloured' poverty.

In order to build up an accurate and detailed picture of the scale of the challenges of poverty that young people in particular face, I decided that, in Chapter 2, I would combine the qualitative research method of poststructuralist analysis with an analysis of quantitative data that includes statistical information from various sources. The data referred to in that chapter is highly specific to the experience of poverty by 'coloured' people in the Western Cape. The data include *The Report on the Demographic profile of Kraaifontein/Brackenfell* (Unit for Religion and Development Research & Transformation Africa 2005), the most recent police statistics for the Kraaifontein area (SAPS 2008) and data regarding drug use by 'coloured' teenagers supplied by the Cape Town Drug Counselling Centre.

*Newspaper reports* (Buffel 2007; Carter 2007; Herman 2006; Kinnis 2007; Le Roux 2007; Solomons 2007) are also included in the research data, as they provide recent and specific accounts of the effects of poverty in the 'coloured' community, and by implication, also of the challenges that poverty poses, especially to the community's young people.

Throughout the thesis, I document the effects of poverty that emerged through *conversations* I had with members of the community, or through my *direct experience* of poverty in the community. In Chapter 2, I also indicate how these conditions contribute to shaping and supporting certain limiting, disabling and disqualifying discourses in a poor ‘coloured’ community. I give a detailed account of the various ways in which especially ‘coloured’ young people suffer poverty and its effects. In Chapter 3, I show how a particular form of pastoral power has developed that contributes to and maintains poverty and the subjugation of people.

In describing the challenges of poverty, I relied on a poststructuralist epistemology for an analysis of power relations. My rationale for describing the challenges of poverty from a poststructuralist perspective is simple: poverty is ultimately an experience of a loss of power, of marginalisation and subjugation. The challenges of poverty are therefore described in Chapters 2 and 3 using terms such as ‘subjugation’, ‘control’ and ‘marginalisation’, which provide a link with a feminist theological epistemology. The poststructuralist analyses in Chapters 2 and 3 provide this thesis with a theoretical framework for understanding the processes of marginalisation and control. Poststructuralist analyses therefore build a picture of the relational limitations that modernist pastoral power has set. When the participants in the research and I realised how pastoral power can violate individuals and communities, this realisation formed the backdrop against which we worked in this research toward the creation of the ‘possibilities’ referred to in the title of this thesis.

What this research therefore aimed at was an intensive epistemological analysis of power, not only of how it features directly in the community, but also of how it informs practices within the discipline of practical theology. The ‘challenges of poverty’ cannot be separated from these broader operations of power. This research document therefore shows how the epistemological analyses of power made visible specific practices which constitute the ‘challenges’ that the title of this thesis refers to. In describing the challenges of poverty, this research document contains, in a sense, a ‘conversation’ between or an ‘illumination’ of the theories of poststructuralism and the real practices of violence, subjugation and humiliation in the lives of poor people.

### 1.3.3 The second research aim: participation

My preferred research approach is participatory action research (Grundy 1996; Hall 1996; Kemmis & Mc Taggart 2005; McTaggart 1994, 1997a, 1997b; Winter 1996) – a genre of qualitative research rooted in liberation theology and community activism (Kemmis & McTaggart 2005:560). It is described as a form of self-reflective enquiry (McTaggart 1994) with a view to changing both individuals and the culture to which they belong (Mc Taggart 1997b:31). In this process, the research participants thus become active in producing knowledge and in shaping culture and history (McTaggart 1997b:38). Hence, ‘(a)uthentic participation in research means sharing in the way research is conceptualised, practiced and brought to bear on the life-world. It means ownership: responsible agency in the production of knowledge and in the improvement of practice’ (McTaggart 1997a:6).

This research therefore aimed at providing some answers to the question of how practical theologians can engage semi-literate or illiterate people of faith to contribute towards the production of knowledge, so that we can expand our vision of what pastoral care entails. I believe that, through the engagement of our South African ‘other’ in the research process, we may all come to more textured understandings of both the challenges and the practices that may be regarded by people in these contexts as ‘participation in the justice mission’ (Herzog 1988:10) of God.

Hence, Poling’s (1991:187) definition of practical theology can be applied to this research: ‘Practical theology is theological interpretation of the unheard voices of personal and community life for the purpose of continual transformation of faith in the true God of love and power toward renewed ministry practice.’ This research aimed to hear those unheard voices. However, this research is only partly practical theology because of *my interpretation* of these unheard voices. This research in particular aimed at the full *participation of marginalised persons in interpreting their own context* and the ethical positions available to them and in taking up those positions. I believe that inasmuch as marginalised persons themselves took up their rightful places as interpreters, this research does constitute practical theology. This thesis documents the unfolding process of how the marginalised started to participate

in the interpretation and voicing of their own lives and how these interpretations and voicings shaped the course of the pastoral praxis of this research.

### ***1.3.3.1 Participation towards possibilities***

Robin McTaggart (1997a:5), a researcher in the field of education, outlines language, 'ordinary activities' and power relations (including the discourses associated with the operation of power in society) as three areas that participatory action research aims to analyse and change. These three 'themes' for change feature throughout this research. Especially the aspect of power is discussed in the aim of *shalom* (see Section 1.3.4).

Working in a context of poverty, I prefer the word 'possibilities', as used in the title of this thesis, to 'change'. 'Change' is a big word that can set up expectations for research that are often not attainable and that may lead researchers to abandon their projects. However, 'possibilities' is a much 'smaller' word; it traces the small steps of the heart and mind that often prepare the way for change. The word also honours the chances that when people participate with one another, a range of possibilities for action may open up that have not been envisaged before.

As this research was done within the discipline of pastoral care, the process of participation was especially aimed at creating new possibilities for care. In its methodology, the research process was an organic one, in which often possibilities emerged only once we had acted on other possibilities (for example, see the story of Granville, in Section 4.3.3.3). When, through the research act, those whose voices had not been heeded before discovered that their knowledges, values and experiences were acknowledged and even regarded as powerful, they were drawn to start participating in new ways to transform their culture. People from the community also started participating by saying what kinds of action they preferred and of what kinds of action they dreamt.

Kemmis and McTaggart (2005:580) describe participatory action that is not merely communicative or reflective in nature, but that also involves the exploration of doing things together and learning from our explorations. In Chapter 6, I describe how the young people and I participated in explorative action. This thesis therefore aims to convey the exploration, fluidity, open-endedness and creativity that constitute

participatory action research. To translate this into formal text was no easy task. The aim of participation is made visible throughout this thesis, but I also depend on you, the informed reader, to recognise it in its various forms and as it illuminates my chosen epistemologies.

### ***1.3.3.2 Forms of participation***

I did not decide on the forms of participation before the start of the research – instead, they emerged from my interaction with members of the Scottsville community and other people. The following ways in which this research aimed at participation are described in this thesis:

- participation between me and teaching staff at two schools;
- participation between me and members of the community, in particular, a group of Scottsville women;
- participation between me and young people, as clients and as writers/actors;
- facilitation of young people's participation in one another's lives in new ways;
- participation between me and my Welgemoed community: inviting members to join me in Scottsville;
- participation in facilitating connections between Welgemoed and Scottsville;
- the setting up of projects in Scottsville with people from Welgemoed;
- participation by teachers in projects and their development of these projects;
- the setting up of witnessing events in which outsiders could participate in appreciative and affirming ways towards women and young people from the community;
- facilitation of the participation of the broader community in the creation of possibilities in Scottsville; and
- pre-participatory work that led to the teachers' participation.

Because of the research, my own understanding grew that sometimes pre-participatory work needed to be done in order for participation to occur. The pre-participatory processes and what led up to them are described in Section 7.4.3.

### ***1.3.3.3 Participation and the possibilities it created for the researcher***

Developing relationships with Scottsville's people both inside and outside of the therapeutic context was vital, because it brought the challenging realities of poverty to my attention in emotive and physical ways – in ways which no scientific publication ever could (see Section 2.3.3.2, under the subheading 'The boys take me into their confidence', for a description of a conversation with a group of boys about the realities of living with the presence of physical abuse in their school community). This meant that the dialogue between me and my co-researchers – the participants in this research, the people of Scottsville – altered my frame of reference regarding the complexities of poverty, introduced some new aims and methodologies to the research and led me to delete and adjust others from my original research plan. Their involvement also broadened my theoretical investigation to include themes that came up in the course of our dialogue or to which I became a witness.

Because I was an outsider to the 'coloured' community, I often had regular consultations with Mr Foster, the school principal at Petunia Primary, and Mr Noach, the deputy principal, who acted as cultural consultants for the research. The research strategy of using cultural consultants is important for being able to do 'just therapy' (Waldegrave 1998:412) and it helped me reflect on whether my good intentions led to culturally sensitive and appropriate actions. In Chapter 5, I discuss how the methodology of using cultural consultants contributed to this research.

Because I adhered to the aim of inviting participation by poor persons in the research, the research developed in an organic way instead of in a rigid, structured way. The improvement of my practice in terms of this research therefore does not refer only to the research practices that I designed. In this thesis it also includes a discussion of pastoral praxis in the broader sense and of how the research participants contributed to the direction this research took. In Chapters 3 and 4, I specifically show how, through their sharing of knowledges and experiences, poor women contributed to the formation of new pastoral understandings that informed and illuminated the feminist epistemology. Spirituality was thus broadened to include the experiences of the marginalised and of the often 'uneducated' caregivers in the community who have been 'doing theology' all along, even though their 'doing theology' was not acknowledged as such. In this research, the unheard voices in the

community therefore became central to the way God is described and theology is (re)defined. They became full and active research participants in the production of knowledge and meaning.<sup>3</sup> In Chapter 6, I describe the processes by which young people actively engaged in creating knowledge by way of creative work.

In Chapter 6, I also reflect in greater detail on how this research aim was broadened to include the participation of the broader community in the transformative work we started with this research. In the light of our country's painful history, this research became the painstaking praxis of participating in co-constructing a new moral community which can respond to the challenge of poverty.

#### ***1.3.3.4 The colon as pastoral metaphor***

I regard the colon in the title of this thesis as symbolic of the aim of this research – unlocking the power of pastoral participation. The colon is positioned in the text between the reality of poverty and the word 'when' that introduces the creation of possibilities as a theme. The challenges of poverty need a response, but the response hinges on a certain condition. To me the colon speaks of the action of response that hinges on the participation with and of others.

Therefore this research reflects on various forms of participation in the research *with* the people from the community. This research also gives an account of the joys of experiencing 'beloved community' (see Section 4.3.3) and of the challenge of building mutuality in a context of individualism and control. It gives an account of my own struggle to stay focused on the aim of participation and what sustained me in keeping my focus and passion (see Section 7.5.1). In Chapter 4, I describe the ethic of mutuality (see 4.3.3.1) between myself and the women from the community with whom I did a lay counselling training course. In Chapter 6, I focus on my participation in the lives of individual young people and how we participated together in challenging a culture of powerlessness. In Chapter 6, I also reflect on the changes that this research created through the use of language. In Chapter 6 the struggles are described of doing participatory research that is also cross-cultural and that challenges the *status quo*.

---

<sup>3</sup> See my letter to Aunt Liz Cupido (Section 3.5.2.4) after our conversation about her experiences of being subjected to the pastoral power of control and subjugation.

But it is not only research that hinges on participation. Our humanity in South Africa hinges on our participation in the lives of others and their participation in ours. In Chapter 5, I focus on my understanding of what Kotzé (2002:17-20) calls ‘participatory ethics’. I need ‘the other’ to witness, appreciate and support me, and the other needs me to witness, appreciate and support him or her. In this way we may participate in creating an authentic community of care in which our meanings and the terms of what is relationally possible may continually be ‘modified, amended, revised, abridged, contradicted, focused, and broadened’ (Heaney 2000:115). This aim of ethical pastoral care became embodied praxis as I started to engage with people in the community.

#### **1.3.4 The third research aim: *shalom* and ‘the creation of possibilities’**

Another central aim of this research process was for it to become a response to the monologue of hopelessness of the poverty statistics and the disabling realities associated with poverty in the Scottsville community. Such a response, by definition, is more than an acknowledgement of poverty, it aims at creating possibilities: ‘...to reread history could seem to be a purely intellectual exercise if we failed to understand that this also involves remaking it’ (Gutiérrez in Rieger 2003:97). In order to remake, a researcher first has to be able to *imagine* possibilities. In reflecting on my research as an imaginative response, I found the most suitable definition of its aim in the ancient biblical theme of *shalom*.

According to Walter Brueggemann (1976:17), *shalom* is the expression of a biblical vision of wholeness, ‘in which persons are bound not only to God but to one another in a caring, sharing, rejoicing community’. *Shalom* refers to more than only peace. It is a term that deals with a wholeness that implies a restoration of physical well-being, a right relationship amongst people, and with attaining justice and righteousness (Brueggemann 1976:19, 94; Consedine 1995:151-2). Justice campaigner and prison chaplain Jim Consedine (1995:152) notes that the Hebrew term for ‘paying back’ (*shillum*) has the same word root as *shalom*. *Shalom* therefore refers to restorative justice at work in physical and in relational terms and also to how it challenges us as human beings and practical theologians constantly to ask questions about what constitutes moral integrity.

Deciding on doing doctoral research brought me to the moral question of who needs to benefit from this research. Was the aim of this research to be solely to serve my own interests? I took a decision then, one which has been confirmed during the research, that it would be immoral to do research on poverty in South Africa in the highly individualised way in which we have become used to in academic culture, where poor people remain subjects that can be analysed, studied and reported on by an outside ‘expert’. For me, the immorality of such an approach lay in the kind of exploitative power relation in which the researcher who operates from a position of certainty and control has everything to gain, and the poor people very little. In coming to an answer about moral research in a context of poverty, I therefore asked myself: In what spirit would Jesus relate? The answer can be found in the words ‘when opening hearts and minds...’ of the title of this thesis. These words refer to a willingness to open oneself to the other and therefore to stand

...where Jesus stands in all walks of life, especially with those whom society tunes out: the invisible women and men, as also the injured creation... So it is not activity in general that is called for when we reflect on our social location. It is first of all participation in the justice mission of Jesus.

(Herzog 1988:10)

Jesus’ own life and death created possibilities for restorative justice that had previously been thought impossible. Not only did Jesus concern himself with the physical well-being of the socially vulnerable, but he also enacted the kind of just relation with them that restored their full humanity. Jesus also constantly challenged believers such as Lazarus (Lk 16:19-31) and the Pharisees to define and remake moral integrity through their actions. In deciding what is right relational and moral action, the question that Jesus asked is whether justice had been done to the other. Considine (1995:152) therefore states that Biblical justice is not measured according to the rightness of rules or theological tradition, but by its outcome – especially as it affects the poor and marginalised. *Shalom* therefore becomes ‘a social happening, an event in inter-human relations, a venture of co-humanity’ (Van Schalkwyk 1999:21). Brueggemann (1976:99) goes so far as to state that ‘(t)he purpose of God is the empowerment of the powerless’ and that, therefore, ‘(s)halom depends on the redistribution of power’ (Brueggemann 1976:101).

For this research, the challenge of poverty therefore became a challenge to the tradition of pastoral care in South Africa and its capacity to enact the restorative justice of *shalom*. The doing of restorative justice that is *shalom* is therefore the primary pastoral aim of this research. In reflecting on the ‘unfinished agenda’ of the social reconstruction process in South Africa, Villa-Vicencio (1999:168) defines the empowerment of the poor as follows:

The common good and national reconstruction is about jobs, houses, health care, education and democratic structures that empower people. Empowerment, however, includes cultural renewal and a spirituality that draws on religious, social and historical resources that provide a sense of personal and communal self-worth.

Hence, practical theologian John de Gruchy (1994:12) states that “‘doing theology’ can never be a neutral exercise, nor can it be a substitute for faith and commitment. It assumes faith, and it requires commitment’. This research in the discipline of practical theology thus grew out of my faith in Jesus, who embodied *shalom*, and my personal commitment to embody *shalom* by way of this research in the poor ‘coloured’ community of Scottsville. My prior commitment to the poor and marginalised therefore became the point of departure for me in ‘doing theology’ (Bosch 1999:424). My faith thus became an imaginative resource for the creation of pastoral possibilities in this research.

*Shalom* also required of me a willingness to let go of control and to become vulnerable to the suffering of others. What poverty has taught me about the stance of vulnerability in coming to more ethical ways of relating to the poor o/Other is discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

The ‘creation of possibilities’ in the title of this thesis is therefore an expression of my faith in Jesus, whose enactment of *shalom* ‘created possibilities’. This research as the creation of possibilities (Chapters 4, 5 and 6) is therefore an act of faith that is rooted in the calling to achieve *shalom* in the midst of poverty and violence. Academic scholarship too is thereby placed in the domain of ‘servanthood’ (Van Wyk 1998:20), as the aim of research is to be of service to others. In the subsequent chapters, the experiences and voices of the people of Scottsville are the litmus test as to whether they have been served by this research and whether its aim of *shalom* has been realised.

## **1.4 EPISTEMOLOGICAL (RE)SOURCES: MY RATIONALE FOR CHOOSING A POSTMODERN HERMENEUTICS AND FEMINIST-POSTSTRUCTURALIST PARADIGM FOR THIS RESEARCH**

The abovementioned aims for this research link with a postmodern hermeneutics and with the research possibilities that a feminist-poststructuralist epistemology opens up and supports. Below, I therefore describe how a postmodern hermeneutics provided me with a particular theoretical stance as a researcher with regard to sources and kinds of knowledge in research and of how the research process itself engages the researcher in the meaning-making that occurs during research. Epistemologies therefore featured as resources for the work, not only as theoretical, reflective resources on praxis, but in shaping praxis itself.

### **1.4.1 A ‘postmodern’ hermeneutics and its role in this research**

Hermeneutics deals with the processes of understanding (Herholdt 1998:454) the rules that inform the criteria for knowledge on which understanding is based. According to Cilliers (1998:113-114), postmodern society operates as a complex system in which a multiplicity of locally determined discourses shape the ways knowledge is formed and how it operates. If discourses create knowledge and determine their operation in society, then it follows that research that calls itself postmodern ‘must expose the social problems that modernist, positivist sociology helped create. The sociologist has an obligation to become free of the positivist preconceptions of the research act so that a fully interpretive, existentially relevant sociology can be written’ (Denzin 1989:267).

The research act has engaged me in this struggle to expose, theoretically and in practice, the rationality that marginalises and that fosters social problems. Denzin’s words make it clear that such an exposé can inform the awareness from which socially relevant work may emerge. This growing awareness of power relations therefore became inextricably linked to the personal and professional discoveries I have been able to make during the research process. However, I first briefly review the modernist legacy that created structures and boundaries according to specific criteria within which societies function(ed).

Zygmunt Bauman (1992:xiv) highlights the main features of modernity and the effect it had on our notion of 'truth', as follows: '...the modern, obsessively legislating, defining, structuring, segregating, classifying, recording and universalizing state reflected the splendour of universal and absolute standards of truth'.

Thus trends in psychology and in pastoral theology developed in which the classifying principle prevailed. To have the problem that one struggled with analysed and classified by some licensing authority (pastor or therapist) implied that it fitted into and made sense through the structure and descriptive order it had been given. The ordering principle at work was the principle of dualist reasoning. Gergen (2001:221) outlines the main features of modernist psychology as grounded in the following concepts: '...the centrality of individual knowledge; the world as objectively given and language as truth bearer.' In such a paradigm, the structure itself gives certainty about what is good or bad, holy or sinful, rational or irrational. Moreover, the rules by which certainties are proclaimed in such a paradigm are not challenged, as doing so would mean challenging the basis of rationality itself.

This universalising rationality at work has also had serious implications for the ways in which issues of difference would be approached and relations with the other could be conducted: 'To create order means neither to cultivate nor to extirpate the differences. It means *licensing* them. And it means *licensing authority*' (Bauman 1992:xvi, Bauman's italics). Hence, pastoral relationships with the other, and especially the poor other, became relations in which the pastoral agent took control without even contemplating the necessity of acknowledging the knowledges, experience or priorities of the other. In fact, as feminist theologian Elaine Graham (1996:26) puts it, 'dominant structures are rendered stable by the occlusion of the marginal, eccentric, Other'.

Acceptable modernist social research also meant maintaining researcher 'neutrality'. Hence, values such as justice and care were regarded as 'unscientific' and considered to fall outside the scope of research. In the process, the modernist quest for value neutrality in social research (Christians 2005:142-144) often led to a colonising of the other in research. The other could be used as a research subject without any researcher accountability towards them. The researcher's accountability would then be towards his or her research as an individualist, scientific endeavour. Bauman

(1992:xxii) therefore contends that serious moral and ethical problems emerged during modernity, because of the large-scale abolition of individual responsibility and the individual's involvement in moral discourse (Rossouw 1993:898). This profoundly affected Christians' engagement with the struggles and uncertainties of moral discourse, especially in the field of pastoral care of and with the (totally, poor) other (see Chapter 5). Instead, '(s)cholars' desire "to know" became degraded only to a rabid quest for rational certainty and institutionalised reason. This quest for certainty is, however, mostly in the realm of ideas and not in the sphere of ethics or behaviour' (Van Wyk 1998:6).

The location of authority in modernist, liberal theology centred in the middle class (Rieger 1998:19) and in particular in those from the middle class who also wielded power in society at the time – which meant white, educated, rational males. So, for example, the white, educated male officials within the institution of the Protestant church were endowed with authority to speak as if they had some privileged relationship with God, and thereby to proclaim their particular rational certainties as the universal theological truth for all. In this process, it was assumed that 'objective truth' existed and thus many voices whose realities lay outside that of the male white context were marginalised or simply not heard. Theology's abuse of power due to the claiming of authority by some over others and the terms of that authority were not questioned.

Postmodern theological research therefore opens up the possibility of questioning modernism's authority and claim to (universal) knowledge and of establishing the central position of reader (and the researcher) in 'actively and participatively constructing the meaning of the text from the perspective of the social context' (Herholdt 1998:453). It also recognises that, instead of some universal humanity, differences between people exist and that these differences need to feature in how we as people engage with one another in ethical ways.

Another postmodern shift that is evident in this research is a shift away from being right towards doing right (Rossouw 1993:903). This research as 'doing right' can be placed in a broader postmodern framework, and therefore includes a purposeful recognition of difference (of historically and socially defined hierarchies of power)

between me and the people of Scottsville. The research aim of *shalom* through service also places this research in a broader postmodern framework.

I would like, by way of introduction, to explain what I mean by ‘postmodern’ and how my commitment to *shalom* fits in with a postmodern hermeneutics of ‘scholarship as “servanthood”’ (Van Wyk 1998:20). I was concerned with the truths of the voices of the poor who have been marginalised by the church and state, and with uncovering and honouring their local truths by way of my investigation. The local knowledges of members of the ‘coloured’ community of Scottsville in Kraaifontein shaped the direction of this research, and its members thereby became participants in the research process. In this way, this research contributes to a ‘rehumanization of knowledge’ (Deist 1994:257).

Giroux (1997:193) argues that postmodernism ‘raises questions and problems so as to redraw and re-present the boundaries of discourse and cultural criticism’. This research was therefore also intended as a project that questioned the boundaries of knowledge about pastoral care with a view to redrawing them in order for the practitioners of pastoral care (including me) to develop practices that could become relevant to the challenges posed by poverty. In this way, this research intends to shape the discourse about ‘pastoral care’ itself. Therefore, the title of this thesis, which outlines this research as an individual researcher’s ethical response to a social challenge and indicates that the research was done in a specific marginalised community, could only be envisaged within a broader postmodern paradigm.

Postmodern analysis also makes biblical interpretation a local and contextualised act that depends on what the reader brings to the reading and interpretation (Herholdt 1998:453, 467-8). Hence, the notion that what one is able to see depends on one’s observational set-up (Deist 1994:260) is made real in this research by a feminist theological epistemology that recognises how marginalised positions can offer new insights to theology and pastoral care. Consequently, what I too became able to see about Christ’s life as *shalom*, and what my research could contribute as practical theology, was made possible by my position in a context of poverty alongside the marginalised.

However, there are scholars such as Seyla Benhabib (1992,) who consider the claims made by postmodernists and feminists to be contradictory. While postmodernism offers a critical paradigm from which to question a universalising rationality, Benhabib (1992) comprehensively describes the limits that the extreme postmodern epistemologies of the Death of Metaphysics and especially the Death of History and the Death of Man place on conceptualisations of social transformation and agency. I agree with her arguments about the consequences of seeing the self as being constituted *only* through discourses. I acknowledge the impact of discourses on the formation of the self in the next two chapters, but I do not believe that a person is merely a ‘ventriloquist for discourses operating through her’ (Benhabib 1992:216) – personal agency is and should remain a possibility. My research position is that discourses can be described for the ways in which they constitute the terms within which people act and think (see Chapters 2 and 3), but that once a discourse has been described, it opens up the possibility for that discourse and its terms to be challenged (see Chapters 4, 5 and 6).

Similarly, a strong postmodernist position also has an impact on the role of language because it dictates that ‘the subject is merely another position in language’ (Benhabib 1992:214). I concur with Benhabib and therefore, in this research, I prefer to adopt the position that culture depends on a subjectivity that is structured by and through language and narrative. Paulo Freire (Freire & Gadotti 1995:263) goes so far as to say that in any process of transformation, it is vital that ‘language is also reinvented, because it is not possible to democratize a society, leaving away one of the fundamental aspects of a society’s tasks, the one of human language’ (see Sections 3.4, 4.3.11 and 6.3 for an analysis of the role of language in feminist-poststructuralist research and the ways in which this research went about reinventing language).

Regarding the Death of History in a postmodern epistemology, Benhabib (1992:223) poses the following question: ‘Should we approach history to retrieve from it the victims’ memories, lost struggles and unsuccessful resistances, or should we approach history to retrieve from it the monotonous succession of infinite “power/knowledge” complexes that materially constitute selves?’ In the context of this research, I treat history as both the retrieval of the discourses of power/knowledge and its constitution of selves *and* the experiences of its victims. Both contribute necessary descriptions of the challenges of poverty in South Africa

and of the kind of pastoral practice that will challenge old patterns of marginalisation and oppression.

I therefore worked with a postmodern historiography (Benhabib 1992:222) (despite its blindness to the victim's perspective) in order to describe the power relations that affect the poor. Poverty itself is therefore discussed in terms of a poststructuralist archaeological and genealogical analysis (see Sections 2.2, 2.3 and 3.5.2) of the *history* of power relations and its effects on the bodies of 'coloured' people. In Sections 3.2 and 3.3, class and race relations in South Africa are discussed, as well as how these relations were shaped and supported by a specific pastoral ethic of control (see Section 3.2). In Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 6, I also present the narratives of the poor, because without their understanding of the specifics of the context, instead of our analysis of it, we as researchers cannot develop practices that are accountable to the community. On the subject of poverty we therefore need the knowledges of those who have been oppressed to realise the limits of knowledge that come from intellectual analysis. We urgently need the victims' narratives because they alter our horizon of what constitutes legitimate knowledge, not only for its content, but because as researchers we discover an experiential component of knowledge that comes from opening ourselves to the poor other. My conversation with Aunt Liz Cupido (see Section 3.5.1) illustrates this point.

This research therefore draws on a broader postmodern hermeneutics by way of introduction only. Postmodern hermeneutics forms the backdrop for the role of context, difference and processes against which the formation of new knowledges about practical theology and pastoral care in this research should be read. Participatory action research as a form of postmodern qualitative research therefore becomes 'above all a knowledge-producing endeavour' (Park 2001:84), in which the marginalised themselves take up their rightful places.

#### ***1.4.1.1 The position of the researcher in postmodern research***

In a postmodern paradigm, the researcher's relationship to the research has changed from one of detachment and objectivity to one which allows for a recognition of the role that the researcher's biography plays in the research process itself. Reflexivity in this research therefore does not only refer to making my reflections on the research

process visible, it also refers to making visible where I ‘come from’ as a researcher-woman-poet-therapist. Failure to make self-reflexivity a feature of any theological research means that ‘we manipulate the evidence to fit with our preferred way of viewing the world and usually fail to acknowledge that this has happened. Reflexivity can provide an internal audit to this process in that it requires us to “own up” to what we know of our constitutiveness in the knowledge construction process’ (Hall 1996:36). Throughout this thesis I therefore document this process of ‘owning up’ to my constitutiveness and of how self-reflexivity has contributed to meaning-making and to the adoption of new methodologies in the research.

I have already described the ways in which my personal commitment informed my initial choice of research context. It is the same commitment that led me to continue working in the community beyond the formal time limits of the research.

According to Denzin (1989:248), the research act is a ‘gendered act’ that is shaped by the researcher’s gender and social biography. As a woman, I brought my own experiences and understandings of marginalisation and patriarchy to the research. In my relationship with the women of Scottsville, these experiences and understandings created openness to others’ experience and fostered a sense of mutuality. As a narrative pastoral therapist I also brought certain interviewing skills and experience in working with women and children to the research. However, in terms of social biography, I was always aware that my race and my middle class existence could create distance and disconnection in my relations with poor ‘coloured’ people. In South Africa, whiteness is associated with a painful history of colonisation and pastoral control (see Chapters 3 and 4), of which I am a genetic and historical part.

This research became my attempt to make a pastoral contribution in the face not only of poverty and its challenges, but also in the face of the painful legacy of inequality and injustice in this country. In doing so, I discovered that I needed to be more than only a therapist in the community, as I had envisaged being at the start of the research. All the other facets that make up my ‘social biography’ would be called upon to play a part in the research act. This research as qualitative research is ‘a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world’ (Denzin & Lincoln 2003:5). Therefore, the research process and my

reflections on it in the form of this research document are not only the work of the researcher-as-academic – instead, it also locates me, in differing measures, in the interpretive and material work of this research as poet, actor, director, narrative therapist, student, bibliophile, mother, daughter, facilitator, friend and follower of Christ. Hence, a postmodern qualitative researcher becomes what Denzin and Lincoln (2003:5) describe as a *bricoleur*: a ‘Jack of all trades or a kind of professional do-it-yourself person’. There are many kinds of *bricoleurs* – interpretive, narrative, theoretical and political.

When we participate in solidarity, we risk change: I too risked being changed myself – ‘(g)enuine solidarity involves not mere subjective identification with oppressed people but concrete answerability to them. Solidarity is accountability and accountability means being vulnerable, capable of being changed by the oppressed, welcoming their capacity to critique and alter our reality’ (Harrison 1985:244). The changes that Harrison describes then happened in all the domains described above in which I as a researcher-as-*bricoleur* participated.

#### **1.4.2 Working in a feminist-poststructuralist paradigm**

Mason (2004:16) describes the purpose of taking a specific epistemological position as the point that it ‘helps you to generate knowledge and explanations about the ontological components of the social world, their social processes, social actions, discourses, meanings, which you have identified as central’. For this research, I chose a feminist-poststructuralist epistemology as the theoretical paradigm that informed my work as a researcher and as a practitioner of pastoral care. Central to the epistemologies of feminism and poststructuralism is their questioning of societal power relations and their effects. Therefore these epistemologies are often linked in social research. Denzin and Lincoln (2003:33) therefore identify a *feminist-poststructuralist* paradigm as one of the four main interpretive paradigms used in qualitative research: ‘Post structural feminist theories emphasise problems with the social text, its logic, and its inability ever to represent the world of lived experience fully. Positivist and post positivist criteria of evaluation are replaced by other terms, including the reflexive, multivoiced text that is grounded in the experiences of oppressed people’ (Denzin & Lincoln 2003:35). As this research concerns poor ‘coloured’ people who have been historically subjected and who are currently still

being subjected by a variety of forms of power, a feminist-poststructuralist epistemology was an appropriate epistemology to provide theoretical support for the thesis and the research process itself.

My commitment to engage with poor and marginalised people finds theological expression and is supported in my research, in the first instance, by liberation theology, and more specifically by the methodologies geared towards liberation and justice within a feminist theological epistemology. Feminist theology has its roots in liberation theology. But the abuse of power that leads to people's marginalisation is not only a historical reality of a 'coloured' community's existence in apartheid South Africa. Even in a poor community, people, especially young people, are often subjected and controlled by others, often by members of the same community.

According to Cochrane, De Gruchy and Petersen (1991:30-31), social analysis therefore becomes imperative if we as theological researchers want to be doing practical theology that can claim to be socially relevant. De Gruchy (1994:11) also refers to the role of the social sciences in providing 'necessary tools and resources for analysing the context within which the church is called to proclaim and live the gospel'. The theoretical positions of both contextual and liberation theologies regard social analysis as indispensable. However, Pattison (1994:63) states that one 'of the surprising features of liberation theology is that, while social analysis is much talked of, and the voice of the social sciences is supposed to be a prominent "first voice" in theological method, there is very little concrete exemplification of this approach in practice'.

What a feminist hermeneutic added to this research – what neither contextual theology<sup>4</sup> nor liberation theology could offer – is its links with poststructuralist analysis. It enabled me to take a critical look at the ways in which power relations are structured and analyse the ways in which these are maintained by certain discourses that legitimise the control of some people by others. It also sensitised me to those voices in communities that are silent, and to how they can be silenced in this way.

---

<sup>4</sup> Speckman (2001:390-391) argues for a broad-based contextual theological model called People Centred Development, without a specific analysis of current power relations in communities. His general model, although it has its merits, therefore does not take into account the specific developmental discourses in circulation in the 'coloured' community, for instance, and how these discourses affect how development is defined, what is developmentally possible and who participates in what is termed 'development'.

Brueggemann (1976:74) links the research aim of *shalom* with the need to look at how social relations are structured and their power – a task I undertake in this research through feminist-poststructuralist analysis. Walter Brueggemann (1976:74) asks:

If we are to be seriously engaged with our faith, then we must be more sensitized to a central *shalom* question: How are things ordered? How did they get that way? Who wants to keep it that way? For what vested reason do they want to keep it that way? *Shalom* leads us to raise issues of sociology of value and sociology of power.

Feminist-poststructuralism thus offers a theory that addresses ‘the questions of how social relations of gender, class and race might be transformed. It implies a concern with history, absent from many poststructuralist perspectives but central to the work of Michel Foucault’ (Weedon 1987:20).

#### ***1.4.2.1 Poststructuralist analyses***

As I worked in Scottsville, and I became aware of the ways in which people in a context of poverty suffered, I realised that research that is done in a context of poverty cannot be done without comprehensive analyses of power. For the purposes of detailed analysis for describing and analysing the production of knowledge, the operation of power relations and the discourses that sustain ideas and practices at the school and in the culture at large, I used the work of Michel Foucault (1968, 1971, 1972, 1976a, 1976b, 1976c, 1977, 1979a, 1979b, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1984, 1988, 1995, 2007), Foucault and Chomsky (1974), Foucault and Delacampagne (1980), Davidson (1997), Dreyfus and Rabinow (1982), Martin (1982) and Veyne (1971) in this research. Foucault’s (1995) analyses of the discourses of discipline, punishment and the notion of ‘docile bodies’ (Foucault 1995:135-169) were particularly useful in this community context where many discourses on discipline, punishment and entitlement continue to license different kinds of physical, emotional, verbal and sexual abuse (see Section 2.3).

Foucault’s analyses therefore provided this research as practical theology with its ‘first voice’ in theological method. I put the term in quotation marks because Foucault did not associate himself with this term. In the next two chapters, I use Foucault’s poststructuralist analyses of archaeology and genealogy to describe how marginalisation and the accompanying lack of voice and power in the ‘coloured’

community came about. To be able to determine what just research in a context of poverty is, I therefore have to know what injustice looks like, what its terms of reference are and what discourses are associated with it.

The continuation of discourses and their creation and legitimising of abusive practices, especially as these affect young people, are discussed. Poststructuralist analyses in this research were therefore not done to contribute to an intellectualising of poverty. They were done with the aim of making visible how injustice works in the ‘coloured’ community of Scottsville. Therefore, seeing how power relations have led to practices that control(ed) the lives and especially the bodies of others, is critically important in doing research in the discipline of practical theology. Bronwyn Davies (2000a:166) states that ‘(s)eeing post structurally makes visible both the systemic practices and the moment-by-moment work through which relations of power and powerlessness are played out’. The ability to start ‘seeing poststructurally’ has had an impact on various aspects of this research, especially on the possibilities that lie beyond the limits of current structures. What seeing poststructurally therefore does is to make visible the terms (for example, of control) by which people occupy certain positions in society and maintain specific ways of relating, and the discourses (for example, of patriarchy and ‘discipline’) that support those terms. In Chapters 4, 5 and 6, I discuss the methodologies that this research used to question and move the limits of those pastoral terms (see Deconstruction below).

I therefore chose Foucault’s poststructuralist method of analysis for exposing ‘the social problems that modernist, positivist sociology helped create’. In Chapter 3, I also present a detailed poststructuralist analysis of the development of pastoral power (Foucault 2007) and of the implications it had for the kind of pastoral relations towards the poor other that developed in the church, in this case, the South African Protestant churches. In Chapter 6, I develop the feminist and poststructuralist ideas about language that informed my work as a narrative therapist and also informed my approach to the role of narrative and language in pastoral practice. Therefore both feminist and poststructuralist analyses not only provided this research with theoretical tools for critique, but also with the conceptual tools for imagining the possibilities for relating and for creative expression that lie beyond the *status quo*.

My interest in poststructuralism is informed by the limitations that a structuralist world-view has had on human relationships. Poststructuralism emerged as a school of thought in France in the 1960s and ‘began to challenge structuralist claims to objectivity and comprehensiveness and...emphasized instead the plurality and deferral of meaning’ (Knowles & Elliott 1997:241). According to Graham (1996:100), ‘(s)tructuralism understands all actions, rituals and institutions as expressions of pre-existent binary oppositions which are embedded in all human behavior’. Relationships that are governed by the rules of binary oppositions perpetuated ‘the old medieval and pre-Christian division of the world into good and bad, black and white, body and mind’ (Isherwood & McEwan 1994:63).

The role of research and of the intellectual (for lack of a better word) who conducts the research in a poststructuralist epistemology is therefore geared towards questioning the kind of power that has created specific relational discourses and has upheld it as an ‘objective truth’ according to which society organised itself. As Weedon (1987:19) points out, poststructuralism lends itself to multiform interpretations and is ‘applied to a range of theoretical positions’. In both pastoral care and theology, terms such as ‘pastoral’, ‘possibilities’ and ‘transformation’ are often used in a way that suggests universal meaning. However, within a poststructuralist discourse, such terminologies are described contextually in order for them to have any practical relevance. After all, how does one begin to describe ‘transformation’ if one has no point of reference regarding the specifics of the context within which this ‘trans-’ has to occur or of the ‘form’ it seeks to ‘transform’, ‘transport’, ‘transmute’ and so on? In uncovering how marginalising pastoral power relations operate, one may simultaneously begin to define what the transformative power of *shalom* would constitute in a poor ‘coloured’ community and design actions to meet that aim.

I therefore use some of the insights provided by Foucault’s analyses and theoretical positioning to describe how these provided me with epistemological tools in doing, in reflecting on and in describing this research as pastoral care (see Chapter 3). Seeing poststructurally with regard to my position as a researcher meant taking cognizance of my own exercise of power in the research, which should therefore co-exist with an awareness of my limits and my potential for abusive action and harm, as Welch (1997:127) warns. Poststructuralist analysis provided me with the

epistemology to do this vital questioning through which I too continually had to reassess my position towards the marginalised other (see Chapter 5). Poststructuralist analysis therefore became a theoretical tool in the ‘conscientization’<sup>5</sup> (Freire 1972:14) that this research made possible in terms of my relationship with the poor.

- *‘Conscientization’*

One important precursor of liberation theology was the pioneering educational work of Paulo Freire, a Brazilian lawyer. During the 1960s, Freire began a programme of adult education and literacy known as ‘conscientization’ with groups of illiterate people around the Latin American continent. The programme aimed to equip people with a critical reflective knowledge of reality which would enable them to discern their true situation, and so lead to historical commitment and action to change dehumanising social structures (Pattison 1994:24). Conscientization therefore means ‘learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality’ (Freire 1972:14).

In what ways was the process of conscientization relevant to this research? What is it that I had to become conscious of in terms of pastoral care to or with the other? Chapter 5 offers a pastoral response to these questions. According to Freire (1972:20), ‘(c)oncern for humanization leads at once to the recognition of dehumanization, not only as an ontological possibility but as an historical reality’. In Chapters 2 to 4, I use Foucauldian analysis to show how the historical processes of dehumanisation came about that affected the ‘coloured’ community in the Western Cape and still do. In these chapters I also outline the effects of dehumanising social conditions (including gangs, violence), laws (such as ‘forced removals’) and discourses (such as discourses on ‘discipline’). Discourses in particular often circulate in communities in contradictory ways. The discourse of ‘discipline’ has, for instance, allowed some teachers to feel that their use of violence towards children is licensed, whilst they would be the first to speak out against learner-on-learner or horizontal violence (Freire 1972:38).

---

<sup>5</sup> Although the ‘ise’ ‘isa’ spelling is preferred in this study, I maintain Freire’s spelling of this particular term throughout because the different spelling draws the reader’s attention to the term, making him or her more ‘conscious’ of it. (In the case of other words where I chose the ‘ise’ ‘isa’ spelling, the original spelling of words is retained in quotations where the ‘ize’ ‘iza’ spelling or American spelling is used, but spelling is adjusted when I use the terms myself.)

For contextually developed theory on how to do conscientization and humanisation within contexts of poverty, for the purposes of this research, I have chosen also to refer to Freire (1972, 1998a, 1998b, 1998c, 1999), Freire and Faundez (1989), bell hooks<sup>6</sup> (1990, 2003) and Rodríguez (2001) for the theories of people who have done conscientization through their community work amongst the poor and marginalised, and in particular amongst the young people in the communities in which they worked. These ‘conscious’ community workers constituted an authentic community of support for me as a researcher, especially in not letting dehumanisation have the last word. They embodied for me as a researcher in a context of poverty and marginalisation some hope for the possibility of humanisation.

- *Deconstruction*

One of the critical tools within a poststructuralist epistemology that I used in this research is the tool of deconstruction. Deconstruction is associated with the poststructuralist work of Jacques Derrida (1981, 1983, 1989, 1992a, 1992b, 1995), Derrida and Roudinesco (2004), Caputo (1997), Cornell (1992), Egéa-Kuehne (2005), Lucy (2004), Naas (2003) and Norris (1998).

Firstly, I would like to cite Derrida to elucidate what he meant by deconstruction. Derrida (1983:3) writes:

...the motif of deconstruction has been associated with ‘poststructuralism’...But the undoing, decomposing, and desedimenting of structures, in a sense more historical than the structuralist movement it called into question, was not a negative operation. Rather than destroying, it was also necessary to understand how an ‘ensemble’ was constituted and to reconstruct it to this end.

What is significant about this comment by Derrida for this research is the fact that ‘poverty’ may be deconstructed through the process of the research (see Chapters 2 and 3), and ‘reconstructed’ (Chapters 4 to 6). What emerges during the process of deconstruction

...is that the text in question is shown to harbour contradictory logics which are standardly ignored – or concealed from view – on other,

---

<sup>6</sup> bell hooks is the name by which Gloria Jean Watkins, a black American intellectual, feminist and teacher, prefers to be known. She borrowed the name from one of her Native American great-grandmothers. Her reason for choosing the lower case spelling of her name ‘is about ego: What’s in a name? It is the substance in my books, not who is writing them, that is important’ (bell hooks 2008:s.p.)

more orthodox accounts. . . . However, this leaves open the possibility that texts may mean something other – and more – than is allowed for by any straightforward appeal to the warrant of authorial intention.  
(Norris 1998:163)

In terms of the social ‘text’ of poverty, deconstruction afforded this research the possibility of looking critically at what, for instance, counts as ‘normal’ pastoral relations. In Sections 5.3 and 5.4, I address the theme of difference and its impact on the possibility for symmetrical pastoral relations. Through the epistemological tool of deconstruction I as a researcher came to recognise that for every visible reality there are invisible, unspoken and unconsidered alternatives:

Deconstruction first focuses on the binary oppositions within a text – like man/woman. Next it shows how these opposites are related, how one is central, natural and privileged, the other ignored, repressed and marginalized. Next it temporarily undoes or subverts the hierarchy to make the text mean the opposite of what it originally appeared to mean. Then in the last step both terms of the opposition are seen dancing in a free play of non-hierarchical, non-stable meanings.  
(Powell 1997:30)

Deconstruction is therefore a relevant epistemological resource through which as a researcher I constantly asked myself, for instance, who benefits from a particular action or discourse, and who is, at the same time, excluded, marginalised, harmed by that same action or discourse. Thus, through deconstruction, we are invited to open ourselves to the other, not yet realised, reality that has often been outside our field of vision (see Section 5.2).

Derrida’s work forms an important epistemological grounding for the concept of ‘possibility’ as both a theoretical and a practical reality in the research. Roux and Kotzé (2002:148), building on the work of Derrida and Caputo, argue that ‘the logic of prescriptive language closes down many possibilities and prevents people from going on an adventure to invite the impossible’.

In imagining possibilities in social research, we cannot do without this ‘double reading’ of deconstruction, for it means ‘a turning away of the reflexive gaze from the achievement and maintenance of an essential self and towards the folding and unfolding of life’s possibilities’ (Davies 2000:170). Hence all definitions associated with poverty, such as powerlessness, silence, marginalisation, have the possibility of being deconstructed and their ‘truths’ in people’s lives can be reconstructed. This

research has therefore in itself worked to de- or re-construct wherever it found disabling and limiting discourses. Deconstruction became *the* first praxis of ‘opening hearts and minds’ that ‘create possibilities in a marginalized school community’ that the title of this research refers to. These theoretical premises therefore have significant implications for research in a poor community where young people, for example, often find themselves occupying the ‘repressed and marginalised’ positions in relationships that are structured according to such binaries. Acts of pastoral care and therapeutic conversations can become vehicles through which the traditional hierarchies of power are subverted. Language becomes an important tool in the subversion of the hierarchies, and in discovering the power that lies beyond binary thinking.

In Chapter 4, I document how a feminist theological epistemology finds a basis for action from the position of the (other) marginalised. I give an account of how Anna (one of the participants) and I deconstructed her sense of unworthiness in attending the lay counselling course that I presented in the community (see Section 4.3.1.1, under the subheading ‘Challenging marginalizing discourses: the story of Anna’). This narrative makes clear how my ability as a researcher to do deconstructive questioning – which was part of my training as a narrative pastoral therapist – led to Anna’s participation in the research. What the actual practice of deconstructive questioning did in this case with someone from the community was to reveal that ‘more options for action in the world became available’ to Anna and therefore that there were also other ways for Anna to see herself.

- *Deconstructing pastoral care*

In Chapters 2 and 3, I use Foucault’s poststructuralist analysis of archaeology and genealogy to describe how marginalisation and the accompanying lack of voice and power in the ‘coloured’ community came about and subjects poor people. In uncovering how pastoral power as control operated in subjecting others, it is simultaneously possible to find the keys to unlocking possibilities for pastoral change.

Using Derrida’s analyses in Chapters 5 and 6, I also question the limits of pastoral care and of going beyond those limits in this research. In Section 6.1.2, I therefore

discuss the ‘possibility of the impossible’ in a cultural context by using Derrida’s metaphor of the *aporia* (the ‘non-road’ that invites a traversal).

I believe that this theoretical exploration of the subject of limits and the *aporia* is political in itself, for in the past, in South Africa, pastoral care towards the other has been structured in specific ways. The research itself and my reflections on it in this thesis propose an ethic of vulnerability (see Section 5.5.2.2) in order to relate to the other in new ways. In this way, this research is not only a response to the challenges of poverty, but offers a deconstructive challenge to practical theology and reflects on the limits of its pastoral praxis. This research therefore intended to illustrate in its praxis what pastoral care can look like when it allows itself to broaden its traditional individualistic scope and becomes socially accountable.

In her reflections on the various meanings offered by the dictionary for the word ‘transformation’, poet Antjie Krog (2003:126) concludes: ‘In its deepest structure, then, the word “transformation” means: to form the other side, to start creating where you are going... Change and transformation are not the same thing... Transformation means that the same unit undergoes an internal change.’ One of the challenges in this research was primarily the pastoral challenge of participating in each others’ lives, not knowing what the outcome would be, but still to create possibilities where we were going. Horton and Freire (1990) describe their pastoral work of teaching skills to lay people in a similar way in the title of their book *We make the road by walking*. This research document reflects on both the internal changes and the relational changes that the research participants and I experienced along the way. In this way the descriptions of our ‘making the road by walking’ in themselves contribute to a deconstruction of preconceived ideas about what pastoral care in a context of poverty should look like or do, and a new description of what constitutes ‘transformation’.

In a context of poverty, the restorative justice of *shalom* has (in traditional pastoral practice) focused on the physical world and economic rules of exchange that are governed by the principle of equivalence. This research as pastoral praxis is therefore describing justice in new terms. That required vulnerability and a generosity to the other that I found in Christ’s life and death. Ricoeur (1995a:283,326) places God’s gift, as expressed through Christ, in a ‘logic of superabundance.’

Historically, whites in South Africa have taken from others, or at best maintained some (often skewed) logic of equivalence in dealing with others. Ricoeur's words therefore seemed to me particularly poignant and supported my decision to give of my time and knowledge and to care about what happens in the Petunia Primary school community. In a chapter entitled *Love and Justice*, Ricoeur (1995a:329) proclaims justice to be 'the necessary medium of love; precisely because love is hypermoral, it enters the practical and ethical sphere only under the aegis of justice'. Embarking on this research project can therefore be seen as my attempt at a practical and ethical response to the call for social justice.

Whilst referring to the principles of pastoral care such as empathy, and understanding personal history in dealing with vulnerable people, Poling (2002:213) cautions against assuming these principles to be universal and adequate for all situations. What Poling proposes is that pastoral care becomes a culturally specific and context-specific response. Hence, it was my intention that the research project become both the practice and documentation of learning 'how to develop a culturally embedded theory and practice of pastoral theology and counselling' (Poling 2002:216). The ways in which pastoral practice itself becomes an agent for change in the context of poverty may then be judged against whether it contributes towards both material and new non-material practices in Scottsville. The latter include practices of respect, the realisation of dignity, the emergence of the presence or possibility of voice and the recognition of the possibility of personal and social agency.

When the aim to respond was translated into pastoral terms, it led to the words 'opening hearts and minds' included in the title of this thesis. 'Opening hearts and minds' as a response to the challenges of poverty was both theoretical and practical. The dialogue that developed in the course of this research between theory and practice meant the participants' hearts and minds (including my own) opened in ways that had not been initially envisaged. The aim of *shalom* is therefore an organic part of every theoretical and practical aspect of the research and is therefore not listed under a separate heading in the research. However, it is described in the different chapters.

A culturally embedded practice of pastoral care led to a discovery of the values that connect us as humans. Antjie Krog (2003:257) writes: 'The time when we needed

ever-changing truths in order to survive each other is hopefully over in this country. For people to be able to live together, to start singing from the same fold of skin, as it were, there is need for unchangeable truths. We need common ground to grow a common humanity.’ Freire (1972:20) calls this process one of ‘humanization’. The central tenet of my Christian faith meant that as a South African I have a responsibility to contribute to cultural renewal and to the humanisation of myself and of social structures that have become dehumanised by a pastoral power of control and subjugation.

In Chapter 5, I explore the ‘challenge of poverty’ as the primary challenge in terms of the common humanity that the poor ‘other’ represents to me. In that chapter, I analyse how this research led me to an exploration of what constitutes ethical pastoral action as a response to this challenge. This research describes how, in reflecting on the research discoveries about what constitutes ‘humanisation’ in relational terms, I became more fully human.

#### ***1.4.2.2 Feminist theology***

My commitment to become accountable to my South African ‘other’ is grounded in the feminist theological position which I subscribe to, and which forms an important part of the epistemological framework of this research. Feminist theology provides an epistemological base for the interpretive, dialectic, gendered and political aspects (Denzin 1989:248) that make up this research. In this section, I discuss the different themes (indicated in bold) in a feminist epistemology.

In my research approach, I subscribe to a feminist theology of praxis in which the lived experiences of the marginalised become centralised. **Solidarity with the marginalised** is therefore not simply a ‘theme’ of theology, but it lies at the heart of understanding what theology is. Solidarity as practice is deeply relational, in that it requires us, as practitioners of care, to step away from the safety of our own contexts and understandings, in attempting to join others where they are. Feminist theologian Schüssler Fiorenza (1993:224) links practices of solidarity with the Greek word *ekklèsia* – the term for church. An ecclesial analysis, as proposed by Cochrane, De Gruchy and Petersen (1991:36-54), in my research is therefore not necessarily an

analysis of 'the church's role within society' but rather a redefinition of what constitutes 'church' in the first place, especially in the context of poverty.

Field (in Rieger 2003:59) proposes that if 'our theology is to be an authentic reflection on and witness to God who is revealed in Jesus Christ as the God of the excluded, then we need to embark on the often painful journey to meet with Jesus the Christ outside the camp, among the excluded'. But being in solidarity with the excluded 'outside the camp' brings with it an awareness of unjust power relations: 'A theology of mutual relation requires us to study both the presence of our power in mutuality and our fear of it. To understand this power, we have to study our collective difficulties in generating it; hence, a relational theology puts a study, or analysis, of social power at the center of theological reflection' (Heyward 1999:61). The research document shows how, in joining others, we become painfully aware of the marginalising effect of power relations. Hence my research document provides a 'view from the margins (that) offers a perspective which is absent in the centre' (Ackermann 1997:67).

Poling (1991:129-142) highlights the contribution that the feminist analysis of societal discourses and their impact on violence and abuse has made to the development of a pastoral praxis that is sensitive to the presence of power relations. Because of this sensitivity, it becomes possible to listen for and hear not only the voices of those who suffer the effects of violence and abuse, but also the societal mechanisms of power that maintain the operations of violence and abuse. This research therefore includes an analysis and interpretation of these power relations and shows how this analysis found its epistemological grounding in feminist theology, as well as in poststructuralist thinking.

As a pastoral therapist, solidarity for me meant engaging with others in their struggle for dignity, the making visible of and resistance to powers that silence, abuse and marginalise. Solidarity therefore implies that I am in solidarity with all of a person's life, not only the silenced, repressed part, but also the part that wants to create meaning, the part that chooses life over violence and death. Thus, in this research, the participants and I strove to broaden the terms of a solidarity that is defined only as being set against forces of death, to work towards a solidarity that also includes a reappropriation of life, and with it the discoveries of resources for living.

In the process of feminists' resistance to the values of what feminist bell hooks (2003) calls a 'dominator culture', other values become centralised. Fear and distance make way for 'subversive' risk-taking; relational blindness and control make way for vulnerability towards the other. bell hooks (2003:197) suggests that '[d]ominator culture has tried to keep us all afraid, to make us choose safety instead of risk, sameness instead of diversity. Moving through that fear, finding out what connects us, revelling in our differences; this is the process that brings us closer, that gives us a world of shared values, of meaningful community'. This research documents the processes of 'finding out what connects us'. It is my intention that the research document will ultimately provide an answer to the research question (see Section 1.2 above) by making visible the discovery of 'a world of shared values, of meaningful community'. In terms of our political and segregated Afrikaner church history, which thwarted the possibility of experiencing community with others, this research also has to do with the 'dangerous, restless power of resurrection' that Brueggemann (1996:155) refers to: 'It is about power at work that we cannot control, power to make human life possible in all the failed places'. Living towards the vision of *shalom*, in feminist terms, therefore refers to the living towards communal wholeness (Brueggemann 1976:66).

For me, what is especially significant about feminist theological social analysis is that it takes the **lived experience of people in their contexts as the central source for analysis** and in the creation of theological meanings. In this way, the research moves epistemologically from theory about power and care and into the domain of embodied experience. This move demonstrates how research that hopes to be ethical on a topic such as poverty needs to make the connection between theory and the lived reality of poor people by starting with the experiences of the poor. The lived experience of 'the silenced majority' (Schüssler Fiorenza 1993:249) of poor people, especially women, is central to a feminist theology of praxis (Ackermann 1991; Isasi-Díaz 1996, 1999; Isherwood & McEwan 1994; Potter Engel & Brooks Thistlewaite 2000).

In Chapter 4, the political aspects of the research act emerge clearly, as this chapter deals with poor women's experiences; also that of their voicelessness. At the same time, the research done with these women also invited them to tell of their experiences of care and especially their understanding of pastoral care and of

scripture. In doing so, this research became political, because through it these women's knowledges became visible. In this sense, this research offers what Welch (1985:34) refers to as 'something that is both modest and more revolutionary: an interpretation of scriptural traditions (and thus of human being, of history, and of political structures) by those who have not yet named the world – the marginal, the silenced, the defeated'. Hence, the feminist epistemology in which the marginalised's contributions are invited and honoured also supports the second aim of this research, which is inviting participation by the poor in the research itself.

In their subheading 'Seeing clearly' in a discussion about the role of social analysis in theology, Cochrane, De Gruchy and Petersen (1991:32) refer to Barth, who proposed that the Bible should be read with the newspaper in the other hand. However, both these sources for understanding the world are based on intellectual interpretive abilities. Such an approach also assumes that 'seeing clearly' is based on the ability to read. My research shows that for Christians in South Africa this may be one of the biggest challenges in making sense of our faith. How do we move from being guided only by our own intellectual understandings of the Bible and the newspaper towards inviting closer bodily and emotional understandings about contexts of deprivation, and the resources that emerge through our interactions with 'the other'? And how can the poor's own understandings start to shape my own? Chapter 4 documents how this research invited the understandings of poor and previously marginalised voices of women to alter my understanding of practical theology and of pastoral care.

Feminists have reconstructed ethical theory and have opened the way forward by situating 'the moral domain within the general purposes of human life that people share contextually and across cultural, racial, and historical boundaries'(Christians 2005:149). Within the realm of a feminist communitarian ethics and this social research, the good and the transformational therefore have to be discovered and negotiated within the specific context of 'coloured' poverty and in the concrete forms it takes. This research as feminist theological research will show how meaning-making is performative, relational and embodied. This approach resonates with the reminder by feminist authors Potter Engel and Brooks Thistlewaite (2000:8) that '*praxis-based* theology is characterized by an ongoing, dynamic, and complex

relationship between the concrete social context and theological reflection' (Potter Engel & Brooks Thistlewaite's italics).

I regard theology as praxis. In Chapters 4 and 5 of this research document, I therefore reflect on the research practices of journeying outside the camp, the practice of meeting others and of doing care and of redefining the ethical imperatives that guide our actions through our meeting 'the Christ outside the camp'. I therefore drew on a feminist theological epistemology for an ecclesial analysis that takes practices of pastoral care outside the camp as its point of reference.

This research demonstrates how a feminist ethic invited me, in this research, to redefine the terms of pastoral power in the community, but also to redefine my position as a pastoral researcher, adult and 'expert'. This redefinition of and reflection on communal and personal power foregrounded the value of care as an integral part of the ethical process. Care is therefore no longer the action invented regardless of the other or the context of the other. Feminist pastoral care depends on vulnerability to the other and her (or his) suffering. In Chapter 5, I therefore discuss how I came to the conclusion that vulnerability is the basis of ethical relation with the other. **Vulnerability** stands against all that modernism has attached to the Christian faith, against its pastoral practices and against what modernism claimed constitutes legitimate theological research: the supremacy of reason and certainty, self-sufficiency, the personalisation of faith, the disregard, even vilification of the body and blinkers that close out an awareness of social injustices and personal accountability.

In Chapters 4 and 5, I discuss how I came to choose a feminist epistemology because of the existence of the injustice of poverty and how it activated the power of vulnerability and care as legitimate resources in my theological research. This research therefore foregrounds **care as *the shalom* response** to the challenges of poverty. In a moving exegesis of John 13:14, Brueggemann (1976:135) refers to the tools that Jesus used doing *shalom* to his disciples. Jesus washed their feet, using the domestic, ordinary tools of a basin and a towel: '...the towel and basin are servant tools. They do the work no reputable, competent manager would do – that is, they make contact with dimensions of our humanity that need personal caring attention'. This research describes the ways in which aiming at *shalom* served others through

acts of care, often in ordinary ways and with ordinary ‘tools’. The example of Jesus’ **embodiment** of *shalom* in such a concrete and direct way made me aware of the importance of the theme of concrete embodied care in theology. The theme of embodiment which is central to a feminist theology of praxis is discussed in Chapter 4.

As a researcher, I discovered in the Jesus of feminist Christology a resource for doing this research as praxis – both as a political and as an ethical act. My research illustrates how this reappropriation of life in individual relationships had an effect on the community at large.

Because of its political stance, feminist theology defines its pastoral praxis as ‘critical, committed, constructive, collaborative and accountable reflection on the theories and praxis of struggle and hope for the mending of creation based on the stories and experiences of women/marginalized and oppressed people’ (Ackermann 1996:34). However, the mending-of-creation actions in this research were more than only a reflection on the stories of the marginalised in this research document, although that reflection was an important part of it. With this research, I wanted to make a contribution by ‘creating possibilities’ as suggested in the title of the thesis, by generating new and alternative stories of hope through pastoral praxis. It is in this way that I believe this research has made the biggest difference to those marginalised people, many of whom will not read the thesis and the meanings made about them.

## **1.5 NARRATIVE THERAPY**

As has already been pointed out, Denzin (1989:248) regards research as ‘a dialectical act that turns back upon itself...and moves forward into uncharted fields of experience’. Therapeutic conversations facilitated in discoveries of meaning for research participants in the community (see Section 5.6.1). In a context of poverty, many young people are exposed to trauma, either as victims or witnesses. Apart from suffering the biological consequences of trauma, young people also have to deal with the interpersonal and psychological effects of trauma (Weingarten 2003:41-62). Some of the most prevalent of these psychological effects take the form of numbness and anger, memory effects, sadness, helplessness and shame and aggression (Weingarten 2003:46-54). As part of this research process, I had therapeutic

conversations at the school with some of the traumatised young people in this community. These sessions provided opportunities for the discovery of the existence of resources in their lives around which relational stories of hope can be built.

Using narrative therapy in the research was also beneficial in that it provided a critical deconstructive approach to discourses of truth. Narrative therapy is informed by both the social constructionist (Freedman & Combs 1996; Freeman, Epston & Lobovits 1997) and poststructuralist epistemologies (White 1997:220-235, 2000, 2007). Richardson (2005:961) states that '(p)oststructuralism links language, subjectivity, social organisation, and power. The centerpiece is language. Language does not "reflect" social reality but rather produces meaning and creates social reality'.

Deconstruction as a poststructuralist concept has already been referred to. In narrative therapy, this concept is translated into a deconstructive attitude to reality and language (Andersen 2001, Anderson 1997, White 2000). According to Michael White (2000:170-171), narrative therapy is 'about local inquiry into what's happening, into how things are becoming other than what they were, or into the potential for things to become other than what they are'. This research was intended as an inquiry into the potential for things in a context of poverty to become other than what they are. Narrative therapy thus provided me with a particular deconstructive stance and with a reference for the kind of questioning that opens up the possibility for change. The relational stance, the deconstructive languaging and the possibility-thinking of a poststructuralist epistemology that narrative therapy integrated into a dialectic tool was therefore indispensable, not only in therapeutic settings, but also in doing this research as local inquiry. In Chapters 4 and 6, I describe how this research offered people in the community an opportunity to 'deconstruct' and 'reconstruct' their identities and to create new social realities through the use of language, outside of the formal therapeutic context. Chapter 6 in particular deals with the use of creative language in this research and how it created the possibility for imagining other ways of constructing identity and community. In these ways language in this research became the writing and speaking of new possibilities, and in doing so, it turned into an instrument for the establishment of new forms of individual and social power.

The effects of poverty, by their very nature, reflect what is *not* there; they reflect *absence*. Poverty itself has been described as ‘the absence of options’ (White & Tiongco 1997:24). In this research project, the language of narrative therapy was used as a vitally important first ‘line of action’ (Denzin 1989). Narrative therapist Johnella Bird’s (2004:92-97) creation of ‘relation presence’ through the use of language acted as an important theoretical and practical narrative resource for this research. My research shows how the creation of relational presence in language provides possibilities for speaking and thinking differently, in a context that had been defining itself largely in terms of absence.

By doing this research, I also wanted to propose that therapy (traditionally regarded as an individualistic activity) in the form of narrative therapy can provide tools for thinking, acting and speaking that make social discourse analysis much more than the preserve of academics – it turns social discourse analysis into a practice that becomes accessible to the people of Scottsville. In sharing therapeutic ideas around certain themes, teachers and other caregivers in the community were invited to experiment with these ideas in their contexts. The research participants shared with me and with others their experience of the effects of their use of these therapeutic tools and insights. Their highly contextual reflections, in turn, provided me with ‘unchartered fields of experience’ to reflect on academically.

When narrative therapeutic ideas are applied in other contexts, they can support acts of pastoral care (such as the practice of outsider witnessing described in Section 5.6.3). Thus the creation of possibilities becomes a communal activity in which everybody can participate. Conversely, acts of pastoral care often become resources for meaning-making in therapeutic conversations (see letter to Aunt Lizzie, Section 5.6.4). The dialectic between the therapeutic stance and language on the one hand, and pastoral care on the other hand, forms a crucial and dynamic part of the research. The shift to and development of relationality in consciousness and in practice, as reflected in both pastoral care (Graham 1996; Harrison 1985; Heyward 1998, 1999; Cozad Neuger 1996; Poling 2002) and in narrative therapy (Bird 2004; Freedman & Combs 1996; Freeman, Epston & Lobovits 1997, Monk et al 1997) therefore provided a joint and complementary focus for the research.

My research document also reflects on the methodology that the research participants and I followed in generating contexts for the creation of pastoral and therapeutic possibilities in this community.

## **1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The ways in which this research as participatory action took form can be described as ‘methodological strategies’ (Mason 2004:30). The methodologies that were used in this research supported the themes of participatory research that formed a central part of my research aim (see Section 1.3.3). The forms of co-participation and action used in the research were oriented towards the creation of possibilities. This aim therefore determined the methodological practices that this research employed. Lincoln and Denzin (2005:1116) speak of the current time in research as ‘the *methodologically contested present*’. This has to do with new forms of methodology (also some methodologies described below), breaking new ground on what can be called legitimate methodology, and this also applies in the field of (theological) research.

### **1.6.1 Methodological practices**

I chose a feminist theological epistemology which centralises the experiences of marginalisation and therefore deliberately includes the voices of those who are/have been marginalised as a source for theological reflection. However, in this case, these voices did not only inform the theoretical aspects of the research. The methodology that flows from such an epistemology brought forth the local narratives and creativity of women and young people in the Scottsville community, which in turn then changed the course of the research. This illustrates the ‘exploratory, fluid, flexible and context-sensitive nature of qualitative research’ (Mason 2004:24). Therefore, most of the different practices described below emerged in and through the research itself. The words ‘opening hearts and minds’ in the title of this thesis refers to what methodology does in participatory action research. What we did opened my mind and heart to what worked and what not, what could be explored and what the challenges were that demanded practical responses from me.

### ***1.6.1.1 Therapeutic conversations***

I started out by focusing in the research on Petunia Primary, and specifically on narrative therapy. I used therapeutic conversations with young people: I worked once a week as a volunteer pastoral therapist in the school with young people referred to me by the principal or teachers. I initiated these sessions to familiarise myself with Petunia Primary's context and its specific challenges. These sessions also provided opportunities for teachers to be introduced to new ways of doing therapy with young people and afforded me the opportunity to offer suggestions for new therapeutic practices in the classroom.

### ***1.6.1.2 Group sessions with teachers***

During three group sessions with teachers at Petunia Primary, I shared therapeutic ideas with them. I thought that these sessions could serve as a platform for teachers to share discoveries they were making in terms of ideas and their effect on practices, and for others to witness and respond to the sharing.

### ***1.6.1.3 Dialogue with individual teachers***

Dialogue happened informally or formally (by arranging a meeting time). The latter type of dialogue often centred on a specific theme, problem or inquiry. However, individual teachers often informally expressed an interest in the work by talking to me about ideas such as 'the child is the expert'. These teachers then referred young people in their classes to me for therapy. With the permission of these young people, I also interviewed them about their experiences of problems in the presence of these teachers. In this way, therapeutic practices were shared, not in the formal way I had envisaged, but through the therapeutic process itself. Often in the sessions, the young people and I would brainstorm problem-solving strategies with their teachers. I would subsequently visit the classrooms of these young people and check with teachers how they were doing. These practices, I discovered, made the teachers feel that their input was valued. I would also ask the teachers who chose to consult with me individually how their caring for young people had come about in their lives. I also asked questions about the dreams that they still held for teaching in a context of poverty.

#### ***1.6.1.4 Presenting a lay counselling training course in the community***

From March to November 2006, I presented a monthly counselling training course for the women of Scottsville who expressed an interest in developing their counselling skills, especially in their relationships with young people (see Section 4.2). Through these two-hour long sessions, I got to know these women and they not only began to function as cultural consultants to me, but also began to act as my community of care (see Section 4.3.3).

#### ***1.6.1.5 Interviews***

I conducted formal interviews with Mr Noach, the deputy principal at Petunia Primary (Noach 2005, 2006) and with Aunt Liz Cupido (2008a, 2008b). Aunt Liz is a member of the Scottsville community who joined the lay counselling training sessions mentioned above. All the interviews were recorded on tape, and transcripts were made. A research strategy (appreciative inquiry interview) therefore developed from my interaction with the teachers that was not part of the original idea with which I started the research.

#### ***1.6.1.6 Reality checks***

Within the first eighteen months, the focus of my research methodology had shifted away from therapy towards pastoral praxis. The reasons for this can be found in the context itself. Although there was a great need for therapeutic support at Petunia Primary, I became aware of other challenges that young people living in poverty face. Many had to do with a lack of resources. Apart from rugby, netball and athletics, I learnt that there are no extramural activities on offer to Petunia Primary's young people. Even the rugby players played on a field without uprights. This knowledge presented me with a challenge: if I wanted to work ethically, I had to broaden the scope of my work at Petunia Primary to include pastoral practices that would contribute to a sense of possibility, especially for young people (see Chapter 6).

#### ***1.6.1.7 Using language creatively***

Because this research subscribes to the poststructuralist view that language creates reality, this research used the method of creative writing with young people as a way

of doing this. Chapter 6 deals in detail with the ways in which language ‘documents the becoming’ (Richardson 2005:966) of Scottsville’s young people.

#### **1.6.1.8 Drama**

The writing and performing of their own play made new forms of social comment and criticism possible for the young people of Scottsville. They could literally experiment with acting a life different to the *status quo*, and in doing so, we could do what action research is supposed to do: ‘It is deliberately designed as an *exploration* of ways of doing things in this particular situation at this particular historical moment. It is designed to be *exploratory action*’ (Kemmis & McTaggart 2005:580). Through the exploratory actions of the writing and re-writing of their drama, *Die Groot Gevaar*, (‘The Great Threat’) and its performance in front of different audiences, the young people and I learnt about co-participation, about the amount of work that goes into producing a play, the struggles and joys of being an actor and director.

We also explored and discovered other ways of being in the world. According to Turner (1986a:42), ‘Genres of cultural performance are not simple mirrors but magical mirrors of social reality: they exaggerate, invert, re-form, magnify, minimize, dis-color, re-color, even deliberately falsify, chronicled events...’. Therefore, drama offered members of a culture a method of working with the raw materials of social reality, turning their performances into ‘magical mirrors’. In the ‘coloured’ community, criticism towards violence against children or drugs often takes the form of marches or meetings. Likewise, the critical stances I would take as a researcher and pastoral therapist would traditionally be through conversations with community members, and by way of academic writing. Through drama, the young people created their own method of criticism, their own mirrors of social reality (see Section 6.5).

#### **1.6.1.9 The creation of youth societies**

Both the formation of the writer’s group and the drama society created an alternative community for some of the young people in Scottsville to which they could belong, with values of care and creativity that they could subscribe to. Membership of these groups constitutes the embodied praxis of a new kind of community.

#### ***1.6.1.10 Creating witnessing events***

My methodology became the deconstruction of the disabling discourses mentioned above in the lives of young people through their relationship with me and through the power of discovery within creative praxis itself. The values that Scottsville's young people enact and the special talents and gifts that they have to offer are often not publicly acknowledged. In Chapters 5 and 6, I describe the various events I organised through which the young people of Scottsville could start seeing themselves through the appreciative eyes of myself, their friends and of adults. These witnessing events also provided opportunities for parents, teachers and other members of the community to look at these young people in new and more hopeful ways.

#### ***1.6.1.11 Documents of appreciation***

At the first witnessing ceremony that I held for young people in the Scottsville community in November 2005, I presented them each with a certificate of merit. This idea was taken from the work I did as a therapist with young people and which developed out of my exposure to the narrative practices described by Freedman and Combs (1996:237-263) and Freeman, Epston and Lobovits (1997:125-142). The wording on the certificates reflected my relationship with each of the young persons, what specifically I had come to appreciate about that person (see Section 5.6.3.1) and how this has contributed to my life, the lives of others and the work we had done together.

#### ***1.6.1.12 Letters***

Letter-writing as a methodology which allows conversations to be extended and lives 're-authored' (Epston 1994) was introduced to me through David Epston's work in narrative therapy.

In the context of this research I used my letters to the women as a form of capturing the details of our lay counselling sessions. The letters also functioned as a form of self-reflection on what was said, and through questions, they constituted an invitation to the women to participate in the meaning-making process too. These letters also became important methodological tools for me, in that they captured stories and the exact words that were spoken by the women. Through them, I could also make

visible what I appreciated about their contributions and, importantly, how these contributions had affected my own life. Through the writing of these letters, a spirit of mutuality was cultivated.

Letter-writing also featured in this research as a methodology for witnessing (see Section 5.6.4). I wrote letters as an appreciative and grateful witness to both Aunt Liz and Aunt Baai, to Mr Foster (the principal at Petunia Primary) and to Mr Matthee and Mr Temmers, two members of staff.

I also wrote a letter to Aunt Lizzie, a woman one of the young people told me about in therapy. Her acts of care were so influential in shaping this young man's life that I wrote a letter to make this visible to her.

#### ***1.6.1.13 Getting our hands dirty***

Because this research aimed at the 'restoration of physical well-being' of the young people involved, this research also included the methodology of literally getting my hands dirty by, for instance, cooking soup and by cleaning out a library that had fallen into disuse and restoring it to become the vibrant heart of the school (see Section 6.8.3.1). Methodology in feminist practical terms in this research therefore also, by necessity, involved the use of my hands and the hands of those who joined me, in doing physical work.

#### ***1.6.1.14 Serving on a community forum***

In 2007, I was invited to attend the quarterly meetings of the Concerned Scottsville Forum, in which problems affecting the community and projects were discussed. The Drug Awareness Day in October 2007 in the Erasmus Hall in Scottsville came about as a result of such a meeting. During this meeting, I volunteered for our drama group to perform a play the group had written on the dangers of Tik at the Drug Awareness Day. I also suggested that a poster competition be launched at all the schools, in which young people would be encouraged to draw a poster to advertise the day. My proposals were accepted.

#### ***1.6.1.15 Caring for the caregivers***

Over the past three years, Doreen, Aunt Baai and Joan consulted with me as a pastoral therapist.

#### ***1.6.1.16 Facilitating between communities***

Participation by the broader community and my facilitation in making it happen developed as a methodological strategy in the course of the research. A feminist epistemology centralises the narratives of poor women. Part of the justice-making process that this research embarked on was to circulate these narratives and knowledges as pastoral praxis. The methodology of sharing local narratives therefore emerged from the feminist epistemology that purposefully included it as sources for theological reflection. The Scottsville women and I presented their knowledges and our mutual learning at a workshop at the 2006 conference of the South African Association for Pastoral work (see Chapter 4). In Chapter 6, I reflect on how my facilitating between Scottsville and the broader community contributed to the creation of possibilities for the young people of Scottsville.

#### ***1.6.1.17 Keeping a research journal***

By ‘taking sides’ for the marginalised, this research therefore also challenged the frames of reference of positivist research that prescribe researcher neutrality. I therefore support Denzin’s (1989:267) proposal that ‘(t)he sociologist has an obligation to become free of the positivist preconceptions of the research act so that a fully interpretive, existentially relevant sociology can be written’. As a researcher I kept a research journal to document my relationship journey with the teachers, the principal and young people at the school, which took the form of e-mail conversations with my promoter and colleagues. Extracts from these conversations are included throughout this thesis.

#### ***1.6.1.18 Consultation***

Before presenting the talk on discipline to staff at Petunia Primary in 2005 (see the chronology in Section 1.8), I consulted with Elize Morkel, a clinical psychologist with extensive narrative therapeutic skills, around some problematic aspects of this presentation in a context of abuse. I also consulted with Elize Morkel prior to a

presentation I did at the Dutch Reformed church in Welgemoed in June 2007 on the ways of doing pastoral care with young people in Scottsville.

### **1.6.2 Summary**

These various methodological strategies afforded me different opportunities to relate to different co-participants in this research, which in turn created knowledges of varying kinds. It also widened the scope within which ‘possibilities’ would be described and practised in the research.

## **1.7 THE FORMAT OF THE RESEARCH DOCUMENTATION**

In the following section, I outline and explain my choice of structural and formal aspects of the writing of this research document.

### **1.7.1 Narratives**

For the writing of action research, Winter (1996:26) proposes a narrative format that can contain both action (what has happened) and reflection (the meaning of what has happened and what may happen because of it). This dialectic between the details of experience and the meaning-making of research is akin to the process in narrative therapy in which ‘landscape of action questions’ inform the ‘landscape of consciousness’ (Freedman & Combs 1996:96-99; White 2007:78-83). In the text in the chapters of this research I therefore use narrative in its pure form by quoting directly what was said in the conversation concerned.

This direct form of narration also includes ‘imagining’, of how things could be otherwise, by the people in the community themselves (see, for example, the conversation with Mr Noach, Section 5.3.1.4, under the subheading ‘The move to openness: Mr Noach’s “enlarged thinking”’). This verbal imagining ‘opens up possibilities for the “voicing of experience by other means than through scholastically presented argumentation”’ (Grundy 1996:113).

I also narrate some events as the researcher in order to describe ‘what happened’. In action research, the researcher’s own experiences are not considered to be outside of the meaning-making, but are an integral part of it. Therefore this thesis also includes personal reflections on my research experiences and on the theological and

epistemological ‘lenses’ (Hall 1996:46) through which I view the research. These reflections and commitments make clear how my values and the ‘epistemological positions [which] influenced the selection, interpretation and analysis’ (Hall 1996:39) of the methods and information I used in the research. Because this research centralises participation, this thesis also includes personal reflections from my research diary on how relationships developed between my co-participants and me as the researcher.

The descriptions of the creation of possibilities in the following chapters therefore include not only my theoretical reflections on conversations and relationships, but also the narratives that ‘represent in themselves the changes’ (Mason 2004:32).

### **1.7.2 Plural text**

Winter (1996:26) refers to what emerges in participatory action research because of everyone’s input as ‘the plural text’. Every chapter in this research contains a plurality of voices and of methods (such as interviews, narration, poetry) and this mirrors ‘the weaving of varied themes and general reflections with accounts of everyday life’ (Winter 1996:26). The text therefore often includes the narratives of poor persons in the body of the text itself (for example, Section 3.5.1 and Section 7.4.8), rather than as addenda to my academic text. By literally giving them their legitimate space in the main document, I am honouring the marginalised as co-participants of the research. Justice-making therefore also enters the writing of this thesis and the choices regarding its structural elements. Likewise, some examples of the creative writing of the young people who participated with me are included in the main body of the text. (Such a lot of creative writing was done that I could not include everything, and some of the other work is presented in addenda.)

### **1.7.3 Language**

As the Petunia Primary school community is an Afrikaans-speaking school community, the research was conducted in Afrikaans, which is the mother tongue of the community and my mother tongue too. The research document is designed in such a way as to honour our conversations in Afrikaans, with an English translation alongside.

In the Scottsville context, I took my lead with regard to the form of address I used from the people in the context. This is reflected in the research document. So, for example, Aunt Liz calls me by my first name, but Aunt Baai does not. Both asked to be called ‘Aunt’. Mr Foster still calls me by my surname, although I invited him to use my first name. Over the past four years, we have stuck with ‘Mr’ and ‘Mrs’, without feeling constrained by the formality of the address.

In referring to certain authors in the research document, I have used both their first names and their surnames, while at other times I have chosen to use only surnames. I used first names instinctively and not to make a point. However, on reflection, I have realised that this choice is not a neutral one. In a sense, it signifies a desire for the spirit of relationality to be present on the pages of the research document – especially as I reflect on my relationships with real people in a context of poverty. I would like to think that by often using their first names in the confines of a formal academic text, I was truly ‘in conversation’ with these authors as academics, philosophers, activists and real human beings.

#### **1.7.4 Making the context visible**

As this research was done in the poor suburb of Scottsville, I chose to include some photographs of this context in Chapters 2 and 6 in order to give the reader some visual idea of what is meant by ‘the challenges of poverty’ referred to in the title of this thesis.

In Chapter 5, I reflect on the fact that ethical pastoral relations with the other depends on my willingness to engage with a ‘concrete other’ (Benhabib 1992). A methodological consequence of such an ethic is that the other is introduced to the reader in this thesis in the concrete visual format of photographs. I also believe that the concreteness of photographs can contribute to one of the aims of this research, which is to move the reader to a new understanding of the many challenges of poverty.

#### **1.7.5 Chapter content**

Due to the organic nature of this participatory action research that took place over a period of three and a half years, I decided to structure the chapters of this thesis

around different research themes and epistemological points of departure. This thesis therefore does not offer a chronological account of events, but rather offers a meaning-making of events based on specific themes.

## **1.8 A CHRONOLOGICAL ACCOUNT OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS**

The scope of the work that was done in this research was vast and diverse, so I give a chronological account of events in this section. Because of the format of this research document (the chapters are structured around epistemological, theological and ethical ‘themes’), I realised that the reader of this thesis might also need another, more linear account of the research process itself. This account is presented below in order to help the reader gain an overview of the process itself and to serve as point of reference for the theoretical reflections of the thesis.

October 2004: I introduced myself to Mr Foster, the principal of Petunia Primary in Scottsville.

February 2005: Research commenced. I introduced myself to the staff and outlined my willingness to do therapeutic work with learners in the school and to support them in developing therapeutic skills.

February 2005-November 2006: I worked as a pastoral therapist at Petunia Primary with learners, their families and other caregivers, and their teachers. I also had informal conversations with members of staff about the challenges they experienced.

May-August 2005: I did workshops, and had interviews with staff around the theme of ‘discipline’.

September 2005: After a conversation with their Afrikaans teacher, I started sharing my love of poetry with the Grade 7 classes at Petunia Primary on a fortnightly basis during their Afrikaans periods. I invited the young people who were interested in writing poetry themselves to contact me. We informally started a writers’ group at the school.

31 October 2005: My friend, poet Ronelda Kamfer, came to the school to share her experiences of writing from a marginalised background with the young people.

15 October 2005: The organisers of the school's 'mothers and daughters' breakfast event invited me, to present a talk on the topic of 'care'. At this presentation I invited women who might be interested in a lay counselling training course to contact me.

March 2006-November 2006: Over a nine-month period, eight women from the community took part in a lay counselling training course that I presented around a series of relevant therapeutic topics.

September 2006: The women and I presented a workshop at the South African Association of Pastoral (SAAP) work conference. Because of what she had witnessed at the SAAP, Hildegard Malherbe, a minister's wife from Stellenberg, joined our group and facilitated communication between her community and the women to get an aerobics exercise class and craft project off the ground in Scottsville.

February 2006: The writers' group consisted of three writers who regularly consulted with me on their work.

February 2006-the present: My conversations with Gawie Niewoudt, deputy principal at a neighbouring school in Kraaifontein where I work as a narrative therapist, about poverty in Scottsville, led the Sunday school classes of the Stellenbosch Dutch Reformed church to which Gawie belongs to make regular contributions to the soup kitchen at Petunia Primary.

June 2006: The writers started collaborating on a play about the dangers of the drug Tik in their community.

August 2006: Twenty-seven children from the school, including the writers, were invited to attend a performance of the play *Ghoema* in Stellenbosch.

November 2006: *Die Groot Gevaar* (The Great Threat) was performed by the Scottsville Junior Drama Society in front of friends, teachers, parents, Vriende vir Afrikaans (Friends of Afrikaans) and some of my friends and colleagues at Petunia Primary.

March-September 2007: The play was re-written by the children and new characters and scenes were added. Rehearsals commenced.

17 June 2007: I addressed the Dutch Reformed congregation of Welgemoed about joining me in making a difference in the lives of Scottsville's young people, in whatever way possible. Mr Foster, three of the women from the lay counselling training and two community workers attended. The minister, Heerden van Niekerk, incorporated my theological reflections in his sermon.

August 2007: I organised for musically talented children and teachers from Petunia Primary and Scottsville Secondary to attend a community workshop held by world-renowned conductor Ben Zander at the Artscape Theatre in Cape Town.

September 2007: I put friends of mine in touch with Terence, who runs a street project with children in the community.

September 2007: I took the writers' group to *Versindaba*, a festival of Afrikaans poetry in Stellenbosch.

October 2007: *Die Groot Gevaar* (The Great Threat) was performed at a Drug Awareness Day in the Community Hall in Scottsville.

29 January 2008: Having read Foucault (2007), I interviewed Aunt Liz Cupido in her home in Scottsville about her experiences of pastoral power.

March 2008: The organisers of the prestigious Woordfees in Stellenbosch invited the actors to perform their play at Woordfees. The play was also performed in front of their teachers and matriculants at Scottsville Secondary school.

- March 2008: The writers' group, two of Petunia Primary's teachers and I met Breyten Breytenbach, renowned South African writer, at a book launch in Stellenbosch.
- April 2008-the present: I ran weekly writers' workshops at Scottsville Secondary School. Some of the writers' groups' poems were published in the newsletters of *Vriende vir Afrikaans* in July 2008.
- April 2008: The members of the writers's group told me that they did not read because they did not have access to a library. I visited the school library and decided to launch a 'revive-the-library' campaign. I sent out e-mails to ask friends and colleagues for book donations. Books started pouring in.
- May 2008: I gave feedback to Reverend Heerden van Niekerk's men's Bible study group in Welgemoed about my participation in the Scottsville community. Heerden phoned to tell me that one of the men had committed himself to supplying uprights for Petunia Primary's rugby fields.
- May 2008: Heerden introduced me to a woman from the Welgemoed community, 'Anne'<sup>78</sup> and her friends. They had approached him about doing work with children, and Heerden remembered my 'joining project'.
- May 2008: I introduced 'Anne' and her friends to Mr Foster and Doreen (head of the junior phase at Petunia Primary). 'Anne' and her friends set up a weekly reading support programme for Grade 1s and Grade 2s at Petunia.
- June 2008: A friend from Welgemoed, Marina Badenhorst, joined me in my vision for a library for the school. She worked with me to clean out the library and she raised funds for it amongst the members of her book club.

---

<sup>7</sup> Ps.

25 June 2008: With book donations from book clubs and friends, and with participation from the writers' group themselves, support from my community in Welgemoed, teachers, the governing body of the school and a Dutch sponsor, the library of Scottsville Secondary School re-opened its doors, in time for a cold, wet winter's holiday. On the day of its opening, 22 teenagers took out books for the first time.

17 July 2008: A visit to the writers' group by the Dutch sponsor and a group of friends took place inside the library. More than 60 teenagers joined the library since its re-opening. Teachers told me that, for the first time in years, they were seeing teenagers reading at school. One of the teachers at the school attended the writers' group for the first time.

24 July 2008: We celebrated the official inauguration of Petunia Primary's uprights. The men from Welgemoed joined the staff of Petunia Primary and the rugby players of the school in a kicking competition.

18 August 2008: A poem by Thelton Masimila (one of Scottsville's young poets) was published on the literary page of *Die Burger*.

August 2008: More than 200 teenagers joined their library since its re-opening.

25 June 2009: Presentation delivered: 'Foucault and Ms Elizabeth Cupido: re-thinking pastoral power, poverty and privilege', at the Joint Conference of Academic Societies in the Fields of Religion and Theology, Faculty of Theology at the University of Stellenbosch (see Addendums 1 to 4).

## **1.9 CONCLUSION**

This chapter provided a description of the research design. In each of the next chapters I reflect on the different themes of this research, as reflected in the title of the thesis. In Chapters 1 to 3, I focus on 'the challenge of poverty'. In Chapters 4 to 6, I make the connection between pastoral care and 'opening hearts and minds' and show how this created possibilities in the lives of poor women and especially poor young people in Scottsville. I also describe the unique possibilities that came about through pastoral participation. The theme of participation is represented by the

semi-colon in the title of the thesis, which links the context of poverty with the work of hope of this research. The work that the semi-colon represents is described in Chapters 4 to 7. In Chapter 7, I reflect back on the research process and on whether the aims outlined in this chapter have been reached. I also propose ways in which the participatory work that this research has started could keep on contributing to social transformation.

## CHAPTER 2

### POWER RELATIONS IN A CONTEXT OF POVERTY: A FOUCAULDIAN ANALYSIS

#### 2.1 WHICH KINDS OF KNOWLEDGE DO WE INCLUDE TO DESCRIBE 'POVERTY'?:

Park (2001:83) defines the threefold objectives of participatory research as 'gathering and analysing necessary information, strengthening community ties and sharpening the ability to think and act critically'. He states that these objectives call for a broadening of epistemological horizons to include representational, relational and reflective knowledge (Park 2001:85) as legitimate forms of knowledge. In terms of research, different forms of knowledge create different 'regimes of truth'. Representational knowledge provides people with information to organise and structure their world. Relational knowledge focuses on the cultural and individual rules of engagement between people and what people need to experience a sense of connection and community.

A response to the challenges of poverty also requires an awareness that a poststructuralist epistemology brings of multi-narratives and multi-vocality, as described by Denzin and Lincoln (2003:35). A poststructuralist epistemology is an epistemology that honours those narratives and voices that have been silenced and that analyses the mechanics of power through which this silencing has been performed. A poststructuralist epistemology is also mindful of the effects that power relations have on language and therefore on the formation of culture. Thus, the questions that arose for this research were which representational and relational knowledges count as legitimate, which sources of knowledge are honoured and, by implication, which sources are disqualified and what effects this has on the formation of culture and on theology.

Reflective knowledge is created when people allow themselves to stand back from their reality, view it critically and deconstruct the premises on which knowledge operates. Davidson (1997:2) quotes Foucault on the focus of his reflections: 'For a long time one has known that the role of philosophy is not to discover what is hidden, but to make

visible precisely what is visible, that is to say, to make evident what is so close, so immediate, so intimately linked to us, that because of what we do we do not perceive it.’ In this chapter I therefore use philosophy to make visible precisely that which is visible in the poor ‘coloured’ community: the historical, social and economic conditions that create and sustain ‘coloured’ poverty and how these conditions breed various forms of violence and abuse, legitimises a culture of drugs and alcohol and discourses, such as powerlessness, the necessity for ‘discipline’ and the normalising of violence.

According to Mason (2004:57-58), research in the ‘Foucauldian tradition’ refers to discourse analyses that ‘are not used to try to explore the context of human action, as for example, an interpretivist might do, but rather to gain a nuanced understanding of the historical operation of discourses or discursive practices’. I want this research to show how Foucault’s analysis of truth, for instance, is not merely a philosophical, ‘nuanced’ analysis of truth, but rather an analysis of a constitution of truth as a ‘historical analysis of the relationship between our thought and our practices in Western society’, as Foucault (1981:146) puts it.

To this end, Foucault uses both archaeology and genealogy as theoretical methodologies for diagnosing and grasping the significance of the way power operates in society. I do not wish to undertake a comprehensive analysis of Foucault’s methodologies of archaeology and genealogy. However, I use both these concepts as methodological tools in analysing the discourses and practices that constitute poverty and violence and their effects on ‘coloured’ young people in the Western Cape, particularly in Scottsville. Therefore, Foucault’s work provides this chapter with an epistemology that concerns itself with the details of practice, the context of ideas and physical realities that make these practices possible, and of the many ways in which the practices of power target the body as its object. A poststructuralist description of ‘poverty’ therefore depends on analysing specific relations at a specific time and in a defined location, as well as the elements that inform those relations.

Rattansi (1995:253) argues that Foucauldian genealogical and archaeological analyses are useful in ‘exploring the accretion of meanings, political affiliations, subject positions, forms of address, regimes of truth, and disciplinary practices involved in the construction of particular myths of origin, narratives of evolution, and forms of boundary marking and policing engaged in by different “communities” in particular

historical contexts'. Challenges that arise from an archaeology and genealogy of power relations embodied in both historical and in current social practices therefore also shaped the methodology of this research. Specific accounts of physical abuse that young people shared with me led to the research methodology of talks on 'discipline' and conversations with male teachers identified by these learners (see Section 2.3.3.2).

Without Foucault's theories I would never have realised the critically important connection between poverty and power. Foucault made me aware of what I had not seen until then and what I needed to see in order to work with a greater awareness of the significance of power relations in the research. An example of how his theories shaped my awareness about the limits of my own knowledge about pastoral power arose when I read Foucault's (2007) analysis of the archaeology of pastoral power itself. It inspired me immediately to interview Aunt Liz Cupido (Cupido 2008a) about her experiences of being subjected to such a form of power (see Section 3.5.1). Chapters 2 and 3 therefore need to be read like a conversation between Foucault's theories and my interpretation of them in the light of experiences of poverty in Scottsville. This kind of conversation was initiated by Foucault himself, as he grounded his theories in the practices he observed in places such as prisons, schools and mental institutions. Although he never specifically analysed power relations in a context of poverty, this chapter will show some ways in which Foucault's work on the ways in which power targets the body is especially relevant in the context of poor 'coloured' young people's experiences in the Western Cape. For me, this research therefore became a to and fro process of illumination between theories of the operation of power and the real life operation and experiences of power in a context of poverty.

In this chapter, I refer to various kinds of research methodology that I used in relation to the topic of physical abuse: brainstorming conversations (with the principal), therapeutic conversations (with Mr M) and pastoral conversations (with Mr R and Mr Noach) and how these conversations influenced the course of the *pastoral praxis*<sup>9</sup> of the research. In this chapter, I also include reflections on sessions (with the boys, teachers) from my research journal. The themes that emerged for my workshops with staff emerged through consultative conversations with a local clinical psychologist, Elize Morkel

---

<sup>9</sup> Generally, in this study, in line with accepted practice, I use italics for emphasis, but sometimes need additional emphasis and then use both italics and bold. This practice reflects the complexity of experience and thought.

(Morkel 2005). In this chapter I also include extracts from an interview with Mr Noach in front of staff (Noach 2005).

A research document is a document of power because it prints people's words and gives a voice to people's experiences. Representational and relational knowledge of the people of Scottsville therefore emerged in the research, not only through me, but especially through the people's own use of language. Because Afrikaans is the mother tongue of the 'coloured' people in the Scottsville community, I consciously wanted to honour their use of Afrikaans in the research. In doing so, I also wanted to honour the powerful meanings that emerged in the research through their voices. Where I quote people from the community, I have given their words with an English translation, and for longer conversations or comments, I have split the page with the English translation appearing alongside the Afrikaans original.

In this chapter and the next, I cite from the work of historians such as Giliomee (2007) and Terreblanche (1977, 2002), who wrote in Afrikaans about slave culture in the Cape. To make the text easier to read, I have translated these excerpts into English as a paraphrase in the body of the text, while the original Afrikaans appears in a footnote.

## **2.2 ARCHAEOLOGY**

Referring to Foucault, Dreyfus and Rabinow (1982:102) contend that the 'task of the archaeologist is to describe in theoretical terms the rules governing discursive practices' and suggest that it 'is necessary, Foucault seems to be arguing, to look at the specific discursive formation, its history, and its place in the larger context of power in order to be able to evaluate its claim to describe reality.... This is the task of archaeology...' (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982:117).

Foucault's 'archaeology', according to Sharon Welch (1985:10), 'is concerned with the episteme, the field of knowledge: what counts as knowable, who is it that knows, the impact of knowledge'. I therefore regard an epistemology that centralises the foundations of the different forms of knowledge – as described by Park (2001) above – and its impact as its point of departure, as making a critically important contribution to pastoral care as a practical response in a context of poverty. Therefore, the next two chapters introduce analyses that led to an inquiry of the links between power and knowledge. The research then followed up on this inquiry with the purposeful

inclusion of those without social power in the research itself, thereby not only expanding the sources and content of new knowledge, but rethinking what constitutes theological knowledge as well.

I begin with a brief archaeological investigation of the various material, historical and social conditions and rules that informed and continue to shape the discourse(s) of poverty and violence in the 'coloured' communities of the Western Cape. Foucault (1968:402-403) describes both the methodology and focus of such an analysis as follows:

What has to be brought out is the set of conditions which, at a given moment and in a determinate society, govern the appearance of statements, their preservation, the links established between them, the way they are grouped in statutory sets, the role they play, the action of values or consecration by which they are affected, the way they are invested in practices or attitudes, the principles according to which they come into circulation...I shall call an *archive*...the series of rules which determine in a culture the appearance and disappearance of statements, their retention and their destruction, their paradoxical existence as *events* and *things*. (Foucault's italics)

Dreyfus and Rabinow (1982:94) state that in 'archaeology this recuperation of the unthought by thought becomes the recuperation of a *nonconscious* system of rules as an explicit theory. Thus it is no longer the forms and contents of consciousness, but the forms and contents of serious discourse, whose conditions are being sought' (Dreyfus & Rabinow's italics). Hence, disciplines and formal knowledges (such as the knowledges of criminology) cannot be understood by their own formal terms alone, as these knowledges emerge through complex often irrational processes, and without a central source or an acting subject at its centre (Scheurich & McKenzie 2005:848).

Therefore, in Foucault's epistemology, the concept of discontinuity or change, in knowledge for instance, has to do with more than a 'change of content (refutation of old errors, recovery of old truths), nor is it a change of theoretical form (renewing of a paradigm, modification of systematic ensembles). It is a question of what governs statements, and the way in which they govern each other so as to constitute a set of propositions' (Foucault 1976c:302-3). To be able to take the practice of transformation or change within this research seriously, it therefore becomes necessary to use the methodology of archaeology to make visible the rules and physical conditions that govern statements and behaviours. In my analyses, the rules that govern relationships

between adults and young people in the community are made visible, as are the historical discourses of control and subjugation that have governed the relations between white and ‘coloured’ people for centuries.

An archaeological analysis of poverty in the ‘coloured’ communities of the Western Cape, with specific reference to Scottsville, consequently has to take into account the historical, economic and physical ‘sets of conditions’ that shape specific knowledges and discourses in the community. In this chapter, I therefore provide the reader with a concise picture of what is meant by ‘the challenges’ of poverty for this community, both as a set of conditions and as discourses, as referred to in the title of this dissertation. In order for this research to be relevant, practices of pastoral care that are geared towards the creation of possibilities can thus only be read against the archaeology of specific conditions and challenges that are posed by poverty in this community.

### **2.2.1 Historical conditions and discursive formation**

This section was painful to write, because it reminded me of the historical realities that shaped ‘coloured’ people’s lives as slaves in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the Western Cape and as second rate citizens during most of the twentieth century, and of how these realities created limits of what was socially possible. Simultaneously, I know that the same rationality that controlled and subjected ‘coloured’ people’s bodies (see Section 3.5.1 for Aunt Liz’s story), at the same time allowed a culture of seemingly limitless freedom and benefits for white people in this country, a group of which I am a part.

‘Coloured’ people lived as slaves in conditions, for instance, which precluded close and stable relationships between parents and their children. Giliomee (2007:4) writes that for the community later known as the Cape coloureds, it was extremely difficult to cultivate a tradition of close family ties after a system had existed for more than 180 years under which slaves could not marry. In the eyes of the law they had no family. Children could at any point in time be taken away from their mothers and sold to someone far away.<sup>10</sup> Van der Ross (2005:67) comments: ‘...family life, as generally

---

<sup>10</sup> ‘Vir die gemeenskap wat later as die Kaapse kleurlinge bekend sou staan, was dit uiters moeilik om 'n tradisie van 'n hegte gesinslewe op te bou nadat daar amper 180 jaar lank 'n stelsel bestaan het waaronder slawe nie kon trou nie...In die oë van die wet het hulle geen familie gehad nie. Kinders kon op enige tydstip van hul moeder weggeneem en aan iemand ver weg verkoop word.’

understood, namely father, mother and children living together, could hardly exist or flourish easily among Cape slaves. Illegitimate children were commonplace and numerous, although they were kept and reared by their mothers' owners. If the fathers were "Christian" (white), such children, if in the Slave Lodge, were to be freed at the age of twenty-five years.' These inhumane social conditions need to be taken into account in the formation of, for instance, discourses of subservience, illegitimacy, non-attachment to one's children and of alcoholism in earlier centuries, the legacy of which did not simply end with the abolition of slavery.

In the twentieth century new and inhumane political laws directly created new conditions of dislocation and poverty for thousands of 'coloured' people. In 1950, the Group Areas Act was tabled in Parliament (Giliomee 2007:193). By 1976, as many as 306 000 (or one in six) 'coloured' persons had been moved due to this law (Giliomee 2007:203). These laws as conditions (in the archaeological sense of the world), disrupted communities and created realities of disconnection, poverty and isolation. Giliomee (2007:192) stresses that the classification of people according to race had the greatest impact on the lives of 'coloured' people, of all the race groups in South Africa. Over a six-year period, 90 000 people were identified as 'borderline cases'. Based on their race status, some families were split up.

These historical conditions had a direct impact on discourses of race, submission and inferiority in the 'coloured' community. Ricoeur (1995b:76-77) refers to 'historical forms of fragility' that are a result of dissymmetric social relations. Historical (archaeological) analysis such as that offered by Foucault, and as referred to in this chapter, therefore make it possible to consider 'the kinds of unequal distribution of the ability to act, especially those that result from hierarchies of command and authority in societies based on efficiency and competition like our own. People do not simply lack power; they are deprived of it' (Ricoeur 1995b:77). Ricoeur's understanding highlights the inhibiting effects hierarchical power relations have on people's capacity to speak or to see themselves as capable of action.

Therefore, the archaeological analysis in this chapter has to be read with this understanding in mind: how the historical relations have a bearing not only as a possibility in terms of physical goods, opportunities or care in relations, but also in that they affect people who have been placed in positions of obedience and can invite

them to regard themselves as agents of their own lives. By taking this dynamic into consideration, a new purpose emerges out of participation of the poor in the research as described in following chapters. This purpose has to do with the discovery of oneself as an active agent in the world in which hierarchical relations had previously denied one that possibility. Likewise, this research afforded me with an opportunity to become mindful of my powers of voice and action and how these can be used in other ways than in maintaining the historical hierarchical *status quo*, which leaves some people with a sense of agency and others with a continuing sense of powerlessness, apathy and fragility.

### **2.2.2 The challenges of poverty in the ‘coloured’ community of Scottsville: an archaeological analysis**

Traditionally, poverty is associated with unemployment. According to the 2001 census, 27% of ‘coloured’ people are unemployed (Leggett 2004b:23). Moreover, currently many ‘coloured’ people experience some degree of political injustice relating to their employment status. Leggett (2004b:s.p.) quotes Schonteich, who claims that since 1994, unemployment has increased by 19% in the black community, compared to 35% in the ‘coloured’ community. At an unemployment crisis conference held in a building that used to house a textile factory – an industry in the Western Cape that retrenched 17 000 employees between 2005 and 2006 – economist Ashgar Adelzadeh (Herman 2006:4) pointed out that the gap between rich and poor has increased since 1995 . Leggett (2004b:s.p.) also states that

...with the loss of the job preferences given to coloureds under apartheid, many coloured people today find themselves competing with black Africans for lower skill jobs: 32% of employed coloured people work in ‘elementary occupations’ (unskilled labour) compared to 34% of black people. Thus, any sense that affirmative action is favouring black Africans, who hold political power, would increase the sense of exclusion.

Hence the experience of exclusion based on race that has always been a feature of a ‘coloured’ people’s life under apartheid continues to be so for especially the most marginal of groups within the ‘coloured’ culture, such as unskilled people. Although the new democratic dispensation in South Africa claims to be working towards improving job opportunities for blacks, it seems to be neglecting ‘coloured’ people. Hence, it becomes clear that an experience of exclusion and of poverty cannot be

understood as a universal truth, as was claimed to be possible in the time of modernity. The larger context of power relations to which 'coloured' power are subjected shapes their specific experiences of poverty, and brings about an understanding of conditions that have an impact upon those experiences, such as retrenchment.

In order to give some account of the situation in Kraaifontein, of which Scottsville is one of its poorest areas, I refer to data contained in the *Report on the Demographic profile of Kraaifontein/Brackenfell* (Unit for Religion and Development Research & Transformation Africa 2005).

The people who live in the 'coloured' suburb of Scottsville in Kraaifontein outside Cape Town are mostly poor (see Photo 1 – photographs precede Chapter 1). Only a small percentage of residents, such as teachers and nurses, who live in the 'better' part of Scottsville, cannot be described as poor. According to the demographic indicators (Unit for Religion and Development Research & Transformation Africa 2005:10) for the whole of the Kraaifontein/Brackenfell region that were recorded in the 2001 Census, the population in this area consists of 29.4% black people, 30.9% white people and 39.3% 'coloured' people.

The number of unemployed people in all of Kraaifontein grew by 7.8% between 1996 and 2001. According to sociologist Jeremy Seekings (2007:17), finding employment is also linked to other factors such as skills (including language skills), credentials and (especially) connections (in other words, social capital). 'Social capital' refers to having family or friends who have jobs and are able to help someone find employment. According to Seekings (2007:17), it 'is therefore especially worrying that the number and proportion of the unemployed living in "workerless" households, i.e. where no one is in wage employment, have risen...from 1.8 million (42 percent) in 1995 to 4 million (49 percent) in 2004' in South Africa.

A total of 19.1% of all residents in Kraaifontein were unemployed in 2001 (Unit for Religion and Development Research & Transformation Africa 2005:10). From this percentage and the statistics of income distribution for the area (Unit for Religion and Development Research & Transformation Africa 2005:13), it is evident that Scottsville (where I did this research), together with Scottsdene, and the squatter camps of Bloekombos and Wallacedene, constitute the poorest areas in Kraaifontein

(where people have an income of R0 to R66105 p.a.) and that the overall unemployment rate of 19.1% is predictably exceeded in these areas. Adhikari (2005:180) quotes a study done by Van den Berg and Louw, who found that ‘though the poverty headcount ratios of all other race groups declined between 1990 and 2000, only amongst coloureds did it increase during that period.’

The apartheid-era municipal subsidies for ‘coloured’ people have been phased out and the ‘ANC government implemented a policy of full cost recovery for such services’ (Adhikari 2005:181). Due to this political change, ‘20 percent of coloured respondents were regularly unable to pay for basic services such as water and electricity and...many had suffered service cutoffs or even evictions as a result’(Adhikari 2005:181). The local primary school, Petunia Primary, and the adjacent high school, Scottsville Secondary School, have been identified by the Department of Education as schools that participate in its Poverty Alleviation programme. This programme creates cleaning jobs in the school for poor single mothers in the community. The pupils attending the schools come from as far away as the Bloekombos squatter camp on the outskirts of Kraaifontein. It was in this school community that I did this research.

Because my focus in this research is the challenges of poverty, especially as it relates to the lives of young people, an archaeological analysis can demonstrate how both historical and current social conditions in South Africa have led to the formation of disabling discourses, and the ways in which they specifically affect the lives of these young people.

#### ***2.2.2.1 Lack of resources***

In Scottsville there are very few recreational facilities whatsoever for its young people –no library, open community centre or sports fields. When the research started, Petunia Primary had a rugby field, but without any uprights.

When one drives through Scottsville’s streets on a late summer afternoon, it becomes clear that the young people have turned their streets into recreational spaces where they play soccer and cricket and skip rope. Idyllic as this may sound, the streets in Scottsville are also the home turf of drug-dealers and gangs. This reality confirms the findings of a National Youth Victimization study which suggests that South African youths have very few safe spaces – spaces where they are not at risk of being victimised (Pelser 2008:6).

Schools in poor communities are also under-resourced. Mr Foster (2006) told me that at the time when Petunia Primary (see Photo 2) was built in 1982, most ‘coloured’ primary schools in the Cape did not ‘receive’ school halls, unlike white schools, even in poor areas, did. The conceptual system that denied this ‘coloured’ community a school hall by implication also denied young people a stage, and with it the opportunity to participate in the performing arts. Recently, Petunia Primary, like many other schools in poor communities, was forced, through a lack of funds, to close down its art room.

I take a look at both these historical and current social conditions in tracing the discursive formation of powerlessness and of silence and boredom amongst Petunia Primary’s young people, in line with what Dreyfus and Rabinow (1982:94) describe. In terms of social resources, the young people who need it most also do not have access to therapeutic support systems outside their (often violent) families.

#### ***2.2.2.2 Alcohol abuse***

There is a long history of alcohol abuse in the ‘coloured’ community of the Western Cape that was historically introduced through the ‘*dop* system’ of paying wine farm workers with alcohol (Leggett 2004b; Thomson 2004). The National Injury Mortality Surveillance System (NIMSS) tested the blood alcohol content of people who died unnatural deaths in 2002, and found that ‘coloured’ people were the ethnic group in South Africa ‘most likely to have alcohol in their systems at the time of death: 68% compared to an overall average of 50%. They were also the group most likely to have extreme levels of alcohol present, with 17% having blood alcohol contents of more than .25 g per 100 ml, compared to an overall average of 12%’ (Leggett 2004b).

Already *in utero*, alcohol abuse is a powerful force in shaping and dictating the conditions for a ‘coloured’ child’s life. The Western Cape has one of the highest incidences of foetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) in the world (Leggett 2004a, 2004b; Viljoen et al 2003:s.p.). Viljoen et al (2003:s.p.) state that FAS ‘is caused by maternal alcohol use during pregnancy and is one of the leading causes of preventable birth defects and developmental disabilities. The FAS phenotype is characterized by a combination of facial dysmorphic features, growth retardation, and central nervous system (CNS) abnormalities’. Consequently, young people born with FAS struggle to cope with academic subjects at school and often fall behind and leave school at the

earliest opportunity. According to Leggett (2004a), '(i)ndividuals with foetal alcohol syndrome may become involved in crime as victims or perpetrators due to poor judgement and a low frustration threshold'.

In a fact sheet on the use of alcohol in South Africa, the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Group of the Medical Research Council (2008) documents that the prevalence of FAS among Grade 1 learners in Wellington was '46 per 1000 in 1997 and 75 per 1000 in 1999'. Alcohol abuse by poor and 'coloured' pregnant mothers therefore has a direct bearing on what is educationally and emotionally possible for the children born from pregnancies in mothers who are drinking heavily.

### ***2.2.2.3 Drug abuse***

Referring to the 2000 Medical Research Council/Institute for Security Studies (MRC/ISS) arrestee drug monitoring study, Ted Leggett (2004a:s.p) states that 'Cape Town was found to have the highest share of arrestees testing positive for any drug (56%), surpassing Gauteng and Durban. The study also showed six times the level of Mandrax usage in Cape Town as Gauteng'. Mandrax has been one of the primary commodities traded by gang members since the mid-1980s, and its disinhibitive effects may be associated with violence. In addition, drug markets have increased the stakes in gang conflict, providing another impetus for turf wars (Leggett 2004b:24). Since 2000, Tik (the Afrikaans slang word for methamphetamine hydrochloride) has overtaken Mandrax as the drug of choice on the Cape Flats, including Scottsville.

According to the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Unit of the Medical Research Council (Plüddemann, Myers & Parry 2007:1), methamphetamine is a powerfully addictive stimulant that affects many areas of the central nervous system. It is a white, odourless, bitter-tasting crystalline powder that 'is typically smoked by placing the powder/crystal in a light bulb, from which the metal threading has been removed. A lighter is used to heat the bulb and the fumes are smoked' (Plüddemann et al 2007:1). The drug can be made from relatively inexpensive over-the-counter ingredients and can be purchased at a relatively low cost (about R15 to R30 per 'straw'), which makes it the drug of choice for young people. Another danger lies in the fact that Tik is highly addictive. Pauw (s.a.:s.p.) quotes the Cape Town Drug Counselling Centre as warning that 'over six months of use, 94 percent of those who smoke meth, become addicted'.

According to the research findings of the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Unit (Plüddemann et al 2007), the average age of patients who reported methamphetamine as their primary substance of abuse in the second half of 2006 was 22 years and 72% of the patients were male. Most of the patients (90%) were 'coloured'. The *Cape Argus* cites the then Western Cape Premier Ebrahim Rasool (who is himself a 'coloured' person) as saying that 'Tik is a coloured problem' (Oliver 2007:s.p.), when he spoke at the launch of the province's new anti-Tik campaign, 'Tik Off – There is Hope'.

Furthermore, the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Unit reports that 72% of persons under the age of 20 years coming to treatment for substance abuse problems in Cape Town in 2006 reported Tik as a primary or secondary drug of choice (Plüddemann et al 2007:3). The *Mail and Guardian Online* (Le Roux, 2007:s.p.) quotes Grant Jardine, director of the Cape Town Drug Counselling Centre, who commented that the rise of popularity of Tik has not only hit Cape Town harder than any other area of South Africa, but that the local problem has also outstripped all other global trends: 'Nowhere else in the world has there been such a massive increase in the use of a drug over such a short period of time.'

The Medical Research Council (MRC) runs a project called the South African Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (SACENDU) in six South African sites, including Cape Town. This research project has found that the demand for drug treatment for problems relating to Tik is substantially greater in the Cape than in other parts of the country. Of all the Cape Town patients treated in the second half of 2004 who had Tik as their primary substance of abuse, 60% were under the age of 20 years. Another massive shift is that 59% of addicts under the age of 20 years have Tik as a primary or secondary drug of choice. The bulk of teenage users are male and 'coloured' (91%), with the average age of teenage users at 16.6 years. Andreas Plüddemann (2007:s.p.), of the MRC's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Group comments: 'We need to include substance abuse into our education. The life skills programmes are not hitting the mark. Educators must work with the kids, their teachers, principals, governing bodies, parents and the wider communities.'

The drug culture on the Cape Flats also feeds property crime (theft and burglary), as addicts may steal to pay for their habits. The drug trade operates through Cape Town's many gangs. According to the then Western Cape Minister for Community Safety,

Leonard Ramatlakane (2007:s.p.), drug-related crimes in the province increased by 17.8% in 2007. In the suburb of Kraaifontein, of which Scottsville is a part, the number of reported 'drug-related crimes' increased by 321% between 2001/2 and 2006/7. Not surprisingly, the Western Cape has 'the highest rate of recorded drug crimes' (Leggett 2004a) in the country. According to the then mayor of Cape Town (Zille 2007:s.p.), there is a link between the rise in crime and Tik: 'Drug related crime skyrocketed from 7000 incidents in 2003 to 25 000 incidents this year, largely as a result of the introduction of methamphetamine into our communities.' Tik has therefore become an important factor that shapes the context of 'coloured' poverty in the Western Cape.

#### ***2.2.2.4 Housing and gangs***

According to Leggett (2004b:23), the average size of 'coloured' households is 4.3 members, which is the largest household size of any population group in the country. In practical terms, this means that the houses, flats and dormitories to which communities were removed under apartheid rule are seriously overcrowded. Leggett (2004b:23) notes that '(p)opulation density has been correlated with juvenile delinquency in at least 12 academic studies'. The reason for this lies in the fact that, because of overcrowding and a lack of recreational opportunities, young people spend a lot of their time on the streets. Burton (2008:65) therefore warns that 'the larger the household, the greater the risk of a young person engaging in violent behaviour'.

The streets in 'coloured' townships are often 'ruled' by gangs who wield territorial and often violent power over community members. Ironically, a more just political system has created increased opportunities for criminal activities, because the police service has undergone a process of restructuring at the same time that border controls were relaxed. This caused a flood of new drugs and the influx of new and violent foreign crime syndicates (Standing 2005:1), who gained access to 'coloured' communities, like other communities. According to André Standing (2005:2), it was estimated that by the late 1990s, around 130 gangs operated in the Western Cape. [Standing](#) (2005:2) explains that the recruitment into gangs 'involves a cynical targeting of youth and typically, the most vulnerable are singled out, including those whose family situation is unstable'. Therefore, '(p)articipation in gang activity is still substantially driven by such elements as group identity, self-protection, pride, boredom and turf' (Standing 2005:9).

Young people who are recruited operate as young criminals for whom committing various crimes has become part of a culture. The gang culture is described by Standing (2005:12) as a hedonistic, consumerist culture that lures poor youngsters by way of designer clothes and drugs. It is also a culture of extreme selfishness and self-gratification, in which taking from others is the norm. Not surprisingly, 'it is a culture of extreme masculinity and gross disregard for women, which is expressed through the celebration of rape and exploitation of women for the sex industry' (Standing 2005:12). It is a violent culture that also reveres the use of firearms. Standing (2005:12) also links the prevalence of gangsterism in poor 'coloured' communities with the incidence of school drop-out: 'The coloured gang culture of the Western Cape...is primarily a culture of the uneducated and unsophisticated' (see Section 2.2.2.7 for a discussion of the problems in 'coloured' education, especially regarding the recent increase in drop-out rates).

#### ***2.2.2.5 Guns and violence***

The experience of poverty in the Western Cape as a social reality is also an experience of the presence of violence and crime. I briefly discuss the main factors that contribute to the culture of violence and crime in order to make visible the extent of the challenges and problems that young people in poor communities are facing, and that those who want to support these young people need to address.

Leggett (2004a) claims that 'the Western Cape has by far the worst overall crime problem in the country and in many crime categories, the fastest growing crime problem'. This is not surprising if the increase in the drug trade in the Western Cape over the past decade is also taken into account. Thomson (2004) explains that an 'historical analysis reveals that the coloured population has, as long as accurate records are available, had the highest murder rate of all race groups in the country. The coloured male homicide rate peaked in 1982 at over 160 per 100,000, and has remained over 80 per 100,000 since 1980', compared to the national average which lies at around 48 per 100 000. According to Leggett (2004b:22), 'coloured' people represent only 9% of the national population, but they make up 18% of the national prison population. 'Coloured' people are also nearly twice as likely to be imprisoned than African black people.

In the municipal area of Kraaifontein, of which Scottsville is a part, the categories of crime recorded by the police (SAPS 2007) that have shown a marked increase in numbers since 2001 are drug-related crimes, indecent assault, public violence and the neglect and ill-treatment of children. However, it 'is less commonly known that South Africa's youth, that is, young people aged 12-22, are generally victimised at twice the adult rate, and at rates even higher for violent crimes... assault at roughly 8 times the adult rate; theft at five times and robbery at four times the adult rate' (Pelser 2008:2).

Another disturbing statistic is the rise in gun-related violence in the 'coloured' community: 'For more than two decades, knives or other stabbing weapons were used in the vast majority of murders of coloured people. Firearms were used in less than 5% of murders before 1990, but this has since risen to 41% in the latest mortuary reports, with guns now as likely to be used as knives' (Thomson 2004). According to Leggett (2004a:s.p.), the Western Cape also has 'the highest rate of recorded cases of illegal possession of a firearm or ammunition' in the country.

Patrick Burton (2008:xi), in his comprehensive study of violence in schools, based on the findings of the National Schools Violence Study (NSVS) undertaken by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP), concludes that there is widespread violence in South African schools (Burton 2008:75). He points out that 'victimisation data within the school puts rates of violence in South African primary schools at 75 learners per 1,000, and at secondary schools at 43 learners per 1,000. In the US, for example, the rate is five learners per 1,000' (Burton 2008:76). The growing level of violence that is referred to includes both learner-on-learner violence and learner-on-educator violence (Burton 2008:25) and educator-on-learner violence.

#### ***2.2.2.6 Reporting of violence and crime***

It must be borne in mind in analysing official statistics that, in a poor community, reporting drug-related violence and acts of intimate violence and crime is not a neutral affair (Dawes et al 2006:15). The reporting of such crimes is affected by the discourses of control through intimidation by gangs or individuals who wield power over others in families or schools. The discourse of intimidation controls its victims by fostering fear of reprisals or retaliations. In turn, the discourse is informed by the physical reality of the relationship between victims and perpetrators; namely, that victims continue to live

in the same neighbourhoods as the perpetrators of violence and abuse. Then there is the issue of family loyalties. Kinnis (1996:18) states that ‘...traditionalists fail to understand the deep-rooted nature of the problem. The people we call gangsters are our brothers, fathers, cousins, uncles and aunts. Hence, support for gang members is very strong in some communities’. For many young people from these families, a culture of drugs, violence and coercion is not only normalised and legitimised, but often revered (see Sections 2.3.3.2, under the subheading ‘The normalising of violence through the discourses of ‘discipline’, and 2.3.4). Others find themselves torn between experiences of loyalty to their family and horror at the violence that is part of the gangster culture.

The continued and complex power relations of intimacy, loyalty and intimidation between perpetrators and victims therefore constitute invisible ‘sets of conditions’ that influence the reporting of especially drug-related crimes, domestic violence and sexual violence in ‘coloured’ communities in the Western Cape. In its 2007 World report, Human Rights Watch (2007) comments on how the reporting of rape in South Africa affects the perception of the problem’s seriousness and the conviction rates of perpetrators by stating that the

...SAPS itself has observed that sexual violence is largely underreported throughout South Africa, suggesting that the numbers of reported rapes in the last year underestimates the extent of the problem. Of those cases that are reported, the South Africa Law Commission found that only five percent of adult rape cases and nine percent of cases involving children end in conviction.

Therefore an archaeological analysis reveals that police statistics, which are supposed to give a ‘true’ reflection of social realities, are shaped by social sets of conditions and rules such as fear of reprisals, relationships of intimidation or adherence to political agendas. In a context of poverty, young people and women who depend for their survival on the perpetrator often accept abuse as part of the package of familial relationships. Keeping in mind these ‘sets of conditions’ that influence the reporting of crimes alters the perception that police statistics are a true reflection of the extent to which crime is affecting poor communities. Recently some newspapers have commented on another factor, a political ‘set of conditions’ that influenced police crime statistics. It has been claimed (Amnesty International South Africa 2007; Carter 2007) that, in order to give a favourable image of the police and government’s crime prevention strategies, some crimes, when they were reported at police stations, were not

documented and therefore did not 'count' and that police corruption played a role in the violence against women and young people that was reported.

The event of reporting and documenting, according to Foucault, is thereby influenced by other agendas, rules and sets of conditions, that bear direct influence on the event but is often not visible. In order to understand social reality, these political factors shape the way even the 'truth' of statistics are influenced and constructed.

### ***2.2.2.7 Problems in education***

The 2007 matriculation results of 'coloured' students in the Western Cape paint a disturbing picture about the state of education in poor 'coloured' communities:

The statistics for the 34,741 Coloured pupils who wrote the government matric suggest that something catastrophic has happened to education in the Coloured community since the ANC came to power. The pass rate for these pupils has dropped from 82.8% in 1991 to 78% last year. More worryingly, only 15.4% (5367) of these pupils passed with exemption. This represents a decline of almost a third in the exemption rate from 1991 when it stood at 21.9%. ...These statistics suggest that, outside of Model C and independent schools, black and Coloured pupils are being deprived of quality education; without which they cannot progress into the professions or compete with the children of the middle classes.

(Myburgh 2008:s.p.)

Principals of 'coloured' secondary schools in the Western Cape (Educationweb 2008) also recently expressed their concern at the increase in the drop-out rate in Grades 10 to 12. The restructuring after 1994 towards an outcomes-based education curriculum has weakened the system of education (Ramphela 2008:179) and the quality of education, 'and may in fact have exacerbated inequalities, because teachers in schools in poor neighbourhoods often lack the skills or motivation to apply the new curriculum' (Seekings 2007:19).

What compounds the problem is the absence of a culture of learning in the adult community. Mr Foster told me, as I recorded in my research journal on 10 May 2005, that adult literacy classes that he offered in the community were poorly attended because, according to him, '*n leerkultuur het nog nie posgevat nie*' ('a culture of learning had not yet taken root').

### *2.2.2.8 Summary*

These historical, physical and societal factors provide some of the archaeological conditions against which the official statistics should be read, namely that the Western Cape not only has by far the worst overall crime problem in the country, but also the fastest growing violent crime problem (Leggett 2004a:s.p.). Coupled with an increase in crime, the problems experienced in education in 'coloured' schools means that the 'challenges of poverty' point in different social directions. When one bears in mind that the gang culture is a culture of the 'uneducated' (Standing 2005:12), it soon becomes clear that a decline in the pass rate and an increase in the drop-out rate from school feeds into a gang culture which, in turn, feeds a cycle of criminality. Crime therefore becomes part of a complex set of power relations whose existence is linked to various historical, economic, educational and physical factors. These factors create conditions in which the discourses of violence and crime become possible, accepted and even revered.

This archaeological analysis is especially relevant for this research, because it provides a picture of the vastness and the complexities of the conditions that support and normalise the discourses of violence and abuse in Scottsville.

In the next section, I outline how some of these discourses operate by showing the links between the social conditions, the operation of discourses and their impact on the bodies of young people in the community.

Dreyfus and Rabinow (1982:117) draw attention to the distinction Foucault makes between the function of archaeology and genealogy: 'It is necessary, Foucault seems to be arguing, to look at the specific discursive formation, its history, and its place in the larger context of power in order to be able to evaluate its claim to describe reality...This is the task of archaeology...When we add genealogy, however...the genealogist can ask about the historical and political roles that these sciences play'. Genealogy therefore deals with the effect the practices and discourses have in real terms, in this case, in the lives of poor 'coloured' young people in the Western Cape.

## 2.3 GENEALOGY

Together with archaeology, Foucault uses ‘genealogy as a method for diagnosing and grasping the significance of social practices from within them’ (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982:103). Foucault (1968: 402-403) was particularly interested in ‘the action of values or consecration by which they are affected, the way they are invested in practices or attitudes, the principles according to which they come into circulation’.

Dreyfus and Rabinow (1982:185) contend that to ‘understand power in its materiality, its day to day operation, we must go to the level of the micropractices, the political technologies in which our practices are formed’. These technologies, as Foucault (1988:16-49) refers to them, relate to various kinds of interrelated practices that include technologies of production and technologies of sign systems. The microrelations of power (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982:251) therefore became the focus of my research.

Following Foucault (1976a), the methodological course I took in the research regarding the operation of discourses (for example, the discourse of ‘discipline’) was not conducted in terms of the strategies of those who dominate, but dealt with the tactics and procedures of power, of domination at the lowest level: ‘...how things work at the level of on-going subjugation, at the level of those continuous and uninterrupted processes which subject our bodies, govern our gestures, dictate our behaviours’ (Foucault 1976a:97). I focused on the experience of ‘discipline’ described from the perspective of the young people.

For this kind of analysis, Foucault introduces genealogy ‘as a method for diagnosing and grasping the significance of social practices from within them’ (Foucault 1976a:103). Thus a new description of history emerges: ‘...the Foucault-style genealogy-history thus completely fulfills the project of traditional history; it does not ignore society, the economy, and so on, but it structures this material differently – not by centuries, peoples or civilizations, but by practices’ (Veyne 1971:181).

Another significant contribution that Foucault’s methodologies have made to this study is that the focus of genealogy is the body. The actions and practices I wish to analyse become visible through what Foucault terms ‘bio-power’, the location of the experience of power in the bodies of people. In this study, I refer to Foucault’s analyses regarding

young people's bodies and the ways in which 'the body is invested with relations of power and domination' (Foucault 1995:25-26).

Foucault's perspectives became more to this research than theory – they became the crux of how I developed various methodologies. By identifying and understanding how bio-power operates on the bodies of poor young people, I could, for instance, start developing practices that resisted the old patterns of powerlessness. If the body was the object of subjection, then my methodologies would have to focus on young people's bodies as the locus of resistance. These methodologies then in themselves questioned the rules that 'subject our bodies, govern our gestures, dictate our behaviours' (Foucault 1976a:97) and helped to create opportunities for young people to search for, experiment with, create and use new ways of expressing themselves (see Sections 6.3, 6.5 and 6.8.1).

It is precisely Foucault's preoccupation with the details of practices of, amongst others, madness, the prison system and sexuality that gives his work such a strong political and ethical character. In this research, Foucauldian analysis therefore provided an epistemology which I could use to describe the complexities and challenges of coming face to face with discourses, as they are embodied in practices (Foucault 1981:161) that affect young people's lives. Hence I could begin to gain a very real understanding, instead of the 'nuanced understanding' (Mason 2004:57-58) of what is meant by the discursive and practical 'challenges of poverty'.

The way in which 'micropractices' are documented in society is often not through academic works, but through newspaper reports and the internet. Therefore, in this section, I refer to such sources for relevant reports as legitimate sources of meaning for this research and reflect on the realities of 'bio-power'.

### **2.3.1 'Bio-power': A poststructuralist analysis of the body as the object and location of power**

In his first lecture at the Collège de France in 1978, Foucault (2007:1) described bio-power as 'the set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of the human species became the object of a political strategy, of a general strategy of power'. He argued that an analysis of these mechanisms of power 'involves investigating where

and how, between whom, between what points, according to what processes, and with what effects, power is applied' (Foucault 2007:2).

Dreyfus and Rabinow (1982:112) suggest that one of 'Foucault's major achievements has been his ability to isolate and conceptualize the way in which the body has become an essential component for the operation of power relations in modern society'. According to Foucault (1980, 1995), the body as the object and the target of power and practices of discipline of the body emerged in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries as 'meticulous, often minute techniques' (Foucault 1995:139) of power applied to the human body with the purpose of producing 'subjected and practised bodies, "docile" bodies' (Foucault 1995:138). Foucault (1976b:142-143) traces the development of bio-power to the rise of capitalism: 'Power would no longer be dealing simply with legal subjects ...but with living beings, and the mastery it would be able to exercise over them would have to be applied at the level of life itself; it was the taking charge of life, more than the threat of death, that gave power its access even to the body.'

### **2.3.2 A genealogy of the violence on and violations of young people's bodies in the Western Cape**

The *World report on Violence and Health* (Krug et al 2002:5) defines violence as 'the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation'.

The exercise of violent physical power over young people's bodies in the Western Cape takes shape in a multitude of technologies which I uncover using Foucault's genealogy, a methodology of centralising the experience and the mechanisms of power in their specificity (Foucault 1981, 1988:161). Because of Foucault's insistence on working with specificity, I refer to several newspaper reports that describe the specifics of violence and violations of young people's bodies and of the technologies through which this is done.

### **2.3.3 Technologies of power**

In this section, I deal with various forms of bio-power, the technologies and discourses through which it is obtained.

### ***2.3.3.1 The power of drugs and alcohol over the bodies of the young***

Various biological and psychological technologies of power operate on the bodies of young people who use Tik and other drugs. It directly and specifically becomes a dangerous form of bio-power. The lure of Tik becomes clearer if its effects and the context in which it is used are taken into account: ‘Methamphetamine triggers release of epinephrine, norepinephrine and dopamine in the sympathetic nervous system. Common effects of intoxication are euphoria, increased energy and self-confidence, insomnia, restlessness, irritability, heightened sense of sexuality’ (Plüddemann et al 2007). A drug that instantly gives self-confidence in a context in which young people’s confidence is often undermined (see Section 2.3.3.2, under the subheading ‘Shaming’), that brings euphoria in the midst of deprivation and poverty, is especially dangerous because of the deceitfulness of its power. Whilst it alters the brain to experience euphoria in the short term, its long-term effects are devastating: ‘...severe weight loss/anorexia, severe dermatological problems, higher risk of seizures and uncontrollable rage/violent behaviour. Chronic mental health effects include confusion, impaired concentration and memory, hallucinations, insomnia, depressive reactions, psychotic reactions, paranoid reactions, and panic disorders’ (Plüddemann et al 2007:1). Ted Leggett, senior researcher at the Institute for Security Studies, points out that crystal meth is becoming the drug of choice amongst gang members to induce violent behaviour: ‘Methamphetamine is seen as an ideal tonic to prepare gunmen for a hit, removing inhibitions, sharpening senses and fuelling aggression’ (Leggett, cited by Pauw, s.a.).

In the Western Cape, this increasingly means that rage and violence are induced through the use of this relatively affordable drug. In a poststructuralist genealogical analysis of power relations, one therefore has to recognise the effect that drugs such as Tik have on the lives of poor ‘coloured’ young people and on their relationship with violence.

Because of its short-term effect on the libido, Tik is also particularly dangerous in that its use increases sexual risk behaviour, which leads to greater risk of HIV infection. A link between the use of Tik and the increase of rape in the Northern Suburbs of Cape Town between 2004 and 2006 has also been claimed (Buffel 2007). The easy accessibility of drugs is another major problem in ‘coloured’ communities. According to Burton (2008:46), “‘Merchants’”, as they are known, sit outside school gates or in close proximity, hawking drugs to learners during school hours and after school. The

frequency with which this was reported, and witnessed... suggests that it is an institutionalised issue, with young people identified by dealers as easy prey and as a reliable source of income’.

A study on the effects of acute alcohol intoxication in South Africa by the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Group of the Medical Research Council (Plüddemann et al 2007) reports that a significant association was found amongst Grade 8 and 11 learners in Cape Town between the use of alcohol and the number of days absent from school and repeating a grade: ‘For example, the odds of repeating a grade at school was found to be 60% higher for learners who consumed alcohol.’

The power of both drugs and alcohol are forms of bio-power that subject the bodies of ‘coloured’ young people who are also poor. By altering their bodies and inhibiting possibilities for caring relationships and education, and by promoting crime and violence, these forms of bio-power demonstrate clearly ‘how relations of subjection can manufacture subjects’ (Foucault, quoted by Veyne 1971:177). In Chapter 6, I document how this research invented strategies of resistance as a response to the challenge of the subjection of young bodies by the discourse of drug use.

### ***2.3.3.2 Interpersonal violence***

In a 2004 document, the World Health Organization (WHO 2004:6-7) identified ‘interpersonal violence’ as one of three forms of violence. The WHO also distinguishes between two categories of interpersonal violence, namely ‘family violence’ and ‘community violence’:

Family and intimate partner violence is that occurring between family members and intimate partners, usually, though not always, taking place inside the home. This category includes child abuse and neglect, intimate partner violence and elder abuse. Community violence includes violence between unrelated individuals, who may or may not know each other, and generally, although not exclusively, occurs outside the home. This includes youth violence, random acts of violence, rape or sexual assault by strangers, and violence in institutional settings such as schools, workplaces, prisons and nursing homes.

Both these categories of interpersonal violence are dealt with in discussing what it means to be a poor ‘coloured’ child living in the Western Cape. I do not make specific distinctions between ‘family and intimate partner violence’ and ‘community violence’

in discussing the different forms that violence take. However, I do note how the increase in family and intimate partner violence in the community has created new discourses of family and of normality.

In the sections below, I discuss various forms of interpersonal violence found in Scottsville and the surrounding areas. Because of the complexity of the issues and the complicated interrelationships between them, a system of bullets and sub-bullets (with deeper indentation) is used to suggest the links.

- ***Murder and sexual assault***

The rape and murder of young people have been regular occurrences in the Western Cape since the 1990s. Police statistics do not distinguish between adults and young people as victims of violent crime. In the SAPS's crime statistics summary for each police station in the Western Cape (SAPS 2008), the only category in which the word 'children' features is the category 'Neglect and ill-treatment of children'. However, young people are especially vulnerable to victimisation because of the vast power differential between children, adult perpetrators and the community of which they are a part. Young people's lack of physical power contributes to their vulnerability and their lack of social power.

The National Youth Victimization study (Leoschut & Burton 2006) found that young people are disproportionately at risk of falling victim to crime in South Africa. If one bears in mind that in terms of overall violent crime statistics in the country, the Western Cape tops the list, this also means that this province's young people are by far the most seriously affected by crime in the country. The study (Leoschut & Burton 2006:45) found that 41.4% of young people in South Africa were victims of crime in the year preceding the study, a rate that is almost double that of adults.

These figures are borne out by Western Cape statistics. The then Premier of the Western Cape, Ebrahim Rasool, reported that between March 2006 and March 2007, 105 children were murdered in the Western Cape (Dentlinger 2007). Of these 105 children, 'only 12 were killed by strangers; the rest by somebody known to the family' (Dentlinger 2007:1). Between March 2007 and March 2008, the figures increased to a total of 128 children or young teenagers who were killed in the Western Cape (Jooste 2008:5). Thomson (2004) comments as follows: '...victim

survey data, as well as docket research on murder by the SAPS' Crime Information Analysis Centre, suggest that the vast majority of murder victims are killed by people they know, including intimate partners and family members.'

In terms of Foucault's genealogy, the technologies of control by which these intimate acts of violence are perpetrated are the trust that young people have towards adults in the community. The violent death in the Cape of 93 young people at the hands of people known to them therefore displays how perpetrators use trust in personal relationships to gain access to young people. The horror that becomes visible through Foucault's genealogy is that the child's experience is one of multiple violence: of the body and of trust in the particular adult. The intimate nature of these murders also has implications for young people's experience of intimate relationships. According to the then premier of the province, Ebrahim Rasool (Dentlinger 2007), parents have to "accelerate" their children's maturity by teaching them to be less trusting of people, even those close to them'. In the quote it is significant that the normalising comparison is one between 'not trusting' and 'maturity'. Foucault (1980:93) therefore argues: 'We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth.' Thus the 'truth' of distrust becomes normalised in relations between adults and young people in the 'coloured' community.

In respect of the northern suburbs of Cape Town, of which Kraaifontein and more specifically Scottsville is a part, community activist Irvin Kinnis (2007:s.p.), in the *Cape Argus* of 16 May, comments as follows: 'Historically, Cape Town has had different crime patterns for different parts of the city. ...we find that crimes against women and children in particular have been particularly acute in the northern suburbs and Mitchell's Plain, where particularly brutal attacks have occurred against children in the last two years.' According to SAPS data (Unit for Religion and Development Research & Transformation Africa 2005:33-34), Kraaifontein has a relatively high incidence of violent crime/assault and sexual crime/rape compared to the rest of the City of Cape Town (SAPS 2008).

The scope of violence against young people in the Western Cape also includes those acts where young people become the targets of adults' frustrations, anger or vendettas between rival groups in the community. Young people also suffer violence

not because the violence is directed at them, but simply because they live and play in violent streets. In March 2003, for instance, no fewer than five young people, four of whom died, were hit by bullets from crossfire between rival gangs on the Cape Flats (Kemp, 2003). By providing a genealogical method, Foucault makes visible the relationship between thought and practices. When a gang member sings the praises of Tik by saying that it ‘makes you aggressive and fearless’ (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs 2007), the specifics of this statement speak of the norm of violence that governs the lives of gangsters and how it fosters a culture in which violence is admired as a sign of strength.

The murder of young people by other young people has increased dramatically in poor communities in the Western Cape since 2007. Between May 2007 and June 2008, at least seven murders of children by youths (none older than 16 years) or children have been reported (Engelbrecht & Steinmetz 2008:7).

- ***Physical abuse***

The *Cape Argus* (Kemp 2003) quotes the booklet *Criminal Economy, Gangs & Child Abuse* released by the Western Cape’s Community Safety Department, on the fact that ‘the Western Cape had the highest rate of physical abuse in South Africa, with children in 20% of all households in the province still getting smacked and beaten. This takes the form of assault with an intention to inflict grievous bodily harm and common assault. It also includes poisoning and the battering of children resulting in the “battered child syndrome”’.

Foucault insists that genealogy directs us to view specific acts such as school disciplinary structures in ‘their own specificity’ (Scheurich & McKenzie 2005:855). In this chapter, I therefore focus on the specificity of actions that control and violate the body and why this prompted me as a researcher to work towards directing productive power at these particular areas.

- *Physical abuse in Scottsville*

In the following excerpt from my research journal (26 April 2005), I describe how I heard first-hand accounts of the use of violence in the school and my therapeutic and pastoral responses to the challenge these stories posed in terms

of my relationships with teachers. Because of the ways in which these conversations informed my understanding of the operation of discourses, in this section, I include an account of my research methodologies as these became connected to the accounts of abuse, and to the knowledge I gained through the research itself. This section therefore contains the accounts of abuse, the discourses that support it and our collective response to the challenge it posed.

- *The boys take me into their confidence*

*The trio of boys have taken me into their confidence during our regular weekly conversation at the school. They told me of the abusive practices of two male teachers that they have either been subjected to or have witnessed. The abusive behaviour includes several incidents of verbal abuse, as well as several incidents of physical abuse...*

*I explored with these boys the possibilities open to us in doing something about the information they had just shared. I proposed that I tell the principal what they had told me, but on condition that their names and the names of the teachers would not be divulged, at this stage.*

(Excerpt from the research journal, 26 April 2005)

What the boys shared with me left me with a dilemma: how could I work for change without compromising their trust? How could I participate with teachers, knowing about the abusive practices but not being allowed to speak of them openly? The following section describes the different ways in which I chose to work with this dilemma and with my power as a researcher.

- *Research methodologies that developed in relation to accounts of physical abuse*

In deciding on which methodologies to use, I allowed myself be led by the context itself. Initially, my conversation with the boys led to conversations with the principal. In May 2005, I presented a workshop with teachers about narrative therapy and the respectful stance it invites from adults. In these sessions, I introduced the idea of discourses of control and domination and how they support abusive practices. However, after this session with staff and the lack of

energy I experienced in the room, I decided instead to offer individual sessions to teachers who wanted to talk with me about their struggles in teaching. Subsequently, four male teachers had therapeutic conversations with me.

Below, I describe how, instead of formal therapeutic conversations in my room, I had other more informal dialogues with Mr R and Mr Noach. In August 2005, Mr Noach, the deputy principal at Petunia, invited me to present a talk on 'discipline' to staff. I agreed, but during the lead-up to the talk I decided to interview Mr Noach because of his knowledges on the subject of relating in caring ways to young people. I also had regular conversations with Mr Foster, the principal of Petunia Primary.

- Conversations with Mr Foster

*Later the same day I went to see Mr Foster in his office. He discussed with me various incidents in which young people were involved. Towards the end of our conversation, I shared the young people's stories with him and the conditions of confidentiality. He said that this has not been brought to his attention before. I told him that I was not surprised, seeing that these young people will anticipate and fear violent acts of retaliation from these teachers.... Mr Foster then spoke of his shock and condemned the actions.*

*I told him that my acute awareness of the context of poverty and neglect through my interactions with young people had saddened me and left me wondering the week before: What do I, a privileged white woman, know about poverty? Can I even listen with the kind of understanding that will make a difference? Is the gap between us not too big? Then Mr Foster said that most teachers at the school come from middle class families and that they sometimes also experienced the gap between their experiences and that of the young people. I asked Mr Foster: 'Do you mean we are working with the gaps?' He replied laughingly: 'Yes, if we have to wait for the gaps to be filled, nothing will get done.'*

*He told me that he would support me in whatever course I chose to take in our group sessions in dealing with the theme of abusive practices. I asked*

*for time to reflect on how to go about it. He told me that in dealing with the theme of abusive practices, we may not be moving at the pace of 'step by step' but rather something much smaller, like 'movement by movement'.*

(Excerpt from the research journal, 26 April 2005)

The following week, an incident at the school opened up the topic of physical abuse. The following excerpt from my research journal documents the course of events:

*A memorable day, May 10<sup>th</sup> 2005*

*Mr M had been charged with assault after hitting a boy with a belt. The parents of this boy had issued Mr M with a warning after a previous incident in which he had hit their son. Now they acted on that warning, even though Mr M apologised a second time.*

*Mr Foster and I talked about disciplining practices. He said that Petunia's young people often do not experience conversation at home as a way of disciplining. At their homes, they are often spoken to in a crude way ('kras wyse') and are often sworn at. Then Mr Foster told me of an incident at the school the previous week during which one boy set another boy's hair alight. He spoke about the 'tragedy of the situation': young people who do not want to be part of the classroom and who disrupt classes and teachers who, on the other hand, have a strong drive 'to deliver' academically and their powerlessness in the face of disinterest.*

*He then told me that the stories of the incidents I shared with him in our last conversation had moved him deeply. He was concerned that young people would experience that those types of incidents are not followed up, and that, as young people, they are 'ignored'. Then he spoke of his aim for the school: to build a 'culture of care' in which young people can be 'empowered' through teachers' living respect and other values. He told me of another male teacher speaking of his practice of hitting children with a belt in his class. Then Mr Foster told me that he told the teacher:*

*'This has to stop!' ('Dit moet einde kry!'). I picked up a shift since our last conversation. We were talking about what can be changed.*

(Excerpt from the research journal, 17 May 2005)

- Group session with teachers May 2005

*Mindful of my conversations with the boys and Mr Foster, I consulted with Elize Morkel, a clinical psychologist, in choosing an angle to approach this talk. Many teachers are busy with sports coaching and were unable to attend our session. But the two teachers who were identified by the young people were present. I picked up on Mr Foster's comment during our last session about the carrying of 'baggage'. Most of the teachers were by now aware of Mr M's position regarding the assault charge. It gave me the freedom to introduce the issue of abuse without having to compromise the safety of the boys who shared their stories with me. I therefore spoke about my sense that participation in the research also involved reflecting on our own 'baggage' and its influence on our practices, which includes abusive practices. I made visible how the historical discourses of control in this country led to the sanctioning of abusive practices during apartheid. I told staff that whilst they are concerned about young people bullying others, I have heard about the abusive practices of teachers that often get legitimised through the discourse of 'discipline'. What are the practices we want to eradicate and which ones do we want to foster? How does/could self-care make a difference to developing nurturing practices? What were/are the experiences of oppression and humiliation that these teachers have been subjected to? How could these experiences inform their position on subjecting others to oppression and humiliation or in taking a stand against it?*

*I also told them about the times when the 'tyrant in me' is let loose. I then proposed that self-reflection could be done during individual sessions in which people may feel safer to speak of things personal. I proposed that we suspend our group sessions for the time being in favour of individual sessions. Everybody agreed.*

*Towards the end of our session, I heard Mr Foster use the word 'culture': we must build a 'different culture' at the school. He reminded us that our individual work can benefit the whole. When we take part in self-reflection the purpose also has to do with contributing towards the changing of a culture.* (Excerpt from the research journal, 10 May 2005)

- Individual therapeutic conversations

*I visited Mr M, who due to illness, was not present at our last group session. I spoke to him of my sadness at having heard what had happened. I told him that while I was sad for the child, I was also saddened when I thought of him – a teacher whose stories of care were often told by young people who visited me as clients. I also shared with him the themes that we discussed during our group session. I invited him to attend individual sessions with me as a way of putting his commitment 'never again' (said to me at the beginning of our conversation) into practice. Later that morning, Mr M delivered his weekly schedule to me in person – we set a time for the next week.*

(Excerpt from the research journal, 17 May 2005)

I approached the other two male teachers, Mr R and Mr V, identified by the young people. We set up consultation times for the following week. In our two therapeutic sessions, Mr M and I investigated the history of the discourse of control and its operation in his life.

- From therapeutic to pastoral relationship: a research journey with Mr R

One of the teachers who had been accused by the young people of abusive language was Mr R. He volunteered for therapeutic conversations with me. I chose not to refer to the abuse directly, as this would put the young people at risk. Mr R told me the story of powerlessness he experienced as a child, hiding from the violence of his father behind a sofa. One day he jokingly told me of a humiliating nickname he used for one of the young people, who is also the young client who told me about the abuse. I then challenged him

directly, by asking if the child also enjoys the use of this nickname. Was there a possibility that the child could experience it as humiliating? He responded by saying that he had not considered this before.

He also told me about his love for art and his dreams for doing art with young people. Over the next months our therapeutic conversations in the room *where I sat* became informal conversations *in his classroom* about the role of art in his life and his frustrations about the lack of resources at Petunia Primary, the large class sizes (around fifty young people in a class) and the diminished opportunities for him to live out his dream of teaching art. What the physical move from my room to his meant was that I physically joined him where he was.

In hindsight I realise that this step was not planned but became hugely significant to the research, in that it brought me new understandings about the complexity of the conditions of poverty and about how these conditions limit, inhibit and/or alter the ideas that teachers have about their relationships with young people. In my conversation (21 June 2005, see excerpt from research journal, below) with Mr R, I realised that people often lose sight of, or due to circumstances are forced to let go of, practices that bring creativity and energy (in the case of Mr R) to teaching. In such contexts, teachers such as Mr R might find themselves slipping into patterns of violent/abusive behaviour and that, in turn, may lead to immense shame. In a conversation with Elize Morkel (2005), we discussed how as a therapist/researcher I could support someone like Mr R. In order for me to support people in developing practices that fit their ideas (of respect/care and so on), Elize suggested the following questions for me to ponder: ‘What would be a first step towards creating respectful practices in class? If that was to happen what effect do you think that might have?’

However, what was different about how my conversation Mr R evolved was that it was no longer a therapeutic conversation in which I had professional boundaries that prevented me from participating in his life. Our relationship had now become a pastoral one in which I realised that talking was no longer enough. The physical conditions of teaching in a context of poverty that he

brought to my attention compelled me into doing pastoral praxis as a way of supporting him:

*I sat talking with Mr R in his class – Afrikaans and art are his subjects. He let off steam about the workload from the department and their expectations in terms of art teaching. These days the subject of art also includes drama, music and dance and the young people have to be assessed for their participation in each of these categories. He told me that he realises that many young people have never learnt to observe, to reflect and to use their imaginations. He told me that he sometimes asks the young people in his class to close their eyes and imagine being at the sea. He told me that many of them are unable to do it. There are fifty young people in his class. For him to attend to every young person is an impossible task. Had there been only fifteen learners, yes...*

*I asked Mr R how he would have liked things to be different...He told me that young people from a young age have to be exposed in schools to things like puppet theatre (even if these puppets are made out of painted socks pulled over the hands). It allows young people to use and develop imagination 'on their level'. Even if they don't have language, says Mr R, they can use their hands to express emotions and to imitate actions. Puppet theatre also brings home the idea that a story consists of a beginning, middle and an ending.*

*Mr R told me that professional people who are experts in the various art disciplines should be brought to schools to offer workshops to young people. He told me that in order to be able to teach to young people you have to have a 'feeling' for your subject matter. He describes to me some of the initiatives he took the previous year to encourage young people in his class 'to leave their shyness behind' and to participate in small plays.*

*I mentioned to Mr R that I hold a degree in drama. Is there a way in which I could support him in teaching the subject of drama? I also shared with Mr R the fact that my poems had recently been published as part of*

*an anthology of new Afrikaans poetry entitled Nuwe Stemme 3. I told him that I had attended a poetry workshop offered to the poets of Nuwe Stemme by Antjie Krog. Mr R seemed genuinely interested. Is poetry part of the curriculum? I asked him. Yes, but he had so far only analysed one poem with his Grade 7 classes. He was not completely sure how to approach the teaching of poetry. Would he consider having me come to his classes and share the knowledges and ideas I have about poetry (linking it with what I'd learnt from Antjie)? Mr R wanted to know how this would work in practice as he teaches two Grade 7 classes. I told him that in that case I would visit them twice. He laughed. I told him that for me poetry is all about music and rhythm. You experience it in your body, on your tongue sometimes even before the words are there... Why do certain poets use certain words? Can we (the young people and us) perhaps consider this question together in class? Antjie says 'a poem has to smell of your place' ...How does a poem smell? Mr R was now excited. He told me that if I talked to them (young people) about rhythm in class, he could give them a poetry assignment to write their own poems at home with rhythm in mind. Mr R promptly handed me a volume of Afrikaans poetry and told me to select any poem I wish for discussion with the young people.*

*Whilst driving home I thought of David Kramer and of including some of his songs in my presentation about rhythm...*

(Excerpt from the research journal, 21 June 2005)

In this conversation we started to establish other grounds for interaction with young people that fitted with Mr R's ideas: imagination, fun and creativity. I therefore proposed to Mr R that I offer pastoral support for him as a teacher. Our relationship moved from a therapeutic one to a pastoral one in which I offered to care for him by coming into his class and sharing my love of poetry with the young people. His enthusiasm for this proposal led to several workshops I presented with the Grade 7 Afrikaans classes at Petunia Primary (see Section 6.3.2.1). Mr R also joined the young writers' group on two occasions.

*'I could see how much he enjoyed it and he even took part in the creative writing himself!'* (Excerpt from the research journal, 18 October 2005).

He also started attending some of the rehearsals for the play. The young people told me that he would sometimes bring his guitar to the rehearsals that I could not attend, and that he would sing along with them.

The same boys who told me about the abuse in April told me at the end of 2005 that Mr R had stopped abusive actions altogether. They told me that they could see 'this man has changed'. I ask them if they wanted to speak of the changes they had witnessed in front of Mr R. They declined, but told me that they would do so in his class. I was reminded of Elize Morkel's (2005) sense that 'we are helping people to create a new platform for action in the world'. At the same time 'we are liberating people from a sense of failure' (Morkel 2005). In the last week of the 2005 academic year, I acknowledged in front of the principal what Mr R's pastoral participation had made possible in terms of my contact with young people that year and their creative writing. In front of Mr Foster, I presented Mr R with a copy of the volume of poetry which contained my own work. In it I wrote:

<p><i>Aan mnr. R</i>  <i>– met groot waardering vir jou oop hart vir die belangrikheid van die 'ander werklikheid' van die poësie. Jou oop hart het gemaak dat kinderharte kon begin oopgaan vir dié werklikheid en vir die taal waarmee digters dit beskryf. Dankie ook vir die hartlikheid waarmee jy my in jou klasse ingenooi het, en steeds doen. Dit is vir my 'n groot voorreg om saam met jou te kan deel in die ontwikkeling van Petunia se 'nuwe ore' en 'nuwe stemme'.</i></p>	<p>To Mr R          With great appreciation for your open heart for the significance of the 'other reality' of poetry. Your open heart made it possible for young people's hearts too to open to this reality and to the language with which poets describe it. I also want to thank you for the warm way in which you have invited me into your classes and still do. It is a great privilege to me to be working with you in developing Petunia's 'new ears' and 'new voices'.</p>
---	--

A joint belief in the power of creativity and imagination led to our pastoral participation, creating a platform for possibilities for Mr R, the Grade 7 classes and for me as a researcher. In working in a context of abuse, in which the abusers, such as Mr R, have been abused themselves, pastoral care means a deliberate quest for new ways of relating. The analogy in narrative therapy is the ‘problem story’ (often the ‘dominant story’) and the search for ‘unique outcomes’ in people’s lives. Michael White (2007:61) comments: ‘It is these unique outcomes or exceptions that provide a starting point for re-authoring conversations. They provide a point of entry to the alternative storylines of people’s lives that, at the outset of these conversations, are barely visible.’ Mr R’s passion for the arts and for the importance of teaching the arts to poor young people emerged as a unique outcome in our conversations. Our uncovering of these unique outcomes developed into several ‘alternative storylines’ in the research in which I participated with Mr R.

Although I lost regular contact with Mr R after the young people went to high school, I still invited him to attend our writers’ group, which he promised to do. When Breyten Breytenbach visited Stellenbosch in 2008, I invited Mr R and Mr M to attend his book-signing with me and the young people from the writers’ group. Both ended up helping with transport and attended the evening. From my relationship with Mr R I learnt that through our conversations, my support for and acknowledgement of him and the re-activation of the possibility of creative work in the school, an alternative story re-emerged in his life of how he chose to relate to young people in his care.

I am reminded of Peter McLaren’s (1995:280) remarks about the ethics of critical ethnography, which also apply to this pastoral participation between Mr R and myself: ‘[It] does not emerge transcendently in textual forms detached from perception, bodily experience, and the friction of social reality. It is an ethics that emerges concretely *from the body, is situated in the materiality and historicity of discourse, in the call of the flesh, in the folds of desire*. It is an imperative that presupposes an answer, in a response *from the other*’ (McLaren’s italics).

Mr R and I worked with the complexity of the friction of social reality: a lack of material resources, my relationship of trust with the abused young people, speaking about abusive practices whilst acknowledging how these have been created by certain historical conditions. But we also worked with our bodies (he invited me into his classes, I went to his classes with a drum beating out poetry, he came to the rehearsals, brought his guitar, helped with transporting young people on cultural outings), with the desire for meaning through art and music. It is an example of transformative pastoral praxis, crafted as a response *from the other*. In Sections 6.3 and 6.5, I discuss the ways in which the creative use of language and drama featured in the direction this research took and in how it shaped my pastoral praxis with the young people of Scottsville.

- Interviewing Mr Noach

Mr Noach, the deputy principal at Petunia Primary, invited me to address the teachers on the topic of discipline. Over the months since my first session with the teachers, Mr Noach would often chat with me informally, in the car park or in the photocopying room, or he would pop into my office to greet me. During these chats I became aware of his resistance to practices of subjugation in teaching and his real creativity in working out more caring, respectful relations with young people. What I heard in our casual conversations drew me to interview him about this subject before my talk. I therefore decided to use the opportunity to let him share his wisdom and stories about disciplining practices in front of the staff by way of an interview. His familiarity with the challenges of teaching in a context of poverty gave credibility and weight to the hope he held for the creation of possibilities. If he could do it, others could be inspired to start doing the same, I thought. I realised that Mr Noach was an ‘insider-expert’ on teaching and had achieved possibilities already, and therefore had more authority to speak on these topics than I, as an ‘outsider’, could.

On 18 August 2005, I interviewed Mr Noach. In this interview, Mr Noach illuminated another way of relating to young people that did not rely on the power of subjugation. Through the many examples Mr Noach gave of

how he practised what he preached, he became a pastoral participant in this research towards the creation of relationships of care (see Section 5.3.1.4, under the subheading ‘The move to openness: Mr Noach’s “enlarged thinking”’).

- I present a talk on ‘discipline’

When Mr Noach invited me to do a presentation to staff on the topic of ‘discipline’, he told me that he had given the staff a choice of topic: ‘human relationships’ or ‘discipline’? Discipline as a topic got the majority vote. I then jokingly asked Mr Noach: ‘Isn’t it the same thing?’

*Mr Noach grinned: ‘Yes, you are right!’ I then told him: ‘But Mr Noach, I learnt it from you!’ Mr Noach’s grin got wider. I suggested to him that we keep the word ‘discipline’, but that he and I would know we were actually talking about relationships. He quipped: ‘I agree! Is this what one calls “constructive subversion”?’*

(Excerpt from the research journal, 9 Sept 2005)

However, in talking openly about violence in schools in the ways that I did, I realised that I ran the risk of alienating some of the teachers. I realised that some teachers might consider my standing up for young people and challenging the *status quo* of abuse some kind of declaration against them. In modernist terms, this may be understood in the words of the saying ‘you are either for us or against us’. However, at the time, I had begun to realise the complexities of teachers’ lives and the challenges they faced (as illustrated by the relationship I built with Mr R). On the other hand, my obligation to my young clients meant that I could not keep silent.

The word ‘discipline’ often came up in conversations when I asked teachers what some of the most serious problems they encountered in their relations with young people were. A ‘lack of discipline’ implied that discipline had to be enforced on young people by adults in some way.

In 'coloured' education, therefore, 'bringing back discipline' has been proposed as a remedy to cure many of the problems between teachers and young people. Many teachers at Petunia Primary told me that they saw enforcing discipline as one of their main tasks as educators. In fact, 'disciplining' is often the dominant action that defines the teacher-child relationship. A relationship that is primarily defined by fixed positions, in which one enforces and the other is subjected, in which one is active and the other docile, in which one is in position of power, the other without political power, is an unequal relationship that is open to abuse. According to Foucault (1995:170), '(d)iscipline "makes" individuals; it is the specific technique of power that regards individuals both as objects and instruments of its exercise'.

What emerged for me as a researcher was that working to change the culture of control and challenging the discourse of discipline depended on conscientization: '...learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality' (Freire 1972:14). 'Discipline' therefore needed to be spoken of as bullying, and the discourses of humiliation made visible to be able to imagine different discourses in all of our relationships, also with young people. I presented the talk on 13 September 2005.

- ***'Discipline' and docile bodies***

Foucault (1995:138) argues that the 'mechanics of power' produce 'coercions that act upon the body, a calculated manipulation of its elements, its gestures, its behaviour. Thus discipline produces subjected and practiced bodies, "docile" bodies'. Hence the 'success of disciplinary power...derives from the use of simple instruments; hierarchical observation, normalising judgement and their combination in a procedure that is specific to it, the examination' (Freire 1995:170). What this means is that in order to achieve docility of the body, the body (in this case of a young person) has to be subjected to observation and judgement. Consequently, a culture in relation to young people has developed in which 'power had to be able to gain access to the bodies of individuals, their acts, their attitudes, their modes of everyday behaviour. Hence the significance

of methods like school discipline, which succeeded in making young people's bodies the object of "highly complex systems of manipulation and conditioning" (Foucault 1979a: 41).

Foucault (1995) refers to the fact that the desire for observation, in turn, creates an architecture that promotes the possibilities for observation. Petunia Primary, like most schools in the Western Cape, has been designed with this purpose in mind. There are open, slightly elevated walkways along the sides of huge open paved spaces and there are almost no trees or plants in the areas that are accessible to young people. The system of observation depends on a hierarchical system of watching the young people.

Observation and surveillance is a common and highly refined practice in most public schools in the Western Cape. Teachers watch over the young people as they line up to enter their classrooms. I have witnessed at Petunia Primary how a seven-year old child who stepped out of the straight line he was waiting in was treated as an object of discipline; he was slapped on the legs from behind by his teacher to (literally) 'bring him in line'.

The mechanism of surveillance does not depend on teachers only. In most schools in the Western Cape, 'model' students become monitors or prefects. These young people wield power over others in that, according to their discretion, they are encouraged to report offences to teachers and the principal, and admonish other young people for 'bad' behaviour. Even the system of 'class captain' has been created so that young people can be observed, and in doing so controlled, even when the teacher is not present. Hence a comprehensive system of punishment exists to react to any departure from 'the norm' (Foucault 1995:184). These departures are rated for their severity according to a points system. Since corporal punishment in South African schools has been outlawed (although it is still practised), these punishments often take the form of a variety of tasks, humiliations and deprivations. As a white South African I am saddened by this legacy of apartheid that perfected disciplines of control that kept whole population groups 'docile' and continues to do so.

If the object of discipline is a docile body, it simultaneously and importantly (for this research), also creates other invisible results: it restricts the body's capacity for action, for self-expression and for the use of imagination in the school context. Amongst staff, it fosters discourses about teaching that centralise actions of control as 'true'. Consequently, where discourses of control and discipline dominate, it becomes difficult for teachers to regard activities of non-control (such as singing, playing the guitar, art, dancing or creative writing) as essential or even as important. The consequences for young people, therefore, lie not only in the fact that they are being subjected and controlled, but in that, simultaneously, *other options for living become inaccessible* to both their teachers and to the young people themselves. Chapter 6 describes the ways in which this research turned creative writing and drama into possibility-generating activities that made other ways of living accessible in which imagination, risk-taking and social analysis are called for. In Section 6.8.3.1, I also describe how a culture of reading was reintroduced into the lives of Scottsville's young people, and how through their reading of books, new options for living became accessible to them.

One of the things from which docile bodies can be identified is apathy. If a person experiences his or her life and body as an object of constant control, the possibility of taking control of that life gradually diminishes. Many schools and churches offer some kind of behaviour modification programmes that control young people's behaviour through systems of threats, punishments and rewards (Rodríguez 2001:267). I have been exposed to the 'zero tolerance' attitude of the Christian principal of a high school in Kraaifontein, who rated young people according to their willingness to mindlessly submit to various forms of control – and worked out elaborate systems of punishment for non-compliance, which were termed 'offences'. According to Rodríguez (2001:68-69), the 'net effect of zero-tolerance policies is that more and more adults are being forced to remove themselves from any authentic relations with young people and adolescents.... "Professionalism" has come to mean "don't get involved," particularly in the emotional life of a child'. As a therapist I have witnessed young people suffer the effects of shame, guilt and worthlessness because of the presence of adults who subscribe to 'zero tolerance'.

Another serious consequence of a 'zero tolerance' stance is the disenfranchising of the skills, dreams and values of young people, and a purposeful blindness to what it is that they have to offer. Therefore when docility becomes both the intention and the norm in power relations that regulate the behaviour of bodies, it continues to have an impact in terms of how relationships are structured in a culture long after the original oppressive political power structures through which the relations started circulating (such as apartheid) have been dismantled. Foucault's genealogical analyses therefore uncover the circulation and continuation of 'discursive practices such as the technologies of normalization and control through which social relations take shape' (Kritzman 1988:ix).

Therefore, when the terms 'cultural production' and 'freeing the imagination' are used in the post-apartheid era, I want to argue that we have to take a few steps back and ask what the conditions of possibilities are for production and imagination, how they can be activated and start circulating, especially in a context where disciplines of control are no longer only political (such as a lack of opportunities for this community), physical (such as a lack of facilities and an absence of training in the various arts) and external, but especially social and intimate.

The prohibitive force of hierarchical power relations has very real effects in terms of the way in which it shapes young people's own ideas about what they are able to or are allowed to create and whether they can start seeing themselves as active in the production of knowledge and can gain some sense that their knowledges will be regarded as legitimate. Bodies which have been trained to be docile do not suddenly become active. Foucault (1977a:55) proposes that the operation of discourses may take shape in a network of relationships that keep it going: '...one must not...accept a primary and massive fact of domination (a binary structure with on the one side the "dominating" and on the other, the "dominated") but rather a multiform production of relations of domination which are partially integratable into the strategies of the whole'. It is therefore not simply a matter of saying to the 'coloured' young people of Scottsville: 'You are free, now express yourselves!'

In my relationships with Scottsville's young people and its women, I often have experienced this sense of docility in physical ways in our first contact. With young people it presented itself as extreme shyness, embarrassment and an inability to even grasp the kinds of question I asked about their understandings of life. I could see the surprise on their faces when they realised that I was actually interested in their experiences and knowledges of life. Some young people, for instance, could not understand the principle of my asking their permission to take notes before the start of our therapeutic conversations. The experience of being asked permission was, for many young people, a novel one. I also experienced self-surveillance and an internalised sense of inferiority in the young people's initial reluctance to share their ideas or experiences in a group (see also Section 2.3.3.2, under the subheadings 'Shaming' and 'Laughter as a form of shaming').

- 'Discipline' and corporal punishment

A docile body is one that can be manipulated. One of the ways in which the manipulation and conditioning takes place is through the outlawed, but still widespread, use of corporal punishment in homes and in schools in South Africa. Physical discipline as a form of interpersonal violence is regarded by the World Health Organization (WHO 2004:s.p.) as a form of 'community violence'. However, according to Burton (2008: xiii):

...corporal punishment plays a large role in South African learners' lives, with almost one in two primary school learners and one in five secondary school learners reporting that they are spanked or caned at home. Similarly, within schools corporal punishment is even more common, with seven out of ten primary and one in two secondary school learners reporting that their educators spanked or caned them when they had done something wrong.

In 2007, a fierce debate raged in the letter column of the morning newspapers in the Cape regarding the newly proposed legislation by which parents who are found guilty of the corporal punishment of their children can be fined. Reverend Tommy Solomons (2007:13) of Elsiesriver, who called himself a 'worried minister' in *Die Burger* of 16 October 2007, wrote: '...if I look at what the new Children's Law could do to our community.... My

opinion is that the state takes the use of reasonable disciplining out of parents' hands, although disciplining is a Biblical instruction to parents.... Loving disciplining is a fundamental Biblical instruction which has to be carried out with discretion by parents'. The combination of the words 'loving' and 'reasonable' with 'disciplining' (meaning corporal punishment when read in the context of his argument) demonstrates how discourses of violence are perpetuated and sanctioned in poor communities by people of influence, such as ministers.

I often had conversations with adults in the community who told me about the oxymoron of 'loving discipline'. The discourse of 'loving discipline' is a particularly dangerous discourse, because it sanctions the use of violence as a form of care or love: 'I hit you because I love you.' In keeping the discourse alive, the Bible is often used as a tool to legitimise not only the pastoral power that parents have over their children, but also the use of violence to enforce that pastoral power.

- A feminist theological position on parent-child relationships

In the Old Testament, the words for 'discipline' that are used to describe a specific relationship between a parent and a child are either *yacar*<sup>11</sup> or *muwcar*.<sup>12</sup> *Muwcar* is used in those texts in which disciplining is linked with 'the rod'<sup>13</sup> (Pr 13:24<sup>14</sup>, 22:15, 23:13) and that are most often quoted by Christians who use these texts to legitimise their own practices of corporal punishment.

Even if one accepts that the words lend themselves to a variety of interpretations, it is well known that society in the Old Testament was structured according to violent social codes for punishment. In a postmodern 21<sup>st</sup> century world, most people no longer subscribe to violent forms of punishment such as burning (Gn 38:24, Lv 20:14), stoning (Lv 24:14),

---

<sup>11</sup> *yacar*: 'to chastise, literally (with blows) or figuratively (with words); hence, to instruct – bind, chasten, chastise, correct, instruct, punish, reform, reprove, sore' (Dt 21:18) (*Strong's lexicon* s.a.).

<sup>12</sup> *muwcar*: 'chastisement; figuratively, reproof, warning or instruction; also restraint – bond, chastening (-eth), chastisement, check, correction, discipline, doctrine, instruction, rebuke.' (*Strong's lexicon* s.a.).

<sup>13</sup> *shebet*: a scion, i.e. (literally) a stick (for punishing, writing, fighting, ruling, walking, etc.) or (figuratively) a clan – correction, dart, rod, sceptre, staff, tribe.' (*Strong's lexicon* s.a.).

<sup>14</sup> *Nelson's NKJV Study Bible*, 1997. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.

plucking out the hair (Nm 13:25, Is 50:6), bruising in mortars (Pr 27:22), or retaliation or injury according to the injury done (Ex 21:24, Dt 19:21).<sup>15</sup> Violence as a form of ‘disciplining’ adults in South African society is no longer constitutional. However, the use of ‘the rod’ against a young person, the most powerless in society, has continued to feature in Christian ‘disciplining’ discourses. The question that this exception poses is whether it suits those who make proclamations about corporal punishment because it confirms their position of power over young people in their care. The kind of pastoral power of which corporal punishment is an expression is pastoral power as control.

If one accepts that a postmodern reading of Scripture means that the interpretation is informed by the reader’s observational set-up (Deist 1994:260), in the case of corporal punishment, it means that my experiences of patriarchy coupled with the suffering of young people in a poor community has brought a sensitivity to power abuse to my reading of the Bible. As a Christian feminist I am therefore less concerned with being right and more with doing right (Rossouw 1993:903). In doing right, I prefer to take my cues from Jesus about right relations between adults and young people.

Jesus introduces a way of relating that does away with control and punishment. In fact, by His death He took the punishment we deserved for our sins upon Himself. Therefore a feminist christology of embodied care takes the place of rules and rods. The word that is used for discipline in the New Testament is *paideia*.<sup>16</sup> It signifies a relationship of learning and instruction. Hence the Greek word for disciple is *mathetes*, a learner or pupil.<sup>17</sup>

Jesus made the point that hierarchical relations had to make way for caring for and serving others. Jesus himself told of a different kind of relationship that is possible between a father and his errant child. In the parable of the

---

<sup>15</sup> ‘Punishment’: Bible verses indexed by subject, from *The New Topical Textbook* by R A Torrey.

<sup>16</sup> ‘tutorage, i.e. education or training; by implication, disciplinary correction – chastening, chastisement, instruction, nurture’, Eph 6:4, Heb 12:7, Rv 3:19 (*Strong’s lexicon* s.a.)

<sup>17</sup> *Strong’s lexicon* (s.a.)

lost son (Lk 15:20-32), the lost son uses the word *hamartano* (Lk 15:21). The word *ham-ar-tan'-o* means 'to miss the mark (and so not share in the prize), that is (figuratively) to err, especially (morally) to sin – for your faults, offend, sin, trespass' (Scripturetext s.a.). But in this parable there is no disciplining rod in sight. The father of Jesus' story chooses not to heed the sins of his son and the need for punishment for what he had done. Instead, the father feels compassion (Lk 15:20). The Greek word is *splagchnizomai*, which means 'to have the bowels yearn, i.e. (figuratively) feel sympathy, to pity – have (be moved with) compassion' (Scripturetext s.a.) and he prepares a feast for his son. This radical love of the father for his sinful son in this parable goes against popular sentiment. His father's generosity to his sinful brother therefore outrages the good, 'disciplined' son.

Feminist theologian Carter Heyward (1999:117) states that '(m)oralism holds the idea of "love" above the act of love' whereas '...actual morality requires our real presence' (Heyward 1999:119). According to Heyward (1999:121), this real presence leads to change: 'Atonement, making *right* relation with God, occurs in the context of *wrong* relation – relation steeped in authoritarian, moralistic, violent dynamics. Wherever God is incarnate (made flesh) in any context of violence or injustice... atonement is under way.' This act of love as atonement is present in the story of the father in the parable, who chooses right relation above violence with his lost son. Jesus' parable presents a vision of the absence of violence and, instead, the wholeness of love in terms of the son's homecoming, and in terms of a parent-child relationship. This parable demonstrates for us as adults working with 'errant' young people the possibility of *shalom*.

The question we as Christians therefore have to ask ourselves about the presence of violence in parent-child relationships is whether it contributes to *shalom*. Or is the violence of corporal punishment, which is often held up as an instrument of creating social order, a self-serving act of power that contributes to more chaos in already violent, chaotic poor communities? Walter Brueggemann (1976:92) states that '(c)haos – anti-creation – need not be formless and anarchic. It can be highly ordered, intentional towards its

goals. ...Chaos presents itself as order. Death presents itself as life. Stones present themselves as fish.’

If more energy could be spent in Scottsville in defending the moral obligation to love young people in practice, instead of defending the obligation to practise discipline, I am wondering what possibilities for right relations (God incarnate) may emerge between young and old.

- The normalising of violence through the discourses of ‘discipline’

In the first section of this chapter, I indicated how historical events, laws and social structures created conditions for the formation of certain discourses. If the preceding accounts of the current social conditions of poverty are acknowledged, the next question that emerges is in what way these conditions create and legitimise the discourse of the ‘normality’ of violence. I have already discussed ways in which Scripture is used to legitimise and therefore normalise corporal punishment. The effect of prolonged exposure to violence and/or a non-questioning stance towards discourses (theological and other) that support violence is a ‘normalisation’ of violence. Foucault (1995:184) comments: ‘Like surveillance and with it, normalization becomes one of the great instruments of power at the end of the classical age. For the marks that once indicated status, privilege and affiliation were increasingly replaced – or at least supplemented – by a whole range of degrees of normality indicating membership of a homogeneous social body but also playing a part in classification, hierarchization and the distribution of rank’.

The following excerpt from my conversation with Mr M (Excerpt from the research journal, 14 June 2005) illustrates how violence sometimes gets normalised, even revered, through its links with other discourses such as that of ‘manliness’ and ‘leadership’:

<i>Vandag vertel mnr. M my hy is nie een oomblik spyt oor die lyfstraf waarvoor hy die aanklag teen hom het nie. Daardie een</i>	Today Mr M told me that he has not regretted for an instant the corporal punishment incident for which the charge
--	---

<p><i>incident, kom ek toe agter, was maar net die een 'sissie' (mnr. M se woord) wat gaan kla het... 'n Man moet sy pak kan vat... Mnr. M sê hy weet dis verkeerd (teen die wet) maar vir hierdie beginsel van 'dissipline' kan hulle hom maar Pollsmoor toe vat.</i></p>	<p>was brought against him. I gathered that the incident that gave rise to the charge had been reported by only one 'sissy' (Mr M's word). Mr M told me that a man is supposed to be able to take a hiding... Mr M told me that he knows that what he did is wrong (against the law), but that he was prepared to go to Pollsmoor (jail) for practising the principle of discipline.</p>
--	--

Mr M's comments illustrate what Foucault (1976b:144) describes as the 'murderous splendour' of bio-power: 'Another consequence of this development of bio-power was the growing importance assumed by the action of the norm, at the expense of the juridical system of the law....Such a power has to qualify, measure, appraise, and hierarchize, rather than display itself in its murderous splendor...'

*Mr M told me stories of people whom he had caned who 'turned out well'. He told me he has to add that it all depends on how one administers corporal punishment. No humiliating bending forward. No, he does it in a playful way and, at other times, he 'comes in from below'.*

*Whilst I was listening, I remembered that this was the man who tells stories from his youth at his home to the neglected youngsters of the neighbourhood. The same man who gives chores for the young people to do around his house, like cleaning his car, for which he pays them. The same man who told me how vital it is to know a young person's circumstances.*

*At the same time, he tells me that corporal punishment does not work for all boys. No, with some you don't achieve anything with the rod and then you have to go sit and talk. But... he does not hit girls. The reason, he tells me, is that he does not want the marks (from the caning) to be on their bodies. But the same does not apply to most of the boys. No, 'they have to take it because*

*one day they will have to take the lead in life'. He wanted to add, he told me, that it is almost as if he and the boys have a better relationship after a caning. I asked him if it almost represents an experience of being initiated into manhood, of male bonding? Mr M told me that it is precisely what he experiences.*

(Excerpt from the research journal, 14 June 2005)

Note how the normalising of corporal punishment is equated with 'discipline' and is connected to the discourse of manliness. 'Taking' corporal punishment means that you accept physical violence as a normal action between men. The degree to which you accept this is equated with 'being a man'. Mr M's comments about 'improved relations' between him and the boys after they had been subjected to violence were particularly disturbing. I asked him whether he regarded corporal punishment as a kind of ritual, a kind of 'male bonding'. He agreed that this was the case for him. A consequence of the normalising of violence through the discourse of manliness is that those boys who cannot 'take' corporal punishment (or who choose to resist) are not regarded as real men. They are 'sissies' ('wimps').

According to Foucault (1995:136), a 'body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved'. Mr M's exercising of bio-power is multiform in its purpose: to subject the boys to his authority, to use the violence as a form of initiation into manhood or of male bonding, and to legitimise the violence as something which transforms (it prepares them for leadership, he says). The kind of rationality that informs the idea of leadership that uses corporal violence as a technique is the rationality of control and domination. By his own admission, girls are not subjected to corporal punishment and, if Mr M's argument is taken to its logical conclusion, girls can therefore not be prepared for leadership. Thus the intentionality of bio-power becomes clear: domination, initiation into maleness and leadership-as-control, which excludes (and subjects) women. It is probably not surprising that Mr M thought my questions interesting, but meaningless, because of the strong 'convictions' he held. I do not know if my questions would have been considered differently, had I been male.

I nevertheless organised for Mr M to consult with a male colleague of mine. He never went.

Mr M's comments and actions are what Foucault describes as 'technologies of power, which determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination, an objectivizing of the subject...and (t)echnologies of the self, which permit individuals to effect their own means ...a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thought, conduct and way of being...' (Foucault 1988:18).

The process through which Mr M normalises violence as an appropriate relational tool illustrates what Foucault means when he argues that the object of his work was to 'sketch out a history of the different ways in our culture that humans develop knowledge about themselves' (Foucault 1988:17-18). His work then was not to accept these knowledges 'at face value' but to relate them to the 'truth games', the techniques, that human beings use to understand themselves' (Foucault 1988:18). The knowledge that Mr M said he was prepared to go to prison for about the legitimacy of corporal punishment was connected with other ideas he held about 'being a man and a leader', and about women.

- ***Young people witnessing violence***

In his 2007/8 Budget Speech, the then Provincial Minister of Community Safety, Mr Leonard Ramatlakane (2007) said that 'as many as 73.4% of the murders committed in our province, are committed by perpetrators who know their victims. And 57% of these murders occur within our communities, on our street corners close to our homes. Our reports further reveal that from this, 62% of the females murdered, were murdered in private homes or residences. Of the 62 % of females, it is reported that only 6.8% of the victims did report the crime or have laid a complaint of domestic violence prior to the murder'. These words by the minister paint a sombre picture of the extent to which the Western Cape's young people have been traumatised by witnessing domestic violence and violence in their immediate neighbourhoods, and that their trauma has been compounded by the fact that the perpetrators of the violence were often known to them.

In analysing the findings of the National Youth Victimization Study of 2005, Leoschut (2006:8) reflects on the fact that 22% of the young people who participated mentioned that they had witnessed family members intentionally hurting one another. Leoschut (2006:8) comments: 'Of particular concern is the violent nature of these family disputes, since two fifths (40%) of those who were exposed to domestic violence reported that a weapon had been used in the attack.'

The nature and scale of the violence described above also has specific relevance to young people's experience of intimate relationships. Foucault (1995:26) proposes that 'the power exercised on the body is conceived not as a property, but as a strategy, that its effects of domination are attributed... to dispositions, manoeuvres, tactics, techniques, functionings; that one should decipher in it a network of relations, constantly in tension, in activity.... In short this power is exercised rather than possessed'.

Whilst as a therapist I prefer to focus on the detail of young people's experiences, it is safe to say that in my encounter with young people who have witnessed or suffered abuse or violence, the effects on them become visible in other networks of relationships and activity. Feelings of powerlessness, shame, distrust, grief, fear, numbness, anger and aggression, as also described by Weingarten (2003:47-54), affect their relationships with peers, teachers, their studies and dreams for their future. The presence of fear often discourages young people from engaging in normal conversation with their parents, or other adults. Consequently, silence is often experienced as a less threatening way of being in the presence of adults. Another effect that violence and abuse has on the lives of young people is that it prevents young people from seeing their parents as trustworthy people that they could consult on matters concerning their own lives. In this way the exercise of violent power creates relational ripples in young people's lives far beyond their experience of the incident itself.

Violence and abuse also alter the physical experiences of young people. It affects concentration levels and has a negative impact on their school attendance and performance. Where violence is a feature of domestic life, young people, from a very young age, are put in situations where they have to fend for and look after themselves and younger siblings. The scope of the trauma that 'coloured' young

people experience as witnesses is brought home when the sharp increase in drug-related crimes (312% in Kraaifontein between 2001 and 2006) (SAPS 2008) is considered. Many of these crimes are committed on the streets, in full view of young people.

In the section above, I have outlined some of the ‘the meticulous rituals of power’ (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982:114), the disciplines or mechanics by which power operate in the community of Scottsville and how they create a network of relations. For example, overcrowding literally pushes young people onto the streets where they are exposed to gang activities. Gangs function according to hierarchical structures and through various strategies of domination that include terror in the ‘coloured’ community. These strategies depend on violence and function as acts of violence and control. These forms of control, as Foucault knew, need not be direct or physical. Crimes and violent acts are often planned by gang leaders in jail, who instruct the gangs on the streets. Gang strategies also involve their control and promotion of the drug trade, which, in turn, promotes and circulates new drugs such as Tik, creating new objects and new networks of dependency and even more new ways in which power is inscribed on the bodies of young people.

- *Verbal abuse and ‘shaming’*

Verbal abuse in general, but specifically the tactic of shaming, is used as one of the most effective tactics of surveillance in the ‘coloured’ community of Scottsville.

The archaeology and genealogy of the disciplines of shaming sensitised me to the fact that in order for the power of creative writing and drama in this research to be called redressive, I intentionally had to allow for the specifics of the speaking and acting of young people’s experiences of the effects of violence and violations in their community. I also spoke directly to the action of shaming in the groups. We had conversations in which I asked them what the effects of shaming had been on their willingness to take part in discussions, in brainstorming ideas and in creative risk-taking. All of the young people told me that they knew what I referred to, and they also knew its inhibiting and silencing and self-depreciating effects.

- *Shaming*

In reflecting on shaming, which she refers to as ‘a weapon of psychological terrorism’, bell hooks (2003:99) explains that ‘African-American parents use a discipline-and-punish model that includes shaming. Told repeatedly they are bad...children...internalize the fear or belief that they are unworthy’ (bell hooks 2003:96). bell hooks’s metaphor of terrorism speaks of the subversive operation of power through the discipline of shaming. Below, I indicate how a genealogy of shaming reveals how the ‘technology of power spreads across and is enacted both within particular systems...and in the social sciences.... Thus technologies of power, arising out of a “common matrix”...may multiply across both particular systems and social sciences in general’ (Scheurich & McKenzie 2005:855).

In Chapter 4, I reflect on the lay counselling training I did with a group of women from the community. Doreen Mentoer, who attended these sessions, made a comment during our second session together about the way ‘coloured’ people shout at and publicly humiliate their children. She asked the group: ‘Why is it like this? Have you listened to the way a white woman will speak to her child in a supermarket? She speaks to him softly, gently. But we...’ Then followed a demonstration of the shouting and denigration of children that ‘coloured’ women regard as normal. But for Doreen, this was not ‘normal’. She sensed that some discourse was in operation here that normalised shaming behaviour between adults and their children in the ‘coloured’ community.

Her remark started a group inquiry into and a conversation about the history of the operation of the discourse of humiliation in the ‘coloured’ community. If a person has been humiliated by the oppressor and this humiliation was politically and theologically sanctioned, then to humiliate becomes an internalised model for relating to those in ‘lesser positions’ in the community, such as young people. In this way ‘coloured’ adults become oppressors of ‘coloured’ young people.

Paulo Freire (1972:22) writes in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*: ‘...almost always, during the initial stage of the struggle, the oppressed, instead of striving for

liberation, tend themselves to become oppressors, or “sub-oppressors”...The ideal is to be men; but for them, to be a “man” is to be an oppressor. This is their model of humanity.’

I have witnessed first-hand how the public shaming (name calling, sarcasm, verbal abuse) of young people is used by some teachers as a way of subordinating them. One teacher told me how he used a nickname for one of the learners in his class. The teacher thought that this nickname was funny. I asked him if the child also thought so. I suggested that he asked the boy about the use of this name. When I asked the boy, who was also a client of mine, about the nickname, he told me that it was humiliating to him, as other young people would join in and there would be laughter in the classroom at his expense. In therapeutic sessions, young people mentioned that they had been told by teachers and parents that they are ‘bad’ or ‘stupid’. In a session with Mrs K and her teenage son, Mrs K started lashing out at her son by telling me that ‘he is no good’. During this conversation, her son, G, sat quietly with his head bowed. It was an experience of the shaming and its effects that young people have to endure that has remained with me since.

The way in which shaming acts upon the actions of young people is that the voice, the eye of the one who judges, and whose judgement becomes the norm, becomes internalised: ‘There is no need for arms, physical violence, material constraints. Just a gaze. An inspecting gaze, a gaze which each individual under its weight will end by interiorising to the point that he is his own overseer, each individual thus exercising this surveillance over, and against, himself’ (Foucault 1980:155). This shaming, self-surveillance in the minds of young people seeks out silence over voice, and over time it legitimises the measures of the one who shames, and encourages a sense of worthlessness from which any form of self-expression seems almost impossible. Foucault (in Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982:220) states:

...what defines a relationship of power is that it is a mode of action which does not act directly and immediately on others. Instead, it acts upon their actions: an action upon an action, on existing actions or on those which may arise in the present or the future. A relationship of violence acts upon a body or upon things; it forces, it bends, it breaks on the wheel, it destroys, or *it*

*closes a door on all possibilities.* Its opposite pole can only be passivity... (my italics)

One of the most violent modes of action directed at young people in this community is the action of shaming and its effect of silence that ‘closes a door on all possibilities’.

- Laughter as a form of shaming

The operation of the culture of shaming amongst Scottsville’s young people also became visible to me through the insidious form of laughter. A culture of shaming creates a fearfulness in young people that whatever emotion they experience as real could be ridiculed once it is shared with others. I experienced the presence of this internalised shaming when I discussed with the young people of the drama society the possibility of their performing their play at their own school. Until March 2008, the young people performed their play at the community hall (but none of the school’s teachers and very few of its learners attended), and at an Arts festival, but not in front of their peers. My suggestion led to a lengthy debate. The fear of being laughed at or mocked was the reason they gave for their reluctance to perform in front of their peers. And yet, they also wanted to showcase their talents. After much discussion, it was agreed that they would perform their play, but only to staff and matriculants, whom they regarded as mature enough not to laugh at them or mock them afterwards. The internalised experiences of shaming of the young people of the drama group had directly led to their being fearful about including the rest of the school’s learners. The cultural practice of shaming had therefore directly influenced the group’s selection of their audience.

What I initially experienced in the writers’ group (this changed as the group became a safe place of sharing and of trust) was that the traumas that young people are exposed to are so varied and occur with such frequency that it becomes almost impossible for young people to allow themselves to experience or to voice the emotional effects on them such as grief, anger and sadness. In order to survive the continued harshness of life, laughter may then be cultivated as a safe way out and a protection from sharing the

experiences of horror. Thus a strange sense of jollity (which as a witness I found strange) sometimes accompanied the telling of stories of trauma in the community. What I therefore experienced was that laughter can be an effect of trauma; a way of dealing with the unspeakable. On the other hand, when young people do risk showing an emotion such as grief, they often risk being laughed at by others. I also wondered about the double bind that young people experience in this community. They cannot share the experience of it, if they share it, they will be laughed at.

In working in the spirit of humanising the culture, I tried to make the young people conscious (for the theme of ‘conscientization’ see Section 1.4.2.1, under the subheading ‘Conscientization’) of the ways in which shaming operates and its effects. In the groups I would therefore have strict rules about shaming practices such as laughing at others. I realised that in order to be able to work towards risk-taking, voice and self-appreciation and appreciation of others, I had to look out for acts of shaming which often threatened to undermine our pastoral participation.

The themes of specificity and intentionality within genealogy also had much significance as I began to reflect on what constitutes redressive power relations in terms of theology and pastoral care.

Narrative therapist, Kaethe Weingarten (2003:53) lists sources of shaming such as ‘systematic structural inequity, structural violence, which occurs between groups and classes of people. This form of shaming is really better understood as an aggression itself, sometimes a massive aggression and sometimes a microaggression, which disproportionately affects the poor, persons of colour...’

- Shame and cultural imitation

Zoë Wicomb (1998:100) states in terms of the experience of ‘coloured’ people, ‘(t)his failure or inability to represent our history in popular forms and consequently the total erasure of slavery from the folk memory presumably has its roots in shame: shame for our origins of slavery, shame for the miscegenation, and shame, as colonial racism became

institutionalized, for being black...'. This awareness of the historical effects of shaming on literature and drama and on the performing arts prompted me to direct my own power in this research towards the geography of young people's belonging, and the kinds of identity that may be produced when their own experiences are honoured by the researcher. I now recognise how the mythologising of places like District Six happened in 'coloured' drama and how the 'politics of nostalgia that sentimentalized the loss' (Wicomb 1998:95) was tied up with the culture of shame and was linked with the silence of speaking the trauma of living life as a subject of violence.

An Indian social commentator, Pavan K Varma (2006:122), reflected on the effect that a hierarchical culture (such as he perceives the historical and current Indian culture to be) has on people's ability to express themselves and to imitate rather than to initiate: 'When people think they cannot be as good as someone else, or spend all their energies trying to be like someone else, they usually end up by being much less than they can be. A nation that internalizes a sense of inferiority begins to accept inferior standards for itself.' Instead of thinking they can be as good as someone else and developing a performative culture of their own, 'coloured' youngsters prefer to imitate the moves of the American performers they see on TV. Even the annual primary school concert in the Kraaifontein Town Hall in 2007 was done in the format of the imitation of dance styles of their American idols (see also Section 6.2.1). Wicomb (1998:101) claims that in the 'coloured' community there is a 'perception of culture as something divorced from the performative and curiously defined as that in which you do not participate...'.

As a researcher I therefore took cognisance of the fact that historical and social conditions directed the bodies of the young towards imitation instead of participation in culture. A genealogical analysis helped me to understand that my pastoral praxis would therefore have to create alternative and self-affirming conditions to counteract the conditions that create shamed and docile bodies. To this end, I used various forms of empowered witnessing (see Section 5.6.3) in my pastoral praxis with young people and women in the community. As an empowered researcher and witness I also actively

encouraged young people to participate in speaking their own realities, instead of imitating what has gone before.

#### **2.3.4 Normalising of violence and abuse and its effects**

Violence and abuse generate feelings of powerlessness, helplessness, resentment and anger in young people's lives and, if these feelings are not actively countered, they can become normalised responses to violence and abuse.

Another effect of high exposure to violence is that of being in a constant state of vigilance. This vigilance has an impact on planning times and routes to shops, church and school. In the gang-ridden culture on the Cape Flats, however, young people can often not prevent themselves from becoming targets, no matter how vigilant they try to be. Even the backyard of your own home and your own living room are no longer guaranteed places of safety. In March 2003, for instance, stray bullets from gang fights on the Cape Flats struck no fewer than five children, four of whom died (Standing 2003:s.p.). The constant, unalleviated trauma that many of these young people experience, as well as the intimacy of the violence to which they are exposed, thus become the mechanisms through which the political subjugation of young people's bodies is achieved.

Because of their exposure to violence and trauma, significant numbers of young people are diagnosed with psychiatric disorders such as depression and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). 'In Cape Town, a retrospective chart review found PTSD to be one of the most common disorders at the Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Unit at Tygerberg Hospital' (Suliman et al 2005:s.p).

According to a community study in Khayelitsha, 95% of young people between the ages of six and sixteen years had witnessed violent events and 56% had experienced violence themselves. All the young people reported exposure to indirect violence. Of them, 22% met the criteria for PTSD. The most commonly reported PTSD symptoms were 'avoidance of thoughts and activities associated with the trauma, difficulties in sleeping, and hypervigilance' (quoted by Suliman et al 2005:s.p.).

The political technology of the subjugation of young people's bodies due to prolonged traumatising thus becomes visible in the altered state of the brain. Research

psychologists with the Medical Research Council Unit on Anxiety and Stress disorders (Mohamed & Suliman 2007:9) comment as follows: ‘Given that early brain development is continually being altered by environmental influences, a child who is exposed to life-threatening trauma (particularly if repeated or persistent) can develop central nervous system dysregulation and disorganisation.’ Read in the context of the above, the technologies of ‘bio-power’, in these instances not only affect young bodies and alter their behaviour, but alter their very biology.

People who are the role models available to these young people often participate in criminal activities, thereby normalising criminal behaviour for these youngsters. A particularly dangerous feature of poverty in the Western Cape can therefore be found in the combination of drugs, violent crime, lack of educational opportunities and the lure of wealth for youngsters. In this way, violence, wealth and control all form systems of control that have real pulling power for ‘coloured’ youngsters:

Excluded by the debilitating effects of poverty, dysfunctional home environments, poor education, lack of appropriate skills and unemployment, this ‘underclass’ cannot access the dominant or mainstream culture and yet is incorporated into it and is constantly aware of and seeks to achieve its primary symbols – wealth and conspicuous, acquisitive consumption. Lacking access to legitimate pathways of achieving society’s normative goals, a significant proportion of South Africa’s youth has ‘normalised’ illegitimate means – crime and violence – of acquiring the prevailing symbols of ‘success’, to demonstrate cultural compliance, individual status and ‘control’ over their environments.

(Pelser 2008:8)

A young person for whom violence has been normalised is an easy target for coercion into criminal activities by adults. These young people then become part of a unique ‘play of dominations’ in which they, in turn, can set the terms for control and subjection of others:

The theory is that these people exist on the fringes of society and create their own set of rules about how to behave. These ‘subcultures’ see violence as normal and are more willing to use violence in situations where other people would not. They are also more likely to carry a weapon and more willing to fight to protect their ‘honour’ or ‘status’. Young adult males are more likely to engage in this type of behaviour, and thus increase their chances of being both victims and perpetrators of violence.

(Thomson 2004:s.p.)

Therefore, one of the biggest challenges that poverty posed to me was how to involve youngsters in power relations that were mutual, through which they could generate new norms for ‘truth’ about how life should be lived.

### **2.3.5 Community responses to violence directed at young people**

It has to be borne in mind that the mechanism of normalising also becomes an effect of other, less overtly violent, relationships. Community responses to violence against young people are often themselves marked by violence: abusive language and threats to those suspected of perpetrating these crimes. However, knowledges about the relationships between adults and young people that support a culture of violence are rarely questioned in the media, in churches or in schools. My awareness of the challenges of poverty as described in this chapter made it a priority for me to make it visible, especially to people of faith. A pressing question for me has become why the church is so silent on the many discourses of control and how it fosters violence, especially in poor communities. Is it because in South Africa Christianity itself has become evident as a pastoral power that controls (others) and remains largely uncritical of its own power? The next chapter deals extensively with this theme.

In the ‘coloured’ community, the relationship between adults and young people is characterised by an ethic of dominance and control. Such a culture, if it remains oblivious of its ethic, will continue to react strongly to rapes and murders of young people, but remain uncritical of its own violent practices of dominance, such as the practices of corporal punishment and verbal abuse.

Even official responses to violence against young people in the Western Cape are marked by proprietorial language that signifies a patronising relationship: ‘Hands off our children!’ What all the relationships have in common is ‘a normalizing gaze, a surveillance, that makes it possible to qualify, to classify and to punish’ (Foucault 1995:184). In reflecting on the social crisis in current policies in the United States that marginalise the youth, Henry Giroux (2005:57) comments:

...youth prompt a public rhetoric of fear, control and surveillance, which translates into social policies that signal the shrinking of democratic public spheres, the highjacking of civic culture, and the increasing militarization of public space. ...Nurturance, trust, and respect now give way to fear, disdain, and suspicion.... Children have fewer rights than almost any other group and fewer institutions protecting these rights. Consequently their

voices and needs are almost completely absent from the debates, policies, and legislative practices that are constructed in terms of their needs.

How therefore do we respond ethically to a culture of abuse against young people? I propose that we have to do an analysis of a history of ideas that has created certain knowledges about what constitutes 'truth' in relationships between adults and young people. Abuse flourishes in a strongly patriarchal and individualistic culture ('every man for himself') in which young people are not acknowledged and honoured: 'In all forms of abuse, the abuser tends to focus on his own intent and his own feelings and so lacks empathy or understanding of the effects of his actions upon the victim. The victim is treated as an object, dehumanized and his or her normal rights are disallowed' (Jenkins 1990:44). Because of his blindness to the effect of abuse on the victim, it therefore became possible for Mr M to dismiss a boy's objection to physical abuse as being the actions of 'a wimp' ('sissy'). Mr M has disallowed the boy his normal right to speak out.

Seeing and hearing how power objectifies and dehumanises brought new dimensions to the work of 'pastoral care' in this research. I realised that any meaningful pastoral work with young people (from their perspective of meaningfulness) would imply that I needed to challenge the discourses that dehumanise, objectify and humiliate young people. Rodríguez (2001:45-46), whose life and work is defined by this challenge, states:

First we must recognize that our battle is with a society that fails to do all it can for young people – then unjustly lays the blame on them... It doesn't take guts to put money into inhumane punishment-driven institutions. In fact such policies make our communities even less safe. It's tougher to walk these streets, to listen to young people, to respect them and help them fight for their wellbeing. It's tougher to care.

In Chapter 5, I discuss the ways in which I faced the tough challenges associated with caring in a context of poverty, namely how to work with difference and how to relate to the other as a 'concrete other' who could also alter my understanding of life. In Chapter 5, I also describe how such relations depended for their ethicality on symmetry and vulnerability. In Chapters 5 and 6, I describe how this research discovered in embodiment and vulnerability an alternative kind of relational power to the one of control and shaming that for so long dominated cross-cultural and adult-child interactions in the 'coloured' community.

### **2.3.6 Neglect and the discourse of the family**

The first National Youth Victimization Study conducted in 2005 was done mainly amongst black rural youths in South Africa. 'Coloured' respondents made up only 8 % of the study (Leoschut 2006). However, its conclusions are significant in the light of what is known about the predominance of violence and, simultaneously of neglect, in the 'coloured' community.

The high levels of interpersonal violence in the coloured community often mean that for many 'coloured' young people 'family' is not associated with safety and support. Leoschut (2006:10) states: 'Youth who are victimised generally seek protection and support from their parents or other adults in their households. However, when domestic violence is a regular occurrence, as experienced by these young people, adult family members are unable to adequately meet the needs of these youth because they themselves are caught up in cycles of violence.' The discourse of the family in 'coloured' communities is therefore often discourse associated with violence and silence. The return to 'family values' therefore seems like a contradiction in terms, because for many poor 'coloured' young people, the family has become the relationship in which young people are most likely to be exposed to violence, abuse and neglect. In their analyses of children affected by maltreatment and violence in the Western Cape, Dawes et al (2006:43) report that the number of cases of neglect and ill-treatment of the Western Cape's children reported to the SAPS had increased significantly, from 47 per 100 000 young people in 2001 to 105 per 100 000 young people in 2004.

In the Kraaifontein area too, the official police statistics for the 'neglect and ill-treatment of children' has more than doubled between 2001 and 2006 (SAPS 2008). Often, only severe neglect or the kind of neglect that has shock value is reported either to the police or by the newspapers.

In July 2007, several Cape Town newspapers (Barron 2007, Medved & Williams 2007) reported the disturbing story of eight-year old Candice Kasper from Scottsdene (the suburb adjacent to Scottsville) in Kraaifontein, who went missing and whose parents only reported her disappearance two days later. She was subsequently found in a place of safety to which a kind stranger had taken her. What emerged, however, was the fact that Candice was drunk when she was found in the street and it came to light that

Candice had been abusing alcohol with her parents. Her parents were subsequently arrested for child abuse and negligence.

The kinds of chronic neglect that young people have told me about include the fact that no or little attention is given by their parents to their schoolwork, progress and school attendance, little or no interest is shown in their emotional well-being and little or no attention is paid to their physical well-being. Often older children in a family take over the responsibility of caring for younger siblings. The discourse of the family was deconstructed in the play that the young people wrote (see Section 6.3.2.7) and in which they proposed the kind of familial values that they stand for.

In analysing the problem of chronic communal poverty in the ‘coloured’ community in South Africa, Terreblanche (1977:76) refers to the connection between physical factors and the way poor ‘coloured’ people understand themselves and the nature of relationships: ‘It was the interaction between internalisation on the one hand and situational factors on the other, that was of particular significance in the historical process that gradually led to the coming into being of chronic community poverty.’ Terreblanche (1977:76-7) gives the example of poor ‘coloured’ parents who work long hours and abuse alcohol and drugs at home, and who often do not have any regard of the importance of setting an example to their children. Their lack of interaction with or neglect of their children, together with violent ‘disciplining’ practices, have serious consequences for the way in which neglect and violence becomes normalised and, according to Terreblanche (1977:77), for the resulting internalised sense of fatalism and distrust that poor ‘coloured’ children experience.

## **2.4 FOUCAULDIAN ANALYSIS: ITS ETHICAL IMPACT**

In this chapter I have shown that the discourses of poverty that affect young ‘coloured’ people should not be seen in social or historical isolation. In the next chapter, I use Foucault’s poststructuralist analyses to reflect on the historical, political and social discourses of pastoral control and subjugation in South Africa and how these have shaped the discourses of unworthiness, distrust and shame in the ‘coloured’ community. I show how ‘pastoral power’ in South Africa was employed to subject the bodies of the most vulnerable members of society: poor people of colour. I also reflect on the physical, educational and psychological bearing that the operation of pastoral power had

on the current challenges of 'coloured' poverty and how it affects its young. The fact that I, as a doctoral researcher, have benefited from the same system of pastoral power whose effects I describe in such painful detail emerged as an ethical research challenge. To me, the challenges of poverty became linked to the challenge of power – in this instance, the power of research and how to use it in such a way that it creates possibilities for 'coloured' young people. The acts of restitution of this research as described in Chapters 4 to 6 are therefore based on and supported by the insights provided by the archaeological and genealogical analyses set out in Chapters 2 and 3.



## CHAPTER 3

### PASTORAL POWER: A POSTSTRUCTURALIST ANALYSIS

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is a reflection on the realities that the words ‘pastoral’ and ‘marginalised’ in the title of this thesis refer to, and the links between the two. I therefore critically examine the laws and discourses that establish hierarchies that have a bearing on the way in which pastoral care is defined and done.

Elaine Graham (1993:211) points out that ‘(a)ttention to the *politics* of pastoral care, therefore begins with the realization that pastoral relationships cannot be isolated from their broader social and cultural setting’. According to Poling (2002:221), in pastoral theology and counselling, we need cultural and economic analysis in order to generate understanding about differences, whilst recognising that these differences are often unfairly organised according to race, gender, sexuality and culture. Furthermore, he advocates cultivating an understanding of cultural and economic dominance, which he describes as ‘the ability of some groups to make their values the norm by which all other cultures are allowed to exist’. Foucault’s archaeology provides this chapter with a theory of discursive practice and an interpretive analysis (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982) of the rules that govern the complex political operations of ‘pastoral power’. In this chapter, I therefore analyse the societal discourse of pastoral power as control and domination and make visible the experiences of those who have been marginalised as a result of it, in the South African context in general, and in Scottsville in particular.

#### 3.2 THE EMERGENCE OF PASTORAL POWER

In several lectures that he gave between 1977 and 1978 at the Collège de France, Foucault (2007) analysed the emergence of a particular kind of pastoral power in the Christian church and the laws that governed this emergence. Foucault (2007:152) argues that, in Hebrew society, no individual took up the position of pastor in relation to others. With the exception of David,

...the Hebrew King is never designated positively, directly, or immediately as a shepherd. There is no shepherd outside of God. On

the other hand, in the Christian Church we see instead the, as it were, autonomization of the shepherd theme in relation to other themes, as not merely one of the dimensions or aspects of God's relationship to men. It will become the fundamental, essential relations, not just one alongside others but a relationship that envelops all the others and, second, a relationship that will, of course, be institutionalized in a pastorate with its laws, rules, techniques, and procedures. So, the pastorate will be autonomous, encompassing, and specific. From top to bottom of the Church, relationships of authority are based upon the privileges, and at the same time on the tasks, of the shepherd in relation to his flock.

Foucault claims that the organisation of the Church 'presents itself as a pastoral organization. The powers held by the Church are given, I mean both organized and justified, as the shepherd's power in relation to the flock' (Foucault 2007:153). Foucault gives several examples of how this power manifests itself in practices such as the power of giving communion, of giving penance, of baptism, and of jurisdiction. Foucault (2007:153) therefore contends that '(r)eligious power, therefore, is pastoral power'.

According to feminist theologian Sharon Welch (1990:111), although 'rituals and doctrines that affirm the absolute power of God also claim that such power is had only by God, they also reinforce a human desire for absolute power'. Or as Rieger (1998:21) puts it: 'From the perspective of the modern self, authority is related to the ability to control.' Thus the valorisation of power as control has been institutionalised in theological discourse and in its pastoral practices. For Foucault, a 'discourse' is a body of thought and writing that is united by having a common object of study, a common methodology, and/or a set of common terms and ideas; the notion of discourse thus allows Foucault to talk about a wide variety of texts, from different countries and different historical periods and different disciplines and different genres.

Foucault gives a detailed and meticulously researched description of the features of pastoral practice that emerged from the centralisation of the shepherd/flock relationship. For the purposes of this research, I focus on the practices of subordination, obedience, and individualisation that Foucault describes. I believe that such a genealogy of pastoral power is essential in order to understand the possibilities of practice within the Christian community and how they influence what is possible in individual relationships as well: 'The Christian pastorate has, I think, organized something completely different that seems to me to be foreign to Greek practice, and this is what we would call the insistence on "pure obedience"' (Foucault 2007:174). This obedience, Foucault

(2007:175) proposes, finds expression in the mechanism of ‘complete subordination’ which means

...it is a relationship of submission, but not submission to a law or a principle of order, and not even to a reasonable injunction.... It is a relationship of the submission of one individual to another. The relationship of submission of one individual to another individual, correlating an individual who directs and an individual who is directed, is not only a condition of Christian obedience, it is its very principle.

Foucault recounts narratives of institutionalised subordination in monasteries in the relationship between abbot or superior, master and novice (Foucault 2007:175-6), where commands had to be obeyed no matter how absurd or unreasonable they seemed, but simply because they ‘had been given’. Foucault (1979b:184) goes on to say that Christian society invented many political, often violent forms: ‘...they alone evolved a strange technology of power treating the vast majority of men as a flock with a few as shepherds. Thus they established between them a series of complex, continuous, and paradoxical relationships.’

Foucault (2007:177) makes the point that this relationship is not finalised, with obedience resulting in some kind of knowledge or even skill which will enable one to become master oneself, but that it results in aiming for a state of ‘humility, which consists in feeling oneself the least of men, in taking orders from anyone, thus continually renewing the relationship of obedience, and above all in renouncing one’s own will’. The renouncing of one’s own will and thinking nothing of oneself can therefore become proof of the level of obedience attained. It becomes both the measure of faith and an indication of whether faith is attained, a measure against which individuals may be judged.

Graham (1993:217) expresses a similar view, pointing out that ‘(t)he use of images like that of the shepherd to delineate the scope and nature of pastoral care perpetuates models of care which emphasize individualism, professionalism, and directivity’. Schüssler Fiorenza (1993:224) also refers to the ‘patriarchalization and hierarchalization of the church’, a process that resulted in a shift in terms of the regard in which the church holds certain values: ‘...mutuality and solidarity amongst Christians no longer connotes a “new reality”, but becomes reduced to mere moral appeal’ (Schüssler Fiorenza 1993:223 -224). Schüssler Fiorenza (1993:224) argues that ‘(s)ubmission and obedience, but not equality and justice, are institutionalized by this patriarchal ethos’.

Foucault then makes the connection between the institutionalisation of the Christian pastorate and Christian morality; ‘both in the history of ideas and for the practice itself, as also for all the problems of what is called the “flesh” in Christ. As you can see, it involves the difference in successive meanings given to the same word *apatheia*, the *apatheia* to which, precisely, obedience strives’ (Foucault 2007:178). If this is the object of the Christian pastorate, Foucault (2007:178) then asks a crucial question: ‘What does the absence of *pathé*, of passions, mean for Christianity?’ In my view, this question of Foucault’s has considerable implications for understanding the power of pastoral care in theology. In a culture of submission and obedience, the individual’s apathy becomes the norm, whilst initiative – also in the field of care – is consciously inhibited. In another work, Foucault (1979b:191) puts the question differently: ‘What has this kind of knowledge, this type of power made of us?’ He considers how it affects what is conceived of as being possible in one’s own life and in that of the community. In effect, says Foucault (2007:179-180):

...the pastorate reveals an entire practice of submission of individual to individual...in a subordination that never has any generality, does not guarantee any freedom, and does not lead to any mastery, either of oneself or of others...in pastoral power...we have a mode of individualization that not only does not take place by way of affirmation of the self, but one that entails destruction of the self.

Thus a certain Christian self-identity was constituted that aimed at the total renunciation of the self and complete submission. When submission and apathy exist in the church, duty, rather than passion, becomes the moral imperative that guides our pastoral care. The question that then emerges is what kind of pastoral relations are born of duty towards the poor and marginalised and what kind of relations passion might elicit. Here I am not referring to thinking or talking about the theoretical problem of poverty, but the conscious building of relationships with the poor, an action that depends on a passion for justice.

In Sections 5.1 to 5.4, I use a Derridean analysis (Cornell 1992; Derrida 1989; Egéa-Kuehne; Lucy 2004; Naas 2003) to suggest a way in which current formalised, institutionalised relations with the other may be deconstructed. The aim of such a deconstruction is to rediscover the possibility of relations that are not guided by formal reciprocity and obedience, but by a passion for justice. However, the deconstructive analysis of a pastoral care whose aim is obedience starts in this chapter. Through the

deconstruction of pastoral power as control I will be able to recognise its aims and to map its effects of which the constitution of the modern subject is one of the most profound. For Foucault (2007:185), this constitution of the modern Western subject ‘makes the pastorate one of the decisive moments in the history of power in Western societies’.

This research specifically inquires about pastoral relations in a context of poverty as part of its scope. Thus these ‘sheep’ are, within the pastoral model proposed by Foucault, specific sheep: they are economically powerless and socially marginalised sheep in need of guidance. Foucault contends that with the Christian pastorate he sees the emergence of an absolutely new form of power; of

...specific modes of individualization: ...this is an individualization by analytic identification, by subjection – through a whole network of servitude and, at the same time, the exclusion of the self, and by subjectivation – through the production of an internal, secret, and hidden truth...What the history of the pastorate involves, therefore, is the entire history of procedures of human individualization in the West.

(Foucault 2007:184)

But one could argue that the Christian pastorate has altered its shape and its procedures since the Reformation, and especially within a postmodern context. Are Foucault’s analyses still relevant? The answer is yes, and the reason may be found in the methodology of archaeology and genealogy itself, which recognises that power must be considered as a productive network which runs through the entire social body (Foucault 1979a:36), ‘as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain’ (Foucault 1976b:98).

Purvis (1993:30-36), for instance, analyses Ephesians 5:21-33 as part of the second century pastoral ethos in which power was viewed as control. She describes how the prescription of marital relations in which one partner is dominant and the other submissive institutionalised power as control (Purvis 1993:35). She then describes the chain-like effect that power as control had on the individual in the church and on human-Divine relations: ‘When the relationship (*of control*) is structured by and is a part of the church, then the institutionalization is understood to be, and is embodied as though it is, a reflection of the nature of the God/human relationship and a faithful representation of God’s desire for human community’ (Purvis 1993:35-36). Control then is claimed to be that ‘which God wants’, while it is rather people’s own ideas about

power to which they adapt their perception of God. In Section 2.3.3.2, under the sub-heading “‘Discipline’ and corporal punishment”, I discussed how the practice of corporal punishment is often supported by an exegesis of parental power as control. Parents whose relationship with their children is characterised by an ethic of control may start seeing control as a divine attribute (with metaphors to match, such as ‘God Almighty’). In this way relationships of control are sanctioned and the rationality that supports them remains unquestioned.

In the light of what I know of control and subjugation because of Foucault’s analyses, I can reconsider what I mean by ‘pastoral possibilities’. In violent, fearful, subjected communities, how can I practise pastoral care in such a way that alternative ways of relating appear? I am reminded of the analogy that Luis Rodríguez (2001:271-286) uses to describe what is needed in relating to inner city ‘at risk’ youths in the United States. He uses the image of the horse whisperer who is brought in to stabilise traumatised horses. Rodríguez (2001:283-4) then says:

We know many raging youth who are responding to various forms and degrees of abuse, neglect, or humiliation. Some of it is personal, but much of it is institutional and cultural. Like almost any other animal that has simply been mistreated, these people become ‘hard to handle.’ Instead of ‘putting them out to pasture’ or sending them away to be destroyed...they can be taken through a careful process of trust building and management through self-control. *We need some children whispering going on.* (Rodríguez’s italics)

Through my contact with young people in this research, I have come to realise the physical and emotional dangers associated with pastoral power as control in the lives of the young (as described in Chapter 2). That is why the title of this thesis speaks of ‘opening hearts and minds’. There comes a time when we as pastoral workers have to recognise the dangers of pastoral power as control. Then we are called to take a stand against the subversive forms of pastoral control in our own practices: intellectualising, distance, assessments and discipline. We urgently need more ‘young person whispering’ going on in places like Scottsville, Manenberg and Heideveld. But whispering depends on a heart that is open to see where the young person is at, purposefully not answering wildness with wildness, shaming with shaming. Instead, it means staying with the child and doing the painstakingly difficult work of building trust and, maybe, confidence. The practices of ‘youth whispering’ of this research are described in Section 6.6.

### 3.3 CLASSIFICATION

The kinds of controlling pastoral relation that Purvis (1993) describes depend on a classifying principle at work, where the male is classified as the head, the norm, and the female as the support, the auxiliary to the norm. Hence the idea of centre and margin: the ‘inside’, the norm, the primary principle against which everything else is judged, and the marginal, the outside, that which is being judged against the norm.

This classifying principle has gained enormous pastoral significance in the way in which it has affected race and race relations in South Africa. In the previous chapter (Section 2.2.1), I referred to the impact that race classification has had on the physical separation in ‘coloured’ families. However, race classification has also affected the way in which ‘coloured’ people regard themselves. Zimitri Erasmus (2001:13) says: ‘...(for) me, growing up coloured meant knowing that I was *not only* not white, but *less than white; not only* not black, but *better than black...*’. She states that ‘colouredness as an identity... has always been understood as a residual, in-between, or “lesser” identity – characterised as “lacking”, supplementary, excessive, inferior or simply non-existent’ (Erasmus 2001:15-16).

Reddy (2001:68) therefore contends that in ‘a rigidly, hierarchically structured racial classificatory system, there will and must be a category for the “unclassifiable” – the Other – which resists the discourse but also functions to give the classificatory system its very meaning. “Coloured” has been the home for this function in South Africa’. However, in a culture of classification, it follows that the reality of ‘the Other’, although it defines the norm, remains invisible and/or regarded as of little consequence. Adhikari (2005:13) quotes Marike de Klerk, the wife of the then State President F W de Klerk, who voiced this invisibility and inconsequentiality in a 1983 interview as follows: ‘The definition of a coloured in the population register is someone that is not black, and is not white and is also not Indian, in other words, a non-person. They are the leftovers. They are the people that were left after the nations were sorted out. They are the rest.’ The ‘norm’ of being a non-person that was established by the operation of pastoral power through its various laws and practices in South Africa was internalised by ‘coloured’ people (Adhikari 2005:13).

The blind spot in current theology is therefore located in an inability to recognise how a

classifying, controlling pastoral power, by serving some, turns the other into a non-person. In Chapter 5, I discuss the idea that a blind spot towards the neighbour as other, in a feminist christology, also implies a blindness to God as Other. This blind spot has implications for how theology and pastoral care define themselves. Pattison (1994:34) therefore states:

By ignoring the essentially human nature and socio-political context of theological discourse, much theology mistakenly regards itself as a politically neutral 'divine' science. This disguises the fact that theology actually serves the interests of those who are dominant in the social order. Because of this unwitting, unconscious bias, the voice and interests of the oppressed are hidden.

This is the challenge that poverty poses to pastoral care: recognising how pastoral power sets social and political 'norms' and by doing so, renders invisible those on the margins of the norm, and their interests.

Pastoral care was therefore practised according to the norm, and what the norm regards as relevant. Elaine Graham (1996:47-48) notes that, in pastoral theology, the dominant themes 'until recently' were the focus on the pastoral agent (usually the clergy, which implies maleness) and methods of care (which favoured scientific and medical models of care through ecclesiastical institutions). As a result, in this kind of power chain, the problem that a 'client' struggles with or the context in which this problem arose may not influence how the care is designed or practised. Furthermore, in a modernist pastoral discourse, the kind of client who was the recipient of pastoral care was the 'self-actualized individual for whom care functions primarily at times of crises' (Graham 1996:51).

In terms of this research, this modernist pastoral focus has large implications for the pastoral support that is currently available to the poor who suffer on the Cape Flats, for their position in church-led relationships of care and for the position of women as the agents of pastoral practice. In the next chapter, I reflect on the ways in which a feminist theology of praxis offers both an epistemology for caring and methodologies for the way in which that caring can be done, so that the voices of the poor can be heard. In Chapter 5, I reflect on the stance of vulnerability to the other as one that invites mutuality instead of control. In the South African context, it prompts a direction for research as historical analysis of the exercise of the church's pastoral power and of the ways in which this particular rationality has shaped and legitimised the technologies of

power wielded by a ‘Christian’ government. Its political structures combined the techniques of both individualisation and strategies of totalisation, as described by Foucault (cited in Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982:213).

Since the second century, power as control and domination as a rationality has given rise to and supported, for instance, various discourses about the relationship between masters and servants, the marriage relationship and adults’ relationships with young people. Therefore the functions of power may be visible in new techniques and may outlive the institutions through which that power was originally introduced. In this way, pastoral power continues to feature in communities. Foucault (1982:214) states: ‘...I think we should distinguish between two aspects of pastoral power – between the ecclesiastical institutionalization which has ceased or at least lost its vitality since the eighteenth century, and its function, which has spread and multiplied outside the ecclesiastical institution.’

Historian Hermann Giliomee (2007:18-19) describes the rationale that prevailed between 1665 and 1795 in the district of Stellenbosch regarding the relationship between masters, slaves and the pastorate. The Synod of Dordrecht (of 1618/19) decreed that whoever was baptised should have the same right to freedom as other Christians. Hence, very few masters had their slaves baptised, because baptised slaves, by law, could not be sold. But Giliomee (2007:19) offers another reason why masters did not baptise their slaves: they feared that a baptised slave would regard himself the equal of his master and that it would then be very difficult to control him. The slave would not, so it was said, ‘know his place’.<sup>18</sup> This historical analysis reveals how the function of pastoral power may outlive the ecclesiastical institution with which it was originally associated, as Foucault describes.

To this day, the discourse of ‘knowing your place’ functions outside the church to subordinate the descendants of slaves, namely the ‘coloured’ community. Ramphela (2008:16) quotes Biko, who said that ‘the most powerful weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed... the latter has been so efficiently manipulated and controlled by the oppressor as to make the oppressed believe that he is a liability to the white man’. When you ‘do not know your place’, you become a liability, as many of

---

<sup>18</sup> ‘Hulle het naamlik gevrees dat ‘n gedoopte slaaf hom as die gelyke van die burgers sou beskou en dat dit dan baie moeilik sou wees om hom te beheer. Die slaaf sou nie, soos dit gestel is, “sy plek” ken nie.’

the people who spoke out during the apartheid years and who were incarcerated, tortured and murdered discovered, people like Biko himself.

A poststructuralist epistemology then works not toward a quest for ‘origins’ or ‘truth’ of events, values or knowledge, but rather creates an awareness of how knowledge is constituted through discourses: ‘Consequently, those who resist or rebel against a form of power cannot merely be content to denounce violence or criticize an institution. What has to be questioned is the form of rationality at stake’ (Foucault 1979b:201). The rationality of the discourse of ‘knowing one’s place’ has gained ‘truth’ status in the coloured community and over centuries has constituted the selves of real poor people. Therefore, Foucault (cited by Veyne 1971:177) argues:

...we should try to study power, not starting from the primitive terms of relation, civil subjects, State, law...but starting from relation itself, insofar as it is relation that determines the elements on which it bears; rather than asking ideal subjects what they may have yielded of themselves or of their powers in order to allow themselves to be subjected, we have to try to find out how relations of subjection can manufacture subjects.

In the next section, I employ genealogical analysis to illustrate how the powerful discourse of ‘knowing one’s place’ suddenly moved to centre stage in the research.

### **3.3.1 ‘Knowing your place’ in Scottsville**

In the ‘coloured’ community, the historical legacy of disregard combined with the current social hierarchies of control (as described in Chapter 2) have serious consequences for the community’s young people. If your experience is one in which your own voice constantly has to be suppressed before the voice of the more powerful, you internalise the message that what you have to say cannot be valuable. Thus young people and their interests remain invisible (Pattison 1994:34) because they ‘know their place’ in the hierarchical pecking order, and this place is a place of invisibility and silence. Dreyfus and Rabinow (1982:94) argue that in ‘archaeology this recuperation of the unthought by thought becomes the recuperation of a nonconscious system of rules as an explicit theory’.

The archaeology of silence in young ‘coloured’ people’s lives reveals that it is based on a hierarchical system of pastoral power to which ‘coloured’ people were subjected during the apartheid years. Under the weight of these rules, silence and laughter became

forms of self-preservation in times when the use of language would constitute disobedience. If your experience is that you have to live according to social rules where you have to listen to others but are seldom listened to, you start losing faith in the legitimacy of your own knowledge and in your ability to speak.

In March 2008, I encountered this ‘knowing your place’ and the internalised discourse of disregard in the research process. I discovered how being invisible can be a comfortable place because you never have to risk visibility. On the other hand, I sensed that invisibility as the *status quo* meant that those wanting to challenge it would be ‘cut down to size’. This dilemma was what the young people in the drama group had to grapple with.

The young people had just successfully performed their play in Stellenbosch at the Woordfees. Before returning the costumes to the rental company, I suggested to them that they perform the play one last time to their peers and teachers. My reason for making this suggestion was that most of their peers in their school had not seen the play and did not know of the talent in their midst. I was also hoping that the performance of the play would create an opportunity for these teenagers to be witnessed by their teachers in new and affirming ways. The actors were adamant that they would not perform in front of their peers for fear of being mocked and teased. By performing, they would literally not ‘know their place’ – which in the teenage culture in Scottsville means being passive, the same as everybody else and with no special gifts that could be shared and celebrated. Maintaining the *status quo* as a teenager in Scottsville means keeping a ‘low profile’ at all costs. It means needing to know your (lowly) place.

The discourse of ‘knowing your place’ therefore dictated who got invited to see the play. After much deliberation, only the teachers and matriculants were invited to a special performance of the play. The actors’ reasons for inviting the matriculants was that the matriculants would soon be leaving the school and that any potential mockery would therefore be short-lived.

According to Wicomb (1998:94), ‘the newly democratised South Africa remains dependent on the old economic, social, and also epistemological structures of apartheid, and thus it is axiomatic that different groups created by the old system do not participate equally in the category of postcoloniality’. In Chapter 6, I describe how the discourse of

‘knowing your place’ was persistently undermined and its limits challenged through the establishment of other ‘postcolonial’ pastoral possibilities such as drama, the arts, poetry and music.

An awareness of the history and operation of such subjugating discourses became critical in the understanding I brought to my conversations with young people and women in the community. I have encountered the discourse of ‘knowing your place’ that became part of the pastoral ethos at Petunia Primary in the fearfulness and feelings of guilt with which young people often speak of violence done to them by adults in positions of power. How can you even begin to do the (dangerous) thinking or speaking beyond/against ‘knowing your place’, if this knowledge is historically so entrenched in and is so strongly culturally sanctioned by the community?

But an absence of voice is not the only result of a pastoral power of dominance. This power also fosters a culture of obedience and submission. In discussing the development of governmentality, Foucault (2007) proposes a genealogy of pastoral power to indicate how the procedures and methods of pastoral power greatly influenced the emergence of a specific form of political governance in the sixteenth century that depended on obedience (amongst other things). The significance that this analysis has for this research lies in Foucault’s view about how power operates: ‘It ... is not a question of undertaking anything like an endogenous history of power that develops on the basis of itself in a sort of paranoiac and narcissistic madness. Rather, the point of view of power is a way of identifying intelligible relations between elements that are external to each other’ (Foucault 2007:215). In the ‘coloured’ community, the violent political hierarchy of the apartheid era with its various techniques of control – of obedience and subjugation – forms the basis for hierarchical social relations in the form of a gang culture in which obedience, violent subjugation and humiliation are key elements.

### **3.3.2 Political and social shaming**

In the previous sections (Sections 3.3 and 3.3.1), I have indicated how the power of classification and submission has led to ‘systematic shaming’ (bell hooks 2003:94) of ‘coloured’ people in this country. For the ‘coloured’ community, the experience of shame has to do with the way power relations have historically shaped that which

counts as legitimate and therefore ‘multiplies across a social field because of a complex set of collections or reasons or causes’ (Scheurich & McKenzie 2005:855). Thus the historical technologies of shaming that multiply across the social field of community, families and schools, shape a particular framework for how the ‘self’ is constructed: ‘...coloured identity has never been seen as an identity “in its own right”. It has been negatively defined in terms of “lack” or “taint”, or in terms of a “remainder” or excess which does not fit a classificatory scheme. These identities have been spoken about in ways which associate them with immorality, sexual promiscuity, illegitimacy, impurity and untrustworthiness’ (Erasmus 2001:17). Contravening the laws by which classification and control were enforced, for instance, by stepping onto a ‘whites-only’ beach, or by using the ‘wrong’ entrance at a shop, meant to a coloured person that he or she could be shamed for not knowing his/her place.

### 3.3.3 The ‘baggage’ of humiliation

In this excerpt from a conversation between Mr Foster and myself (from the research journal, 10 May 2005), after I had brought the abusive practices of some teachers to his attention (see Section 2.3.3.2, under the subheading ‘Conversations with Mr Foster), he spoke of the hurt caused by apartheid that still shapes relationships in the ‘coloured’ community. It is significant that Mr Foster identified a connection between the teachers’ physical humiliation of young people and their own humiliation as ‘coloured’ people under apartheid. Mr Foster referred to ‘the baggage’ that teachers carry with them into teaching and his appreciation for the need for teachers to reflect on the way this baggage shapes their teaching practices. In this comment I saw a plea for a deconstruction of the discourse of humiliation that is part of ‘the baggage’. Mr Foster recounted the power of humiliation as a power that subjects others:

*‘Apartheid had caused us intense pain. We were second-hand citizens in the country. We grew up under parents who felt that they were being wronged. You learnt values but you felt that you could not realise yourself as an adult.’ Then Mr Foster told the story of his parents who, upon retirement from teaching, took a trip to Europe. On their return they were asked at customs what they had to declare. His father had carefully listed all the gifts they had brought for their children. Despite this, their luggage was thrown open and they were humiliated in public.*

*At this stage of the telling, I felt the burning of tears behind my eyes.*

*Mr Foster acknowledged it with a nod of his head. Then Mr Foster burst into tears. We sat like this for a long time, without shame. I apologised for being without tissues. Mr Foster reached out and passed me a toilet roll from the table.*

*I asked him about the experience of humiliation. He replied: 'You would not even know that this was humiliation, because it was the way in which you grew up. This is part of your role as principal...to understand the circumstances from the parents' side.'*

(Excerpt from the research journal, 10 May 2005)

What Mr Foster realised was that the power of humiliation 'has spread and multiplied' outside the institutions that first applied it in this country. Mr Foster's story speaks about how macro-relations of power have cultivated an ideology based on classification that has led to abusive practices of humiliation of 'the other'. These practices, because of their pervasiveness, have affected every aspect of a 'coloured' person's life in South Africa. In this way, humiliation and shame were normalised and internalised by 'coloured' people – as he put it: 'You would not even know that this was humiliation, because it was the way in which you grew up.' Mr Foster has also realised that the normalising of the humiliation of others as a practice will therefore not easily be undone. Undoing humiliation through giving respect therefore became a pastoral practice of this research. But the first step, Mr Foster realised too, was to make 'the baggage' visible and to question it in relation to teachers' own teaching practices. This is what I did in individual sessions with specific male teachers in the school in 2005.

Today, the 'coloured' principal whose family was subjected to humiliation feels that their 'freedom has been subjected to power' (Foucault 1979b:200). The violence against them cannot merely be diagnosed, nor can it be isolated from the power relations that informed it. The rationality that supports the modalities of power need to be questioned: 'Consequently, those who resist or rebel against a form of power cannot merely be content to denounce violence or criticize an institution. What has to be questioned is the form of rationality at stake' (Foucault 1979b:201). According to Sharon Welch (1990:125), the moral crisis for us as communities therefore does not lie in a lack of shared moral criteria, as some ethicists would have it, but rather in 'the inability of most communities to engender or accept a thorough critique of their "own purposes" and

their “terms” of implementing those purposes’.

Both Foucault’s and Welch’s analyses had a profound influence on this research methodology. In contemplating what constitutes ‘pastoral possibilities’, a response requires a different rationality that can affect new and more possibility-producing modalities of power for especially women and young people in the community. In this chapter, I propose a critical rationality that questions the link between power, pastoral practice and the experience of being subjected. This analytical rationality reveals the ways in which power has affected poor people’s bodies and their communities and, at the same time, has laid down the terms for what is possible.

In making visible the rules and mechanisms by which structures of discipline and control continue to operate in ‘coloured’ communities, I had to ask myself as a researcher, if docile bodies were one of the intentions of power relations of obedience and control, ‘what forms new power relations need to take and what kind of practices will be introduced that could, intentionally, move this research and the lives of young people beyond (post) old structures and the rules by which they operate?’ (Excerpt from the research journal, 17 May 2005).

### **3.4 THE (PASTORAL) POWER OF LANGUAGE**

In poststructuralist research such as this, ‘(l)anguage is the place where actual and possible forms of social organization and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested. Yet it is also the place where our sense of ourselves, our subjectivity, is constructed’ (Weedon 1987:21). In this chapter I therefore introduce the use of language in the ‘coloured’ community and its classification within the grid of broader societal power. The different relevant aspects relating to the power of language in a context of ‘coloured’ poverty discussed here are the type of language that is spoken, the kind of experience that is spoken of through language and how it is heard. Because as a researcher I recognised the power that is located in language, I asked a ‘coloured’ woman to speak of being subjected to pastoral power and thereby to bring life to Foucault’s theory in this chapter. In this way, the truths about pastoral power are not only constructed in Foucault’s, Welch’s and Purvis’s intellectual language, but also in the experiential, emotive language of Aunt Liz Cupido of Scottsville.

During the research I also discovered how language can be used as a tool to control poor

people. One of my clients at Petunia Primary, a girl of twelve, asked me in a letter if I would take her to the movies as she had never been to the movies before. We set a date, but then I realised that I needed her father's consent. In true modernist style I typed a note in formal language: 'I ...hereby give permission for my daughter.... to go to the movies on....', with spaces for date and signature typed in. The day we went to the movies J got into the car and handed me a handwritten note from her father. He wrote in an informal style, saying that he was happy to give permission, and thank you so much for taking her, for weeks it had been the only thing she had been able to talk about. He used the Afrikaans expression '*die kind is so opgemaak hieroor*', which is a term to describe eager anticipation. I do not know what happened to the formal note. J's father reminded me of how language itself, in its formality, can set up and control the way in which others are made to respond. Or perhaps J's father reminded me of how it can be done differently; how personal and heartfelt words can be a tool in creating humane relations, through something as insignificant as a note of consent.

I also witnessed a disregard, not only for the kind of language 'coloured' people speak, but also for the contribution they make through language. In March 2005, I attended a church-led conference on poverty held by the traditionally white Dutch Reformed Church and traditionally 'coloured' and black United Reformed Church in Southern Africa (Dutch Reformed Church (Western and Southern Cape) and Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (Cape) Conference 2005) in Kraaifontein. Delegates from congregations all over the Western Cape attended.

The person at the head of our table who gave feedback after discussions was the white male minister of a Dutch Reformed church of a rural Karoo town. During one of the sessions during which we had to make suggestions about the ways in which the plight of the poor could be made known to the church, one of the 'coloured' women (an ordinary member of her congregation) at our table suggested: '*Mense in die gemeente moet met mekaar begin praat*' ('People in the congregation have to start talking to one another'). The minister responded: 'So what you are saying is that there has to be better communication?' During feedback to the other delegates in the hall, the minister again spoke of 'communication'. The woman's original contribution was lost. A white minister's right to 'translate' an ordinary 'coloured' woman's word into some grander abstraction was not questioned. When I deconstructed this incident, it became clear that the minister's position of power at the table (as spokesperson) and as head of a

congregation, allowed him to translate others' contribution into (literally) his own terms. In the process, the logic by which he allowed himself the freedom to translate left the 'coloured' women out. What would it have meant to the woman and to the minister, had he honoured her contribution by quoting her? I understood that day that language is seen and used 'as a system of power relations rather than a transparent medium' (Heshushius & Ballard 1996:9).

Within theology too, an absence of passion and the predominance of the rational have shaped and marked a specific use of language. Soelle (1990:72) comments: 'So-called scientific theology is normally unconscious speech – that is, it is unaware of emotion, insensible to human experience, expressing a kind of ghostly neutralism without interests and without invitation, with no desire to be effectual.' Therefore, the voices and emotions of the poor do not reach the church which gives them soup to eat in its soup kitchens. The disregard for the voices and experiences of the poor as a resource for theology means the gradual disregard for, or silencing of, the voices of the poor and of women in the church and in the discipline of pastoral theology. This in turn means that theology remains untouched, invulnerable to the emotional appeals that the poor may make.

To counteract these technologies of disconnection, I therefore consciously chose to include Aunt Liz's emotive language in the body of this thesis, and not to relegate it to an addendum. The deliberate inclusion of Aunt Liz's own voice and her exact words as the source for pastoral reflection in this chapter therefore demonstrate that justice in a feminist epistemology becomes visible in the choice of research methodology (an interview that was transcribed). For the same reason, I included the Scottsville women in my presentation to the Dutch Reformed Church in Welgemoed. At the South African Association for Pastoral (SAAP) work conference in 2006, women from Scottsville co-presented our workshop with me (see Section 4.4).

### **3.4.1 Afrikaans**

The classifying pastoral principle that was discussed in Section 3.3 also had a profound influence on the status afforded to different types of spoken Afrikaans, the home language of 'coloured' people over the past century. What was described as 'standard Afrikaans' has become equated with White Afrikaans. 'Coloured' Afrikaans was not

only accorded marginal status because it was ‘different to the norm’, but because it was considered to be an unrefined, even vulgar, diversion from of the norm. Hence, Adhikari (2005:16) states: ‘The Afrikaans vernacular distinctive of the ‘coloured’ community...has, for example, customarily been stigmatized as a mark of social inferiority.’ The stigmatisation of non-white varieties of Afrikaans has only recently started making way for recognition.

To appreciate and fully recognise ‘non-white’ Afrikaans as part of the norm requires a revision of what is considered to be the norm. Stell (2006:16) quotes Coetzee regarding a new ‘norm of frequent usage’, which she opposed to the then common yardstick of ‘the standard usage of a group of socially leading speakers’. The current prescriptive standards for Afrikaans usage mean that the ‘language reality’ of ‘coloured’ Afrikaans is still regarded as being outside of the norm. Stell (2006:15) notes that the latest dictionary edition of the *Afrikaanse Woordelys en Spelreëls* or AWS (2002) devoted a whole section to lexical items of mainly English origin (such as *ghoebaai/koebaai* (‘good bye’), *besides/besaai* (‘besides’), and categorises these as *Omgangsafrikaans* (colloquial Afrikaans). ‘However, these items are not recognised as “standard”’ (Stell 2006:15). The categorising process that has set the norm for ‘standard Afrikaans’ still relegates ‘coloured’ Afrikaans on the margins.

### **3.4.2 Language: ‘the new strategic possibility’**

Paul Veyne (1986:229) suggests that Foucault introduced an ethic that refuses a dualistic function, not to ‘establish as finally true what everyone would like to believe’. Therefore, the transformations lie in the self: ‘... it is no longer necessary to wait for the revolution to begin to realize ourselves: the self is the new strategic possibility’ (Veyne 1986:231). Many feminists would disagree with Veyne and contend that, for Foucault, the subject is always bound by discourse – hence his work represents the ‘denial of an autonomous subject’ (Oksala 2005:1). However, I believe that Foucault (cited in Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982:216) regards the presence of discourses not only as a constitutive force, but also as a force that could be refused, and within it, the kind of individuality that it fosters:

Maybe the target nowadays is not to discover what we are, but to refuse what we are. We have to imagine and build up what we could be to get rid of this kind of political ‘double bind’ which is the simultaneous individualization and totalization of modern power

structures. The conclusion would be that the political, ethical, social, philosophical problem of our day is not to try to liberate the individual from the state...but to liberate us both from the state and from the type of individualization which is linked to the state. We have to promote new forms of subjectivity through the refusal of this kind of individuality which has been imposed on us for several centuries.

The methodologies of feminist theology and of narrative therapy in this research have to do with a refusal of the ‘individualization and totalization of modern power structures’ through which people have lost or have been denied a voice and language of their own. Moreover, Davies et al (2006:90) argue that subjects are not only produced through dominant discourses, but also because of the ‘new possibilities opening up through language’. In this chapter, I try to create space for a new description of subjection through the language of one of its victims. In Chapters 4 and 6, I refer to the various ways in which this research has developed new uses of language as sites of struggle and possibility.

### **3.5 HISTORY OF THE DISCOURSES OF POVERTY AND SUBJUGATION: A PERSPECTIVE FROM THE SUBJUGATED**

The title of this thesis indicates that this research reflects on the challenges that poverty poses. In Chapter 2, I have used a Foucauldian analysis to describe poverty and its association with discourses of violence and control. I described the effects that power relations have had on the formation of discourses of control that subjected not only the bodies (bio-power) of the marginalised, especially young people, but also defined the limits of what becomes possible in their lives. In this chapter, I suggest, again through Foucauldian analysis, how the discourse of control has legitimised a particular form of pastorate whose object was submission and obedience.

In this chapter, I reflect on how pastoral power has developed and how this development challenges us to take a critical look at how these power relations contribute to people’s marginalisation and to poverty. However, to illustrate what these challenges constitute, I let one of the research participants tell the story of pastoral power and of poverty ‘from the underside’. In the next chapter, I elaborate on how feminist theology has provided me with an epistemological resource for doing this research as a pastoral response to some of the challenges posed by poverty.

For the purposes of giving an epistemological framework within which Aunt Liz's story needs to be read, I briefly note that the identification with the marginalised as a theological theme was introduced through contextual theology, which includes both liberation and feminist theologies. Identification with the poor leads to a need to define a new hermeneutic task for theology, namely to interpret the gospel in terms of historical and social contexts (De Gruchy 1994:10) and to analyse the structural and personal violence that leads to people's marginalisation. Feminist theology adds the dimensions of listening, acknowledging and responding to the experiences of marginalisation on an interpersonal level: 'Feminism is a political and public enterprise built out of a commitment to the experience of those who are disadvantaged in the cultural power arrangements. It is very personal in that it is built out of the hearing and privileging of those disadvantaged and normally ignored perspectives, and it is always political' (Cozad Neuger 1996:92-93). This research as feminist research therefore acknowledges that research cannot rely only on philosophers and theologians to describe the history of poverty, pastoral power and its effects. This research as feminist theological research therefore privileges Aunt Liz's first-hand account of pastoral power.

In a feminist poststructuralist epistemology, it is recognised that the aim of possibility has to work with and through language (bell hooks 1990; Davies et al 2006:90; McClintock Fulkerson 2000) and the body (Davies et al 2006:90). Therefore the next section of this chapter is an example of the combination of poststructuralist and feminist epistemologies in research: it describes the operation of pastoral power and its effects through the direct languaging of a poor 'coloured' woman of her experiences of that power. Aunt Liz's languaging of experience, the narrative itself and its inclusion in the thesis thereby acknowledge her as an authority on pastoral power. In this way, she literally speaks her authority into existence, and thus becomes the object of her own and others' discursive practices (Davies 1991:47), which include the discourse of voice, which has political consequences.

Davies et al (2006:92) also describe the role of memory that serves as 'data that can be analysed to produce insights into the processes of subjectification – that is, the dual processes through which we become specific individuals actively taking up as our own the terms of our subjection, and through which we are categorized, totalized and governed.' What the following conversation adds to the theme of power is the vividly

described details of experiences of loss and pain associated with the pastoral power to which she was subjected. By describing the processes of subjectification, Aunt Liz is reconstituting herself as a speaking subject who can see how she has been discursively constituted and who can critique the terms of those discourses through which she was ‘categorized, totalized and governed’ (Davies et al 2006:92). By speaking her memories, and by its inclusion in this thesis, Aunt Liz becomes a ‘subject who is in process, a verb rather than a noun’ (Davies et al 2006:93). She is no longer only the totalised subject of her memories, but the active, speaking subject who analyses them, and whose sharing of them with me brings about a change in my understanding of the terms of her subjection and also of her resistance.

### **3.5.1 Elizabeth Cupido narrates history**

During the time of the forced removals in South Africa, one family that had to move three times was the family of Aunt Liz (Elizabeth) Cupido of Douglas in the Northern Cape. Aunt Liz, who now resides in Scottsville, and whom I got to know through the lay counselling sessions (see Section 4.2) that I offered in the community, agreed to talk with me for the purposes of this thesis.

When I started reading Foucault, I realised that I only knew the outlines of how the institutionalised power of the apartheid government, through the policy or ‘strategy’ as Foucault calls it, of forced removals, had affected Aunt Liz. I also realised that a poststructuralist analysis obliges me to inquire about the history of the ‘meticulous, often minute techniques’ (Foucault 1995:139) of power with the objective of subjecting the bodies of ‘coloured’ people. Benhabib (1992:222) argues that for ‘Foucault there is no history of the victims but only a history of the construction of victimization’, but feminism is interested in the recovery/uncovery/discovery of the experiences of those whose voices have been silent due to victimisation. This distinction influenced the research methodology. *Poststructuralist analysis* that describes the construction of victimisation is relevant because, without it, the construction of discourses of control that keep poor people subjugated would not become visible. The ‘terms of the existence’, if you will, of both poverty and injustice thereby become clearer. But this research also subscribes to a *feminist theological epistemology* that centralises the narratives of the victims of those processes described by means of poststructuralist analysis. What such a methodology contributes to the research is that it makes effects of

injustice clear in human terms. Both the poststructuralist and feminist epistemologies therefore deal with pastoral power in this research, but from different and complementary perspectives.

The excerpt below of a conversation I had with Aunt Liz Cupido in Scottsville (Cupido 2008) makes visible the rationality that was implemented by the apartheid government in its exercise of power over the ‘coloured’ community. It also offers a painful description of the operation of bio-power on the bodies of ‘coloured’ people, and how the dislocation it intended contributed to poverty. Furthermore, Aunt Liz’s examples clearly illustrate how institutionalised power set in motion a series of power relations that subjected people’s bodies. Aunt Liz describes how the policy of forced removals led to actions that had far-reaching implications for her family. The family’s move not only changed her life as a child of eleven years old, but had a dramatic impact on her future.

<p><i>L: Toe gebeur dit. Ons moet ook trek. Dit is bekendgemaak dat hulle ‘n gholfbaan gaan bou...waar ons gewoon het. Ons klipkraal moes platgegooi word. My pa moes sy vee verkoop...waarvan hy verskriklike verliese gely het. En ‘n gholfbaan was gebou waar ons gewoon het.</i></p>	<p>L: Then it happened. We also had to move. It was announced that they were building a golf course where we lived. Our stone kraal had to be flattened. My father had to sell his livestock, which caused him to suffer terrible losses. And a golf course was built where we lived.</p>
<p><i>My ma het ‘n boerdery by die huis gehad... Middae as ons van die skool af kom het ons hoenderhokke toe gegaan en eiers uitgehaal want ons kliente moes eiers gekry het.</i></p>	<p>My mother ran a small farming business from home. In the afternoons when we got home from school, we went to the chicken coops to collect eggs, because our clients had to receive eggs.</p>
<p><i>T: So julle was deel van die besigheid?</i></p>	<p>T: So you were part of the business?</p>
<p><i>L: Ons was deel van die besigheid. Soggens het my broers gaan melk. En</i></p>	<p>L: We were part of the business. In the mornings my brothers did the milking.</p>

<p><i>elkeen wat skooltoe gegaan het, moes melk gaan deliver het...ons het sekere mense gehad.</i></p> <p><i>T: So dis nie net trek nie, dis 'n hele leefwyse...</i></p> <p><i>L: (hyg) Jy raak eintlik verarm ook. Kyk, van daardie inkomste kon my mammie ...op daardie stadium het Douglas mos nie 'n hoërskool gehad nie. En twee van my susters was toe al op hoërskool in Kimberley. So sy kon hulle losiesgeld betaal het. Sy't mos ons eie rokke gemaak, so sy kon haar material gekoop het.</i></p> <p><i>T: ...en toe's dit weggevat?</i></p> <p><i>L: (snak na asem) Weet u... die delwers... ons het gegroei soos broers en susters en skielik word dit uitmekaar uit gebreek ...Die nabyheid was toe nie meer daar nie. Jy moes gaan na daar waar hulle die council gebou het. En vandag is mens nog altyd bitter... (lang stilte) as jy so op die rantjie staan en jy kyk so...soos nou wat ek (daar) met vakansie gewees het...en soggens is die sproeiers aan op die gholfbaan. As jy dink dit was ons woonplek. Toe's dit vir hulle vir 'n plesier. Dit bring bitterheid mee. Mense moet weer gaan begin om 'n huisie te meubiler...want daai meubels breek ook mos met 'n trekkery. En onse pragtige skool, onse pragtige skool...ons kon uitgegaan</i></p>	<p>And everyone who went to school had to deliver milk...we each had certain people.</p> <p>T: So it's not only about moving, it's about a whole way of life...</p> <p>L: (pants) One actually also becomes impoverished. Look, from that income my mom could...at that time Douglas did not have a high school. And two of my sisters were already attending high school in Kimberley. So she could pay their boarding fees. She made our own dresses, so she could buy her fabric.</p> <p>T: ...and then it was taken away?</p> <p>L: (gasps for breath) You know, the diggers...we grew up as brothers and sisters and it was torn apart... Then the closeness was no longer there. You had to go to where they had built the small council house. And today one is still bitter... (long silence) when you stand on the ridge and you look... like recently when I was there on holiday... and in the mornings, the sprinklers are (spraying) on the golf course. If you consider that this was our home. Then it was for them, for their pleasure. It causes bitterness. People had to start all over again furnishing their small house, because furniture breaks during a move. And our lovely school, our lovely school...when it was apricot season,</p>
---	---

<p><i>het as dit appelkoostyd is dan pluk jy appelkose op die skooljaart, ons granate ...onse pragtige kerk, ons pastorie...</i></p> <p><i>T: Wat het daarmee gebeur?</i></p> <p><i>L: Afgebreek. Dit was mos in die dorp.</i></p> <p><i>T: Is die kerk en die skool afgebreek?</i></p> <p><i>L: ...die kerk en die skool en die pastorie is afgebreek. Al wat daar staan...ek kan jou vandag vat...is die twee pilare waaraan die klok gehang het. (Stilte)</i></p>	<p>we could go outside and then you pick apricots in the schoolyard...our pomegranates...our lovely church, our parsonage ...</p> <p>T: What happened to it?</p> <p>L: Demolished. As you know it was in the town.</p> <p>T: Were the church and the school demolished?</p> <p>L: ...the church and the school and the parsonage were demolished. All that is left ...I can take you there today... is the two pillars that supported the bell. (Silence).</p>
--	--

What struck me too when I listened to the tape recording again later, was the purposeful destruction of a particularly pastoral way of life. I asked Aunt Liz about her understanding of the effects these events had on community life.

<p><i>L: Mense se moraal het gedaal. Mense het begin sukkel...Weet u dis bitter bitter jare wat ek nou van praat...Tot vandag. Nou soos ek nou hier praat, het hulle 'n saaltjie vir die Lutherse kerk gebou. Met die bietjie geld wat hulle uitbetaal het, kon hulle net 'n saaltjie gebou het.</i></p>	<p>L: People were demoralised. People started to struggle...Those were bitter years, you know...Until today. As I am speaking to you, they have (only) built a small hall for the Lutheran church. With the small amount of compensation money that they paid, they could only build a small hall.</p>
--	--

Aunt Liz told me that when she was ten or eleven, they had to move house because of the Group Areas Act (see Section 2.1.1.2). Until then, her mother's small-scale farming business enabled her mother to send Aunt Liz's two older sisters to Kimberley, as she could afford the hostel fees. To get a high school education, in those days, 'coloured'

young people from Douglas had to go to Kimberley, 107 kilometres away. There was only a white high school in Douglas at the time. As a result of this particular forced removal, the family had to give up its farming business. This, in turn, meant that when it was time for Liz to go to Kimberley, there was no money to pay the hostel fees. She had to leave school.

<p><i>L: My mammie sal dit altyd sê hoe't ek gehuil want ek wil ook gaan, ek wil ook gaan. I always wanted to be a nurse... (snikke). Sy kon nie my hoërskool toe stuur nie, want daar was nie geld nie. ...Die onregverdige stelsel het van my af weggevat dat ek kon nie verder gaan studeer nie. Hy't onse toekoms geskaad.</i></p>	<p>L: My mother will always recount how I cried because I also wanted to go, I also wanted to go (to high school). I always wanted to be a nurse (sobs). She could not send me to high school, because there was no money. The unjust system took (high school) education away from me. It damaged our future.</p>
--	--

I then asked Aunt Liz about her experiences at the time of being treated differently to white people. She replied:

<p><i>L: ... dan mag jy nie by die kafee inkom nie, jy moes daar by die venstertjie gekoop het. Ons het gekom by die poskantoor, dan is daar 'n apartheidsmuur. Dan moet ons by die klein venstertjie onse goed gekoop het. Jy kom by die dokter, dan moet jy buite sit op 'n bankie. Jy kom by die bioscope, dan moet ons bo sit. Hoe gemaak nou? Jy moet maar inval.</i></p>	<p>L:...then you couldn't go inside the café, you had to buy at the small window. When you got to the post office, there was an apartheid wall. Then we had to buy what we needed at the small window. When you got to the doctor, you had to sit outside on a bench. When you got to the bioscope, you had to sit upstairs. What could you do? You had to submit.</p>
--	--

I then asked Aunt Liz what these experiences had done to her relationship with white

people. She replied:

<p><i>L: Ek dink daar was geen verhouding nie. Want jy sien hulle net as mense wat vir jou verinneweer het en geneem het wat...Kyk, hulle het mos die mag gehad. So daar was net gevat en gemaak net wat hulle wil. Dis so onmenslik gewees...</i></p>	<p>L: I think there was no relationship. Because you see them only as people who have damaged you and who took what...Look, they had the power. So they just took and did exactly what they wanted. It was so inhumane.</p>
--	---

I asked her if she thought that the white church should have taken a stand against these injustices.

<p><i>L: Therese, hoe kon die kerk 'n ander standpunt inn neem? Dominee preek nou vir ons van die groot liefde van God....van die altaar af né...en as Dominee by die huis kom dan moet sy bediende buite sit met 'n blikbeker en 'n blikskottel en daai goed mag nie eers in die kombuis kom nie. Daai goed word onder die kraan gewas. Nou hoe bring jy die twee bymekaar? Twee, drie minute gelede het Dominee vir ons vertel van die groot liefde van God ...maar as Dominee huis toe gaan, (doen) Dominee wat die regering sê. (Cupido 2008)</i></p>	<p>L: Therese, how could the church take up another position? Now the minister preaches to us...from the pulpit...about the great love of God...and when the minister gets home his maid has to sit outside with a tin cup and a tin dish and those were not even allowed inside the kitchen. Those things were rinsed (outside) under the tap. Now how do you reconcile these things? Two, three minutes ago, the minister told us about the great love of God...but when the minister goes home, he does what the government tells him to.</p>
---	--

### 3.5.2 A poststructuralist reading of Aunt Liz's story

Foucault distinguishes between *institutions* of power and *techniques* by which power presents itself in and through these institutions: '...techniques of power present at every

level of the social body and utilized by very diverse institutions (the family and the army, schools and the police, individual medicine and the administration of collective bodies)...also acted as factors of segregation and social hierarchization...guaranteeing relations of domination and effects of hegemony' (Foucault 1976b:141). In the next section I focus on the various institutions and techniques of pastoral power and their objectives that became visible through Aunt Liz's story.

### ***3.5.2.1 Laws and their intentionality***

One of Foucault's most provocative proposals about power concerns the *intentionality* in power relations: '...there is no power that is exercised without a series of aims and objectives' (Foucault 1976b:95). Foucault points out that these objectives do not result 'from the choice or decision of an individual subject'; instead 'the rationality of power is characterised by tactics that are often quite explicit at the restricted level where they are inscribed... tactics which, becoming connected to one another, but finding their base of support and their condition elsewhere, end by forming comprehensive systems'. The question then arises how we can uncover this intention. The answer lies in the methodology of genealogy, which starts with the practices themselves: 'For it is the practices, focused in technologies and innumerable localizations, which literally embody what the analyst is seeking to understand' (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982:187).

However, there is a difference between the description of the practices from the position of the philosopher and that of the victim herself. Aunt Liz's words make real what the enforcement of the (invisible) law of forced removals did to the bodies of a 'coloured' family, what specifically was destroyed of their school and church, and the destruction of community life. The intention behind these actions was the seizure of the land belonging to 'coloured' people by the local authorities, who used the policy of the state to legitimise its action in order to build a golf course. As witnesses to her story, we have uncovered the injustice of this intention, and the tactics and the comprehensive systems that were formed, as details of Aunt Liz's story unfolded.

Foucault refers to power 'as something which circulates, or rather as something which only *functions in the form of a chain*' (Foucault 1976b:98, my italics). I discovered that power as a political strategy also has long-term, 'chain-like' consequences in terms of the possibilities it closed down for Aunt Liz. Aunt Liz discovered that the possibilities

of education for her were limited because of the implementation of political power through the policy of forced removals. In a modernist paradigm, her lack of high school education may have been simply explained as a result of poverty or of some inherent disqualification in Aunt Liz's own thinking or ability. A poststructuralist analysis, by contrast, reveals that poverty is not a neutral state of existence; specific strategies of power intentionally functioned in the form of a chain: the family's livelihood was taken away, which led to increased poverty in the family, which meant that there was no money for an education for Aunt Liz, which meant that she had to start working in a butchery.

Under the heading of 'defining injustice as domination and oppression', Marion Young (1990:37-38) describes the role of institutionalised power in society as that which creates or obstructs opportunities: 'Oppression consists in systematic institutional processes which prevent some people from learning and using satisfying and expansive skills in socially recognized settings, or institutionalized social processes which inhibit people's ability to play and communicate with others or to express their feelings and perspective on social life in contexts where others can listen.' Young's words are particularly poignant in the light of Aunt Liz's story; the same actions that extended and improved white people's ability to play (golf), obstructed opportunities for a livelihood for Aunt Liz's family, which prevented her from learning. Because we heard Aunt Liz's descriptions of the effects of 'bio-power' on her body and on the bodies of 'coloured' communities at the time, we discover the cruel intentionality of this form of power and what that power did. These discoveries could not have been made visible in any other way than through the accounts of Aunt Liz herself, as a marginalised person.

According to Foucault, therefore the 'problem bio-power has succeeded in establishing is how to make welfare institutions work; it does not ask, "What do they mean" ... but rather "what do they do?"' (Foucault in Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982:196). As I was writing this chapter, I realised that the methodology of genealogy urged me to ask questions about power, not in terms of what it meant, but what it did and was still doing. The only way in which I could retrieve the details of bio-power, of what it did, was through the description of a victim herself. Feminist theology honours the experiences of women's voices as a vital resource for theological and pastoral reflection and meaning. Aunt Liz's story can therefore be read as both a personal and a social description of the mechanisms of Foucault's bio-power. By 'hearing' Aunt Liz's own

voice, we as her audience honour her pain of being subjected to that power. Through Aunt Liz's powerful telling, we discover that any historiography cannot exclude an analysis of the mechanisms whereby people are victimised. Nor can it ignore the very real details that form the chain of pastoral power and its effects in the history of the victim: a demolished kraal, a mother's words that there is no money, work as an assistant in a butchery, Douglas's golf course and Aunt Liz's sobs.

One of the most significant ways in which pastoral power as control over others was executed, and which becomes clear through Aunt Liz's story, was the creation of 'docile bodies'. 'Docile bodies' are subjugated bodies that will obey orders. Hence, docile bodies can be forcibly removed from their homes so that their land may be used. Foucault (1979a:41) traces the historical development of this form of power that exercised itself through social production and social services.

### ***3.5.2.2 Pastoral power and the intention of docile bodies***

Aunt Liz told me about the various institutions in a rural town which acted as 'factors of segregation and social hierarchization', such as not being allowed inside the shop, having to wait outside on a bench at the doctor or sitting at the back of the cinema. The word she used to describe the act of submission to the greater power was '*inval*' (falling in with, submitting). This discourse of submission links with another discourse already discussed in this chapter, namely that of 'knowing your place.'

The intention of these strategies and institutions of bio-power was to create 'docile' bodies' (Foucault 1995:138) that could submit ('*inval*', 'know their place'). According to Foucault (1995:136-7), what was new about the techniques of the eighteenth century regarding the control of the body was the scale and the object of the control. Foucault (1995:137) uses examples of how the bodies of soldiers, for instance, were controlled in the most minute details: in movement, attitudes and gestures, through methods of uninterrupted supervision and coercion: 'These methods, which made possible the meticulous control of operations of the body, which assured the constant subjection of its forces and imposed upon them a relation of docility-utility, might be called "disciplines"'. As we have learnt from Aunt Liz, similar disciplines were put in place to submit and control the body under apartheid.

A poststructuralist analysis of bio-power and its operation in Aunt Liz's life tempers the

idealism that sees power relations in simple, linear terms. It acknowledges the fusion of various elements of control over different times and on different levels of community life and on the body of its subject. It also recognises the dynamics of power relations in how they continue to shape perceptions and discourses of possibility, norms, visibility and legitimacy.

### ***3.5.2.3 The white church and pastoral power***

Foucault's inquiry leads us to question 'the type of rationality implemented in the exercise of state power' (Foucault 1979b:192). In the South African context, it prompts research as historical analysis of the exercising of the church's pastoral power and of the ways in which this particular rationality shaped and legitimised the technologies of power wielded by a 'Christian' government.

Marginalised people such as Aunt Liz experienced the discrepancy between, for instance, the central value of love in Scripture and the actions of Christian politicians and the clergy in South Africa. In my conversation with Aunt Liz (Cupido 2008), I asked her about the fact that the white churches at the time of the forced removals in South Africa did not take a stand against these injustices. Her reply (Cupido 2008) speaks of the fusion between political and pastoral power in South Africa and the lasting lack of trust this fusion generated towards the white men in the church: '*Twee, drie minute gelede het Dominee vir ons vertel van die groot liefde van God ...maar as Dominee huis toe gaan, (doen) Dominee wat die regering sê.*' ('Two, three minutes ago the minister told us about the great love of God... but when the minister goes home, he does what the government tells him to.')

When I asked Aunt Liz about what restorative steps the 'white' Dutch Reformed church could start to take, she replied: '*Jy weet nie of die man opreg is in dit wat hy sê nie.*' ('You can't trust people...You do not know if the person is sincere in what he is saying.')

I then asked her if she was in a position where she could make any suggestions that were being heard, what these would be. Aunt Liz was hesitant. She struggled to find words, then finally said: '*Wat ek kan sê sal nutteloos wees vir hulle...*' ('What I can tell them will be worthless to them...')

Her comment speaks of the experience of a pastoral power of submission that was enforced over many generations. The type of rationality that favours control is a type of

rationality that regards the voices of those who have been controlled as of little or no consequence. Aunt Liz's experience is that in such a tradition of pastoral power, a 'coloured' woman's voice has no value and no legitimacy. Hence the political power of feminist theology is that it attempts to introduce a different pastoral power that brings a new 'rationality', one that not only values the voices of those who had previously been silenced, but also centralises those voices in its methodology. In terms of facing up to the reality of poverty in the 'coloured' community, the call to justice and the ways in which this call shaped the methodology of this research is explored in more detail in the next two chapters.

#### ***3.5.2.4 Personal implications***

In a poststructuralist epistemology, a researcher is not outside of that which he or she researches. A poststructuralist researcher therefore does not claim neutrality, but admits that the ways in which he or she has been constituted influence how he or she listens and what he or she hears (Davies & Harré 1991:58). As a speaking, writing and (in this case) listening poststructuralist researcher, I am therefore not only historically situated in relation to Aunt Liz's story, but also bring my own gender, race and education to my listening and my understanding of her story. By listening to Aunt Liz's accounts of pastoral power, I had an opportunity to hear the operation of discourses of control, to be moved by them and to (re)position myself as a white person in relation to those discourses.

Following on from our conversation, I therefore wrote Aunt Liz a letter. In my letter, I tried to make visible to Aunt Liz how her telling had shaped my understandings of poverty, of pastoral power and of her influence on my life and work. The letter therefore documents the 'constantly-in-process-subjecthood' (Davies 2006 et al:90) of the researcher working in a poststructuralist paradigm.

In my letter to Aunt Liz, I told her how her story had moved me. I also told her of the ways in which I had listened myself into her story. I argue in Chapter 5 that for far too long, the discipline of pastoral theology has isolated itself from listening into the stories that are told by the poor. There is a danger in postmodern times that stories of suffering are acknowledged as real, but are listened to in a removed way. As pastoral theologians, we may recognise and even empathise, but we do not allow stories of suffering to affect

or challenge us. In centralising Aunt Liz's story in this chapter, I am purposefully extending the possibilities of pastoral care as discipline to include my listening to and hearing how pastoral power is at work in my own life.

Foucault's unique combination of archaeology and genealogy therefore enabled me to go beyond hermeneutics to current real life political and social problems: 'The practitioner of interpretive analytics realizes that he himself is produced by what he is studying; consequently he can never stand outside it' (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982:124-125). Without such a critical reflection on my own power as an educated researcher/white person/adult and on the terms in which that power operates, I am in danger of duplicating the kind of relations in which the poor experience marginalisation. Hence, Sharon Welch (1997:127) contends:

The solution to the crisis of political theory is not the abdication of power, but an exercise of power that co-exists with an ironic awareness of our limits and our potential for error and harm. That means moving beyond a logic of dualism and constructing new vocabularies for social analysis that are capable of creating group cohesion and motivating political action without demonizing our opponents or ignoring our mistakes....Our theories must propel us to take the risks that are necessary for sustained social struggle.

My letter to Aunt Liz (3 February 2008) that followed on from her narration (a translation of the letter is included in its entirety below) as retold in this chapter therefore made my listening visible and included my ironic awareness of how I had benefited from the same pastoral power (being able to write a doctoral thesis) that denied her the opportunities to study beyond primary school level.

In line with Welch's contention, the 'challenge of poverty' that Aunt Liz's story therefore posed to me as a researcher is bound up with my willingness to write myself into her painful story of pastoral power. Aunt Liz's story therefore also serves as an invitation to the white church community of Douglas too to take account of itself and to see how it directly benefited from this pastoral power.

*Dear Aunt Liz*

*With this letter I want to thank you for making time to tell me how your life was affected by an unjust political system. As I listened back to our conversation, I was moved again*

*to hear what had been destroyed during the removals. In my mind's eye I can see the kraal destroyed, the cows sold, the chickens gone and with it the practice of collecting eggs from their warm nests in the afternoons after school. I think about the lovely school and its apricot trees from which you were allowed to pick apricots in summer – demolished. I also see the twelve-year-old girl who cried when she realised that she would never become a nurse. What struck me again was the fact that the same unjust system that denied you the opportunity to study was the one that offered me opportunities to do so. It is a fact for which I too bear the blame, and yet cannot change. I am so sorry about this.*

*When I think of you, I remember all the painful stories of losses you've shared with me over the years. However, with these stories also came the stories of balm, of people who care, of faith that remains, of not allowing bitterness to have the last say, of deepening compassion.*

*Thank you, Aunt Liz, for both: the stories of losses and those of hope. Of tears and laughter shared. I am including them both in my thesis, but especially the tears. In this way you, who could not go to high school, occupy an important place in my thesis on power abuse and poverty. It is my hope that your examples will make the injustices more real, especially to those who have benefited from them.*

*It is my hope that more white South Africans will begin to see in their mind's eye the demolished apricot trees and the child who could no longer go to school. Your stories remind me of how easily I can remain blind to how 'progress', like Douglas's golf course, comes at a price. In future I will look more intensely and ask more questions, because of what you have told me.*

*Thank you, Aunt Liz, for also reminding me that we have to reach towards the future. Thank you for encouraging me not to let myself be dragged down by a spirit of indifference amongst both white and 'coloured' people...*

*With love and appreciation,*

*Therese*

### **3.5.3 Presentation at a theological conference**

On 25 June 2009, Aunt Liz and I travelled to Stellenbosch to present her story at the Joint Conference of Academic Societies in the Fields of Religion and Theology, held to celebrate 150 years of theological training at the Faculty of Theology at the University of Stellenbosch. The title of our presentation was ‘Foucault and Ms Elizabeth Cupido: rethinking pastoral power, poverty and privilege’ (see Addendum 1 for the invitation posted outside the venue where the presentation was held). A poem I had written for Aunt Liz, based on what she had told me, also formed part of the invitation (see Addendum 2 for the poem, *Lament for Douglas*). A transcript of the presentation is included as Addendum 3. Aunt Liz participated in the form of a pre-recorded six-minute video interview I did with her at her home in Scottsville on 11 June 2009. Although this interview was much shorter, thematically this interview was similar to the one I conducted with Aunt Liz in January 2008. A copy of the DVD shown at the presentation is attached as Addendum 4.

### **3.6 THE RETRIEVAL OF PASSION: THE PASTORAL CHALLENGE**

In this chapter I have made a case for the implementation of a critical rationality as a vital part of understanding the operations of pastoral power and how it has affected, and still affects, the lives of poor people. What I have discovered through this research is that, in tandem with this critical epistemology, another stance is required to be able to see and respond to the struggles and pain of the poor. It is a stance that goes beyond rational and statistical descriptions of poverty and ties in with Foucault’s question about what the absence of passion has meant for the Christian pastorate (see Section 3.2). I will answer this question in two ways: firstly, as it relates to the exclusion of actual poor people and their passions and, secondly, as it relates to discourses of a theology and research that exclude passion as a legitimate resource for working in poor communities.

To get to a different kind of (passionate) knowing of pastoral power, I used Aunt Liz’s embodied and affective modes of awareness, as suggested by Heshusius and Ballard (1996:2), as legitimate primary sources of knowledge in this chapter. Somatic and affective modes of knowing ‘refer to direct modes of knowing, to actual locations of primary knowledge, to primary sources of information’ (Heshusius & Ballard 1996:14).

Hence, Aunt Liz's direct, real and personal descriptions of apricot trees and Douglas's golf course enter the pastoral arena. The purposeful retrieval of the experiences of poor people *in their own language* in this chapter and elsewhere in this thesis therefore returns to the pastorate those passions that have been lost.

The primary resources of this research as practical theology were therefore not books, but the 'living human documents' of Scottsville and my evolving embodied relationship with them. In feminist theology I found an epistemology that supported a research approach that regarded as legitimate the experiences of poor people, especially women and young people (the heading of Chapter 4, 'A feminist theological epistemology as resource and point of reference' reflects this concern). In my conversations with poor people it therefore became important for me consciously to honour their passion and somatic forms of awareness. I knew how standards of objectivity and rationality have led previously silenced people often to disqualify their own somatic knowledges. Aunt Liz (Cupido 2008) told me that she had always wanted to be a nurse, but that she had changed her mind many years later, after having done a course in patient home-care. She said: '*...maar toe besef ek... ai, ag nee... ek sou saam met al die pasiënte gehuil het...*' ('Then I realized ...oh no... I would have cried with all the patients...'). I then asked: '*Is dit nie die soort nurse waarvan ons meer nodig het nie?!*' ('Are those not the kind of nurses we need more of?!'). The robust laughter that followed spoke to me of Aunt Liz's understanding of how my question questioned the legitimacy of the rational discourse that promotes distance and disconnection in nursing and how such a discourse disallows tears. In that moment we both knew and acknowledged the importance of tears and the kind of care of which it was an embodiment.

At the same time, the poor people I came to know taught me that to be able to respond appropriately, I too needed to experience their reality and its challenges somatically. Hearing Aunt Liz's sobs as she remembered how she could not go to high school, sensing the fear of young people sharing their experiences of abuse, seeing and smelling poverty, brought passion into circulation for me. It became the presence of passion that fuelled my commitment to keep working in Scottsville.

Embodied awareness and passion of the pastoral researcher, of necessity, poses serious challenges to practical theology. It challenges the rationality itself that turned practical theology into primarily an intellectual practice. In Chapter 5, I elaborate theoretically on

the feminist theme of embodiment and the challenge it poses to practitioners of pastoral care in South Africa. Therefore, my emphasis on the theme of embodiment in the context of pastoral power does not imply that this research took up a dualist position in favour of embodied knowledge *against* rational knowledge. The poststructuralist analyses I did in Chapters 2, 3 and 5 are proof of my regard for analytical thought in understanding and describing the contextuality, dynamics and effects of power relations.

My emphasis on embodiment is meant as an epistemological act of retrieval of passion in pastoral relations and of recognising our own bodies as undervalued sources of knowledge and of the doing of justice (see Section 5.5). In retrieving these sources of knowledge, I believe we are creating a poststructuralist epistemological point of departure from which to conduct and describe research anew.

Therefore a genealogical look at the historic role that pastoral care currently plays in poor communities reveals authoritarian regimes of power in which there are those ('on pedestals') who decide to give and those who are left receiving. It also challenges a discourse of absolute power inherent in the strategies of distance in current Western religious traditions (Welch 1990:116). Pastoral power has an important consequence for theological research. If a researcher views the power of research as the power of controlling its outcome, that researcher may give up (or not even dare to start) in the face of all poverty's challenges. Sharon Welch (1990:113) states that a 'theology that emphasizes the absolute power of God holds as an ideal type of power not possible for those working for justice. The expectation of certain victory leads middle-class activists to disillusionment in the face of defeat, to cynicism in the face of partial remedies to overwhelming problems, or to acquiescence to the efficient, triumphal workings of even unjust power'.

Although a poststructuralist epistemology intellectually sensitised me to the dangers and effects of power as control, and to how power determines the ethnicity of our relationships with the other, it was feminist theology that offered me a practical and workable alternative. The alternative methodology provided by feminist theology is grounded in love. Sharon Welch (1990:110) describes the foundation of analysis and action in all liberation theologies (and that includes feminist theology) as a passionate and expansive love for the oppressed. In response to the criticism levelled at liberation theology's agenda as 'naïve' in the face of social evil, Welch (1990:110) states: 'When I

fully love myself, my people, and others who are oppressed, my hope for our lives is expanded. I begin to question whether previously accepted limits are actually necessary. What emerges is not the naïve denial of any genuine limits but a sophisticated questioning of what a social system has set as “genuine limits”.’ In Chapter 4, I describe the ways in which the women of Scottsville and I participated in re-describing theology as passionate praxis.

### **3.7 RECOGNISING THE PASTORAL PEDESTAL AND GETTING OFF IT**

An aspect of Welch’s argument that I find persuasive is the point that love for the oppressed is bound up with the questioning of limits, also of one’s own position in the social system and the limits and controls that we can allow/disallow ourselves to be guided by. Therefore, ‘seeing poststructurally’ in this research meant that the kinds of rationality that had previously denied or obstructed possibilities (as the title of the thesis suggests) in my own thinking became visible to me. Such a critique of the social rationality or ‘terms’ within which pastoral relations are conducted began in practice when I started out working in the community from ‘the pedestal’ (a compassionate pedestal but a pedestal no less) of therapeutic knowledges. Offering talks on abusive practices left me in control and on the pedestal. It also left me feeling alienated and disconnected. Many people such as Doreen, Mr Foster and Mr Noach kindly and patiently opened my eyes to the rationality of control. But it was mostly witnessing the young people and the techniques that subjected them that alerted me to how an ethic of control operated and to the dangers of duplicating it in my own pastoral practices. I have come to agree that ‘power as control cannot function as the basis for a Christian ethic of community without deep and violent self-contradiction. Yet such power has been and is the most prevalent understanding and practice of power within Christian community’ (Purvis 1993:21). If I wanted to do this research to create participatory pastoral practices that the research question refers to (see Section 1.3), for a start, I would have to get off my pedestal and stand alongside those who suffer.

A very sobering realisation that emerged during the course of the research was how easy it is to not to come alongside a suffering other. With the amount of work to be done, it became clear to me why it was so hard to maintain relations in the community. Young people would sometimes not come back to see me, parents who work will find it hard to take off time from work only to come and speak with me about how things have

improved. I realised how easy it was to not follow up, to make that phone call, to pop in to see how a family was. Many times, I left it to the parents while I knew that in the process I was letting go of my commitment to stay connected.

Becoming vulnerable to the complexities of lives lived in poverty therefore moved me to challenge my own heritage of certainties and control. I discovered that in the struggle to survive, in the reality of poverty, some issues have priority over others. The struggle to survive (50 young people in a class, an administratively overburdened educational system) may sap energy to such an extent that it stifles creativity in teachers.

In getting off my pedestal, I discovered that my capacity for true compassion grew, because I could start seeing the many ways in which a lack of resources and power as control continue to create obstacles in a marginalised school community.

Finally, Foucault has given me the gift of recognising the kind of rationality that supports the operation of power of control in my own life. His analyses have opened my eyes to see the chainlike effects of power and that to 'acknowledge one's limits includes acknowledging the limits of others, and it also includes acknowledging the potential wisdom and insights of others as well as oneself' (Welch 1995:239). By implication, Foucault has sensitised me to the fact that not knowing, not controlling may be *the* risk-taking stance that leads to true invitation to the other in research. This research therefore intended to enact such a new kind of pastoral power in a marginalised community, in which the knowledges of the poor become centralised and were honoured.

The following three chapters document how this research established 'pastoral' relations in the Scottsville community that were different to the relations of control, violence and *apatheia* described in the first three chapters. Pastoral power meant 'the refusal of this kind of individuality which has been imposed on us' (Foucault 1982:216) and the restoration of humanity, possibility and passion. Chapter 4 documents how women's narratives described pastoral power, not as control, but as caring, serving praxis. In Chapter 5, I discuss the relational and ethical challenges that 'the different other' poses to the believer and the researcher, and how this research crafted a response to these challenges. In Chapter 6, I reflect on the power of pastoral participation in the research and how it (re)activated passion and created possibilities in young people's lives.

## **CHAPTER 4:**

### **A FEMINIST THEOLOGICAL EPISTEMOLOGY AS RESOURCE AND POINT OF REFERENCE**

*To come to the knowledge you have not,  
you must go by a way in which you know not...*  
*(St John of the Cross, cited in Dombrowski 1992:24)*

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

St John of the Cross (1542-1591) was a Spanish mystic, a poet, a Carmelite friar and a major figure in the Catholic reformation (St John of the Cross s.a.). His words resonate with a stance that I as a feminist theologian took to relate to the experiences of poverty that I encountered, but also especially to coming to theological knowledge. My knowing that I ‘know not’ became the stance which invited poor people to share their experiences and knowledges with me. We could not foresee where that journey would take us. This chapter charts the ‘ways we knew not’ and that we travelled together in the research. This chapter also tells of how we came to knowledges about ourselves, God, pastoral care and community that we did not have before.

The previous chapters described, in great detail, the nature and seriousness of the injustices that particularly ‘coloured’ young people suffered and continue to suffer, in Scottsville and elsewhere. This chapter provides a practical theological response to these experiences of ‘coloured’ poverty and injustice in the Scottsville community. This chapter therefore provides a description of my understanding of feminist theology, and especially its links with the aims of the praxis of social transformation and possibilities of liberation theology.

The theme of social transformation is by definition a theme that addresses the issues of social injustice and theology’s response to it. Feminist theology concerns itself with all forms of exploitation and the discourses that support social injustice. Therefore, I discuss the relevance of feminist theology’s deconstruction of the discourses of patriarchy and kyriarchy (Schüssler Fiorenza 1999:127), in the light of faith. Feminist

theology is also a practical theology – hence, I discuss my understanding of praxis within a feminist epistemology, because it describes the practical terms of struggles for justice.

This chapter begins with a description of the research journey that led to my relationship with a group of women from Scottsville. My relationship with these women, their stories and the stories of my pastoral relations with them and with young people in the community became the resources from which I could relate to feminist theology and its understanding of Scripture and of Christian community.

## **4.2 THE RESEARCH JOURNEY THAT LED ME TO THE SCOTTSVILLE WOMEN**

When I set out doing research in the community, my aim was to work with teachers, supporting them. The aim was especially to provide them with therapeutic skills, and supervising and developing those skills in their relationships with children. In 2005, I presented two workshops at Petunia Primary with teachers on the topic of building relationships with young people. Between these two workshops, both the deputy principal, Mr Noach, and the principal, Mr Foster, and I had several conversations on themes that emerged during these workshops (see Section 2.3.3.2, under the subheadings ‘Conversations with Mr Foster and ‘Interviewing Mr Noach’). At the time, I consulted with individual teachers about the struggles they were experiencing, but I sensed that most of these teachers were not very enthusiastic about continuing with a formal training programme, as they already had too many meetings to attend and felt overburdened by administrative and educational responsibilities. In Chapter 7 (see particularly Section 7.4.1.1), I reflect on the mistakes I made in setting up this training programme, and the lessons I have learnt because of it.

Once I realised that I would not be working primarily with teachers, I shifted my attention to doing therapy with young people and families and, where appropriate, to involving teachers in these sessions. I also started having informal discussions with teachers. As I started adjusting my methodology from formal to informal discussion, I could sense more enthusiasm and a greater willingness to share from individual teachers (such as Mr Mathee, Ms Doreen Mentoor and Ms Priscilla du Plessis). Then it struck me that formal sessions where the principal was present made it impossible for many

teachers to participate freely, as they felt they were being watched and judged.

One day in September 2005, I spoke to Dr Johann Roux about this lay counselling training and the *cul de sac* in which I felt I was in the Scottsville context. Dr Roux was a supervisor at the Institute for Therapeutic Development (ITD) involved in teaching course work and supervising the internship of the master's and doctoral programmes in Pastoral Therapy. Both programmes were presented by the ITD in collaboration with the University of South Africa's Department of Practical Theology. Dr Roux told me that during a recent visit to the United States, he had come across initiatives to involve members from the community in supporting teachers and young people. Perhaps I needed to consider changing my focus to include the broader community.

In October 2005, one of the school's teachers invited me to present a talk on 'caring relationships' in the community hall at a Mothers-and-Daughters event organised by the school. At this event, I invited the women in the community who were interested in developing some counselling skills to contact me for a training programme that I was willing to present in the community. Joan Pieterse, Nerine Williams, Lena Fyfer, Doreen Mentoor, Anna Tarentaal, Liz Cupido (Aunt Liz) and Treselina Martin (Aunt Baai) joined this group (see Photo 3). Both Doreen and Nerine were teachers at Petunia Primary. Nerine was not a regular member of the group.

I was touched that Priscilla du Plessis, who could not join the group, but had participated as a teacher in one of the workshops I had presented at the school, encouraged her aunt, Liz Cupido, to join. I realised that in doing community work, I sometimes lost sight of the fact that my presence made sense to teachers without their ever voicing it. Many teachers would initially not speak directly with me, but I would sometimes 'get the message' that someone believed in what I did in an indirect way. By encouraging her aunt to attend, Priscilla indirectly told me that what I was offering could be meaningful to her aunt, who had just suffered the death of her only daughter.

Before our first actual session in March 2006, we discussed the purpose of our sessions. It seemed that most of the women wanted to develop skills in their conversations with children and young people. I realised that by offering lay counselling training to these women, I could enable them to develop skills that they could use as they showed

pastoral solidarity with marginalised people in their community.

I discussed the fact that our sessions formed part of this doctoral research project with them. I consulted with Elize Morkel, the clinical supervisor of my own therapeutic work for my master's degree, about the format and content of the sessions. I also used an advanced narrative therapy course presented by Elize Morkel in February 2006 to brainstorm my proposed training programme with colleagues. What emerged for me was that training in a context of poverty would focus not so much on language as on the stance (not-knowing, curious, respectful) that makes caring and listening possible and on the power relation between a counsellor and his or her counselees.

I then documented what the challenges were for me doing training in this context. I also documented what information I wanted to share, knowing from experience that this information could be helpful in the lay counsellors' conversations with people who consult with them. All the themes that I introduced over the nine months of our sessions together would lead to lively discussions in which the women eagerly participated. After each session, I wrote a letter to the group in which I reflected on what had been discussed in the session and on the ways in which it touched me. Although I asked questions in the letters about their own meaning-making, it seemed that the women preferred to keep the letters as documents they could refer back to, instead of the letters' being documents which 'extended our conversations' (Epston 1994:31). However, for me, the letters captured the details of the women's stories, as well as the way in which they told them, and others' reactions to it. What also emerged through the letters was the wisdom and care with which these women related to others and to me. Some of these letters and excerpts from them are cited in this thesis.

From our first session, in which I asked the women to share with the group their reasons for joining the group, to the celebratory meal we had before Christmas, a real sense of community and trust developed amongst the women; and we became compassionate witnesses to each others' stories. What I did not bargain for was that I would learn from them what I have been reading about feminist epistemology, but yet had to experience in a pastoral context. In the next section, I discuss the discoveries I have made regarding the meaning of a feminist epistemology and its praxis in a context of poverty. The lay counselling training of 2007 therefore refers as much to my training as it does to theirs. Because it became a project in which we all learnt from and supported one another, it

embodied and therefore ‘realised’ the feminist hope of authentic community.

### **4.3 SOURCES IN FEMINIST THEOLOGY**

Feminist theology’s sources are Scripture, a critical stance to Christian tradition, the daily experiences and knowledges of women, and the symbol of ‘beloved community’ (Welch 1990:160). These are not merely sources that have been randomly chosen. To Schüssler Fiorenza (1993), feminist theology is by definition a critical theology which understands theology itself as a cultural and historical endeavour. This means that the meanings we make of Scripture and the Christian tradition emerge from the way in which we relate them to real life contexts.

By way of introduction, I would therefore like to explain how a contextual reading of Scripture and a critical stance to Christian tradition, especially regarding solidarity with the marginalised, theoretically informed this research and the practical methodology of this research. To these sources in feminist theology, I want to add the source of the body. In the next chapter, I explain why I argue that embodiment is the biggest epistemological and relational challenge for the church and people of faith in the face of poverty.

#### **4.3.1 The daily experiences and pastoral knowledges of women and other marginalised people**

A hermeneutic shift in the postmodern era relates to the modernist view that knowledge is rational and can be obtained objectively (Herholdt 1998:458-459). An awareness of power relations brought about a new awareness of socially conditioned criteria in respect of what constitutes ‘real knowledge’. According to Anthony de Mello (1990:129), ‘(o)ur great tragedy is that we know too much. We think we know, that is our tragedy; so we never discover.’ Feminist theology made me question the kinds of knowledge I have centralised in theology and at what price. A feminist epistemology then led me to new discoveries through sources that might previously not even have been regarded as sources of knowledge.

A feminist hermeneutics in particular makes it clear that what people know depends on where they stand (Schüssler Fiorenza 2000:23), on their social and economic location and on the lenses through which they view the world. Knowledge about the world and

God contained in the universal truth claims made by male theologians should therefore be treated as provisional, social constructs. Such a feminist hermeneutic is critical in its stance, because it creates an awareness of whose knowledges are and have been privileged, in the church, for instance, and of the fact that these knowledges have generated certain models of pastoral power. At the same time, such awareness brings with it a realisation about those whose voices have been marginalised and whose models of pastoral praxis the church has sidelined. Dorothee Soelle (1990:17) calls this kind of theology, in which the poor are neither heard nor seen, an 'apartheid theology'.

Miller-McLemore (2004:64) therefore proposes a feminist pastoral care that argues 'for alternative theological understandings of the social context as essential for adequate care'. Such an understanding of the centrality of social context means theological understandings and pastoral care that therefore centralise the knowledges and experiences of those who are already doing care in this very context. In this chapter, I therefore centralise the praxis of care of the women of Scottsville themselves and their knowledges of pastoral care as praxis. In the next chapter, I reflect on the relevance of embodiment in theology that emerged from our mutual reflections on the women's pastoral praxis.

In his provocative article 'Questioning contextual theology', James Cochrane (2001:67-86) points out that the challenge for contextual theology lies therein that it needs to provide social analysis at a local level, and according to the categories provided by the people in those contexts. Cochrane (2001:85) argues that

...our solidarity can only be with those who are hurt, subjugated or otherwise marginalized by the institutions and procedures by which we organize our life together in society. It is from that point of view, with such people as our first interlocutors and their experiences as our first point of reference for analysis, that critical engagement with government and other agencies in our society becomes valuable, and vital.

In line with feminist theology, the experiences of poor people themselves, especially women (Isherwood & McEwan 1994:80), but in this research also young people, were used as my first points of reference for social and theological analysis. By regarding poor people as my first interlocutors, my feminist theology in this research thus practises what it preaches, namely to return social and theological power to those who have been disempowered by social and theological structures.

The theme of pastoral care as ordinary, but at the same time spiritual, doing, also emerged in our sessions together. According to *mujerista*<sup>19</sup> theologian, Ada María Isasi-Díaz (1996:68), *lo cotidiano* (daily experience) provides the material in which feminist theological understanding grounds itself: ‘Therefore, *lo cotidiano*, the daily experience of Hispanic women, not only points to their capacity to know but also highlights the features of their knowing... Our emphasis on *lo cotidiano* as an epistemological category, as a way of knowing, has to do, in part, with the need to rescue Hispanic women’s daily experience from the category of the unimportant.’

One of the features of Doreen’s understanding of faith, which she shared with the group in the session on 8 May 2006, emerged from the descriptions of ordinary daily practice of pastoral care for the ‘other’. She told her story in response to a question Aunt Liz had asked the group about what they thought the word ‘pastoral’ meant. Aunt Liz said that she thought that it referred to ‘*geestelike bediening*’ (‘spiritual ministry’). Aunt Liz said that she equated the term with ‘*Woordbediening*’ (‘ministry from Scripture’). Our conversation then turned to the meaning of the words ‘spiritual ministry’. I asked the women if they thought that one could minister to someone by physically joining him or her. Or does ‘spirituality’ refer exclusively to quoting from Scripture? (Excerpt from the session on 8 May 2006). In reply to my question, Doreen told the story about her understanding of ‘*geestelike bediening*’ as praxis. Doreen’s story illuminated not only what the term ‘pastoral’ meant to us, but also the idea of a person being served as a ‘concrete other’ (see also Section 5.3.1.2).

*Doreen told us that every morning she gives bread to Basie, a man who lives with cerebral palsy. She told us that he does not always understand her. But every morning he is there with a ‘Môre antie!’ (‘Good morning auntie’). Doreen told us that her son had on occasion said that his ‘mother is more concerned about Basie than about me’. She told us that she said to her son: ‘There is a passage in the Bible where God says: “I came to stand at your door and you did not give me a piece of bread.” Maybe it is God himself in the form of Basie asking for bread... I do not talk to him (Basie) about the Bible, but through the fact of giving him his daily bread, I*

---

<sup>19</sup> ‘*Mujerista* theology brings together elements of feminist theology, Latin American liberation theology and cultural theology’ (Isasi-Díaz 1989:560). The term reflects Hispanic women’s struggle for recognition and justice.

*am joining him.’ Aunt Baai then commented on Doreen’s story by saying: ‘He realises someone cares about me’. Doreen also told us that in response to her son’s question about why she gives bread to Basie, her reply was: ‘Because it’s “a must”.’* (*Want dis ‘n moet’*).

(Excerpt from the letter written to the group after the Session on 8 May 2006, translated).

‘Because it is “a must”’ became a refrain that has grounded me ever since in doing the work in Scottsville. It kept on reminding me of the enlistment in God’s struggle for justice in the community, in which women such as Doreen have been doing theology all along. What I have discovered through the practice of listening to Doreen’s experience is the existence of a pastoral model that is different from the traditional model in which ‘the pastor is the powerful and privileged agent through whom God works’ and in which ‘God is understood to work from a position of strength and power’ (Graham 1993:221). From Graham’s feminist perspective,

(t)he notion of the suffering God suggests that pastorally God is disclosed as much in the person and situation of the cared for as the carer...It implies a God who enters completely into human affairs, refusing to be abstracted or distanced from the pain of the world. It certainly implies an end to models of care which are based on dualistic relationships of healthy/sick, able expert/powerless client, shepherd/sheep, or ordained/lay; and invites us to consider models of mutuality and incarnate love as paradigmatic to pastoral theology.

(Graham 1993:221)

My research methodology was therefore influenced by the epistemological framework that feminist and *mujerista* theology provided, namely the notion of actively working towards hearing and honouring the daily experiences of women in this community. The feminist theological methodology that made me value Doreen’s experience thus elicited a model of pastoral care that was expressive of God’s relationship with those who suffer. Doreen reminded her son and the rest of us in the group that God could be the poor, disabled one at the door begging for bread. Chopp (1989:3) states: ‘Theology is knowledge and words about God, and linguistically, God is understood as the Word. As Word, God has traditionally been prevented from being represented by woman. While woman has been configured as taboo and placed on the margins of the Word.’

By speaking her own experiences in this session, Doreen challenged the intellectual

understandings of God and of pastoral praxis. She reminded us all that God in the form of the poor disabled Basie asks of her a form of spiritual ministry (*‘geestelike bediening’*) that is embodied, deeply relational and meaningful to him as a person who is standing at the door. Reflecting on her example nearly three years later, I am touched again by its wider implications as I reflect on the daunting challenges of poverty. All the talking at conferences, all the ministry from Scripture (*‘Woordbediening’*) from the pulpit, all the clever posturing and postulating in academic language is not pastoral if it means people do not have a face-to-face encounter with the suffering other who begs for bread at the door.

What makes Doreen’s story especially poignant is the fact that Basie often did not intellectually grasp any of the small talk that Doreen tried to engage him in. Doreen reminded us that words can never be substitutes for the concreteness of Basie’s hunger and the ordinary reality of handing the real man real bread through a real opened door. Doreen’s story goes to the heart of the challenge of poverty and how pastoral care can and should respond to it. In Chapter 5, I reflect in greater detail on the challenge of embodied relationality for faith in the twenty-first century.

#### ***4.3.1.1 The role of language in feminist-poststructuralist research***

Speaking with women such as Doreen about their understanding of faith in this research meant breaking the silence through their use of language. Their language was not formal or intellectual, but experiential and richly narrative. Thus, in this feminist-poststructuralist research, language was the medium through which these women’s faith and pastoral practice was revealed as humane and deeply relational. Elaine Graham (1998:141) states:

Christian pastoral practice has the potential to reveal a God who is startlingly present in human encounter. In their relationships and actions of care, Christians believe they can effect some of the creative and redemptive work of God, but that such care will also express something of the divine reality. Thus human pastoral relationships, however expressed, will also be to Christians in some sense a disclosure of God.

For the domestic, the daily life, to be revealing of God is hugely significant if this revelation is seen in the context of a tradition of pastoral power (see Sections 3.1 and 3.2) that absolutised male rationality as the source of theological understanding. Nancy Fraser (1992:294), a professor of Political Science, argues that the ‘rhetoric of domestic

privacy seeks to exclude some issues and interests from public debate by personalizing and/or familializing them; it casts these as private-domestic or personal-familial matters in contradistinction to public, political matters’.

Through Doreen’s telling, and through her retelling of this story at a conference of the South African Association for Pastoral work (SAAP), the domestic story of giving bread at the kitchen door entered the public arena. Honouring ordinary and domestic narratives in a public context and honouring them in this research document were therefore deliberate political moves on my part. The intention behind these moves was/is to reveal how pastoral knowledge and knowledge about God can also be found in women’s accounts of the domestic and the ordinary. Such a methodology is expressive of the feminist theological epistemology in which I worked. It is important to note here my intention not simply to create a new dualism of pastoral knowledge: women’s narrative, domestic, relational knowledges replacing male rational universalising knowledges. This thesis is proof of the ways in which I consider both legitimate resources of knowledge: the *poststructural* analyses of power of Foucault *and* the *feminist* foregrounding of women’s experiences. However, in a pastoral tradition that favoured one form of knowledge over the other for so long, it is important to provide an epistemological corrective – of which this chapter is a part.

As a feminist-poststructuralist researcher, I am also aware of the fact that human beings are discursively constituted. Feminist theology is also a discursive practice (McClintock Fulkerson 2000:316), one that relies on the accounts of women’s experience. Apart from its constructive function, language in a poststructuralist epistemology also has a questioning, deconstructive function. Writing about the poststructural use of language in feminist theology, McClintock Fulkerson (2000:309) therefore states: ‘By recognizing the textual or coded nature of all reality, we can perceive its conventional or made character... and discover (its) cracks and occlusions in order to press the possibilities for change.’ In Chapter 6, I discuss in greater detail the ways in which this research has demonstrated how ‘subjects are produced...through the opening up of new possibilities in language’ (Davies et al 2006:90). In the story below, the deconstructive use of language through a question is the research tool that opened up new possibilities in Anna’s life.

- **Challenging marginalising discourses: the story of Anna**

One of the effects that the marginalisation of women has had in poor communities is that when it comes to making a contribution, many of these women have been led to believe that they have little if anything to offer that is of value outside of their immediate context. The disabling discourses of submission and *apatheia* have succeeded in making these women’s contributions seem inconsequential and invisible, even to themselves. *Mujerista* feminist theologian, Ada María Isasi-Díaz (1999:231) writes: ‘What has erupted and threatens to dislodge the subjugating aspects of the rationality of modernity is not the theories of the academy, the debates about post modernity, but the insistence of subjugated people on being subjects of their own histories, on being central characters in their own narratives.’

The story of Anna is a case in point. Anna Tarentaal came to our first lay counselling session. During the session I asked the women to introduce themselves.

<p><i>T: Anna, jy het vertel dat jy huisvrou is en ma van vier kinders. Jy het vertel hoe jou ‘hart uitgegaan het vir die kinders’ by die hospitaal vir gestremdes. Jy het gewonder ‘kan ek nie permanent hier bly om ‘n ogie te hou nie? ‘ Hierdie begeerte wat jy in jou dra om ‘n ogie te hou oor veral kwesbare kinders het my diep geraak. Ek wonder hoe jy hierdie raaksien van kinders se nood oor die jare ontwikkel het?</i></p>	<p>T: Anna, you told us that you are a housewife and mother of four. You told us how your heart went out to the children at the hospital for the disabled. You told us that you wanted to stay there permanently ‘to keep an eye’. Your desire to keep an eye on vulnerable children touched me deeply. I then wondered how this ability of yours to notice the needs of others had developed over the years?</p> <p>(Excerpt from the letter written after the session on 1 March 2006, translated).</p>
---	---

I then introduced the ways in which I would be working, telling the women that they could make notes if they wished to do so. During tea break, Anna left the room. I could see that she was upset. I caught up with her on her way to the gate. When I asked her what the tears were about, Anna broke down. Through her tears she told

me that she was illiterate and that because of it she thought that the course was not for her. Thinking back to the caring for children that her introduction to the group spoke of and knowing that Anna's faith in Christ was central to her life, I asked her: 'When Jesus chose his disciples, how important do you think He regarded reading and writing as an ability?' Anna suddenly stopped crying. Then, wiping the tears from her cheeks, she said: 'Not important... OK, then I will stay.'

What my question did was to deconstruct the importance of the category of writing in terms of Jesus' own life and the decisions he made. Because I chose not to preach, but to ask a question, Anna was invited to deconstruct the 'truth' about literacy herself in terms of her understanding of the meaning of Jesus' life. White (2000:167) speaks about how the unpacking of identity categories (such as 'I am illiterate')

...contribute very significantly to an appreciation of complexity of these categories, and to the rich description of knowledges and skills of living that are associated with them ... it is through this deconstruction that complexity is apprehended. And it is in the apprehension of this complexity that more options for action in the world become available to people.

The unpacking of illiteracy in the context of Anna's faith in Christ did indeed bring with it an immediate and rich description of knowledge: being literate is not a valued identity category for Christ in the doing of God's work. The knowledge that emerged for Anna from this question made 'more options for action in the world available' to her, one of which was staying in the group. It also lifted the burden of shame around the illiteracy for her.

At our next session on 11 April 2006, Anna told the group of the transformative effect that the previous session had on her:

<p><i>'Iets het binne-in my gebeur. Ek het besef ek is iets al het ek gedink ek is niks en ek kan iets met my lewe doen as ek wil. Jy kan ook ander mense help. Ek het so goed gevoel. Ek kon amper nie slaap nie. Dit het my baie geraak.'</i></p>	<p>'Something happened inside of me. I realised I am somebody although I had been thinking I am nothing and I too can do something with my life if I want to. I can also help others. I felt so good. I could almost not sleep. It moved me deeply.'</p>
---	--

On 19 June 2006, Anna decided to speak to the women in the group about the shame that had burdened her for so long. Anna told us that her mother was a domestic worker and her father a labourer. When she was in Grade 5, she had to leave school to look after her cerebrally palsied brother to enable her mother to work. Anna told us that she enjoyed looking after her brother, but that, as a result, she never completed her schooling. She said that she could read a little bit, but that she had never learned to write. She had always felt ashamed of that fact. She also told us that she loved children and wanted to work full-time in the hospital where her brother later stayed. Joan responded to her story by saying that we could learn from Anna about what caring demands.

In a modernist pastoral culture, the world was divided into binary opposites (Isherwood & McEwan 1994:63-64; Slee 2003:103) such as literate/illiterate, body/spirit, client/expert. Seyla Benhabib (1992:15) argues that the 'logic of binary oppositions is also a logic of subordination and domination'. In church, some structures (for example, the status associated with individuality and rationality, such as higher learning) have downscaled other knowledges and abilities. Hence, a feminist hermeneutic deliberately works with an ethic of interpretation to show that the Bible, history and theology 'as master narratives of Western cultures ...are always already implicated in and collude with the production and maintenance of systems of knowledge that either foster exploitation and oppression or contribute to a praxis and vision of emancipation and justice' (Schüssler Fiorenza 2000:58-59). For Anna, the master narrative of rationality that favours analysis above praxis dominated her life, obscuring her contribution to pastoral care. My question about what the historical Jesus valued in terms of serving others opened a whole new system of knowledge for Anna in which she could find a place for herself.

The recognition of this research of women's active roles as agents of care in contexts that are not traditionally associated with the work of (male) clergy, in itself becomes a deconstruction of the limits of pastoral care. This research attempted to broaden the horizons by focusing on women and young people in the poor community of Scottsville and on their knowledges. I as a witnessing researcher discovered that these knowledges were gained because of struggles of living life in a context of poverty, of experiencing various abuses of power, about doing right relations between people and about holding onto faith in a context of struggle and

pain. According to Elaine Graham (1993:224), women therefore do not merely contribute by way of their inclusion to pastoral care, but because of a different theological sensibility, they can bring something to research such as this too:

The challenge of women to pastoral care does not, therefore, simply require their inclusion in a tradition that remains otherwise unchanged. Instead, it is a programme for reconstituting the nature of pastoral values and the theological understandings which underpin Christian practice...there is the possibility of a theological sensibility which roots Christian values in the immediacy and concretion of interpersonal encounter, while witnessing to the paradox that at the very heart of such a dynamic of need and response is felt the transcendence which carries us beyond the knowable and certain into the realms of divine disclosure.

The methodology of feminist theology that was at work in this section was intended to retrieve women's knowledge as a source for theological reflection and to retrieve the knowledges that have been lost in a pastoral tradition that valued only rationality and literacy. Anna's story therefore reminds me, as a researcher who is busy with a doctorate that depends on literacy, not to lose sight of the things that Christ values when he calls people to serve others.

#### **4.3.2 Scripture and a critical stance to the Christian tradition**

In feminist theology, the resource of Scripture is viewed with a 'hermeneutics of suspicion' (Cardoso Pereira 2002:s.p., Schüssler Fiorenza 1998:80-82). This suspicion has to do with the ways in which Scripture has been interpreted by white middle class men over centuries with a view to controlling others and to legitimising their own practices of political power by way of these interpretations.

In terms of its critical stance toward the Christian tradition, feminist theology is informed by both critical social analyses, such as those offered by poststructuralism, and by Scripture as it has been reinterpreted by liberation theology in the light of the suffering of the poor. Therefore 'feminist theology informs itself not only from scripture and tradition but also from social theory, economic analysis, psychology and political theory. Therefore it is attempting to broaden the horizons of patriarchal theologians to show that knowledge of God can be found in all of human existence' (Isherwood & McEwan 1994:71-72). In order to understand the political and theological significance of this broader focus, it is necessary to understand feminist theology's roots in liberation

theology.

#### ***4.3.2.1 Feminist theology as liberation theology***

By including an awareness of the constitutive force of power in shaping unjust pastoral discourses, feminist theology is an appropriate epistemology to support research that is done in a context of poverty. Both feminist theology and its precursor, liberation theology, scrutinise injustice in terms of socially sanctioned power relations. In a chapter called 'Theology and the excluded: the turn to others', Joerg Rieger (2001:99-127) reflects on the power of exclusion in social and ecclesial structures. He then highlights the contribution of feminist theology as 'turning to others': it 'demonstrates that theology can no longer afford to talk about the divine Other in isolation from the other person' (Rieger 2001:113). He goes further by saying: 'Feminist attention to brokenness and incompleteness makes a difference in our understanding of doctrine and truth' (Rieger 2001:114).

This chapter traces how the understandings of the research grew out of my own experience of brokenness and incompleteness in the Scottsville community. In Section 4.5, I also reflect on how a feminist hermeneutic shaped my own understanding of social and theological truths – as Ackermann (1991:107) puts it: 'Feminism is about a different consciousness, a radically transformed perspective which questions our social, cultural, political and religious traditions and calls for structural change in all these spheres.'

In this research process, I subscribed to liberation theology's understanding of theology as 'God-walk', using Frederick Herzog's term (1988), rather than 'God-talk' (Potter Engel & Brooks Thistlewaite 2000:10). In the light of this understanding of theology, the criteria for what constitutes God-walk become critical: 'In Matthew 25:31, ...Jesus provides explicit criteria for those who have done his work. The tests entail helping the poor, the hungry, the thirsty, the homeless, and the least in society... God is concerned about the concrete identities and social locations of the poor' (Hopkins 2003:129).

However, I realise that, although, like liberation theologians, I share the preferential option for the poor as a point of departure, and subscribe to praxis as theology, the focus of my research is not aimed at a corporate and political struggle (Pattison 1994:28) which is the focus of Latin American liberation theologians. Forty years have passed

since the Medellin Conference in Colombia in 1968, during which liberation theology first proclaimed itself as such (Pattison 1994:26-27). However, the challenges of poverty remain. South Africans have struggled and gained political freedom from the oppression of apartheid, but poverty is still a reality in South African communities. At present, the preferred locus of this research is the relief of the oppression of women and especially of young people in the Scottsville community. Their struggle is primarily a social struggle, shaped by discourses of subjugation and control.

Ackermann (1997:63) argues that '(a)s feminist theologies have their genesis in liberation theologies, which in turn are part of the larger unfinished dimensions of theology, their future is crucial to the future of the entire theological project in southern Africa'. For me, these 'unfinished dimensions' include justice work in context, that *is* theology. David Bosch (1999:423) suggests that 'theology 'from below', 'from the underside of history', has as its main source (apart from Scripture and tradition) the social sciences, and as its main interlocutor the poor or the culturally marginalised. In feminist theology, these 'poor and culturally marginalised' are primarily women and young people who have been denied voice, not only in political structures, but also in the male-dominated church (Van Rensburg 2002) and in the discipline of practical theology. By taking a feminist epistemological stance, this chapter therefore reflects on this research as the purposeful hearing and honouring of the voices of Scottsville's women and of the ways in which their knowledges add to a pastoral understanding of theology as 'God-walk'.

In previous chapters, I have shown how the social sciences in the form of poststructuralist analyses provided a critical epistemology for this research and informed its methodology. In this chapter, I focus on the ways in which the epistemology of feminist theology, born out of the justice-tradition of liberation theology, has informed this research.

The inclusion of the voices of Scottsville's women in this thesis therefore moves this research from philosophising and theologising about poverty and marginalisation *into the experiences of the poor and marginalised*. The domain of the experiential, which is part of a feminist epistemology, extends to my witnessing of the women's narratives, and the meanings I have made because of them, for the purposes of this research and for my own life.

- *Feminist theology's hermeneutics of liberation: deconstructing discourses of patriarchy and kyriarchy*

The history of the pastoral power of control that I described in Chapter 3 is also the history of the normalisation of the discourse of patriarchy. The practices associated with patriarchy are therefore aimed at maintaining control, whether by the silencing of resistance, or by the use of violence and force in order to maintain control (Moore 2002:42). In terms of a feminist methodology, a deconstruction of power relations implies a deconstruction of many discourses of control that have gained truth status and are associated with patriarchy.

The *Merriam-Webster Online dictionary* defines patriarchy as ‘social organization marked by the supremacy of the father in the clan or family, the legal dependence of wives and children, and the reckoning of descent and inheritance in the male line; *broadly*: control by men of a disproportionately large share of power’. Hence, a ‘*feminist* analysis implies both the acceptance of the patriarchal nature of society and the commitment to change it’ (Moore 2002:29). This commitment is a broadening of the scope of liberation that the liberation theologians introduced.

However, limiting feminist analysis to the effects of patriarchy implies restricting power to its effects in terms of gendered relationships. Feminist theologian Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (1999:126) therefore prefers the term ‘kyriarchy’<sup>20</sup> to ‘patriarchy’. Whereas the term patriarchy is limited to the domination of women by men, the term kyriarchy gives a broader perspective on the multiplicity and interlinked structures of domination and control in social relations. These interlinked systems of race, class and gender oppression are the most visible in the lives of poor women and children.

Schüssler Fiorenza (1999:127) therefore formulates a norm for feminist theology that lies not simply in the option for the poor/marginalised, but rather ‘grounds this norm in the emancipatory historical struggles for the transformation of kyriarchal relations of domination’. In line with Schüssler Fiorenza’s argument, the focus in such a feminist epistemology shifts from a specific group in an oppressive system to

---

<sup>20</sup> The term ‘kyriarchy’ is a neologism coined by Schüssler Fiorenza. It is derived from the Greek words for ‘lord’ and ‘master’ (gr: kyrios) and ‘to rule or dominate’ (gr: archein) which seeks to redefine the analytic category of patriarchy as a multiplicative, pyramidal system of intersecting structures of domination and subordination. (‘Kyriarchy’ 2001).

the praxis of struggle for liberation from *all forms* of domination. To this end, I employed poststructuralist analyses in this research with a view to making visible and challenging kyriarchal discourses that govern social relationships.

In Chapter 2, I reflected on the ways in which a kyriarchal culture dominates and controls the bodies of poor children. Kyriarchal discourses do not only govern the external relations between people, but also shape people's internalised discourses about what is possible and what is not. In the next two chapters I describe how a multitude of kyriarchal relations (of domination) affected the ways in which all human relationships are structured, including those between the researcher and the research participants. This research therefore has to be read as a response to the 'kyriarchal dehumanization' (Schüssler Fiorenza 1999:127) of people in a poor community. This research therefore aimed at creating possibilities that would transform 'kyriarchal structures of injustice and domination' (Schüssler Fiorenza 1999:137), especially in the ways in which we as the joint participants in the study chose to relate to one another in new ways in this research. These new ways of relating were based on values of care rather than those of control.

- ***What is meant by 'praxis' in a feminist epistemology***

The use of the Marxist term *praxis* in theology originated in the liberal tradition where it signified 'me and my personal experience' (Brooks Thistlethwaite & Potter Engel 2000:7). However, the term as it is used in liberation theologies refers not so much to action or practice *per se* as to the 'web of relationality' that includes a commitment to let social location inform theological reflection. Therefore, 'praxis-based theology is characterised by an ongoing, dynamic, and complex relationship between the concrete social context and theological reflection' (Brooks Thistlethwaite & Potter Engel 2000:8). Hence, Denise Ackermann (2003:35) states: 'Praxis is not the opposite of theory. It is opposed to separating theory and practise.'

The process of praxis-located theological reflection was introduced by liberation theologians in the 1960s. The social justice focus it brought to theology developed into a 'pastoral cycle' of action and reflection with a view to transformation (Freire 1972:28, 52, 60; Graham, Walton & Ward 2005:171, 188-191) that spread beyond its Roman Catholic origins. Some may argue that theological research done from a

poststructuralist, feminist perspective lacks the meta-narratives of truth and values to guide praxis. The significance of research done in a feminist epistemology, however, lies precisely in praxis as a strategy *through which* values can be reconstructed. In the context of this research, praxis afforded a dynamic quality to the process, because it constantly interpreted the challenges of poverty in the light of faith and faith in the light of the challenges of poverty.

Through the praxis of feminist theological research, it is therefore possible to discover not only new stories about words such as love and justice, but also new ways in which these values are embodied and *made true* by those whom the church has marginalised. Elaine Graham (1996:36-7) writes: ‘It may not be possible to derive principles of hope and obligation from some transcendent power or force that automatically guarantees their authenticity and success. However, it may yet be feasible to develop strategies by which such values can be reconstructed out of the fragments of pluralism and difference.’ Carter Heyward (1998:204) also argues that ‘(w)hat has been missing in the dominant structures of Christian faith and discourse has been *a praxis of relational particularity and cooperation*, in which theological knowledge might cease to be a matter of discovering *the* Christ and might become rather a matter of generating together images of what is redemptive or liberating in particular situations’.

This research therefore takes as its locus not only theories about poverty (such as those presented in Chapter 2) or exegesis with poverty as its theme, but the real experiences of limitations and struggles of poor ‘coloured’ women and young people and of our mutual developing relationships. Instead of a closed system that merely demands obedience from its practitioner, the experience of faith, consequently, becomes a process of discovery, questioning and affirmation that people are immersed in. Paolo Freire (1998c:104) writes in *Pedagogy of the Heart*: ‘Still young, I read in Michuel de Unamuno that “ideas are to be had, beliefs are for one to be in.” I am in my faith, but because it does not immobilize me, being in faith means moving, engaging in different forms of action coherent with that faith. It is to engage in action that reaffirms it ....’

In this regard, Elaine Graham (1996:203) states: ‘A commitment to the contextual and situated nature of human experience, if taken seriously by pastoral theology,

therefore means that the only vocabulary available to Christian communities in articulating their truth-claims is that of pastoral practice itself.’ The implication is that universals such as solidarity and love are made flesh, are realised in the personal and particular of our actions in the world. Hence Christian praxis is, at its most fundamental level, an action of reception and response (Goizueta 2003:146). Jesus asks his disciples: ‘Who do you say that I am?’ This question is not part of an intellectual or philosophical debate. It is a question that demands a personal, practical and ‘lived answer’ (Goizueta 2003:154). Therefore, a theology of liberation, which includes a feminist theology, ‘is (critical) reflection on practice in the light of faith’ (Gutierrez in Rowland 1999:27).

○ *‘Possibilities’ defined as praxis within a feminist hermeneutics*

Liberation theologies regard the praxis of Jesus, which was aimed at transforming the realities of people’s lives, as the foundation of its faith. The hermeneutics of such a theology therefore ‘goes to the roots of our fear of powerlessness and assures us that “all things are possible”’ (Soelle 1990:115).

Because the word ‘possibilities’ features in the title of this thesis, it is important to qualify its meaning in terms of a feminist hermeneutics. The ‘possibility’ that I have referred to in this chapter is therefore not the individualist possibility of liberal and neoconservative theologies that disregard the social context of faith and even objects to faith’s ‘politicization’ (Soelle 1990:108). In our first session, Aunt Liz spoke out against the kind of pastoral power in the Scottsville community that has such an individualist focus. In reflecting on our conversation, I wrote:

*‘Aunt Liz, you shared with us your frustrations about people in the community whose attitude is not for the benefit of others, but for the benefit of their own circle.’*

(Excerpt from the letter to the group written after the session on 1 March 2006, translated)

Doreen then spoke of the effects that such an individualist pastoral ethos also has on the creation of physical possibilities in a community. She said: ‘In twenty-five years nothing has been established in Scottsville for our young people. Unlike (in) places such as Ravensmead, there are no youth centres, sports fields, a clinic or a library for our people. There is nothing here.’ Doreen’s words raised my awareness about the urgent need for physical possibilities in the community that could benefit young people in particular. In Chapters 6 and 7, I describe the creation of physical possibilities in this research in response to Doreen’s words.

Feminist theology therefore provided an *epistemology of possibility* for this research through pastoral praxis itself. The kind of praxis in this research that generated possibilities was relational praxis. Thus when white and ‘coloured’ women presented a workshop together at SAAP, when I directed a group of young people towards writing and performing their own play, when Petunia Primary got its rugby uprights from a stranger in Welgemoed, when caring people from different communities actively worked towards the dream of a new library, *faith was shown to be the possibility-generating force of relational praxis. To the degree that this research was able to turn the commandment to love thy neighbour into a real relational praxis, this research can be seen as an expression of faith.*

Feminist theology also provided an *epistemology of possibility* for this research because by *honouring the voices of the marginalised. Mutuality can only happen as a result of such an honouring.* When those voices that have been silent are heard and honoured, everyone can start learning from them and people’s understanding of faith and pastoral praxis is expanded. Mutuality is therefore the conscious, political practice of a different kind of power relation within communities and between different communities. Such a power relation is not intent on controlling others, but on making sincere, honouring and caring human relations possible. The history of power abuse in South Africa thus makes mutuality a real and serious possibility-challenge to all who claim to be followers of Christ. The possibility-generating force of mutuality is often talked about, but seldom achieved. In this study, a feminist theological epistemology anchored this possibility in the mutuality that Jesus made possible when He

called illiterate fisherman to be His disciples, when He had a theological conversation with the town prostitute and when he accepted an invitation to share bread with Levi.

○ *Praxis and its implications for the reading of Scripture*

The focus on possibility as praxis in feminist theology has an impact on the role of Scripture. I have described how Jesus' contextual praxis leads the way and gives an epistemological framework for a praxis of justice and love. As such, praxis is the continuous challenge to us as pastoral workers, researchers, therapists, to make the word flesh. Soelle (1990:153) refers to the 'Word of God' as that which should not signify a historical and completed event. Instead, everyone can participate in writing the 'Word of God' in the ways in which our relationships are 'life-giving and life-sharing' (Soelle 1990:153).

Because God, through Jesus, is the embodiment of love and justice, I too am called to embody and to write the Word of God, especially in contexts of poverty such as Scottsville. In this realisation lies a vast resource for 'creating possibilities'. Then Scripture is no longer a rulebook to be obeyed but a Word that enlists people to make it real in their own time and place: 'Faithfulness is less an outgrowth of prior theological and ethical teaching and more a shared, lived *engagement that enacts* an identity, values, and knowledge that sustain such a theological and ethical vision' (Ramsay 2004:158) (my italics). An enactment that takes place on the margins also brings with it discoveries about the embodied nature of knowledge and values-as-praxis.

This section describes the ways in which Scripture features in the life of poor Christian women and how their knowledge provided feminist theology in the South African context with new descriptions. Hence, because feminist theology is not only grounded in what is past, but very much in current theoretical and experiential knowledges, it is forever open to new descriptions of terms such as 'community', 'pastoral care' and 'Christian'. Hence theology is not a static discipline, but a dynamic, contextually relevant process of action and reflection (Ackermann 2003:36) in which all are invited to engage.

Welch (1985:7) therefore states that in liberation theology, the ‘truth of God-language and of all theological claims is measured not by their correspondence to something eternal but by the fulfilment of its claims in history, by the actual creation of communities of peace, justice, and equality’. Because of the ways in which Scripture had been used to subject and control others, feminist theology works with a contextual exegesis in order to discover a hopeful, humanising relationality. Liberation theologian Juan Luis Segundo (1993:123) therefore writes:

...those who go directly to the gospel for the solution to a problem on the pretext of a ‘neutral approach’ fail to understand the gospel...because its letter has killed them in advance. Who are these dead who approach the gospel? They are those who have a hard heart, with this neutrality of theirs – going to seek their answer directly in the letter of Scripture.

During this research, I thus started reading Scripture with an open heart and with Scottsville’s young people in mind. Because of the double focus with which I read, I discovered a Jesus who has gone before me and who created possibilities in marginalised communities. I also discovered that the ‘remarkable thing about Jesus was that, although he came from the middle class and had no appreciable disadvantages himself, he mixed socially with the lowest of the low and identified himself with them. He became an outcast *by choice*’ (Nolan 2001:34). Jesus’ decision to identify Himself with the outcast did not only have social and political implications for the communities at the time. It has serious implications for all who call themselves ‘Christians’, followers of Christ, and for what following Christ entails.

- ***Solidarity with the marginalised***

For liberation (and feminist) theologians poverty ‘constitutes a hermeneutic field which leads ... to a rereading of the Biblical message...The preferential option for the poor person is a fundamental axis in the proclamation of the gospel, which we commonly call...the pastoral task. It is also a fundamental axis in the field of spirituality, that is, in the following of Jesus’ (Gutiérrez 2003:95).

In the gospel of Luke, Bosch (1999:86) has identified the widest range of those who were regarded as socially oppressed and outcast at the time, and with whom Jesus

associated. However, ‘whenever Luke recorded words of Jesus about those who suffered, he either put the poor at the head or at the very end of the list. This seems to suggest that the poor were an all-embracing category for those who were the victims of society’ (Bosch 1999:436). Nolan (2001:28) too gives us a fuller picture of who ‘the lowest of the low’ were in the time of Jesus: ‘Although the term “poor” in the gospels does not refer exclusively to those who were economically deprived, it does include them. The poor were in the very first place the beggars. They were the sick and disabled who had resorted to begging because they were unemployable or without a relative who could afford to or was willing to support them.’ He also includes another group of ‘outcasts’ with whom Jesus associated, namely the sinners: ‘Anyone who for any reason deviated from the law and the traditional customs of the middle class (the educated and the virtuous, the scribes and the Pharisees) was treated as inferior, as low class. The sinners were a well-defined social class...’ (Nolan 2001:29).

Because society regarded these people as outcasts, their marginalised status was associated with a loss of dignity and shame. According to Tutu (2004:121), power as defined by Jesus ‘is for service – for being compassionate, for being gentle, for being caring – for being the servant of all’, in particular, the poor and the sinners.

Schüssler Fiorenza (1993:67) therefore argues that the theme of taking a stand with the poor and marginalised implies a stand to transform the kyriarchical structures through which people are marginalised. Only from this stand, Schüssler Fiorenza argues, can theology be called ‘Christian’: ‘Only when theology is on the side of the outcast and oppressed, as was Jesus, can it become incarnational and Christian.’

Here it becomes important to take a look at the word ‘solidarity’ and what it means for this research. According to womanist author Shawn Copeland (1995:11), the word ‘comes from the French, *solidarité*, which is derived from the reflexive verb, *se solidariser*, which means to join together in liability; to be mutually dependent (upon), to make common cause (with)’. Currently in feminist theology there are those who call for a moratorium on the use of the word, because they caution that ‘solidarity’ could start serving as a hegemonic feminist discourse (Kamitsuka 2007:138) in which the call for solidarity can mask the differences between people and the complexities inherent in the practices of solidarity. However, Copeland

(quoted in Kamitsuka 2007:138) argues that ‘it is possible to move “beyond a facile adoption of the (white feminist) rhetoric of solidarity”, by a methodological commitment to critical social analysis of oppression, a theological-moral commitment to the irreducible individual value of human person, and a eucharistic commitment to the broken bodies of others, because “a hurting body has been the symbol of solidarity for Christians since the institution of the Holy Communion”’.

To be able to continue ‘to make common cause with’ the poor in the face of violence and absence in the poor Scottsville community meant that I had to relocate in my own life the resource of the Eucharist vision of the broken body, through which I am connected to both Christ and the broken bodies of others.

Jesus’ solidarity therefore requires me to rethink the construction of my own social categories. Jesus’ bodily compassion towards outcast people and the ways in which he made common cause with these people through his life and death became the inspiration that sustained me during the research in which I too met outcast and oppressed people. An important aspect of Jesus’ solidarity was his willingness to meet people wherever they were. In the first chapter, I referred to Beverly Harrison’s definition of solidarity – she describes solidarity as ‘concrete answerability’ to oppressed people. Jesus’ concrete answerability to the pain and marginalisation of His time involved responding to whatever the context demanded: whether it is healing the sick, calming a storm, providing fish and bread to feed the hungry, or dying on the cross. His instruction to all who refer to themselves by His name is an instruction towards this answerability. When we answer the other through our embodied acts of solidarity, He says, we are, at the same time, showing our solidarity with Him: ‘Whoever has done it to the least of these has done it unto me’ (Mt 25:40).

But Jesus also took a political stand on behalf of the marginalised within the broader social context of power. One such context was the synagogue, which represented the theological traditions of the time. Those present in the synagogue when Jesus quoted Isaiah were at first ‘amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips’ (Lk 4:22). I can guess that they found these words agreeable because they were so abstract and so familiar. But then Jesus’ words went beyond what his audience expected, or as we read later, condoned. He reminded those present in the synagogue of ‘the truth’

about the way in which God works, thereby linking His own mission on earth to the practices which God had done before (Lk 4:25-27).

In this passage, what is significant for this research is that Jesus did not merely describe healing pastoral work as an addendum to His life ‘in his own country’. As pastoral worker, he continued doing as God has done through his prophet. In this passage, He also reminds the men in the synagogue of the *specific, practical* ways in which God goes about healing. Jesus defines what being a prophet entails by referring to God’s healing pastoral work, through his prophet, amongst those whom literally lived on the geographic, social and political margins of Judaic society – such as the widow from Sidon and the man from Syria. This understanding that Jesus brings to the men in the synagogue is so revolutionary that it infuriates them. Their reactions are a precursor to Jesus’ fate at the hands of men later on in his life. Jesus’ mission on earth and his death on the cross is hereby linked to the revolutionary nature of his praxis: to associate Himself (and Godself) with and commit Himself (and Godself) to bringing healing to the socially marginalised and powerless. The focus of this passage is also the focus that liberation and feminist theologians have reintroduced to theology, namely the centralisation of a healing pastoral practice amongst the marginalised as God-work.

I am also reminded through this piece of Scripture that the work of justice is, by definition, revolutionary and therefore both risky and lonely work. In order to become relevant, pastoral practice in a feminist paradigm needs to heed the call to move outside the city walls and needs to enlist for the solidarity that the passage above refers to and that liberation theologian Herzog (1988:42) refers to below:

A completely different sensibility is introduced. This claim tells us: I am moving you out (out of the ‘guild’ for example). We get a different location, a social location. No safe haven, with our boat securely anchored. We are drawn into the muck and mire, into encounters outside safe locations, outside the ‘city wall,’ outside academia... It is not primarily a matter of revelation (disclosure), or transformation (social change), but of captivation (enlistment): ‘I have called you by name, you are mine’ (Isa. 43:1). The initial struggle of Christian thought is the coming to terms with this ‘enlistment’. In a new social location, it is enlistment in God’s justice struggle.

Such an enlistment contextualises the praxis for justice that is another central theme

in a feminist epistemology: 'Action begins in the face of overwhelming loss and the recognition of the irreparable damage of structural evil' (Welch 1990:67). The work for justice therefore relates directly to the plight of the poor and the marginalised.

However, what is important with regard to this research is that as a white middle class, educated woman who works in a profession of my choice, I am at the centre of a life of possibilities. This research has sensitised me into using this position in the centre to wield influence that could benefit those living on the margins. The margin, however, has become the place from where I make sense of what it means to be living as a Christian in ethical relations with the other. The 'challenge of poverty' mentioned in the title of this thesis therefore has this double meaning for me: to be mindful of my power at the centre and of my vulnerability at the margins. The task of practical theology lies in continuing the never-ending relationship between the two.

- *'Joining': the stance of solidarity*

Solidarity is not only a word that is used to describe a theological stance. Solidarity is also a therapeutic stance I take when working with young people. Therefore, in our first conversation, I asked the women to give me an Afrikaans equivalent for the English word 'join', a verb that is expressive of the feminist stance of solidarity. Aunt Liz came up with the expression: 'to hook in' with the other, to be arm in arm (*'om in te hak'*). We then explored the conditions for joining others; for example, the idea that you could not be one step higher than the person you are joining. Joining implies being on the same level. This is how *'inhak'* became the metaphor we used for embodied solidarity with the suffering other.

I then invited the women to talk amongst themselves in small groups about experiences they have had about being joined by others or of their joining others. I was keen to know, if joining was the action that spoke of the kind of pastoral power these women subscribed to, what stories they would tell me that would demonstrate what they meant by 'joining'. After their group conversations, Aunt Baai shared a moving joining story with the group that I reflected on in my letter to the group (written after the session on 1 March 2006, translated from

Afrikaans):

*Aunt Baai, you told us about the man, a complete stranger, who arrived at your door with the words that a voice had sent him there. You told us how you listened to the man as he told you of the problems in his life and of the thoughts he had of killing his family. You said that the reason you listened was to give him the opportunity to get everything off his chest ('kans gegee om sy hart uit te praat'). You then asked him if you could do a prayer for him.*

*I then asked you what you consider to be the difference between being asked and simply receiving a prayer without being asked. You all then spoke about experiencing respect when being asked. Aunt Liz put it beautifully: 'May I... You have to remember you are crossing the threshold of someone else's life' ('Mag ek...? Jy moet onthou jy betree iemand anders se drumpel').*

*I then asked Aunt Baai what kind of prayer she did for the man. She told me that she did a supplicatory prayer for him; pleading to God on his behalf.... I then asked you how it becomes possible for someone to plead on someone else's behalf – can it happen because you develop a sense of where that person is, of finding the other's 'pitch' or 'wavelength'? You all then spoke about how coming onto another's 'wavelength' would create a sense of safety and trust – also in a counselling situation...*

*Aunt Baai, you made me realise again how often coming onto someone else's 'wavelength' depends on the attitude with which we listen. If I understood you correctly, your prayer was part of a conviction that you have that there is always hope. Right? I was also moved by your appeal to God to 'give you an answer'. You told us how this appeal was based on your belief that your God is not a deaf god. Those words of yours made me consider how God joins us when we join others in a spirit of care. It made me realise how we can then hold on to hope even in listening to the most hopeless of stories. I wonder if hope entered the man's life through you and your prayer, Aunt Baai?*

I believe that these stories provide us with resources for doing pastoral care in a spirit of embodied solidarity. It is significant in the context of this research that both Doreen and Aunt Baai's stories deal with social outcasts, even in a context of poverty: the mentally retarded man and the desperate man who contemplated committing murder.

For me, Aunt Baai and Doreen's respectful stance towards these outcasts embody the vulnerability and compassion of Jesus: 'The compassion of Christ is thus not a striking of a sympathetic attitude from afar, but literally com-*passion*, or a suffering solidarity which willingly shares in the limitations of the human condition' (Graham 1993:221). Even coming with well-intentioned prayer, as Aunt Liz reminded us, we should be mindful of the fact that we are entering the threshold of another person's life. Therefore we must not enter with prayer without asking permission to do so.

- *Inviting others to practice solidarity with the marginalised*

As the research progressed, and I witnessed the many young people who lived without caring adults present in their lives, the 'joining' (*inhak*) metaphor started haunting me. I had come to realise that far more than therapeutic conversations or soup, young people in the community needed people who cared to 'join' them (*hak in by hulle*). I also realised, as I started joining young people myself, that nothing could replace the meaning of this deeply pastoral act of embodied solidarity in a young person's life.

In May 2007, I contacted Reverend Heerden van Niekerk, the minister of the local Dutch Reformed Church in Welgemoed, about my growing awareness of the need amongst 'coloured' young people for others to join them. Because of experiences with the writers' and drama groups, I realised that *inhak* could take a multitude of forms: educational support, outings into nature, music, art, sports coaching.... Heerden immediately understood. He then invited me to speak to the congregation during a service.

My talk to the congregation was delivered on 17 June 2007, on Father's Day. Aunt Baai, Liz, Doreen, Mr and Mrs Foster, Mr Mentoor and community workers, Terence, Yolandi and Jennifer, came from Scottsville to attend the

service. I shared with the congregation my growing concern about the neglect, violence and abuse that poor children in the Scottsville community suffered. I shared with them the discoveries I had made about my own privilege and how ‘*inhak*’ with those who suffered while I benefited could constitute my way of ‘doing sorry’. As I spoke, I could see that people were moved. I ended by telling the congregation about how I had experienced care from people in the community, such as the women from the lay counselling group, whom I then invited to join me in front.

I then shared with the congregation the story of Aunt Baai who sang to me: one afternoon I joined the lay counselling group, feeling burdened by stories of family violence I had just heard at Fanie Theron Primary, the other school in Kraaifontein where I had been working as a pastoral therapist for four years. Aunt Baai had brought her choral sheet music along in a blue plastic bag. In the previous session we had talked about the joys of singing and the fact that Petunia Primary did not have a choir. I sat down and made small talk, but felt overwhelmed by the stories of trauma I had heard that morning. Aunt Baai did not engage with me in therapeutic talk. She took out her volume of sheet music and paged through it. Aunt Baai then started singing, to me: ‘If I can help somebody, my life will not be in vain...’. After I had shared this story about embodied solidarity, the women sang this song to the congregation. There were tears in many eyes.

Heerden had also asked me to write a piece that he could use in his sermon as well. I reflected on Jesus’ words in Mark 9:33-37. I chose this piece of Scripture because it spoke to me of Jesus’ understanding of pastoral power as joining others. Heerden read my reflections on this piece of Scripture as part of his sermon:

*God became human because he wanted to join us. How different this is to faiths where temples and rituals of cleansing signify a different, more distanced relationship with God. Was that what the scribes of the time expected? A God who would reside in a temple? A god associated with power? The life and death of Jesus speaks of God’s service to us: a servitude*

*of becoming human, of relinquishing power, of going outside of the city walls to where the need was. Jesus' servitude meant that He joined people who were totally different to the norms of the time; people who had been rejected by the structures of power. Jesus in fact made a point of joining people such as the lepers, the town prostitute, the children... He joined people who even gave offence to the disciples because they were so 'totally different'... as a matter of fact Jesus identified himself with these 'totally other' people to the extent that he says 'it is Me. When you did it to them, you have done it to Me, and you have done it to Godself.'*

*This is the radical ministry of Jesus: God as a neglected child in Scottsville. This is the challenge of Christianity in a world characterised by dominance, self-interest and competition. Jesus associated the concept of service with the relinquishment of the power of dominance. Jesus introduces the power of love. It is love that compels us to join 'the other'.*

The piece I wrote for Heerden's sermon, together with my talk and the women's singing, encapsulates what is meant by 'solidarity with the marginalised' and embodiment in a feminist epistemology. The events of 17 June 2007 also demonstrate the different and interconnected levels on which embodied solidarity in a feminist epistemology can function: my solidarity with the people in the context of poverty and their solidarity with me, which then moves to reflection and Scripture in which we discover God's solidarity with us through Jesus.

In this research, however, embodied solidarity did not only serve as an end in itself. It became an experience that also literally pushed me to the front of the church to speak about the urgent need for embodied solidarity with vulnerable young people. In this practice of solidarity, I was joined by both men and women from the community and by Heerden.

- Our experiences of marginalisation: a turning point in awareness

My awareness of the urgent need for embodied solidarity with Scottsville's young people, such as Granville, had grown out of my own embodied

experiences during the research. I was certain that other Christians would join us if they knew about the levels of violence that young people were being subjected to, not far from where they lived. However, 17 June 2007 featured in this research as a turning point. The events of that day and the following months made me aware how alienated the church has become from the pastoral task of embodied solidarity with the (suffering) other.

After the sermon and in the following months, no one came forward from the congregation to offer to join any of Scottsville's poor children. Only five people from the congregation (of about 500 people) came to the entrance hall of the church on the day to greet the visitors from Scottsville. Three of the five people were a friend and family members of mine. The theme of embodied solidarity of people of privilege from Welgemoed with young people from Scottsville in this research would only come later through personal contact and because of Heerden's solidarity, but not through the formal church structures (see Sections 6.8.3.2 to 6.8.3.4)..

The day after the church service, one of the Scottsville women commented on the 'coldness' of the white people she had experienced in Welgemoed. In her church, she told me, visitors are always made to feel especially welcome. And then she added: '*Maar juffrou, ons bruinmense is al gewoond daaraan*' ('But miss, we coloureds have become used to it'). Her words touched me deeply. 'Coloured' Christian people can perform in the church. They can drive from Kraaifontein on a Sunday morning to support a pastoral project on behalf of vulnerable young people. But the privileged will not regard them as worthy of ordinary hospitality and care. That evening, I wrote a letter to Heerden in which I expressed my thanks to him for the opportunities he had created for us that day. I also shared with him the woman's comment and the intense anger and grief I experienced about the lack of care shown to the visitors:

*Heerden, I am hurt by the realisation that if people could not come and join the strangers in the lobby of their own church, how would they ever travel the kilometres to Scottsville? What remains with me, are... her*

*words about her experience of the coldness of the people. I realise that it did probably not occur to the majority of the members of the church how strange the visitors must have felt or what a word or a handshake could have meant to them. Maybe because they have never had the experience of being strangers in a 'coloured' church? Maybe because they don't know what it feels like to be outsiders? I believe that if people are not made aware of this, they cannot begin to consciously take steps to put themselves in the shoes of others, let alone join them. Her reflection on her experience of Sunday compels me to comment on the unawareness of many believers about the impact of their lack of reaching out to others, especially the 'total other'. It hurts me to write about this because it stands in such contrast to what I had experienced during the service itself. However, I know that keeping quiet will only reinforce the unawareness amongst church members and that without it there can be no realisation about our role in the painful experience of exclusion. This is why I share it with you, Heerden; in the light of this country's painful history of exclusion and in the light of your Philemon sermon. If I understood your sermon correctly, Paul too would have said: 'It is a must'*

(Excerpt from the letter to Heerden van Niekerk, 19 June 2007, translated)

Being a witness to and experiencing marginalisation on this day made me realise how much the research had changed me. Because of my social location of solidarity with those on the margins of society, I was able to start seeing and experiencing the painful effects myself of a pastoral power that marginalises. Because of what I was able to see, I felt compelled to speak out against these insensitive and unjust practices. From a marginal position, Herzog's (1988:10) words gained new meaning for me:

...God-walk means willingness to immerse oneself in life as a whole and to stand where Jesus stands in all walks of life, especially with those whom society tunes out: the invisible women and men, as also the injured creation... So it is not activity in general that is called for when we reflect on our social location. It is first of all participation in the justice mission of Jesus. It is eucharist action. It is immersion in

*conflict*, with class struggle at the cutting edge.

I realised that subscribing to a feminist epistemology meant taking up a position about faith as embodied solidarity with the other and that it implied challenging the unjust *status quo*. Such a challenge, as I experienced in the research, means that I found myself immersed in conflict as I started to experience the effects of marginalisation myself.

### 4.3.3 ‘Beloved community’

In a chapter on Christian feminist spirituality, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (1993:199) challenges the traditional notion that spirituality has something to do with the life of the soul, with prayer and mystical union, with ‘waiting’ for God’s will to come to pass. According to this notion, the spirit is *within* us. She proposes a feminist understanding of spirituality as being *among* us: she regards the relational practices of entering into community as the true *ekklesia* – the Greek term for church.

The stories of the Scottsville women and of Granville in this chapter illustrate how immanent, individualist notions of spirituality in which the body is sublimated or denied have impoverished the Christian pastoral tradition and limited theology’s vision of what church can be. An immanent view of spirituality has also supported ‘a general disengagement from matters of the material, historical and political world’ (Slee 2003:97). In facing the challenges of poverty, we as Christians need to become aware of such disengagement and what it has blinded people to in this country. In this sense, this research is an attempt to revive a concrete relational spirituality with service and mutuality instead of individual salvation and holiness as its objectives.

Feminist theologian Letty Russell (1974:158-163) argues for an ‘open ecclesiology’ that allows for the church to take a variety of forms. This means that instead of starting with the nature of the church and arguing from its nature to its function in the world, open ecclesiology ‘begins with the function of participation and moves from there to understand the form and nature of the church’ (Russell 1974:158). Therefore, *ekklesia* is wherever people participate in Jesus’ task of creating communities of love, hope and justice. In this chapter I have described the ways in which the women I have met through the lay counselling training embody *ekklesia* in their community. Another way in which their participation embodied *ekklesia* was in their relationship with me.

Because of a history of racism and classism in this country, we as people of privilege have created a Christian pastoral tradition of distance and alienation. However, over the months of our sessions together, and in the time since, relationships of real care and solidarity developed between Doreen, Joan, Aunt Liz and Aunt Baai and myself. We became a ‘beloved community’ (Welch 1990:160) to one another.

During our presentation at the SAAP conference (see Section 4.4), I referred with appreciation to the times during which Doreen initiated conversations with me to support me in my work at Petunia Primary and encouraged me not to get sidetracked by a lack of support from certain teachers at the school. On the stage at the SAAP conference, I asked Doreen why she had encouraged me in this way, knowing full well that her support of me was not without risk to herself. Doreen replied that in the course of the 29 years that she had been teaching in Scottsville, she could see the gradual deterioration of the community: ‘I see the children who are lost. I see the parents who are not interested in their children. And I sit there and I feel helpless...’ She told me that she saw in me a kindred spirit. She said that she saw in this ‘white outsider’ someone who wanted the kind of transformation that she wanted for her community. That is why she decided to inform me of the power relations in the school and to support my work. I experienced this reaching out of Doreen’s as an act of true pastoral care.

Carter Heyward (1995:82) states that pastoral care should indeed, serve as a ‘resource in our struggle against forces of alienated power that silence, separate, and shatter us...’. Below, I briefly discuss other ways in which mutual pastoral care created ‘beloved community’ during this research.

From the outset, these women showed me, a stranger, a kindness I did not expect. In this section, I describe the different ways in which we as a community of care embodied care, hospitality and solidarity towards one another.

#### ***4.3.3.1 Care shown towards me***

Aunt Baai invited me to her church in July 2006. Below is an excerpt from a letter that I wrote to her after attending the service in which I made visible how I have experienced care from her and the effects it has had on my life. By writing about it, I wanted to make the value of her caring visible to Aunt Baai. Reflecting on this excerpt whilst writing this chapter, I have become aware about how it encapsulates, in an embodied form, all

the sources of feminist theology: Scripture, an appreciation of meaning associated with the Christian tradition of choral music, my experience of the events as a woman and the experience of beloved community (in both the past and the present). My letter to Aunt Baai and my inclusion of the letter in the academic format of this thesis is an attempt to honour my experience of ‘beloved community’ as an important (theological) resource for this research. Aunt Baai told me that she had given the letter to the choirmaster to read, and that he was moved by what I had said. Letter writing was the methodology I used in this situation to foster mutuality of care which went further than I had originally envisaged.

*Dear Aunt Baai*

*Thank you very much for inviting me to share in your celebrations for your pastor. It was my first ever visit to a Full Gospel Church. The atmosphere reminded me of the Apostolic church that I belonged to as a student and where I had myself baptised. I remember clearly how the sincerity of the people made me feel at home. Yesterday I was again touched by how glad the people were to see one another... Thank you, Aunt Baai for taking the trouble to introduce me to the pastors and to the brothers and sisters of the congregation. While you were busy introducing me, you kept your arm around me – I will remember with gratitude these small acts as acts of care that you have shown me....’*

(Excerpt from letter to Aunt Baai, 31 July 2006, translated).

In Section 4.3.2.1 under the subheading ‘Inviting others to practice solidarity with the marginalised’, I described the effect on me of that Aunt Baai’s singing of the hymn: ‘If I can help somebody...’. When my proposal for the SAAP conference was accepted, I remembered my experience of relational care and of community of that afternoon. I retold the story to the audience at the SAAP conference and then three of the Scottsville women who accompanied me sang the same song again. It became something of an anthem to us regarding the way we understand pastoral praxis.

#### ***4.3.3.2 Supporting one another***

Confronted by the apathy of teachers and community members about working together,

or working towards developing initiatives, I often also consulted with Aunt Liz, who had been involved in social outreach programmes in the community for years. She shared her daily experiences of frustration and anger with me about the apathy she sometimes experienced in the community. She said that she often felt like this:

<p><i>'I'm wasting my time. It's demoralising....Mense stel net nie belang nie. Ek wil byvoorbeeld so graag tapestry doen.... Ek gaan nou op my eie aan... want as jy jou weer kom kry dan is jy ook besig om in die moedelose put af te gaan. En dan sit jy daar onder dan ontdek jy maar hier moet ek uitklim.'</i> (Cupido 2008)</p>	<p>'I'm wasting my time. It's demoralising.... People are just not interested. For instance I wanted to do tapestry. I am doing it on my own now... because before you know it you are slipping down into the well of dejectedness. Then you are sitting there thinking: I have to get out of this.'</p>
---	--

From Aunt Liz I learnt that pastoral care meant continuing with what you can, where you can and not letting yourself remain in the well of despair (Cupido 2008b). Then I remembered how Aunt Liz described herself in our first session: as a 'community person' who had, through projects in the squatter camps of Wallacedene and Uitsig, been able to put not only bread on the table for the women who participated, but even a leg of lamb at Christmas.

Before meeting Aunt Liz, these sobering but realistic angles on pastoral care in a poor community had entered my field of vision, but had remained there in an unformulated, discomfoting state. Aunt Liz's stories of both joy and struggle were an inspiration to me in my own struggles not to be overwhelmed by the challenges of poverty. My interaction with Aunt Liz sensitised me to working with the gaps in the landscape of despair. As a narrative therapist, I have been trained to look for those gaps in a story; the details that contradict the problem story, and to work with these details in developing more hopeful stories with people. I realised that Aunt Liz's life spoke of that same commitment, a commitment to get out of the well of dejectedness that she often reminded me of. She managed to hold the meaningful events of providing opportunities for poor women that resulted in their being able to put a leg of lamb on the table at Christmas time, *together with* the apathy and the spirit of individualism that is also part

of the community. For me, this ‘double vision’ became the lenses through which I started viewing the doing pastoral care in a context of poverty. It meant taking full cognisance of the forces that destroy *and yet* never letting go of hope. One of Aunt Liz’s favourite comments on Scripture is ‘...but there is a balm in Gilead!’ She would say this when speaking about her pain at the death of her daughter prior to the commencement of our sessions. I understand it to mean that God’s healing power is always available to us, and especially so in the face of suffering and despair.

I would also phone Doreen for support at times when I felt especially vulnerable; like the day of final rehearsals of the young people’s play, when two of the lead actors did not show up and the bickering in the group left me feeling desperate and lonely. Doreen listened to me with full attention and without trying to make me ‘look on the bright side of things’. She encouraged me with words about the contribution she could see I was making and was one of the only two teachers (the other was Mr Foster) from both schools who showed up at the performance the next day to show their support to the young people, and to me.

I would show my support to the women by having therapeutic conversations with them in my car, or in my consulting room at home. I would also phone to hear how they were and send them a cell phone text message. On the anniversary of the death of Aunt Liz’s daughter, I visited her at her home.

Doreen’s listening and her hugs, Aunt Baai’s invitation to her church and her song, Aunt Liz’s words of comfort in times of despair, have been like bread and balm to me in the research process. Through them, I have been able to also see God anew as a vulnerable God ‘who enters completely into human affairs’ (Graham 1993:221) and as a God of hope because their lives and stories bear testimony to it in my life. The relationships between us, and the stories of care towards others that I witnessed, became the embodiment of the pastoral power of mutuality in which

(d)ivinity is not a mark of that which is other than the finite. Grace is not that which comes from outside to transform the conditions of finitude. Divinity, or grace, is the resilient, fragile, healing power of finitude itself. The terms *holy* and *divine* denote a quality of being within the web of life, a process of healing relationship, and they denote the quality of being worthy of honor, love, respect, and affirmation.

(Welch 1990:178)

Revisiting that afternoon more than two years ago when I invited these women to share stories of being joined, I never knew how richly this research would provide me with examples of others joining me and connecting me to ‘the web of life’, the stories of which I can share by way of this thesis.

#### ***4.3.3.3 Creating community: the stories of Granville***

In this research the commitment to work in a spirit of mutuality was not limited to the relations between women – it also infused my other work, such as my pastoral relations with young people and with men inside and outside of the community. The stories of Granville illustrate how the spirit of mutuality can create possibilities.

Granville was one of my first clients at Petunia. His teacher referred him to me about his struggles with aggressiveness in class. She also told me that Granville lived in difficult circumstances and had learnt from an early age to fend for himself. Granville and I had a few sessions together. During one break, he and two of his friends visited me in the classroom where I consulted. Granville told me that they wanted to give me a gift. I was given a chair to sit on and while the two friends did a break-dance for me, Granville hammered out the beat with two rulers and his elbow.

I thanked the group and shared with them my delight at their dancing talent and at Granville’s musical abilities. When, one year later, the young people decided to perform the play that they had written, I remembered that morning and Granville’s musical abilities. I invited him to share his talent with the members of the newly-founded drama society. Granville did more than share his musical abilities. He engaged wholeheartedly in the process of the creation of the play. During the witnessing ceremony at the end of the play, I honoured the fact that Granville brought original ideas to the show.

One day Granville asked me whether, seeing that this play was about Tik, we should tell people where they could get help for their addiction as part of the play. Granville’s suggestion meant that a list of all the drug rehabilitation centres and their telephone numbers appeared on the back of the programme. The narrator referred to it in the play. Granville’s name appeared on the back of the programme as the originator of the idea. I remember saying goodbye to the young people after the last of our three performances at the school. Granville waited for everyone to leave and then came up to me and threw his arms around my waist.

Months had passed since the first performance of the play. I then got an email from my friend Conrad Sidego telling me of a visit to Cape Town by world-renowned music teacher and conductor, Ben Zander. Ben was offering a musical workshop around the theme of Possibility thinking (!) with the Cape Town Philharmonic orchestra to young people from poor communities. On that Sunday afternoon, Mr Foster brought Granville to the auditorium in Cape Town to attend the workshop. This is an excerpt of my thank you letter to Ben Zander after the workshop:

*Granville Wannenberg was amongst the group of children who attended your Sunday afternoon performance with the Cape Philharmonic Orchestra in August. Granville was a client of mine at the school who one day came into my consultation room with two friends to thank me. He played the beat on a school desk with his elbow and two rulers, while his friends did a break-dance. When we needed a drummer for our play, I remembered Granville's musical ability. I include a picture of Granville with his drum during a performance in one of the school corridors. (This school does not have a hall where children can perform, so we used this as our 'stage'.) I have asked him about his experience of your Sunday 'show'. I asked him what in particular stood out for him. He said that he enjoyed seeing your 'pact' (ooreenkoms') with the 'band' (said whilst simulating an energetic piece of conducting).*

*He also enjoyed the sound made by 'those long instruments at the back' (gestures). Although he did not understand the English, he thought the singing was awesome ('die sing was kwaai'). Of you he said: 'One can see that here's a man who enjoys his music... Maybe he can show me how to blow (those long instruments at the back) or to play the guitar. Actually, I too am a man who enjoys music. It makes me happy to watch him... It makes me think; maybe one day then I can join him on the stage. He will get the best out of me'. ('n Mens kan sien da's 'n man wat van sy musiek hou...Miskien kan hy my wys om te blaas of guitar te speel. Ek's ook eintlik 'n man wat van musiek hou. Dit maak my gelukkig om hom te sien... Dit laat my dink miskien kan ons twee eendag saam op 'n stage wees. Hy sal uit my die beste haal').*

*Granville and I agree that your ability to get the best out of the band members has been an inspiration to us both. Thank you! (1 September 2007).*

At this time it was decided that our play would be performed at a community Drug Awareness Day in October 2007. The following is an excerpt from an e-mail I sent to my promoter on 24 August 2007 that tells the story of what I discovered had happened in Granville's life at school since the previous year:

*I phoned the school to leave a message for Granville about the repeat performance of the play and of our rehearsal times. The secretary told me that she would call him. He is now a prefect and is doing duties close to her office. Prefect? Granville? The boy who was referred to me 18 months before as one of the school's biggest 'troublemakers'? Just the year before, Mr Foster cautioned me, saying, '... are you sure? He can be a handful...', when I insisted that Granville travel with the group of Grade 7s to watch Taliep Petersen and David Kramer's production of *Ghoema* in Stellenbosch.*

*Miss Jacobs (the school secretary) told me that one day in June Granville simply presented himself to the principal, saying that he wanted to be a prefect. He felt that he was ready for it. I phoned Mr Foster. Had I heard correctly? Yes, Mr Foster assured me, all of it is true. Then I remembered how Mr Foster had taken Granville with his car to Artscape to listen to Ben Zander. The little boy and the tall man together. Mr Foster told me how Granville had told him while they were travelling together that his father was in jail. I then used the opportunity to thank Mr Foster for reaching out to Granville: connection through relationship instead of through discipline.*

Sharon Welch (1990:124) states that the 'moral critique of structural forms of injustice emerges...from the material interaction of different communities...morally transformative interaction requires far more than conversation between groups and peoples and that "genuine" conversation presupposes prior material interaction...or joint involvement in life-sustaining work'.

Granville's story is one of the power of mutuality that comes from material interaction. Mr Foster took Granville by car to listen to Ben Zander who invited the audience to sing Beethoven's Ninth Symphony while the philharmonic orchestra was playing. This

travelling and singing together made it possible for Granville to have a ‘genuine conversation’ about his life with the school principal. Granville brought me the embodied gift of his music and the dancing of his friends. I then provided Granville with the opportunity of playing the drum in the play. Granville’s story also illustrates that community work depends on joint involvement between different communities: Conrad Sidego, a Cape Townian with a passion for community work whom I had told of the Scottsville community, Mr Foster, Ben Zander on tour from the United States, Granville and myself – we all contributed to what I can now dare to call ‘life-sustaining’ work. We can also call it hope.

Holocaust survivor and Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel (1995:s.p.) says: ‘I have learned two lessons in my life: first, there are no sufficient literary, psychological, or historical answers to human tragedy, only moral ones. Second, just as despair can come to one another only from other human beings, hope, too, can be given to one only by other human beings.’ In Chapter Two I have outlined the many social conditions that can and do create despair in poor communities. In feminist theology I found a ‘moral methodology’ that can challenge this despair in the form of care that is both embodied and mutual.

#### **4.4 PRESENTING A WORKSHOP AT SAAP**

In Chapter 3, I set out to describe the development of a particular kind of pastoral power that gave some power over other that then led to the subjection and marginalisation of those ‘others’.

Feminist theologian Sally Purvis (1993:15) points out that the ‘conceptualization and implementation of power is such a fundamental aspect of communal structure that without addressing it, true, lasting change is impossible’. However, while poststructuralist analysis and deconstruction is invaluable in understanding the operation and effects of pastoral power, they do not offer an alternative to the abusive relational patterns of the past. I could not relate to pastoral models that professed care, but whose practices did not centralise the experience of the ‘other’. Because this research was done in a context of poverty, I had to find my pastoral focus in a theology that centralised the experience of those who had been subjugated by the practices described in Chapter 3. Feminist theology and pastoral care provided me with such a

focus. It follows that with such a focus, a different kind of pastoral praxis emerged that had as its aim participation and mutual care. An epistemology that takes a critical look at power relations and its effects is an epistemology that 'revalues difference and privileges particularity' (Ramsay 2004:158). This revaluing of difference and particularity, in turn, has important ethical consequences for practice (these are discussed in Chapter 5). It also has political consequences, especially in terms of how this work could be made visible to a broader public.

Fraser (1992:290) addresses the misguided concept of the public space as being a neutral cultural space: '... this assumption is counterfactual, and not for reasons that are merely accidental. In stratified societies, unequally empowered social groups tend to develop unequally valued cultural styles. The result is to marginalize the contribution of members of subordinated groups both in everyday life contexts and in official public spheres.' The decision to present a workshop at the 2006 South African Association for Pastoral work (SAAP) conference came about because of what I had experienced/witnessed about the ways in which these women chose to relate to others, some stories of which I had referred to in the previous section. I realised that if I wanted to 'revalue difference', then I also needed to make visible to the broader pastoral community the epistemological framework of my pastoral enterprise that centralised these women's experiences and to publicly centralise a cultural style of presentation which included the sharing by women of their own experiences and narratives. In this way, women of faith who live in a context of poverty were purposefully included in this research to participate in a dialogue of faith, and in doing so to reconstruct the Christian pastoral tradition.

Therefore, feminist theology and its methodologies (such as the workshop at SAAP) 'is not a question of privileging women over men, but of including women in the places where hitherto they have been excluded and transforming those places by their inclusion' (Moore 2002:28).

Our workshop was entitled: 'Discovering and creating resources in a poor community in the midst of crises and change'. In the programme notes I described the background to and purpose of our contribution as follows:

*The workshop will focus on:*

***Narrative therapy** and the ways in which it provides resources in terms of the stance and language that invite discovery.*

***Pastoral care** as a resource for supporting families in contexts where therapy cannot.*

*The workshop will take the form of the sharing of stories from the Scottsville community in Kraaifontein. Outsider participants are invited to take part in our workshop as active witnesses. As a witness you will be invited to reflect on the stories and its meaning for your life and context.*

***Background to the workshop:** The conversations between the women from Scottsville and myself started whilst I was doing research for my doctorate in Practical Theology (UNISA). The women wanted to develop their skills as lay counsellors in the community. I wanted to learn from them what pastoral care in the community looks like and how it can be supported. Our sessions have become a process of mutual learning. This workshop is a way of extending our conversations.*

#### **4.4.1 How the workshop was conducted**

The women (Nerine, Doreen, Aunt Liz, Lena, Joan and Aunt Baai) and I sat in a semi-circle on the stage. I introduced each of the women to the audience by sharing aspects of my own relationship with her, what I had learnt from her and appreciated about her. I also introduced the stories of care and knowledges of faith she had brought to our sessions. These stories were then retold by the women themselves. The women also spoke about the challenges of poverty and their pastoral stance in the face of these challenges. Aunt Liz, for instance, described the stance of resilience one has to take when initiating projects in the face of apathy:

<p><i>‘...al is dit net ons. As niemand belangstel in die gemeenskap nie dan maak dit nie saak nie. Dan begin ons. As jy saad in die grond sit...iewers gaan hy opkom... Mense sit so vas in hulle omstandighede. Mense is so verarmd en mense is so versukkeld dat hulle nie die lig in die tunnel sien nie.’</i></p>	<p>‘...even if it is only us. It does not matter if nobody in the community is interested. Then we start. If you sow seed in the soil...somewhere it will sprout... People are so caught up in their circumstances. People are so impoverished and people are so worn-out that they are unable to see the light in the tunnel.</p>
--	--

Aunt Liz’s words reminded me of Michael White’s comments at a workshop in Somerset West in 2003. He spoke about the therapeutic context where we encounter people who, due to the overwhelming presence of problems in their lives, cannot see the light that Aunt Liz referred to. Then the therapist has to hold the hope for her client. What I learned from Aunt Liz is that when a community cannot hold hope yet, we have to hold the hope for them. Then *we* begin.

That day, Aunt Liz also shared with the audience the spirit of true mutuality in which she practises pastoral care with very poor people. She spoke about how someone once suggested to her that they give carrot-water as soup to poor people in a squatter camp. Aunt Liz told us:

<p><i>‘Ek redeneer so...Dit wat ek vir my kinders op die tafel sit sit ek vir die kind in die plakkerskamp op die tafel. Nee, ek gee vir niemand wortelwater nie. Ek gooi dit ook nie by (ander sop) nie. Ek gooi dit in die drein af.’</i></p>	<p>I am reasoning like this...What I put on the table for my children, I put on the table for the child in the squatter camp. No, I do not give carrot-water to anyone. I also do not mix it (into the other soup). I throw it down the drain.’</p>
---	---

In Chapter 5, I will pick up on Aunt Liz’s comments when I discuss Derrida’s description of ethical relations with the other, as relations of symmetry. When I regard the child in the squatter camp as no different to my own, the poor child will receive the

same soup as my own child. The principle of symmetry also guided the choices I made during the refurbishment of the school library at Scottsville Secondary School. Books that I would have been happy for my own children to read when they were teenagers were the books that were given a place on the shelves.

#### **4.4.2 The significance of the SAAP presentation**

The tradition of pastoral theology in South Africa has been impoverished because it has been without the voices of poor women who have managed to care for others in the face of great personal hardship. In her book on postcolonial imagination and feminist theology, Kwok (2005:34) asks the question about the kind of subjectivity afforded to those women who have historically been subjected. She then states: ‘To recover black foremothers as strong, resourceful, and enduring is to rewrite a tradition to live by, and to celebrate black women’s audacity of creating a way out of no way.’ It is my hope that our work at the SAAP conference contributed to the rewriting of Christian tradition, in the sense that it was done orally and by way of personal narratives. Hence, we made the point that ‘(t)ruth is not just to be found in written Christian tradition but also in the traditions of those places at the margins where we often fail to look’ (Rieger 2001:116).

Chopp (1989:2) also makes the point that women, through their participation in language, change the rules of language itself: ‘Women will be forever strangers unless their words and their voices revise the social and symbolic rules of language, transforming the law of ordered hierarchy in language, in subjectivity, and in politics into a grace of rich plenitude for human flourishing.’ Women’s language at SAAP took the form of the sharing of their learnings in the group, stories and experiences, words of appreciation for one another, favourite expressions, the singing of a meaningful song and also of responding to outsider witnesses in the audience reflecting back to the women on what was meaningful to them. It resonates with Chopp’s (1989) view that the emotive, experiential and ‘ordinary’ and informal use of language (whether it was sung or spoken) of ‘coloured’ women at SAAP contributed to the transformation of the hierarchies of language at pastoral conferences, such as expert, formal or professional presentations, ‘*Woordbediening*’ or even the authoritative language of analysis or exegesis done by ministers or people with formal education. According to Brueggemann (1976:101), ‘(s)halom depends on the redistribution of power’. The redistribution of power through language that was done by the women themselves at SAAP was

therefore significant also in terms of the fulfilment of the research aim of *shalom* (see Section 1.3.4).

After the presentation, the members from the audience were invited to reflect publicly on their experience of the women of Scottsville. Several audience participants spoke about how their listening to the women from Scottsville had inspired and encouraged them in their own work. A white male minister from Kraaifontein commented that he came to the women's session feeling despondent about the many challenges of poverty. In the course of our presentation, however, he said, 'I started realising what you were doing was to light a small fire of hope...and this really...I feel great now...because I experienced something of that hope'. What is significant to me is his use of the word 'experienced' in relation to hope. Within a theology that centralises praxis and embodiment, hope is something we do in such a way that it can be experienced – also by witnesses.

After the workshop, the women could not stop talking about what the witnessing had meant to them. Joan exclaimed: 'To think that a minister could learn something from us!' Miller-McLemore (2004:63) regards feminist *pastoral care as 'giving voice to the socially marginalized'*. This research as feminist pastoral care created the condition of a workshop so that the once silent may be heard in contexts other than their own. The active witnessing format of the workshop meant that the hearing of their voices was made reflected back to them and, with it, the hope that such a hearing generated. To the women to experience themselves as people who could help shape the hope of others was a new and hugely empowering experience.

#### **4.5 SOME REFLECTIONS ON CURRENT THEOLOGICAL METAPHORS (IN THE LIGHT OF A FEMINIST POSTSTRUCTURALIST HERMENEUTICS) AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR PASTORAL PRAXIS**

In this chapter I have discussed the themes in a feminist epistemology of mutuality, embodiment, solidarity with the marginalised and of centralising the experiences of those who had been marginalised. Feminist theologians (Miller-McLemore 2004:50; Slee 2003:103) often refer to the fact that there is no division between the personal and the political. My experiences of these theoretical themes in practice in the research

started altering what it was that I valued and paid attention to both in my life and in research.

This chapter opened with the words of St John of the Cross about coming ‘to the knowledge you have not’ because of going ‘by a way which you know not’. My coming to new knowledge as described in this chapter gradually changed the paradigm of what I regarded as ‘important’ and it sensitised me to language and actions that harm and marginalise. Foucault’s analyses also offered me insight into the operation and techniques of power and how language is used as an expression of that power. These changes in insight, because they deal with power relations, can never be neutral. The ‘critical stance towards the Christian tradition’ that I referred to as a source for feminist theology in the introduction to this chapter therefore requires me continuously to take a critical stand in the domain of my own praxis and in relation to current social practices. Hence, I also take a critical, political stand in this thesis in relation to the social and theological events not only of history, but also of the present day. This stand is based on the realisation of injustice that comes from my solidarity with the marginalised. By coming to terms with my ‘enlistment in God’s justice struggle’ (Herzog 1988:42), I have come to realise that the personal indeed has to be the political, and that speaking out is part of such an enlistment.

We live in a culture that values material successes and power. It is the culture of television that portrays movie, pop and sport ‘stardom’. Even in humanitarian work, the media is driven by what Soelle (1990:152) describes as ‘the success mentality’. What recently made headlines as theological ‘success’ is that 60 000 South African men gathered at one of a series of Mighty Men conferences (Jackson 2008). One of the attendees (Reyes 2008) reports on the event as follows: ‘I estimate that 80% of the people at the conference were Afrikaans speaking, and probably 80% of those were farmers. These guys are hurting, and life is not easy for them. Their wellbeing, culture, masculinity and many other factors are under huge pressure, and I think Angus speaks to their hearts.’

In Chapter Three, I explored how a pastoral culture of control developed with might as one of its central themes. In feminist terms, the reverence of might by men speaks of maintaining the kyriarchal *status quo*. Such a ‘branding’ by Afrikaans-speaking men of their Christianity, however, begs a response in a country in which women and young people suffer the violence of mighty men (as described in Chapters 2 and 3) and women

are still being marginalised in the church (Van Rensburg 2002). According to Van Rensburg (2002:744), such a process of establishing control/marginalisation is supported by an 'upsurge of fundamentalism'. Considering the metaphors of might and war (such as 'Warriors for Christ') associated with the Mighty Men conference, I am left wondering what kind of pastoral practices can emerge from such a theology. The focus of the conference seems to primarily be on these men themselves, for whom 'life is not easy'. How different would it have been if the conference was called 'caring men' or 'merciful men' or 'men in solidarity with others'? And how many would have attended under such a banner? I am wondering what difference such a relational focus would have made to the suffering millions in South Africa for whom life has not been easy for decades.

I am therefore concerned about the ways in which the experiences of privilege in South Africa are shaping an understanding of Christian faith that is, in the first instance, concerned with the maintenance of individual strength and well-being. Such an understanding that centralises the self and the might of the self by implication loses sight of the vulnerable other and how our might contributes to their vulnerability. It also loses sight of the fact that Jesus, through his life and death, centralised the relationship with the vulnerable other (which is also I). I want to argue that in such a self-serving paradigm, the pastoral challenges of poverty will remain addenda to the understanding of Christian faith itself.

As a feminist theologian of praxis who has been sensitised by the context of poverty to the usage of theological metaphors, I therefore cannot help but wonder which metaphor Christ would have preferred for this country, which has suffered so many injustices in the pursuit and the maintenance of individualism and might. When he addressed the crowds in His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus gave pointers to an ethical life (Ackermann 2007): 'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth...Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God' (Mt 5:5,9). A feminist hermeneutic therefore also urges me to take a particular stand in relation to a theological culture in South Africa that values might over meekness and the metaphor of the warrior over that of the peacemaker.

According to Purvis (1993:51), 'we ... are not equipped by common understandings and expressions of control to perceive as power the noncoercive, nonmanipulative, nondominating power for which the cross is the central symbol'. Purvis (1993:51)

argues that for Paul, ‘the lesson of the cross is that even the most violent efforts to manipulate life, to control the power of God, are finally overcome by that very power that by worldly standards looks like weakness’. Doreen’s story of the bread that she gives daily to the poor and mentally handicapped man may not feature in the newspapers or even in the sermons of many charismatic Christian preachers, because it is simply too ‘ordinary’. And yet, in its non-coerciveness, it speaks of the power of divine love. It restores our human connection to the sacred bonds that we humans share with another and with God, as Doreen so beautifully described to her son. Relationships of non-dominating care also feature in Granville’s stories. In feminist theological research, as in narrative therapy, we listen to and (re)tell these stories with reverence, because through them we are reminded of what Michael White (2000:145) describes as ‘the spiritualities of the surface’, of the ordinary, sacred events of life.

In the next chapter I discuss vulnerability and mutuality as the keys to ethical relations. In Chapter 6, I then elaborate on the focus of this research on the ordinary experience of young people as an expression of the sacredness of life and how what we valued contributed to the creation of a different culture to the one of control in the midst of poverty.

## CHAPTER 5

# THE POSSIBILITY OF ETHICAL RELATIONS IN A CONTEXT OF POVERTY – A FEMINIST-POSTSTRUCTURALIST EXPLORATION

*To come to be what you are not  
you must go by a way in which you are not.  
(St John of the Cross, cited in Dombrowski 1992:24)*

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapters 2 and 3, I discussed how a kind of pastoral power emerged that operated in ‘coloured’ communities through discourses of domination, violence and control. In both these chapters, I used Foucault’s archaeology and genealogy to describe the power relations that inform and sustain the pastoral heritage of ‘coloured’ people living in the Western Cape. In these chapters I also discussed the effects that this heritage has had and still has, especially on the lives of poor ‘coloured’ youth. The terms of resistance to the heritage and the conceptual tools that Foucauldian analysis introduced are taken further in this chapter by using Derrida’s description of ‘deconstruction’.

Eg ea-Kuehne (2005:38-39) argues that, for Derrida, the relationship with a cultural legacy is not a passive one, but one that demands that people must question and re-evaluate the assumptions that support such a legacy in order to be able to displace it. In Chapter 4, I have given theological grounds for a re-evaluation of a pastoral legacy of control. In this chapter, I use both a feminist and a poststructuralist epistemology in formulating the conceptual tools with which I tried to create new possibilities in line with the following insight:

Consequently and paradoxically one can be faithful to one’s heritage only in as much as one accepts to be unfaithful to it, analyze, critique, and interpret it, relentlessly. Derrida goes one step further, declaring that it is precisely within this heritage that one can find the ‘conceptual tools,’ which will enable one to challenge the very limits of this heritage as traditionally defined and imposed.

(Eg ea-Kuehne 2005:40)

This chapter reflects on how this research led me to discover what makes for a different kind of relation between people who live in a context of poverty and the researchers, pastoral workers and theologians who work here. In order to do so, I would first like to discuss the term ‘deconstruction’ as defined by Jacques Derrida (Caputo 1997; Cornell 1992; Derrida 1983, 1989; Lucy 2004; Naas 2003).

In my opinion, this term is crucial in any discussion about creating just pastoral relations. My reason for linking deconstruction with ethical relations lie in the *shalom* aim of restorative justice, as described in Chapter 1.

Deconstruction brings into focus that which lies beyond, outside of what has already been achieved or described. The church and most Christians say that they do care for others. However, in a cross-cultural research context, which is simultaneously also a context of poverty, it is not enough to speak about an ethic of care (Tronto 1995) without critically looking at who is meant by ‘the other’ and what form of care the poor other considers to be just. Hence, Lucy (2004:13) argues that ‘deconstruction is not something that is brought *to* an opposition; it is the impossible condition of possibility of every opposition.’ Hence, ‘(d)estruction is justice...It is possible as an experience of the impossible, there where, even if it does not exist (or does not yet exist, or never does exist), *there* is justice’ (Derrida 1989:15, Derrida’s italics). Restorative justice in South Africa is that ‘impossible condition’ which has ‘not yet’ been realised in ‘coloured’ communities such as the community in Scottsville. A poststructuralist understanding of how we develop an awareness of the ‘not yet’ in terms of human relations is therefore crucial for research that has justice-making in a context of poverty as its aim. In recognising that which lies beyond the limits of what I know or do, that which is not yet, it is possible to uncover the ‘pastoral possibilities’ that the title of this thesis refers to.

In this chapter, I also expand on the concept of the ‘not yet’ in terms of feminist theology’s attempt to create more mutual forms of power relation with ‘the other’. In this chapter I also reflect on the role my openness to the other plays in creating a new kind of pastoral power at work in communities and in research. Hence the questioning of the limits of openness to the other is done in this chapter as it pertains to the various positions I took up in this research: as a white privileged researcher, as a therapist and as a mentor of young people.

In this chapter I reflect on the fact that the concreteness of the poor other challenges me in very real, practical terms. Hence I discuss both the body as a resource and embodiment as a theme in a feminist epistemology. In the previous chapter (see Section 4.3.3), I have already described some of the ways in which our female bodies created mutuality and a sense of ‘beloved community’ in cross-cultural relationships.

In this chapter I also include the self-reflexive perspective of Mr Noach, who has been teaching at Petunia Primary since the school opened its doors 28 years ago (see Section 5.3.1.4 under the subheading ‘The move to openness: Mr Noach’s “enlarged thinking”’). He refers to the relational ethics that accompanies an open and embodied response to the other. What struck me about Mr Noach’s relational stance is how he lets it be informed by an openness to the context of poverty within which he teaches.

Narrative therapy provided me with a methodology in taking a deconstructive stance; not only in therapeutic conversations, but also in terms of social justice. In this chapter, I describe how I used a deconstructive stance in this research and what it achieved in relational terms. This chapter also describes the ways in which the witnessing practices from narrative therapy that I introduced through this research deconstructed the limits of what is relationally possible in the community.

## **5.2 THE ETHICS OF DECONSTRUCTION**

The call to deconstruct implies a going to the other, a questioning of the limits of that which is culturally, pastorally and rationally sanctioned. Drucilla Cornell (1992:60) therefore renames deconstruction the ‘philosophy of the limit’, also in terms of the dream of community – ‘in the chance of uncovering or having revealed to us different ways of belonging together, which does not revert to classic individualism and which is also not just the identification of the individual within the community in mass society’. Deconstruction therefore ‘exposes how the very logic of the establishment of community draws boundaries that by necessity leave some out’ (Cornell 1992:61).

Therefore, the function of the deconstruction of the pastorate reveals the logic that sets up the limits that define pastoral relations, and it simultaneously challenges those limits, suggesting that community may be experienced in different ways. To Derrida, ethics lies precisely in this act of deconstruction, this ongoing challenging of the limits. Norris (1987:224) concludes that, for Derrida, ‘the realm of ethical discourse is that which

exceeds all given conceptual structures, but exceeds them through a patient interrogation of their limits, and not by some leap into an unknown “beyond” which would give no purchase to critical thought’. A reflection on the experiences I have had of limits of care and limitations to care in the Scottsville community, as well as in the faith community of Welgemoed, is therefore part of the ethical deconstruction of pastoral care itself. Cornell (1992:40) also argues that

Derrida does not simply reject the historical reality of community life, nor does he merely privilege the moment of ‘transgression’ when the boundaries yield. He warns us against both the violence of identity that presents the community as a self-contained unit of *being* and the relegation of the other to a *phenomenological* relation of asymmetry in which the dance of sameness and difference is denied. It should not be forgotten that the general strategy of deconstruction is to disrupt the violent hierarchies of binary oppositions. Derrida is one of our sharpest critics of both sides of the myth of self-containment.

If deconstruction acts against self-containment, the question arises what (ethical) stance deconstruction elicits. Naas (2003:168) argues that ‘deconstruction would be ... a certain form of openness. Openness to something other or unprecedented, to surprise or the unknown. Openness – but not without preparation and not without purpose’. Because this research was done in the discipline of practical theology, the purpose of the deconstructive stance I employ in this chapter is to redefine the terms of openness to the poor other. As the relationship with the other comes into focus in this chapter, my reflections are intended to contribute to the conversation about the **practice of ethics** in theology. The title of this thesis refers to both ‘pastoral care’ and ‘creating possibilities’. But this research and the themes in this chapter do not have as their primary objectives a furthering of academic debate. The realities of poverty are such that ethicising about ‘the other’ without real change in how research affects practice would be unethical.

Matthew Sharpe (2002:186) questions an ethics such as Derrida’s if the practice of such an ethics is aimed at making and defending a point to itself: ‘To paraphrase the famous statement about the law: morally, “knowledge of impurity is no excuse”. We simply *do* then have the right to question a practice that does not make of this “knowledge” a starting-point for reconstructive thinking open to concrete contestation, but hypostasizes it into a point to ceaselessly circle around.’

Therefore, the purpose of the deconstructive stance of this chapter is to question what responsibility to the other can look like in practice in South Africa today. In terms of the

title of this thesis, the creation of possibilities of this chapter refers to relational possibilities. Narrative therapy presents such a kind of reconstructive thinking and doing based on Derrida's knowledge (see Sections 5.5.1 to 5.5.3). This chapter also deconstructs relational responsibility in theological and pastoral terms.

But in order to create possibilities of care to and with the other, I first have to define the relational limits to care that have been set in the past. Any analysis of relationships in a context of poverty has to include an understanding of difference and of how this understanding influences what is or becomes relationally possible.

### **5.3 DEALING WITH DIFFERENCE**

Carol Witherell (1991:85) cites René Girard's comment that during the twentieth century daily life has been demystified. Consequently, 'we create the greatest myth of all – that of our own detachment' (Witherell 1991:85). Therefore, self/other became part of the 'hierarchies of binary oppositions' that Cornell (1992:40) refers to. According to Schüssler Fiorenza (2000:21), traditionally, 'discourses of domination are engendered by the logic of difference or the logic of "othering." This logic of difference as domination understands the other always as "not" (e.g. not-white, not-male, not-civilized) who lacks the valued qualities of hegemonic society and whose humanity becomes the opposite of that of those who are elite and in power'. Minow (1990:22) argues: 'Difference, after all, is a comparative term. It implies a reference: different from whom?'

For me, the value of a feminist hermeneutics is that it does not deal exclusively with the injustices of difference of gender as a binary construct, but primarily focuses people's attention on 'the fixing and naturalizing of this relationship that produces structures of exclusion' (Rieger 2001:123). If the white male is seen as the norm in the church, the structures of the church, by definition, tend to exclude women, and women of colour even more so. Hence, the doctrinal discourses of the church were shaped by these discourses of domination, which were based on dualist thinking in which one of the items in binary opposition 'is always a devaluation, the naming of an inferiority in relation to a superior standard of humanity' (Young 1990:170). Therefore, as Minow (1990:374) suggests, 'we must think seriously about difference. Otherwise, its meanings

– embedded in unstated norms, institutional practices, and unspoken prejudices – will operate without examination or justification’.

Unstated norms and unspoken prejudices have important consequences for pastoral work. In Chapter 3, I discussed how the shepherd/sheep model of pastoral care developed. In such a discourse, the poor other’s difference is not regarded as an invitation to engage with theology and the doctrines of the church differently. The individual caregiver remains the norm, whilst the reality of the other is largely sidelined or relegated to inferior (sheep-like) status. Elaine Graham (1996:47-48) notes that in pastoral theology the dominant themes, ‘until recently’, were the focus on the ‘self’ of the pastoral agent (usually the clergy, which implies maleness) and the methods of care (which favoured scientific and medical models of care through ecclesiastical institutions). Consequently, the problem that a client or a group in a community struggles with or the context within which this problem arose was not influential in how the care was practised.

Furthermore, in a modernist pastoral discourse, the kind of client who was the recipient of pastoral care was usually the ‘self-actualized individual for whom care functions primarily at times of crisis’ (Graham 1996:51). Feminist theologian Riet Bons-Storm (2003:73) makes the point that the ideology within which people live also directs their intentions and their actions of care. In terms of this research, this modernist pastoral focus has important implications for the pastoral support that is available to the poor, different ‘other’ who suffer daily on the Cape Flats, for their position in church-led relationships of care and for the position of women as the agents of pastoral practice.

Because many Christians work and live in a market-ideology which values economic productivity, individualism and personal responsibility, it may even create blindness about which others are included in the field of vision of practical theologians when it comes to pastoral care: ‘[T]here are the deserving poor who are willing to be industrious, frugal, law abiding and simply victims, and the undeserving poor who have created their own fate by being not industrious, frugal and law-abiding’ (Bons-Storm 2003:73). Those poor who are perceived to have ‘brought it on themselves’ therefore tend to be treated differently from those whose victimhood is obvious. The irony of the market-ideology in South Africa is that it was supported by the pastoral power of control. Consequently, very few poor South Africans have brought poverty on

themselves. That is why it is essential for Christians who find themselves entrenched in market-ideology thinking to remain mindful of technologies that have subjugated people as described in the previous chapters, and how those technologies have contributed to poverty. Market-ideology also shaped the traditions of pastoral care given to the poor by South African white churches. To a large extent, donations of money and ‘material goods’ defined and became the expression of care for the other.

Another unstated norm that operates in pastoral care is the notion that those who practise care from a position of privilege do not think of their action as part of a mutual relation. It remains a one-sided relationship in which the affluent give and the poor receive. By acknowledging the voices of the different, poor women as a source for theological reflection in Chapter 4, this research intentionally created a new way of working with difference in pastoral care. In Chapter 4, I discussed the ways in which different perspectives added to my understanding of pastoral praxis and to the possibility of mutuality in relationships.

However, thinking about difference also means that we recognise the fluidity of the term, and acknowledge that it is ‘indeed ambiguous, relational, shifting, without clear borders’ (Graham 1996:171). Such thinking recognises that the meaning of relations between black and white in South Africa have also shifted. Doreen told me that in the democratic South African context, black has replaced white as the norm. Against such a norm, ‘coloured’ people still experience marginalisation – she says: ‘Previously I was not white enough. Now I’m not black enough...us “coloured’s” are still the “marmite in the middle”.’

Being human in the South African context therefore cannot be thought of without the concept of difference and the flourishing of a particular hermeneutics of difference, namely of inequality, of being more or less than others and of the practices of segregation, humiliation and disconnection it supports. Humanist theologian John de Gruchy (2006:48) states that ‘(a)partheid became a crime against humanity because it made personal identities and differences absolute, thereby denying a common humanity and, in the process, degrading the identity people had; in short, dehumanising them’. In this research, thinking about difference therefore means considering what humanising ethical relations with the different other could or should look like against the backdrop of the dehumanising pastoral practices of the past.

### **5.3.1 The relational implications of caring for difference**

Paying serious attention to difference can no longer be an epistemological addendum to any pastoral enterprise that claims to be working for justice. To work towards justice I should care for difference, argues Cornell (1992:57), and should adopt the stance that it requires from me: ‘The care for difference needs a generosity that does not attempt to grasp what is other than one’s own. The danger of certainty is that it turns against the impulse to open oneself up to the Other, and to truly listen, to risk the chance that we might be wrong. The move to nonclosure, then, can and should be understood ethically.’

The move to non-closure and generosity has specific meanings for white and privileged researchers in South Africa. Sharon Welch (1995:239) asks: ‘Is there room for passion for justice, for outrage, for commitment in a sensibility that acknowledges our vulnerability and capacity for error? It is so difficult to imagine this sensibility, for much of our religious and political symbol systems are so precisely the contrary.’ Welch (1995:240) adds: ‘To move out of our identities as the dominant race, we must learn to fail – because we will, often and embarrassingly and repeatedly.’ Young (1990:3) argues that ‘where social group differences exist and some groups are privileged while others are oppressed, social justice requires explicitly acknowledging and attending to those group differences in order to undermine oppression’.

Hence, an awareness of difference calls us to self-reflection – to constantly evaluate what it is we do not or cannot or will not see: ‘Through deliberate attention to our own partiality, we can begin to acknowledge the dangers of pretended impartiality. By taking difference into account, we can overcome our pretended indifference to difference and our tendency to sort the world into “same” and “different”, familiar and unfamiliar, equal and unequal. But only by admitting that rules are resistible...can justice be done in a democracy’ (Minow 1990:389). Becoming aware as South Africans of our own partiality and the social rules by which inequality operates, we can start working towards a different kind of relation with those whose lives are different to our own. This deliberate attention, this waking up to difference, is the start of ethical relations in pastoral care and in research.

#### ***5.3.1.1 Coming up against my own partiality: an ethical challenge***

When I started out doing the research in Scottsville, I expected the ‘coloured’ teachers to be eager to participate in the training I was offering them. I expected them implicitly

to trust my good intentions. In June 2006, I was not invited to a poetry reading by young people at Petunia Primary, even though the organisers were aware of the fact that I was running a poetry group at the school. It was deeply hurtful to me. When I asked them about it, I could see that the thought of including me had never crossed their minds.

In May 2008, I was confronted by a particularly apathetic stance at Scottsville Secondary School regarding the writers' group I was trying to run at the school with teenagers. Teachers simply did not bother to encourage the young people in their classes to consider joining the group. The deputy principal told me that the teachers probably thought that it would in some way mean they had to do more work. I was appalled by this stance and saddened because I realised how many of the school's children were losing out on an opportunity to develop their creative talents.

Only much later did I start to realise that my expectations were based on ignorance about my part of the historic 'othering' of which I am a part. The expectations that I brought with me to Scottsville did not take into account sufficiently the fact that 'coloured' people and I are related to each other through networks of hierarchy, mistrust and exploitation (Welch 1991:89). Reflecting back, I realise that the apathy and coldness I initially experienced were not necessarily directed at me personally, but at the whiteness and privilege I represented. Gradually my understanding grew of how difference affected the ways in which 'coloured' teachers initially related to me. By taking notice of difference, I could also re-assess my exclusion from a poetry reading morning at Petunia Primary. If there is no history in the community of including those who have traditionally been regarded as 'different', as 'outsiders', how could such inclusion happen now? I realised that by speaking about my pain at being excluded as a human being who has a passion for poetry and children, I was taking a step towards creating a new kind of awareness with members of the 'coloured' community of my humanness. By speaking as a human being who suffered the pain of exclusion, I was challenging relational hierarchies that our shared history had given us.

A breakthrough came about for me in terms of the limits of my own understanding of people's apathy towards or non-support of the work I was doing or trying to do in the community when I read the work by Ross and Reynolds (2004). Anthropologists Fiona Ross and Pamela Reynolds's (2004) reflections on listening to stories shared during the process of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) sensitised me to the

lingering effects of trauma and mistrust and the fact that the process of reparation obliges those who have oppressed to look at the situation from the perspective of those who have been oppressed.

I am part of a capitalist culture that promises timely rewards for people's efforts. There is a rule of equivalence by which people are supposed to be rewarded for what they put in. Even the formulation of research aims in a context of poverty is done with the expectation that the researcher's aims will be reached, and, in my case, that others will support me as a researcher in working towards this aim. In an individualist culture, the word 'single-minded' conjures up positive associations of working with such a clear and individualist focus. What Scottsville has taught me is that single-minded 'rules' do not apply in a narrative therapeutic context. They also do not apply in a pastoral context in which those with power have seldom listened to those without power. If I wanted to make a contribution, I would have to be prepared to listen, and feel from the perspective of the other, whose reality and culture is so different from my own. I would have to become 'double-minded'.

### ***5.3.1.2 The concrete other***

Feminist author and philosopher Seyla Benhabib (1992) argues that the process of reconceptualising a moral self depends on people's relationship, not with a generalised other, but with a concrete other. When pastoral care becomes a self-enclosed, institutionalised tradition, it bases its truth claims and its practices on the perception of the rational carer as to what constitutes care, thereby simultaneously fostering a blindness and deafness to the other as a real human being, a concrete other (Benhabib 1992). This blindness extends to the context, often of poverty, within which the other lives and the bearing it has on his or her life.

The tradition of self-enclosure is therefore a tradition of care towards a generalised other. Such a form of care prevails wherever patriarchy dictates for certainty and control. Purvis (1993:99) claims that under 'power as control, we cannot tolerate the change that diversity brings...the "other" is molded by our own needs to see and say and do'. This is the shepherd/sheep tradition of the pastorate that Foucault describes (and that is discussed in Section 3.2).

But what morality results from relations in which the other is seen in universal, generalised terms? According to Benhabib (1992:158-9),

(t)he standpoint of the generalized other requires us to view each and every individual as a rational being entitled to the same rights and duties we would want to ascribe to ourselves.... Our relation to the other is governed by the norms of *formal equality* and *reciprocity*: each is entitled to expect and to assume from us what we can expect and assume from him or her. The norms of our interactions are primarily public and institutional ones.... The moral categories that accompany such interactions are those of right, obligation and entitlement, and the corresponding moral feelings are those of respect, duty, worthiness and dignity.

According to Benhabib (1992:10), 'there can be no coherent reversibility of perspectives and positions unless the identity of the other as distinct from the self, not merely in the sense of bodily otherness but as a concrete other, is retained'. For Benhabib (1992:165), 'every generalized other is also a concrete other'. Therefore the 'other' who is generally referred to as 'the poor' are also the concrete man coming to Doreen's door for bread, or Aunt Liz, who recounts her concrete experiences of being forcibly removed. Benhabib (1992:159) then argues for a relationship with the other as a concrete being:

The standpoint of the concrete other... requires us to view each and every rational being as an individual with a concrete history, identity and affective-emotive constitution.... Our relation to the other is governed by the norms of equity and complementary reciprocity: each is entitled to expect and to assume from the other forms of behavior through which the other feels recognized and confirmed as a concrete, individual being with specific needs, talents and capacities.... The norms of our interaction are usually...private, non-institutional ones. They are norms of friendship, love and care. These norms require in various ways that I exhibit more than the simple assertion of my rights and duties in the face of your needs. In treating you in accordance with the norms of friendship, love and care, I confirm not only your *humanity* but your human *individuality*. The moral categories that accompany such interactions are those of responsibility, bonding and sharing.

Even within a feminist tradition, a move towards closure, certainty and control is therefore a move away from ethical relations with the other. Carter Heyward (1995:x) raises her concern regarding the emergence of an individualist white feminist culture and the liberal concept of 'justice' as achievable fairness. The assumption behind this 'colorblind' and 'genderblind' concept of justice is that 'the playing field is level':

Breaking with the liberal justice tradition that sees no differences among us, I think we must insist that justice cannot be achieved unless we take our differences seriously. Where our differences are acknowledged and understood in terms of their cultural, political, and economic meanings, justice making is a radically relational movement and an ongoing process of creating, struggling for, and envisioning right relation among us.

Benhabib (1992:9) therefore proposes an ethic that calls for an ‘enlarged thinking’ around difference; a reversibility of perspectives that is based on willingness to see ‘the poor’ as real people. In a presentation entitled ‘Putting a (gendered) face on poverty’, Juliana Claassens (2009) quotes Frank Fromherz (2001:241), who suggests that the doing of justice depends on getting ‘real’ and concrete about ‘the other’:

Justice is better understood not as a rigid and abstract principle, like a giant anvil dropped into the flower garden of our fragile lives, but rather as a call heard sometimes faintly and now and then poignantly as real stories are shared and collective narratives of sin and grace are encountered. Justice, in this view, is intrinsically relational and invites a turn to stories in order that we may recognize creaturely relations with particular creation – not ‘all of creation’ in the abstract.

When the particular creation entered my field of vision in the research, I began to see how poverty affected those with the least societal power most – women such as Aunt Liz and young people like Granville. By becoming concrete others to one another, Aunt Liz and I were both recipients and givers of care. Such a relational process may therefore contribute significantly to and shape our understandings of *shalom*. I want to argue that in the context of the history of large scale relational injustices in South Africa, the restoration of justice begins by acknowledging Aunt Liz and the struggles in her life as real **and** by becoming a real, concrete person to her. By seeing my tears and reading my letter to her, Aunt Liz had an opportunity to experience an Afrikaner as a concrete human being. In this way, my humanity as an Afrikaner was restored.

Heshusius (1996:133) quotes Baldwin: ‘The question which one asks oneself begins, at last, to illuminate the world, and becomes one’s key to the experience of others. One can only face in others what one can face in oneself. On this confrontation depends the measure of our wisdom and compassion.’ This chapter deals with how an ‘enlarged mentality’ made it possible for me as a researcher to love the other in a way that did not perpetuate patterns of domination and subordination. I have come to the conclusion that there can be no possibility for justice in pastoral care without this enlarged mentality

that comes from relations with a concrete other: ‘Love can, and often does, remain a comfortable abstraction, but when it is connected with our becoming or our concern for the becoming of others it is manifest as a commitment to justice in the world’ (Isherwood & McEwan 1994:70).

However, to be able to work meaningfully with the history of difference and how it has shaped my relationships with my Scottsville ‘other’, I decided at the start of the research to work with the research methodology of speaking with cultural consultants. This methodology of consulting with local cultural ‘guides’ who interpreted the context for me and made the concrete other’s point of view or history visible often made differences between us intelligible to me.

### ***5.3.1.3 Cultural consultants***

I adopted the idea of using cultural consultants from the Just Therapy team in New Zealand. They suggest that therapists, ‘when working with people from cultures significantly different from their own, are required to defer to key people from those cultures. It is these people who have been tutored in the cultural meaning patterns through their life experience; this knowledge cannot be taught in an academic institution’ (Waldegrave 2003:22).

In the previous chapter, I have described how the women of Scottsville acted as pastoral and cultural consultants to me in the research. My relationship with the principal of Petunia Primary, Mr Raymond Foster, started out as a cordial one between a researcher and her cultural consultant. Gradually, Mr Foster would share with me certain complex problems that he experienced in his school community, with learners at the school and in his own church community. Our conversations became journeys of discovery in which we both delighted. These conversations created a foundation of trust that made it possible for me to be real with Mr Foster about what I experienced during the research: delight at the writers’ talent I became aware of, pain when I heard stories in therapy of violence and abuse, anger at the patriarchal stance that condoned abuse, uncertainty when I as an outsider struggled to make sense of what I was experiencing. Over time, I approached Mr Foster as both a cultural consultant and as a friend.

Another person who acted as a cultural consultant was Mr Noach, the deputy principal at Petunia Primary. In Section 5.3.1.5 (under the subheading ‘The move to openness:

Mr Noach's "enlarged thinking"), I reflect on an extract of a conversation I had with Mr Noach in 2006. This conversation highlights the relational knowledges that come from a man who chose to invent new 'cultural meaning patterns' in his relationships with children. When writing this chapter, it became clear to me how many of the poststructuralist understandings Mr Noach had been practising in the school all along, without having read Derrida or Foucault.

#### ***5.3.1.4 Openness to context***

The responsibility that Benhabib (1992) refers to above becomes a dynamic process, a dialogue between the values we subscribe to (as Christians) and the context in which these values are made visible: 'An ethic of responsibility accepts that the demands of the actual situation or context are as important as the ethical norms on which one draws in deciding on what is morally right' (Villa-Vicencio 1994:75). Hence, the end of meta-narratives does not mean that we as Christians are left with no normative options. Feminism itself is normative in the position it takes for social justice. Benhabib (1992:24) argues that it becomes more a matter of how we define what is normative in a specific context – the meta-narratives of truth that worked towards self-containment and the formality of the rules and norms prescribed by modernity can make way for a communicative ethic: discovering and naming what is normative and moral through participating in a process of interaction with concrete others.

If Cornell's (1992) and Benhabib's (1992) arguments are applied to the context of pastoral care, it means that by excluding 'the concrete other' of Scottsville from our idea of community, we are foreclosing the possibility of an 'enlarged mentality' in our own thinking and, ultimately of ethics as a relational, participatory concept. Lois McNay (1992:92) argues: 'Ethics can no longer be grounded in a categorical imperative or in respect for an abstract law. Rather, a feminist ethics is based on a responsiveness to others and a respect for the particular which leads to moral concerns connected to providing care, preventing harm and maintaining relationships.'

In pastoral terms, such an ethic is ever in flux, because it demands a response to the particulars that cross-cultural relationships (in the case of this research) are made of. I experienced an example of such a relational ethics at work in the research during the final stage of consultation with the research participants. I circulated the chapters

amongst the research participants at Petunia Primary for their comment and feedback. In a follow-up conversation with Mr Foster (2009), he told me that he was uncomfortable with certain parts of a conversation between him and me which I had included in the draft of Chapter 2. He was of the opinion that some of these comments had been made in private and were not intended for public consumption. My respect for the particulars of his concerns led me to delete these parts of our conversation from the final text. Thus what was ‘ethical’ for this research was determined through our engagement in conversation.

- *The move to openness: Mr Noach’s ‘enlarged thinking’*

I have highlighted the sections in which Mr Noach refers to the other as concrete others, with realities that may be different to his (that is why he asks questions), maintaining contact, not getting sidetracked by a problem but affirming the values that he knows are alive in a child’s life.

What is significant about the context of this conversation is that it took place at a time during which teachers were complaining about the lack of discipline, some lamenting the official abolition of the practice of corporal punishment. In the light of the discourses of pastoral control and submission and of violence in a context of poverty described in Chapters 2 and 3, Mr Noach brought an alternative ethic to the staff room that day. What was noticeable for me was the ways in which Mr Noach’s self-reflection featured as part of his telling of the story. This extract of our conversation starts with his taking a position that is different to the approach of violence ‘with which we have been working all along’. Interestingly, Mr Noach mentioned another kind of relationship that ‘does not work’: ignoring children. Mr Noach also cares for the difference between himself and the young people in terms of power. Because he realises the difference, he is mindful of how his power can humiliate.

What Mr Noach proposes is a relationship that is flexible, open to the child as a ‘concrete other’ and one that is mindful of the context. Mr Noach therefore chooses not to relate to the children according to a prescribed set of rules. Whenever he faces a challenge in relating to children, especially when he has to address some problem, he reflects (‘wait...wait...wait...’). He then deconstructs the situation by looking at it

from another perspective, one which could change the meaning of what the child has done (for example, by considering the possibility that ‘maybe they belonged to a church where one does not pray’). He has invented new ways to bring meaning to old methods of punishment (like writing lines). In his relational approach, Mr Noach told me that one has to remain mindful of the context of deprivation and hardship and the ways in which it has affected children’s lives:

<p><i>N: Geweld of slaan help nie. Dit is uit. En dis eintlik ons wapen waarmee ons gewerk het al die tyd.</i></p> <p><i>T: Kan ek vra...hierdie bewustheid dat slaan of geweld nie help nie, hoe het dit ontwikkel? Was dit omdat dit nie meer toelaatbaar was nie, of het dit voor die tyd al ontwikkel?</i></p> <p><i>N: Juffrou, vir my is dit nie dat dit nie toelaatbaar is nie. Maar dat dit...ek het gevoel dit pas net nie meer nie. Dis uit pas uit. ...hoe erger raak die kind. Hy raak net erger...Dit pas nie. Jy kan maar slaan en slaan en slaan. Die ander ding wat ook nie werk nie – om die kind totaal te ignoreer werk nie. Dit het ek agtergekom. Maar ek glo daaraan – bly in kontak met daai kind op ‘n baie subtiele manier... Nou moet mens in gedagte hou dat die omstandig-hede by sommige van ons kinders is maar nie so lekker nie.... Om dit baie sag te stel. Maar ‘n kind wil maar erkenning hê.... Juis omdat hulle so uniek is. Omdat ‘n mens uniek is....</i></p>	<p>N: Violence or spanking does not help. That’s out. It was the tool we worked with in the past.</p> <p>T: Can I ask you... this awareness that violence does not work, how did this develop? Did it come about because it is no longer permissible or did it start even before that?</p> <p>N: Miss, for me it’s not about the fact that it is not allowed. But because...I felt that it was no longer appropriate. It was out of step. ...The child’s attitude only became worse. It became worse. It does not work. You can go on hitting and hitting and hitting. The other thing that doesn’t work is to totally ignore the child. That’s the other thing I realised. But I believe in this – stay connected to that child on a very subtle level. Now one has to bear in mind that the circumstances within which some of these children live, are not so good.... To put it very mildly. But a child wants to be acknowledged.... Precisely because they are so unique. Because people are</p>
--	--

<p><i>T: Kan u vir my vertel van hierdie praktyke van 'in kontak bly' met die kinders?</i></p> <p><i>N: Juffrou, die situasie verskil somtyds so...is soms so wyd van mekaar af. Nou moet jy maar soorte van 'n manier vind.</i></p> <p><i>T: Jy moet op jou voete dink?</i></p> <p><i>N: Dis reg...Kom ek gaan vir u 'n voorbeeldjie maak: Ons skool is op 'n Christelike basis geskoei en ons verwag as daar die oggend gebid word of in die middag gebid word, dan moet daar absoluut geen gesprekvoering wees tydens die gebed nie... vir my is dit ongehoord as 'n kind 'n gesprek voer tydens 'n gebed.</i></p> <p><i>[Gesprek gaan toe oor mnr. Noach wat sien hoe twee dogters en 'n seun onder gebed gesels het. 'n 'Klomp gedagtes' gaan toe deur mnr. Noach se kop.]</i></p> <p><i>Ek dink toe: wag, wag, wag. Probeer nou hierdie kinders positief benader. Moet hulle nie uitsit of skel of vir die hele klas vertel nie – want somtyds is dit nie goed nie. Wat maak ek toe? ...Ek het daai kinders uitgeneem en ek <b>vra</b> ... wat was die rede vir die gesprekvoering? Dan gee jy so bietjie toe en sê nou maar ek sal nog verstaan as jy oop oë staan...net vir as jy</i></p>	<p>unique....</p> <p>T: Can you tell me more about these practices of 'staying connected' to the children?</p> <p>N: Miss, the situation can vary so much. Somehow you have to find some sort of way.</p> <p>T: You have to think on your feet?</p> <p>N: That's right. I am going to give you an example: our school is Christian-based and we expect that during prayers, whether in the morning or afternoon, there should be absolutely no talking during prayers...to me it is unheard of that a child should conduct a conversation during prayer.</p> <p>[Our conversation then shifted to an incident when Mr Noach saw two girls and a boy talking during the prayer. 'Many thoughts' went through Mr Noach's head.]</p> <p>So I thought: wait, wait, wait. Now try to approach these children in a positive way. Do not send them outside, or scold them or tell the whole class about it – because sometimes that is not good. What did I do? ...I took those children aside and I <b>asked</b> them what the reason for their talking was. Then you make allowances and say you could still understand that</p>
---	---

<p><i>aan 'n kerk behoort waar hulle byvoorbeeld nie bid nie of so. Nou wil mens mos daai kind baie positief benader. Dan gaan leer plaasvind. As mens die kind aan jou kant kry, dan gaan leer plaasvind. Absoluut, ek glo daaraan.</i></p> <p><i>[Mnr. Noach vertel my toe dat hy'n strafstelsel van lyne skryf wat in die skool gebruik word, aangepas het by die straf wat hy vir hierdie jongmense uitgedink het. In plaas daarvan om uit te skryf oor wat hulle verkeerd gedoen het, het mnr. Noach dit waaroor hulle moes skryf positief gemaak: 'Ek is 'n Christen en ek sal nie gesprekvoer tydens 'n gebed nie, of ek is 'n gehoorsame mens en ek sal 'n gebed respekteer in die klas.']</i></p> <p><i>T: Jy sê maar jy weet ek weet eintlik is jy 'n gehoorsame mens...!?</i></p> <p><i>N: Ja, ek wéét dit. Jy sê eintlik jy neem notisie en jy weet watter tipe mens hy is. Jy verwag dit nie van so 'n kind nie.</i></p> <p><i>T: Die feit dat jy notisie neem, watter effek het dit op die kinders?</i></p> <p><i>N: Kinders wil erkenning hê. Gee my erkenning – dan gaan hy maak soos jy sê. ...Vat net bietjie die een van die daai</i></p>	<p>they had their eyes open...just in case they belong to a church where one does not pray, for instance. You want to approach the child in a very positive spirit. Then there will be learning. If you can get the child on your side, learning can take place. I believe that absolutely.</p> <p>[Mr Noach then told me that he adapted the punishment system of writing out lines used in the school to these young people. But instead of writing lines about what they did wrong, Mr Noach turned the writing of lines into a reminder of something positive they already knew about themselves: 'I am a Christian and I will therefore not talk during prayers, or I am a law-abiding person who will respect prayer in class.']</p> <p>T: So what you are saying is: you know that I know that you are actually a law-abiding person...!?</p> <p>N: Yes, I <b>know</b> it. You tell him that you notice him and that you know what kind of person he is. Therefore one does not expect such behaviour from such a child.</p> <p>T: The fact that you took notice ... what effect does it have on the children?</p> <p>N: Children want to be acknowledged. Acknowledge me – then he will do what you ask. Look at the example of the lines</p>
--	---

<p><i>blaai wat ek laat skryf het: 'Ek is 'n spesiale mens.' Toe...die teësinningheid om die lyne te skrywe is absoluut weg!</i></p> <p><i>T: Was daar nie...een wat meer geskrywe het as wat hy moes nie?</i></p> <p><i>N: Ja! (lag) Die kinders...omdat sommige van hulle nie baie aandag kry by die huis nie, dink ek verwag hy om daai bietjie te kry by die skool... Juffrou, 'n kind is soos 'n draadjie; as jy hom verkeerd behandel, gaan hy skeef staan. Jy gaan nie daai samewerking kry nie. Mens moet ook onthou 'n mens kry daai outjie...in die klas jy kan maar met watter benadering kom..., sy gemoed vir die dag was net nie reg nie.</i></p> <p><i>T: So u laat in u benadering ook toe daarvoor dat 'n mens 'n 'af dag' het?</i></p> <p><i>N: Ja, absoluut.</i></p> <p><i>T: So u laat toe daarvoor... daar's daai buigsaamheid?</i></p> <p><i>N: Ja dis 'n give and 'n take. Maar jy't die groot kans...jy kan vir hom 'n spatie laat...</i></p> <p><i>T: As u dink aan die droom waarmee u in die onderwys ingekom het, en aan hierdie praktyke wat u besig is om hier te ontwikkel...?</i></p> <p><i>N: ...weet Juffrou, mens het nogal in die</i></p>	<p>I had them write: 'I am a special person'... Then... the reluctance to write out the lines was gone completely!</p> <p>T: Was there not one (young person) who wrote out more than he should have?</p> <p>N: Yes! (laughs). The children ...because some of them do not get attention at home, I think they expect to get that little bit [of attention] at school...Miss, a child is like a piece of wire; if you treat him the wrong way, he will be bent out of shape. You will not get the co-operation that you seek. But one has to remember...you will get that kid in class...no matter how what approach you take...his spirit for the day was just not right...</p> <p>T: So in your approach, you also allow for the fact that people sometimes have a bad day?</p> <p>N: Yes, absolutely.</p> <p>T: So you allow for it...there is that flexibility?</p> <p>N: Yes, it's a give and take. But you have this great opportunity... you can give him a gap...</p> <p>T: When you reflect on the dream with which you entered the teaching profession, and on the practices you are developing here now...?</p> <p>N:... you know, Miss, in the past... you</p>
---	--

<p><i>verlede...het 'n mens nogal gevoel jy staan op 'n 'pedestal' as jy 'n onderwyser is. Jy's hierso (wys met hand bo) en die kinders is ma' hier (wys met hand na onder). Maar as mens self in die praktyk kom, jy is nou in die ding...om leer te kan laat slaag, moet mens in elk geval na die kind se vlak toe afkom. So 'n nederige mens is eintlik 'n onderwyser.</i></p>	<p>sort of felt you were on a 'pedestal' as a teacher. You are here (hold his hand up) and the children are only here (drops hand). But when you are in the practice yourself, you are now immersed in it... then in any case you have to go down to the child's level for learning to take place. Therefore, a humble person is a (true) teacher.</p>
---	--

Sharon Welch (1985:82-83) states: 'To challenge the truth of oppression is not to point to its intellectual or conceptual frailties, but to expose its frailties of practice, to disclose and nurture alternate forms of human community that challenge it on the level of daily operations of power/knowledge.'

Mr Noach's examples illustrate both the frailties of practice and how he consciously started nurturing 'alternate forms of human community'. What Mr Noach does is remarkable – he relates to each child as a unique person, a concrete other. In coming to his realisation about the ineffectiveness of the power of subjugation and control, he steps down from his pedestal and onto the child's level. In the story of the young people who talked during prayer, Mr Noach demonstrates how he allowed for the realities of others to shape his own understanding of the truth. Mr Noach consciously took this step *to ask them* about their behaviour in order to create a more symmetrical relationship between himself and the young people. In asking myself what kind of relationship with a concrete other I am aiming at, Mr Noach tells me that it has to be a relationship of humility about the limits of my own knowledge. When read against the discourses of subjugation and control described in Chapters 2 and 3, Mr Noach's position offers the possibility of new, ethical relations between 'coloured' adults and the children in their care. Mr Noach also referred to the fact that teachers are uniquely positioned: they are the ones who can create opportunities for young people ('but you have this great opportunity... you can give him a gap').

It should come as no surprise that in reflecting on how I used my position in the community, Mr Noach highlighted the changes that came about when I made myself 'synonomous' with Scottsville's young people. It therefore became possible for Mr Noach to witness the presence of symmetry in my relations with young people in the community, because his own practices spoke of such symmetry too.

#### **5.4 THE ETHICS OF SYMMETRICAL RELATIONS**

When describing what constitutes ethical relationality in a poststructuralist epistemology, Derrida scrutinises the ideas that govern the stance that informs the individual's relation to 'the O/other'. Cornell (1992:53) points out that Derrida, in his reading of Levinas, sees a separateness from the Other as the principle that Levinas employs to invite an ethical relationship of asymmetry: 'She is the stranger; yet as the orphan, the widow, and the hungry, she is also the one who judges me on the basis of my responsibility to her.' Welch (1990:164) also contends that within such an asymmetrical relationship as Levinas proposes, care is combined with control. Poling (1991:150) describes unjust communities as those that 'organize power on the basis of privilege and dominance'.

Derrida argues that the relation to the Other, in order to be ethical, has to be based on symmetry: 'Derrida argues that the relegation of the Other to pure externality is itself a form of self-containment. To be self-enclosed, to deny the "trace" of the Other in oneself, is to be impenetrable, safe from the contamination of the "outside"' (Cornell 1992:54-55). This impenetrability that Derrida describes has also been part of unethical relations with the other in modernist theology. Modernism's focus on rationality, the self and themes of self-sufficiency has led to the privatisation of theology. The privatisation of theology has meant that the self has remained detached from the other, also in terms of the culture within which the self /other is embedded.

Liberation theology in the form of feminist theology has reintroduced the theme of the relationship with the other as that which defines the self and as that which redefines theology. According to Rieger (2001:112), '(u)nlike the turn to the self, the turn to others resists control and points away from itself. Realising that we need to take seriously other subject positions than our own, the self is reconstructed in

relationship'. Hence, 'the turn to others, charting the terrain for a theo/acentric turn to the Other, promotes new respect for what is different' (Rieger 2001:111).

Considering the formation of ethical conditions and possibilities in this research, I therefore chose to consider it within the context of the relational epistemology posited by feminist theology: 'A relational anthropology is founded on the praxis embodied in the injunction 'to love your neighbour as yourself'. As such, it is the opposite of alienation, of apathy, of discrimination and finds its source in an understanding of God as 'God in relation' (Ackermann 1991:108). The absence of passion that was the object of pastoral power (Foucault) therefore makes way for a different kind of ethical relation between God, the world and humanity. One of the ways in which the loss of control expresses itself in relationship is found when we as human beings make ourselves vulnerable to the suffering of others. By allowing myself to be vulnerable to the other, I deconstruct 'the myth of self-containment' (Cornell 1992:40).

Jesus placed Himself in such a symmetrical relation to the other when He challenged the disciples who were arguing among themselves about which of them was the greatest. Jesus challenged hierarchical pastoral relations that foster a spirit of competition by telling his disciples: 'If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all. Then He took a little child and set him in the midst of them. And when He had taken him in His arms, He said to them, "'Whoever receives one of these little children in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me, receives not Me but Him who sent Me"' (Mk 9:35-37). I came to understand during this research process that it is the symmetry of relations between God in Jesus, between Jesus and us (as the other), between us and others (as Jesus) which makes for truly ethical pastoral relations. Within the symmetry of such care, as white South Africans, we may begin to deconstruct the pastoral heritage of submission, obedience and the destruction of the self (see Sections 3.2 and 3.3).

The symmetry of relations has another important consequence, namely the possibility of the mutuality of care. Elaine Graham (1996:206) therefore asks: 'Can we regard authentic pastoral practice, therefore, as that which draws us into encounter with the "Other", towards a deeper understanding of our own identity-in-relation?' Christ sets a new norm for authentic pastoral practice in this regard. What Christ regarded as superior human behaviour was almost always cast as inferior in terms of the social

ideologies of his time. Yet, Christ deliberately recognises, then transfigures, the binary of difference. His own life became the disruption of the concept of ‘king’ – no longer part of an ideology of patriarchy and control, but part of an ideal of service to concrete others.

#### 5.4.1 Symmetrical pastoral relations in the research

After the first performance of the play at Petunia Primary in November 2006, Mr Noach made some comments to me about the value of my work and my relationships with the young people in the community. I asked him if I could interview him about what he had witnessed in terms of the position I took in the research and his understanding of the contribution it made to social reparation. In our conversation, we reflected on the reports in newspapers of the washing of the feet that Adriaan Vlok performed for the women whose husbands and sons were killed during the regime during which he, as Minister of Justice, was the responsible person. My question to Mr Noach in the light of Adriaan Vlok’s action was: ‘How do we do atonement?’ According to Mr Noach, atonement is only possible in symmetrical relations. He went so far as to say that, for him, atonement was being done because I became ‘synonymous’ with the Scottsville community:

<p><i>N: Juffrou is sinoniem aan hierdie gemeenskap.</i></p> <p><i>T: Hoe bedoel u... wat is sinoniem (van wat jy ervaar het)?</i></p> <p><i>N: Eie, eie. U’t al so deel van hulle (die kinders) geword. En dit was vir my een van die deurslaggewende rolle wat Juffrou gespeel het... Ek word eers deel van jou, van die bestel, en nou gaan ek met jou werk.... Dit wat Juffrou doen...deel van die gemeenskap... dit kan mens sê, dis versoening. Doen</i></p>	<p>N: Miss, you are synonymous with this community.</p> <p>T: How do you mean...what is synonymous (in your experience)?</p> <p>N: Familiar, familiar. You’ve already become part of them (the young people). And to me this was one of the decisive roles you’ve played... I first become part of you, of the scheme of things, and now I am going to work with you.... What you did...being part of the community...this, one can say, is reconciliation. Do the</p>
--	--

<p><i>opheffingswerk. Kyk waar daar 'n nood is en werk daaruit. Die voetewassery [verwysend na 'n onlangse nuusberig oor oud-minister Adriaan Vlok wat 'n groep swart vroue se voete gewas het] maak vir my absoluut nie 'n halwe sin nie. Ek was die ou se voete en more...ek het sy voete gewas en dis verby. Met dit wat Juffrou bereik het met die kinders...wys vir die res van die kinders wat in dieselfde...omgewing bly... wys vir hulle wat kan die effek wees van dit. Dan het jy iets gedoen. Dan het jy deel geword van 'n gemeenskap.</i></p>	<p>work of social upliftment. See where there is a need and work from there. The washing of feet [referring to a recent newspaper report about ex-minister Adriaan Vlok who had washed the feet of a group of black women] does not even half make sense to me. I wash the guy's feet and tomorrow... I've washed his feet and it's over and done with. With what you have achieved with the children...you show the other children in the community what can be done. Then you've done something. Then you have become part of the community.</p>
<p>(Excerpt from conversation with Mr Noach on 30 November 2006)</p>	

Afterwards I reflected on Mr Noach's words: *'one of the decisive roles'*, because it expresses the critical role that my creation of more symmetrical relations played in realising the aim of restorative justice of this research.

The next question that emerged for me was about where the tradition of 'pastoral care' in practical theology stands in relation to the objective of more symmetrical relations with the different, poor concrete other. Mary Elizabeth Mullino Moore (2003:249) also raises this question as follows: 'Practical theologians as a whole have not been in the forefront of analysing and leading religious communities in relation to poverty and violence. If even practical theologians have not been relating to poverty and violence, the question is why not?' I want to argue that the reason for this inability to conceptualise justice as it relates to the lives of real people has to do with the development of a kind of spirituality in modernist times in the church that was based on the notion of the split between mind and body (Harrison 1985:241-2). René Descartes posited the mind/body dualism, and since then, the mind's status as the superior human function was established. Consequently, in theology, individual reasoning had more

claims to truth than experience did. Those who were skilled at reasoning could even theorise about the experiences of the body without allowing themselves to be influenced by the experiences themselves. As a privileged man in a position of leadership in the church, you could therefore take up a 'reasonable' position about the breakdown of discipline amongst youths in a context of poverty, for instance, without ever having to experience what contributes to this breakdown or place yourself in a position where you have to engage with young people from those communities.

The church's pro-reason stance has fostered a dangerous self-sufficiency and complacency, and with it a lack of vulnerability to the complexities of life as it is lived in contexts of poverty, for instance, and the bodily sufferings associated with poverty. In traditional theology, the body was at best sidelined, and at worst vilified. The patriarchal church has become so concerned with itself and with wielding pastoral power that it has lost sight of the fact that we as Christians are called upon to serve others with our bodies, and in doing so, to suffer with them. Hence, the theme of suffering has almost been completely obliterated by the way in which in modernist times the church has centralised the theory of individual salvation and individualist spiritual activity.

From a feminist perspective, in this chapter, I hope to show that any meaningful response to poverty and violence has to be an embodied, relational response. It therefore seems that any commitment to face the challenges of poverty and violence by the church and its theologians has to be preceded by a willingness and a commitment to revise its old pastoral traditions, which are based on the mind/body dualism.

Next, I reflect on the church's relationship with the body and the ways in which this relationship has shaped a particular Christian tradition of pastoral care. In this way I hope to illustrate that the body, in particular the body that does pastoral care within a particular tradition, is the object of power. This research has demonstrated to me how the body can be a powerful resource for creating community and just relationships, especially with our poor concrete neighbour.

## **5.5 THE ROLE OF THE BODY IN FEMINIST THEOLOGY**

Feminist theologians have re-established the body as a legitimate and valuable source of knowledge (as discussed in the previous section) and insight in theological discourse (Ackermann 2003:64-97; Heyward 1999). However, in this thesis, the role of the body

and the theme of embodiment should not be read as absolutes in a reversal of the mind/body dualism reminiscent of the modernist era. In feminist theology, both the experiences of the body and the critical, imaginative and loving abilities of the mind inform one another.

The centrality of experiences of the body relates to a major contribution by feminist thought to political and pastoral practice, namely the questioning of the division between the public and the private. Benhabib (1992:12) suggests that '(f)eminists have argued that the "privacy" of the private sphere, which has always included the relations of the male head of the household to his spouse and children, has been an opaque glass rendering women and their traditional spheres of activity invisible and inaudible.' Their experiences of relations within the private domain of the home are primarily relations of care for concrete others, such as children and the elderly. Hence, 'women in their capacities as primary caregivers have had to exercise insight into the claims of the particular. In a sense the art of the particular has been their domain...' (Benhabib 1992:14). The kind of morality that is the result of pastoral power that universalised the male and the public has rendered the female, the particular and the private inconsequential to the development of a universal morality.

In Section 5.3.1.2, I have described the theory of communicative ethics (Benhabib 1992) and how it is founded on the relationship with a concrete other. For the purposes of this chapter, it is important to note how the absence of the particular and the private in pastoral discourses in theology have epistemologically excluded the experiences of women from the discipline. This exclusion has also meant an exclusion of the kind of relationships with others as real people, not as theoretical abstractions. Women's narratives and my narratives that came from interaction with 'the poor' gave them faces, names and histories. I also elaborate on the implications of my view of the poor as a real 'other' for my understanding of theology and the pastoral task.

### **5.5.1 The body – a Christological perspective**

Feminist theology therefore does not merely centralise the experiential and the bodily in its epistemology in some radical move or because feminist theologians have nothing else to offer the pastorate, but because through our bodies we as Christians are called to respond to the suffering bodies of the poor – like Christ did. Nowhere in the Christian

story does the body carry so much meaning than in the Eucharist. According to Denise Ackermann (2003:91), the Eucharist 'is the bodily practice of grace. The bodies of those who are sick, who suffer and even despair, partake bodily of the feast'. The profound truth that links the feminist themes of solidarity with the marginalised and embodiment is bound up with the symbol and practice of the Eucharist: 'If we believe that we are truly one body as we partake of the bread, there is no ducking solidarity with those who suffer' (Ackermann 2003:92).

God's practical, embodied positioning of Himself in the suffering world, through Christ, is a deeply relational act. Within such a relational epistemology, I discover Jesus not as an already fully described person in the Bible, but as someone who invites me to embody that which He stood for. Schüssler Fiorenza (2000:170) makes the point that the gospel writers were not so much concerned with 'historical transcription but with interpretive remembrance and rhetorical persuasion'. She suggests that, similarly, Jesus needs to be remembered, contextualised, interpreted and His relevance acknowledged anew through praxis. Embodiment of love and hope in the midst of poverty then becomes a continuation of what Jesus started: a new way of relating to the poor that means joining them in their suffering. It also means carrying the burdens of others, as Jesus did, with his body: 'Christian theology has always been an embodied theology rooted in creation, incarnation and resurrection, and sacrament. Christian theology has always applied both the *analogia entis* (analogy of being) and the *analogia fidei* (analogy of faith) to the body. The body is both the site and recipient of revelation' (Isherwood & Stuart 1998:11). I have come to believe through this research, as in Granville's stories, for example, that our bodies are the primary sites in which we as humans have to bring justice, love and hope in embodied ways to a world that is suffering hate, violence and injustice. The critical pastoral task of a feminist epistemology is therefore to offer solidarity as a real alternative to those who suffer loneliness and powerlessness. Our solidarity should be so embodied and 'real' that the experience of it reveals more hopeful ways of relating, especially to poor young people who live in contexts of violence and hatred. Then, to young people, Christianity may be revealed not as something people are taught, but as a power they experience – for real.

Jesus used the images of salt and light (Bonhoeffer 2003:110-114) to illustrate to those who followed him what real life functions they have. Invisibility in the world is therefore not a Christological option. In reflecting on the Sermon on the Mount,

Bonhoeffer (2003:181) comments: 'From the human point of view there are countless possibilities of understanding and interpreting the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus knows only one possibility: simply go and obey. Do not interpret or apply, but do it....' In the doing lies the blessing, because we are doing that which is in line with the kind of relations Christ Himself embodied.

The theme of embodied justice is especially relevant in relation to the suffering of the poor. De Gruchy (1987:26) suggests that 'God's redemptive suffering in Christ becomes concrete in the world through the life and witness of the suffering community of faith and especially its prophets. Without this embodiment, the message of the cross remains theory, an empty word that reinforces the experience of the absence of God amongst those who suffer injustice and oppression.' In this way, the feminist praxis of suffering solidarity with the poor becomes the continuation of the love-work that God embodies in Christ.

#### ***5.5.1.1 Aunt Baai embodies justice***

One of the most poignant stories that was shared in our lay counselling sessions was the story of how Aunt Baai took a stand for justice in a community that had remained silent. What this story speaks of is the fact that pastoral care in a context of poverty is almost always an act of justice. In Aunt Baai's story, the marginalised person that she showed solidarity with was a girl of whom nobody took notice because she suffered from cerebral palsy and had no language to communicate with. Here is an excerpt from the letter (20 April 2006, translated) that I wrote to the group after the session:

*Aunt Baai, you've told us the moving story of the girl with cerebral palsy in the community whose limited language ability caused no one in the community to hear or heed her story of sexual abuse. Aunt Baai, you've reminded me of how we as counsellors need to rely on other sources of knowledge to make meaning when there is limited use of language. You've managed to piece together a story of abuse out of your experiences of the girl's fear when her mother's boyfriend was near and her experience of pain in her lower body with the few words she shared with you. You then had the courage to put pressure on the girl's mother to end her relationship with this man for the sake of her daughter's safety. Aunt Baai, you told the mother of the girl*

*that if the boyfriend who has committed the abuse had not left the community by evening, you yourself would make sure that he was arrested. By evening the man had left and never returned to the community. Aunt Baai, I wonder how this girl's fate would have been different, had you not been willing to 'hear' her and her story? Your story affects me deeply, Aunt Baai, because you remind us all that justice is a value that demands courage from us and opens hearts for others. Your story speaks of doing justice, precisely when others are silent, or when they deny the reality or turn away.*

Aunt Baai's praxis reminds me of Herzog's (1988) term 'enlistment' – the conscious identification with the social outcast, which in itself means a rearrangement of the structures of power in society. This enlistment poses a huge challenge, not only to move beyond the city walls, but also to join Christ in loving whom one finds there. In response to Lisa Anderson who asked 'How can one truly love what one refuses to see?' at the meeting of the American Academy of Religion in San Francisco, on 23 November 1997, Carter Heyward (1999:35) suggests the following: '*There is a way to know and love ourselves, the world, and God: We can truly know only that which we are not afraid to love, and we can truly love only that which we are not afraid to see*' (Heyward's italics). Jesus' praxis, like Aunt Baai's, speak of this fearlessness to see and to take a stand on behalf of those without voice or power. Aunt Baai's story tells of care by someone of the community acting from inside the community.

### **5.5.2 The body as a resource for faith: the challenge to the Christian pastoral tradition**

The combination of rationalism and individualism that is present in so many Christian faith communities has literally led the church to dislocate itself and to alienate itself from 'the world' and 'the other'. I have come to see that this dislocation of the church is not neutral in its effects. This dislocation from the world means that, despite the example of Jesus, 'by and large the church functioned for centuries to justify the systematic oppression of the "other", the poor. In part this was due to the theological separation of the spiritual and temporal spheres, a separation that resulted in little importance being placed on justice and righteousness in social structures' (Chopp 1986:14).

The analysis of a faith community's lack of response to an invitation to care (in Section 4.3.2.1 under the subheading 'Our experiences of marginalisation: a turning point in awareness') reveals that the discourse of care in many affluent white church communities today is that of disembodied care, relations without struggle. Bonhoeffer (2003:226) makes the point that a 'truth, a doctrine, or a religion needs no space of its own. Such entities are bodiless. They do not go beyond being heard, learned, and understood. But the incarnate Son of God needs not only ears or even hearts; he needs actual, living human beings who follow him'. Wentzel van Huyssteen (2007) also argues for 'the rediscovery of embodiment in theological epistemology'. Van Huyssteen (2007) comments: 'Justice is at the heart of any discussion of the image of God (Imago Dei)'. The image of God, he argues, is linked to and embodied in interhuman relations. Hence, justice needs to be done in embodied terms, rather than in discussed or abstract terms.

I am wondering if theology's marginalisation of the body is the reason behind the relegation of the responsibility for pastoral care in South Africa's white Afrikaans churches to pastoral care groups which consist mainly of women. Through reason, and reason alone, mainstream theology and the men who remain in its leadership positions thus seem to isolate themselves and have not been able to develop a 'vocabulary' of pastoral praxis. Hence, the pastoral task of embodied care to the poor within the church has, for the biggest part, not been regarded as important enough to be taken up by men, but has been relegated to those with the least power in the church: its women. The ways in which pastoral care has become a female task speaks clearly of the importance that the patriarchal church has attached to the task of embodiment through its pastoral praxis. The discourse of pastoral practice in the church became a gendered discourse from which men, by and large, alienated themselves.

In a recent draft of a framework sent out by SAAP, people whose doctorates were proof of 'academic leadership' (in other words, included a paper read at a conference or an article in a research journal) were placed in a higher category than people with doctorates in practical theology with a specialisation in pastoral work, whose work is embodied, practical and community-based. The church and its pastoral structures have yet to understand that the ability to love is bound up with that which one is not afraid to see (as Heyward 1999:53 would have it). Seeing the body and the enlistment of the body as theology may be a first step in challenging the autocracy of reason and

maleness that has for so long defined the church. I want to go even further: the church's preferred blindness to the crucial role of the body in Christian theology has created blindness to the bodily sufferings of the poor, and to the human Christ who embodied solidarity with all who suffer.

Justice within a feminist epistemology means taking up the challenge that poverty poses to privilege and alienation in the church today: to leave the safety of the life of the intellect and the known and to risk a face-to-face encounter with an unknown suffering 'other'. Part of such an encounter, in which Christ led the way, will inevitably be the bodily experience of the pain, absence and horror of poverty and marginalisation. To come to a knowledge of injustice and how to respond to it as followers of Christ, we as Christians have to go 'by a road which we know not'.

Within a feminist methodology, embodied solidarity with poor people can therefore take many forms and is determined by the context itself. Miller-McLemore (2004:50) therefore states that, in a feminist epistemology, the 'personal is not only political, it is socially constructed. That is, power relationships in history and society construct the self'. The power relationships in the church that have constituted women's marginalisation have also marginalised the personal body in doing Christ's work. A feminist epistemology in this research therefore reintroduces the personal body as a vital resource for faith and, in doing so, reclaims its power for social reconstruction.

### ***5.5.2.2 The challenge of vulnerability***

In South Africa since the TRC, the theme of doing atonement has been one of making right the relation with the other. The question that arises from such a commitment is how those of us who have operated under an ethic of control all along must act so that more ethical, symmetrical relations can become possible. What should the next step be in our ethical reflections as practical theologians, once we have realised that caring for difference and symmetrical relations demand our attention?

Nancy Ramsay (1994:175) argues: The formation for pastoral theological reflection requires attention to several competencies: the self-understanding and values of the person; a priority for the practical wisdom yielded by pastoral theological reflection; and the practices and methods appropriate for the particular context(s) in which the person will collaboratively work'. She adds that practitioners of pastoral reflection

should declare their own positions regarding the faith tradition they work in and how that position informs individual practitioners' commitments, values and practices.

However, theological reflection, the development of competencies and the declaration of one's commitment as a pastoral theologian are not enough when working in a context of poverty. Feminist theology and the people of Scottsville have taught me that theology also requires a particular stance. Whenever, in the course of the research, I have allowed the social context to dictate the course of my work, I developed not so much competencies, or intellectual positioning, as a real sense of solidarity, of becoming 'synonymous' with the suffering of others. Maybe the call to act then has less to do with following tradition and developing competency than it has to do, in the first instance, with a willingness to become vulnerable. Couture (2000:69) quotes Sobrino, who said that 'the work of mercy "consists in making someone else's pain our very own and allowing that pain to move us to respond"'.

According to De Gruchy (1987:26), '(s)uffering becomes redemptive when it is vicarious, and in our context that only becomes possible when we accept our guilt in the suffering of others and our responsibility to be in solidarity with them. In this act of solidarity we meet God and discover not only *where* God is but *who* God is' (De Gruchy's italics). If we recognise God's participation in our suffering, through Jesus, it means that we accept that God is affected by us; He/She is vulnerable *because of the relationship* and so should we be. According to Heyward (1999:155), it is vital 'to reinterpret God's power as the *power of love*, a power recognizable not by its control but by its *vulnerability* – that is its openness to being touched and changed by what is happening' (Heyward's italics). I have learnt from the praxis of the Scottsville women (as described in Chapter 4) that to become vulnerable for the sake of the other, which means to love the other, ultimately becomes a way of seeing God. Under the caption: 'Seeing God through love', the Apostle John (1 John 4:12 *NKJA Study Bible* pp 2146-2147) states: 'No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.'

The ethos of vulnerability to the other is feminist theology's response to an ethos of control that has characterised pastoral practice for so long. Ackermann (1996:46) writes: 'Engaging in liberating praxis is a hope- and struggle-filled activity provided it embraces vulnerability. It must abandon any manipulative action directed at the

maintenance of social systems at the expense of those who have the least.’ Soelle (1990:xi) therefore says that ‘if we really understand the parable of the last judgment, in which every hungry child is Christ (Mt 25), we can say: Christ is God’s wound in the world. Therefore we need a window of vulnerability if we want to live in inward relationship with Christ’. From a feminist theological perspective, the God that made Him/Herself vulnerable through Christ cannot be a God of control who requires faith to be the embodiment of control of others. What God urges us through Christ is to let love be our faith; and this requires us to become vulnerable. A vulnerability to others means that one’s heart opens and one, literally, is willing to be moved. ‘Being moved’ (to hope, to struggle...) then becomes an appropriate metaphor for pastoral work in a context of poverty.

The metaphor of being moved is commonly used as an expression of compassion. In achieving this kind of awareness, as a Christian I look to Jesus’ life. Nolan (2001:35) speaks of the ‘unrestrained compassion’ Jesus felt for the poor and the oppressed: ‘The English word “compassion” is far too weak to express the emotion that moved Jesus. The Greek verb *splagchnizomai* used in all these texts is derived from the noun *splagchnon*, which means intestines, bowels, entrails or heart, that is to say, the inward parts from which strong emotions seem to arise.’ Jesus’ compassion therefore, was primarily an embodied compassion. This kind of *compassion* came about because of being exposed to suffering (Nolan 2001:36). In order to experience compassion and to lament, one has to become vulnerable to the other.

In the previous chapter, I recorded the stories of Doreen and Aunt Baai, who made themselves vulnerable to the suffering of others. A feminist ethic of vulnerability therefore implies an understanding that the self is no longer in control of truth, but that theological truth is always unfinished (Rieger 2001:115), and that it is realised in relationship; whether it be with the other, Other or with Scripture or the doctrines of the church. Hence, theology is no longer the domain of ‘coherent structures’ or of ‘systems’ but rather lies in the practices, discoveries and awareness that come from a relational praxis in which the self’s relativity (in this case my relativity as a researcher) is acknowledged (Rieger 2001:115).

### 5.5.2.3 Seeing from 'the underside'

In a chapter entitled 'On learning to see? A Reformed perspective on the church and the poor', Dirk Smit (2003:57) poses the question: 'Could it perhaps be that suffering, especially in radical poverty, challenges the Christian church to see in such a fundamental way that the very being of the church is itself at stake?' Smit defines seeing as 'perceiving', 'accepting' (as a moral challenge) and 'interpreting'. It is possible for a Christian to do all the things that Smit proposes as seeing by simply reading the newspaper or by attending a conference on poverty, even with the poor. 'Seeing' can become just another discourse with which the church engages in relation to poverty. However, Smit (2003:64) states that 'the first question to us, once we see, and hear, may not even be the practical question, of what to do, and worse still, how to solve all these problems, how to eradicate poverty. It may be the much more fundamental question of how we could suffer with those who cry, how we could show compassion.'

When Joerg Rieger (2003) therefore asks what 'margins' mean in an 'anything goes' postmodern world, it implies to me that I may see the other, even recognise the other's suffering, but with the same single-mindedness as in modernist times. Postmodernism's inclusion of the other into my own single-minded perspective may fool me into thinking that I have ethical relations with our poor neighbour. Kwok (2005:56) therefore argues that '(t)he appeal to universal human experience and the inability to respect diverse cultures are expressions of a colonizing motive: the incorporation of the Other into one's own culture or perspective.' Both Rieger and Kwok describe the stance of cultural relativity, the tolerance of diversity as a paradox of postmodernity: whilst the existence of the margins is acknowledged more than ever before, the suffering associated with the margins remains an abstraction. Minow (1990:378-379) argues: 'We all tend to forget that our conceptual schemes are simplifications, serving some interests and uses rather than others. We forget because our minds – and probably our hearts – cannot contain the whole world. We reduce the world to shorthand that we can handle. Our shorthand, because it is *our* shorthand, reflects what we think we need, where we stand, and who we are. ...The more powerful we are, the less we may be able to see that the world coincides with our view precisely because we shaped it in accordance with our view.'

In South Africa we gladly refer to the colourful language, the sense of humour of the 'coloured' people as long as their plight does no challenge us – as long as we do not

have to take the risk of doing anything about poor 'coloured' children suffering the massive physical verbal and emotional effects of poverty. The challenge that poverty therefore poses in postmodern times is that '(i)n the realm of theology and the church, few have dared to take an extended look at the underside' (Rieger 2003:15). The question is therefore how we, working in the field of pastoral care, can begin looking *at* and then *from* 'the underside'.

In this regard, feminist theology, with its focus on the embodied solidarity with the suffering other, offers a point of departure that may answer the question about how we could foster symmetrical relations with the other, how we could *suffer with*.

The seeing of the suffering becomes only the first compassionate step that leads to an *embodied joining* of the poor, which, in turn, leads to *seeing from the perspective of the poor*. The perspective from the 'underside', importantly, brings into focus the injustices that may have been absent from our first 'perceiving'. In this seeing we may also 'see' for the first time that many of our privileges as affluent South African Christians are built on the destruction of lives, as Aunt Liz's story in Chapter 3 so vividly illustrates. It is this second seeing, of injustice and how it has benefited us, that moves us towards redressive and just praxis. Praxis then becomes, by necessity, a matter of personal enlistment. If Smit's (2003) question about the challenge to the church is read in relation to this process of seeing-joining-seeing-praxis, then the doing of justice in fact becomes 'the very being of the church'.

This feminist perspective of justice as the perspective from the underside changes the dynamic of care from one in which we act out of compassion and the 'goodness of one's heart' to one where we are vulnerably obliged to 'do sorry' because we start seeing ourselves inside the picture of societal power that has created, and still creates, the conditions for poverty and of marginalisation. In this regard, Aunt Liz's story in the previous chapter invites us to become vulnerable to the ways in which our social, cultural, political and religious traditions have both intentionally and unintentionally harmed others and still have the power to do so.

To become vulnerable as a church to our own ability to marginalise therefore sensitises us to remain vigilant to our own constructs of power and our interpretations of Scripture that are contrary to the praxis of Jesus. The praxis of 'seeing' the other and then the

necessity of ‘seeing’ from the perspective of the other requires us as pastoral workers to make ourselves vulnerable to suffering, also to the suffering we are capable of inflicting that makes us think in new ways about justice. It also enables us to hear the voice of the other. Getting close to concrete others makes us see them no longer only for their suffering, but also their humanity and the specific values, talents and skills they have to offer. (In the next chapter I describe the step-by-step process of coming close in embodied ways to young people and how my closeness to them made me see their gifts and talents, a seeing that would not have been possible from a distance.)

Becoming involved on the margins of society therefore offers theologians ‘a perspective which is absent in the centre’ (Ackermann 1997:67), and a ‘seeing again’, on more than one level. This perspective has an impact on our view of ourselves, of the concrete other and what he or she offers us, what we consider church to be, in terms of social relations and our part in it, but also in terms of the Divine-human relationship.

#### ***5.5.2.4 Listening from ‘the underside’***

Listening from the underside is not comfortable listening, because it makes the listener vulnerable. I suspect that is why it is such a hard thing for so many theologians and Christians to do. In their reflections on the limitations of listening and how those limits affect support for others after the TRC, Ross and Reynolds (2004:109-110), contend that *listening from the underside* can be downright challenging or even unbearably difficult:

It can be easier not to listen. Families of those who have been greatly harmed find it hard to pay attention to an individual’s pain when it seems not to abate over time. One young man we know was tortured in prison every day for four months, then held in solitary confinement for three years and, once released, took refuge in drink. He is struggling now to study and to hold himself together but his kin have lost sympathy. ‘You are old now,’ they say, ‘and should be contributing money to the family, not asking for support.’ Their assumptions that pain has a finite lifespan...that listening to pain, too, is of finite duration, reflect in some part the rhetoric of the TRC, which asserted that speaking and healing would follow one another closely in time.

Ross and Reynolds’s (2004) work was highly significant for me in my understanding of the terms whereby acts of reparation are done in a context of poverty. They share another story of a meeting about reparation between a TRC-appointed expert on trauma and the community of Zwelethemba in 1998. The expert invited the group to engage in

dialogue about the forms of reparation that the victims expected, to which the community leader then replied: ‘They wrap themselves around our soreness and then go away. Why does the TRC say they want to heal us? ...You come in, in a hurry. Come in, out again. That is the way it’s been, and we are the victims. We don’t think that is the way we are going to heal’ (Ross & Reynolds 2004:106). Ross and Reynolds (2004:110) conclude:

The kinds of work undertaken by the Commission and others like it run the risk of too simple a translation of the memory of pain from the intimate to the public, the risk of generating fixed positions. We fear that the Commission failed to recognise the intimacy of recording pain. There is a danger that the range of reasons for which people testified or did not, the complexity of decisions to testify about pain or loss, and the consequences of these are ignored or erased. Already, silences are being overwritten with voices that do not take account of the particularity of the local. A deep understanding of the past and its influence on the present can only come from intensive work at the micro-level.

I wanted to share the awareness about the connection between the work of justice and developing a real sense of ‘the particularity of the local’ that came from reading the work of Ross and Reynolds (2004) and the ability to hear the locality of each voice. I therefore decided to share these discoveries with a teacher at Petunia Primary. Mr Temmers, a teacher, taught C, a 14-year old girl who came to consult with me twice about the many problems she had experienced in her life. Mr Temmers shared his concern about the fact that she had stopped attending school with me. My first reaction was that if she ‘did not want to’ come to school, there was nothing Mr Temmers or I could do about it. Having read Ross and Reynolds (2004), I also then started asking myself if I could apply my criteria for tolerance and understanding to a situation of trauma that I knew so little about. Was I talking about her better than she could speak for herself, something bell hooks had warned me against? I realised that by talking about her in this way, I had diminished her power to speak and that, if she could speak, she would probably tell me about the context of her life, of which I had temporarily lost sight. What I did know was that the community in which she lived was one that did not actively support a culture of learning – especially for girls. It is a culture in which many young women have babies early. Relationships with partners are often not stable ones that provide physical, emotional or material support to the young woman and the baby. I started asking myself: what difference does living in such a house and street make to the options for living available to C?

Subsequently, I wrote Mr Temmers a letter in which I shared with him some quotes from Ross and Reynolds (2004), the discoveries I had made about my own prejudices and my understanding for the need for reasoning from her point of view, and for doing pastoral work on a micro-level.

*The comments in the book made me realise how easily I too can be drawn into a culture in which problems are quickly resolved... Unlike Dr Phil... we are not in the soft chairs of a glamorous TV studio. For C the road to healing may be a long and dusty one on which I will have to join her instead of expecting from her to join me where I am. There may be talking, but I expect that I will also have to be able to join C in the silence she experiences. Thank you for your support on this long and arduous journey – the outcome of which we cannot predict.*

(Excerpt from the letter to Mr Temmers written on 21 June 2006, translated)

I also invited Mr Temmers to write her a letter. Mr Temmers wrote her a lovely letter in which he not only assured her of his support, but in which he spoke of what he appreciated about her as a student. He encouraged her friends to write her letters too. I dropped these off with C at the house of a family member where she was staying. She told me that she had been diagnosed with tuberculosis and that this was the reason for her absence from school.

- ***Deconstructing silence and listening***

One of the biggest advantages of listening from the underside that this research has led me to, is that it brings with it an awareness of how, by holding on too tightly to my own knowledges, I often cannot hear the other. I realised the danger that an unintentional disregard for difference held for my research, namely that it may lead to too simple a translation of pain and powerlessness into my own meanings and frame of reference. Soelle (1990:64) states that she understands feminism ‘as the conscious part of the women’s movement that struggles not only for equal rights, but for a new and different culture’, in which the Other is no longer that person whom I translate into my own language or whose lives and voices serve my purposes, such as research. In this regard, bell hooks (1990:151-2) cautions: ‘Often

this speech about the ‘Other’ annihilates, erases: “No need to hear your voice when I can talk about you better than you can speak about yourself. No need to hear your voice...I am still the colonizer, the speaking subject and you are now at the center of my talk.”” Over the four years working in Scottsville, I started to understand with Ross and Reynolds (2004) the importance of letting go the control of time, of determining outcomes and of becoming present to the other. Narrative therapist Johnella Bird (2000:14) calls this ‘presence listening’. This is the kind of therapeutic listening that I gradually became attuned to, also in a pastoral context: ‘It is listening that defies Western cultural strategies of detachment. It is listening that positions us on the line between knowing and not knowing. In this listening place we make our selves available to have our life knowledges overturned, added to and/or confirmed’ (Bird 2000:14).

In Chapters 1 and 2, I have provided an archaeological and genealogical analysis of the connection between poverty, violence and voice in the community of Scottsville. Audre Lorde, black feminist poet, writes that communities of colour in the United States experience the choking effect of fear and silence that comes from being marginalised: ‘We can learn to work and speak when we are afraid in the same way we have learned to work and speak when we are tired. For we have been socialized to respect fear more than our own needs for language and definition, and while we wait in silence for that final luxury of fearlessness, the weight of that silence will choke us’ (Lorde 1984:197).

Riet Bons-Storm (1998:23) speaks of ‘women of faith who are afraid to speak their minds in their communities of faith’. She concludes:

They have to hear the sound of their own voice in groups or in conversation with another person to whom they give authority, like a pastor, a minister or a theologian.... She needs new stories, that give her the authority to speak. Practical theology should uncover these new stories. A woman needs an image of the Divine which will encourage her to raise her voice. When muted persons in the community of faith are trained to contribute to the dialogue of faith, the role of the clergy will change.

My experience in the course of research was that women and young people who have been marginalised need more than a divine image in order to develop the courage to share their stories. In Chapter 2, I have shown how pastoral power has

contributed to people's 'mutedness'. In the South African context, the shift from mutedness to speaking is not primarily the responsibility of the teller who has been subjugated through various strategies of political, pastoral and social control. We as theologians and pastoral workers in South Africa have to become serious about the need for these muted women and young people to raise their voices – not as an addendum to our own practices or to theology – but because *we* are recognising and honouring them. Because we have become aware of the fact that we have been part of a system that contributed to their silencing, we are obliged to acknowledge the significance of our stance and how it affects what is possible for them as 'others'.

In pastoral care we have undervalued the role that an honouring way of listening plays in opening up the possibility of speaking. Marginalised people will tell you that when you are listened to in a patronising way, you start to lose faith in your own voice. What is therefore needed is less training for marginalised women to meet the clergy where they are, and more 'training' for the clergy to start making themselves vulnerable as compassionate witnesses to the experiences, often through the stories and silences of marginalised others. In Scottsville, compassionate and honouring witnessing required me sometimes simply to sit with someone, hold a hand, share a cup of tea and tears or provide toilet paper to blow their noses with. (I purposefully chose to keep a roll of toilet paper in the room for this purpose, as nobody in the community uses tissues.) Such compassionate listening is intensive pastoral work at the micro-level, in which I have had to let go of all the modernist discourses of professionalism and of being in control. In these moments I am at my most vulnerable.

For Benhabib (1992:6), the self is therefore no longer the self-contained self of the enlightenment, but 'an embodied and embedded human self whose identity is constituted narratively'. Through this research, I often discovered that the stance with which I listened to people narrating their stories, in the first instance, influenced the possibility for sharing a story at all, and subsequently for what could be told and how it could be told: 'Voice is contingent on who listens with what attention and attunement. Voice depends on witnessing' (Weingarten 2000:392).

In Sections 5.6.3 and 5.6.4, I reflect on the ways in which this research created witnessing events and documents through which previously silent and silenced

voices of young people could be heard. In the next section, I want to introduce narrative therapy and the ways in which it provided me with a methodology that turned poststructuralist theory into practice.

## **5.6 NARRATIVE THERAPY**

I started out this research as a pastoral therapist who had been trained in narrative therapy. Narrative therapy is informed by the social constructionist (Freedman & Combs 1996) and poststructuralist epistemologies (Besley 2002; White 2000, 2007; Winslade 2005). For the purposes of this research as feminist-poststructuralist research, I focused on the poststructuralist aspects of narrative therapy, especially with regard to the relational and deconstructive use of language and the creation of relational practices. In the work of narrative therapists such as Michael White (1991, 2000, 2007), Freedman and Combs (1996) and Johnella Bird (2000, 2004), I discovered a therapeutic relationship with the client as other that was not based on psychological meta-narratives, but which recognised the concreteness of the other in all its fluidity, contradictions and capacity for change. Importantly, a strong poststructuralist position in narrative therapy makes it possible for me to recognise that I too am discursively constituted (Davies et al 2006:91) and positioned (Davies et al 2006:91; Davies & Harré 1991; Winslade 2005). In terms of practice in this research, this means that I asked questions that offered people the opportunity ‘to take up a position in relation to discourse’ (Winslade 2005:352).

When I engaged in conversation with young clients, or in sharing a possibility-stance with adult women in lay counselling training, I kept an open mind in respect of the fact that there are ‘truths’ outside of the problem truth that people bring to our conversations. I am mindful of the power of these alternative, often unspoken truths and the stories through which they can be brought to life and may influence the ideas people hold about themselves and their relationships with others. In the following section, I give a brief overview of how the poststructuralist idea of deconstruction influenced the epistemology of narrative therapy and its impact on this research.

### **5.6.1 Narrative therapy and a deconstructive stance in a therapeutic context**

Narrative therapy’s deconstructive practices shaped the kind of relational stance I took, the questions I asked and the kind of listening I did as a therapist and as a researcher. In

this section, I share examples of how my deconstructive stance and questioning opened up possibilities for people in the therapeutic context, but also in the broader pastoral context of this research.

The poststructuralist epistemology invited me as a therapist into a position of curiosity and of ‘not knowing’. Not assuming that one knows (about) the other is one of the basic tenets of ethical relationships, because it loosens one’s grip on certainty and necessitates the asking of questions. In this research, this methodology of not knowing also led me to inquire about the nature of poverty in the ‘coloured’ community, to the specifics of poverty in Scottsville and its effects on concrete people’s lives. Chapter 2 is the result of such a ‘not knowing’ inquiry about the definition of ‘poverty’.

In a therapeutic context, I use deconstructive questioning to bring forth the ‘other truths’ of my clients’ lives. According to Freedman and Combs (1996:57), ‘(d)estructive questioning invites people to see their stories from different perspectives, to notice how they are constructed (or *that* they are constructed), to note their limits, and to discover that there are other possible narratives’.

#### ***5.6.1.1 Lwellyn and I challenge the discourse of inferiority***

Lwellyn<sup>21</sup> (14) was referred to me by the principal at Petunia Primary because he started staying away from school for days on end. In our conversation, it emerged that Lwellyn struggled with a commitment to attend school because friends who had already dropped out tried to convince him to do the same. What contributed to his struggle was the fact that he had difficulty with reading. Because of this, Lwellyn had experienced a growing sense of inferiority in relation to his schoolwork and to life in general.

But when I asked him about other areas of his life, a different, more hopeful energy came into the room. It emerged that this teenager had cast a cement slab by himself, made up the beds at home every day, cleaned the lounge, did the dishes and swept the floors and then checked that everything was as neat as he wanted it. It made him feel proud. He said: *‘Ek maak die kooie op, maak die voorhuis aan die kant, doen die skottelgoed, en vee die huis uit. Dan kyk ek of alles netjies is... Dit laat my trots voel...Ek’s nie bang vir harde werk nie.’* (‘I make the beds, I clean up the lounge, I do

---

<sup>21</sup> P<sub>s</sub>

the dishes and I sweep the house. Then I check to see that everything is tidy. It makes me feel proud. I am not scared of hard work.’) Until we had had this conversation, Lwellyn did not consider these tasks to have any significance. I asked about the details (and he answered, bemused by my insistence) of what he did and if whether these tasks were the kind of thing teenagers of his age in Scottsville did as a matter of course. He then told me that what he did was not done by any other teenager that he knew.

I asked him about what his parents knew about him: *‘Hulle weet ek is ‘n harde werker. Hulle kan op my staatmaak... ek kan klaarmaak.’* (‘They know that I am a hard worker. They can count on me... I will complete what I’ve started’.) He then told me that the people at school had yet to discover this about him, and that if they did, he guessed that they would be very surprised. We then investigated the possibilities of ‘not being scared of hard work’ within the school context and who could support him in this. We then also discussed the challenges he would face in sticking to his commitment to work harder at school and whether he was up for it. I chose to ask about what he could do instead of what he had been told by himself and had been told by others that he could not do.

Narrative therapy is informed by the poststructuralist premise that knowledge is constructed, and that the individual too ‘is constituted through the discourses of a number of collectives as is the collective itself. One can only ever be what the various discourses make possible, and one’s being shifts with the various discourses through which one is spoken into existence’ (Davies 1991:43). The kind of questioning about the details of Lwellyn’s own experience as a source of meaning within narrative therapy provided alternative everyday details of experiences that could start to challenge the discourse of inferiority. Even if Lwellyn kept on struggling with schoolwork, he could now start to see that being ‘not good enough’ was at the time limited to his reading ability, and that he could use his ability to work hard to challenge even this ‘not good enough’ discourse. He could also hold on to the fact that, in terms of working with his hands, he was capable of unusual work for a teenager of his age. More importantly, Lwellyn could start seeing himself as the trustworthy person who was ‘spoken into existence’ in our session, a person who could finish tasks he set himself. When these knowledges about himself became visible to him, other ways of thinking about himself became possible too.

## 5.6.2 Taking a deconstructive stance in a pastoral context

Taking up a deconstructive stance in both a therapeutic and a broader pastoral context means that I view ‘truth’ as something that is constructed. When I view truth as a construct, by implication there are events, ideas and stories that lie outside of that which has been constructed as ‘truth’. Once the truth is viewed as a construct, it also means that I can make visible the terms by which this construction is created or held in place, the hidden ‘biases and prejudices’ (White 1991:27) that guide me in uncovering the construction of this truth. In this section I discuss the ways in which I used a deconstructive stance and a relational use of language in the writer’s group to question cultural beliefs around gender. I also discuss a scene that I wrote for the play in which I challenged the cultural shaming of young people who use drugs in the community, rather than providing them with support.

### 5.6.2.1 Anna deconstructs and reconstructs her relationship with her son

During the lay counselling training, I invited the women to consider the fact that life is multi-storied and to ask their clients about contexts where the problem did not feature. During the session, I could see the surprise in Anna Tarentaal’s face. She later spoke to me about how taking a deconstructive look at her relationship with her son that day subsequently brought about a turnaround in their troublesome relationship and how she had shared this discovery with the women at her church.

In a taped conversation I had with Anna on 24 October 2006, I asked her about her relationship with her son, Elrich, and the discoveries she had made about the truths that had, up to that day, been lying outside of her field of vision. Anna told me:

*There was something in him that I did not like. It always felt to me as if he did not respect me. He disregarded me. I always went into myself and prayed... I always thought of him as a nobody. Whenever he said something that I did not like I thought to myself: If you want to be like this, I am leaving you alone. I am not going to worry about you. You just want to be that rude kind of person. You always want to have the last word. You always want to hurt people...*

I then asked Anna about the day I had asked her if there were times when she experienced her son differently. Anna told me that my question had led her to think about him in another way.

*A: I always thought that when he is at church he is not like the person he is at home. He radiates...he can actualise himself through his music. And he is just wonderful. Then I thought...wow, then my child is not as bad as I thought. I never considered it that he could have simply wanted me to say: you are not such a person (rude). There is actually something good in you.*

Seeing in her mind's eye how her child performed music in church was a different experience of him for Anna than the one she experienced at home. For her, this memory was a unique experience, as described by Bird (2000:57). When the 'wonderful' child who performed music at the church entered her field of vision, Anna could start recognising the possibility that her child 'was not as bad as she thought'. She subsequently started constructing their relationship around this new truth. She told me that her language became more respectful, she would start doing little things for him and she would tell him that she loved him. Instead of giving only the problem story space in their relationship, she literally made space for the unique experience of the wonderful musical boy to re-enter their relationship. She told me:

*Then I saw the big change in him... What I had learnt here I started applying. I thought: No, I am not going to keep on thinking I am right and Elrich is the one who is wrong. ... And it worked.*

Anna's own life to me speaks strongly of a willingness to take up a deconstructive stance to the truths she held in her relationship with her son. For Anna, a deconstructive stance meant 'to look back at, to reconsider, to see again' which is the description of the Latin word *respectus* (Rodríguez 2001:53). Hence respect, the act of reconsidering, of seeing again, as a research approach, in Anna's case meant reconsidering of her son as a musician and a participant in church activities.

In taking up a deconstructive stance towards her relationship with her son, Anna made discoveries about relational possibility that she could now use as an inspiration to other struggling parents in the community. Anna's story makes visible how, when we are prepared to 'see again', relationships can change.

In September 2008, the principal at Scottsville Secondary school approached me about a plan he had for starting a parent guidance/support group at the school, especially for the many single parents in the community who found it difficult to cope with their teenage children. He asked me if I would be willing to lead such a group. I then thought of Anna's story above and suggested to Mr Smith that I approach Anna to co-present this workshop with me. I had the sense that Anna's experience of taking a deconstructive stance, of the discoveries she made and how she chose to work with those discoveries in her relationship with her son, could serve as encouragement to other parents to invite into their thinking some truths that lay outside of their current relationship with their teenagers.

In January 2009, a Stellenbosch businessman, George Ducharme, asked me if there were any specific projects I had in mind for 2009. I told him of my dream of building a culture of appreciation and respect amongst Scottsville's parents for their teenagers. I wanted to host a regular parent support event at the school with the help of Anna and Joan, one of the other women in the lay counselling group. These sessions would also offer adults for whom humiliation and abuse had been normalised some opportunities to reconsider their actions and their effects on their teenagers. George spoke about his understanding of faith, which was to live and share with the poor in 'a spirit of abundance' – also an abundance of respect and care. George committed himself to provide financial support for the project. The first meeting took place on 10 February 2009. Anna and Joan both earned a fee for the facilitating roles they played in these sessions.

#### ***5.6.2.2 A deconstructive conversation with boys about gender discourses***

During a meeting of the poet's group (which on that day consisted of five teenage boys) on 24 September 2008, one of the young poets from Grade 9 shared a poem he had written from the perspective of a young 'coloured' matriculant with the group. In the poem, the narrator (not the same person as the poet), speaks of a girl who with 'her

short skirt' seduced the narrator one night at a party, and how now his matric year had been ruined because she had a baby.

The poetic construction foregrounded only a boy's experience, but did not account for the girl's experience of the event. I took the meaning of this poem as an opportunity to engage with the group of teenage boys around the table that afternoon about the discourses in the community that put the responsibility for sexual abuse and rape with the (female) victim and not with the perpetrator. A lively debate followed, during which we deconstructed the ways in which this discourse makes women and children responsible for the fact that they are raped. We discovered that one of the effects of the operation of such a discourse was that a girl can be blamed for wearing a short skirt, but a boy in the community would seldom be asked why he chose to 'open his zip' (as one of the poets, Zulrich, put it that afternoon). The eyes of the boys widened around the table as they realised these 'other realities' that my deconstructive questioning opened up.

I then invited the young male poet to experiment with writing poems from these 'other realities': the story of a pregnant girl, a grandmother who is looking after the baby, a girl's parents. By giving voice to those experiences that are normally not centralised in a culture in which men are the ones who speak 'the truth', poems can 'give voice' and make visible those other, marginalised experiences. In this way poetry becomes political because it uses the power of language to deconstruct the discourses of authority in a community that dictates whose truths are being heard and circulated, and whose are not.

To me as poet, mentor and pastoral worker, writing poetry in Scottsville can therefore not be regarded as merely an act of individual self-expression. That afternoon, I could have kept quiet and concentrated on the poem in front of me. But by discussing the effects of giving voice through poetry to (one kind of) male experience in this context, and in effect silencing the female experience, I exposed the boys to how deconstruction works and how it affects our social responsibility as poets in a community in which gender relations are not equal. The poststructuralist deconstructive stance even in this context invited me to take an ethical stand for the voices who are silenced and to invite the boys to consider what they give voice to and what they leave out in their poetry. That afternoon the boys and I realised how, in our relationship with language 'deconstruction calls for an increase in responsibility', as Derrida (1989:20) put it.

Poet Eavan Boland (2000:54), says: ‘I believe the poet’s responsibility to poetry – to shelter and advance not just the art, but the conditions in which the art occurs – has never been more obvious... I mean the most practical, neighborly responsibilities – those of warning and witness and presence... If poets do not take responsibility for some of the changes in their own world, who will?’

On 3 November 2008, one of the young poets, Thelren Masimila, editor of the revived school newspaper, proudly brought the first copy of the newspaper to the table. I was delighted for him that his writing and editing skills were put to use in this domain. One of the articles in the newspaper, ‘*Meisies wag jou tyd!*’ (‘Girls wait your time’), again had teenage pregnancy as its theme, with teenage girls of the community being addressed. Our deconstructive conversation led to Thelren’s excitedly saying: ‘I am getting lots of ideas about follow-up articles – one of which would be boys and teenage pregnancy!’ Our conversation that afternoon also brings to life the words of feminist Sharon Welch (1990:128), about a communicative ethics which ‘takes as its standpoint the interaction between “concrete others.” The ideal situation for moral discernment is thus a collective, historical process. Moral reasoning cannot be carried out by any one theorist but requires dialogue with actual members of different communities’. The ethics that research in a feminist-poststructuralist epistemology subscribes to is therefore one that is committed to transformation and therefore requires constant conversation *and* ongoing deconstruction:

The process of transformation, then, is not so much the result of a rational choice to be someone or something else in particular, but a movement, a ‘decomposition’, an engagement in a messy process in which one ‘scrapes and catches and drags’ in a complex process of reinscription, of rubbing out the unthinkable; a decomposition, and a fractured, messy recomposition, of thought and of body.

(Davies et al 2006:90)

Scottsville’s young poets have been invited to take responsibility for their poetry and for the conditions within which that poetry is created through this messy process of rubbing out and of recomposition of thought.

Thus far, I have discussed different kinds of deconstructive conversations that took place in the research and what they made possible. In the next section I reflect on various forms of witnessing events and on the documents that formed part of this

research and how they actively deconstructed relational limits to create very real and new relational possibilities.

### **5.6.3 Witnessing practices**

In many ways, the stories that circulate in the Scottsville community about its young people are ‘problem-saturated’ and critical stories about a lack of discipline, violence and drugs. Alternative experiences of young people are seldom storied. Consequently, a culture of appreciation of young people in this community is almost non-existent. In the Scottsville community itself, many teachers still subscribe to an ethic of control by which children are subjugated and silenced.

In his thought-provoking book on the causes of youth violence in South Africa, *Someone stole my smile*, Partick Burton (2007:18) refers to a protective factor regarding children’s relationship with violence, namely ‘the reverse of attitudes that value violence and deviance: children whose attitudes are pro-social are less likely to behave violently’. Burton (2007:18) then refers to the fact that children who ‘engage in religious practices’ did not act in violent ways. The questions that came up for me when I read Burton’s (2007) book was whether the adult culture in Scottsville’s attitude to its children was a pro-social one. How can and should we as adults witness children in ways that are in accordance with our religious convictions and values, such as love and respect? Can we as adult people of faith start carrying the responsibility to act in such ways that young people’s attitudes may be reversed and that they can experience in their own lives what a ‘pro-social’ stance looks and feels like?

In narrative therapy, the use of ‘outsider witnessing’, ‘definitional ceremonies’ (Freedman & Combs 1996:237-363; White 2007:165-218) and written documents such as letters (Epston 1994) to reflect what a person has achieved in a therapeutic context are well described. Kaethe Weingarten (2004) speaks of the importance of moving from passive witnessing in the broader social context to effective action in the face of personal, structural and collective violence. She proposes that steps to compassionate witnessing include telling the person who is being witnessed what has been powerful or eye-opening to you about what you have witnessed, and also how it has affected your life, or will do so in future.

My ethical responsibility as a researcher in the ‘problem-saturated’ context of Scottsville was to use my position as director of the play *Die Groot Gevaar* to create appreciative witnessing opportunities for the young people of this community. A few days before the first performance of the play that the young people had written, it struck me that we would have an audience in front of which I could do appreciative witnessing of the young people who performed in the play. I decided to use the time after each of the three performances on the day to create a small witnessing ceremony. Kaethe Weingarten (2003:26-34) refers to the position of being an active and aware witness that we can step into as the position that has the most potential for transforming hopelessness and powerlessness in a context of violence.

#### ***5.6.3.1 I speak at a witnessing ceremony***

The witnessing ceremony took the form of a presentation of awards of appreciation to each of the young people who took part in the play. Stardom in the Scottsville culture is associated with aspirations of fame and with a spirit of competition. I therefore decided to deconstruct the word ‘star’ by connecting it with the actions and values of these young people that I had experienced throughout rehearsals. These ‘Real Star’ awards were laminated and the words were read out loud to the audience, along with a short description of what led me to appreciate a young person in this particular way, for example, to Tracey James who played the part of the doctor, I said:

*Tracey, thank you that you were willing to take on this difficult part and that you worked with this challenge and eventually made such a success of it. You have made possible something that looked impossible a month ago. That is why you are an inspiration to me and many of Scottsville’s young people. I want to thank you too for your spontaneous applause when some of your fellow-actors achieved something special. You are a real star (See Photo 4).*

A community worker who visited Tracey’s house a year later told me that Tracey’s award took pride of place in the small sitting room of her family’s dwelling.

I purposefully also honoured a talented actor who chose to leave the show towards the end of rehearsals. I realised that he too needed appreciation for his contribution. I had

heard how others in the group had shamed him for ‘deserting us’. I wanted instead to react in a respectful way by focusing on what he contributed rather than on what he did not. After the show, I delivered my words to him at his house:

*I want to say something about an actor and musician who chose to withdraw from our show. B did, for the short time he was part of the Scottsville Drama Society, share his musical and acting talents with us. Thanks, B, for the beat of ‘Die ding hy trek jou in’ and ‘Kyk wat maak die Tik aan jou’. We are saddened by your decision to no longer take part in the show. However, we hope that your path will one day lead to the theatre and that you will discover in it a place where your many talents can blossom.*

The day after the performances, Mr Noach (excerpt from conversation with Mr Noach on 30 November 2006) told me: ‘*Hierdie kinders het dit so waardeer dat hulle erkenning kry omdat erkenning vir hulle ‘n buitengewone ding is.*’ (‘These children appreciated the acknowledgment of them so much because acknowledgement is for them such an unusual experience’). According to Mr Noach, recognition is often outside the experience of Scottsville’s young people. The witnessing ceremonies brought recognition and appreciation of young people into the domain of the social. Before the performances of the play that followed in 2007 and 2008, I would again honour the actors individually in front of the audiences.

#### ***5.6.3.2 Creating conditions of possibility: young people participate in a witnessing ceremony of their own***

At the end of 2007, I organised a celebratory meal for the members of the Scottsville Junior Drama Society. I wanted them to use the meal as a witnessing opportunity to speak about what they had appreciated about the process, what they had discovered about themselves and about one another. To help them in formulating their reflections, I handed each young person an invitation with some guidelines (see Addendum 5). Up to this point, I had spoken what I had witnessed. I wanted this research to give the young people a similar opportunity, in a context in which they felt safe. Benhabib (1992:168) states: ‘Neither the concreteness nor the otherness of the “concrete other” can be known in the absence of the *voice* of the other... one needs principles, institutions and

procedures to enable articulation of the voice of “others”.’ The group witnessing on 24 October 2007 turned out to be such a ‘procedure’.

Even the most reticent young people in the group engaged in this witnessing ceremony without shame. Some, like Verona de Villiers, spoke about their surprise at what they had managed to achieve, things which a year ago they would not even have contemplated. Others acknowledged me and thanked me for what they had learned about writing and acting. But two young people chose to acknowledge their fellow actors for what they appreciated in them. One of the lead actors, Keenan Jooste, addressed his co-lead, Elnico Burns. Keenan thanked Elnico for his patience with him during rehearsals of some of the difficult scenes and for showing him how to improve his acting.

Zulrich Isaacs, who played the part of the magistrate, told Juclite Joseph, who played the part of the pastor, that he valued the respect that he had witnessed in Juclite’s life: *‘Hy’t altyd geluister. So ek’t van hom af geleer dat ek nie vir my moet opruk of moet stress vir niks nie. Dit maak dat ek respek het vir my medeakteurs.’* (‘He always paid attention. So I learnt from him not to take offence or stress about nothing. It helps me to be respectful towards my fellow actors.’)

Narrative therapist Johnella Bird (2004:25) reflects on the therapeutic and social consequences that relational language-making has in a context of violence: ‘The violence perpetrated by those holding social and institutional power extends beyond the violent act, to the type of violence that can diminish our faith that life itself is and can be treasured, valued and protected.’

When people who perpetrate or condone violence in a community use words such as respect, love and commitment, young people lose faith in the meaning of those words. In the Scottsville community, I sometimes noticed that young people seem to be unable to find words to describe their experience, and I wondered whether the silence showed that they harboured some distrust about words and how they can be used against a person. Bird (2004:26) suggests that ‘relational language-making moves detached absolutes or truth statements into the partial or the subjective. In this movement the context which constructs individual meaning-making becomes apparent’.

The witnessing ceremonies of this research created space for relational language-making, by linking words such as courage with young people's subjective, contextual doing and/or witnessing of it. In this way 'respect' was rescued from the language spoken by drug lords and used by Zulrich to describe what he had learnt from Juclite. What is even more significant about the relational language-making of the witnessing ceremonies is that it generated a 'relational consciousness, which...provide(d) us with a place to engage with that which feels substantial or meaningful in our lives', as described by Bird (2004:27).

What struck me as I reflect on the witnessing is how the young people became authors of their own 'pro-social' (Burton 2007:18) 'scripts of meaning' around that table. Another one of the 'pro-social attitudes' that I witnessed that day came in the form of spontaneous applause after each member of the group had spoken. I reminded myself of the difficulties many of these teenagers experienced at the beginning of rehearsals to even read their script in front of others, to speak their minds freely or to 'get into' the character of the part they were playing. These difficulties arose because the experience of shame and therefore the shaming of others had been normalised (see Section 2.3.3.2 under the subheadings 'Verbal abuse and shaming', 'Shaming', 'Laughter as a form of shaming' and 'Shame and cultural imitation'). According to Weingarten (1994:21), 'it is not only brutality that silences voice – though it does, profoundly. Benign conditions, reasonable standards, if they include no receptive listening, no space for difference, no room for alternative naming, can shut down and turn off voice.'

Now I sensed that respect and appreciation was not only voiced, but had a chance of taking root, of maybe in time becoming the relational norm for these teenagers. Receptive listening and the alternative naming of appreciative experience had in fact created the conditions for the possibility of speaking. *These conditions of possibility* altered the nature of the relationships between these teenagers: humiliating laughter had started to make way for appreciative applause. I also realised that 'if you don't know your own gifts, you can't see the gifts in others', as Rodríguez (2001:67) puts it. The seeing and honouring of the gifts in others meant that these teenagers were starting to recognise their own gifts too. I therefore hold on to the memory of the spontaneous applause in honour of each other around the table that day as one of the most meaningful achievements of the research for me.

### **5.6.3.3 Reflections on the ethical implications of witnessing**

A 'relational consciousness' became apparent to me as I watched the group listen attentively to each young person speaking. I sensed that each person felt that he or she could speak freely because of the level of trust had been generated over the months in the group. I experienced how the act of speaking *per se* became a transformative act because a group of trustworthy and appreciative listeners were validating the speaker's voice.

In this community, experiencing the safety of trust in relationship amongst peers and being listened and spoken to in appreciative ways were all what narrative therapist Johnella Bird (2000:57) calls 'unique experiences'. These ceremonies illustrated how the witnessing methodology of narrative therapy created meaning in pastoral contexts. However, these ceremonies also have ethical implications.

When I as a researcher and director used my position of authority and influence not to control Tracey, for example, but to see her, to witness the values and actions that she as a 'concrete other' contributes to my life and to the lives of others, the possibility emerged for more humane, more mutual, more symmetrical relations between Tracey, myself and her fellow-actors. When Zulrich used his opportunity to speak to appreciate and care for Juclite, instead of humiliating or shaming him, we saw a different pastoral ethos at work to the one described in Chapters 2 and 3.

I discovered through the witnessing ceremonies that part of the ethical challenge that poverty poses to the researcher is to constantly look for opportunities for creating more mutual relations. I believe that through appreciative witnessing, we were actively deconstructing the discourses of silence and powerlessness and actively constructing the possibility of love and justice. In the final analysis, Derrida (1989:20-21) says, deconstruction is about justice: 'For in the end, where will deconstruction find its force, its movement or its motivation if not in this always unsatisfied appeal, beyond the given determinations of what we call, in determined contexts, justice, the possibility of justice.'

The struggle to do justice in a community that is used to hierarchical relationships means to love the other in a symmetrical relation. Doreen Mentoor sat with me before the start of the evening performances of the play and asked me if she could have a look

at the awards which I would hand out again that evening. She told me that other members of staff had told her about them. As she started reading through the awards, Doreen burst into tears. I asked her if she could tell me what the tears were about. She replied that she was moved because of the love that my words spoke of.

Danish theologian Knud Løgstrup (1971:112) refers to the ‘radical demand’ of Christian ethics to love one another: ‘The radical demand does not bypass a person’s own insight, experience, judgment, and imagination. It only indicates whom he is to serve through these abilities, namely, the other person rather than himself.’ Through the witnessing ceremonies the young people and I found a vehicle through which our own insight, experience, judgment and imagination could be used to serve and love the other. The various witnessing events in which we all participated served as the research methodology through which new discourses of relational safety and of appreciation and care could be constructed.

#### **5.6.4 Letter writing in the research**

Letters featured in this research as another kind of witnessing methodology. During the celebratory ceremony with the young people, I also read a letter to the group that had been written by a friend and colleague of mine, Estelle Raymond, who had attended the last performance of the year. She wrote:

*When I came to see Die Groot Gevaar last year, I thought that it was excellent, but you have surely made it even better! To me it looked as if the ease and confidence of the actors in front of the audience had increased... As a legal person I was very impressed with the court scene which was very convincing, with the attorneys using the same kind of formal Afrikaans they use in real court! It was hard for me to believe that the magistrate was not a real magistrate. He looked and acted just like one and commanded a lot of authority.*

*(Excerpt from her letter to the group by Estelle Raymond)*

Estelle became an ‘outsider witness’ whose words were cheered as I read the letter. In this way, the young people, who have limited access to people who appreciate what they do, could see themselves anew through Estelle’s appreciative eyes.

The writing of letters in the research was therefore another way in which relational consciousness was made visible, strengthened and/or generated. Sections 3.5.2.4 and 4.3.3.1 included letters from me to Aunt Baai and Aunt Liz Cupido. Both letters are honouring of a relational consciousness that had developed between us.

After some therapeutic conversations, I also wrote letters to make visible to my young clients what we had spoken about and the meanings we made during the session. One day in September 2005, I had a conversation with 12-year-old E about the difficulties he encountered at home, where both his parents abused alcohol. He told me that, because of the alcohol problem they struggled with, he often had to take care of his younger brother. Listening deconstructively to his story, I asked E how he knew what care meant, seeing that he had so little experience of it at home. E then told me about Aunt Lizzie. After our session, I asked for E's permission to write Aunt Lizzie a letter.

In this letter I took up the position of an appreciative witness to their relationship. The letter was intended to make visible to Aunt Lizzie what her actions and words had made possible in E's life. Here follows an excerpt of the letter (translated), written on 29 September 2005:

*Dear Aunt Lizzie*

*Last week E and his friend R came to speak with me. E told me that he had a difficult childhood. He told me what happened when alcohol came into their house. He also shared with me his concerns for his younger brother who is often not cared for at home. He said: 'Sometimes it feels to me as if I'm the only one who worries.' I then asked E how it came about that he worried about his younger brother when he himself had not experienced an example of worrying about others at home. He then told me about you, Aunt Lizzie.*

*He told me: 'I am so used to all the kind words she speaks to me that I've started saying it myself.' If I understand correctly, E has learnt from you how to speak words of kindness. I then asked E to tell me about the kind words you speak to him. He told me: 'I help her with chores around the house. Then she tells me "when you are grown up you will be a good husband to your wife."' He told me how you always listen to him and make him feel part of your family. He told me he has learnt from you not to hurt other*

*people but to care for them... He tells me that he feels safe with you. 'Whenever something bad happens, I go and sit by aunt Lizzie' ('As iets sleg gebeur, loop sit ek by Aunt Lizzie'). I was so moved when he told me: 'She always makes me feel that I am a someone' ('Sy laat my altyd na iets voel'). To me it sounds as if you have managed to keep respect, human dignity and safety alive in a community where adults have often forgotten how to do this. I wonder how it happened that you have chosen to live love and human dignity and how you are able to persevere with it?*

*I am writing this letter to you so that you may know what a difference you are making to the life of E and to mine. When I am trying to work in a spirit of love at Petunia, I will think of you and not be discouraged. Thank you for that.*

Some weeks later E came to invite me to tea on behalf of Aunt Lizzie. I went. She thanked me for the letter and invited me to tea again. I asked her if I could share the letter with the audience of women and children at a talk I was invited to give in the community hall on caring relationships. Aunt Lizzie agreed to this, but could not attend the event herself. A week later E came to tell me what the letter had made possible. Aunt Lizzie had told E that she had never realised the significance her actions had on his life, but that the letter had made her realise it. She had subsequently asked E if he wanted to move in with their family, which he did.

## **5.7 REFLECTIONS ON THE RELATIONAL STRUGGLES OF THE RESEARCH**

Giroux (2005:78) argues that, in our interhuman relations, '(d)emocracy's promise demands more justice, more hospitality, more struggle, not less. Democracy is more than an event and a ritual; it is a *site of struggle* whose outcome is always uncertain but whose future should never remain in doubt' (my italics). A chapter that explores ethics as something that we engage in also has to note the struggles that are part of cross-cultural research that works towards more ethical pastoral relations. In Section 4.3.2.1 under a subheading 'Our experiences of marginalisation: a turning point in awareness', I discussed my struggle with the lack of hospitality from members of the Welgemoed faith community to the different 'other' who visited them in their church. Likewise, I have struggled in this research when I have come up against the refusal of some

teachers to relate to young people 'from the underside'. I realised that difference in a context of poverty does not only refer to race and class difference, but also to the values people subscribe to, such as the values of compassion or solidarity. Working with this difference has been the biggest challenge of the research for me. I give some examples below.

At the Scottsville Secondary School, I have been struggling for years to get the message about the existence of the writers' group to the majority of young people at the school. Most teachers do not bother to tell the young people about it or encourage them to join, even though they are supportive of my efforts to set up their library.

At our Concerned Scottsville Forum meeting in August 2007, I proposed to the three principals and two community workers present that, instead of having a poster or brochures printed to advertise an upcoming Drug Awareness day, we could invite the young people of the three schools to draw a poster illustrating the dangers of drug use. My rationale was that we could invite wider community participation and that the art we received could be displayed in the form an exhibition. Children would get recognition for their creative work. I would donate some money to award to the young artist whose poster was selected. The proposal was eagerly accepted. On Monday, 17 September 2007, I phoned the schools to remind them of this project. When I phoned on Friday, 21 September, I heard that there were no posters at the high school or at any of the primary schools. At Petunia Primary, Mr Foster made an effort and reminded the children. Three posters were handed in.

I was disappointed at the lack of effort from the teachers. I am often told that there are no opportunities for children in this community. When an opportunity arose, most teachers could not find the energy to support such projects that were beyond the limits of schoolwork, exams and inspections. What I also experienced was a lack of interest or real commitment to involve young people in the affairs of the community. The educational opportunity of linking art with social issues was also lost, as was the creative opportunity for the young artists of Scottville.

In a follow-up conversation with Mr Foster I spoke openly about the sadness and frustration I experienced. I told him that I needed to do uncensored speaking and that trust in our relationship made it possible for me to do so. Mr Foster then reminded me

of the burnout that many teachers who work in this context experience. And yet, he reminded me that very few people share the vision he and I have for transformation. Mr Foster shared with me some experiences he had in coming up against the limits of care when a 'can't be bothered' attitude take over with some adults and children.

We talked about how we can cross the limits between talking about our concerns (as the Concerned Scottsville Forum) and actually doing something about these concerns. Is our concern enough to bring about awareness and transformation? We can stay with the format of structured meetings about our concerns, but what will change in children's lives? Who benefits? My sense is that what gives meaning to the structure of meetings is our ability to go beyond those structures; to implement new ideas, to do creative projects, to actively raise children's awareness and to develop creativity. Without the 'beyond', the structure itself keeps on dictating what is possible. I realised, however, that 'beyond' needs some vision, and that many teachers' struggle for survival makes it hard for them to develop a vision for the young in the community. And yet... I decided that what would be ethical for me was to speak more openly at appropriate times to teachers about my struggles and about my vision for justice. I realised that restorative justice, because it is by nature an ongoing process, compelled me into speaking about what I experienced as obstacles to achieving justice for young people in the community. According to Llewellyn (2004:170),

(t)here is not the same moment in restorative justice as there is in retributive justice when one can say justice has been done, although the moment may be substituted for by the sense of satisfaction and empowerment people feel as they play a role in doing justice....But so ingrained is the traditional way of approaching the work of justice that even our justice vocabulary makes it difficult to talk about justice differently. People call for justice to be done, to be seen to be done, to meet the demands of justice, etc. Restorative justice, in contrast, involves a commitment to strive continually for just relationships.

To promote the project of restorative justice then, I would take a deconstructive stance; knowing what has relationally not been realised yet, but what is waiting to be realised. In a question put to him on the meaning of the work of James Joyce, Derrida highlighted Joyce's use of the word 'yes': 'Inauguration is a "yes." I say "yes" as a starting point. ...The "yes" is the moment of institution, of the origin.... But when you say "yes" you imply that in the next moment you will have to confirm the "yes" by a second "yes."...The second "yes" will have to reinaugurate, to reinvent, the first one....

So the inauguration has to be reinvented every day' (Caputo 1997:27-28).

Derrida's 'yes' becomes an expression of the dynamics of the 'enlarged mentality' in human relations and the need for its continual 'reinauguration'. In this research, 'Yes!' was realised through the methodologies of relational language-making, compassionate and appreciative witnessing and letters. But 'Yes!' also concerned that which still lies outside of relational consciousness and that awaits my inauguration. I therefore could not afford to say 'No!' to those who did not share the vision that Mr Foster, Aunt Liz, Aunt Baai, Doreen and I have of transformation. As Lucy (2004:163) says: 'When I say "yes" to another, ...I inaugurate a promise to remain open to whatever might come, to others who may come unexpectedly or in forms I may not have been able to predict. It is this and not my nation's laws or my culture's traditions, that puts me in touch ...with a sense of "community"....'

Staying willing to remain open to the possibility of relationship and of community as I continue with the work in Scottsville may ultimately be one of the biggest ethical insights that the feminist-poststructuralist research epistemology has afforded me. Moreover, this second 'yes!', the reinvention of the 'yes!' of the research, is sustained by the experiences I have had with Scottsville's young people and the participation of outsiders who have supported us. These experiences are described in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 6

### WHEN OPENING HEARTS AND MINDS CREATES CULTURAL POSSIBILITIES WITH AND ON BEHALF OF SCOTTSVILLE'S YOUNG PEOPLE

#### 6.1 'POSSIBILITIES' – AN INTRODUCTION

This research could have been only a description of the challenges of poverty. The context of poverty and its physical, social and historical limitations have been described in the first three chapters of the thesis. However, the central aim of this research is the creation of various physical and relational possibilities as the work of *shalom* (see Section 1.3.4). What is meant by 'possibilities' in research depends on the researcher's epistemological point of departure and can therefore take many methodological forms. It may mean working towards particular possibilities with the help of a clearly formulated agenda. Even qualitative research may work according to such a methodology by using the stories and ideas of the people in the community to support or illuminate a particular theme or agenda. So, for example, in Chapter 3, I used the interview with Aunt Liz Cupido to relate Foucault's archaeological and genealogical analysis of pastoral power to life in a context of 'coloured' poverty. The cognitive possibilities that emerged from our conversation brought me an awareness of the dangers of duplicating power relations in research that can control and subject others. The relational possibilities that emerged between Aunt Liz and myself are documented in the letter that I wrote to her after our conversation (see Section 3.5.2.4).

In Chapter 4, I described the possibility-generating methodology of taking a group of Scottsville women with me to co-present a panel discussion at SAAP. This was done deliberately as a way to honour their knowledges in an academic pastoral context.

In this chapter, I reflect on my work with young people in the community and how that work was based (and is still based) on what Derrida refers to as *aporia*. What is significant about *aporia* as the source for my methodology in working with young people is that it led to unpremeditated and novel possibilities. In Chapter 5, I introduced an ethics of deconstruction. This chapter is an elaboration of that theme.

### 6.1.2 'The possibility of the impossible': the political and cultural significance of Derrida's *aporia*

Derrida (1989:16) refers to the possibility that is yet to be realised as a 'non-road' or *aporia*:

...ethics, politics and responsibility, *if there are any*, will only ever have begun with the experience and experiment of the *aporia*. When the path is clear and given, when a certain knowledge opens up the way in advance, the decision is already made, it might as well be said that there is none to make: irresponsibly, and in good conscience, one simply applies or implements a program. ...The condition of possibility of this thing called responsibility is a certain experience and experiment of the possibility of the impossible: the testing of the *aporia* from which one may invent the only possible invention, the impossible invention.

(Derrida 1992b:41, Derrida's italics)

Hence, Richard Beardsworth (1996:32), in his analysis of the political significance of Derrida's work, centralises the concept of *aporia*, which is derived from 'the Greek *aporos*, which means "without passage" ...An *aporia* is something which is impracticable'. Therefore, in relation to the experience of problems and limitations, Derrida refers to *the experience of aporia*: 'To experience is to advance by navigating, to walk by traversing. And by traversing consequently a limit or a border' (Derrida 1992a:373). When I use the concept of the limit and the crossing of the limit, I am again reflecting on deconstruction. Beardsworth (1996:33) links *aporia* and deconstruction as follows: '...*aporia* is both "undeconstructible" and the source of all deconstructions. As this source... *aporia* does not suspend judgement, it is the latter's very condition of possibility. No judgement is possible without the experience of *aporia*.'

How did this research work with *aporia*? In this chapter I reflect on the ways in which I invited young people to use language as a form of judging and a testing of *aporia*. My relationship with the young people of the community represented an opportunity for me as a researcher to use language to traverse the boundaries of 'pastoral' care through creative writing and drama.

According to Beardsworth (1996:150), Derrida's philosophy is political because he is thinking of *aporia* in terms of time. Therefore, justice is *aporia* which always demands a response now, especially in a context of poverty with its many injustices. This chapter has to be read with this aporetic perspective in mind as deconstruction moved in this

research from the theory of the limit into the crossing of the limit towards real possibilities in young people's lives.

Because this chapter deals, in the first instance, with language and young people's access to and use of language, below, I introduce the broader theme of culture and of the cultural limitations that poor 'coloured' teenagers experience. This chapter therefore provides a feminist-poststructuralist reply to the question of what culture has to do with theology in the first place.

## **6.2 WHY FOCUS ON CULTURE? A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE**

Elaine Graham (1996:1) regards cultural and social experience as legitimate sources of pastoral reflection, because in a postmodern paradigm, the 'individual is always a cultural subject, inscribed in linguistic, historical and social contexts' (Graham 1996:3). Regarding the role of cultural change in social transformation, Paolo Freire (Freire & Faundez 1989:81) makes the following suggestion: 'It thus seems to me that one of the important tasks to be performed in the process of changing a class society, transcending the opposition between dominant classes and dominated classes,...would be a critical rediscovery of culture and of language.'

Purvis (1993:66) envisions that the 'power of life' is not only a theological concept, but that it extends to 'power as life at the cultural level'. She argues that it becomes visible in the multiplicity and variety of stories that are told, adding that 'only in the fullness of their several tellings will the whole culture's story be found' (Purvis 1993:67). Therefore, culture itself 'will be fluid, multiple, literally out of control' (Purvis 1993:66).

Hence, this research is also a deconstruction of the division between 'material culture' and 'spiritual culture' (Ndebele 1991:120) that implies a view of culture as consisting of separate realities that are mutually exclusive and excluding. Through the practices of this research, I wanted to show how the material can be the spiritual. Hence, this chapter shows how, by taking a (poststructuralist) deconstructive stance as discussed in Chapters 3 and 5, the process of questioning the limits of current cultural structures was done in practice. Maguire (2001:64) argues that the metaphor of 'voice' is an integral part of feminist research. In Chapter 4, I have shown that feminist research asks questions about the politics of knowledge creation in the theological and social

domains. In this chapter, I ask the same questions: Whose perspective? Whose voice? But this time, I ask these questions in relation to culture and to young people's participation in culture.

Poling (1991:123) argues that young people are often betrayed by the adults in communities in which they suffer abuse, instead of their being supported: 'It is unjust that abused children are isolated from the resources of life and creativity. Power and privilege become organised in institutional forms that resist change, and these forms are protected by powerful ideologies that promote the power of some groups at the expense of others.' This chapter deals with the resources of creativity that have been offered through this research to young people in the Scottsville community and how this offer has led young people to discover the power of possibility. The focus in this chapter is also on how relationship with and on behalf of young people generated a specific kind of methodology in this research that led to resistance, and to young people's discovering a sense of agency (Davies 1991) in their own lives. Christians (2005:151) therefore describes a feminist communitarian ethic in research as one whose mission is 'enabling community life to prosper – equipping people to come to mutually held conclusions'. It is therefore fitting that the prospering of community life that this research worked for came to those most marginalised by power arrangements (as comprehensively described in Chapter 2): its young people.

### **6.2.1 The experience of culture in a poor 'coloured' community**

Bauman argues that the concept of 'culture' was 'coined and named, in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, as a short-hand for the management of human thought and behaviour. ...The term "culture" entered the vocabulary as a name for a *purposeful* activity' (Bauman 2005:52). To manage meant 'the manipulation of probabilities: making certain conduct...more likely to take place than it would otherwise be, while making some other moves less likely or preferably unlikely to happen. In the last account, "to manage" means to limit the freedom of the managed' (Bauman 2005:53). Bauman's ideas can be linked to the historical analysis of pastoral power as control discussed in Chapter 2: there are those who manage and those who are left being managed. Bauman refers to the kind of controlling power relations that, as Foucault suggests, 'spread and multiplied outside the ecclesiastical institution' (Foucault 1982:214) in which it originated, and filtered through into the cultural domain and

especially into language. Cultures are therefore about the meanings people give events (Waldegrave 1998:400) and also about who sets the norms and values through which meanings are attributed or made. In the Scottsville community, culture is often referred to in negative terms: a drug culture, a gang culture, a culture of silence. This raises serious questions about identity and belonging (Waldegrave 1998:400), because culture 'is us, it is who we are, how we see ourselves and the vision we have of the world' (Sachs 1990:22).

However, when the vision of the coloniser subjects that of others, it drives those who are subjected into the underground of silence. In this regard, Sachs (1990:24) laments: 'Apartheid has closed our society, stifled its voice, prevented the people from speaking....' Black feminist poet Audre Lorde (1984:197) warns: '...it is not difference which immobilises us, but silence. And there are so many silences to be broken.' Historically, Wicomb (1998) argues, 'coloured' culture is not only a matter of silence, but has been developed as a sentimentalised, often musical, often humorous account of events that diminish the real effects of violence, humiliation and abuse in 'coloured' people's lives. Wicomb (1998:101) adds that, for 'coloured' people, there is a 'perception of culture as something divorced from the performative and curiously defined as that in which you do *not* participate'. Henry Giroux (2005:59) comments on the privatisation of culture as a consequence when people are not being recognised as legitimate contributors to culture. Giroux's words are particularly applicable to groups such as poor 'coloured' teenagers, who experience themselves as socially and culturally marginalised:

For many young people and adults today, the private sphere has become the only space in which to imagine any sense of hope, pleasure or possibility. Culture as an activity in which people actually produce the conditions of their own agency through dialogue, community participation, resistance, and political struggle is being replaced by a 'climate of cultural and linguistic privatization' (quoting Naomi Klein) in which culture becomes something you consume.

(Giroux 2005:59)

In defining these limitations to culture, it became crucial for me to understand the social conditions and discourses that support those conditions. The discourse of success in an individualist culture is one in which 'stardom' is venerated. Adrienne Rich (2003:40) also speaks of the current Western consumerist, competitive culture 'that pushes the

“star” at the expense of the culture as a whole, that makes people want stardom rather than participation, association, exchange, and improvisation with others’. Zoë Wicomb (1998:100) states in terms of the experience of ‘coloured’ people that ‘(t)his failure or inability to represent our history in popular forms and consequently the total erasure of slavery from the folk memory presumably has its roots in shame: shame for our origins of slavery, shame for the miscegenation, and shame, as colonial racism became institutionalized, for being black.’ In Section 2.3.3.2, under the subheading ‘Shaming’ and in Section 3.3, I have discussed the operation of shame in Scottsville’s young people’s lives through the discourse of ‘knowing your place’. I became aware of the operation of these discourses in the cultural domain in the initial hesitance amongst teenagers to share their ideas in a group. Their fear of being shamed was a real limitation for us to overcome, as was the inclination to ‘do your own thing’ and an uneasiness in working with and supporting fellow-writers/actors.

Other key social and physical conditions that inform a lack of cultural engagement in Scottsville have to do with the absence of a culture of learning and curiosity in the community. Schools remain places of strictly academic learning; and for young people whose parents have little academic background themselves, there is almost no academic support and a culture of learning is not fostered. According to data from the Unit for Religion and Development Research & Transformation Africa (2005:7), the highest academic qualification for 35.23% of Kraaifontein’s residents is between Grade 8 and Grade 11, 30.41% of the residents have matriculated, but a high 18.53% of residents dropped out of school by Grade 7. Only 10.37 % of the people in Kraaifontein have obtained any tertiary qualifications. Non-academic ways of learning and of developing curiosity are simply not offered or even encouraged by schools or churches in the community. Therefore young people are not provided with opportunities for reading, singing, painting, drawing, woodwork or the development of entrepreneurial skills. The only sports offered are rugby, cricket, netball and athletics. Young (1990:26) states:

Opportunity is a concept of enablement rather than possession; it refers to doing more than having. A person has opportunities if he or she is not constrained from doing things, and lives under the enabling conditions for doing them.... Being enabled or constrained refers more directly, however, to the rules and practices that govern one’s action, the way people treat one in the context of specific social relations, and the broader structural possibilities produced by the confluence of a multitude of actions and practices.

Consequently, the limiting of cultural opportunity that apartheid introduced is now compounded by the current operation of the disabling discourses of control and discipline in ‘coloured’ schools. Where control is the norm in teaching, activities of non-control – such as the arts – are often not regarded as an essential part of the broader ‘curriculum’. The result for young people is not only that they are subjected and controlled, but that, simultaneously, other options for living, such as expressing themselves through the arts, become inaccessible both to them and to their teachers.

This cultural void has been filled by American culture. The controlling influence of American culture on the lives of ‘coloured’ young people all over the Cape Flats keeps them from expressing ‘how we see ourselves’ (see my comments to Thelren’s story in Addendum 6). Pop culture with its focus on possessions, sex and stardom represents a new wave of domination and colonialism (Sardar 1998:13). At Petunia Primary’s end-of-year concert in 2007, I saw this new colonialism in full swing (literally). Despite Mr Foster’s reservations (he later shared these with me), members of staff choreographed the dances of each grade to the beat of American pop and rap music. Children as young as seven years were imitating the sexy moves of their American idols to the cheering of their parents and friends in the audience. Witnessing this evening of cultural imitation, knowing what these youngsters are capable of in terms of creativity, was a painful experience to me. It was equally painful to realise that the well-meaning adults whose influence steered the concert in this direction did not give this loss a second thought.

### **6.2.2 The cultural task of theology**

According to Charles Waldegrave (2003:21) of the Just Therapy team, ‘culture is probably the most influential determinant of meaning in people’s lives’. In a poststructuralist epistemology, culture is not only a construct that has to be accepted, but also one that can be reconstructed. The theme of reconstruction is a deeply spiritual one. In a chapter entitled, ‘God only has us’, Desmond Tutu (2004:62) speaks of the individual’s actions as a de/reconstruction of the cultural frames that define us. In this process, the *aporia* that I become aware of and the *traversing* that I do are significant:

Your contribution can inspire others, embolden others who are timid, to stand up for the truth in the midst of a welter of distortion, propaganda, and deceit; stand up for human rights where these are being violated with impunity; stand up for justice, freedom, and love where they are trampled underfoot by injustice, oppression, hatred, and harsh cruelty;

stand up for human dignity and decency at times when these are in desperately short supply.

According to Sachs (1990:22), '(c)ulture is us, it is who we are, how we see ourselves and the vision we have of the world'. However, the critical question that Sachs's statement evokes is this: who is the 'we' that he is referring to and what happens if this 'vision of the world' is an American one? In coming to a feminist-poststructuralist definition of culture, in this research I looked to those who have been most marginalised by historical and current cultural power relations. In Chapter 2, I explained why I believe that young people are the most marginalised of all social groups in the Scottsville community. This research therefore worked from a poststructuralist epistemological position to traverse the cultural boundaries of submission, consumption, imitation and of negative culture towards the enablement of young people to discover their own agency in defining culture anew. Turning to young people in this research was therefore a deliberate feminist theological turning.

Foucault (1980:142) writes: 'There are no relations of power without resistances; the latter are all the more real and effective because they are formed right at the point where relations of power are exercised.' Therefore, because silence and shaming are the effects that current cultural relations have on young people, this research aimed at creating relationships that recognised and honoured their voices. This is how language became a tool of cultural resistance and regeneration with which the young people and I worked. However, I also want to outline the structuralist limitations at work in the culture, because it forms the backdrop against which the abovementioned methodologies should be read to ascertain the significance of these methodologies. Apart from the limitations that poverty poses to the development of voice, young people in Scottsville's ability to use language is also limited by a structuralist view adults have of relationships. Many teachers take up such a structuralist stance in relation to young people, with silencing effects. Such a position is discussed next, because it poses a limit that required the traversing that a poststructuralist approach to language made possible in the research.

### **6.3 A POSTSTRUCTURALIST APPROACH TO LANGUAGE**

In order to understand the significance of a poststructuralist approach to language for this research, it is important to note the limitations that a structuralist approach imposes on language. Narrative therapist Michael White (2000:16) outlines the limiting and

dangerous effects that a structuralist approach has on therapeutic conversations with young people. The same dangers apply to any other social context in which young people find themselves:

When the expressions of children's lives are the subject of structuralist understandings, these expressions are taken into systems of analyses and assessment that provide for the translation and interpretation of them as 'behaviors'. In the course of this, children's lives can become the focus of 'assessment', 'management', 'intervention', and/or 'treatment' in a power relationship that is marginalising of, and frequently disqualifying of, the knowledges and skills of living that have been generated through the history of their engagement with the world.

The poststructuralist epistemology that informed White's stance towards young people and the honouring of their language greatly influenced the emergence of methodologies of language-making in this research. Especially in my creative relationships with young people, the poststructuralist epistemology offered me a stance that invited us to look beyond the rationality of known structures and of expert interpretation.

Understandings of young people's culture from a structuralist perspective imply that young people's lives have been 'theorised' (White 2000:15) to a great extent. Structuralist thinking supports the idea that there are powerful (adult) individuals who know more and hence have 'the solutions' to the dilemmas that confront young people in their daily lives. These experts should be consulted on how to 'deal with' the struggles and dilemmas that young people face. Even in a campaign that has been initiated to support young people, the voice of 'intervention' can be heard: 'Hands off our children!' It is the voice of ownership ('our' children) and of instruction. The political consequences of a structuralist view of childhood is that adults assume that it is 'normal' for them to speak on behalf of the young people that they care for, even with good intentions. It also means that children themselves are very rarely consulted on their perspectives and insights. In a poststructuralist epistemology, it became necessary for me to have the kinds of conversations with young people that gave them an experience of having been 'radically heard and consulted'.

'Seeing poststructurally' (Davies 2000a:166) (see also Section 1.4.2.1) as a researcher in a cultural context therefore implies a questioning of power relationships 'in which others know more about the predicaments that children experience than children themselves know about these predicaments, and in which the relevant solutions to these

predicaments are to be found in domains of knowledge that are distant from children's immediate experiences of life and from children's culture' (White 2000:16).

When asked why he exhibited an interest in 'social outcasts', Foucault responded by saying: 'All my analyses are against the idea of universal necessities in human existence. They show the arbitrariness of institutions and show which space of freedom we can still enjoy and how many changes can still be made' (Martin 1982:11). Foucault's analyses therefore provide a theoretical framework for this research in terms of possibilities that can be generated in the face of traditions of knowledge that seek to prescribe and protect old patterns of knowledge. In terms of this research in a context of poverty, Foucault's work therefore also centralises and describes the methodologies by which 'social outcasts' such as poor young people discovered 'the space of freedom' that language provided them with and the changes that became possible because of how they started using language. In this regard, Bronwyn Davies (2000a:11) states that there is 'a multidirectional force in poststructuralist thinking, one that insists on faithful attention to the discursive detail that we are made from, and, in that very attention to the detail, an opening up to the multiple movements that we are capable of'. The multiple movements that Foucault refers to came about by way of overcoming silence and of finding language.

### **6.3.1 Researcher de-centring: not being afraid to 'see the world unveiled'**

From my experience as a therapist I understood that if my knowledge or language remained central in my relationship with young people, theirs would remain marginal. Also, if my voice was too strong, theirs could not be heard. Too strong a voice on my part would also re-enact a culture of submission and control in which young people are encouraged to imitate rather than create. For young people who have come to experience their knowledge as inferior and who have therefore befriended silence, daring to use language by either speaking or writing is no ordinary matter. In fact, Adrienne Rich (2003:85) says that 'every poem breaks a silence that had to be overcome'. Silence in poor 'coloured' communities is often associated with the experience of marginalisation and isolation.

I have often referred to the conditions that support certain practices of control. Likewise certain conditions had to be created in this research that made it possible for young

people to overcome silence. Two such conditions were my conscious de-centring of myself in my creative work with young people and cultivating a radical openness to what they brought to our relationship. My creative work with young people therefore followed the advice of bell hooks (1990:148-9) to ‘invent spaces of radical openness. Without such spaces we would not survive. Our living depends on our ability to conceptualize alternatives, often improvised... For me this space of radical openness is a margin – a profound edge. Locating oneself there is difficult yet necessary’.

In Chapter 5, I discussed the ethical challenge that such a radical openness to the most marginalised other poses to theology. Vigen (2004:226) even goes so far as to suggest that it represents a ‘seismic shift in theological anthropology’. According to Vigen (2004:227), a sense of accountability comes from a theological anthropology in which white people are no longer made ‘the standard of humanity’. She argues that it is only through white people’s accountable action in relation to people of colour that we can practise what de-centring of ourselves demands: ‘These kinds of practical engagements and relationships are of paramount importance because if white people do not get it right in our day-to-day interactions and relationships, we won’t get it right in our thinking, writing, or sermons’ (Vigen 2004:244).

It is therefore my de-centring in cross-cultural context that has to pass the litmus test of accountability. De-centring was often visible in my relationships with young people in that I kept asking questions, ‘not-knowing’, for instance, what ‘the right word’ in a poem would be. Through my questions, I invited the young people to consider their choice of words more carefully, made them aware of rhythm and metaphor and of the possibilities of meaning beyond what they had considered up to that point. Paulo Freire (1972:18-19) speaks of the radical task of entering into another’s reality and of not being afraid of the ‘unveiling’ that such a de-centring of oneself brings:

The radical, committed to human liberation, does not become the prisoner of a ‘circle of certainty’ within which he also imprisons reality. On the contrary, the more radical he is, the more fully he enters into reality so that, knowing it better, he can better transform it. He is not afraid to confront, to listen, to see the world unveiled. He is not afraid to meet the people or to enter into dialogue with them... The pedagogy of the oppressed...is a task for radicals.

This chapter gives an account of the passion for poetry I shared with young people, but also of how I de-centred myself in this ‘radical task’ and thereby made it possible for these young people to overcome silence.

### **6.3.2 Using language to create possibilities**

In a poststructuralist relational epistemology, the role of language is not merely to reflect meaning, but also to create meaning (Weedon 1987:23). Davies (2000b:181) refers to language ‘as the most powerful constitutive force shaping what we understand as possible and what we desire with those possibilities’. Hence language ‘is the place where actual and possible forms of social organization and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested’ (Weedon 1987:21). In a poststructuralist epistemology, the narratives whereby people are constituted may be refused, and the person may choose to take up a different position to those narratives or invent new ones that are closer to a preferred position. Such a narrative may emerge in a therapeutic conversation or through a witnessing event (see Section 5.6.3).

In this chapter I document the ways in which the creative use of language and performance of language afforded young people opportunities to consider possibilities with, and to create meanings about themselves, the community and their place in it. This chapter also documents the various innovations in methodology that formed part of this participatory action research. Gergen and Gergen (2000:1027) highlight reflexivity, multiple voicing, literary styling and performance as such innovative methodologies. In Section 6.3.1, I discuss the impact that my *self-reflective* stance had on generating conditions in which young people felt that they could speak. In this chapter I reflect on the *multiple voicings* of Scottsville’s young people, and on how they started interacting with voices from outside the community. In terms of *literary styling*, this chapter includes excerpts from poems and poems written by young people. To honour the powerful significance of young people’s language, I also use their own language as headings for the various sections below in which I reflect on our creative work together. In Section 6.5, I describe how *performance* featured as a research methodology. In this chapter I also reflect on the broader networks of relationship that were constructed because of the creative engagement with language.

### ***6.3.2.1 The relationality of poetic language: ‘When I read this poem it feels as if my mom is holding me’***

Living as a young person in a context of poverty, as described in Chapter 2, comes with experiences of dehumanisation and cultural isolation. In Chapter 4, I have described solidarity as a key theme in a feminist hermeneutics. My decision to take poetry to Petunia Primary to read to the Grade 7 classes in October 2005 came from the experiences of connection and solidarity I have had whilst reading poetry myself.

I wanted the young people of Scottsville to experience this ‘poetics of relation’ (Glissant 1997; Rich 2003:272). Adrienne Rich (2003:86) describes such a form of poetic relationality as follows: ‘We go to poetry because we believe it has something to do with us. We also go to poetry to receive the experience of the *not me*, enter a field of vision we could not otherwise apprehend.’ This experience of the ‘not me’ is also the experience of curiosity. According to Foucault and Delacampagne (1980:328), Christianity has turned curiosity into a vice. Therefore Anthony de Mello (1990:129) states: ‘This is what is ultimate in our human knowledge of God, to know that we do not know. Our great tragedy is that we know too much. We think we know, that is our tragedy; so we never discover.’

In an interview that is included in a section entitled ‘Notes on the Power of Culture’ (Foucault & Delacampagne 1980:307-330), Foucault (Foucault & Delacampagne 1980:328) states that for him curiosity evokes ‘care’:

...it evokes the care one takes of what exists and what might exist; a sharpened sense of reality, but one that is never immobilized before it; a readiness to find what surrounds us as strange and odd; a certain determination to throw off familiar ways of thought and to look at the same things in a different way; ...a lack of respect for the traditional hierarchies of what is important and fundamental. I dream of a new age of curiosity.

My creative work with young people in Scottsville began as a project in curiosity: an exploration of the non-known and the ‘not me’. Such an experience of the ‘not me’ came through sharing poetry with Scottsville’s young people in October 2005. I was surprised at how this curiosity generated care for what might exist through language.

In March 2005, ten of my own poems were published in an anthology of Afrikaans poetry entitled *Nuwe Stemme 3* (Krog & Schaffer 2005). I had just attended a workshop

by Krog and Schaffer in which the key elements of poetry were discussed and related to our own poetry. In Section 2.3.3.2, under the subheading ‘From therapeutic to pastoral relationship: a research journey with Mr R’, I describe my relationship with Mr R, an Afrikaans teacher at Petunia Primary. During one of our conversations, I offered to share what I had just learnt about poetry with the Grade 7s. I was hoping that Mr R would perceive such sharing as being supportive of his work as an Afrikaans teacher.

The first time I went into the Grade 7 classes, I took along poems with a pronounced rhythm. Musicality is intrinsic to poetry. I therefore took my drum along. As I read Ingrid Jonker’s ‘Donkerman’, one of the young people kept the beat on the drum. Bringing a drum into the classroom made the musicality of poetry audible. The delighted response of the young people served as an encouragement to me. The next week I took a CD player to the school and played the two classes Breyten Breytenbach reading (on his CD, *Mondmusiek*) in his lovely rich Boland accent: ‘*Ek sal sterf en na my vader gaan Wellington toe met lang bene in die lig na waar die kamers swaar en donker is*’ (‘I shall die and go to my father and go to Wellington with long legs, in the light to where the rooms are heavy and dark’, translation mine). In this poem, the ‘I’ narrator speaks of death as a journey to Wellington, to ‘the house of my father’. There is a familiarity about this house, which is a boarding house with its many rooms, and its unusual mix of angels and board games. The poem also speaks of the fleeting quality of life: ‘*Ons kom en ons gaan is soos water uit die kraan.*’ (‘Our coming and going is like water from the tap’, translation mine).

*In the Grade 7B class, there was an almost devotional atmosphere. The normally boisterous teenagers were listening in complete silence. Some teenagers were wiping tears from their cheeks. In the Grade 7A class, a boy spontaneously applauded Breyten after the reading. The young people told me that they thought that the poem was ‘beautiful’.*

(Excerpt from the research journal, 12 October 2005)

Breytenbach’s poem invited an engagement with metaphor and mystery. In a context of poverty with its brutal realities, that morning, poetry opened a door to the *aporia* of mystery.

During the break, later, a thirteen year-old boy, B, came to my consultation room. I documented the events of that day in my research journal (12 October) as follows:

*B: This is the most beautiful poem I have ever heard...*

*T: What about it was beautiful to you?*

*B: I could hear it was coming from his heart.*

*T: This is what poetry is all about...*

*B: I was shocked. I have never heard anything like it before. Can you play it again, Miss?*

*(‘Ek was geskok. Ek het nog nooit so iets gehoor nie. Kan Juffrou dit nie weer speel nie?’)*

*Then B and I listened together with heads bowed over the CD player.*

*B: That bit...that bit. (Indicates with his finger) ... that is really beautiful: vriende medesterwendes, moenie huiwer nie....*

*(‘Daai stukkie, daai stukkie (wys met vinger) ...dis baie mooi: vriende, medesterwendes, moenie huiwer nie....’)*

In schools, young people’s relationship with poetry and poetic language is often set up to be a primarily intellectual relationship in which poems are analysed and dissected to discover ‘what they mean’. Poems are rarely experienced. That was the purpose of my engagement with the young people of Petunia Primary: to introduce them to the possibility that language can be experienced and that such experiences can make us all feel connected to something beyond ourselves.

Speaking from the experiences of his own traumatised, gangster- and drug-filled youth, Luis Rodríguez (2001:14) shares the wisdom that he has gained through the process of unravelling himself from ‘the web of a crazy life’:

I had to gain a worldview – tied to something deep in the soil and deep in the soul.... Almost always the development of a worldview is linked in some way to art – music, the visual arts, dance, writing – to the intersection of external and internal energies that impel us onto a creative terrain where spirit and body, the conscious and the unconscious, the universal and the singular, the personal and the social live through us in a delicate dance.

Experiencing poetry as ‘a delicate dance’ therefore became for Petunia Primary’s young people a way of traversing the boundaries of intellectual understanding of poetry towards an *aporia* of connectedness with life beyond death, with God and, most importantly, with language, which makes these connections possible. In a follow-up conversation (Excerpt from the research journal, 18 October 2005) the next week, I asked B why this poem had had so much significance for him.

*B started by quoting Breytenbach: ‘Vriende, medesterwendes, moenie huiwer nie....’ B then told me that his mother had died in an accident some months before. He said that he put the printed copy of the poem I had handed out the day of the reading on the inside of his classroom desk. He told me ‘as ek die gedig lees dan voel dit my my ma hou my vas’ (‘when I read this poem I feel as if my mom is holding me’).*

Breytenbach’s poem offered B an opportunity of ‘traversing’ the boundaries of disconnection that death brings. For him, the poem became a passage to his mother.

Helene Cixous (in Davies 2000:182-3) argues that mystery is an experience that is beyond the forces of control in society:

Ordinary human beings do not like mystery since you cannot put a bridle on it, and therefore, in general they exclude it, they repress it, they eliminate it – and it’s *settled*. But if on the contrary one remains open and susceptible to all the phenomena of overflowing...one discovers the immense landscape of the *trans-*, of the passage. Which does not mean that everything will be adrift: our thinking, our choices etc. But it means that the factor of instability, the factor of uncertainty, or what Derrida calls the undecidable, is indissociable for human life. (Cixous’ italics)

Many of the Grade 7 young people of Petunia Primary experienced that morning how language can make a passage possible. In March 2008, the teenagers from the writers’ group and I drove to Stellenbosch to meet Breytenbach at a book-signing event. In our conversation with him, I told him that his poem provided the young people with an experience of the possibilities of the Afrikaans language.

*I told him that his poem made the young people realise what poetic language could sound like. It created the conditions for the beginning of a writers’ group at the school.*

*I introduced Breyten to B and told him that B had said to me that those were the most beautiful words he had ever heard in Afrikaans. Breyten (who had stood up as our group approached the table where he was sitting) then put his hand on B's shoulder and said: 'I think you are going to write the most beautiful words in Afrikaans.' To each of the young people around his table, Breyten spoke or wrote words of encouragement. Having read a poem that Thelren showed him, Breyten then kissed Thelren on the forehead. (Excerpt from research journal, 19 March 2008)*

On 31 October 2005, I brought a young poet friend, Ronelda Kamfer, to the school to read some of her poetry that had strong roots in the context of the Cape Flats to the young people. In addition to reading her poetry, Ronelda spoke about the importance of reading in developing language skills.

According to Heshushius and Ballard (1996:31), '(b)oth the problems and their solutions exist in the ways we imagine that the world is and could be. We construct our understandings through dialogue with one another and with the many poets and other storytellers that we choose to illuminate our lives'. By introducing young people to Afrikaans poets, new understandings were constructed in the research about the ways in which we could imagine the world. It seemed that the experimentation with the *aporia* of poetry and of combining poetry with music had effects beyond what I had planned for. During a creative writing session, held on 14 February 2007, the young people who attended told me that Mr R now brought his guitar to the school as part of his poetry lessons with the young people in his class.

#### ***6.3.2.2 'Can I choose anything?' John discovers the possibility of languaging his own experience***

In a poststructuralist epistemology, meaning is made through language in all its forms: conversation, the sharing of images, words and stories. Words become the 'methodology' through which each of us can connect our experience with those of others, as the story of B's response to Breytenbach's poem so beautifully illustrates. But because of my experience of how young people's subjection in Scottsville had led to their silence, this research gradually took on as one of its central aims the creation of possibilities for young people themselves to voice their experience. Turner (1986b:37) states: 'We are social beings, and we want to tell what we have learned from

experience. The arts depend on this urge to confession or declamation. The hard-won meanings should be said, painted, danced, dramatized, put into circulation.'

As a narrative therapist who has been working with children for many years, I have become aware of how meaning-making depends on descriptions of action – often seemingly ordinary actions. Michael White (2000:131) reflects on cultural perceptions of spirituality as being either ascendant or immanent in form; both literally experienced as being 'out of this world'. Instead, White (2000:145) proposes a revisiting of the ordinary and through it of the extraordinary. White quotes Malouf, who speaks of these events as 'the little sacraments of daily existence'. White elaborates as follows:

The word *sacrament* invokes mystery. And it evokes a sense of the sacred significance of little events of people's lives; those little events that lie in the shadows of the dominant plots of people's lives, those little events that are so often neglected, but that might come to be regarded with reverence, and at times with awe. (White's italics)

In terms of the purpose of this research on the development of an authentic children's culture, White (2000:146) states that Western culture finds it hard to pay attention to the little sacraments of daily life, '(p)erhaps it is because these little sacraments of daily life don't relate all that well to the accepted goals for life in this culture – like demonstrating "control over one's life"'.

When a culture values control, by implication it devalues that which is beyond its control. Within a context of poverty, young people experience being subjected to all kinds of technologies of subjection and control. White (2000:146) proposes the introduction of other ways of relating: 'I believe that through the metaphor of poetics it becomes possible for us to challenge the marginalising of existence, and to play some part in making visible and in honouring "little sacraments of daily existence".'

At the second of my poetry sessions with a Grade 7 class at Petunia Primary, I invited the teenagers to write poems about their experience of a significant person in their lives. During break the next week, I saw a young boy, John Pamplin, hovering outside the classroom where I worked as a therapist. So I too 'hung out' in the corridor outside the classroom. After a while John took a small piece of paper from his shirt pocket: 'I have written something, but I don't know if it's right,' he said. I invited him in. The poem he had written was about his 'mother's love'. Ideas about what is 'right' poetry and the format in which to express this led to the poem being full of lofty words of love and

appreciation that seemed to me far removed from a twelve year-old boy's experience of love. I decided to have conversation with John and asked him if it was OK for me to take notes as he spoke. He agreed. This is an excerpt of our conversation as recorded in my research journal on 18 October 2005.

<i>T: Waaroor gaan die gedig?</i>	T: What is this poem about?
<i>J: Oor my ma.</i>	J: About my mother.
<i>T: Wat wil jy sê oor jou ma?</i>	T: What do you want to say about your mother?
<i>J: Oor haar liefde.</i>	J: About her love.
<i>T: Vertel my van hierdie liefde. Hoe is dit vir jou?</i>	T: Tell me about this love. What's it like to you?

What followed was allowing John to go to his own experience rather than using words to describe some universal experience of love. Whilst John was speaking, I asked permission to record his exact words:

<i>J: Dis nie suur nie.</i>	J: It's not sour.
<i>T: Nou, John, as jou ma se liefde nie suur is nie, wat is dit dan?</i>	T: Tell me, John, if it's not sour, what is it then...?
<i>J: Soet, Juffrou.</i>	J: Sweet, Miss.
<i>T: Soet soos wat?</i>	T: Sweet like what?
<i>J: Kan ek enigiets kies Juffrou?</i>	J: Can I choose anything?
<i>T: Enigiets, John.</i>	T: Anything, John.
<i>J: Appels, perskes, lemoene en guavas.</i>	J: Apples, peaches, oranges and guavas.
<i>T: John, is jou ma se liefde net 'n vrugte-soet of is dit ook 'n ander soort soet?</i>	T: John, is you mother's love only fruity-sweet or is it also another kind of sweet?
<i>J: (glimlag) Wilsons toffies.</i>	J: (smiles) Wilsons toffees.

From my transcripts of our conversation I started to construct a provisional poem in John's presence:

<p><i>My ma se liefde is soos Wilsons toffies. Soet soos guavas...</i></p> <p><i>T: Wat se soort guavas, John?</i></p> <p><i>J: Hoe bedoel juffrou nou?</i></p> <p><i>T: Hoe lyk en proe die guavas, is hulle hard, geel, groen of wat?</i></p> <p><i>J: Nee, Juffrou, daai sagte geles.</i></p> <p><i>T (lees John se gedig vir hom): My ma se liefde is soos Wilsons toffies. Soet soos guavas sag en geel.</i></p>	<p>My mother's love is like Wilsons toffees. Sweet like guavas...</p> <p>T: What kind of guavas, John?</p> <p>J: What do you mean, Miss?</p> <p>T: What do these guavas look and taste like? Are they hard, green, yellow or what?</p> <p>J: No, Miss, those soft yellow ones.</p> <p>T (reading John's poem back to him): My mother's love is like Wilsons toffees. Sweet like guavas soft and yellow.</p>
---	---

John's poem became the first to be written as part of my creative work in the community. That morning in the unfolding process of coming to a poem, I was struck by John's question about poetic language: 'Can I choose anything?' I realised that, Scottsville's young people, like many others in South Africa, faced a particular challenge:

...the greatest challenge of the South African revolution is in the search for ways of thinking, ways of perception that will help to break down the closed epistemological structures of South African oppression.... The challenge is to free the entire social imagination of the oppressed from the laws of perception that have characterized apartheid society. For writers this means freeing the creative process itself from those very laws. It means extending the writer's perceptions of what can be written about, and the means and methods of writing.

(Ndebele 1991:67)

By being able to tell John that he could choose 'any' word, by centralising his experience of his mother, by being a 'questioning scribe' to him and in reading the words he chose back to him in the form of a poem, I believe I helped that day 'to break down the closed epistemological structures of South African oppression'.

It was John's poem itself, the possibility for meaning that comes from connecting toffees and soft guavas with love that led me to experiment further with the *aporia* of creative writing with young people in the community. The methodology of possibility thus evolved from my sharing of a love of poetry with the Grade 7 classes at Petunia Primary to the young people's reception of Breytenbach's poem to John's poem about love, towards the *aporia* of the many possibilities that still had not been thought of or told as poetry in this community.

- ***Finding 'little pockets to work in'***

In October 2005, the writers' group was formed at Petunia Primary. For the first few months, Michael Khoosal and Zulrich Isaacs were the only ones who came to our fortnightly meeting. At times when I contemplated ending the writers' group, the thought of the enthusiasm with which these two young people engaged in conversations kept me going. Myles Horton (Horton & Freire 1990:237) makes the following valuable comment about the nature of community work: 'I always have valued those low periods when you had to really struggle intellectually to try to get the sense of what was going on, so you could *find little pockets to work in*. That's the only way you'll ever be part of the struggle, when you climb the hill out of the valley' (Horton's italics). Michael and Zulrich provided me with such 'little pockets to work in'.

The format of a research dissertation or thesis cannot do justice to the experiences of discovery and delight that were part of my poetry workshops and meetings with young people over the last few years.

During late 2006 and 2007, the writing and rehearsing of the play took up most of my time with Scottsville's young people, but we still conducted poetry sessions, if only on an *ad hoc* basis. Despite the workload of putting a play together, I felt it was important to take care of the development of a poetic sensibility alongside the development of young people's other skills and talents. In the July 2007 school holidays, I offered two poetry workshops to young people. Sixteen high school children put their names down, but only four came. Jonathan was a new face. He walked all the way from the Bloekombos squatter camp to attend. Since March 2008, the group, consisting mainly of young poets, has met again on a regular basis.

Feminist theologian Pamela Couture (2000:61) regards considering one's commitments and then making only those commitments that one can keep as central to the work of mercy with young people. She adds: 'Do not underestimate the accumulating value of small, regular commitments.' My poetry sessions with young people were part of the regular creative commitments I made in this research.

### **6.3.2.3 '*Bolle – the drawing-genius is dead*': Poetic language as resistance**

In violent communities, the victims and witnesses of crime often do not have recourse to language. So serious is this prohibition that I would say that to speak out against violence publicly could often put young people at risk. By 2007, the larger poetics of relation that Rich (2003) refers to started featuring in the young people's work. They were no longer voiceless, passive witnesses of violence. Through poetry they could start speaking the 'not me' – also of violence. And yet, and at the same time, their own experiences of the horror at the senselessness of violence could take shape. According to Adrienne Rich (2003:10), 'that is one property of poetic language: to engage with states that themselves would deprive us of language and reduce us to passive sufferers'. They could relate the discipline of violence on the body in poetic ways. They could start to relate their protest in poetic ways too.

In July 2007, each member of the group of three poets who attended a poetry workshop during the school holidays with me wrote an account of the particularly brutal killing of a young member of the community known to them all as 'Bolle'. Zulrich chose to write the shock and disbelief of the victim and by writing it to, to voice his own shock. His poem started with the first words that Zulrich thought of that the killer would have said: '*Hier is jy nou.*' ('Here you are.'). I asked Zulrich if he thought that this sentence conveyed the danger that he was aiming for as a poet. The boys then told me the names of various weapons that could be used in a murder in Scottsville: 'okapi', 'butterfly', 'kapsabel'. I asked him where the knife entered the body. Zulrich spoke about the fact that it was in Bolle's back. He was aware of the poetic significance this image carried. I asked him if he could describe the difference between perpetrator and victim at this point. There were some obvious and dramatic contrasts that Zulrich picked up. The perpetrator carried a dangerous weapon. Zulrich made a drawing of it. I then asked about the victim's back. The word 'soft' came up. I asked him to reconsider his decision

of weapon, based on the image of 'sy sagte rug' ('his soft back'). Zulrich then wrote: 'Toe steek hy sy kapsabel in sy sagte rug' ('Then he stabbed/put his kapsabel into his soft back').

The image of the kapsabel entering the soft back of the victim became an embodied description of the experience of betrayal. bell hooks (1990:146) states: 'The oppressed struggle in language to recover ourselves, to reconcile, to reunite, to renew. Our words are not without meaning, they are an action, a resistance. Language is also a place of struggle.' Verona de Villiers also used poetry to struggle with the death of Bolle through her poem 'Gemeenskapsverlies' ('Community loss'). Her poem is both an honouring of this young man's life and talent and an expression of sadness and outrage at his brutal and lonely death. By using poetic language, Verona's poem is to me a poetic 'refusal to let our humanity be stolen from us' (Rich 2001:145):

#### ***Gemeenskapsverlies***

*Winderig was die dag  
met een groot donker wolk.  
My suster bring die nuus  
Bolle die tekengenius is  
gekapsabel in die nek en hart.  
Voor die gemeenskapsaal  
lek die honde sy bloed.*

#### **Community loss**

Windy was the day  
with one dark cloud.  
My sister brings the news  
Bolle the drawing genius has been  
kapsabled in the neck and heart.  
In front of the community hall  
the dogs are licking his blood.

#### **6.3.2.4 'What does not worry me...': Michael's poem becomes a play**

On 28 March 2006, one of the writers in our small writers' group, Michael Khoosal, brought a poem to the group for discussion. This poem was the poet's own personal reflection on non-worry: 'Wat my nie worry nie' ('What does not worry me'). In the poem, the poet lists catastrophic world events such as 'vloede in Asië' ('floods in Asia') that warrant worry in a universal sense, but that do not worry him personally. In our conversation about the events that do not warrant worry, another member of the group, Zulrich Isaacs, added Scotland to the list of things that 'do not worry me'.

I realised that this 'not worry' position that the young poet took presented me with an opportunity for stepping into a narrative therapeutic position and enquiring about the details of the young people's own lives. So I moved the question from the individual

poet and directed it at the group: ‘If I know what does not worry you, I am curious to know what *does* worry you?’ A young person of whose dire circumstances at home I was aware, replied: ‘*Wat ek more gaat doen*’ (‘What I am going to do tomorrow’). Another replied: ‘*Hoe om die hoeke te meet in die wiskundetoets*’ (‘How to measure the angles in the maths test’). Michael replied: ‘*As die skollies my goed afvat*’ (‘When the skollies\*<sup>22</sup> take my stuff’). An animated conversation ensued about the gangs in Scottsville and their reign of terror. I asked what these gangsters looked like, what they said and what the effects of their behaviour were on the children who saw them hanging out on the street corners. The young people started giving vivid descriptions of the gangsters; the tattoos of diamonds and dragons, the caps pulled low over the eyes, the slouching and swearing in front of Auntie Joyce’s corner shop.

The children also named and described the rankings in the local gang culture and their different agendas of violence and brutality: ‘...the 28s kill, the 27s look for blood and the 26s look for money’. Through these descriptions, the sense of fear and of terror that the children experienced in relation to the *skollies* became an almost tangible reality. ‘Worry’ became an experience that related to real relationships. We started our collaboration on a group poem in that energy-filled room that day. I invited the young people to continue to write about their experiences of the *skollies* in poems and to bring these poems to our sessions. However, only Michael and Eleanor followed up on this invitation and brought work back to the group.

Nevertheless, our conversations on the theme were ongoing and by June included the drugs that the *skollies* push and the dangers of drug use, especially Tik.<sup>23</sup> By mid-August the theme had shifted away from the *skollies* themselves and towards the dangers of using Tik. Mindful of the creative energy of the March day in terms of bodily expression and descriptive language, I became aware of the fact that although we had a potential theme to work with, somehow the children had lost the impetus for writing about it. I reflected on the possibility that poetry was maybe not the most suitable format to carry the theme. I therefore asked the children if they would be interested in writing a play. The excitement amongst the writers was palpable. The poem ‘What worries me’ was being turned into a play called *Die Groot Gevaar*. The

---

<sup>22</sup> *Skollies*: Afrikaans slang for hooligans, gangsters.

<sup>23</sup> Tik: Afrikaans slang for methamphetamine hydrochloride. See Section 2.2.2.3 for a description of the drug and its effects on the ‘coloured’ community.

writing (see Section 6.3.2.7) and performing (see Section 6.5) of the *Die Groot Gevaar* became one of the most hope-creating experiences of the research.

**6.3.2.5 ‘...os het altyd skaloeloe gespeel, boemby, driestokkies’: Verona creates new possibilities for Afrikaans**

In Section 3.4.1, I referred to the fact that the Afrikaans that ‘coloured’ people speak is not accepted as ‘Standard Afrikaans’ and that it is regarded as acceptable but still as divergent from the norm. In the stance I took towards young ‘coloured’ people’s exploration of the use of Afrikaans, it was critical that I regarded the young people’s use of the local Afrikaans language that is spoken in Scottsville as the norm. Because I did so, the young poets experimented with ‘their’ use of Afrikaans. Consequently, I celebrated their choice of language for the ways in which it added to the descriptive power of Afrikaans, for example, by adding a word such as ‘*kapsabel*’ in Zulrich’s poem. Here is an excerpt from a poem by Verona de Villiers in which local Afrikaans is being heard (the poem is not translated, because it is uniquely intranslatable):

*My broetjie klokkies my bra  
Jy was my pel  
van snotnies dae af  
os het altyd skaloeloe gespeel, boemby, driestokkies  
en was altyd in die moeilikheid vir tok-tokkie  
In flatse het ons grootgeword... (Verona de Villiers)*

Verona’s poem was published in the June 2008 Newsletter of Vriende van Afrikaans (Friends of Afrikaans)(De Stadler & Van der Westhuizen 2008a:7).

The relevance of the research as a process whereby young people become co-creators of language that may be lost if one judges these forms of cultural expression from a modernist, quantitative research perspective. Those who are used to having the privilege of hearing their own voices, in their own language, might regard the stories and poems that the young people first started sharing with me as mere trivialities and therefore as almost too ‘inconsequential’ to be sources for knowledge in academic research. But when these stories and poems are judged from the context of the preceding silence and their previous disqualification, writing, performing and publishing them has great political significance.

### 6.3.2.6 *'Die Testament': Publication and accountability*

By mid-2008, the young poets were playing with words more, experimenting with voices other than their own. Amanda de Stadler of *Vriende van Afrikaans*, who had visited our poetry group and witnessed the work of the young poets, was so impressed by the quality of the poetry that she asked me for a copy of the poem 'Die Testament' by Thelton Masimila. I typed it out and sent it to her. She then sent this poem by the fifteen year-old to the book editor of *Die Burger*, the leading Afrikaans daily newspaper in the Cape. On 18 August 2008, Thelton Masimila's poem appeared on the literary page of *Die Burger*. In all the years that I have been reading *Die Burger*, I had never seen a 'coloured' teenager's poem published on this page. To me, the publication of Thelton's poem constitutes an *aporia* for young Afrikaans writers from marginalised communities everywhere because it 'free(s) the entire social imagination of the oppressed from the laws of perception that have characterized apartheid society', as Ndebele (1991:67) puts it. This freeing has, most importantly, to do with what Scottsville's young people themselves could start imagining for themselves and their work.

The poem is reproduced below, with a translation beside it. The translation is a free translation, and does not reflect the poet's rhyme scheme, in favour of reflecting his ideas.

#### ***Die testament***

*As julle hierdie boodskap kry  
beteken dit ek is van Karl Bremer<sup>24</sup> vry  
Vry om reguit onder wit dekens te lê  
en sweet as 'n tweede vel te hê  
sonder 'n pyp in my aar regdeur my vel  
en my hartmonitor se 'bleep' van hel.  
Ouboet, help ma sorg vir kleinsus soos sy groei.  
Sorg dat hoender, eiers reg uitbroei.  
Wees verantwoordelik  
Jy kry my plaas  
Jou suster melk die koei, maak kaas  
En net daar vir jou  
is die huis my vrou.  
Steur jou nie aan ons bed halfvol*

#### **The will**

When you receive this tidings  
it means that of Karl Bremer I am free  
Free to straight under white coverings  
and have sweat as a second skin  
Without a tube through my skin and into my artery  
and my heart monitor's bleep of hell.  
Big brother, help mom look after sis as she grows up  
and see that the eggs are hatched right.  
Be responsible  
You get my farm  
Sis will milk the cows, make cheese.  
And to you my wife  
the house.  
Take no notice of our half-full bed

---

<sup>24</sup> Karl Bremer is the name of a provincial hospital in the Cape.

*of my asbak sonder sigaretkol  
 daars 'n bietjie geld  
 julle moet maar deel  
 raak nie opgewonde  
 dis tog nie veel.  
 Strooi my as teen sonsondergang  
 oor Hartebeespoortdam  
 nie later  
 Ek wil my gees onsterflik hê, onsterflik ja!  
 Soos water  
 so moenie huil, ek haat 'n tjank  
 o ja! Ma! Jy kry my bank.  
 En as jy sit nie te lank treur  
 Ek het nie kanker.  
 Ek kry nie seer.*

or the ashtray without its cigarette stain  
 there is a little money  
 you'll have to share  
 don't get excited  
 it's not a lot.  
 Scatter my ashes at sunset  
 over Hartebeespoortdam  
 not later  
 I want my spirit to be immortal, immortal yes!  
 Like water  
 So do not cry, I hate a fuss  
 O yes: Mom! you get my couch.  
 And when you sit do not go insane  
 I have no cancer.  
 I have no pain.

The power of writing, according to Adrienne Rich (2001:21), lies in its ability to traverse the boundaries of that which the culture dictates, and, consequently also the boundaries of the imagination:

...if the imagination is to transcend and transform experience it has to question, to challenge, to conceive of alternatives, perhaps the very life you are living at that moment. You have to be free to play around with the notion that day may be night, love might be hate; nothing can be too sacred for the imagination to turn into its opposite or to call experimentally by another name. For writing is re-naming.

The challenge of poverty that the title of this research refers to is therefore also a challenge to language: to imagine that which lies beyond the cultural limits and to re-name it. The publication of the poem meant a public acknowledgement, a public re-naming of Thelton as a poet. Read against the backdrop of the pastoral power of control described in Chapters 2 and 3, and its effect of stifling and marginalising 'coloured' voices, the publication of 'Die Testament' created hope and new possibility for Thelton and the other 'coloured' writers to regard their own creative abilities and what they could do with it differently.

But the publication of the poem is also a testament (!) to the *aporia* of accountability that this research as a cross-cultural project has made possible. Tamasese and Waldegave (1993:93) define the term 'accountability' in a cross-cultural context as follows:

Accountability that fosters commitment to actions makes a difference to the lives of those who suffer. If it lies in the bedrock of values like

humility, reciprocity, love, and sacredness, a mutual learning process can take place, for both those who call for accountability and those who respond. It becomes a mutual learning in vulnerability. In essence, accountability is about the building of trust with the group with whom trust has been broken.

I believe that the publication of the young people's poetry and the various performances of the play constitute such a building of trust. To be publicly honoured for their creative work was a totally new experience for the 'coloured' young people of this community. For me as researcher-turned-mentor, accountability therefore does not lie only in my creative engagement with the young people, but also in the public honouring of their creative work in contexts in which young 'coloured' voices had not been acknowledged before.

For me, these small testaments to accountability in a cross-cultural context link with my understanding of the *aporia*, the non-roads, that Christ's life, death and resurrection made possible. It is this growing understanding of *Christ as the aporia* that has come to inform and sustain all my possibility-generating work in this community. Brueggemann (1996:155) contends that the 'resurrection is not just about a dead man come back to life. It is about power at work that we cannot control, power to make human life possible in all the failed places'.

### **6.3.2.7 Play-writing**

Michael Khoosal's poem 'Wat my nie worry nie' led various members of the writers' group and interested outsiders to write different scenes of a play about the dangers of a drug called Tik in the Scottsville community. In July 2006, the Scottsville Junior Drama Society was founded.

On 16 August 2006, I attended a friend's birthday party. I sat next to his sister, Phia van der Westhuizen, who works for a cultural organisation called Vriende van Afrikaans (Friends for Afrikaans). During the party, I shared some of the stories of my relationship with the young people at Petunia Primary and about the various effects poverty had on this school community with Phia. Phia invited me to send her an e-mail, which I then did. In it I mentioned the writers' group and, mindful of the play they were busy writing, expressed a wish for them to see David Kramer and Taliep Petersen's play *Ghoema* about the slave origins of Afrikaans. A few days later I received an e-mail from Phia informing me that she had contacted David Kramer's wife, Renaye, who offered

27 tickets to Petunia Primary's young people and staff to attend a performance of *Ghoema* in Stellenbosch.

The decision about who should attend the show was left to Mr Foster and the writers' group. I convened the writers' group and asked them to identify young people who they thought could make a contribution to the development of their play by attending *Ghoema*. They handed their list to Mr Foster, who based his selection on this list. Mr Foster proposed that two teachers, Mr Julies (an Afrikaans teacher) and Mr Mentoor (the library teacher) accompany the young people. I made only one demand. I insisted that Granville Wannenberg also went along. Granville, who was in Grade 6 at the time, and who was one of my first clients at the school, had one day played the beat on a desk with a ruler and his elbow whilst his mates did a breakdance for me. It struck me at the time that this young boy's musicality was a potential resource for meaning and connection in his life. At Petunia Primary, there is no drama, music teaching or art teaching. It was my hope that, in terms of forms of self-expression and the use of language, music and stories, *Ghoema* could in turn become an imaginative resource to Granville and the other young people who went.

After *Ghoema*, the writers' group grew from five to fourteen inspired young people. Granville joined us as a drummer. At first, the young people wrote dialogue around the theme of Tik use. Once the pieces of dialogue were brought together, the young people were given scenes of their choice to write and/or rewrite. By the end of October 2006, we were able to assemble a play from all the contributors. The writing of the play became a collaborative project in the fullest sense of the word. Writers would, for instance, bring a particular scene to the group for discussion where it would be adapted and edited. New ideas were constantly integrated. We started out in 2006 with a simple plot and a total of 13 actors. At the final performance at Scottsville Secondary School in 2008, a total of 18 actors had parts in the play, some of whom played more than one part. At the beginning of 2007, Thelton and Thelren decided to re-write the play and to add some new scenes, of which the 'courtroom' scene was the most dramatic. We called the play *Die Groot Gevaar* – referring to the danger of Tik use.

By using language, these young people thus started to participate in the construction of meaning about themselves and their relationships within society. According to feminist and *mujerista* theologian Ada María Isasi-Díaz (1999:231), what 'dislodges the

subjugating aspects of the rationality of modernity' is not the theories of postmodernity, 'but the insistence of subjugated people on being subjects of their own histories, on being central characters in their own narratives'. In the writing of the play, the young people located their narratives in the divergent realities of each of the play's characters: experiences as *witnesses* of violence and drug abuse (the doctor, nurse, policemen), as *victims* of gang violence (such as the drug-using teenager, but also his worried mother and her friend and stories of other victims as told by the pastor and social worker), *ex-drug users* and as *social activists* (members of the community joined by the pastor and social worker in taking up a position of resistance and of support). Therefore, '(i)ntead of denying history and fabricating a totalizing colouredness, "multiple belongings" could be seen as an alternative way of viewing a culture' (Wicomb 1998:105). I believe that this 'multiple belonging' poses an answer to Bhabha's ([1994] 2006:2) question about representation in a fragmented community: 'How do strategies of representation or empowerment come to be formulated in the competing claims of communities where, despite shared histories of deprivation and discrimination, the exchange of values, meanings and priorities may not always be collaborative and dialogical, but may be profoundly antagonistic, conflictual and even incommensurable?'

Through writing the play, we all discovered that the formulation carries more weight if it reflects the complexities of people's lives. For instance, I decided to write a scene for the play to make visible how discourses of drug-users in themselves turns drug-abuse into an individualist practice which fosters disconnection, rather than seeing it as part of a bigger social problem in 'coloured' communities. The knowledge I used as a resource for writing this scene came from my experiences as a therapist in this community.

This scene follows the courtroom scene in which the character Elrico has just been sentenced to do community work for stealing to support his drug habit. He is also sent to a rehabilitation clinic to 'come clean'. Elrico's mother thanks the pastor for the words in mitigation of sentence he has spoken in court. In his address to the court, the pastor says that he knows Elrico as 'a good boy' and that he is aware that a 'troublesome family life had forced him onto the streets'. The pastor's compassion when he asks the magistrate to 'give this boy another chance' is contrasted by Elrico's father's fury that Elrico has 'brought shame on their family'. Elrico then speaks out about the abusive and shameful practices of his father: his alcohol abuse and the physical abuse of his mother, which he has witnessed for years. In this scene, Elrico's mother cautions him by using

the discourse *'ons praat mos nie uit die huis uit nie'* ('we do not tell outsiders about what happens in the privacy of our home').

The intention of this scene (outside the courtroom) was to make visible how drug-abuse for Elrico came about because of the problem of alcohol and physical abuse which made him flee out of his home and landed him on the streets. In terms of healing, Elrico challenges his father: *'Ek gaan gemeenskapswerk doen maar wat se werk gaan pa doen?'* ('I am going to do community service but what kind of service are you going to do?') Some of the actors told me that they found this to be quite a shocking scene, because it spoke about things that were often not spoken about in their community. During the performance in front of the matriculants in their school hall, this scene evoked animated responses from the audience.

Foucault (1976b:95, 1977a:55) proposes that where there are relations of power, there are also instances of resistance and 'that the latter are all the more real and effective to the extent that they are formed there where the relations of power are exercised' (Foucault 1977a:55). In the face of violence that operates as particularly controlling by shaming humanness, the play introduced the building of relationships of care as that through which a different kind of humanness could be experienced. What it means to be human means moving beyond old categories of good/bad, us/them. Humanity becomes a project that requires us to think of the capacity for good and for evil not as belonging to some exterior, demonised force (such as drugs), but as part of the movement within our own relationships:

The solution to the crisis of political theory is not the abdication of power, but an exercise of power that co-exists with an ironic awareness of our limits and our potential for error and harm. That means moving beyond a logic of dualism and constructing new vocabularies for social analysis that are capable of creating group cohesion and motivating political action without demonizing our opponents or ignoring our mistakes.

(Welch 1997:127)

The scene between father and son was intended to create awareness of how adults use their power in relation to vulnerable young people, and of adults' own 'limits and our potential for error and harm'. The compassionate and caring stance of the doctor in the hospital-scene, telling Elrico the details of what Tik has done to the body of his friend, is an example of such an exercise of power. According to Desmond Tutu (2004:13), our

‘ability to do evil is part and parcel of our ability to do good. One is meaningless without the other. Empathy and compassion have no meaning unless they occur in a situation where one could be callous and indifferent to the suffering of others’. The writing of the play came about because young people cared for and worried about their community.

In South Africa, much has been written about the healing effect the telling of painful stories had during the TRC. For some of Scottsville’s young people, the writing of *Die Groot Gevaar* constituted an opportunity to participate in culture (rather than consuming it) by voicing the painful current story of drugs from their perspective. This practice resonated with Witherell’s (1991:94) description: ‘Whether inventing, reading, or listening to stories... (we) can discover connections between self and other, penetrate barriers to understanding, and come to know more deeply the meanings of his or her own historical and cultural narrative. Story and metaphor provide a form of educational encounter that renders us human and frees the moral imagination.’

Drugs as a ‘challenge of poverty’ of the title of this research is therefore not only a cultural phenomenon that adults, such as myself, theorise about. Through the writing of their play, the young people of Scottsville came to formulate and know ‘more deeply the meanings of his or her own ...cultural narrative’. Bruner (1986:144) argues that ‘stories are not ideologically neutral. Narratives are not only structures of meaning but structures of power as well.’ In sharing their narratives with audiences through the performance of their play, their own meanings could be made visible and start to circulate. By creating their own narratives, the young people generated power as the authors and actors of their own life-stories.

#### **6.4 A POSTSTRUCTURALIST PERSPECTIVE ON CRITICISM**

As my role as poet/researcher developed, I realised that inspiration alone was not enough to guide young people into experimenting with the possibilities of poetic language. They also had to be taught how to develop critical judgement towards their own use of language. Instead of taking a dualist (right/wrong) stance, I took a poststructuralist perspective on criticism. In an interview between Foucault and Christian Delacampagne (Foucault & Delacampagne 1980:326), Delacampagne asks

Foucault: ‘But doesn’t the public expect the critic to provide him with precise assessments as to the value of a work?’ To which Foucault replied:

I can’t help but dream about a kind of criticism that would not try to judge, but to bring an oeuvre, a book, a sentence, an idea to life; it would light fires, watch the grass grow, listen to the wind, and catch the sea-foam in the breeze and scatter it. It would multiply, not judgments, but signs of existence; it would summon them, drag them from their sleep. Perhaps it would invent them sometimes – all the better. All the better. Criticism that hands down sentences sends me to sleep; I’d like a criticism of scintillating leaps of the imagination. It would not be sovereign or dressed in red. It would bear the lightning of possible storms.

In my comments on the poems that teenagers brought to our sessions I always tried to be mindful of the way in which criticism can become judgement that stifles creative thinking and experimentation. I would rather discuss the use of a particular word, for instance, by asking if this word reflects the experience of meaning of what the poet wants to capture. When the young poets started thinking about this, new words came up that fitted into the poem better, words that would bring ‘a sentence, an idea to life’, that would evoke experiences which, in turn, started multiplying signs of existence, often by ‘dragging them from their sleep’ (Excerpt from research journal after the session on 6 August 2007).

In a feminist epistemology, theology is about relationship. But it is also about using language to redefine relationships. In their relationship with creative writing, young people initially brought these categories to our groups. I became aware of the fine detail of its operation in the choice of themes it dictated, the necessity for rhyme, the obsession with the use of generic words such as ‘love’ and ‘happiness’. To many young people in Scottsville, the discourse of poetry produced a kind of universal meaning similar to that on a mass-produced birthday card. On reflection, this definition of poetry excluded the lived experience of the young people themselves. It also excluded the senses as resources of experience that could create art. In our creative writing sessions, I therefore purposefully introduced exercises to activate the senses and invited the writers to reflect on their own experiences of the world. In our sessions, the surprise and delight at the ‘unexpected details’ that emerged embodied a process of deconstruction and reconstruction of the discourse of poetry that we were engaging in.

During one of our sessions in May 2008, the young people conversed about the merits of Mother's Day cards and the kind of language that these cards used to convey a particular message. Some months later, Thelren Masimila, Thelton's twin brother, brought the following poem to the group. Thelren did what Foucault proposed: he mastered a kind of criticism of Mother's Day cards 'that would not try to judge, but to bring ... an idea to life':

***Die perfekte kaart***

*Een warm  
maandagmiddag  
vra 'n digter  
vriend van my  
'Hoe maak ek 'n moedersdagkaart?'  
Ek vra hom  
'waarvan hou jou ma?'  
Rose sê hy  
Wel vat drie roosblare  
los die fancy woorde  
Plak 'n soen op die kaart  
en gee dit vir haar vir ontbyt.*

**The perfect card**

One hot  
monday afternoon  
a poet friend  
asked me:  
'How do I make a mother's day card?'  
I asked him  
'What does your mother love?'  
Roses he says.  
Well, take three rose petals  
leave the fancy words  
Stick a kiss on the card  
and give it to her for breakfast.

Thelren's poem illustrates how he has come to regard the poetic process as one that 'can break open locked chambers of possibility, restore numbed zones to feeling, recharge desire' (Rich 2003:xx). Thelren the poet can therefore advise a fellow-poet to trust personal, lived experience and knowledge as authentic resources for writing poetry – and the perfect Mother's Day card (as the title of the poem suggests)! It is with great delight that I reflect on how Thelren used a question to access this experience. To me, this poem by Thelren is a reflection on what he was able to learn from me about deconstruction as a practice in poetry ('*los die fancy woorde*') and about trusting one's own experiences, knowledges and actions in making meaning in poetry.

What is significant to me is that Thelren wrote this poem after he had brought me the first draft of a novel he had written for comment. In my letter to him (see Addendum 6), I drew his attention to the fact that he was busy imitating and duplicating American language and themes for his story. It was not a bad imitation, but with his creative capacities, was that where he wished to put his energies? It was my hope that my words to Thelren 'would bear the lightning of possible storms' in terms of making sense of the world in his own unique way.

## 6.5 DRAMA PERFORMANCE

The rehearsals for the first performance of the play on 28 November 2006 started in September 2006. Because Petunia Primary does not have a school hall, the play was performed in an open corridor, with the young people from the school sitting on the cement of the adjacent quadrangle. The second performance of the play took place in October 2007, as part of a Drug Awareness Day in the Scottsville Community Hall. The third performance of *Die Groot Gevaar* was done by invitation, at the 2008 Woordfees in Stellenbosch. The play's last performance was in March 2008, in front of the matriculants and teachers of the Scottsville Secondary School, in their school hall.

According to Turner (1986a:37), 'drama *is* rooted in social reality, not imposed upon it... The Greek term '*drama*' means a 'deed' or 'act' and was only later applied to an action represented on the stage' (Turner's italics). These social acts that drama represents became especially significant for this research against the backdrop of the 'impossibilities' of the social reality in the Scottsville context. These 'impossibilities' (which have been discussed extensively in Chapters 2 and 3) include various physical and cultural techniques of subjugation and of self-surveillance (such as those brought about by discourses such as 'know your place').

The system of surveillance that results in the interiorisation (Foucault 1980:154) of a sense of unworthiness presented itself during the first rehearsals of the play. Tracey, one of the actors, came to one of the first brainstorming sessions. She also attended the performance of *Ghoema*. Afterwards, the other young people complained to me that she had behaved rudely to them, that she 'took over' and that she shamed other members of the group. I took her aside and told a tearful Tracey that her participation in the group depended on her behaving respectfully towards others. If she felt that she was able to let go of the disrespect of which I had been told, she was welcome to rejoin the group. bell hooks (2003:103) states: 'Shame dehumanizes. There can be no better place than the classroom, that setting where we invite students to open their minds and think beyond all boundaries to challenge, confront, and change the hidden trauma of shame.' Through the vehicle of the play it thus became possible to challenge, confront and change the hidden trauma of shame in a contextual and embodied way. Tracey came back to the group and did not shame any of her fellow actors ever again.

Tracey had a lovely strong voice and a real stage presence. However, when I proposed that she read the part of the doctor, she declined. In Section 5.6.3.1, I discuss how my relationship with Tracey culminated in the witnessing event in which I could speak appreciatively about her. In this chapter I want to focus on the process of engaging with the performance of words and their meaning and for Tracey it constituted crossing a limit of the possible into the ‘impossible’.

Tracey initially saw herself as not being worthy of playing a part that required her to speak like a professional person. At our first reading, she suggested that Verona should rather play this part. Verona was known to the young people in the group as someone with ‘intelligence’. I told Tracey the reasons for my insistence on her taking this part. I also told her that we would go through the ‘difficult words’ together and that I would explain to her what the words meant. Through this slow process, I hoped to create a sense of safety for Tracey to venture into what was, for her, unknown territory.

Through the rehearsals I took care to guide Tracey also to bring some humanity to the more formal side of the doctor’s role. Reaching out to others – through a touch on the shoulder, through a sympathetic tone of voice – was not something that came easily to Tracey either. Together we sat and imagined what it must have been like for the doctor who witnessed the dying of a patient due to the use of Tik. My support for Tracey in crossing the boundary of the possible was one of the many spiritual experiences of the play and its performance.

Zakes Mda (1998:257-264), novelist and playwright, writes about the ‘frames of reference’ regarding the performance of drama in South Africa’s poor communities, called ‘Theatre for Development’ work. ‘Theatre for Development’ work in this country started in the early 1970s. It is the kind of theatre that

...comes to the target areas as a prepackaged product that presents both the problem and the solution. These problems and solutions are formulated from the perspective of the theatre practitioners themselves, sometimes with the assistance of ‘experts’, but without any consultation with the community members. This kind of theatre therefore perpetuates the top-down communication process that only gives the target audiences access to the consumption of messages transmitted by the outside experts, rather than reinforcing the audiences’ active participation in the programming itself, and thereby enhancing the community’s ability to create and distribute their own messages.

(Mda 1998:260)

Therefore Mda advocates (1998:259-260) what he calls a 'Progressive Theatre for Development in Africa' whose 'emphasis is on utilizing theatre as a vehicle for critical analysis, which will in turn result in critical awareness, or conscientization (Mda 1998:259). The process of conscientization involves the active participation of people in transforming themselves by engaging in a dialogue through which they identify problems, reflect on why the problems exist, and take action to solve the problems' (Mda 1998:260). This description fits the way in which *Die Groot Gevaar* was written and performed. Turner (1986a:42) quotes Meyerhoff: 'As heroes in our own dramas, we are made self-aware, conscious of our consciousness.' In this research, conscientization happened through young people's performance in their own drama.

However, my reading of Mda's work coincided with the final rewriting stages of *Die Groot Gevaar* in July 2007. Mda's comments on audience participation stirred my imagination. I decided to raise this issue with the young people. The scene outside the courtroom, where the pastor has a conversation with Elrico and his parents, held the possibility for audience participation. The text was changed to include questions from the narrator to the audience. However, as the rehearsals progressed, I realised that, due to the inexperience of the actors, the questions to the audience would merely be to confirm the narrator's perspective rather than offer opportunities for the actors to improvise on suggestions offered by members of the audience. Thelren would, for instance, simply ask the members of the audience: 'Do you think it is right that adults talk to their children in this way?' During the final performance of *Die Groot Gevaar* in the school hall of the Scottsville Secondary school, the teenagers in the audience enjoyed being asked such questions. They responded with great enthusiasm by shouting replies, some members even jumped from their seats, using their arms and hands as they told the narrator that this was indeed no way for an adult to speak to a child.

Victor Turner (1986a:106-107) contends that the spontaneous experiences of social drama attain a limited degree of reflexivity. However, the 'plural reflexivity' that is required in the genres of performance relies on '(o)ther languages or metalanguages, nonverbal as well as verbal, other scrutinizing procedures' (Turner 1986a:107). Poststructuralist theories make visible what Turner (1986a:168) describes as 'metalanguages' or discourses that operate within a culture and also between different cultures and with it the scrutinizing procedure of deconstruction. Hence, '(p)erformative reflexivity is a condition in which a sociocultural group, or its most perceptive members

acting representatively, turn, bend or reflect back upon themselves, upon their relations, actions, symbols, meanings, codes, roles, statuses, social structures, ethical and legal rules, and other sociocultural components which make up their public 'selves' (Turner 1986a:24).

When members of a culture have not had the experience of reflecting on their own experiences in such a private and public way, the process itself becomes a legitimising of their ways of looking at the world and of making meaning of it. For these young people, reflection on their subjugation in a culture that speaks about them and rarely with them provided a powerful surge that drove the creative process and the performing of the play. Having been subjected to others' authority may in fact have fostered a cultural tradition of non-reflexivity and of acceptance of the *status quo*. In the Scottsville community, the writing of poetry and drama and the performance of the drama provided the young people of the community with opportunities for standing back from their social realities, reflecting on and interpreting them. Turner (1986b:33) argues that '(m)eaning arises when we try to put what culture and language have crystallized from the past together with what we feel, wish and think about our present point in life.... Each such rubbing together of the hardwood and softwood of tradition and presence is potentially dramatic'.

The performance of the play became a vehicle for dramatic experimentation with discovery and witnessing the power of taking up a position in relation to the existing metalanguages. I did this through conversations in which the young people were, as Michael White (2000:15) so aptly puts it, 'radically consulted about their own lives'. During rehearsals I would often 'radically consult' the young people about their experiences. In the various crowd scenes, I would, for instance, consult with young people about their experiences of rage against the destructive reign of drug lords in their community and the complex mix of emotions that was part of their relations with youngsters who used drugs. These youngsters were often beloved friends or family members. In the scene described above, the process of consultation was taken further when the narrator even consulted with members of the audience about the validity of the operation of the discourse of shaming in the relationship between the father and his son.

If my work with the drama society continues, I would like to experiment more with audience participation as the actors grow in their ability to improvise. This continuous

process of adaptation of the play and its performance, however, illustrates that ‘the world of the play interacts very closely with the world of the community. People are therefore able to identify their problems within the context of a particular social order, and the theatre provide(s) the means to codify that social reality’ (Mda 1998:260).

Drama performance can thus become a communal experiment with the *aporia* of engagement in deciding what constitutes ethical action. This is an enormously significant step if, again, it is seen against the backdrop of a pastoral ethics of control, as discussed in Chapter 3. Foucault (1984) argues that an ethic of control takes away the opportunity for people to engage with questions of ethics. My creative work, especially in the writing and performance of drama, was an attempt to reactivate such a process of engagement:

...the will to be a moral subject and the search for a ethics of existence were, in Antiquity, mainly an attempt to affirm one’s liberty and to give to one’s own life a certain form in which one could recognize oneself, be recognized by others, and which even posterity might take as an example. This elaboration of one’s own life as a personal work of art, even if it obeyed certain canons, was at the centre, ...of moral experience...whereas in Christianity, with the religion of the text, the idea of the will of God, the principle of obedience, morality took on increasingly the form of a code of rules....

(Foucault 1984:49)

In communities where Christianity has come to mean rules, an engagement with the values that support ethical relations marks the beginning of a new way of following Christ: not through the code of rules but through engagement in praxis. Henry Giroux (2005:77), in reflecting on the promise of democracy, comments: ‘While it is crucial for education to be attentive to those practices in which forms of social and political agency are denied, it is also imperative to create the conditions in which forms of agency are available for students to learn how to not only think critically but to act differently.’ To act differently is what practical theology is all about. Thus practical theology in this research worked towards the ‘elaboration of one’s own life as a personal work of art’. My creative actions in this research have created the conditions for more reflexivity and more actions of creativity, care and respect amongst Scottsville’s young people. But it is the teenagers themselves who have experimented with the *aporias* of breaking of the silence, of honouring of their own knowledges, of taking up of ethical positions in relation to various cultural through their writing and performance. Their ‘*aporian*’ actions can therefore be called *powerful* in the true Foucauldian sense of the word:

...it seems to me that the notion of repression is completely inadequate to account for precisely what productivity there is in power. ..What gives power its hold, what makes it accepted, is quite simply the fact that it does not simply weigh like a force which says no, but that it runs through, and it produces, things, it induces pleasure, it forms knowledge (*savoir*), it produces discourse; it must be considered as a productive network which runs through the entire social body much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression.

(Foucault 1979a:36).

There was therefore enormous power in the creative work of the young people (performance and writing), because they produced things which induced pleasure, produced knowledge and created the discourse of possibility in the ‘social body’ of their community. In this way the *aporia* of possibility meant a re-definition by these teenagers of their own power and how it can operate as a creative force, not only in their own lives, but also in creating a new creative culture in their community: ‘...cultural performances are not simple reflectors or expressions of culture or even of changing culture but may themselves be active agencies of change, representing the eye by which culture sees itself and the drawing board on which creative actors sketch out what they believe to be more apt or interesting “designs for living”’ (Turner 1986a:24).

## 6.6 YOUTH WHISPERING

In a book called *What is found there. Notebooks on Poetry and Politics*, Adrienne Rich (2003:57) writes: ‘What would it mean to put love into action in the face of lovelessness, abandonment, or violation? Where do we find, in or around us, love – the imagination that can subvert despair or the futile firing of a gun? What teaches us to convert lethal anger into steady, serious attention to our own lives and those of others?’ What Rich asks in the first place is a question about love – not love in a universal sense, but about putting love into action (the question of practical theology) in a context of lovelessness, abandonment, or violation (in this case, poverty in Scottsville). What is significant is that Rich makes a link between love and imagination in a context of violence. In a context of violence and abandonment, the doing of love is that which requires imagination. It is a non-road, an *aporia*. It is the *aporia* that Aunt Baai took when others looked the other way when a girl was being sexually abused.

Luis Rodríguez (2001:70) refers to what young people experience in relational terms in the United States as ‘wholesale abandonment’ because of the ‘tyranny of indifference’

(Rodríguez 2001:319). I think the tyranny of indifference is as prevalent in Scottsville in the Western Cape as it is in the United States that Rodríguez describes. In Chapter 5, I have discussed how an ethic of control in theology has supported discourses of detachment and of the privatisation of faith. Such discourses therefore contribute to the normalisation of indifference amongst privileged Christians to young people in poor communities.

The consequence of the tyranny of indifference is visible on the streets of Scottsville where bored and idle young people who have dropped out of school hang out, where they push drugs, intimidate residents and plan and perpetrate crime. Michael Meade (1996:57) refers to adolescent energy as '*Litima*', a Ugandan word for the fire of passion in youth. Meade argues for some form of attention from adults to these passions, some initiation ritual by which these passions can be directed towards constructive, meaningful expression: 'To educate means to lead out, to educe, to elicit, or even to extract something. *Litima* is that something – both the capacity to erupt in violence and the capacity to courageously defend others, both the aggression that breaks things and the force that builds and protects.'

The question for anyone doing the painstakingly slow work of 'leading out', *Litima* means experimenting with the *aporia*. The work of re-routing passions in such a desperate context is only possible through personal relationship. I discovered through this research that a mentoring, caring relationship between a researcher and a young person can be the beginning of an alternative: the 'education' of *Litima*, the subversion of despair and the conversion of anger into reflection.

Many of these young people are traumatised themselves. Rodríguez (2001:271-286) uses the metaphor of the horse-whisperer and applies it to working with traumatised young people. He pleads for more 'children whispering', which I have adapted to 'youth whispering'. This mentoring kind of walk with traumatised youth is a 'two-legged walk' says Rodríguez (2001:202), because with one foot you step into the mud and with the other you keep in touch with solid ground. I think this methodology also applies to the stance one takes in approaching the practices of cultural possibility in research. With one foot, the researcher stays in touch with the conditions of impossibility: silence, disqualification, and practices of self-surveillance. With the other foot, the researcher walks on the solid ground of the possibility of language, imagination and hope. To be

prepared to walk with one foot in the mud is another of the challenges that poverty poses to the researcher.

‘Mud-walking’ in the research often meant driving to young people’s homes to remind them about rehearsals, picking them up for writers’ sessions or dropping them off, seeing how they were or, in the case of F, finding out why he had not turned up at a rehearsal. One of the other actors drove with me to direct me to F’s house. When we arrived, F was standing by the gate. He told me that he had desperately wanted to come, but that his mother had to take a sick relative to the clinic and he was told to look after the house as the neighbourhood had been experiencing a spate of burglaries. That afternoon I realised how much I still had to learn about the complexities of young people’s lives. In poor communities, young people are often expected to take responsibility for household chores, caring for siblings and for protecting their homes. Not knowing about the divided loyalties in F’s life, I could have assumed that he ‘lacked a proper work ethic’. My relationships with young people such as F mentored me in humility and in not assuming that I knew ‘the truth’.

Young people who live in deprived contexts are used to adults giving up on them. I discovered the extraordinary effect that not giving up on them has for young people. I will give an example. Once the court scene of the play had been written, Zulrich was adamant that he would be playing the part of the magistrate. Even during rehearsals when the rest of us sat on the floor, Zulrich would take up a seat to ‘get into character’. A week before the performance of the revised play in October 2007, a despondent Zulrich mumbled that he no longer wanted to play the part of the magistrate, because the part had too many words for him to remember and the words were too difficult to memorise. That night I reflected on the direction I should take in the face of this obstacle. I decided to have individual sessions with Zulrich and two other actors who seemed to be struggling with their parts. The next morning I drove to the school and spoke with the young people about my plan. They were enthusiastic about the plan and that afternoon I had an hour-long session with each teenager.

I started out my conversation with Zulrich by asking him to remind me why he had always been so keen on playing the part of the magistrate. The purpose of this question was to reconnect Zulrich with the dream or hope he had at the beginning of our rehearsals. Zulrich then told me that he liked watching a courtroom TV-series in which

a 'strong judge' featured. Then he said: 'I also want to be a strong judge.' The therapist in me wanted to know more. So I asked Zulrich what he meant by 'strong'. Zulrich told me that to him 'strong' meant 'fair'. Our conversation then turned to the many times I had witnessed Zulrich's sense of fairness in the group. Zulrich and I then did a step-by-step breakdown of the magistrate's dialogue to show how this dialogue was an expression of the judge's fairness in the court; for instance, of giving each advocate an equal opportunity to make and defend his case.

This individual session between Zulrich and myself proved to be a turning point for Zulrich. After that day, Zulrich underwent a complete metamorphosis as the magistrate. The faltering, unsure magistrate of the first weeks made way for one who did not only know all his words by heart, but spoke them with authority and fairness. This became one of the most meaningful mentoring experiences of the research, because it made visible to me the change that is possible if we respond with patience and care when young people ask: 'Show me the way, give me the tools...stand by my existence with all its pains and glories so that I can know what it is to be truly alive, to have clarity and purpose, and to thoroughly and genuinely belong' (Rodríguez 2001:286).

However, walking as a mentor with one foot in the mud can sometimes be an extremely challenging experience. One such time was 5 October 2007, during the final dress rehearsal for a performance of the play in the Scottsville Community Hall. When I arrived at the hall that afternoon, I discovered that two of the lead actors had not showed up. I drove to the house of one of them, where his grandfather told me that he had just left with a friend. When I returned to the hall, there was bickering amongst the members of the group and a general sense of mayhem. At one point I called them all together and, to my own surprise, I burst out crying. The young people were stunned. After I had controlled my emotion, I explained to them what the tears had been about: I had wanted to offer them the kind of opportunity that I had been given as a teenager many years ago. When I was young, I told them, there were people who believed in me, and in what I could offer the world. I wanted to give them an opportunity to discover what they had to offer and to have someone like myself who could help make it visible to them. I told the group that I loved each one of them and believed that each had something special to give to this production and to others. However, I could not take responsibility for this production by myself. It was now fully their responsibility. But if they did not want to

take this opportunity, or was no longer interested in performing the play, I would understand if they did not show up the next day. It was now up to them.

That evening I received a moving cell phone text message from Zulrich in which he told me, amongst other things: ‘Your love brings hope in my eyes’ and ‘you are like a mother to me.’

The next morning all the actors were waiting for me at the gate of the community hall. Thelren had made me special ‘Oscar’-like certificate for directing. This was put up in the entrance hall. The young people were taking charge of their own show in ways that I had never seen them do before. The boys would, of their own accord, bid each visitor welcome, introduce themselves and hand each visitor a programme. One of the girls got the group together and initiated a morale-boosting ‘war-cry’ – similar to those performed by sports teams before a game. There was a real sense of excitement and pride in the air. The young people had taken ownership of their creative work. My mentoring walk had extended an invitation to the young people to traverse the boundaries of responsibility and make possible what had seemed impossible the day before. On the morning of 6 October 2007, I witnessed this group of young people taking the *aporia* of responsibility.

According to an online Workshop report by the Open Society Foundation for South Africa (2002), the majority of the mentoring of vulnerable young people currently being done in South Africa is by volunteers through non-profit organisations which have mentoring as their prime focus, such as Big Brothers, Big Sisters of South Africa (Big Brothers, Big Sisters of South Africa s.a). Recently, companies such as Media24, in partnership with local universities, have started investing in mentoring programmes with its Rachel’s Angels-trust project (Media24 s.a.) and the Multi-Choice Fort Hare Inkwenkwezi-trust project (MultiChoice s.a.). In the Western Cape, youth at risk are mentored through the successful programmes run by Usiko (Usiko s.a.) in the Bonteheuwel and Jamestown areas. These programmes are ‘closed’ mentoring programmes, in the sense that they do not depend on work done by volunteers. Many non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working with young people in South Africa, such as the ‘Greater Good South Africa’s Life Exchange Programme’ (Greater Good South Africa s.a.) or the Youth development programme of MaAfrika Tikkun (MaAfrikatikkun s.a.) has mentoring as one of their aims and require volunteer participation.

Why do Christian churches not actively encourage their members to get involved in mentoring youth at risk either through their local contacts or through organisations such as the ones mentioned above? I believe this has to do with a particular kind of Christian theology that regards intellectual and individual practices such as Bible study and prayer as definitive of a life of faith (as discussed in Chapter 5). Often the church does get involved in offering young people ‘life-skills’ programmes. However, such intellectual programmes in which youths are lectured about the dangers of violence, drugs and ‘moral decay’ are often the primary way in which adults relate to young people in poor communities. This may be successful in introducing young people to certain ideas. However, this research has taught me that unless we mentor care, and unless we are willing to *actively* create alternatives to boredom, humiliation and hopelessness, nothing will change. Mentoring can take many forms, but it works on the basis of relationship.

The mentoring experience of the research started out as a ‘walking together’, an exploration of the possibilities of creative writing and performance. But in the process it became more like a friendship, in which I too made myself vulnerable. In the mentoring process, I introduced the possibility of the *aporia*, but the taking of it depended on the young people themselves, as the story above illustrates. In the research, the mentoring stance sometimes required me to take the lead in our relationship. Especially when I was introducing disciplines such as poetry and theatre to young people, there were times when I had to instruct them in more formal ways. Mentoring has also been the well-considered stance of ‘may I show you...’ and, importantly, ‘will you show me what you make of this knowledge, these discoveries and how you can apply these to your own life and context?’

But most importantly, any meaningful mentoring relationship needs patience and an expectation of being surprised by what each young person brings to the relationship. Such a mentoring relationship requires a shifting of power from control and authoritarianism to openness and mutuality. Rodríguez (2001:110) argues:

Young people, even in the midst of a society rife with fear, anger, and hatred, exhibit a great range of spiritual, artistic, and intellectual powers, as well as extraordinary resiliency. But they need a constant reminder of these talents and strengths. Too often they are ‘corrected’ rather than encouraged. Our job, then, is to learn how to use our strengths to overcome our weaknesses when solving society’s problems; too much

current policy and practice (including imprisonment) uses people's weaknesses to overcome their strengths.

The title of this thesis speaks of 'when opening hearts and minds create possibilities'. Standing by young people, believing in and fostering their spiritual, artistic and intellectual powers, as well as their resiliency, requires a mentor continually to open heart and mind. This is not an easy thing to achieve, as I continually came up against all kinds of disqualifying discourses in my own mind that posed a threat to our relationship such as: 'They (poor teenagers) cannot subscribe to a work ethic.' However, the examples from the research that I have shared in this section illustrate how the mentoring relationship can create opening hearts and minds for mentor and young persons alike. The creative and relational possibilities that our mentoring relationship created became a powerful way of 'reinventing community, while affirming that there is an important role for each of us in it' (Freedman cited in Hechinger 2006:105).

Griggs (2002) recommends a holistic approach towards youth violence that involves school management, teachers and parents. In this research, I want to propose that outsider-mentors can and should also create conditions for social change.

## **6.7 IMAGINATION AS CULTURAL APORIA**

The creative act is about using the imagination. In a context of poverty and limited opportunity, using their imaginations provided young people with access to limitless possibilities. In her Nobel lecture, Doris Lessing (2007) said that 'it is our imaginations which shape us, keep us, create us – for good and for ill. It is our stories that will recreate us, when we are torn, hurt, even destroyed. It is the storyteller, the dream-maker, the myth-maker, that is our phoenix, that represents us at our best, and at our most creative.' Making young people aware of the possibility-generating power of the imagination in this research meant making a connection for them with their capacity to create and recreate themselves and influence the culture in the community, instead of staying with imitation or silence. Therefore their experiences of the margins can be turned into a legitimate place from which to speak: 'I was not speaking of a marginality one wishes to lose – to give up or surrender as part of moving to the center – but rather of a site one stays in, clings to even, because it nourishes one's capacity to resist. It offers to me the possibility of radical perspective from which to see and create, to imagine alternatives, new worlds' (bell hooks 1990:149-150). By describing the

experiences of living on the margins, the young people of the writers' group traversed the limits of the possible and started walking the *aporia* of the impossible.

In a tradition of faith that centralised rational knowledge, imagination was not accepted as a resource for faith. But I believe that the praxis of this research demonstrates that imagination is not foreign to understanding faith – it is what grounded my faith in the fact that there can be alternatives to violence. In this imagining of the *aporia* of impossible alternatives in the midst of poverty, power abuse and despair, God created the *aporia* of Christ. Therefore, Brueggemann (1996:157) regards the resurrection as God's creation of possibility beyond what humans could have imagined. In the light of such a God, 'the question is whether you can permit in your horizon new healing power, new surging possibility, new gestures to the lame, new ways of power in an armed, fearful world, new risk, new life leaping, dancing, singing, praising the power beyond all our controlled powers'.

The alternative of hope is therefore not, in the first instance, 'something we do with others' (Weingarten 2000:402). In doing this cross-cultural research, where 'doing with others' seemed downright impossible, imagination became the starting point for doing the impossible. Hope meant first experiencing the *aporia* of the imagination; whether this imagination was activated because of historical injustices, or whether it was rooted in feminist theology or in a poststructuralist view of culture or ethics. When I began to experience the *aporia* of imagination in the research, I began to re-imagine my relationships with poetry and with others. It is out of this re-imagining that the possibility of 'doing culture' together developed.

Therefore, the various artistic processes provided this research with a methodology for discovering the potential in young people themselves for creating possibilities in relation to their world. This was not planned. It emerged as a research methodology because of the fusion between my skills, my participation with the young people as 'concrete others' and their willingness to experiment with the *aporia*.

Once this 'epistemological threshold' of cultural production was crossed, art became a resource in our lives through which they could re-image and 'remake' themselves (Sachs quoted in Jamal 2005:18). By employing poststructuralist theories in my approach to art and in my reflection on its meaning, I am no longer bound by ideas of a

‘real self’ but rather see the self as an active self that ‘emerges’ through my engagement with words and others, in ways that resonate with the following description by Davies (2000a:168):

I can see what is emerging not just as the effect of my acting or speaking in a particular way, but also as a new moment in which the context, the lived history of the participants and their understanding of the present moment, will all be constitutive of my speech, my action.... And action moves away from repeated practices to movement between possible practices...towards different ways of understanding practice and its implications.

As we create work that gives new meaning to the world and in the process discover or make new meanings about ourselves and others, art both as a process and an end product can thus lay claim to being spirit-filled – making all things new.

From a structuralist perspective, identity is expressed through behaviour that speaks of essential truths and that is described in binaries such as metaphors of surface/depth and centre/periphery (White 2000:15). A culture that subscribes to such essentialist thinking often regards young people primarily as victims.

My pastoral and therapeutic work with young people, in particular with young people in Scottsville, became a conscious searching for and finding of ‘opportunity for a re-engagement in the processes of meaning-making and identity formation – even for those who have believed that matters of their own identity were forever sealed, forever set in cement’ (White 2000:10). We discovered and invented(!) various processes of meaning-making by means of which it became possible for young people to start exploring ‘the options for living in ways that are other in regard to the received modes of being’ (White 2000:133)

Scottsville’s young people started imagining alternatives in terms of their own lives. During our celebratory meal on 24 October 2007, Verona commented on the fact that during her involvement in the play she ‘had learnt how to communicate with people’, something she had not done with ease before. Eleanor commented on an individual rehearsal she and I had and how it helped her to approach her role with more self-confidence (*‘ek het meer selfvertroue uitgebring’*). In his reflections on the performance of the play, Mr Noach (Noach 2006) spoke about the fact that he had witnessed our creative work opening up the possibility of alternatives:

<p><i>‘Wat is die basiese norm van hierdie gemeenskap? Ons moet maar carpenters word, painters word...backyard mechanics...my ma werk in service of miskien hier by County Fair (hoenderplaas). Dit is die omgewing waarin hulle lewe, die kokon.... Hulle is vasgekleuster; hulle kan nie daar uit kom nie. En hier’t Juffrou definitief vir hulle kom oopbreek – kom ons maak die kop oop en wys vir die mense ons kan dramatiseer. Ek kan oorspronklik ook wees. Ek kan praat uit my agtergrond milieu....’</i></p>	<p>‘What is the basic norm of this community? We have to become carpenters or painters... backyard mechanics...my mother works in service or maybe at Country Fair (a chicken farm). This is the environment in which they live, the cocoon.... They are trapped; they cannot escape out of it. And here, you, Miss, have definitely broken open that cocoon for them – let us open their minds and show the people that we can dramatise. I can be original too. I can speak from my own context....’</p>
--	--

Their speaking with authority from their own perspective and context altered these young people’s relationships with culture. Bhabha ([1994] 2006:255) argues that the ‘shift from the cultural as an epistemological object to culture as an enactive, enunciatory site opens up possibilities for other “times” of cultural meaning (retroactive, prefigurative) and other narrative spaces (fantasmic, metaphorical). My purpose in specifying the enunciative present in the articulation of culture is to provide a process by which objectified others may be turned into subjects of their history and experience.’ For young people who have historically been objectified, controlled and humiliated to become subjects of their own history and experience, this research has enabled a significant *aporia*.

### **6.7.1 A culture of the imagination takes root**

Our creative work brought a new awareness amongst leaders in the school of the role that cultural activities such as creative writing and acting can play in young people’s lives in terms of the formation of ideas about self, community and the value of life itself. At the beginning of 2007, I heard from both the principal and the deputy principal of Petunia Primary that cultural projects such as creative writing and the establishment

of a school choir had been named as priorities for the school. These suggestions were well received and were supported by the teachers.

It was my experience and that of Mr Noach that the process of art opened up the possibility of new relational and reflective knowledge that could serve to disrupt the old discourses of control and subjugation in the community. American community activist for the youth and author Luis Rodríguez (2001:67) states: 'What is needed has nothing to do with controlling youth. ...What we need is a fundamentally different system of relationships that, as a whole, sets the conditions in which anything that can happen will happen.' My work with young people in this research introduced such a 'different system of relationships'.

Another dimension of the political significance of the play can be found in the subject matter and the young people's relationship to it. In the local media, young people are mostly portrayed as victims of the drug culture. Through the writing and performing of the play, these young people discovered that there was not only another position available to them, namely that of resistance, but that in taking up this position they were aided by the rich resource of their own imagination. Thus an act of resistance does not have to be defined or limited by cultural discourses of resistance that take form in demonstrations and speeches, but new forms of resistance can be constructed through the use of individual and collective imagination and language. According to Cornell (1992:80), Derrida 'continually explores strategies that try to displace the subject who imposes his meaning on the world around him. What obsesses Derrida is not what he says, but what can be said, given our inevitable placement in language and into pre-given representational systems. His strategies are a promise to the thing, to the remains, to otherness, he knows he can't fulfill – the promise to let the thing speak.' This research has also been an attempt to go beyond that which is said to that which can be said. Derrida's strategies of deconstruction, his philosophy of the limit (Cornell 1992) provided me with an epistemology of promise to otherness and possibility that has sustained me in my work.

Thus the discourse of resistance as an act of displacement of that which can be thought, felt, said and done, became a process in which the young people of the Scottsville community took an active part. What has great political significance is the fact that the play does not vilify drug abusers but portrays them as real, recognisable teenagers

whose drug use occurs within a web of social connections: a caring mother, an alcoholic father and even a concerned social worker and pastor and a compassionate doctor are all part of their lives. The values of care and friendship are therefore not dealt with in an abstract way but rather became embodied values in the play. An important theme in the play is the way in which drugs alter human relationships. The effects of drug use are therefore not only made visible in physical terms, but also in the fear and pain that a mother experiences in her relationship with her addicted son. Thus drug use is depicted as a relational reality that affects and tries to undermine connection between people. Embodying the value of care and striving for its protection creates another vital political dimension – resistance to drugs and the necessary change of lifestyle can be achieved in an ethics of participation and care.

## **6.8 PARTICIPATION TOWARDS A DIFFERENT KIND OF COMMUNITY**

In the final chapter of his book *The abuse of power: A theological problem*, Jim Poling (1991:174) speaks of the importance of realising every human being's connectedness to all of creation, because of 'a relational God whose destiny is identified with creation' and especially its suffering. Jesus in fact 'formed a community that was *Inclusive* and *Just*' (Poling 1991:152). Because God embodied inclusive and just love for the sake of changing human suffering, it is everyone's responsibility to care for this inclusive relational web too. Especially in the South African context, the challenge of poverty is the challenge of inclusivity: 'Communities that are inclusive of otherness are living deeply out of the relational nature of human existence itself and the ambiguity that is part and parcel of flesh and blood humanity' (Poling 1991:149). To participate together (in research and in life outside of research) means that we as South Africans are connected again in the 'flesh and blood humanity' that apartheid divorced us from. Nobel laureate and holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel (1995) says: 'I have learned two lessons in my life: first, there are no sufficient literary, psychological, or historical answers to human tragedy, only moral ones. Second, just as despair can come to one another only from other human beings, hope, too, can be given to one only by other human beings.' In the South African context, Wiesel's words have enormous implications, because the appeal to do hope becomes inextricably linked with the human tragedy apartheid has caused. The doing of hope through research then becomes an act of reconciliation.

Carter Heyward (1995:36) states: ‘From a christian perspective, it is to become *christic* participants in a movement in history that carries us into the fullness of a shared humanity and, thereby, into the fullness of a shared divinity.’ This research afforded me an opportunity as a white researcher participating with people of colour to be connected again with my own humanity.

Below, I describe the various methodologies through which this research created opportunities for different people’s participation in creating an inclusive community of care. Such a project found its understanding of ethical participatory praxis in a feminist anthropology of more respect, more justice and more mutual care. Participation in this research is therefore symbolised by the colon in the title of this thesis. It represents the actions that turn the despair of poverty (before the colon) into the hopeful possibilities that opening hearts and minds (after the colon) create. It is particularly relevant to me in view of the fact that this research was conducted in the discipline of practical theology that *participation means praxis*. Therefore, participatory praxis can be theorised about only because it has been practised. It is praxis that leads us to theory and back again. In this regard, Derrida (1995:25) links praxis with responsibility:

In order to be responsible it is necessary to respond to or answer to what being responsible means. For if it is true that the concept of responsibility has, in the most reliable continuity of its history, always implies involvement in action, doing, a *praxis*, a *decision* that exceeds simple conscience or simple theoretical understanding, it is also true that the same concept requires a decision or responsible action to answer for itself *consciously*, that is, with knowledge of a thematics of what is done, of what action signifies, its causes, ends, etc. In debates concerning responsibility one must always take into account this original and irreducible complexity that links theoretical consciousness... to ‘practical’ conscience..., if only to avoid the arrogance of so many ‘clean consciences’. (Derrida’s italics)

### **6.8.1 Participation by young people**

In Section 1.3.3, I outlined participation as one the main aims of this research. Through the methodology of rehearsing and performing together in the play, young people started participating with one another toward s a common goal. Mr Noach (Noach 2006) commented as follows on what he observed:

<p><i>N: Ek wil net iets bynoem, Juffrou, dat U het 'n ander dimensie ook ingebring...deur vir hulle so te kry om in 'n groep te werk.</i></p> <p><i>T: Kan u ... verduidelik wat u bedoel?</i></p> <p><i>N: Kom ons sê Zulrich en Granville was nie vriende nie. Maar omdat hulle saamwerk in 'n groep, het hulle daai wedersydse respek vir mekaar begin ontwikkel. Dis ook een van die goed wat ek geobserveer het. En daai struwelinge wat hulle altyd gehad het het gekwyn as gevolg van die samesyn in hierdie drama. Dit is die dinge wat Juffrou bymekaar gebring het en dit is deel van menswees. En die feit dat hierdie kinders, soos hulle hier is, hulle lewe in konteks met mekaar waar hulle in die verlede nie so was nie.</i></p>	<p>N: I want to add, Miss, that you brought another dimension (to their lives) ...by getting them to work together in a group.</p> <p>T: Can you ...explain what you mean?</p> <p>N: Let's put it like this: Zulrich and Granville were not friends. But because they worked together in a group, they started cultivating respect for one another. It is also one of the things I've noticed. And the bickering between them subsided because of their togetherness in this drama. These are things you've brought together, Miss, and it is part of our humanity. And the fact that these youngsters, as they are here, now behave in ways with one another that is different to how they've been (towards one another) in the past.</p>
--	--

For Mr Noach, drama created the conditions for mutual and respectful relations between young people. These conditions developed their capacity for respect towards one another, which, according to Mr Noach, is part of humanness. I too witnessed this growing awareness of what respect and care for others looks and feels like in how the young people actively supported me:

*Yesterday I arrived for our first rehearsal after the casting had been done on Monday. Ten loyal youngsters are waiting for me. Six young people (five of which are lead actors) did not show up. What to do now? The ten are annoyed with the absent ones when we have to abandon the rehearsal. On my way home I am doubting the contribution I am trying to make... So much wasted time... Then Zulrich's concerned*

*face appears before me and I hear him suggest: 'Miss, let's share the parts, then you don't have to stress!'*

(Excerpt from the research journal, 24 August 2007)

With this comment, Zulrich expressed his care for me. He was suggesting a plan that could support me and cause me to 'stress less' about the problem of non-attendance. I took up Zulrich's suggestion. From that day on, some roles were shared and it did indeed cause me to stress less about actors not turning up for rehearsals. I witnessed how the young people had become agents of their own lives.

By September 2008, Thelren decided, with the help of other Grade 10s and 11s, to start up a school newspaper, *Die Scotty*. As editor, Thelren spoke with great confidence about how he selected articles for the newspaper. As I listened to him I felt a great gratitude for the way in which he, and others, have taken ownership of culture in their school. I also reflected on my role as mentor to Thelren and what it had made possible in his life. Then I remembered Myles Horton (Horton & Freire 1990:247-8) quoting Lao Tzu (604 B.C.): 'Go to the people. Learn from them. Live with them. Love them. Start with what they know. Build with what they have. But the best of leaders, when the job is done, when the task is accomplished, the people will all say we have done it ourselves.'

### **6.8.2 Participation with young people**

Democracy in post-1994 terms is often characterised by terms such as 'the rainbow nation' and 'ubuntu'. In feminist-poststructuralist terms, '(d)emocracy's promise demands more justice, more hospitality, more struggle, not less. Democracy is more than an event and a ritual; it is a *site of struggle* whose outcome is always uncertain but whose future should never remain in doubt' (Giroux 2005:78, Giroux's italics). The site of struggle for justice in this research was related to young people's lives in a context of poverty. This chapter dealt with the ways in which this research as a creative project became a struggle *against* the domination and submission of young people and for their full participation in deciding about the direction and the content of our work together, and of their lives.

Griggs (2002) analysed the strategies of eight organisations working towards the prevention of crime and violence in South African schools. He quotes a French qualitative research project that indicated that violence diminished significantly in caring schools where learners felt a sense of belonging and felt they were being listened to. Such a radical listening by adults to young people meant that they were involved in negotiations about 'school rules, rights and responsibilities' (Griggs 2002:112). The ideas that a school holds about what is 'just' or 'responsible' can therefore only be determined through the mutual participation of all. An experience of mutual and just relations by young people in the French schools was directly linked to a dramatic decline in abusive and violent practices by the French young people.

Young (1990:16) broadens her description of justice by linking justice with developing capacity for action: 'I wish rather to displace talk of justice that regards persons as primarily possessors and consumers of goods to a wider context that also includes action, decisions about action, and provision of the means to develop and exercise capacities.'

Through their participation in decision-making processes during the writing and performing of the play, these young people of Scottsville were widely and regularly consulted about action, and were given the 'means to develop and exercise capacities'. An example of such a consultation process happened during the auditioning process when Theltom, who had written most of the play, objected to being cast in a particular role. Theltom stated his case about why he wanted to play the part of the advocate. I let go of my idea (which I still think would have had great dramatic effect!) and Theltom played the role of Advocate de Wet. I realised at the time that the issue could not be what the 'the best' possible casting scenario was, but rather how Theltom experienced a real sense of ownership in the decision-making process. In the context of a South African history in which white people decided 'what is best' for people of colour, I believe my stance in relation to Theltom's full ownership of our work was significant.

Paolo Freire (in Freire & Faundez 1989:95) quotes President Aristedes Pereira: 'We have driven out the colonialists: now we must decolonize our minds.' During my conversations with Thelton, I realised that as a white researcher I could continue the legacy of 'colonisation' or I could help to create conditions in which it becomes possible for young people to start the 'decolonisation' of their own minds: 'The presence of the colonialist as a shadow housed within colonized people is more difficult to drive out because, when the shadow of the colonialist is driven out, the people must, as it were, fill the space it formerly occupied with their own freedom, that is, with their decision-making, their participation in the rediscovery of their society' (Freire & Faundez 1989:95). The responsibility I had (and still have) as a researcher/mentor to contribute to the decolonising of the minds of colonised people by honouring them as full participants in the research/conversation/meaning-making presented me in the research with an *aporia* for justice that I continuously needed to take. To be able to take it meant that I had to cross the limitations in my own mind about ownership and decision-making. At the beginning of this research I was not aware that such an *aporia* even existed. As the title of Horton and Freire's book (1990) about social change suggests: 'We make the road by walking.' In the case of our participation in justice-making in Scottsville, we made the *aporia* by walking.

As I worked in the context and read feminist-poststructuralist literature, an awareness of my own power to do good and harm started entering my field of vision. Therefore, I referred to the feminist-poststructuralist epistemologies as resources in Chapter 1, because they shaped my own praxis. Karin Case (2004:69) states: 'Emanicipatory praxis is a cycle of action and critical reflection that helps illuminate the system of domination, so that our own consciousness and actions are transformed. Our praxis may have concrete effects in terms of social change as we begin to act decisively to disrupt the system of domination.'

Even in the work of violence-prevention with the youth, an understanding is needed of the critical relevance of both power and the relational (and this is something that working in a feminist-poststructuralist paradigm offers). A disregard for the relational and an unawareness of power may result in well-meaning anti-violence programmes which produce social conditions that deny young people possibilities for developing their capacities and agency. Such social conditions are described by Young (1990:38) as those of oppression and domination: 'Oppression consists in systematic institutional

processes which prevent some people from learning and using satisfying and expansive skills in socially recognized settings, or institutionalized social processes which inhibit people's ability to play and communicate with others or to express their feelings and perspective on social life in contexts where others can listen.'

Griggs (2002:123-4) mentions four such anti-violence strategies in his report, entitled *Preventing crime and violence in South African schools*, that seem to have no significant influence on violence amongst youth. The one strategy that has received mixed reviews is the strategy of peer support. As this practice lies outside the scope of this research, I will not comment on my experience of its usefulness as a tool in creating respectful practices in schools. However, the other three strategies are born of epistemological points of departure that do not take cognisance of power in relationships with young people or in developing a relational culture of participation, care and mutuality in schools. The unhelpful strategies that Griggs (2002) lists are punitive measures (as discussed in Section 6.8.2), instruction (telling young people what to do) and sports and recreational facilities. I concur with all Griggs's reservations, and would like to add some comments on the notion of providing sport fields. There is a popular perception that poor communities need sport and other recreational facilities that can provide young people with a socially acceptable alternative to violence. However, my view is that sports facilities will not, in themselves, create opportunities for young people that will steer their lives away from violence and crime. Once young people feel valued and appreciated by others *while doing sport on the sport field*, they can start thinking of themselves and society differently. It is the caring, participatory relationship that seems to matter, not the field. That is why Myles Horton (Horton & Freire 1990:177), in a conversation with Paulo Freire, considers the caring relationship as *the* most important factor in what he calls 'radical' education:

I think if I had to put a finger on what I consider a good education, a good *radical* education, it wouldn't be anything about methods or techniques. It would be loving people first. ...And then next is respect for people's abilities to learn and to act and to shape their own lives.....The third thing grows out of caring for people and having respect for people's ability to do things, and that is that you value their experiences. (Freire's italics)

Care in relationship is what this chapter describes me doing in this research. Caring relationships are not a fuzzy feminist praxis that is rated 'below' intellectual theological enterprises in theology. Caring as a white woman for 'coloured' young people in a

context of poverty relates to justice. Wentzel van Huyssteen (2007) argues that ‘justice is at the heart of any discussion of the image of God (Imago Dei)’. The image of God, he argues, is linked to and embodied in interhuman relations.

However, the *aporia* for social justice in a context of youth violence today seems not to be taken with as much vigour or commitment as the taking of the *aporia* for justice was to end the system of apartheid. In this thesis I invite the church to take the *aporia* of justice for the sake of vulnerable young people. This research has demonstrated why the caring for justice matters just as much today in places like Scottsville as caring for justice did before the establishment of political democracy in South Africa in 1994. Justice-making is therefore not only a political practice. It is the yearning for freedom and right relation that also lies at the heart of the current cultural struggle in poor coloured communities.

### **6.8.3 Advocacy and networking**

An important facet of my social biography emerged for me during the course of the research. I realised that, because of my education, my life in the affluent suburb of Welgemoed and my friendships, I had access to a network of people who could support not only me, but also the work of creating possibilities in this school community. Public and private advocacy on behalf of Scottsville’s young people therefore developed as an important part of the research. Advocacy served as invitations to others to participate. Often, these invitations were not acted upon. But sometimes outsiders did open their hearts and minds to the people of Scottsville, with the result that networks of possibilities were created far beyond what I could have foreseen. Below, I document how advocacy and networking created networks of support for the people of Scottsville.

#### ***6.8.3.1 Developing the library project: mutual participation***

In the first lay counselling session with the women of Scottsville, Doreen Mentoor voiced her concern about the lack of physical and cultural opportunities in Scottsville as follows: *‘In a period of 25 years nothing was established in Scottsville for our youngsters. Unlike places like Ravensmead, there are no youth centres, women’s clubs, sports fields, a clinic or library for the people here’* (Excerpt from the letter to the group after the lay counselling training session on 1 March 2006). Her comments stayed with me and influenced the direction the research took, because that day I realised that the

creation of physical resources would also be an important part of pastoral care for Scottsville's young.

In Chapter 2, I showed that the lack of physical resources in 'coloured' communities is not neutral in its effects. I have discussed the effect that the absence of a stage at school had on the performing arts. Foreign sponsors and NGOs are noticeably absent in Scottsville. The large-scale social apathy towards the plight of 'coloured' young people means that youngsters are left to their own devices.

The young people also alerted me to the ways in which material poverty affected their lives. In our writers' sessions, for instance, it became clear to me that most of the young people did not read because they did not have access to a library. I made arrangements for the librarian of Eikendal Library (the library closest to Scottsville) to speak to Petunia Primary's young people about what their library can offer them. I contacted the library service of the provincial government and got posters for the school that promoted reading as a cool thing to do. I also started bringing my own volumes of poetry to our sessions. By 2007, the writers were attending Scottsville Secondary School, adjacent to Petunia Primary. This school had no functioning library where books could be borrowed. I thought of the difference it would make to young people to have books to read during holidays and over weekends. I wondered whether, if they were able to read books, young people would also be safer because they would be inclined to stay off the dangerous streets of Scottsville.

By April 2008 I had sent out e-mail requests to friends and colleagues. Books and magazines poured in. A friend from Welgemoed, Marina Badenhorst, supported me in this project by physically working in the library and by generating funds and interest for the project in her Bible study group. In May and June 2008, Marina and I, with the help of Thelton and Michael, cleared out and rearranged the old library, dusted the shelves and brought the once dysfunctional library back to life (see Photo 5).

The school's governing body had heard about the project and two of its members paid us a visit. They decided that they wanted to donate curtains for the library. Mrs Opperman of the school's governing body and I travelled to a shop to choose fabric for the curtains. Mrs Opperman had the curtains made and hung within two days. Mrs Masimila, Thelren and Thelton's mother, donated a carpet. My husband and mother-in-

law donated large floor cushions. I donated a clock and Afrikaans magnetic poetry, words that youngsters could arrange to make public poetry with. The new school library was opened by the school principal in front of staff, members of the governing body and thirty teenagers, on 25 June 2008. People from affluent communities still contribute to the library in the form of regular magazine and book donations.

- ***Participation by Vriende van Afrikaans'***

The possibilities that this research generated in terms of young people's lives would not have been possible without the generous support shown to myself and the young people of Scottsville by Vriende van Afrikaans in Stellenbosch.

I have already described (see Section 6.3.2.7) how, in 2006, Phia van der Westhuizen organised tickets to a performance of *Ghoema* in Stellenbosch for a group of Petunia Primary's Grade 7s. Amanda de Stadler and Phia also attended the first performance of *Die Groot Gevaar* in 2006. They were so taken by the originality of the play, that they, in turn, suggested to the organisers of Woordfees that the play be performed at this event.

In May 2008 I told them about our plan to revive the school library at Scottsville Secondary School. They pledged their support, and in June offered us R5 000 that they had procured through their contacts with a Dutch sponsor, Professor Jansen and his students. In June 2008, Amanda, Phia and I went together to select the new books for the school.

When Professor Jansen, his wife and their friends visited the Cape in July 2008, Amanda contacted me with a view to connecting these Dutch sponsors with the young people who had benefited from their donation. On the afternoon of 17 July 2008, the Dutch visitors sat with the principal, Amanda, Marina, myself and young writers around a long table in the library and talked about books and the experience of reading. Zulrich told the group with great enthusiasm how he had read a book for the first time during the school holiday. It took him two weeks, he told us. But he eagerly told us the whole story. I then asked him if the story meant anything to him personally, had moved him in any way. He told me that he had learnt by reading the book that one needs to let anger go '*want ek word gou kwaad*' ('because I get angry quickly'). He told us how one of the main characters had told the people who had

previously burnt down his shop to leave their weapons outside, ‘because weapons will not bring back my shop’. The feuding families reconciled. The male character in a book provided Zulrich with an alternative to violence. Violence did not need to have the last say. The possibility for non-violence was supported in Zulrich’s life through a story. Zulrich’s sharing made me realise that in communities such as Scottsville where there are few resources for alternative ways of being, the characters in books can offer meaningful alternatives.

More young people spoke about the discoveries they had made and about their gratitude to the Dutch sponsors for what they had donated. The front page of the October newsletter of Vriende van Afrikaans (De Stadler & Van der Westhuizen 2008b:1) carried an announcement that one of the Dutch visitors was so inspired by what she experienced that afternoon at Scottsville Secondary School that she started a fund-raising project in her community in the Netherlands which collected a total of R65 000 to further the donation of books to other poor schools through Vriende van Afrikaans.

### ***6.8.3.2 Doing pre-participatory work in Welgemoed***

A legacy of the modernist era is the one of detachment (see Section 5.1). In this research I appealed to the people of privilege to think beyond the relational limits that this detachment has created in the society and in the church. I put it to privileged people (see Section 4.3.2.1, under the subheading ‘Inviting others to practice solidarity with the marginalised’) that, as Christians, we cannot escape the fact that we are called to take a stand with, and to respond to, young people who find themselves immersed in a culture of violence.

Since 2005, Reverend Heerden van Niekerk, Minister of the Welgemoed Dutch Reformed church, and I had many conversations about the involvement of people from Welgemoed in the Scottsville community. My public appeal to the Welgemoed congregation after his invitation on 17 June 2007 did not lead to any direct involvement. However, I discovered that my role had been to make visible what the impossibilities of poverty looked like and to invite each person of faith to cross the limits of the possible in their own thinking. Despite my sadness at the lack of initial response, I decided that whether or not people took up the invitation was irrelevant to my responsibility to

extending the invitation in the first place and in continuously doing so whenever I meet with people in my own community.

### ***6.8.3.3 'Anne'<sup>25</sup> and friends participate***

When a member of the Welgemoed congregation, 'Anne', and her friends approached Heerden about helping young children in a disadvantaged community with developing reading skills, Heerden set up a meeting between 'Anne' and myself at the church in May 2008. I then set up a meeting between 'Anne' and her friends, Mr Foster and Doreen Mentoor at Petunia Primary. Since June 2008, 'Anne' and some of her friends have been visiting the school twice a week to give individual attention to junior phase learners who struggle with reading. Griggs (2002:71-80) refers to a reading programme with pre-school children in Lavender Hill in the Cape, in which it was found that reading competency plays a significant part in the prevention of anti-social behaviour (Griggs 2002:73). In this way 'Anne' actively creates possibilities for some of Petunia Primary's children for a long-term education and to experience a sense of accomplishment. In 2005, I would have been delighted to know that by 2008 I would no longer be alone in the hopes I have for possibility-generating praxis for the young people of Scottsville.

### ***6.8.3.4 Participation by men of faith from Welgemoed***

During one of my regular feedback sessions in May 2008 to the men of Heerden's Bible study group who have been supporting my work at another primary school in Kraaifontein for years, I mentioned that Petunia Primary's boys have for years been playing rugby without uprights. A couple of days later Heerden called to tell me that one of the men had committed himself to source, transport and erect uprights at Petunia Primary. On 24 July 2008, the rugby field with its new uprights was officially inaugurated at Petunia Primary. Heerden, men from the Bible study group and other members of the Welgemoed faith community travelled to Petunia Primary. The men participated with Mr Foster and the boys in a kicking competition. That day, for the first time in 15 years, Petunia Primary's boys could play rugby against a neighbouring school on their own field. The school community gathered next to the field to support their teams. In a thank you letter, Mr Foster wrote: 'A totally new rugby spirit has

---

<sup>25</sup> Ps

emerged amongst our learners, teachers and parents. Thursday was an extraordinary day in the history of Petunia. Thank you, thank you, thank you...' (see Photos 6 and 7).

#### ***6.8.3.5 Gawie Nieuwoudt creates physical possibilities for Petunia Primary's young people***

The deputy principal of Fanie Theron Primary, Gawie Nieuwoudt, and I have known each other since 2000 when I did my master's research at the school, in which Gawie participated. Since starting to work in the Scottsville community, I have shared some of my experiences with Gawie – especially about the lack of physical support for the most destitute of its children. Since 2006, Gawie has quietly used his influence in his own community of faith in Stellenbosch to spread the word about need in the Scottsville community. Since that time, I have regularly received envelopes with money from Gawie's Stellenbosch faith community, with which Mr Foster was able to run a regular soup kitchen at Petunia Primary. Currently, more than a hundred children receive soup at the kitchen on a daily basis. Sometimes I would hand an envelope to Aunt Baai who cares for vulnerable children in the community. I sent a card and made a DVD with pictures from Petunia Primary to thank the Stellenbosch children and their parents who opened their hearts in this way.

Gawie modestly describes his role as that of someone who just 'passes on' information and funds. However, Gawie reminds me of the way in which pastoral possibility often depends on the open heart of someone who cares enough to volunteer to connect one community with another. With the pastoral participation between Gawie, myself and the Stellenbosch community, a whole network of support was developed for Petunia Primary's young people.

#### ***6.8.3.6 Hildegard Malherbe reaches out***

Hildegard Malherbe approached me during a tea break at the SAAP conference in 2006 after the women from Scottsville and I had done our presentation. Hildegard was so moved by the spirit of mutuality and care that she had witnessed in our presentation that she asked me if she could join our group with a view to supporting the women from Scottsville. Since that time, Hildegard has joined our fortnightly lay counselling sessions. Hildegard brought to our sessions her own insight as a psychologist, a person of faith and her contacts as a minister's wife in the congregation of Stellenberg.

Hildegarde organised a visit of the Scottsville women to view the card-making skills of a group of women involved in a self-help project in the Stellenberg community. Hildegarde also tried to canvas people in her community to volunteer to share their time and skills with the women and children of Scottsville.

Hildegarde and her friends also attended the first performance of the play at Petunia Primary during November 2006. During this performance, I made an appeal for funds towards the building of a school hall for Petunia Primary. Hildegarde made a substantial donation towards this fund. In 2007, the adjacent high school started the building of its school hall. According to Mr Foster, the primary school would also be able to make use of the hall. With the changing scenario in mind, I approached Hildegarde and told her what had happened since she had made her donation. Would she agree to her donation being used to fund a gate between the two schools that would create direct access for Petunia Primary's children to the hall? Hildegarde agreed. Hildegarde's enthusiastic participation meant a lot to me at a time during which I felt isolated in my own community. Her physical support of me and the women has contributed greatly to the spirit of possibility being kept alive in and amongst us.

#### **6.8.4 Participation by Scottsville's teaching staff**

During the research process, I discovered that the experience of solidarity and mutuality was not only experienced through spoken language. It comes through real interaction with concrete people (Welch 1990). Participation thus took place in the form of the real interactions, such as having tea together, clearing library shelves, making soup together, crying and laughing together. In *The Power of the Cross*, Sally Purvis (1993:96) speaks of this kind of encounter as an experience of 'building one another up', explaining that 'as we love one another into being, we are all of us enlarged'.

My interaction with others in pastoral care meant not only that their circumstances moved me, but also that *I was cared for* in ways that I did not expect. Mr Foster would often visit us in the church where we were busy rehearsing or writing. He would sit quietly, witnessing our working together. At other times he would inquire about my studies and life, how I was and how my own children were. His care for me made it possible for me to speak my mind about my disappointment at the lack of support I sometimes experienced from teachers. Mr Foster came to Welgemoed on the Sunday

morning when I spoke to the congregation at the Dutch Reformed church. The day after the inauguration of the rugby uprights I again received a heartfelt personal telephone call from Mr Foster.

Doreen once spoke of the first time she met me in the tea room of the school where I spoke to the teachers about my research. She told me later that she immediately realised: ‘This woman wants the same for this community that I want!’ Doreen became a concrete other to me, and I to her. She shared tears with me about personal problems. In turn, I cried on Doreen’s shoulder when the painful experience of being excluded from a school recital made me feel an outsider to the community, and when feelings of despair overwhelmed me during the final rehearsals of the play. Doreen volunteered to help me drive the young writers in her car to Stellenbosch for a Poetry Morning (Versindaba), because she saw in it an opportunity for their worlds to be extended. But in terms of their unquestioning trust and support for me and my work, Doreen and Mr Foster were the exceptions.

#### **6.8.5 Asking and giving consent as a participatory methodology**

As a researcher I am accountable to the people in the community for what I have written about them in this thesis. I therefore used different methodologies to create opportunities for the people of Scottsville to discover the ways in which their words, experiences, photographs, poems, stories, relationships and wisdom were documented. In November 2008, I started sending the various chapters via e-mail to Mr Foster for comment and adjustment. During May 2009, I circulated hard copies of the text amongst the teachers at Petunia Primary for their comment and approval. During this time, I also visited each of the women of the lay counselling training group to check with them the details of what I had written and to get their approval for it. Because of the scale of her contribution, Aunt Liz Cupido was given the opportunity to read Chapter 3 in hard copy format. Anna and I sat together over cups of tea and muffins, while I read to her from the research document.

When I approached Mr Foster about this process for the first time, he was taken aback by the fact that his permission was being sought. I was hoping that such an invitation could make clear what the norm of transparency and mutuality looks like, not only in (cross-cultural) research, but for all social relationships where people are spoken or written about, and information about them is used. Mr Foster commented on how this

process of consultation created trust and made him feel that, as research participants ‘we were not “used”’. He also spoke of his appreciation about the fact that, during our conversation, I acted on some of the comments he made regarding the content of the research document. In Chapter 1, I indicated how Mr Foster’s comment about the use of the word ‘coloured’ had led me to place the word in inverted commas throughout the research document. Participation in this final stage of the research therefore still shaped the meanings that were made in the research document.

During my consultative conversations with Mr Noach, Mr R, Mr Temmers and Mr Foster, I was delighted as these conversations turned out to be meaning-making events in themselves. Mr R would share with me how he had started using ‘the softer approach’ he had witnessed in my dealings with young people, to connect with a particularly ‘difficult boy’ in his class. He told me that what he had read in Chapters 1 and 2 made him rethink his own practices. He told me how he realised that when one is ‘on a pedestal’ as a teacher it is impossible to make connections with young people and make them feel valued. He told me that he had come to realise something: ‘*Miskien is dit waarvoor ons gemaak is...om mekaar te boost*’ (‘Maybe this is what we were made for... to boost one another’).

On Saturday, 8 November 2008, I held an information session for the young people and their parents or caregivers. I invited these people to the session with a written invitation (see Addenda 7a and 7b). I allowed for the fact that some of those invited would not be able to or would not feel the need to attend this session. I therefore also handed out a consent form that had to be completed by all young people and their parents or caregivers.

In my letter of invitation to them I explained why I was seeking their permission. I explained that the research process had taken me in a creative direction I had not anticipated at the start of the work in the community in 2005. The creative work itself and the young people’s participation in creating cultural possibilities turned what was originally at most a ‘secondary’ theme into one of the major themes of the research. In line with this ‘organic’ development, I wished to share what had emerged and the discoveries we made with others through the thesis as well as with them as the people involved in these young people’s lives.

Only two people came to the session: Verona's mother and Zulrich. With both these people, I sat and showed them on my laptop what I had written and explained the context within which I had written about them and made meaning. Between February and June 2009, I held similar sessions with the young people mentioned in the research document and their parents. This part of the research turned out to be a lengthy and time-consuming process. However, in hindsight, I realise how the personal and detailed process of consultation and approval greatly contributed to the participants' meaning-making of the work and their contribution to it. Some parents signed the consent form without expressing a desire to know what was written. However, in May 2009, I made appointments to see the parents of Granville and Tracey. I felt that it was important that they should see first-hand the ways in which their children had contributed to the research and to my life.

I was especially touched by the session I had with Granville's parents in the sparsely decorated living room they share with other family members. Granville's father had just been released from jail. He sat quietly and listened as I went through the chapters and translated from English into Afrikaans. Granville sat next to me. His mother sat on my other side. After I had shared my words and experiences of Granville with them, I invited them to share their feelings with me about what had been written. Granville's father said that he was proud of 'what his son had made of himself' in the time that he was away. He told me that when he was young he had not been given 'this kind of opportunity'. He was hoping that Granville would continue to make something of his life. Klara, Granville's mother, told me that she had made photocopies of the certificate I had handed out after the performance of the play. She took one of these with her to work. In the time since, she told me that she would often remind Granville of the fact that there were others like 'Miss Hulme' who cared deeply about him. It was already dark when I left this family. As I drove off, I saw Granville's father still at the gate, waving.

#### **6.8.6 Cultural re-imagining through participation**

The young people of Scottsville altered the goal of this research to become 'a theology and politics of liberation fuelled not by protest alone but by an inspiration to reimagine and to refashion existing social systems and institutions. Our theories must propel us to take the risks that are necessary for sustained social struggle' (Welch 1997:127). This

chapter documents some of the creative re-imagining that the young people of Scottsville and I did together. But cultural re-imagining in this research also meant that people who live in conditions of privilege took the risk of becoming involved in the social struggle of those who live in conditions of poverty. Such re-imagining depended on a ‘larger participatory consciousness... the “hermeneutics of connection”, where the self and other are seen, not as separate entities, but as an ontological and epistemological unity’ (Heshusius 1996:131). When the relationship with the other provides the epistemological grounding and the ethical impetus for research, I as a researcher, was no longer ‘unrelated, normal, separate, disembodied, and in control, “researching” the “not-me”’ (Heshusius 1996:132). I was drawn into a relationship with the people who live in poverty. This chapter demonstrated feminist-poststructuralist qualitative research at work with its

...innovations in co-constructed narratives, multivoiced methods, participatory performance, conjoint and distributed representation, and participator action research...(that) do far more than expand the methodological arena. Rather, in subverting methodological individualism they begin to generate a new form of consciousness. It is not the private mind that is celebrated, but integral connectivity.

(Gergen & Gergen 2000:1042)

This research is therefore a celebration of integral and embodied connectivity in all of the research methodologies that have been documented, especially in Chapters 5 and 6: acknowledging one another in witnessing ceremonies, writing poetry and drama, performing the play, bringing an unused library back to life, organising uprights for Petunia Primary. Integral connectivity as an aim of this research, as symbolised by the colon in the title of the thesis, was made real as people recognised that we are all connected to and responsible for one another. Participatory care is possible because we have allowed a new consciousness to connect privilege and poverty; and it is that powerful connection that holds us continually accountable to one another. In a context of individualism, this is the stuff that cultural – and theological – renewal is made of.

## **6.9 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

All of the cultural and relational possibilities described in this research emerged from an awareness of what in a context of poverty seemed practically or discursively impossible, impracticable – the experience of the *aporia*. Experience ‘is a traversal, something that *traverses* and travels toward a destination for which it finds the appropriate passage...

justice would be the experience that we are not able to experience. ...I think there is no justice without this experience, however impossible it may be, of *aporia*. Justice is an experience of the impossible' (Derrida 1989:16). This chapter documents the many ways in which we travelled toward a destination for which our experience found the appropriate passage. This chapter also documented the cultural passages whereby we made the impossible possible.

This traversal or crossing of what Jamal (2005:3) refers to an 'epistemological threshold' also pertains to the role of culture in social transformation. By taking a deconstructive attitude to rules such as non-participation (see Section 6.2.1) by which culture is defined and practised in the 'coloured' community, this research developed new cultural possibilities for young people. Through their participation, outsiders supported these possibilities and sometimes created physical possibilities (such as rugby uprights, see Section 6.8.3.4) which, in turn, had a profound influence on a sports culture at Petunia Primary. Norris (1987:225) states: 'Only by pressing this *aporia* to the limits of conceptual explanation can philosophy begin to perceive what lies beyond.' And this experience – as Derrida argues 'will take us into the domain of ethics, rather than epistemology'. By perceiving what lies beyond the cultural and relational limitations of poverty and by making a passage to access 'the impossible', the work with and on behalf of young people described in this chapter can indeed be described as the work of ethics.



## CHAPTER 7

### REFLECTING ON THE RESEARCH AND THE CHALLENGES OF 'COLOURED' POVERTY FOR PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

#### 7.1 OUTLINE

This research project used various ways of coming to the knowledges that are described in this research document. In this final chapter, I reflect on the epistemological framework within which this research was done. I also reflect on the research methodologies that emerged from these epistemologies and how they contributed to the realisation of the research aims. As I indicated in Chapter 1, the feminist-poststructuralist epistemology became a primary resource of knowledge about and insight into the discourses of power and marginalisation. It was obtained from my reading of books and articles. Knowledge also came about as I reflected on the Scottsville context in the light of these academic sources.

A second primary resource of knowledge in the research was my experiences in the Scottsville community. Experiential, embodied knowledges came about as I made myself vulnerable to my poor other. I argue that a feminist epistemology allowed me to regard this form of knowledge as legitimate. In this chapter I discuss how these new embodied knowledges brought with them new understandings regarding the challenge that poverty poses to privilege. It also reconnected me with the calling of faith that the embodied Christ represents. I therefore show how my growing embodied understanding of the challenges of poverty, and in turn, shaped my understanding of what both research and theology need to be and do to be accountable to our poor o/Other. In this chapter, I do an archaeological analysis of my participation and the insights that the analysis made possible – especially regarding the limits of what I as a person from a middle class background can claim to understand about poverty.

A third resource of knowledge in this research lies in the participation between the people of Scottsville and myself, and between us and the broader community. This resource of knowledge was supported by the focus on relationality in a feminist epistemology, and was developed as the research expanded to include more people.

Participation as a research aim came to be expressed through a range of research methodologies. The experience of participation ultimately became a primary source of knowledge about the doing of cross-cultural research. In this chapter, I therefore reflect on the difficulties of participation and on the mistakes I made. I also discuss the contribution that this research has made in terms of the developing methodologies through which the possibility-generating force of cross-cultural pastoral participation could be generated.

## **7.2 HOW THE RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION IS DESCRIBED**

My understanding of the contribution of this research is not summarised separately from my discussion of the feminist-poststructuralist epistemological framework within which I worked, because my chosen epistemology served as a resource in this research because it made me see ‘coloured’ poverty and power relations more clearly. Because of what poststructuralism invited me to see, the work that I did with young people went in a specific direction in terms of voice and their use of language, as described in Chapters 5 and 6. The fact that a feminist epistemology, for instance, is grounded in the experiences of poor women, made possible the kind of work described in Chapters 4 and 5. Therefore the research contribution is intimately connected to the political framework that the research epistemology provided for it.

Epistemology therefore informed my praxis; and this praxis created new opportunities for reflection. Both praxis and reflection on praxis, and reflection on epistemology in the light of the praxis of the research, had an impact on the contribution that this research has made. The contribution described in this chapter relates to the description of poverty in poststructuralist terms, which reveals the power relations that contributed to poverty. Other contributions described in this chapter include those relating to specific poor people’s lives, the culture in Scottsville, physical possibilities in the community and cross-cultural and inter-cultural participation. The contribution that this research has made to the discipline of practical theology and its traditions of pastoral care is woven into the descriptions of the epistemological framework and its themes of power and possibility.

As reader you too can add to the meaning of the research through your own understanding of the details of the work, as described in each of the previous chapters and how it relates to your context.

In this chapter, I let people from the community participate in reflecting on my work and the spirit within which I acted. I therefore include some of their comments about the meaning they have made of my work in Section 7.4.8.

In this chapter, the way forward and beyond the research is described in poststructuralist terms. I show how I propose to continue to pay attention and commit myself to the work of cross-cultural justice that this research has started. The recommendations I make in this chapter are grounded in this understanding of the work of justice and in a feminist understanding of faith as praxis.

### **7.3 REFLECTING ON THE CHOICE OF A FEMINIST-POST-STRUCTURALIST EPISTEMOLOGY TO INFORM THIS RESEARCH**

The first research aim (see Section 1.3.2) was to describe ‘the challenges of poverty’.

This research was conducted within a feminist-poststructuralist epistemology. Foucault’s poststructuralist analyses supplied me with the ‘lenses’ with which to see beyond the obvious physical and relational conditions of poverty in the ‘coloured’ community of Scottsville, and recognise the operation of power relations that created and maintained these conditions. Hence the ‘description of poverty’ as set out in Chapter 1 as a research aim was described in terms of power relations in the community and their effects on the bodies of ‘coloured’ people.

Derrida’s poststructuralist ‘lenses’ offered me the theory of the limit and the possibility of crossing the limit (of poverty, shame and powerlessness). Hence, I discuss the relevance that these analyses had for this research.

#### **7.3.1 Foucault and the description of the ‘challenges of poverty’**

In Chapters 2 and 3, I used Foucault’s poststructuralist analyses of both archaeology and genealogy to uncover the conditions and the specifics of power relations that affect poor ‘coloured’ young people.

The key to the main challenges of poverty for young people in a ‘coloured’ community such as Scottsville lies in the description of these power relations: the presence of a drug and alcohol culture, the presence of various forms of interpersonal

violence and abuse and the absence of a culture of learning and of resources for recreation.

Recognising the chain-like effects of the problem of alcohol abuse in the community, for instance, sensitised me to the prevalence of Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) in some of the youngsters I met, and to how it limited their capacity to concentrate. I also discovered how many youngsters displayed the symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and realised that due to a lack of resources and support, these symptoms would mostly go undiagnosed and untreated. This also means that young people who find it hard to concentrate for longer periods, especially those who lack of parental support, tend to drop out of school. In doing pastoral praxis, my reading of Foucault adjusted my own perspective and made it possible for me to see beyond the distractedness and temper tantrums of the young people in the drama group to the historical and social conditions of power, its influence on their bodies and on their relationships.

Foucauldian archaeological analysis allowed me to recognise Scottsville's streets as places of danger and see how the young people, due to physical conditions beyond their control, were exposed to this danger. I started realising, for instance, how boredom and overcrowding pushed youngsters onto the streets. Young 'coloured' people also often accept apathy as the norm, because they have been exposed only to a gang and drug culture and not to any other kind of culture with which they could associate themselves. Therefore, pastoral praxis with young people in the community had to provide some alternatives to the dangerous boredom that they knew so well. Pastoral praxis has to take cognizance of the complexities and interrelatedness of these factors as it considers a response that can be relevant to the community.

Because I could borrow Foucault's lenses, I could start seeing the challenges of poverty in the 'coloured' community, especially in terms of strategies of control and subjugation of young people. In Chapter 2, I applied Foucault's methodologies of archaeology and genealogy to the discourses of violence, control and humiliation in Scottsville. These methodologies made it possible for me to describe power relations, not in abstract terms, but in terms of the operation of bio-power – the effects of power on the bodies of young people, particularly as it is expressed through various technologies of violence and of the humiliation of young people in 'coloured' communities in the Western Cape.

This was especially so in terms of understanding the enormous influence that the covert culture of shame and powerlessness plays in young people's lives – especially in terms of seeing themselves as agents of their own lives. The challenges of poverty that Foucauldian analysis made visible therefore extended from the practices of shaming and the functioning of disempowering discourses such as 'know your place', to how these discourses created and supported an internalised culture of shame in 'coloured' people (see Section 2.3.3.2, under the subheadings 'Verbal abuse and "shaming"', 'Shaming', 'Laughter as a form of shaming' and 'Shame and cultural imitation').

This research took on the challenge in terms of the physical realities of young people's lives, but especially in acknowledging and working with the complexities of internalised shame and powerlessness.

To me, this is ultimately the challenge that poverty poses to practical theology – namely how to work towards altering the internalised culture of shame and powerlessness associated with poverty in this country. A theology that is not mindful of this internalised culture can even feed the discourses of shame by choosing to focus on themes of sin, punishment and the authority of God versus the powerlessness and total obedience of man. Hence, ministers and community workers who work in poor areas should become mindful of their social responsibility in the light of the operation of these disabling discourses in their communities. Poststructuralist and feminist analyses of power relations should therefore be incorporated into theological training where they can create awareness about disabling discourses in the community and the ways in which theology itself can support or challenge such discourses.

My increased understanding of the degree to which a sense of shame and worthlessness has been internalised by young people meant that I developed patience in my relations with these young people. Young people would, for instance, not necessarily jump at opportunities for creative writing, simply because they did not consider themselves to be 'worthy'. Most of Scottsville's young people have been acculturated into thinking that adults and white people and educated people know best and are doubtful that they have anything of value to contribute. I discovered the controlling power of adults contributes to the silence of young people. Hence the object of my work with young people was not to instruct them about how life should be lived, but to facilitate their discovery of the possibilities of the forces of creativity, care, respect and transformation

in their own lives. Where I did share knowledges around the subjects of drama, poetry or theatre, these knowledges were offered to them with the aim of assisting these young people in finding their own voices (see Section 7.4.5).

The more I read of Foucault's theories, the more I realised that I also had little understanding of the details of the historical operation of bio-power in 'coloured' communities. This realisation prompted me to interview Aunt Liz Cupido about her experiences of bio-power (see Section 3.5.1). Aunt Liz's descriptions of bio-power illuminated Foucault's theories in the South African context. Not only does Chapter 3 document a 'coloured' person's experiences of bio-power, it also offers a critique of the ways in which pastoral power as control (based on the shepherd/sheep model) became normalised and institutionalised.

In Chapter 2, I refer to the role of institutions of schools and especially families in creating conditions for and in becoming instruments through which violence is applied. According to Burton (2008:62), almost one quarter of primary school learners and one third of secondary school learners in a nationwide study in South Africa reported that they do not feel safe in the community where they live. In the 'coloured' community, the violent political authoritarianism of the apartheid era with its various techniques of control, of obedience and subjugation, has formed the basis for authoritarian pastoral relations in schools and families in 'coloured' communities.

Research in the discipline of pastoral care that wants to be accountable to its poor research participants therefore also had to reflect on the terms and conditions of the operation of authoritarian pastoral power. Foucault's archaeology and genealogy therefore sensitised me to the fact that we need to reflect on power relations in the field of pastoral care, because, if pastoral care itself was historically employed as a strategy of control and violence, the poor challenge us as researchers to deconstruct pastoral care itself (as was done in Chapter 3). But I also wanted to become mindful of how power operates in our own lives, and in doing so, to be able to move others to reflect on our own practices and to continually create and recreate practices of resistance to abusive power relations. An awareness of power relations was one of the biggest epistemological gifts that this research gave me.

‘Seeing poststructurally’ (Davies 2000a:166) changed me not only in relation to my own work, but also in terms of how I grew to understand social responsibility and how my actions could create more possibilities for pastoral participation. I could therefore no longer read a newspaper from a position of neutrality, or fail to see the absence of hospitality and the lack of ‘attentive generosity’ towards the aliens, the former slaves, in the midst of a congregation in Welgemoed. In my Foucauldian analyses in Chapter 2 (current forms of bio-power in the ‘coloured’ community) and Chapter 3 (the history of bio-power in the ‘coloured’ community), I therefore describe the ‘challenges of poverty’ as physical and also as relational, pastoral challenges. The description of challenges in specific relational terms formed the backdrop against which this research would be done. The poststructuralist description of the challenges of poverty also challenged me as a researcher to consider the ways in which I use my power and influence in the research. Surely I could not know all that I do about the challenges of poverty described above, and as a Christian remain behind my desk in my own study?

Much has been written lately about the escalation of violence in poor communities, with younger and younger people becoming victims and perpetrators of violence. Burton (2008:6) points out that ‘exposure to violence and victimisation is a key predictor of later deviant behaviour and can also facilitate access to destructive peer-oriented activities such as gang activities’. Could I know all that Foucault had enabled me to see and still wash my hands of violence? My research therefore became a response, through its methodologies, to the challenges that Foucault’s analyses had made visible to me.

In this research, I knew I could use language openly to start to challenge the disabling discourses associated with ‘coloured’ poverty; but even more so, I realised that through the painstaking work of pastoral praxis in itself, I may be able to demonstrate that I regard the young people and others, like Anna, as powerful and gifted. In taking up this pastoral stance, I was sustained by Christ who challenged the discourses of His time through his caring, acknowledging praxis with the marginalised. It consequently became critically important to me in the research to make visible to those who had been subjected to discourses of powerlessness how they too had powerful experiences, insights and values to offer others. In Section 5.6.3, I have created specific witnessing events in which I made visible how the values they subscribed to influenced my life and the lives of others.

Foucault's analyses formulate the theme of the body as the point at which controlling pastoral power is applied. *Shalom* in such a research paradigm therefore meant working with power in ways that are concrete and that work towards creating mutuality in the face of humiliation and control. Foucault's analyses raised my awareness about the need for new embodied forms of relating that could deconstruct the pastoral power of control. The word 'challenge' especially applies to the fact that as a white person, I had been part of a system of control which created poverty for Aunt Liz and many others. The 'challenge of poverty' therefore became a personal 'pastoral' challenge for me: to take the responsibility to embody right human relations in this community in whatever way I could. In my work with young people, pastoral praxis therefore meant the painstaking and slow work of disrupting and dismantling internalised discourses of shame and of powerlessness. As a pastoral therapist I therefore became deeply concerned about the bodily steps we as a society and as a church are currently taking to demonstrate to young people that mutuality exists and what it feels like. Pastoral care itself therefore has the possibility of creating an alternative for young people who have been socialised into accepting subjugation and violence as the norm.

A poststructuralist epistemology made me see what the task of the research would be: to resist the disqualifying discourses of poverty by embodying new affirming discourses and, simultaneously, to unmask the operation of power which had been normalised. In a conversation with Noam Chomsky (Foucault & Chomsky 1974:130), Foucault said:

It seems to me that the real political task in a society such as ours is to criticize workings of institutions, which appear neutral and independent; to criticize and attack them in such a manner that the political violence which has always exercised itself obscurely through them will be unmasked, so that one can fight against them. This critique and this fight seem essential to me for different reasons... because political power goes much deeper than one suspects; there are centers and invisible, little-known points of support; its true resistance, its true solidity is perhaps where one doesn't expect it.

The metaphor of fighting that Foucault uses may not be the most appropriate metaphor for me to adopt in view of the violence described in Chapters 2 and 3, but the metaphor suggests that there are significant links between Foucault's methodology of genealogy on the one hand and liberation theology on the other. Sharon Welch (1982:113) argues: 'The dangerous memory (of suffering) expressed in liberation theology is not just a memory of conflict and exclusion,... It is also a memory of hope – a memory of

freedom and resistance. The domination is not absolute as long as there is protest against it.’ The political and theological task of this research therefore included my ‘protest’ against the subjugating discourses inside the community, the apathy both inside and outside the Scottsville community to the plight of ‘the other’, and the internalised forces of despair that tried to convince me that working in Scottsville would not amount to much. Such discourses of *apatheia* (see Section 3.2) work against *the opening* of hearts and minds on which the creation of possibilities depends.

In considering a response to ‘the challenges of poverty’, a more appropriate metaphor than the fighting metaphor may be the ‘dismantling’ metaphor. As black feminist poet Audre Lorde (s.a.) suggests, the ‘master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house’. In Chapter 2, 3 and 5, I have used the tools of poststructuralist analysis to start the intellectual dismantling of the master narrative of subjugating power that is associated with the experiences of poverty. The true resistance in this research came where I did not expect it – through feminist theology’s praxis of solidarity and participation with the suffering other. The instances of resistance in the research can therefore not be read separately from the analysis that questioned the rationality that led to the marginalisation of ‘coloured’ people. In this regard, Welch (1982:274) argues:

To engage in genealogy may be an act of faith. It expresses the willingness to engage in a life and death struggle for the oppressed, to live out conversion to the other as something that matters. Yet, to be critical of one’s position, to realize its partiality, is also an act of faith, an acceptance of one’s finitude and a refusal to cling to what may be transitory determinations of justice, freedom, solidarity. Faith impels genealogy as it evokes conversion to the other. It also evokes critique as it challenges self-security.

Next, I reflect on the contribution made to this research by Derrida’s deconstruction, and how it dictated against self-security by fostering an ethic of vulnerability towards the ‘concrete other’. I also reflect on the theme of *aporia* and the unfinished agenda of justice which continuously demands a response.

### **7.3.2 Derrida and the possibility of deconstruction**

In Chapters 2 and 3, using poststructuralist analytical thinking, I described the complexities and interrelatedness of the ‘challenges of poverty’. One of my research aims (see Section 1.3.4) was *shalom* and ‘the creation of possibilities’. In Section 5.2, I describe in great detail the significance that Derrida’s deconstruction had for my

thinking of the 'philosophy of the limit' (Cornell 1992:60). In this chapter, I reflect on the wider significance of the theory of the limit for the work of justice in South Africa.

Poverty evokes a multitude of limits. But this research did not ultimately let the limits define its methodology. The question 'why not?', or rather 'how come?', is answered in the next section in the light of Derrida's powerful work. Because of my research and reading about the levels of violence and injustice in 'coloured' communities in the Western Cape and how these affect young people's lives, I started to question the professional limits within which I worked. I could no longer only sit in an office having therapeutic conversations with young people and their families whilst I did nothing to contribute to changing the social and material conditions in which these young people live. The scope of the challenges of poverty therefore urged to me to deconstruct the traditional limits of pastoral therapy, namely one-on-one conversations with people behind closed doors. I sensed that taking 'therapeutic engagement' outside my office to where people worked and lived would mean that my work had a greater chance of building a caring culture. After deconstructing the limits of my pastoral task in my conversation with Dr Johann Roux in 2005 (see Section 4.2), I went to the community and invited its members into conversations with me. This deconstructive process is ongoing.

Because of Derrida, I have also been able to recognise the limits of my own understanding, as a white person, of poverty. The practice of deconstruction described in Chapter 5 therefore became the ethical practice by which I could invite that which lies outside my context, and let those understandings challenge and, ultimately, change me. For when I recognise the limit, I know that, at the same time, every limit invites a traversing, a crossing. To be able to think of what is impossible, we as pastoral theologians have to challenge what we have come to know and accept as the norm. Therefore, by way of poststructuralist analyses, I questioned the limits, what is included and what lies beyond in terms of poverty and of care for young people in the Scottsville community.

But deconstructive thinking also required me to apply such thinking to the boundaries of reflection in this research document. Such thinking invites me also to recognise the limits of traditional academic disciplines and their discourse. By including poetry, drama, rugby uprights and the ordinary conversations of poor women in this thesis,

I crossed the limits of possibility of how practical theology itself is defined. This is the challenge to all of us who work in the challenging contexts of poverty: not to be limited by and to what has been done before in the name of pastoral care and pastoral theology. Before Jesus multiplied the bread and fish, would it have been considered theology? Or would when he entered Levi's house have been considered theology? By immersing myself in Derrida's thinking, it became possible for me to discover Jesus as someone whose life and death deconstructed the limits of possibility. The Jesus who was re-introduced to me by feminist theology had traversed the many physical and relational non-roads (*aporias*) of poverty, powerlessness and shame before me. Realising this meant a widening of the limited focus I had in my own faith up till then.

Hence the notion of structure and poststructure becomes an important theme when discussing the theological discourses through which pastoral care towards the other is structured (see Chapter 5), the limits of a culture of poverty (see Chapters 2 and 3) and the subject's relation to language and discursive production (see Chapters 5 and 6). In their work on deconstruction by Jacques Derrida (Cornell 1992; Derrida 1989; Egéa-Kuehne; Lucy 2004; Naas 2003) and in the questioning of the discourses of power in our relationships of care to 'the other', feminists Seyla Benhabib (1992) and Sharon Welch (1982, 1985, 1990, 1995, 1997) provided this research with an *epistemology of discovering* that which is ethical in cross-cultural relations. The praxis of care in a context of poverty can therefore no longer claim to be 'neutral', but such a praxis is implemented knowing the discourses at play which create obstacles to relations that are (more) just and mutual.

### **7.3.3 The challenges of relating – a feminist theological perspective**

In Chapters 2 and 3, I have shown how the conditions and discourses of poverty in Scottsville, a 'coloured' community in the Western Cape, create 'non-possibilities' of safety, respect and opportunity for most of its young. In Chapters 3 and 5, I describe the discourses through which cross-cultural relations have historically been maintained as discourses of individuality and control. The relational effects of the operation of these discourses were and are effects of alienation, humiliation and, especially, of powerlessness. The significance of these cross-cultural discourses is that they are now being maintained by 'coloured' people in positions of power in the community itself. The object of maintaining power over others and of keeping them subjected and

powerless is still being enforced by many parents, ministers and teachers. The legacy of control has created the conditions of impossibility of participation in their society or in having a sense of belonging for many of Scottsville's young.

Because this research was done in the discipline of practical theology, I focused on these relational 'non-possibilities', but not simply to study them and report on them. The aim of my research was to create relational possibilities in the context of such relational impossibilities. To be able to do this, I worked in a feminist-poststructuralist (Denzin & Lincoln 2003:33) research paradigm. What I found particularly useful about feminist theology is not only its advocacy for women *per se* (see below), but also its broader ethics of relationality. The locus of relationality in feminist theology brought all kinds of pastoral power relation and their effects of marginalisation, violence and abuse into focus for me. As a liberation theology, feminist theology therefore takes the experiences of the marginalised as its point of departure. This allowed me as a researcher to take experiences of marginalisation such as the ones described in Chapters 2 and 3 as legitimate sources for theological reflection. Therefore, in addressing the challenges of poverty, I was supported by a theology that not only takes power abuse seriously, but also offers a humane alternative in the face of the history of power abuses (also in and through the church) in South Africa.

The ethics of relationality in feminist theology, as I discovered, is not based on women's own ability to care. In Chapter 4, I described how the ethics of relationality in feminist theology grew out of an understanding of God who loved the world so that He embodied His love in Christ. This research has made me see that the poor concrete other – the socially invisible and broken – were at the centre of Jesus' life. God's love as praxis is the basis of a feminist understanding of love as praxis. Pastoral care, which has always been considered to be the 'love praxis' of the church, is therefore not an addendum to feminist theology. It is that which motivates and drives feminist theology.

I am grateful that this research brought me to Scottsville, because here I again encountered the Jesus who deconstructed the limitations of His time through His embodied self and the praxis of His life and death. I cannot be committed to Jesus without a commitment to 'the concrete other' (see Section 5.3.1.2). Without reactivating the self-other responsibility within Christianity through praxis, even pastoral care that is a response to poverty is done according to individualist terms, agendas and

expectations. Praxis that takes symmetrical pastoral relations (see Section 5.4) seriously is radical in the sense that it demands unselfish service from those of us who are used to being served by others.

In this regard, Nolan (2001:85) argues:

There is no mistaking the two quite different ways in which power and authority are understood and exercised. It is the difference between *domination* and *service*. The power of this new society is not a power which has to *be* served, a power before which a person must bow down and cringe. It is the power which has an enormous influence in the lives of people by being of service to them. It is the power which is so unselfish that it will serve others even by dying for them. (Nolan's italics)

A feminist reading of the story of Christ also highlights the unconventional way in which God thinks about power. He chose an unwed young woman to let Christ be born. Christ's birth in a manger sets the scene for His life in which power relations are radically altered – no longer in control of others, but in service to others, no longer separate from them, but amongst them. Because of feminist theology, a totally new understanding emerged for me in the course of this research of the way in which Christ's praxis embodies the power of possibilities in the face of power abuse and relational impossibility.

Christ's range of possibilities included changing the physical conditions of people's lives. He changed the impossibility of death through His own death. But what especially moved me in my time in Scottsville is how He changed people's perceptions of the possibilities for their own lives. He showed fishermen that he had enough trust in each one of them that they could be His disciples; He showed Levi that He thought of him as being 'good enough' to share a meal with. He showed the prostitute at the well that she was intelligent and wise enough to for him to have the longest recorded theological conversation he had with anyone with her, and acknowledged the depth of her faith to the Canaanite woman who irritated the disciples because of her insistence that Christ save her child. Christ's relationships with these unknown, often marginalised people in society pointed to the fact that they were visible to Him and that He acknowledged them for something more than had been visible to society. Because of this loving acknowledgment, He rearranged power relations in society then and He still does. In a feminist anthropology, Christ makes no distinction between Himself and us, nor between us and 'the other'. This kind of symmetrical relationality (see Section 5.4)

which Christ made possible became the touchstone of my work towards relational possibilities in Scottsville. It is such a relationality that makes it possible for the last to be first, and the first last. Christ fulfilled faith in this possibility of a ‘beloved community’ (Welch 1990:160) itself.

### ***7.3.3.1 Experiential and embodied knowledge of women as a resource for theology***

In Section 4.3.1, I discussed as one of feminist theology’s primary sources, the daily experiences and knowledges of women and other marginalised people (Welch 1990:160).

The two Greek words for ‘know’ – *ginosko* and *oida* (NKJV Study Bible 1997:2089) apply here. *Ginosko* is the term used for coming to know or ‘to know personally’– a relational term that indicates growing knowledge. *Oida* is derived from the Greek verb meaning ‘to see’ – to perceive, or ‘to know absolutely’ (NKJV Study Bible 1997:2089). In this research I was able ‘to see’ those things I knew absolutely, such as that there can be no thriving of a community or personal agency in the presence of discourses of shaming or violence. I also started to see how Christ deconstructed the power relations of His time. This I do know (*oida*) for sure.

However, reading Foucault and Derrida and ‘seeing poststructurally’ meant that in this research I started investigating the terms by which we (especially people who do research) think we can know absolutely about the world or God. ‘To see’, for me, meant seeing the limits of my knowledge. Once I acknowledged those limits, I was able to invite others’ knowledge to extend my own. This process of exposure and invitation to knowledge in the research came about because I committed myself to the research aim of participation (see Section 1.3.3). In Section 1.3.4, I outlined the research aim of the creation of physical possibilities, but more especially relational possibilities. James Cochrane (2002:130) refers to McGaughey’s comments about the crucial role of ‘possibility’ as the driving force of theology in relation to ‘actuality’. Cochrane then argues:

Possibility always breaks open actuality, revealing what is new, at the same time concealing something else. This dialectic of revealing and concealing, at the heart of theology, also prevents any certainties about our claims and forces upon us the need for a critical appraisal of both actuality and possibility, both in theory and in practice.

Coming from a position of white privilege, this research was therefore, in the fullest sense of the word, a breaking open of actuality, because I discovered and worked with sources of knowledge that had previously been outside of my frame of reference. As a therapist I had always acknowledged that people have knowledges about their own lives. But regarding the experiences of women such as Aunt Liz, Doreen and Aunt Baai as sources for practical theology generated powerful new experiences of theological possibility for me, and for the research.

The experience of coming to new pastoral knowledge and to its possibilities therefore made me ask questions about the premises of a theological tradition that privileged certain types of knowers and their knowledges. A practical theology that centralises white males as the prime knowers, and rational deductive reasoning as its main form of knowledge, marginalises other knowers and their knowledges:

...the voice of the other is a voice that is skewed, silenced, subjugated not simply by other voices, but by structures of power and of economy. To forget this, is to make nonsense of the voice of the other who is *not* normally heard, whose absence is forgotten or desired, whose silence is a pleasure to those that would otherwise be unsettled in their place of power and threatened in their spheres of interest.

(Cochrane 2001:75-76, Cochrane's italics)

The research is therefore relevant to feminist theology's position as a workable epistemology in a context of poverty in South Africa, because what led to the creation of possibilities in the face of poverty's challenges was participatory praxis itself. In Chapter 4, I discuss the centrality of praxis to feminist theology. In this regard, Chopp (1989:21) argues that feminist theology is not a mere corrective enterprise in Christianity. Instead, it is rather the 'reformulation of Christianity in which, among other things, the good news of Christianity emancipates and transforms the world, instead of, as was so often the case in modern Christianity, merely interpreting Christianity to itself'.

The 'good news of Christianity' that Chopp (1989:21) refers to for me relates to the fact that Jesus honoured the voices and actions of the previously marginalised and introduced us as Christians to new emancipatory ways of relating to 'the other' (see Sections 5.3 and 5.3.1.2). I am reminded of how Jesus recognised the actions of the woman with the alabaster flask (Lk 7:36-50) towards him as love. When he forgave her in the presence of the powerful Pharisee, Jesus said: 'Your faith has saved you...'

Similarly, the actions of the women described in Chapter 4 of this thesis embody love. It is a love, not societal power, that revealed faith for Jesus. In Chapters 4 and 5, I therefore argue that embodied pastoral care, the least favoured child of theology, is that through which faith as love is realised. If Jesus valued the woman's actions to the extent that he turned them into an example of faith, why then does Christian theology today not value women's embodied faith in the same way?

Implicit in feminist theology as a form of liberation theology 'is the insurrection of subjugated knowledges (of the Third World, minorities, women, the oppressed) against the functional understanding of truth operative in a society of normalization' (Welch 1982:103). By using women's experiences and knowledges as resources in this research (see Chapters 3 to 5), I am making an appeal to the academic theological tradition to reconsider whose knowledge it centralises and normalises, whose knowledges are marginalised and what is lost to theology because of this approach. In this research, I have aimed to make clearly visible why I regard Anna, Aunt Baai, Doreen, Joan and Aunt Liz as practitioners of practical theology. Adrienne Rich (1978:67) writes:

My heart is moved by all I cannot save:  
so much has been destroyed

I have to cast my lot with those  
who age after age, perversely,

with no extraordinary power,  
reconstitute the world.

My participation with the women of Scottsville therefore led me to a new aim for the research: to honour the women whose actions embody faith privately and publicly (for example, at the SAAP conference), and in doing so to reconstitute the real world of Scottsville and the world of 'practical theology'. This research as justice-making therefore meant that poor women did not remain subjects of theology and theological research, but, through centralising their praxis, were acknowledged as its agents.

Therefore this research also reflected critically on the discipline of pastoral care by women who live in a context of poverty, not as 'applied' theology but as central to a new understanding of what practical theology is or should be. In the first chapter, I quoted Poling's (1991:187) definition of practical theology as being the 'theological interpretation of the unheard voices of personal and community life for the purpose of

continual transformation of faith in the true God of love and power toward renewed ministry practice'. Something I did not bargain for when I embarked on this research was the extent to which my hearing of those unheard voices would transform my understanding of faith as praxis.

Because pastoral praxis is centralised in liberation theology, Pattison (1994:6) argues that the praxis of pastoral care can no longer be regarded as mere addenda to theological hermeneutics. Instead, pastoral care is foregrounded as the central resource for theological reflection and for the generation of theological understandings. In my research, I showed how the praxis of care itself in the Scottsville community is *the* primary meaning on which our theological meaning-making rests, not the other way around. In Section 7.4.5, I discuss the implications that such an understanding of care has for the role we as practical theologians (need to) accord the body in both theology and theological research. I want to go even further by saying that practical theology, the task of reconstituting the world, is already alive and well in the streets of Scottsville, whether outsider academics reflect on it or not. In the light of so much that has been destroyed in South Africa, this research therefore challenges those who still regard practical theology as just an academic discipline to consider whether their position is ethically defensible or Christian at all.

In the next section, I make a case for *participatory theology*. The term 'practical theology' still holds the danger that those with power may decide what practice is and how and where it should be done. Despite its good intentions, it may still be possible for practical theologians to work in preconceived ways, without allowing the context of poverty to open their 'hearts and minds'. Such theology is still about 'us' helping, instructing and controlling 'them'. By contrast, a participatory theology refers to a praxis that develops in and from the context in which it is done. This praxis is done in a spirit of vulnerability, because the practitioner has now opened heart and mind to be changed. This is the only way in which I am able to discover 'the other of myself' – a discovery that has been long in coming to theology in South Africa.

#### **7.4 REFLECTING ON THE RESEARCH AIM OF PARTICIPATION**

As the challenges of poverty and violence in this country escalate, Christians are increasingly becoming aware of the need to make faith and research work cross-

culturally and the need to let both transform relationships. This research has shown that it is possible. However, there are many historical and current discourses that stand in the way of cross-cultural participation. In Section 7.4.1, I discuss the ways in which I acknowledged these challenges and worked with them in the research.

The modern liberal concept of the public space is that of a neutral cultural space in which participation can occur freely (Fraser 1992:290). However, the context of poverty, the lack described above, certain hierarchical social structures (in schools and in the church), together with the history of apartheid of which I, like many others, have been a beneficiary, all constitute realities that have a direct impact on the trust, willingness and motivation with which people can participate. Hence, this research aimed to develop participation itself as a possibility.

#### **7.4.1 Researcher experiences as a resource in the research**

In Section 1.4.1.1, I indicated that this research would also be informed by the knowledges that emerge because of my self-reflexivity as a researcher, as a privileged South African, Christian, mother, poet, therapist and human being. In doing cross-cultural research, the practice of self-reflexivity kept me alert to how I was situated as a researcher (Hall 1996:36; Vigen 2004:235). In terms of the research aim of participation, it became clear that it was critical to recognise and be accountable for the ways in which my personal, historical, racial, educated, gendered self affected my participation in the research and others' ability to participate with me. Self-reflexivity proved to be an invaluable practice, especially in terms of the metaphor of the colon as participation in this research. In this research I used the following *methodologies of self-reflection*: in Section 5.3.1.3 I described the methodology of using *cultural consultants* (see Section 5.3.1.3) from the Scottsville community to act as my research guides by explaining the context to me. I also used the research methodology of keeping a *research journal* to reflect on my own power, the struggles I had and the discoveries I was making. I also used *letters* (see Section 5.6.4) to reflect on personal experiences that I had. Another way in which I reflected was in the form of the *telephonic conversations* I had with my promoter.

In Chapter 2, I used Foucault's method of archaeology to make visible the unconscious system of rules that supports discourses such as 'discipline' in 'coloured' schools.

Chapter 3 deals with the forms and contents of the serious discourses of political classification and normalisation whose conditions were being sought, as suggested by Dreyfus and Rabinow (1982:94). Throughout the research, the practice of self-reflexivity made visible to me the conditions that played a part in the operation of the discourse of participation in this research. Archaeology was therefore not only used as an epistemological tool for describing the conditions that keep the discourses associated with ‘coloured’ poverty in place, but also as a tool for uncovering and making visible the conditions that informed cross-cultural participation in this research. In the next section, I give a practical example of how, in reflecting on the research in this chapter, I uncovered a certain condition, a blindness on my part, that obstructed the possibility of participation for Petunia Primary’s teachers. An archaeological analysis of my own experience therefore reveals ‘what counts as knowable, who is it that knows, the impact of knowledge’ (Welch 1985:10).

#### ***7.4.1.1 An archaeological analysis of my participation as a researcher***

When I arrived at Petunia Primary in 2005 with my teacher training programme, I was so intent on creating relational possibilities for young people that, in my eagerness, I remained closed to the realities of teachers’ lives. My programme became an instruction manual about how to relate with more openness and greater sensitivity to the alternative stories in young people’s lives. The stories of abuse that I encountered at the school created in me a sense of urgency about ‘spreading the word’ on how to relate differently. In my eagerness, I did not remain open and alert to alternative stories of ‘small’ acts of care in teachers’ lives. Because I did not ask for these stories, the problem stories dictated the course of my interaction with teachers. Instead of searching for the examples of values in teachers’ own lives that could create platforms for hope, I wanted to offer my versions of hope. Consequently the energy in our conversations was all my own. When people are not energised, they do not join. Now I know. In a book called *We make the road by walking*, Horton and Freire (1990:65) recount an anecdote in which his wife, Elza, after one of his talks, told him that ‘it does not work like this’. He protested that he talked about ‘serious things’ to which she replied: ‘All you said is right, but did you ask them whether they were interested in listening to you speak about that? You give the answers *and* the questions.’

In this research, I too started out by giving the answers and questions to Petunia Primary's teachers. The alternative knowledges that I did make visible in the sessions with teachers were those of Mr Noach, a person in a position of power in the school. With hindsight I can see clearly how my disregard for the alternative knowledges of ordinary teachers about relating to young people could in fact have fostered discourses of disqualification and powerlessness in their own lives.

Gradually, my relationship with Mr R outside of these formal sessions taught me about participation in ways I did not expect (see Section 2.3.3.2 under the subheading 'From therapeutic to pastoral relationship: a research journey with Mr R'). Firstly, I physically joined him where he was, in his classroom. Secondly, I asked him the questions about his dreams for teaching that I should have asked in the formal sessions. Mr R then shared with me his love of art, his dream of teaching art to young people and how he kept the dream alive, despite the many physical constraints he encountered within the teaching system. When I connected with, acknowledged and started to support this alternative reality in his life, Mr R started participating with me and I with him. Once the alternative story started circulating, it could be built upon and I could acknowledge it in the presence of the school principal. I have to thank Mr R for his willingness to engage with me, despite the blindness he too must have experienced from me in the staffroom during my presentations. Mr R's willingness and generosity to me have created important conditions for the colon of participation to exist between us, and because of us, also a whole group of young people. I am thankful that he did not 'write me off', but taught me how participation actually works when relating with teachers who work in a context of poverty – of which I had very little knowledge at the beginning of the research process.

To be able to understand the necessity for and to conceptualise participatory action, this research chose as its epistemologies the feminist theological paradigm, with its ethics of mutuality, and a poststructuralist epistemology to provide a thorough understanding of the different contexts from which we speak as co-participants in the research. These different contexts had a bearing on the possibility for participation in this research as a project – as Heaney (2000:115) puts it: 'The significance of new knowledge, the meaningfulness of our research, rests on the thoroughness with which we have understood the intersubjective and political context of our discourse. The art of explaining is dialogical.' Considering research to be a discourse with its own

limitations, context, but also its possibility-generating capabilities, therefore meant that I could factor into the research the conditions for participation. The poststructuralist view on pastoral power in particular (see Chapter 3) kept me mindful of the historical context of this research and continuously reminded me that one of poverty's biggest challenges may be the willingness of the 'coloured' marginalised to participate with me as a white researcher in this research and my lack of understanding of the obstacles to their participation.

After four years of working with poor young people, I am now much more aware of the many obstacles to joining that exist between teachers and young people in communities such as Scottsville. I have experienced some of these obstacles myself in the months of rehearsals for the play and in the creative writing sessions. I am also, importantly, aware for the first time of the obstacle to my participation with teachers that can be found in the judging of my own heart. In the title of this thesis, I refer to 'opening hearts and minds'. I intend to use this new openness of my heart and mind in relation to participation that this research has afforded me in the service of this and other poor communities. Welch (1997:127) states:

The solution to the crisis of political theory is not the abdication of power, but an exercise of power that co-exists with an ironic awareness of our limits and our potential for error and harm. That means moving beyond a logic of dualism and constructing new vocabularies for social analysis that are capable of creating group cohesion and motivating political action without demonizing our opponents or ignoring our mistakes.

Recognising my mistake, I engaged with a new awareness with adults in the community. The insight that the archaeological analysis in the research offered me already made a difference to the way in which I planned and conducted the first meetings of the parent support group I started at Scottsville Secondary School in February 2009. In 2009, I also became aware of a new sensibility with which I approached my work in the community. On my way to the evening of our first parent support group meeting in Scottsville in February 2009, I was suddenly overcome by a sense of panic. The panic grew out of my awareness that I as a white parent know very little about the real struggles of poor 'coloured' parents. Would what I have to offer resonate at all with the people from this community, and would I be able to make them feel 'heard'? Reflecting on that sense of panic, I realised that it grew out of a new humility that came as a result of having participated in this community for four years.

For Carter Heyward (1995:7) '(h)umility is radically relational'. According to Heyward (1995:8-9), 'being humble means struggling to know and do what's right...and to be more genuinely present with one another'. Carter Heyward identifies the value of humility as central to our struggle for right relation.

This research process has opened my heart and mind to how I exercise my power. This awareness has brought a new humility to my cross-cultural relations that I did not have before the start of the research. Humility therefore started to feature in how I 'construct(ed) new vocabularies for social analysis' (Welch 1997:127) that favoured real participation by all.

Being able to reflect on my own experience therefore presented me with 'a new narrative, a narrative in which we can see ourselves as moral agents, as subjects of our own history... Our own narratives help us to imagine ourselves in a new way, to know ourselves in a new way....', as Isasi-Díaz (1994:48) puts it. Working within a research paradigm that regards the 'personal as the political' (Isasi-Díaz 1994:11-44) offered me the opportunity to come to know myself in a new way as less sure, more vulnerable and more humble in relation to my poor other. This is a kind of change I did not aim for or expect at the start of the research, but that was made possible by the methodology of participation itself.

The act of participation brings humanity to epistemology. When I reflect on the interview I did with Aunt Liz Cupido in Section 3.5.1, I realise that it came about because I had read Foucault and I was curious to know whether there were aspects of Aunt Liz's story which could illuminate Foucault's theories. I realised that academic research requires a certain epistemological framework that determines the course of the research. However, whilst listening to her, something strange and new happened to me. Aunt Liz's narrative of personal grief, community fragmentation and unfulfilled dreams against the backdrop of a particularly pastoral landscape went beyond epistemology. There are no sobs in Foucault's works. What Foucault had introduced me to, Aunt Liz brought home to me in bodily ways I had never experienced whilst reading Foucault, or feminist theorists, for that matter. What was different about this was that I was implicated in her experience. I was no 'neutral' reader reading about power relations in a French asylum. This was South Africa. We were speaking in the same mother tongue. And yet, there was bitter irony in the fact that Aunt Liz could not go to high school and

I was interviewing her about this experience for my doctoral thesis. I felt a stiffness in my throat, a burning of tears against my eyelids. Whilst I grew up with limitless opportunity because of being white, Aunt Liz, who longed to be a nurse, served customers in a butchery. I realised then that one of Aunt Liz's many gifts to the research was how she made me aware of the limits of the understanding that I as a privileged white person can bring to her trauma.

This difference demands a kind of non-understanding from me. Kapano Ratele (Krog et al 2009:172) quotes Lanzmann on 'the obscenity of understanding' another's trauma. In this research I have been reminded that no matter how much I read, or even participated with others, I have never been poor nor deprived of opportunity. It is with reverence that I hereby acknowledge the scope of that which I do not understand, can never understand about the experience of poverty: an *aporia* of experiences of class and race that I am unable to traverse.

#### **7.4.2 Participatory praxis and the aim of *shalom***

In this section I formulate how this research tried to respond to the research question of Chapter 1:

How can participatory pastoral practices be developed through caring *with* relationships with the purpose of taking on the various challenges that the effects of poverty pose to young people in a coloured community?

A central aim of this research had been the creation of *shalom*. In Chapter 1, I quoted Brueggemann (1976:99), who said that the 'purpose of God is the empowerment of the powerless' and that, therefore, '(s)halom depends on the redistribution of power'. However, the redistribution of power did not, in the first instance, occur because I simply 'applied' some praxis in a context of poverty, but rather because I started participating in the lives of poor people. Out of our participation emerged the kinds of praxis that made a difference. A case in point is the renovation of the Scottsville Secondary School's library. This was not a praxis I had envisaged at the beginning of the research. As the young people and I started participating in creative writing sessions, I asked them what they were reading. Only a few of the young people told me that they were members of the municipal library. Others told me that there were almost no appropriate books for them to read in their school library. This particular challenge of poverty arose out of our conversations and demanded a participatory response.

It became a truly participatory research project in which people from different affluent communities participated with Thelton, Thelren and Michael, myself and members of the governing body.

Therefore the research design developed organically out of our participation. In an organic research design such as this one, practices often shaped new methodologies, which in turn, led into new theoretical directions, instead of my working with a pre-conceptualised academic 'score sheet' that merely uses methodologies to validate or prove certain empirical truths.

### **7.4.3 Pre-participatory praxis**

As this was specifically research that was directed at a school community, I aimed in particular to encourage teachers to reflect on the kind of relationships they have with young people. However, in Scottsville, teachers are also affected by the context of poverty: a lack of resources, big classes, poor parent support, delinquency and the general absence of a culture of learning in the community. This research shows how I purposefully participated in schools to support teachers and to create educational possibilities. My aim of participating with teachers with a view to supporting change was slow to be accepted by most of the teachers at the two schools where I ended up doing research. Initially, many teachers doubted my motives; others suggested that they did not want to change the *status quo* or were too tired or despondent to even think about it. In Section 7.4.1.1, I discuss how my own closed stance may have led to teachers' non-participation.

Over time, my work at both Petunia Primary and Scottsville Secondary School developed far beyond the original training programmes I had envisaged. In Chapters 4 and 6, I describe how my pastoral participation with women and young people from the community developed. However, I still came up against a lack of enthusiasm amongst the majority of the teachers for the writers' group and the work of the drama society. Teachers would simply not tell the young people in their classes about the existence of the groups or of events linked to them, such as performances of the play in the community, a poster competition, or my regular meetings with youngsters interested in developing their writing skills. Young people were also not told about the holiday workshops I offered. After the restored library had opened its doors in June 2008, I still

met with youngsters at the high school who were not aware that there were new and exciting books inside the new library for them to borrow. Teachers greeted me politely, but kept me at a distance. I experienced the atmosphere as one of distinct coldness. These experiences presented opportunities for me to feel the pain of rejection and of working in isolation – something people in these communities have had to live with for decades. I realised that in building trust, many teachers needed to be convinced of my *bona fides* and I learnt to regard this kind of work as pre-participatory work I needed to do before they could join me.

In Chapters 2, 4, 5 and especially Chapter 6, I describe the work of this research as the slow, patient work of building trust, of negotiation to cross the limits of what had been done before, and of reflecting on whose power is at work – and to what effect. I discovered that where there is no culture of cross-cultural participation: I had to be prepared to work first and in the process establish credibility. Such examples of work in this research involved my physically getting my hands dirty, for example, by dusting the library shelves and by rehearsing the play with a boisterous group of teenagers on hot summer afternoons. I therefore refer to this essential part of my cross-cultural research as pre-participatory praxis, which I hope may have paved the way for some participation by adults later.

I realise that my praxis alone will tell of my commitment to being a different kind of white pastoral worker, therapist and researcher than one who controls, exploits or silences. Pre-participatory praxis is the work of trust-building, which I need to do because of the legacy of racism and pain associated with me as a white woman of privilege. Such pre-participatory work is literally an undoing, a deconstruction of the ideas people of colour may hold of white outsiders wanting to ‘research’ them without contributing anything to their lives. I want to apply the description that Charles Waldegrave (2003:28) uses to describe what ‘just therapy’ means: ‘The measure of its commitment to justice can be assessed by the commitment to the themes of liberation and self-determination at the heart of the therapeutic process.’ The theme of liberation can only be made visible through research praxis on behalf of the liberation of others, and such praxis takes time.

In Chapters 2 and 5, I describe how I gradually started having individual conversations with teachers at the school during this time as another method of pre-participation. As

my *bona fides* started becoming clear to teachers and they experienced me as an ordinary human being, the atmosphere between us started thawing. As they witnessed the time I put into the various projects, my commitment to the young people in the community, and the ways in which my methodologies strove to honour the marginalised, it became possible for them to acknowledge me, even join me (like Mr R and Mr M who drove young people to the book signing by Breyten Breytenbach in Stellenbosch).

I experienced being joined many a time with teachers from the Scottsville Secondary School during the weeks in which I worked in the library. They would express their delight at the library, chat with me about their own passion for books and the dreams they have for young people in the community. I was delighted when, several weeks after the library opened, I discovered that one of the teachers at the school had, without my knowledge, been canvassing extensively for book donations for the library. Wendy, the woman who helped with administration at the school and who took up the role of librarian with fervour, went on a one-day librarians' course. Thelren, Thelton and Michael were appointed to help in the library during breaks and after school. The people of the community had taken ownership of their library. The cultural pre-participation work that I had done blossomed into real participation by adults, of their own accord and without my involvement.

When teachers then started participating with me in the creation of possibilities, in the face of everything in the context that worked against it, the research aim was accomplished. But our participation accomplished more than a research aim; it created the possibility of overcoming historical and contextual challenges of distrust, scepticism and cross-cultural non-participation, towards the creation of pastoral possibilities together. The thesis gives an account of how these challenges were recognised, how I decided to *live* some of those challenges down, the spirit of generosity with which some of the 'coloured' women and young people accepted me and of how participation was accomplished.

In the next section I want to describe another kind of research methodology that has to do with the more embodied and interpersonal *caring with* of the research question.

#### **7.4.4 Traversing the *aporia* of community participation**

In Section 4.3.3, I discuss ‘beloved community’ as a source in feminist theology. In a feminist epistemology, the symmetrical nature of communal relationships is reflected in the terms ‘solidarity’ and ‘mutuality’. In the South African context, the feminist commitment to create ‘beloved community’ through solidarity is what this research worked towards creating between women from different cultural backgrounds. Our creating ‘beloved community’ is the embodied response to the ‘caring with’ of the research question of Chapter 1.

In Chapter 2, I show how control and individualism create experiences of alienation and powerlessness. Currently, many ‘coloured’ people in positions of influence, such as teachers, subscribe to a culture of control over young people which resists and undermines ‘beloved community’. The disempowering effects of the colonising, controlling power of American culture in the lives of poor ‘coloured’ young people were discussed in Section 2.3.3.2, under the subheading ‘Shame and cultural imitation’ and in Section 6.2.1. A new generation of ‘slaves’ is being kept ‘in their place’ through new forms of control and subjectification by people in their own communities and by the influence of a strong consumerist, individualist culture from another continent.

At a conference on memory, narrative and forgiveness, held in Cape Town ten years after the TRC, Dr Mamphela Ramphele (2006) spoke on reparation and the fact that South Africa’s ‘bleeding’ communities are in urgent need of socio-economic empowerment. She urged the members of the audience: ‘We need to think how we can make amends... (how) can we make a difference in the lives of all those young people who are driven in desperation into a life of crime.’ Ramphele was urging us to create conditions for community for poor young people in which they, literally, feel embraced. The urgent need for alternative, non-controlling ways of relating to young people are, however, dependent on young people’s participation and on our willingness to embrace them. Brueggemann (2007:51) states that community depends on our active ‘gathering’ to become ‘beloved’:

In context, then, ministry cannot be about maintenance; it is about gathering, about embrace, about welcoming home ‘all sorts of and conditions’ of people. Home is a place for the mother tongue, of basic soul food, of old stories told and treasured, of being at ease, known by name, belonging without qualifying for membership. The ministry of gathering is one to which God has been committed forever.

The ‘ministry of gathering’ (Brueggemann 2007:56) that God calls us as white Christians to in South Africa is all the more poignant, given the fact that we were the ones who have made slaves of the ‘coloured’ people, who have created the conditions of their exile, as Aunt Liz’s story in Chapter 3 bears testimony to. The responsibility of restoring the possibility for humanity and community therefore lies with those who first normalised relations of violence, control and individualism. My (research) work in Scottsville was therefore my response to the covenant of God, to restore the possibility of a sense of feeling at ease, of being known and belonging without qualification, especially amongst Scottsville’s women and young people. How this was achieved in the research had less to do with the following methodology and more with following where my body took me.

#### **7.4.5 Research as care: a response to the challenge of embodiment**

The body as the site of care in research is especially significant in contexts of poverty in South Africa where violent forms of power have targeted and still target the body in all kinds of controlling and destructive ways (see Chapters 2 and 3). The object of such power relations is for the body to become controlled, silenced and invisible – also to itself. The legacy of such relations continues to this day in communities such as Scottsville in the form of discourses such as ‘knowing your place’. Young people would often instruct me not to acknowledge their talents in front of other young people in the school for fear of being seen as not ‘knowing their place’. However, as each one of the women of Chapter 4 and the young people of Chapter 6 became ‘a concrete other’ to me and I to them, our relationship itself became the site where this discourse was challenged. Through my eyes, each of the young people could start seeing himself or herself as unique and special (see Section 5.6.3.1 for a description of the witnessing ceremonies during which I publicly acknowledged each young person in the drama group). Therefore the task of this research was to find ways in which to describe the self – no longer within such disqualifying discourses, but as a relational self who can be re/described – through acts of embodied care. In this regard, Joan Tronto (1995:141) argues: ‘...care provides the basis for the most important form of contemporary radical political thinking’. Looking back on many of the significant moments of this research, I realise that they happened because of the fact that I allowed my body to participate in creating meaning.

The initial interest in poetry amongst Petunia Primary's Grade 7s, for instance, was not sparked simply because I had analysed Breytenbach's poem, '*Ek sal sterf en na my vader gaan...*' with them but because I invited them to experience the poem. Many young people closed their eyes while they listened. The spirituality of Breytenbach's metaphors, and the combination of his sonorous voice and the music in the background moved the hearts of many of the young people because I had given them permission to experience the poem bodily. When I discussed the Ingrid Jonker poem, '*Donkerman*' with the same groups, I took a drum along and the young people were invited to experience poetry as rhythm in a physical way. These experiences led to young people's experimentation with poetry themselves. Their access to the 'magic' of poetic language came through their own bodies.

On other occasions my bodily 'tuning in' to the bodies of others set energy in motion for possibility-generating work. This was the case when I saw Anna fleeing from our group during break. I sensed that something was wrong and caught up with her on her way to the gate. The conversation that followed had important consequences for Anna and for the insights she would later share with others. However, looking back, I realise how meaning sometimes hinged on my being attuned to the bodies of others. Especially in contexts where people often retreat to the familiar but often isolating territory of silence, tuning in to the body of the other became a vital part of creating meaning. In my conversation with Tracey about her shaming of others, I was intensely aware of the need to be firm without shaming her in the process (see Section 6.5). In working with troubled youth, I have adapted Rodríguez's (2001:271) metaphor of 'children whispering' to 'youth whispering' (see Section 6.6). As the rehearsals of the play progressed I kept on 'whispering' encouragement to Tracey who felt intensely insecure about her ability to play the part of the doctor.

Care can be 'methodologised' and be turned into a discipline over which countless (feminist/theological) theories can be developed. I discovered that meaning often lies exactly in that moment when I sat huddled over the script with Tracey, when Anna and I embraced, when I opened the door of my car to Doreen, when Aunt Liz and I, and Mr Foster and I (see Sections 3.3.3 and 3.5.1) shared tears as they told me the painful stories of injustice. In the unfolding narrative of the research in which I participated in their realities and they in mine, the very real and 'ordinary' events that constituted our sharing represent to me what White (2000:132) calls 'the spiritualities of the surface'.

In Section 4.3.3.1, I documented the many ways in which I experienced the spirituality of relationship in bodily ways. These were the moments when Aunt Baai put her hand behind my back as she introduced me to her pastor or when she sang to me in my moment of despair.

In Chapter 5, I therefore emphasise the urgent need for the church to develop a kind of care that is rooted in an ethic of vulnerability (see Section 5.5.2.2). For a culture that values theology as primarily an individual and intellectual practice, this indeed represents radical thinking. Care that emerges out of an ethic of vulnerability is care that is reliant on the body as a source of knowledge and meaning-making – especially where one finds oneself in a situation in the community where methodology or analytic tools cannot reach. At such times during the research I had to learn to trust my body as a powerful resource through which meaning could be made.

In Chapter 6, I described such a situation, when the discord amongst the young people and the non-attendance of some actors caused me to burst into tears in front of the group. It was a moment I had not anticipated. It simply occurred out of a sense of despair. However, my show of vulnerability altered my relationship with the young people. Not only did the young people take responsibility for the play in new and dramatic ways (see Section 6.6), they also responded to me in new and caring ways.

It was as if the vulnerability I had shown brought it home to the young people that their actions had the power to affect me profoundly. They mattered this much to me. A new sense of mutuality emerged between us because I literally gave up the control I had. This is the challenge that poverty poses to the self-containment and invulnerability of the privileged members of faith communities: to become willing to be made vulnerable to the possibility that the poor can affect us deeply. If the poor can affect us, it then follows that they can invite us to let go of control. As we relinquish our power to control (also the direction and outcomes of our research!), the poor concrete other can enter our lives and research. As the poor other enter as equals, they alter the spirit and content of our debates about poverty. Our conferences on poverty will therefore look and feel different because we will be able to start seeing the opulence of the venue and the inconsequentiality of much of our intellectualising.

#### 7.4.6 Research as a response to the challenge of participating in relationship

In Chapter 6, I described how one of the challenges of education, especially in a context of many relational injustices, is the challenge of forming relationships. The operation of a structuralist ethos in poor schools works against relationship and rather focuses on the assessment and management of young people. Such a system is closed and depends on certainties and known outcomes that the system is aimed towards achieving. This is also the way in which theological traditions such as Sunday school and catechesis are currently being played out in poor communities. These traditions in their insistence on finding *the* answer and in assessing whether *this* has been achieved, greatly inhibits young people's own sense of agency in relation to the values of Scripture and the nature of theology itself.

This is why the idea of *relationship* is so central to my understanding of the meaning of work in poor communities. Relationship is about the possibility of solidarity and care with concrete others. But a poststructuralist understanding of *relationship* also means that I regard neither the realities of poverty nor 'the self' as complete or already defined. A relational stance means that I enter into an open-ended process in which I share of myself, but also receive and can therefore be changed by what I share and receive.

Relational thinking in the research therefore meant that I used language to constantly invite young people to re-evaluate the position they have in relation to, for instance, the drug culture and their relationship to discourses of violence. In Chapter 6, I document how I engaged young people in conversations about their relationship to poetry and what it was they wanted to say through their particular poems and how this could be done. Poetry and drama have featured in this research as ways through which the highly personal and 'ordinary' experiences of young people could be voiced, heard and legitimised. Seen against the backdrop of the experiences of subjugation and of 'knowing one's place' in the 'coloured' community as described in Chapter 1, the young people's poetry embodies their new-found voices. In a context that subjugates the voice of the marginalised so strongly, this is no small achievement. Language turned out to be a powerful meaning-making activity in the midst of powerlessness. The play about the dangers of Tik and Verona's moving poem about and the senseless death of Bolle and the community's apathy serve as examples. The young people's relationship with language also offered the possibility for them to mourn that which they could not

change and celebrate the discoveries they made. Our poetry represents the traversal of the *aporia* of language itself – finding words for that which had not yet been said by anyone in this way, in this place.

In poor communities there is little appreciation for the skills, values and talents young people have to offer the community. The absence of a culture of appreciation in this poor community meant that I became mindful of how I could make my appreciation for young people visible. In this way it became possible for people to start seeing themselves through my appreciative eyes. An important discovery I made during the research was that I had the power, because of my position in the school, to make these values, skills and talents visible not only to the young people themselves, but also to their parents and especially their teachers.

Relationality was therefore not treated as a ‘theme’ of the work. It was, and still is, the basis of the work. I realise now that whatever actions of ours create belonging for those who do not feel that they belong, a homecoming for those out in the cold, can be called theology. Chapter 1 introduced the aim of *shalom* as a kind of healing and empowering relationship. Poetry and drama with young people *can therefore be legitimately* included in theological research that has healing and empowering relationship as its aim. The experiences of the research have taken my feminist understanding of theology as praxis to another, more dynamic possibility-generating level. I now regard as theology any act of embrace and of homecoming that I create for the concrete other. In fact, theology is the spirit of relationship that depends on my *embodied participation* to be fulfilled. This understanding is bound up with the realisation that theology is ultimately also about an acute awareness of all the *aporias* that have not yet been seen or even formulated. Only my participation in the context of the concrete other can create awareness in me of the *aporias* that need to be traversed.

For Mr Noach, my ‘becoming synonymous with the community’ (see Section 5.4.1) was the basis of the work he described as ‘reconciliation’. This, I now understand, is the possibility-generating message of the life and death of Christ: it is through our faith as participation that the ongoing *aporia* of justice must be traversed, especially in South Africa. It is through the passion and commitment of participatory praxis that we can meet the Christ who has gone before us (walked the *aporia*) in deconstructing the limits of reconciliation.

In March 2009, the principal and staff of the Scottsville Secondary School invited me to be the guest speaker at the school's annual prize-giving ceremony. The speech I gave to the young people, parents and staff in March 2009 had the theme 'Yes we can', the slogan with which Barack Obama had just won the US presidential elections. This speech gave me the opportunity to publicly challenge the disabling discourses that young people in Scottsville are facing. These are the discourses of 'No I cannot...'. I then shared with the audience some of the discoveries we had made in the last four years: a young girl thinks she cannot write a poem, tries and discovers – 'Yes I can'. I told the story of the young boy who joined our drama group out of curiosity. He had never acted before. He then, reluctantly, read for a part and became a lead actor in our play. In my speech I reminded the audience that this was the way in which the library was brought back to life too – because lots of people started working for change. I shared with the audience how some people from my community tried to discourage me when four years ago they heard of my wish to work in Scottsville. I then thanked the young people for showing me as 'a white woman in Scottsville... yes you can'. Spontaneous applause followed this remark. This was a moving moment for me – as I publicly acknowledged the young people's role in my life and work, the young people accepted my thanks through their applause. I realised later how these young people, through their applause, participated in my speech. After four years, the young people's spontaneous, embodied participation that day affirmed the spirit in which I have worked in the community.

#### ***7.4.6.1 Questions and 'an openness to the unexpected'***

A poststructuralist relational research praxis, whether in the domains of therapy, drama or creative writing, is open-ended and is guided by a belief in the possibilities that may emerge once we start a process of engagement with ourselves and with others. The methodology that flows from such a belief is one of questioning. According to Davies (2000a:170), '(p)oststructuralist theory does give greater mor(t)al responsibility to the subjects who use it, simply because they cannot rely on the certainties that others have put in place, and so involves an acute awareness of life, and of being in and of the world. Poststructuralist theory invites an openness to the unexpected...?'

Narrative therapy was employed in the research as a form of inquiry to 'unearth' and start activating again, the alternative, more hopeful knowledges that young people have

about themselves (see Section 5.6.1.1) I also put to use the questioning skills I had developed as a narrative therapist in this research in the areas of lay counselling training, as well as of creative writing and drama.

In the process of asking, considering and responding, we unlocked doors of creative possibilities that might never even have emerged before to the question was asked. I am thinking here of John's surprise at being asked to give a detailed, experiential description of 'my mother's love' (see Section 6.3.2.2). In return, he asked me if he could 'choose anything' to describe his mother's love. As I kept asking, he offered still more and more possibilities: oranges, peaches, guavas (soft and yellow) and Wilsons toffees. Through my asking of questions, a richly descriptive poem evolved.

In my conversation with Zulrich, who was on the point of giving up on his role as judge in their performance of *Die Groot Gevaar*, I asked him in detail about the obstacles he experienced in relation to the part of the judge. We then tackled these obstacles together. I also asked him what had drawn him to playing the part in the first place. Through this question I reconnected Zulrich with his original motivation to play a character who embodied fairness. Through this question, Zulrich was not only reconnected to the part of the judge, but to his own sense of fairness. I then shared with Zulrich my appreciation for the times I had witnessed the fairness that he had displayed during rehearsals. Through my engagement with him, Zulrich gradually rediscovered the energy and commitment that had become lost during rehearsals. Zulrich again became the agent of his own life. He stayed in the play and played the part of the judge with great conviction.

It is a kind of questioning that is genuinely interested to find out that which we do not know yet. I am referring to what Freedman and Coombs (1996:117) describe as questions that *generate* experience and meaning. Furthermore, what was generated in my conversations with both John and Zulrich lies outside anything I could have planned for or could have predicted. Through their reflections on my questions, I was let into another's world with all its richness and possibility.

- ***Reconciliation and the possibility of humanisation***

In Chapter 5, I discuss the challenge of embodiment that poverty poses to privilege. A lot has been said in South Africa's newly democratic society about restoration and reconciliation. I have come to discover that 'reconciliation involves the humanization of the victims and survivors of slavery, colonialism, racism, and apartheid. It involves people who have been treated as less than human and who sometimes internalize that dehumanization, seizing their humanity and their destiny' (Villa-Vicencio 2002:241). But seizing their humanity is no simple task for many of the victims of centuries of power abuse. In Chapter 5, I therefore argue that in this research, the ethicity of cross-cultural justice-generating work depended on the ability of someone who has benefited from injustice to create conditions of humanisation for her South African 'other'. Colonialism and racism created conditions for dehumanisation – this research therefore purposefully worked towards creating some conditions for humanisation.

Welch (1990:41) refers to how easy it is to abandon social justice work when one is the beneficiary of the system by which others are marginalised. She states: 'Becoming so easily discouraged is the privilege of those accustomed to too much power, accustomed to having needs met without negotiation and work, accustomed to having a political and economic system that responds to their needs.' I am continuously learning to de-centre myself in my community work and to centralise the experiences of young people. When their faces appear before me, it becomes less possible for me to succumb to discouragement. When they are centralised, I am reminded of who needs my humanising service most. The only way in which to achieve the restoration of power to those who are most powerless is to relinquish my control and to serve them as a human being. Through service, Jesus reminds us, we embody faith. As a white South African, I am grateful to the research for teaching me how to become a servant to those who have been servants for centuries. This ethical imperative has, in a strange way, developed into a source of sustenance for me.

The title of this thesis refers to 'opening hearts' as creating possibilities in a marginalised community. In Section 4, I described my experience of the closed hearts of the Welgemoed faith community in relation to my presentation about the suffering of young 'coloured' people in Scottsville and towards the presence of

‘coloured’ visitors in their midst (see Section 4.3.2.1, under the subheadings ‘Inviting others to practice solidarity with the marginalised’ and ‘Our experiences of marginalisation: a turning point in awareness’). I discovered that the problem of reconciliation is the problem of the willingness of those Christians who lead privileged lives to relinquish the power to control, and instead decide to serve. Without the deliberate move to risk myself, service to my poor other would have remained impossible; and therefore the terms of our participation would have been dictated by the more powerful party – me.

For reasons I have discussed extensively in Chapter 3, I realised that people of privilege (both black and white) in this country have to initiate the work of participation with and on behalf of people who live in poverty. This is so because the power we have has given us skills and opportunities that can be put to use in the transformation of society. In this regard, Ramphela (2002:164) states: ‘We cannot wish away the reality of the skewed distribution of skills. What is required is to develop strategies that use these skills as a foundation to build a broader skills’ base drawing on the widest pool of talent available.’ This research describes the ways in which I have used my therapeutic, networking, drama and creative writing skills in the project of social transformation. De Gruchy (1984:86) argues that

...the freedom of white South Africans from the bondage of privilege and all that this entails finally means moving away from buttressing an irresponsible society and taking concrete steps to participate in its transformation into a responsible society. It means moving beyond guilt and the social immobilization that it so often produces, and beyond resignation of responsibility, to a life of discipleship for the sake of others. ‘Every one to whom much is given’ said Jesus, ‘of him will much be required’ (Lk 12:48).

This research demonstrates that the challenges of poverty can be addressed; but that its realisation hinges on how we as ordinary Christians define a ‘responsible society’. In Section 5.3.1.2, I therefore referred to Benhabib’s (1982) arguments for relations with a ‘concrete other’ as the feminist position that is most ‘responsible’.

In what reads like a passing comment, Mullino Moore (2003:255) states that practical theology ‘is after all an academic discipline’. The following question then emerges: How are we as practical theologians contributing to justice and social responsibility by what we prioritise in practical theology? If practical theologians

fail to see that they will have to leave the safety of their studies and set out into the poor suburbs and townships, what legitimacy will their theoretical reflections on humanisation have?

The challenge that poverty poses to the world of academia, through this research, is to elevate participatory praxis once again to the central role it once played when Christ healed the sick and embraced the suffering of the world on the cross. This has been this research's biggest challenge: to embody the possibility of solidarity and ultimately reconciliation between rich and poor, white and 'coloured', adult and young persons.

When participation becomes vital, it is not only 'the other' who benefits from our actions. Because of the participation in my life by Aunt Baai, Aunt Liz, Mr Foster, Granville, Zulrich, Thelton, Thelren, Verona, Juclite, Michael, Mr Noach ... the process of my own humanisation has started. Antjie Krog (Krog et al 2009:12) recounts the words of an illiterate woman, Cynthia Ngewu, mother of Christopher Piet, one of the Guguletu Seven, which were translated from the original Xhosa: 'This thing called reconciliation...if I am understanding it correctly...if it means this perpetrator, this man who killed Christopher Piet, if it means he becomes human again, this man, so that I, so that all of us, get our humanity back...then I agree, then I support it all.'

In Section 3.5.2.4, I described how my conversation with Aunt Liz alerted me to my own power and in so doing confronted me with the task of finding my own humanity again, through her. Paulo Freire (1972:20) states: 'As man perceives the extent of dehumanization, he asks himself if humanization is a viable possibility.' The questions that my reflections on poverty and its challenge to privilege therefore pose are tied up with Brueggemann's (1976:101) argument that *shalom* depends on a 'redistribution of power'. In the light of the challenge that poverty poses to privilege, my questions to the wider faith community are these: Do we in academia and in the church have the willingness to redistribute power by participating with others with open hearts and minds? How will we start showing 'attentive generosity' towards our totally different other (see also Section 5.3)? Can we allow attentive generosity to re-shape our faith traditions – from weekly Bible study to weekly service in poor community? How will such attentive generosity affect how we

(re)define those terms we have come to use with such frequency in theology: ‘humanity’, ‘community’, ‘church’? Do we have the courage to see when ignorance of own power perpetuates the conditions of exile for others? Are we willing to find our humanity again through participation with others? These questions are intended as an invitation to Christians to traverse what is probably the most difficult *aporia* – that of our own humanity.

#### **7.4.7 A promoter’s ‘caring with’ participation**

One of the gifts of this research has been the ways in which my promoter, Dr Dirk Kotzé, participated in the research process. From the outset his participation was not only an intellectual one. He visited Scottsville and met with the people more than once. He allowed me the freedom to share my reflections by email. These reflections often voiced the struggles, the despair and uncertainty I experienced as I came up against the challenges of poverty and power. Dirk always responded with great insight about the complexities inherent in doing cross-cultural work and the need for this to be done within the discipline of theology in South Africa. In countless telephonic conversations, he encouraged me to keep on doing the work, which he thought could make a contribution to theological discourse. When I could not see it, he did. He ‘promoted’ the possibilities he saw in me and the work I was doing. He celebrated the discoveries and joys of the research with me in a spirit of delight. His ‘caring with’ me and care of me not only fulfilled the research question, but made me believe that theological research can and should, in the first place, create humane possibilities.<sup>26</sup>

#### **7.4.8 Accountability – the research participants evaluate the research and its contribution**

The practice of reflecting on the research contribution in a feminist-poststructuralist epistemology is mindful about whose judgements are being heard. Hence, in this section, I argue that the methodology of judgement in itself must represent the redistribution of power that Brueggemann (1976) associates with *shalom*. Therefore, in my reflection on the research, I remain accountable to the ‘coloured’ people of Scottsville. This accountability resonates with the following comment:

---

<sup>26</sup> Comment from promoter: ‘Thanks for the acknowledgement. This research was with real people about real lives in real and concrete situations; it touched me; I am implicated as white male; I could not but also participate as Thérèse writes. This project keeps opening my heart and mind...’

Accountability that fosters commitment to actions makes a difference to the lives of those who suffer. If it lies in the bedrock of values like humility, reciprocity, love, and sacredness, a mutual learning process can take place, for both those who call for accountability and those who respond. It becomes a mutual learning in vulnerability. In essence, accountability is about the building of trust with the group with whom trust has been broken.

(Tamasese & Waldegave 1993: 93)

In line with the aim of participation, the people of Scottsville will participate in reflecting on the contribution of my work and, just as importantly, on whether my actions have made a difference to their lives and whether trust has been built between us. However, whilst writing about accountability, I am aware of the fact that many of the young people have not been culturalised to consider their meaning-making to have value. During the filming of our celebratory meal in 2007, a group of boys each (unbeknown to me) expressed his thanks to me on camera. Their appreciation was for the writing of poetry, teaching them about drama and for taking time and having patience with each one in working through certain problems they experienced during rehearsals.

In June 2008 I received a hand-decorated letter from Verona de Villiers at the opening of the library, where her poem, ‘*My broetjie klokkies my bra, jy was my pel...*’ (see Section 6.3.2.5) was showcased:

<p><i>Ek wil begin om te sê, baie dankie vir die opofferinge en geduld wat u vir ons gehad het. Ek weet dit het soms moeilik gegaan maar u het ons nie in die steek gelaat nie. Van my kant af wil ek net sê baie en nogmaals baie dankie vir die gedigte skryfery en vir die toneel wat ons kon gedoen het. U het ‘n ander kant van my beleef wat ek nie gedink het mense sal ooit sien nie. Juffrou het my dinge geleer wat ek nie geweet het nie en baie dankie vir die kennis wat u met ons gedeel het. U het ‘n</i></p>	<p>I want to begin by saying thank you very much for the sacrifices you’ve made and for the patience you had on our behalf. I know it was hard sometimes, but you did not drop us. From my side, I want to say thank you very much for the writing of poetry and for the performance of the play. You experienced a side of me I thought that no-one ever would. Miss, you taught me things I did not know and thanks for sharing your knowledge with us. You have a very special place in my heart...</p>
--	--

<i>baie spesiale plek in my hart...</i>	
---	--

During our last writers' group gathering of the year on 27 November 2008, Verona shared a new poem with the group and then told me: 'I think I have found my own voice.'

During the course of the research, there are many moments during which I grasped the significance of something I did through the reactions of young people. Ashwill's conversation with me about the effect of my letter to Aunt Lizzie comes to mind, as does Granville's arms around my waist, and the loving sms's I received from young people like Zulrich and Timothy. I also value the 'Oscars' I received from Thelren after the performance of the play in the Community Hall. Many of the young people showed me that what I did was making a difference to their lives simply by showing up and by not 'dropping' me.

The next section contains excerpts of a conversation between Mr Noach (deputy principal at Petunia Primary) and myself on 30 November 2006. This conversation took place two days after the first performances of the play in the open corridor at the school. Mr Noach commented on the effects of my creative work that he witnessed:

<p><i>N: Soos hulle sê as 'n kinders gerecognise word, as hulle erken word, dit is eintlik die sleutel tot die sukses wat daai kind...of jy kan daai talent wat die kind het, kan jy optimaal benut...So daai talent... kom ons sê dit waarmee Juffrou besig was met hulle, het gemaak dat daai kind se selfbeeld...gegroe het. Sy menswees het ontwikkel...Dis vir my baie interessant dis goedjies, dis maar fyn aspekte wat ek oplet omdat ek elke dag met die kinders werk.</i></p> <p><i>T: Wat is dit wat u raakgesien het?</i></p>	<p>N: As they say, the fact that children are recognised, that is actually the key to unlocking the success of that child, or you can optimally use the child's talents... So that talent...let us say that what you were involved in with them, Miss, increased that child's feeling of self-worth, humanised them...It is very interesting to me; these are just little things I was able to notice because I work with these children every day.</p> <p>T: What were the things that you noticed?</p>
---	--

<p><i>N: Juffrou, ek het...gesien dit wat , behalwe dat Juffrou hulle afrig, die entoesiasme waarmee die kinders gewerk het.</i></p> <p><i>T: Het dit u verbaas?</i></p> <p><i>N: Dit het my verbaas, absoluut!...Ek wil net iets bynoem Juffrou dat u het 'n ander dimensie ook ingebring. 'n Ander dimensie deur vir hulle so te kry om in 'n groep te werk.</i></p> <p><i>T: Kan u bietjie verduidelik wat u bedoel?</i></p> <p><i>N: Kom ons sê Zulrich en ...Granville was nie vriende nie. Maar omdat hulle saamwerk in 'n groep, het hulle daai wedersydse respek vir mekaar begin ontwikkel. Dis ook een van die goed wat ek geobserveer het. En daai struwelinge wat hulle altyd gehad het het gekwyn as gevolg van die samesyn in hierdie drama. Dit is die dinge wat Juffrou bymekaar gebring het en dit is deel van menswees. En die feit dat hierdie kinders, soos hulle hier is, hulle lewe in konteks met mekaar waar hulle in die verlede nie so was nie.</i></p> <p><i>T: ... van die impossible na die possible..</i></p> <p><i>N: Juffrou, van die onmoontlike, die moontlike... Juffrou, juffrou sal nie glo wat het hierdie dramastuk aan die groep</i></p>	<p>N: Miss, I saw apart from the fact that you've worked with them, the enthusiasm with which they participated.</p> <p>T: Did this surprise you?</p> <p>N: It surprised me absolutely!...I want to mention something else that you introduced them to, Miss: another dimension, their ability to participate with each other in a group.</p> <p>T: Can you explain a bit about what you mean?</p> <p>N: Let's say Zulrich and Granville were not friends. But because they participated in the group, they developed respect for one another. It was something else I've observed. And those altercations they used to have in the past subsided because of the sense of togetherness they experienced during the (performance of the) drama. These are things you brought together, Miss, and these are things that are part of humanness. These children are living in a new context in a spirit that is different to how things were before (free translation)</p> <p>T: from the impossible to the possible..?</p> <p>N: Miss, out of the impossible, the possible... Miss, you will not believe what this play has done for the members of the</p>
--	--

<i>gemaak nie.</i>	group.
--------------------	--------

The following excerpt from a conversation between Anna Tarentaal and myself (Tarentaal & Hulme 2006) captures some of the changes that occurred in her life since her participation in the lay counselling training group.

<p><i>A: My man het vir nou die dag gesê die pastoor sê daars net 'n groot verandering in jou en jou vrou. Iets het gebeur....In alles... die manier hoe julle teenoor mense is...'</i></p>	<p>A: My husband said the other day that the pastor remarked about the big change in 'you and your wife. Something has happened...In everything...the way in which you relate to other people...'</p>
<p><i>T: Wat se verandering het jy in jouself agtergekom Anna? Wat is anders?</i></p>	<p>T: What kind of changes have you become aware of in yourself, Anna? What has changed?</p>
<p><i>A: Ek is nie meer so teruggetrokke nie, so in my dop gekruip nie... Alles wat ek aanpak voel vir my is 'n sukses. Ek kan nou alles in die oë kyk sonder om te dink ek gaan dit nie maak nie. Ek voel nie meer wat mense dink of sê nie, ek voel net ek wil aangaan!</i></p>	<p>I am no longer so withdrawn, so pulled back into my own shell...Everything I undertake feels to me like a success. Now I can look everything in the eye without thinking I am not going to make it. I am no longer concerned about what others think or say, I feel I just want to continue!</p>

In a chapter entitled 'Pastoral counselling as an art of personal, political activism', Christie Cozad Neuger (1996:92-93) argues that '(f)eminism is a political and public enterprise built out of a commitment to the experience of those who are disadvantaged in the cultural power arrangements. It is very personal in that it is built out of the hearing and privileging of those disadvantaged and normally ignored perspectives, *and* it is always political'. This research shows how my experiences in the context of poverty shaped my perception of the kind of care that people in the community would consider appropriate or useful. It is one thing to consider hearing the perspectives of the

marginalised. It is quite another to do something about the situation that the people themselves consider meaningful. In this way ‘political’ action, which I understand to be action that is linked with justice, does not refer to what I primarily consider to be political/just, but what people in the community consider to be just.

Mr Foster wrote me a letter on 1 December 2006 – the year in which the play was first performed at Petunia Primary. Below, I include an excerpt from his letter in which he speaks about ‘my alliance’ with Petunia Primary and the impact this alliance made:

<p><i>‘...u verbintenis met ons skool is beslis uniek! Om in woorde te beskryf wat u vir ons beteken het deur u betrokkenheid met opvoeders, leerders en ouers en die gemeenskap is baie moeilik omdat woorde nie ten volle kan vervang dit wat u vir ons beteken nie.</i></p> <p><i>As opvoeders het u ons geprikkel om uit die gewone denkpatrone te kom en ons benadering tot ons leerders te verander. Ons het geleer om meer te konsentreer op die goeie eienskappe van die leerder en daarop te fokus eerder as om op die negatiewe (slegte) te konsentreer.</i></p> <p><i>Baie dankie vir die klomp gesprekke wat ek met u kon voer en daardeur myself en die verskillende elemente van die onderwys in ‘n gemeenskap soos Scottsville beter te verstaan. U het aan my ook die geleentheid gebied om meer bewus te wees van dit wat ‘n mens nog steeds kan doen vir ons kinders en die gemeenskap.</i></p>	<p>Your alliance with our school is definitely unique! To describe in words what you have meant to teachers, students and parents and the community is very difficult because words cannot describe what your contribution has been/you mean to us.</p> <p>As teachers you have stimulated us to think outside of the conventional patterns of thought and to change our approach towards our students. We have learnt to focus more on the good qualities of the student instead of concentrating on the negative (the bad).</p> <p>Thank you very much for all our conversations that allowed me to better understand the different facets that make up teaching in a community such as Scottsville. You have also provided me with the opportunity to become more conscious of that which can still be done for our children and the community.</p>
---	--

<p><i>Dankie dat u op so 'n praktiese en liefdevolle wyse met veral ons leerders omgaan (uself bemoei). U het beslis daarin geslaag om hulle te laat glo in hulleself en hul Godgeskape vermoëns. Die saadjies wat u gesaai het het voorwaar op vrugbare grond geval maar u het ook die grond gedurigdeur gevoed en benat...</i></p> <p><i>U het ook op praktiese wyse weereens getoon hoe om erkenning te gee aan die goeie en die prysenswaardige deur op skrif erkenning te gee aan elke persoon wat betrokke is by die Scottsville dramagroep...</i></p>	<p>Thank you for engaging with our children in such a practical and loving way. You definitely succeeded in making them believe in themselves and their God-given talents. The seeds that you have sown did indeed fall on fertile ground, but you constantly cultivated and watered the ground...</p> <p>You also again demonstrated practically how to acknowledge the good and praiseworthy by honouring each person involved in the Scottsville drama group in writing.</p>
--	---

During February 2009, I attended the launch of a community crafts project with Aunt Liz Cupido, who played a leading role in getting the project up and running in the community. During her speech Aunt Liz asked me to stand. She called me ‘my friend’ and told the audience that we ‘laugh and cry’ together. In the light of her account in Chapter 3 of the shattering of trust between white and ‘coloured’ people, Aunt Liz’s words had real significance for me about the meaning of friendship that had been achieved during this research, especially in the light of ‘all that had been destroyed’ in her life because of the power of apartheid. It struck me how she had somehow retained a willingness to embrace me, despite everything I represent in terms of whiteness and privilege. Aunt Liz’s remark made me hopeful that when we as privileged South Africans become vulnerable to the pain of others, we may restore the possibility of embrace and of friendship again, from which we had for so long divorced ourselves. In their moving book about the testimony before the TRC of Mrs Konile, the mother of Zabonke, one of the Gugulethu Seven, Krog et al (2009:43) ask: ‘How do we overcome a divided past in such a way that “The Other” becomes “us”?’ This has been the question that this research asked, and that I have tried to respond to in embodied ways.

## 7.5 RETRIEVING PASSION

In Section 3.2, I quoted Foucault, who asked what the absence of passion in modernist times has meant for the Christian pastorate. Carter Heyward (1999:131) suggests that through feminist theology's relational practices of 'going with' and 'for' others, we are indeed reactivating passion in the Christian pastorate. My work with young people constituted such a reactivation for me:

This is the role we are called to play, again and again, to *go with* one another in the radically mutual, interdependent world and creation that we share – and whenever this is impossible, to *go for* those who are without voice, presence, or the power required in the specific context. To go for others in this way is always to go for God as well. *Passion* is a theological term that denotes this 'going with' and 'going for' god, this godding, this real presence in life and in God...

(Heyward 1999:131, Heyward's italics)

The 'opening heart' I mention in the title of this research therefore has a direct bearing on the way in which the research contributed to my life. Passion can therefore be seen as a research contribution that I did not plan for or even imagine, but which emerged out of my 'going with' the people of Scottsville and their going with me. In South Africa the destruction of humanity, community life and cross-cultural trust is vividly described in Chapters 2 and 3. Mr Foster (excerpt from the research journal, 10 May 2005) told me: '*Gevoel het weggegaan (as gevolg van apartheid)... Mens moet deur jou hart lewe... Dis wat godsdien is*' ('feeling vanished (as a result of apartheid) ... You have to live through your heart... That is what serving God is'). However, living with an open heart does not mean that one can constantly remain in a state of vulnerability. To protect myself from burnout, prolonged despair or depression during this research, I started developing and accessing support for myself.

### 7.5.1 Protecting the passion

To keep working in a poor school community with its many overt physical impossibilities and especially coming up against an ethos that promotes distance and non-involvement in the life of the concrete other, it became imperative for me to seek support. The kind of support I sought took the form of regular conversations with a spiritual director. She guided me in developing the practice of daily reading of Scripture and spiritual reflection. Through these actions I met and stayed connected to the humane, relational Jesus. In particular, I felt supported by Jesus' embodiment of care in

social contexts not only of poverty and physical struggle, but also of social abandonment.

Another mindset that I started to cultivate as the research progressed was a conscious decision to acknowledge and steer away from the energy-sapping impossibilities around me. I also realised that I would be paralyzed if I spent too much time engaging with people whose stance towards young people differed completely from my own. Ramphele (2002:148) reflects on the challenges she faced in mobilising and sustaining community support for her work with young people in New Crossroads: ‘People who have little education, who have been betrayed often and who have a poor self-image are difficult to mobilise for creative action. ... “learned helplessness” is real, as is a lack of basic trust. Then again, once community participation is mobilised, sustaining it becomes an intense and demanding activity.’ She concluded that ‘without the inner resources to sustain development, poor communities such as New Crossroads were unlikely to cope with the running of modern institutions, It would take a full-time champion to nurture sustainable development in such a community’ (Ramphele 2002:149). I realised that in terms of developing poor young people’s writing talents, I had to be the champion that nurtured this cause and will continue to do so in future.

I knew that I could be provoked by an abusive comment, the display of a spirit of self-interest or a lack of care for young people. I realised early on to limit the scope of the work by including those people who displayed some interest. Another form of support that has sustained me in the work was friends with whom I could share the struggles, frustrations and joys of the work.

The creative work with young people turned out to be an enormous source of energy for me. What I have learnt from this is that it is best to bring one’s own passions and talents to community work. This required me to turn a highly individualist practice such as reading and writing poetry into a possibility-generating communal practice. For me the research has brought new understanding of the relational, empowering function of poetry in a South African context. This realisation also brought new energy to my own desire to engage with my own poetry.

The creativity and imagination of Scottsville’s young people fuelled my own, and still does so. The experience of an impromptu breakdance done for me, the sight of Ricky’s

'Pumas' (see Photo 8) or hearing an original metaphor of soft and yellow guavas to describe a mother's love have kept my passion for creative work in the community alive, particularly at times when I felt isolated from the adults in the community. The fact that I recorded these experiences by way of words and photographs in a research journal meant that I could re-visit these experiences and be energised by the memory.

## **7.6 THE 'NOT YET' OF JUSTICE**

Working with the themes of power, relationality and embodiment of a feminist poststructuralist epistemology, the vision of what is 'not yet' that is always before us. It is a vision that compels us to work to transform a culture, not necessarily from within, but often precisely by going beyond the limits of how such a culture or tradition defines itself. In the epilogue to their authoritative publication on qualitative research, Lincoln and Denzin (2005:1117) see four main political features as part of the future of qualitative research: 'the reconnection of social science to social purpose, the rise of indigenous social science(s) crafted for the local needs of indigenous peoples, the decolonization of the academy' and the use of new approaches by social scientists. This research has demonstrated how the social science of philosophy in the form of Foucault's work was used with the purpose of explaining and describing pastoral power relations. Derrida's complex analysis also formed the theory on which I based my use of the word 'possibilities' as well as the words 'opening hearts and minds' in the title of this thesis. But most importantly, this research's decolonisation of the academy lies in the description of those methodologies that centralised the experiences and knowledges of ordinary and marginalised people and my embodied participation with them. In order to be just, practical theology depends on this participation.

Therefore, research that keeps the uncertain, and unfinished nature of our realities and God's reality in mind, invites us into a process of critique whereby we are called to co-formulate what 'not yet' means in practical and social terms. When I started out doing this research at the beginning of 2005, the writers' group, a play, rugby uprights, a library and a white woman's participation with poor 'coloured' people, were all 'not yet'. Now, whilst reflecting on what has been accomplished in this research, I am acutely aware that the challenge of the other to me is forever the challenge of realising the 'not yet' – especially in the lives of young people. Not yet enough care and

opportunity, not yet art and music classes, not yet a culture of learning, not yet opportunities in the community for witnessing young people in appreciative ways.

Feminist theologian Carter Heyward (1999:22) suggests that ‘the only way we can live fully in God in this world at this time is to embody God’s own yearning for that which is not yet – the completion, or fulfilment, of creation’. Heyward’s position has important implications for the way in which I regard practice. Taking ‘not yet’ seriously means that participation in poor communities is motivated by the ongoing longing to realise that which has not been thought, imagined or realised before:

Rather than presenting our yearning for fulfilment as sacred, a dimension of God’s own presence with us, the church has tried to complete the redemption story by suggesting that, in *Jesus’* death, God’s desire for right relation with creation was finally completed or ‘satisfied.’ I believe that such a theology short-circuits the Spirit’s movement in history, and, moreover, I believe that through *Jesus’* living and dying and through our lives as well – in our yearning for a righteousness that is unfulfilled, a justice-love that has not been satisfied – God’s longing is God’s holiness, and so to is our own.

(Heyward 1999:25, Heyward’s italics)

I am reminded of Jesus’ words about the coming of the Kingdom here (Lk 17:20-21): the Kingdom has not yet come, but its possibility, Jesus implies, lies with us. This is the ongoing task of *shalom*. Community work and/or research flowing from a ‘not yet’ stance is therefore by its very nature work that is never complete. It constantly deconstructs the present against the promise of the tradition within which we work. In the section below, Derrida refers to the promise of Capitalism and even Marxism. This passage is significant for me in that it gives words to my experience of the gap between the promise of Christian theology and the inadequate relational, emotional and physical opportunities for young people in a context of poverty. It was the aporetic awareness of the gap that prompted a research response from me and will continue to do so beyond this research. Beardsworth (1996:145-6) quotes as follows from Derrida’s *Spectres of Marx*:

Even beyond the regulative idea in its classic form, the idea...of democracy to come, its ‘idea’ as event of a pledged injunction that orders one to summon the very thing that will never present itself in the form of full presence, is the opening of this gap between an infinite promise ... and the determined, necessary, but also necessarily inadequate forms of what has to be measured against this promise. To this extent, the effectivity or actuality of the democratic promise, like that of the communist promise, will always keep within it, and it must do so, this

absolutely undetermined messianic hope at its heart, this eschatological relation to the to-come (*l'à-venir*) of an event *and* of a singularity, of an alterity that cannot be anticipated. Awaiting without horizon of the wait, awaiting what one does not expect yet or any longer, hospitality without reserve, welcoming salutation accorded in advance to the absolute surprise of the *arrivant* from whom or from which one will not ask anything I return... just opening which renounces any right of property, any right in general, messianic opening to what is coming... (Derrida's italics)

Justice, according to Derrida, has this 'opening' (the *opening* of hearts and minds of the title of this thesis) at heart. Hence Derrida's 'radical sense of responsibility is always set adrift from a pre-existing, pre-formed, a priori *anything*, which is why (for Derrida) you could never let yourself think...that you *are* responsible.....responsibility would always remain to be done' (Lucy 2004:109, Lucy's italics). This has been one of the biggest epistemological discoveries that the work with young people led me to: it is the open stance to the unknown *l'à-venir*, the aporetic awareness that had always invited a response from me and still does. Reflecting on my creative work with young people described in Chapter 6, I am aware of how I too invited people from the Welgemoed community to respond to the gap 'between the between an infinite promise ... and the determined, necessary, but also necessarily inadequate forms of what has to be measured against this promise'. But more than the gap itself, I hope that the singularity of my research has illustrated in some way how I as researcher started 'to await what one does not expect'.

Within a theological tradition of care with the other based on targets and outcomes, Derrida offers a radically different ethical stance that is simply grounded in an awareness of the 'not yet' of the present : 'The necessary disjuncture, the detotalizing condition of justice is...that of the present...' (Derrida quoted by Beardsworth 1996:133). The 'not yet' can therefore be regarded as an invitation to act. In a context of 'coloured' poverty, Zlomislic's (2007:227) analysis of Derrida's ethics has particular significance: '...Derrida claims that the *aporia* of undecidability is there because there are never enough precedents, there is never enough time, and there is never enough knowledge to form a fully calculated decision. But it is precisely this impossibility of adequate calculation that lets there be the responsible leap towards less violence.'

As a researcher of poverty, knowing that I do not know about being poor, 'coloured' or marginalised could (and still can) immobilise me. As the research progressed, I became

aware that what was ethical could never be centred in knowledge alone, but that it would be located in the praxis of (my continuous) responsible movement towards less violence.

I want to link the *shalom* aim of the redistribution of power with this ethical vision of Derrida. Brueggemann (1976:40) echoes St John of the Cross (quoted in Chapter 5) when he says what such an awareness demands of us:

We are expected to go where we are not.  
We are expected to become who we are not.

The concrete poor ‘other’ demands of me to be more responsible, to go to where I have not yet gone. My ‘becoming’ depends on such a ‘going’. This research has documented my ‘becoming’ other than I was before the start of the research. Derrida’s work on deconstruction and the *aporia* provided this research with the ethical stance that to continually be responsible for doing justice in a context of poverty, whilst knowing that it still has to be done and that it can never be done completely (Lucy 2004:114). That is why I simply could not draw a line that signified the formal end of the research. This community work, like any participation that has justice-making as its aim, remains a work in progress. However, in the next section I discuss certain *aporias* I have identified because of the work of the research. These *aporias* offer invitations to academia, the church and concerned South Africans who want to participate in the project of restoration of our humanity and of community.

## **7.7 RETHINKING THE USE OF THE WORD ‘PASTORAL’**

As a deconstructing researcher, I therefore also have to reflect on theological terminology, how it is founded, how it functions and, especially, how it totalises. This section takes a leap towards less violence by examining the language of the discipline in which this research was conducted. As this research was done within a poststructuralist paradigm, it follows that the recommendations that emerge out of this research are based on the power relations in a context of poverty we were allowed to ‘see again’, and a desire to deconstruct our relationship with language in the light of this ‘seeing’.

This finding of new ways to say exactly what we mean could also be honouring of the context in which we work: no longer in dualist terms (shepherd/livestock) or negating the harsh and marginalising realities of this context. Therefore, re-thinking the

linguaging of research itself becomes an aporetic, ethical practice. Therefore a poststructuralist deconstructive stance compels me as a researcher to act on the language I inherited as a white South African. In terms of a pastoral heritage, Derrida contends that ‘the idea of heritage implies not only a reaffirmation and a double injunction, but at every moment, in a different context, a filtering, a choice, a strategy. An heir is not only someone who receives, he or she is someone who chooses, and who takes the risk of deciding’ (Derrida & Roudinesco 2004:8). I therefore want to take up Derrida’s invitation to take ‘the risk of deciding’ by considering how ethical the terminology which we have inherited as part of a theological tradition actually is.

In Chapter 3, I discussed Foucault’s analysis of pastoral power itself; how it became legitimised through religious discourses and how it shaped political actions in South Africa. In Chapter 3, I also interviewed Aunt Liz Cupido with a view to seeing whether Foucault’s theories fitted the South African context. Chapter 3 documents and analyses Aunt Liz’s descriptions of the devastating effects of pastoral power on her life and on the ‘coloured’ community at large.

I would like to explore to the relevance of the adjective ‘pastoral’ in the context of practices that aim to work for justice. The *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary* gives the following description of the word ‘pastoral’:

Function: *adjective*

Etymology: Middle English, from Latin *pastoralis*, from *pastor* herdsman

Date: 15th century

**1 a** (1): of, relating to, or composed of shepherds or herdsmen (2): devoted to or based on livestock raising **b**: of or relating to the countryside: not urban <a *pastoral* setting> **c**: portraying or expressive of the life of shepherds or country people especially in an idealized and conventionalized manner <*pastoral* poetry> **d**: pleasingly peaceful and innocent: [idyllic](#)

**2 a**: of or relating to spiritual care or guidance especially of a congregation **b**: of or relating to the [pastor](#) of a church.’

In the light of Foucault’s analysis of the history of dominance and control (‘shepherd’ and ‘livestock’) associated with the term ‘pastoral’ (as discussed in Chapter 3), and in the light of the fact that the dictionary’s explanations reflect the ethos of control over people (‘guidance’) rather than of mutuality with them, I want to propose that the use of this term be reconsidered.

The historical irony that emerged in Chapter 3 relating to the word ‘pastoral’ is tied up with Aunt Liz’s descriptions of the actions of a government that claimed to be Christian but in fact purposefully destroyed the particularly pastoral existence of Aunt Liz’s family in Douglas. During our conversation Aunt Liz grieved the loss of that pastoral existence. The stone kraal was broken down, the chickens and cows sold, the ‘lovely’ Lutheran school with its apricot and pomegranate trees destroyed. Aunt Liz’s family lost their livelihood and Aunt Liz’s dreams of education were shattered. The white people’s golf course was built where their house once stood.

The time has come for theology in South Africa to become mindful of the abuse that is part of a pastoral relational model in which ‘pastors’ and politicians both controlled their ‘sheep’. Because of the pastor/sheep model, ‘a whole network of servitude’ (Foucault 2007:184) and of human individualisation has developed which became the norm in human relations in the West (see Sections 3.1 and 3.2).

A response to the complexities of the current challenges of poverty described in Chapter 2 cannot aim to restore ‘pastoral’ ‘peaceful’ and ‘idyllic’ conditions to poor communities. On the contrary, feminist praxis is more concerned with creating relations that are just and more hopeful in the midst of poverty, violence and abuse than with aiming for the unrealistic restoration of pastoral peace to such a community.

In remembrance of the historical violations that were done under the operation of *pastoral* power in this country, I propose that this word no longer be associated with a praxis that works for justice. Instead, I propose that work in communities that is aimed at restoring justice and hope be called ‘community theology’ or ‘participatory theology’. In this way we could allow the descriptions of our practices to describe the nature and the purpose of our practices, instead of relying on a fifteenth century word to reflect the realities of working in community in the twenty-first century. In the light of the historical violations associated with the word ‘pastoral’, I want to illustrate the power for creating mutuality that the word ‘participation’ has over the use of the word ‘pastoral’.

I start with a following quote from feminist theologian, Carter Heyward (1995:82). I have placed her choice of the word ‘pastoral’ in inverted commas and I have inserted the word ‘participatory’ in brackets. This research has shown that the word ‘pastoral’

refers to a system of unequal power relations, whilst the spirit of the word ‘participation’ is the one that resists the alienation that is part of unequal relationships: ‘I believe the work of ... ‘pastoral’ (participatory) care... can be understood, practiced, and experienced as a resource for resistance to alienation. It should be a resource in our struggle against forces of alienated power that silence, separate, and shatter us...’ As theologians of praxis, participation is the only ‘method’ by which alienation can be replaced by a process of ‘humanisation’.

In Section 1.4.2.1, under the subheading ‘Conscientization’, I quote Paolo Freire (1972:20): ‘Concern for humanization leads at once to the recognition of dehumanization, not only as an ontological possibility but as an historical reality.’ In South Africa, a critical part of the challenge of poverty is the concern we have for the processes of humanisation in theology and, likewise, for language that humanises. In the next section, I reflect on how greater familiarity with poststructuralists’ work can help those who participate with others to recognise how the power of dehumanisation operates.

## **7.8 ARGUING FOR POSTSTRUCTURALIST TRAINING FOR AND CROSS-CULTURAL PARTICIPATION BY PRACTICAL THEOLOGIANS**

Because of the ways in which we have allowed the pastoral power of control to operate in the church and in society (see Chapter 3), we have created what Brueggemann (2007:51) refers to as an ‘exile-producing culture’. In Chapters 2 and 3, I have shown how the male-dominated political system combined with the male-dominated white church in South Africa have created systems of knowledge that resulted in the domination of and conditions of exile of ‘coloured’ people – with poor women and young people being most marginalised. Weedon (1987:13) also refers to ‘the particular conditions under which prestigious and powerful bodies of knowledge were and are being produced. This is manifest in the professional institutions of ...social science...and the humanities...which exclude alternative forms of knowledge, in particular those produced by women under different social conditions of knowledge production’.

Within academia and theology, the dangers that neo-liberalism hold are real and inhibit us in even considering the real challenges of participation by those who have been

exiled. Currently, it is not only the legacy of apartheid that haunts us, but also the power of neo-liberal thinking, which ‘draws on and exacerbates a fear of difference and rewards a rampant, consumerist, competitive individualism’ (Davies 2005:7). When I had read Davies’s comment, I experienced a huge sense of relief. I could, for the first time, begin to match the experiences I had of apathy and individualism in both the communities of Scottsville and Welgemoed with a neo-liberal ethics. Teachers who subscribe to the neo-liberal ethos refuse to consider doing anything more than they are being paid for and they remain indifferent to the need of the young in their school community. Davies (2005:9) states: ‘The emphasis of responsibility is shifted over to responsibility for individual survival. Survival is constructed not as moral survival but as economic survival.’ In teachers’ relationships with young people, neo-liberal teaching is geared towards personal autonomy, social distance and a system of surveillance by way of the discourses of ‘professionalism’ and ‘not getting involved’.

The affluent who benefit from a consumerist culture also find it hard to disengage from its individualism and enter into a spirit of community. This research has therefore demonstrated the necessity of taking a deconstructive stance, not only in relation to oppressive historic discourses of relating, but also to current violent power relations in societies such as that in Scottsville. In Chapter 5, I addressed the ways in which discourses of control and alienation such as the neo-liberal discourses (Davies 2005) of individual responsibility at the expense of the social, at best diminish or at worst endanger people’s capacity to participate as Christians in contexts other than those benefiting their own interests.

I therefore propose that feminist-poststructuralist analysis be integrated into the theological curriculum at universities. Without ‘opening hearts and minds’ to the realities of power relations and theologians’ part in it, the urgent need for engagement with the poor concrete other will remain low on the church’s list of priorities. I furthermore propose that all students of theology, once they have completed their studies, are sent not to faith communities of their choice to do their ‘internship’, but are placed to do community service amongst the poor and destitute. Rodríguez (2001:18) argues:

As the core culture becomes increasingly materialistic and profit orientated, it also becomes mean-spirited, intolerant, and devoid of a regenerative spirit.. So where do we turn?...to the margins, to the

‘outcasts’ and the outlawed. Just as the extremities of the body energize the heart, so, too, do the peripheries of a culture revitalize its heart. Here is where the imagination of the possible expands, where change and creation find seed and root.

Poverty therefore challenges us to relinquish the power associated with a kind of Christian morality that values rationality and the disconnection from the other that privilege brings (see Section 5.1). My hope is that feminist-poststructuralist analysis will invite all Christians, but especially those in positions of power in the church,

...to see the world differently, so that the activities that legitimate the accretion of power to the existing powerful are less valued, and the activities that might legitimate a sharing of power with outsiders are increased in value. An initial step in this process is to recognize that the current boundaries of moral and political life are drawn such that the concerns and activities of the relatively powerless are omitted from the central concerns of society.

(Tronto 1993: 20)

My bodily experience of care with and of the other became the way of ‘seeing the world differently’. Care itself has altered some of the moral and political boundaries that have kept me apart from my ‘coloured’ other for so long. In South Africa, this is the challenge that poverty poses to privileged theology: to serve and let the embodied other on the periphery of society teach us anew about theology as participatory praxis. There is no other way through which ‘the other’ can become ‘us’ and our imagination about the possibility of real community can take root in the church again.

## **7.9 MENTORING**

In Section 6.6, I argue for the urgent need for more people to do ‘young people whispering’ in poor communities. This urgency is based not only on the development of skills and talents, but especially on what young people experience as care. In Sections 5.6.3.2 and 5.6.3.3, I describe a witnessing event during which it became visible to me what our participation in the drama group had been able to cultivate in young people in terms of relationships of care, respect and mutuality. In the context of the dehumanisation and the ‘tenuous connections’ (Couture 2000:23) described in Chapter 2, sustained work of humanisation with poor young people must be one of the church’s priorities. However, the work of care can only be done by those who are willing to be humanised themselves.

There is a real danger that preaching to the young can become yet another tool by which young people can be controlled by the church, instead of joined. This research has shown in Chapters 5 and 6 that participatory care for and with the young is the only way in which an alternative power-chain of possibilities can be created in poor young people's lives. I did not introduce the concept of mentoring to Scottsville. I merely joined those in the community who have been changing young people's lives all along. This research documented the powerful effects of the 'young person whispering' that Aunt Lizzie (Section 5.6.4) and Aunt Baai (Section 5.5.1.1) are doing. In Chapter 5, I also documented Mr Noach's efforts to 'get off his pedestal' as a teacher, and to become a caring mentor to the young people in his class. The poorest 'coloured' communities are urgently in need of more Mr Noachs, more Aunt Lizzies and Aunt Baais.

What I also experienced over the past four years is how the current teaching system of large classes (more than fifty young people in a class), the discontinuation of subjects like art, woodwork and domestic science and the absence of remedial teachers in 'coloured' schools has led to the abandonment of many of the poorest young people. This abandonment especially affects those young people who have limited abilities in terms of formal schooling and those who lack support at home. Hence, what these young people have to offer is not looked for, is not seen, is not accommodated or cultivated: 'Unfortunately the stimulus of this economy – investing to make profit – becomes the leading metaphor in our relationships with children: If they don't appear to produce "value", then society has determined they are not worth any "investment"' (Rodríguez 2001:71). There needs to be more involvement, more humane investment, in the lives of these most vulnerable of young people by those who have benefited from education.

In the next section I discuss the dangers that 'tenuous connections' with adults and institutions such as schools pose in terms of drug-use and sexually risky behaviour amongst vulnerable young people. Foucault's metaphor of the chain to describe the functioning of power applies here: tenuous connections with adults link with disconnection, which fosters drug use, especially Tik, which opens up a multitude of emotional and physical vulnerabilities – of which HIV/AIDS is but one.

### **7.9.1 Drug use and the *aporia* of HIV/AIDS amongst poor ‘coloured’ teenagers**

In Chapter 2, I used Foucault’s genealogical and archaeological analyses to describe the ways in which drugs target the bodies of poor ‘coloured’ young people. In this section I argue that the escalation in drug use amongst ‘coloured’ teenagers introduces a new *aporia*, namely that of sexual promiscuity and, with it, the danger of HIV/AIDS.

According to the 2007 National HIV and Syphilis Prevalence Survey (2007), the Western Cape, with 12.6% of the population being infected, has the lowest incidence of HIV infections of all the provinces in South Africa. However, in analysing substance abuse trends in the Western Cape, Parry (2005) notes the demographic shift that has occurred between 1996 and 2005. Drug use amongst young people under the age of 20, for instance, has increased from 5% to an alarming 25% of all drug users during just the first half of 2004. In Chapter 2, I referred to the studies that analysed especially the rising drug use amongst ‘coloured’ teenagers in the Western Cape. Many studies point to the fact that drug and alcohol use exacerbates risky sexual behaviour such as ‘unprotected sex, inconsistent condom use, multiple partners and both sexual and physical violence against women’ (Parry & Pithey 2006:14).

One of the few local studies that traces the connection between drug use and sexual HIV risk patterns among South African drug users (Parry et al 2007) points out the dangers of crystal methamphetamine, or Tik, as it is commonly known. In Chapter 2, I discussed how this drug has become the scourge of the poor ‘coloured’ townships around Cape Town. This is the drug most teenagers favour because of its accessibility and affordability. Moreover, respondents taking part in Parry et al’s study (2007), for the most part, described Tik as ‘highly sexual’, as ‘sensual’ and as a ‘love’ drug. In Cape Town in particular, ‘it was described as a drug most highly associated with sexual activity... is very popular for sex parties and long sex sessions’ (Parry et al 2007:196). The dangers for ‘coloured’ teenagers therefore lie in the way in which drug use increases risky sexual behaviour, which, in turn, increases the risk of HIV infection. It follows that poor ‘coloured’ teenage girls and poor ‘coloured’ women are those most at risk of infection.

#### ***7.9.1.1 HIV/AIDS: How we can and should respond***

Taking the *aporia* of the prevention of drug abuse and HIV infection amongst ‘coloured’ teenagers in Scottsville seriously by implication means not only targeting the

dangers of drug abuse itself, but developing social protective factors. Such protective factors include the ‘involvement of parents in the lives of their children’, ‘life skills’, and ‘strong bonds with institutions such as schools and religious institutions’ (Harker et al 2008:3).

Through the parent support group that I have started at the school, I am aiming to work with parents in seeing and addressing the obstacles that often prevent their positive involvement in the lives of their children. The painstaking work of building trust between parents and children also depends on a deconstruction of those discourses that support domination and control. Such discourses are often sanctioned by religious institutions (see Sections 2.3.3.2 under the subheading “Discipline” and corporal punishment and 3.2 and 3.3). Herein lies a vast *aporia* for institutions such as the church: they need to critically evaluate the ways in which their support of discourses of control creates conditions of risk such as alienation of young people from parents and such institutions.

In a recent study of prevention programmes in respect of substance abuse amongst young people in the Western Cape (Harker et al 2008: 18-19), the authors point out the urgent need for programmes that are culturally sensitive. This research has shown that such cultural sensitivity can only be developed through participation with young people in the community. Such participation elicits knowledge about discourses, attitudes and the physical conditions of poverty that support drug use. These are the ‘intersecting issues’ that make up our understanding of the dangers and urgency of *aporias* that will need to be traversed not only by medical researchers, but especially by us, the church.

Any discussion about ‘coloured’ poverty has to be a discussion that includes drugs, the dangers of HIV/AIDS and the empowerment of the ‘coloured’ society’s most vulnerable members: its young people and women. Research (such as this) or community programmes that aim at empowering young people women in ‘coloured’ communities can therefore do much more than only address poverty. Such programmes, by focusing on skills development and learning and in cultivating a sense of belonging, decrease the risk of drug taking and exploitation.

However, the physical and sexual risks for poor young people and women are not only associated with a drug culture. In Chapter 2, I comprehensively described the ways in

which violence by the powerful against the powerless is legitimised and normalised in ‘coloured’ communities. The empowerment of those most at risk therefore goes hand in hand with a dismantling of what Lorde (s.a) refers to as ‘the master’s house’ and its rules. This is the essence of the double-sidedness of this research’s theological response to the challenge of ‘coloured’ poverty.

## **7.10 TAKING THE RESEARCH FURTHER**

My witnessing work with young people, as described in Chapter 5, forms the basis of another workshop I am presenting on 3 December 2009 at a conference at the University of Cape Town entitled ‘Beyond Reconciliation: Dealing with the Aftermath of Mass Trauma and Political Violence’. The title of my workshop will be ‘Doing reparation in community: a cross-cultural journey of possibility’.

I intend to publish articles emanating from this research in theological publications. If there is sufficient interest, I would like to share the research process and its discoveries with students during workshops and/or short courses at universities, seminaries and colleges. I will also publish extracts from my research on my website.

I intend to continue the parent support group at Scottsville and to look at ways in which this work and the creative writing with young people from poor ‘coloured’ communities can be sponsored so that it may be extended to other school communities on the Cape Flats. The poetry of the young people of Scottsville will be published during October 2009. Two ceremonies will be held during which the poets will read their own published work. I am currently inviting teachers who want to contribute to these events to join us. I am especially hoping to convince Mr R to join us with his guitar – either providing background music for the reading or setting some of the poems to music. In this way I hope to publicly acknowledge the contribution Mr R has made to the process of developing an interest in poetry amongst Petunia Primary’s Grade 7s. I will also invite Granville to set to music poems written by Juclite and/or Michael.

I am also planning to set up music lessons and workshops in the community with funds from Norwegian sponsors.

The passion that this research has ignited in me for community work will find a way of continuing – also in forms I cannot yet imagine. We will continue to make the road by walking...

## REFERENCES

- Abercrombie, N, Hill, S & Turner, B S 2006. *The Penguin dictionary of sociology*. London: Penguin.
- Ackermann, D 1991. Postscript by a feminist practical theologian, in Cochrane J R, De Gruchy, J W & Petersen, R (eds), *In word and deed. Towards a practical theology for social transformation*, 106-111. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster.
- Ackermann, D 1996. Engaging freedom: A contextual feminist theology of praxis, *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 94 (March), 32-49
- Ackermann, D M 1997. Forward from the margins. Feminist theologies for life. *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa* 99 (November), 63-67.
- Ackermann, D M 2003. *After the locusts. Letters from a landscape of faith*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans & David Philip.
- Ackermann, D M 2007, 20 December. Private conversation, Newlands, Cape Town.
- Adhikari, M 2005. *Not white enough, not black enough. Racial identity in the South African coloured community*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press.
- Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Group of the Medical Research Council 2008. *Fact sheet – alcohol use in South Africa*. (Alcohol and drug abuse module online). Available: <http://www.sahealthinfo.org/admodule/alcohol.htm>. (Accessed: 10 November 2008).
- Amnesty International South Africa 2007. *Amnesty International Report 2007, South Africa* (Homepage of Amnesty International South Africa). Available: <http://thereport.amnesty.org/eng/Regions/Africa/South-Africa>. (Accessed: 22 October 2008).
- Andersen, T 2001. Our language forms our lives and bewitches our understanding. Workshop, 24 March. Cape Town.
- Anderson, H 1997. *Conversation, language, and possibilities*. New York: Basic Books.

- Barron, N 2007. Police may open case against girl's mother. *Cape Times*, 12 July.  
Available:  
[http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set\\_id=1&click\\_id=13&art\\_id=vn20070712034201495C703609](http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=13&art_id=vn20070712034201495C703609). (Accessed 22 August 2008).
- Bauman, Z 1992. *Intimations of postmodernity*. London: Routledge.
- Bauman, Z 2005. *Liquid life*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Beardsworth, R 1996. *Derrida & the political*. London: Routledge.
- bell hooks 1990. *Yearning. Race, gender and cultural politics*. Boston, MA: South End Press.
- 2003. *Teaching community. A pedagogy of hope*. New York: Routledge.
- 2008. Available: <http://www.allaboutbell.com/>. (Accessed: 29 July 2008).
- Benhabib, S 1992. *Situating the self*. New York: Routledge.
- Besley, A C 2002. Foucault and the turn to narrative therapy. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling* 30 (2), 125-143.
- Bhabha, H K [1994] 2006. *The location of culture*. London: Routledge.
- Big Brothers, Big Sisters of South Africa. s.a. Homepage of Big Brothers, Big Sisters of South Africa. Available: [www.bbssa.org.za](http://www.bbssa.org.za). (Accessed: 30 January 2009).
- Bird, J 2000. *The heart's narrative. Therapy and navigating life's contradictions*. 2 nd ed. Auckland: Edge.
- Bird, J 2004. *Talk that sings. Therapy in a new linguistic key*. Auckland: Edge.
- Boland, E 2000. Warning, witness, presence. *Poets and Writers* Nov-Dec, 52-55.
- Bonhoeffer, D 2003 *Discipleship. (Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works, Volume 4)* Trans. by Barbara Green & Reinhard Krauss. Edited by Kelly, G B & Godsey, J D. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress.

- Bons-Storm, R 1998. Putting the little ones into the dialogue: a feminist practical theology, in Ackermann, D & Bons-Storm, R (eds), *Liberating faith practices*, 9-25. Leuven: Peeters.
- Bons-Storm, R 2003. The camel and the needle's eye, in Couture, P D & Miller-McLemore, B J (eds), *Poverty, suffering and HIV-AIDS. International Practical Theological perspectives*, 71-79. Cardiff: Cardiff Academic Press.
- Bosch, D J 1999. *Transforming mission. Paradigm shifts in a Theology of Mission*. New York: Orbis.
- Breytenbach, B 2001. Ek sal sterf en na my vader gaan. (Track 5) *Mondmusiek* CD, Kaapstad: Human & Rousseau.
- Brueggemann, W 1976. *Living toward a vision. Biblical reflections on shalom*. Philadelphia, PN: United Church Press.
- Brueggemann, W 1996. *The threat of life. Sermons on pain, power and weakness*. Edited by C L Campbell. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress.
- Brueggemann, W 2007 *Mandate to difference. An invitation to the contemporary church*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Bruner, E M 1986. Ethnography as narrative, in Turner, V W & Bruner, E M (eds), *The anthropology of experience*, 139-155. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Buffel, E 2007. Tik playing new role in rape. *Die Burger*, 18 May. Available: [http://www.news24.com/News24/South\\_Africa/News/0,,2-7-1442\\_2115094,00.html](http://www.news24.com/News24/South_Africa/News/0,,2-7-1442_2115094,00.html). (Accessed: 10 October 2007).
- Burton, P (ed) 2007. *Someone stole my smile. An exploration into the causes of youth violence in South Africa*. Cape Town: Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention.
- Burton P 2008. *Merchants, skollies and stones. Experiences of school violence in South Africa*. Monograph Series 4. Cape Town: Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention.
- Caputo, J D (ed) 1997. *Deconstruction in a nutshell. A conversation with Jacques Derrida*. New York: Fordham University Press.

- Cardoso Pereira, N 2002. The body as hermeneutical category: guidelines for a feminist hermeneutics of liberation. *The Ecumenical Review*. Available: [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m2065/is\\_3\\_54/ai\\_92136469/](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2065/is_3_54/ai_92136469/). (Accessed: 12 June 2009).
- Carter, C 2007. *Rape statistics are skewed – experts*. 7 July. Available: [http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set\\_id=1&click\\_id=13&art\\_id=vn20070707082904984C306939](http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=13&art_id=vn20070707082904984C306939). (Accessed: 4 Oct 2007).
- Case, K A 2004. Claiming white social location as a site of resistance to white supremacy, in Harvey, J, Case, K A & Gorsline, R H (eds), *Disrupting white supremacy from within. White people on what we need to do*, 63-90. Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press.
- Chambers, R 2002. What is poverty? Who asks? Who answers?, in United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – International Poverty Centre (IPC), *What is poverty: Concepts and measures*, Poverty in Focus Publication, December 2006, pp 3-4. [http://www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0002253/IPC\\_UNDP\\_Poverty-focus\\_Dec2006.pdf](http://www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0002253/IPC_UNDP_Poverty-focus_Dec2006.pdf). (Accessed: 22 September 2008)
- Chopp, R S 1986. *The praxis of suffering*. New York:Orbis.
- 1989. *The power to speak: Feminism, language and God*. New York: Crossroad.
- Christians, C G 2005. Ethics and politics in qualitative research, in Denzin, N K & Lincoln, Y S *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*, 139-164. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cilliers, P 1998. *Complexity and postmodernism*. London: Routledge.
- Claassens, L J M 2009. Putting a (gendered) face on poverty: with special attention to Jesus' foremothers in Matthew 1. Paper presented at conference: *The role of religious communities with regard to gender justice in the economic sphere*. Faculty of Theology, Stellenbosch University.
- Cochrane, J R 2001. Questioning contextual theology, in Speckman, M T & Kaufmann, L T *Towards an agenda for contextual theology. Essays in honour of Albert Nolan*, 67-86. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster.

- Cochrane, J R 2002. On religion and theology in a civil society, in Holness, L & Wüstenberg, R K (eds), *Theology in dialogue. The impact of the Arts, Humanities, and Science on contemporary religious thought. Essays in honor of John W. de Gruchy*, 116-132. Cape Town: David Philip.
- Cochrane, J, De Gruchy, J & Petersen, R (eds) 1991. *In word and deed: towards a practical theology of social transformation*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster.
- Consedine, J 1995. *Restorative justice. Healing the effects of crime*. Christchurch: Ploughshares.
- Copeland, M S 1995. Toward a critical Christian feminist theology of solidarity, in Hinsdale, M A & Kaminski, P H, *Women and theology*, Vol. 40, 3-38. New York: Orbis.
- Cornell, D 1992. *The philosophy of the limit*. New York: Routledge.
- Couture, P D 2000. *Seeing children, seeing God*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon.
- Cozad Neuger, C 1996. Pastoral counseling as an art of personal political activism, in Cozad Neuger, C (ed), *The arts of ministry. Feminist-womanist perspectives*, 88-117. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox.
- Cupido, E 2008a, 30 January. Interview with author. Scottsville, South Africa.
- Cupido, E 2008b, 13 May. Conversation with author. Scottsville. South Africa.
- Davidson, A I 1997. Structures and strategies of discourse: remarks towards a history of Foucault's philosophy of language, in Davidson, A I (ed), *Foucault and his interlocutors*, 1-22. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Davies, B 1991. The concept of agency. A feminist poststructuralist analysis. *Postmodern Critical Theorising* 30, 42-53.
- 2000a. *A body of writing 1990-1999*. Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira.
- 2000b . Eclipsing the constitutive power of discourse. The writing of Janette Turner Hospital, in St Pierre, E A & Pillow, W S (eds), *Working the ruins. Feminist poststructural theory and methods in education*, 179-198. New York: Routledge.

- 2005. The (Im)possibility of intellectual work in neoliberal regimes, in *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 26(1) March, 1-14.
- Davies, B, Browne, J, Gannon, S, Hopkins, L, McCann, H & Wihlborg, M 2006, Constituting the feminist subject in Poststructuralist discourse. *Feminism and Psychology* 16 (1), 87- 103. London: Sage.
- Davies, B & Harré, R 1991. Positioning: The discursive production of selves. *Journey for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 20(1), 43-63.
- Dawes, A, Long, W, Alexander, L & Ward, C 2006. *A situation analysis of children affected by maltreatment and violence in the Western Cape. Report for the Research Directorate Department of Social Services & Poverty Alleviation: Provincial Government of the Western Cape*. Available: [http://www.hsrc.ac.za/research/output/outputDocuments/4048\\_Dawes\\_situation\\_analysisofchildren.pdf](http://www.hsrc.ac.za/research/output/outputDocuments/4048_Dawes_situation_analysisofchildren.pdf). (Accessed: 2 Oct 2007).
- De Gruchy, J W 1984. *Bonhoeffer and South Africa*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- De Gruchy, J W 1987. Standing by God in his hour of grieving. Edited by P G R de Villiers, Third C.P. Powell Public Lecture, Faculty of Theology, UNISA. Pretoria.
- De Gruchy, J. W 1994. The nature, necessity and task of theology, in De Gruchy, J W & Villa-Vicencio, C (eds), *Doing theology in context: South African perspectives*, 2- 14. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.
- De Gruchy, J.W 2006. *Being human. Confessions of a Christian humanist*. London: SCM.
- De Mello, A 1990. *Awareness*. London: Fount.
- De Stadler, A & Van der Westhuizen, P (eds) 2008a. Doendinge vir Afrikaans. *Nuusbrief van die Vriende van Afrikaans* 12(2), Junie, 7.
- De Stadler, A & Van der Westhuizen, P (eds) 2008b. Doendinge vir Afrikaans. *Nuusbrief van die Vriende van Afrikaans* 12(3), Oktober, 1.

- Deist, F E 1994. Post-modernism and the use of Scripture in theological argument: Footnotes to the apartheid theology debate. *Neotestamentica* 28(3) (special edition), 253- 263.
- Dentlinger, L 2007. South Africa: 105 kids murdered in a year. *Cape Argus* 19 July. Available: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200707190396.html>. (Accessed: 28 September 2007).
- Denzin, N K 1989. *The research act. A theoretical introduction to sociological methods*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Denzin, N K & Lincoln, Y S (eds) 2003. *Strategies of qualitative inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Derrida, J 1981. *Dissemination*. Translated by Barbara Johnson. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- 1983. Letter to a Japanese friend, in Wood, D & Bernasconi, R (eds) 1988. *Derrida and Différance*, 1-5. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- 1989. Force of law: The “Mystical Foundation of Authority”. Translated by M Quaintance, in Cornell, D Rosenfeld, M & Carlson, D G (eds) 1992. *Deconstruction and the possibility of justice*, 3-67. New York: Routledge.
- 1992a. *Points...Interviews, 1974-1994*, Translated by P Kamuf et al, edited by E Weber. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- 1992b. *The other heading. Reflections on today's Europe*. Translated by P-A Brault & M B Naas. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- 1995. *The gift of death*. Translated by D Wills. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Derrida, J & Roudinesco, E 2004. *For what tomorrow...A dialogue*. Translated by J Fort. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Dombrowski, D A 1992. *St. John of the Cross: An Appreciation*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

- Dreyfus, H L & Rabinow, P 1982. *Michel Foucault: Beyond structuralism and hermeneutics*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Dutch Reformed Church (Western and Southern Cape) and Uniting Reformed Church in Southern Africa (Cape) Conference. 2005. *Church and poverty eradication in South Africa*, Scottsville 15-17 March.
- Educationweb. 2008, 28 February. *50% of our pupils drop out before matric*. Available: <http://www.educationweb.co.za/ew/?p=121>. (Accessed: 11 Jan 2009).
- Eg a-Kuehne D 2005. Right to humanities: Of faith and responsibility, in Trifonas P P & Peters M A (eds) *Deconstructing Derrida. Tasks for the new humanities*, 37-52. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Engelbrecht, S & Steinmetz, Z 2008. Kindermisdade neem toe. *Die Burger* 24 June, p 7.
- Epston, D 1994. Extending the conversation. *Networker*, November/December, 31-39.
- Erasmus, Z 2001. Re-imagining coloured identities in post-Apartheid South Africa, in Erasmus, Z (ed) 2001, *Coloured by history, shaped by place. New perspectives on coloured identities in Cape Town*, 13-28. Cape Town: Kwela Books and SA History Online.
- Foster, R 2005, 10 May. Conversation with author. Petunia Primary, Scottsville.
- Foster, R 2006, 15 February. Conversation with author. Petunia Primary, Scottsville.
- Foster, R 2009, 4 June. Conversation with author. Petunia Primary, Scottsville.
- Foucault M 1968. On the archaeology of the sciences: response to the epistemological circle, in Rabinow, P & Rose, N 2003, *The essential Foucault. Selections from the essential works of Foucault 1954-1984*, 392-422. New York: New Press (Original copyright 1994 Editions Gallimard).
- 1971. Revolutionary action: 'Until Now', in Foucault, M 1977. *Language, counter-memory, practice. Selected essays and interviews*. Translated by D F Bouchard & S Simon, edited by D F Bouchard, 218-233. New York: Cornell University Press.

- 1972. *The archaeology of knowledge*. Translated by A M Sheridan Smith. London: Tavistock.
- 1976a. Two lectures, in Foucault, M 1980 *Power/Knowledge. Selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977*. Brighton: The Harvester Press.
- 1976b. *The history of sexuality, Volume 1*. Translated by R Hurley. Copyright: Éditions Gallimard, Translation copyright: Random House Inc 1978, Copy reprinted 1990, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- 1976c. Truth and power (Translated by C Lazzeri), in Rabinow, P & Rose, N 2003, *The essential Foucault. Selections from the essential works of Foucault 1954-1984*, 300-318. New York: New Press (Original copyright 1994 Editions Gallimard).
- 1977a. Powers and strategies (interviewed by the Révoltes Logiques collective) (Translated by W Suchting), in Morris, M & Patton, P 1979. *Michel Foucault: Power, truth, strategy*, 49-58. Sydney: Feral.
- 1979a. Truth and power (interviewed by Alessandro Fontano and Pasquale Pasquino) (Translated by P Patton & M Morris), in Morris, M & Patton, P (eds) *Michel Foucault: Power, truth, strategy*, 29-48. Sydney: Feral.
- 1979b. Omnes et Singulatim, in Rabinow, P & Rose, N 2003, *The essential Foucault. Selections from the essential works of Foucault 1954-1984*, 180-201. New York: New Press (Original copyright 1994 Editions Gallimard).
- 1980. *Power/Knowledge. Selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977*. Brighton: The Harvester Press.
- 1981. The political technology of individuals, in Martin, L H , Gutman, H & Hutton, P H (eds) 1988, *Technologies of the self. A seminar with Michel Foucault*, 145-162. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.
- 1982. Afterword. The subject and power, in Dreyfus, H L & Rabinow, P (eds) *Michel Foucault: Beyond structuralism and hermeneutics*, 208-226. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

- 1984. An aesthetics of existence, interviewed by Alessandro Fontana, in Kritzman, L D (ed) 1988. *Michel Foucault. Politics, philosophy, culture. Interviews and other writings 1977-1984*. Translated by A Sheridan. New York: Routledge.
- 1988. Technologies of the self in Martin, L H , Gutman, H & Hutton, P H (eds), *Technologies of the self. A seminar with Michel Foucault*, 16-49. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.
- 1995. *Discipline and punish. The birth of the prison*. Translated by A Sheridan (Copyright 1977). New York: Vintage.
- 2007. *Security, territory, population. Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-78*. Translated by G Burchell, edited by M Senellart. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Foucault, M & Chomsky, N 1974. Human nature: Justice versus power, in Davidson, A I (ed) 1997, *Foucault and his interlocutors*, 107-145. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Foucault, M & Delacampagne, C 1980. The masked philosopher, in Kritzman, L D (ed) 1988. *Michel Foucault. Politics, philosophy, culture. Interviews and other writings 1977-1984*. Translated by A Sheridan, 323-330. New York: Routledge.
- Fraser, N 1992. Politics, culture, and the public sphere, in Nicholson, L & Seidman, S 1995. *Social postmodernism. Beyond identity politics*, 287-312. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Freedman, J & Combs, G 1996. *Narrative therapy. The social construction of preferred realities*. New York: Norton.
- Freeman, J, Epston, D & Lobovits, D 1997. *Playful approaches to serious problems. Narrative therapy with children and their families*. New York: Norton.
- Freire, P 1972. *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Translated by M Bergman Ramos. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- 1998a. *Pedagogy of freedom. Ethics, democracy, and civic courage*. Translated by P Clarke. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

- 1998b. *Teachers as cultural workers. Letters to those who dare teach*. Translated by D Macedo, D Koike and A Oliveira. Oxford: Westview.
- 1998c *Pedagogy of the heart*. Translated by D Macedo & A Oliveira. New York: New York Press.
- 1999. *Pedagogy of hope. Reliving pedagogy of the oppressed*. Translated by R Barr. New York: Continuum.
- Freire, P & Faundez, A 1989. *Learning to question. A pedagogy of liberation*. Translated by T Coates. Geneva: WCC Publications.
- Freire, P & Gadotti, M 1995. We can reinvent the world, in McLaren, P L & Giarelli, J M (eds) *Critical theory and educational research*, 257-270. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Gergen, K J 2001. Psychological science in a postmodern context. *The American Psychologist* 56, 803-813.  
<http://www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/kgergen1/web/printer-friendly.phtml?id=manu25>. (Accessed: 18 January 2009).
- Gergen, K J & Gergen, M 2000. Qualitative inquiry: Tensions and transformation, in Denzin, N K & Lincoln, Y S (eds), *Handbook of qualitative research*. 2nd ed, 1025-1046. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Giliomee, H 2007. "Nog altyd hier gewees". *Die storie van 'n Stellenbosse gemeenskap*. Kaapstad: Tafelberg.
- Giroux, H A. 1997. *Pedagogy and the politics of hope. Theory, culture and schooling. A Critical reader*. Boulder, CO: Westview.
- Giroux, H A 2005. Higher education and democracy's promise: Jacques Derrida's pedagogy of uncertainty, in Trifonas P P & Peters M A (eds), *Deconstructing Derrida. Tasks for the new humanities*, 53-81. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Glissant, E 1997. *Poetics of relation*. Translated by B Wing. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

- Graham, E L 1993. The sexual politics of pastoral care, in Graham, E & Halsey, M, *Life Cycles. Women and pastoral care*, . London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.
- Graham, E 1996. *Transforming practice. Pastoral theology in an age of uncertainty*. London: Mowbray.
- Graham, E 1998. A view from a room: feminist practical theology from academy, kitchen or sanctuary, in Ackermann, D & Bons-Storm, R (eds), *Liberating faith practices*, 129- 152. Leuven: Peeters.
- Graham, E, Walton, H & Ward, F 2005. *Theological reflection: methods*. London: SCM.
- Greater Good South Africa homepage. Available:  
<http://www.greatergoodsa.co.za/> (Accessed: 22 July 2008)
- Griggs, R A 2002. *Preventing crime and violence in South African schools. A review of learning and good practice from eight interventions*. Commissioned by the Criminal Justice Initiative, Open Society Foundation for South Africa.
- Grundy, S 1996. Towards empowering leadership: the importance of imagining, in Zuber-Skerritt, O (ed), *New directions in action research*, 106-120. London: Falmer.
- Gutiérrez, G 2003. The situation and tasks of Liberation Theology today (Translated by J B Nickoloff), in Rieger, J (ed) *Opting for the margins. Postmodernity and liberation in Christian Theology*, 89-104. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hall, S 1996. Reflexivity in Emancipatory Action Research: Illustrating the researcher's constitutiveness, in Zuber-Skerritt, O (ed), *New directions in action research*, 28-48. London: Falmer.
- Harker, N, Myers, B, Parry, C 2008. *Audit of prevention programmes targeting substance abuse among young people in the greater Cape Metropole: Technical Report*. Alcohol and Drug abuse Research Unit, Medical Research Council. March. Available: <http://www.sahealthinfo.org/admodule/auditprevention.pdf>. (Accessed: 6 May 2009).

- Harrington, A, Marshall, B L, Müller, H-P 2006. *Encyclopedia of social theory*. Oxford: Routledge.
- Harrison, B W 1985. *Making the connections. Essays in feminist social ethics*. Edited by C S Robb. Boston, MA: Beacon.
- Heaney, T 2000. Politics of Explanation. Ethical questions in the production of knowledge, in Steiner, S F, Krank, H M, McLaren, P & Bahruth, R E, *Freirean Pedagogy, Praxis and Possibilities. Critical Education Practice*, 101-118. New York: Falmer.
- Hechinger, F M 1996. Saving youth from violence, in Mahdi, L C, Christopher, N G & Meade, M (eds), *Crossroads. The quest for contemporary rites of passage*, 99-108. Chicago: Open court.
- Herholdt, M D 1998. Postmodern hermeneutics, in Maimela, S & König, A (eds), *Initiation into theology. The rich variety of theology and hermeneutics*, 451-470. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Herman, D 2006. Fifty percent of SA citizens live in poverty. *Pretoria News* 13 June. p 4. Available: <http://www.iol.co.za/index>. (Accessed: 22 Sept 2007).
- Herzog, F 1988. *God-walk. Liberation shaping dogmatics*. New York: Orbis.
- Heshusius, L 1996. On tending broken dreams, in Heshusius, L & Ballard, K (eds), *From positivism to interpetivism and beyond. Tales of transformation in educational and social research*, 128-135. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Heshusius, L & Ballard, K 1996 How do we count the ways we know? Some background to the project, in Heshusius, L & Ballard, K (eds), *From Positivism to Interpetivism and beyond. Tales of transformation in educational and social research*, 1-16. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Heyward, C 1995. *Staying power. Reflections on Gender, Justice, and Compassion*. Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press.
- Heyward, C 2000. Jesus of Nazareth/Christ of faith. Foundations of a reactive Christology, in Brooks Thistlewaite, S & Potter Engel, M (eds), 1988. *Lift every voice. Constructing Christian theologies from the underside*. New York: Orbis.

- Heyward, C 1999. *Saving Jesus from those who are right. Rethinking what it means to be Christian*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.
- Hopkins, D N 2003. More than ever: the preferential option for the poor, in Rieger, J (ed) *Opting for the margins. Postmodernity and liberation in Christian Theology*, 127-142. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Horton, M & Freire, P 1990. *We make the road by walking*. Philadelphia, PN: Temple University Press.
- Hulme, T 2002. Transforming a school community: facilitators living values. MTh thesis, University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- Human Rights Watch 2007. World Report. Available: <http://hrw.org/englishwr2k7/docs/2007/01/11/safri14710.htm>. (Accessed: 23 October 2007).
- Isasi-Díaz, A M 1989. Mujeristas: A name of our own!! *Christian Century*, May 24-31, 560. Available: <http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=874>. Accessed: 5 June 2009.
- Isasi-Díaz, A M 1994. *La Lucha continues. Mujerista theology*. New York: Orbis.
- 1996. *Mujerista theology*. New York: Orbis.
- 1999. *Mujerista narratives: creating a new heaven and a new earth*, in Farley, M.A & Jones, S (eds), *Liberating eschatology. Essays in honor of Letty.M.Russell*, 227-243. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Isherwood, L & McEwan, D 1994. *Introducing feminist theology*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Isherwood, L & Stuart, E 1998. *Introducing body theology*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Jackson, N 2008. Duiwel het 'n pak slae gekry. *Die Burger*, 23 April. Available: <http://www.dieburger.com>. (Accessed: 20 November 2008).
- Jamal, A 2005. *Predicaments of culture in South Africa*. Pretoria: UNISA Press.

- Jenkins, A 1990. *Invitations to responsibility*. Adelaide: Dulwich Centre.
- Jooste, B 2008. Cape's child violence shame: 128 murdered. *The Weekend Argus*, 5 July, p 5.
- Kamitsuka, M D 2007. *Feminist theology and the challenge of difference*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kemmis, S & McTaggart, R 2005. Participatory action research. Communicative action in the public sphere, in Denzin, N K & Lincoln, Y S (eds), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*, 559-603. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Kemp, Y 2003. Shock report on 'child shields'. *Cape Argus*, 10 June. Available: <http://www.capeargus.co.za/index.php?fArticleId=1122536>. (Accessed: 11 October 2007).
- Kinnis, I 1996. The struggle for the Cape Flats, in James, W, Caliguire, D & Cullinan, K (eds), *Now that we are free. Coloured communities in a democratic South Africa*. 16-19, Cape Town: IDASA.
- Knowles, E & Elliott, J (eds) 1997. *The Oxford dictionary of new words*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kotzé, D 2002. Doing participatory ethics, in Kotzé, D, Myburgh, J, Roux, J & associates, *Ethical ways of being*, 1-34. Pretoria: Ethics Alive.
- Kritzman, L D 1988. Introduction: Foucault and the politics of experience, in Kritzman, L D (ed), *Michel Foucault. Politics, philosophy, culture. Interviews and other writings 1977-1984*, Translated by A Sheridan, ix-xxv. New York: Routledge.
- Krog, A 2003. *A change of tongue*. Johannesburg: Random House.
- Krog, A, Mpolweni, N & Ratele, K 2009. *There was this goat. Investigating the Truth Commission testimony of Notrose Nobomvu Konile*. Scottsville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.
- Krog, A & Schaffer, A 2005. *Nuwe Stemme 3*. Kaapstad: Tafelberg.
- Krug, E G, Dahlberg, L D, Mercy, J A, Zwi, A B & Lozano, L (eds) 2002. *World report on violence and health*, World Health Organisation, Geneva.

- Kwok, P 2005. *Postcolonial imagination and feminist theology*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox.
- 'Kyriarchy' 2001. Glossary, Wisdom Ways, New York: Orbis. Available: <http://feministphilosophers.wordpress.com/2008/05/01/word-of-the-day-kyriarchy/>.(Accessed: 5 June 2009).
- Leggett, T 2004a. What's up in the Cape? Crime rates in Western and Northern Cape provinces. *Crime Quarterly* 7. Available: <http://www.iss.co.za/pubs/CrimeQ/No.7/Leggett1.htm>. (Accessed: 2 October 2007).
- 2004b. Still marginal. Crime in the Coloured community. *Crime Quarterly* 7. Available: <http://www.iss.co.za/pubs/CrimeQ/No.7/Leggett2.htm>. (Accessed: 2 October 2007).
- Leoschut, L 2006. Double Trouble. Youth From Violent Families: Easy Victims Of Crime?. *S A Crime Quarterly*, 16 June, 7-11. Available: <http://www.issafrica.org>. (Accessed: 3 October 2007).
- Leoschut, L & Burton, P 2006. *How rich the rewards? Results of the 2005 National Youth Victimisation Study*, Cape Town, CJCP Monograph Series No. 1.
- Le Roux, M 2007. Tik takes toll on South African teens. *Mail & Guardian* 14 February. Available: [http://www.mg.co.za/articlePage.aspx?articleid=298937&area=/breaking\\_news/breaking\\_news\\_national/](http://www.mg.co.za/articlePage.aspx?articleid=298937&area=/breaking_news/breaking_news_national/). (Accessed: 22 October 2007).
- Lessing, D 2007. Nobel lecture: On not winning the Nobel Prize. 7 December. [http://nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/literature/laureates/2007/lessing-lecture\\_en.html](http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/2007/lessing-lecture_en.html). (Accessed: 12 Nov. 2008).
- Lincoln, Y & Denzin, N K 2005. Epilogue. The eighth a ninth moments - Qualitative research in/and the fractured future, in Denzin, N K & Lincoln, Y S (eds), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 1115-1126. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Lister, R 2006. s.v Poverty, in Turner, B S (ed), *The Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology*, 462-464. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Llewellyn, J L 2004. Doing justice in South Africa: Restorative justice and reparation, in Doxtader, E & Villa-Vicencio, C (eds), *To repair the irreparable. Reparation and reconstruction in South Africa*, 166-183. Institute for Justice and Reconciliation. David Philip: Cape Town.
- Løgstrup, K E 1971. *The ethical demand*, Translated by T I Jensen. Philadelphia, PN: Fortress.
- Lorde, A 1984. The transformation of silence into language and action. *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. Freedom. California: Crossing Press, in Bell-Scott, P (ed), 1998. *Flat-footed Truths. Telling black women's lives*, 193-197. New York: Henry Holt and Company.
- Lorde, A 'The master's tools...' Available:  
<http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/a/audrelorde357280.html>.  
 (Accessed: 20 November 2008).
- Lucy, N 2004. *A Derrida dictionary*. Blackwell: Oxford.
- Maguire, P 2001. Uneven ground: Feminisms and Action Research, in Reason, P & Bradbury (eds) 2006, *Handbook of Action Research*, 60-70. London: Sage.
- Martin, R 1982. Truth, power, self: An interview with Michel Foucault in Martin, L H , Gutman, H & Hutton, P H (eds), 1988. *Technologies of the self. A seminar with Michel Foucault*. 9-15. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.
- Mason, J 2004. *Qualitative researching*. London: Sage.
- MaAfrikatikkun homepage (online). Available:  
<http://www.maafrikatikkun.org.za/web/content/view/134/272/>. (Accessed: 18 November 2008).
- McClintock Fulkerson, M 2000. Feminist theology: language, gender and power, in Webster, J & Schnier, G P (eds), *Theology after Liberalism. A reader*, 305-320. Oxford: Blackwell.

- McLaren, P 1995. Collisions with Otherness: “Traveling” Theory, Postcolonial criticism, and the politics of Ethnographic practice – the mission of the wounded ethnographer, in McLaren, P L & Giarelli, J M (eds), *Critical theory and Educational research*. 271-300. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- McNay, L 1992. *Foucault and feminism: power, gender and the self*. Boston, MA: Northeastern University.
- McTaggart, R 1994. Participatory Action Research: issues in theory and practice. *Educational Action research* 2(3).
- 1997a. Reading the collection, in McTaggart, R (ed), *Participatory Action research. International contexts and consequences*, 1-24. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- 1997b. Guiding principles for Participatory Action Research, in McTaggart, R (ed), *Participatory Action research. International contexts and consequences*, 25-44. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Mda, Z 1998. Current trends in theatre for development in South Africa, in Attridge, D & Jolly R (eds), *Writing South Africa: literature, apartheid and democracy, 1970-1995*, 257-264. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Meade, M 1996. Litima: the inner heat, in Mahdi, L C, Christopher, N G & Meade, M (eds), *Crossroads. The quest for contemporary rites of passage*, 57-62. Chicago: Open court.
- Media24 s.a. Rachel’s Angels (Homepage). Available: <http://www.rachelsangels.co.za> (Accessed: 5 March 2009).
- Medved, M & Williams, M 2007. Missing girl ‘was drunk’. *Cape Argus* 11 July. Available: [http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set\\_id=1&click\\_id=13&art\\_id=vn20070711114721596C902118](http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=13&art_id=vn20070711114721596C902118). (Accessed: 22 August 2008).
- Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary* s.a. Available: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pastoral>. (Accessed: 2 May 2009).

- Miller-McLemore, B J 2004. Pastoral theology as Public Theology: Revolutions in the 'Fourth Area', in Ramsay, N J (ed), *Pastoral care and counseling. Redefining the paradigms*, 45-64. Nashville, TN: Abingdon.
- Minow, M 1990. *Making all the difference. Inclusion, exclusion and American law*. London: Cornell University Press.
- Mohamed, A-R & Suliman, S, 2007. Severe trauma affects a child's brain. *Cape Times* 1 October, 9.
- Monk, G et al (eds) 1997. *Narrative therapy in practice. The archaeology of hope*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Moore, Z B 2002. *Introducing feminist perspectives on pastoral theology*. London: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Morkel, E 3 May 2005. Conversation with author. Somerset-West.
- Mullino Moore, M E 2003. Beyond poverty and suffering: an eschatological vision, in Couture, P D & Miller-McLemore, B J (eds), *Poverty, suffering and HIV-AIDS. International Practical Theological perspectives*, 247- 259. Cardiff: Cardiff Academic Press.
- Multichoice s.a. Inkwenkwezi trust project (Homepage). Available: <http://forthareinkwenkwezi.co.za> (Accessed 5 March 2009).
- Myburgh, J. 2008. Anatomy of South African decay. Politicsweb 4 March. Available: <http://www.politicsweb.co.za/politicsweb/view/politicsweb/en/page71619?oid=86908&sn=Detail>. (Accessed: 22 November 2008).
- Naas, M 2003. *Taking on the tradition. Jacques Derrida and the legacies of deconstruction*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- National HIV and Syphilis Prevalence Survey South Africa 2007. Homepage of the National Department of Health. Available: [http://www.hst.org.za/indicators/HIV\\_AIDS/antenatal\\_2007.pdf](http://www.hst.org.za/indicators/HIV_AIDS/antenatal_2007.pdf). (Accessed: 6 May 2009).

- Ndebele, N S 1991. *Rediscovery of the ordinary. Essays on South African Literature and Culture*. Johannesburg: COSAW.
- NIMSS (National injury mortality surveillance system online) 29 August 2007, 'Violence and injury'-module. Available: [www.sahealthinfo.org/violence/nimss.htm](http://www.sahealthinfo.org/violence/nimss.htm). (Accessed: 1 June 2009).
- Noach, C A T 2005, 18 August. Interview with author. Scottsville, South Africa.
- Noach, C A T 2006, 30 November. Interview with author. Scottsville, South Africa.
- Nolan, A 2001. *Jesus before Christianity*. 4th printing. New York: Orbis.
- Norris, C 1987. *Derrida*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Norris, C 1998. s v Deconstruction, in Craig, E (ed), *The shorter Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 163. London: Routledge.
- Oksala, J 2005. *Foucault on freedom*. Modern European Philosophy Series. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Oliver, L 2007. Tik is a coloured problem – Rasool. *Cape Argus* 10 July. Available: [http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set\\_id=1&click\\_id=13&art\\_id=vn20070710135210997C487450](http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=13&art_id=vn20070710135210997C487450). (Accessed: 15 November 2007).
- Open Society Foundation for South Africa (Homepage Open Society Foundation for South Africa – Mentoring Programmes). 2002. Available: [http://www.osf.org.za/File\\_Uploads/docs/MentoringProgrammesforYouth18June2002.pdf](http://www.osf.org.za/File_Uploads/docs/MentoringProgrammesforYouth18June2002.pdf). (Accessed: 15 November 2008).
- Park, P 2001. Knowledge and participatory research, in Reason, P & Bradbury, H (eds) 2006. *Handbook of Action Research*, 176-184. London: Sage.
- Parry, C 2005. Substance abuse trends in the Western Cape: Summary 25.02.05. MRC Available: <http://www.sahealthinfo.org/admodule/summary.pdf> (Accessed: 6 May 2009).
- Parry, C et al 2007. Technical report: Drug use and sexual HIV risk patterns among non-injecting and injecting drug-users in Cape Town, Pretoria and Durban, South Africa, Alcohol and Drug abuse Research Unit, Medical Research

- Council. Available: <http://www.sahealthinfo.org/admodule/druguse.pdf>. (Accessed: 6 May 2009).
- Parry, C D H & Pithey, A L 2006. Risk behaviour and HIV among drug using populations in South Africa. *African Journal of Drug and Alcohol Studies*, 5(2), 140-157.
- Pattison, S 1994. *Pastoral care and Liberation Theology*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.
- Pauw, I s.a. *Life or Meth*. Available: <http://lifeormeth.com/#/albertacapetown/4517029139> AND <http://www.health24.com/child/Abuse/833-859,28041.asp>. (Accessed: 17 May 2009).
- Pelser, E. 2008. Learning to be lost: Youth crime in South Africa, Discussion Paper for the HSRC Youth Policy Initiative, Reserve Bank, Pretoria 13 May. Available: [http://lnw.creamermedia.co.za/articles/attachments/13570\\_justice&crimeprevention.pdf](http://lnw.creamermedia.co.za/articles/attachments/13570_justice&crimeprevention.pdf). (Accessed: 22 November 2008).
- Pieterse, H J C 2001. *Preaching in a context of poverty*. Translated by M Manley. Pretoria: UNISA.
- Plüddemann, A, Myers, B & Parry, C 2007. Fact sheet – Methamphetamine (‘meth’ ‘tik’, ‘tuk’, ‘Speed’, ‘crystal’). Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Unit, Medical Research Council. Available: <http://www.sahealthinfo.org/admodule/methamphetamine.pdf>. (Accessed: 15 October 2007).
- Poling, J N 1991. *The abuse of power. A theological problem*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon.
- Poling, J N 2002. *Render unto God. Economic vulnerability, family violence and pastoral theology*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice.
- Potter Engel, M & Brooks Thistlewaite, S 2000. Introduction: Making the connections among liberation theologies around the world, in Brooks Thistlewaite, S &

- Potter Engel, M (eds), *Lift every voice. Constructing Christian theologies from the underside*. 2<sup>nd</sup> printing, 1-18. New York: Orbis.
- Powell, J 1997. *Derrida for beginners*. London: Writers and Readers.
- Purvis, S B 1993. *The power of the Cross. Foundations for a Christian Feminist Ethic of Community*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon.
- Ramatlakane, L 2007. Western Cape Community Safety Prov Budget Vote 2007/08. Available: <http://www.polity.org.za/article/ramatlakane-western-cape-community-safety-prov-budget-vote-200708-2007-06-06>. (Accessed: 18 October 2007).
- Ramphela, M 2006, 23 November. Public conversation with Archbishop Desmond Tutu: *Journeys through Trauma after the TRC in South Africa*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town.
- Ramphela, M 2002. *Steering by the stars. Being young in South Africa*. Cape Town: Tafelberg.
- Ramphela, M 2008. *Laying ghosts to rest. Dilemmas of the transformation in South Africa*. Cape Town: Tafelberg.
- Ramsay, N J 2004. Contemporary Pastoral Theology: A wider vision for the practice of love, in Ramsay, N J (ed), *Pastoral care and counseling. Redefining the paradigms*, 155-176. Nashville, TN: Abingdon.
- Rattansi, A 1995. Just framing: ethnicities and racisms in a 'postmodern' framework, in Nicholson, L & Seidman, S, *Social postmodernism. Beyond identity politics*, 250-286. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Reddy, T 2001. The politics of naming: The constitution of coloured subjects in South Africa, in Erasmus, Z (ed), *Coloured by history, shaped by place. New perspectives on coloured identities in Cape Town*, 64-97. Cape Town: Kwela Books and SA History Online.
- Reyes, J 29 April 2008, 'Mighty Men conference 2008 – dying to live', UCB International blog. Available: <http://ucbmedia.com/blog/2008/04/29/mighty-men-conference-2008-dying-to-live/>. (Accessed: 12 October 2008).

- Rich, A 1978. *Dream of a Common language*. New York: Norton.
- Rich, A 2001. *Arts of the possible*. New York: Norton.
- Rich, A 2003. *What is found there. Notebooks on Poetry and Politics*. London: Norton.
- Richardson, L 2005. Qualitative writing, in Richardson, L & St. Pierre, E, *A Writing. A method of inquiry*, in Denzin, N K & Lincoln, Y S, *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 959- 967. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. 2x in?
- Ricoeur, P 1995a. *Figuring the sacred. Religion, Narrative and Imagination* Translated by D. Pellauer, edited by M I Wallace. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress.
- Ricoeur, P 1995b. Autonomy and vulnerability, in Ricoeur, P 2007, *Reflections on the Just*, (translated by David Pellauer), 72-90. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Rieger, J 1998. *Remember the poor. The challenge to theology in the twenty-first century*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International.
- 2001. *God and the excluded. Visions and blindspots in contemporary theology*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress.
- 2003. Introduction: Opting for the margins in a postmodern world, in Rieger, J (ed), *Opting for the margins. Postmodernity and liberation in Christian theology*, 3-22. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Rodríguez, L 2001. *Hearts and hands. Creating community in violent times*. New York: Seven stories.
- Ross, F C & Reynolds, P 2004. Voices not heard: small histories and the work of repair, in Doxtader, E & Villa-Vicencio, (eds), *C To repair the irreparable. Reparation and reconstruction in South Africa* 106-114. Institute for Justice and Reconciliation. Cape Town: David Philip.
- Rossouw, G J 1993. Theology in a postmodern culture: ten challenges. *HTS* 49(4), 894-907.

- Roux, J & Kotzé, D 2002. Ideas for participatory practices in organisations, in Kotzé, D, Myburg, J, Roux, J & Associates. *Ethical ways of being*, 145-157. Pretoria: Ethics Alive.
- Rowland, C 1999. Introduction: the theology of liberation, in Rowland, C (ed) *The Cambridge companion to Liberation Theology*, 1-16. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Russell, L M 1974. *Human liberation in a feminist perspective – a theology*. Philadelphia, PN: Westminster.
- Sachs, A 1990. Preparing ourselves for freedom, in De Kok, I & Press, K (eds), *Spring is Rebellious*, 19-29. Cape Town: Buchu.
- Sardar, Z 1998. *Postmodernism and the Other. The new Imperialism of Western culture*. London: Pluto.
- Scheurich, J J & McKenzie, K B 2005. Foucault's methodologies. Archaeology and genealogy, in Denzin, N K & Lincoln, Y S (eds) *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed, 841-868. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Schüssler Fiorenza, E 1993. *Discipleship of equals. A critical feminist ekklesia-logy of liberation*. New York: Crossroad.
- 1998. *Sharing her word. Feminist Biblical interpretation in context*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark.
- 1999. To follow the vision, in Farley, M A & Jones, S (eds) 1999, *Liberating Eschatology. Essays in honor of Letty M. Russell*, 123-143. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox.
- 2000. *Jesus and the politics of interpretation*. New York: Continuum.
- Scripturetext. <http://scripturetext.com/luke/15-21.htm>
- Seekings, J 2007. *Poverty and inequality after apartheid*, CSSR Working Paper No. 200, Centre for Social Science Research, UCT. Available: [http://www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0003024/Poverty\\_inequality\\_Seekings\\_Sep2007.pdf](http://www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0003024/Poverty_inequality_Seekings_Sep2007.pdf). (Accessed: 20 Nov. 2008).

- Segundo, J L 1993. *Signs of the times. Theological reflections*. Translated by R R Barr, edited by T Alfred & S J Hennelly. New York: Orbis.
- Sharpe, M 2002. The descent of doves. Camus's Fall, Derrida's ethics? *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 28(2), 173-189.
- Slee, N 2003. *Faith and feminism. An introduction to Christian Feminist Theology*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd.
- Smit, D J 2003. On learning to see? A reformed perspective on the church and the poor, in Couture, P D & Miller-McLemore, B J (eds), *Poverty, suffering and HIV-AIDS. International Practical Theological perspectives*, 55-70. Cardiff: Cardiff Academic Press.
- Soelle, D 1984. *The strength of the weak. Toward a Christian Feminist identity*, Translated by R & R Kimber. Philadelphia, PN: Westminster.
- 1990. *The window of vulnerability. A political spirituality*. Translated by Linda M. Maloney. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress.
- Solomons, T 2007. Verbod op tug wek kommer. *Die Burger*, 16 Oktober, 13.
- South African Police Service (SAPS) 2007. <http://www.saps.gov.za/statistics> (Accessed: 19 November 2008).
- South African Police Service (SAPS) 2008. Crime for the Kraaifontein Police Precinct in the Western Cape for the period April to March 2001/2002 to 2007/2008. Available: [http://www.saps.gov.za/statistics/reports/crimestats/2008/\\_provinces/w\\_cape/pdf/kraaifontein.pdf](http://www.saps.gov.za/statistics/reports/crimestats/2008/_provinces/w_cape/pdf/kraaifontein.pdf). (Accessed: 31 May 2009).
- Speckman, M T 2001. For Nolan's sake, let's move on: a plea for a developmental dimension in Contextual theology, in Speckman, M T & Kaufmann, L T (eds), *Towards an agenda for contextual theology. Essays in honour of Albert Nolan*, 390-406. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster.
- St John of the Cross. Wikipedia. Available: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_of\\_the\\_Cross](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_of_the_Cross). (Accessed: 1 June 2008).

- Standing, A June 2003. *The social contradictions of organised crime on the Cape Flats*. ISS Paper, 74. Available: <http://www.iss.co.za/Pubs/Papers/74/Paper74.html>. (Accessed: 8 April 2009).
- August 2005. *The threat of gangs and anti-gangs policy*. ISS Policy discussion paper, no 116. <http://www.iss.co.za/pubs/papers/116/Paper116.pdf> (Accessed: 14 August 2008).
- Stell, G 2006. Feature selection and variation in Standard-Afrikaans: From White and Eurocentric to African and multiethnic? *Internet-Zeitschrift für Kulturwissenschaften* 16, Juni. [http://www.inst.at/trans/16Nr/01\\_4/stell16.htm](http://www.inst.at/trans/16Nr/01_4/stell16.htm). (Accessed: 4 August 2008).
- Strong's lexicon* (online). Available: <http://biblos.com/>. (Accessed: 20 August 2008).
- Suliman, S, Kaminer, D, Seedat, S & Stein D J, 2005 Assessing post-traumatic stress disorder in South African adolescents: using the child and adolescent trauma survey (CATS) as a screening tool. *Annals of general psychiatry*. Available: <http://www.annals-general-psychiatry.com/content/4/1/2>. (Accessed: 19 October 2007).
- Tamasese, K & Waldegrave, C 1993. Cultural and gender accountability in the 'just therapy' approach, in Waldegrave, C, Tamasese, K, Tuhaka, F & Campbell, W, 2003 (eds), *Just therapy - a journey*, 81- 96. Adelaide: Dulwich Centre.
- Tarentaal, A 2006, 24 October. Conversation with author. Petunia Primary, Scottsville.
- Terreblanche, S 1977. *Gemeenskapsarmoede. Perspektief op chroniese armoede in die Kleurlinggemeenskap na aanleiding van die Erika Theron-verslag*. Kaapstad: Tafelberg.
- 2002. *A history of inequality in South Africa, 1652-2002*. Scottsville: University of Natal Press & Sandton: KMM.
- Theron, E & Du Toit, J B 1977. *Kort-begrip van die Theron-verslag*. Kaapstad: Tafelberg.
- Thomson, J D S 2004. A murderous legacy. Coloured homicide trends in South Africa. *Crime Quarterly* 7. ISS. Available:

- <http://www.iss.co.za/pubs/CrimeQ/No.7/Thomson.htm>. (Accessed: 16 October 2007).
- Torrey, R A s.a. *Study the Bible topically*. Available: [www.Bible-Topics.com](http://www.Bible-Topics.com). (Accessed: 15 September 2008).
- Triegaardt, J D 2006. Reflections on poverty and inequality in South Africa: Policy considerations in an emerging democracy. Paper presented at the annual Association of South African Social Work Education Institutions (ASASWEI) conference organised by the University of Venda, Department of Social Work.
- Tronto, J 1993. *Moral boundaries. A political argument for an ethic of care*. New York: Routledge.
- Tronto, J C 1995. Care as a basis for radical, political judgments. Symposium on care and justice, *Hypatia*, 10(2), Spring, 141-149.
- Turner V 1986a. *The anthropology of performance*. New York: PAJ.
- 1986b. Dewey, Dilthey, and Drama: An essay in the anthropology of experience, in Turner, V W & Bruner, E M (eds), *The anthropology of experience*, 33-44. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Tutu, D 2004. *God has a dream. A vision of hope for our time*. New York: Doubleday.
- Unit for Religion and Development Research & Transformation Africa 2005. *The Report on the Demographic profile of Kraaifontein/Brackenfell*. Faculty of Theology (University of Stellenbosch). Available: [www.sun.ac.za/theology/urdr.htm](http://www.sun.ac.za/theology/urdr.htm). (Accessed: 1 October 2007).
- UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. 2007. IRIN humanitarian news and analysis, 27 February. *SOUTH AFRICA: Gang culture in Cape Town*, in <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=70038> (Accessed: 29 May 2008).
- Usiko homepage (online). Available: <http://www.usiko.org.za/all.htm>. (Accessed: 18 November 2008).

- Van der Ross, R E 2005. *Up from slavery. Slaves at the Cape, their origins, treatment and contribution*. Cape Town: Ampersand.
- Van Huyssteen, W 2007. Alone in the world? Human uniqueness in science and theology. Paper presented at Theological Seminary, 29 May. Stellenbosch.
- Van Rensburg, F, J 2002 Women in church and society Report of research done by a research team at the PU vir CHO. *Skriflig* 36(4), 717-752. Available: <http://search.sabinet.co.za/>. (Accessed: 12 January 2008).
- Van Schalkwyk, A 1999. *Sister, we bleed and we sing: Women's stories, Christian mission and SHALOM in South Africa*. PhD Thesis, University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- Van Wyk, A G 1998. Beyond modernism: scholarship and 'servanthood'. Paper read at the ASRS Meeting, Orlando, USA.
- Varma, P K 2006. *Being Indian. Inside the real India*. London: Arrow.
- Veyne P 1971. Foucault revolutionizes history, in Davidson, A I (ed) 1997, *Foucault and his interlocutors*, 146-182. . Translated by C Porter. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Veyne, P 1986. The final Foucault and his ethics, in Davidson, A I (ed) 1997. *Foucault and his interlocutors*, 225-233. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Vigen, A M 2004. To hear and to be accountable. An ethic of white listening, in Harvey, J, Case, K A & Gorsline, R H (eds), *Disrupting white supremacy from within. White people on what we need to do*, 216-248. Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press.
- Viljoen, D, Craig, P, Hymbaugh, K C, Boyle, C S & Blount, S 2003. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome - South Africa, 2001, *MMWR* 52(28), 660-662. 18 July. Available: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwr.html/mm5228a2.htm>. (Accessed: 17 May 2009).
- Villa-Vicencio, C 1994. Ethics of responsibility, in Villa-Vicencio, C & De Gruchy, J (eds), *Doing ethics in context. South African perspectives. Theology and Praxis: Vol. 2*, 75-88. Cape Town: David Philip.

- Villa-Vicencio, C 1999. Liberation and reconstruction: the unfinished agenda in Rowland, C (ed), *The Cambridge companion to Liberation Theology*, 153-176. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Villa-Vicencio, C 2002. Reconciliation as metaphor, in Holness, L & Wüstenberg, R K (eds), *Theology in dialogue. The impact of the Arts, Humanities, and Science on contemporary religious thought. Essays in honor of John W. de Gruchy*, 224-244. Cape Town: David Philip.
- Waldegrave, C 1998. The challenges of culture to psychology and postmodern thinking, in McGoldrick, M (ed) *Re-visioning family therapy. Race, culture, and gender in clinical practice*, 404-413. New York: Guilford.
- Waldegrave, C 2003. Just therapy, in Waldegrave, C, Tamasese, K, Tuhaka, F & Campbell, W, *Just therapy - a journey*, 3- 62. Adelaide: Dulwich Centre.
- Weedon, C 1987. *Feminist practice and Poststructuralist theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Weingarten, K 1994. *The mother's voice. Strengthening intimacy in families*. New York: Harcourt Brace.
- 2000. Witnessing, wonder, and hope. *Family Process* 39 (4),389-402.
- 2003. *Common shock. Witnessing violence every day: how we are harmed, how we can heal*. New York: Dutton.
- 2004. Compassionate witnessing and the transformation of violence, Notes made of Presentation at SAAMFT 9<sup>th</sup> International Conference, Durban 18 May 2004.
- Welch, S 1991. An ethic of solidarity and difference, in Giroux, H.A (ed), *Postmodernism, feminism, and cultural politics. Redrawing educational boundaries*, 83-99. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Welch, S D 1982. *The battle for truth: Foucault, liberation theology and the insurrection of subjugated knowledges*. Phd thesis, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN. University Microfilms International.
- 1985. *Communities of resistance and solidarity*. New York: Orbis.
- 1990. *A feminist ethic of risk*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress.

- 1995. Dismantling racism. Strategies for cultural, political and spiritual transformation, in Williams, R R (ed), *Theology and the interhuman*, 228-243. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International.
- 1997. Dancing with chaos. Reflections on power, contingency, and social change, in Batstone, D, Mendieta, E, Lorentzen, L A, Hopkins, D N (eds), *Liberation theologies, postmodernity, and the Americas*, 125- 127. London: Routledge.
- White, M 1991. Deconstruction and therapy. *Dulwich Centre Newsletter* 3, 21-40.
- 1997. *Narratives of therapists' lives*. Adelaide: Dulwich Centre.
- 2000. *Reflections on Narrative practice: Essays and interviews*. Adelaide: Dulwich Centre.
- 2007. *Maps of Narrative practice*. New York: Norton.
- White, S & Tiongco, R 1997. Doing theology and development: meeting the challenge of poverty. Edinburgh: Saint Andrew.
- Wicomb, Z 1998. Shame and identity: the case of the coloured in South Africa, in Attridge, D & Jolly, R (eds), *Writing South Africa*, 91-107. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wiesel, E 1995. 'I have learnt two lessons...'. Available: <http://www.wisdomquotes.com/001849.html>. (Accessed: 17 May 2008).
- Winslade, J M 2005. Utilising discursive positioning in counselling. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling* 33(3), August, 351-364.
- Winter, R 1996. Some principles and procedures for the conduct of action research, in Zuber-Skerritt, O (ed), *New directions in action research*, 13-27. London: Falmer.
- Witherell, C 1991. The self in narrative: a journey into paradox, in Witherell, C & Noddings, N (eds) *Stories lives tell. Narrative and dialogue in education*, 83-95. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.
- World Health Organization (WHO) 2004. Handbook for the documentation of interpersonal violence prevention programme. Geneva. Available:

<http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2004/9241546395.pdf>. (Accessed: 17 May 2009).

Young, I M 1990. *Justice and the politics of difference*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Zille, H 2007. Opening address for the City of Cape Town Health Committee Summit (8 September). Cape Town. Available:  
[http://web.capetown.gov.za/eDocuments/mayoe\\_speech](http://web.capetown.gov.za/eDocuments/mayoe_speech). (Accessed: 13 September 2008).

Zlomislic, M 2007. *Jacques Derrida's aporetic ethics*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.



## **ADDENDUM 1:**

### **Foucault and Ms Elizabeth Cupido: re-thinking pastoral power, poverty and privilege**

**Thursday session A 13: 10h45-11h45**

For the past four and a half years I have been working as a white female pastoral therapist, community worker and poet in the ‘coloured’ community of Scottsville, in the Western Cape. As I read the work of French philosopher Michel Foucault and listened to poor ‘coloured’ people, I became increasingly aware of the connection between the discourses of power, poverty and privilege. In this workshop I will share how it came about that Foucault enabled me to hear and see Elizabeth Cupido better. Her story, in turn, brought Foucault’s analyses of ‘bio-power’ to life. ‘Bio-power’ refers to the techniques of power aimed at controlling the body. Elizabeth Cupido will share her experiences as a young girl in Douglas in the Northern Cape during the time of forced removals. Apartheid destroyed their pastoral existence.

I will reflect on the ways in which pastoral power relations have created conditions of ‘coloured’ poverty. These conditions are not only physical. The legacy of discourses of shame and silence in the ‘coloured’ community poses particular challenges to practitioners of theology in South Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

This work of art by my friend, Susan Roux, emerged during one of our collaborative creative sessions during which I shared a poem I had written, *Lament for Douglas*, with her.

*The material on which this workshop is based forms part of a doctoral research project in Practical Theology with specialisation in Pastoral Therapy at UNISA. My promoter is Dr D J Kotzé, and my co-supervisor is Prof A P Philips.*

Thérèse Hulme

*The word ‘coloured’ is used to refer to a specific South African community with a specific social location and history which is ‘not white’ and ‘not black’. However, because this is a ‘description that was not chosen by a group of people, but forced upon them’, I place the word in inverted commas to reflect the historical subjugation that this term speaks of.*

## ADDENDUM 2a

### Klaaglied vir Douglas

vir Elizabeth Cupido

Hier op die sesde putjie

waar die sproeiers vroemôre met sekerheid hul genade 180 grade sprinkel

het julle huis gestaan,

die gepakte kraal, die raserige hoenderhokke.

Hier het jou broers met geoefende hande vroemôres melk uit stram spene

laat stroom,

smiddags, gebukkend,

eiers uit hul warm neste gehaal.

Hiernatoe het die bus jou suster gebring –

huistoe met swaar vakansiekoffers, die Rolling Stones en stories.

Hier is Vrydagaande by lae lig die melkgeld, eiergeld getel,

gedeel: tiende, skoolfonds, busgeld, skoene.

Hier het die tyding julle gekry: Trek!

En so is julle vreemd gemaak vir 'hier'.

Met onge oefende hande moes jou broers die kraal toegooi,

die hokke sif en hout verkwansel.

Jy moes leer om kantgordyne van hul vensters los te maak

en veral te vergeet vergeet Here van die bus en die oop boeke

waarvan jou suster se mond vol was.

In jou elfde jaar – die jaar toe spesiale kweek met sorg op putjie ses gelê is –

kon jy al lamsvleis saag en voor help by die til.

Toe al het die baas van jou gepraat as 'n 'voorslag'.

Thérèse Hulme

## ADDENDUM 2b

### Lament for Douglas

for Elizabeth Cupido

Here on the sixth green

where in the early morning the sprinklers spray their grace an accurate 180 degrees

your house used to stand,

the warm-packed kraal, the noisy chicken runs.

Here in the early mornings your brothers with practised fingers coaxed milk

to spurt from stiff teats,

in the afternoons, bent double,

took warm eggs from their nests.

This is where the bus brought your sister –

home with heavy holiday suitcases, the Rolling Stones and stories.

Here on Friday nights under feeble lights the milk money, the egg money was

counted,

divided: tithe, school fund, bus money, shoes.

Here the tidings reached you: Move!

And so you were alienated from ‘here’.

With unpractised hands your brothers had to cover the kraal,

sell off for a pittance the chicken wire and wood.

You had to learn to take down the lace curtains from their windows

and above all to forget forget Lord of the bus and the open books

which filled your sister’s mouth.

In your eleventh year – the year a special lawn was carefully laid on the sixth green –

you already knew how to butcher lamb and help out at the till.

Even then your employer spoke of you as a ‘livewire’.

Thérèse Hulme

## ADDENDUM 3

**Presentation by Thérèse Hulme at  
Joint Conference of  
Academic Societies in the Fields of Religion and Theology.  
Faculty of Theology at the University of Stellenbosch.  
25 June 2009**

*Foucault and Ms Elizabeth Cupido:  
rethinking pastoral power, poverty and privilege*

### **Waking the ink**

In Japan, the Ink painters of the Sibuie tradition say that sometimes, when ink is not used for a while, it goes to sleep. In this state it cannot be used. For them to be able to use the ink, it has to be woken. To me, faith, like conscience, is like ink. It can go to sleep when understanding becomes fixed, when it is turned into dogma. In today's session, I would like to share with you two parallel experiences that woke my humanity and with it a new understanding of faith. Both happened as I was busy with my doctoral research in practical theology in the coloured community of Scottsville. The theme of my research was pastoral care and the challenge of poverty...

The more I experienced in the community, the more I started realising that I cannot speak or think about poverty without thinking about power relations too. So I started reading the analyses of power of French philosopher Michel Foucault. He died in 1984, but I want to honour him for what he has woken in me. The other awakening had to do with linking what I had read with the experiences of poverty in the coloured community of Scottsville. In this, Mrs Elizabeth Cupido's painful stories of being on the receiving end of the power of control stirred my conscience as a white South African. Mrs Cupido is present today and I want to thank her for doing this presentation with me in the form of a videotaped conversation.

However, I do not want this session to be the final word on power relations. Then this presentation too runs the risk of going to sleep like the ink –and you with it. Therefore I want to invite you to listen to this presentation in a spirit of stirring, of rethinking and

maybe of waking. At the end of this session, I will invite your reflections. In this way, you will in turn contribute to my thinking.

But why do I place so much emphasis on the act of waking and rethinking? Because of my neighbour. My neighbour is the person who is totally different from me. In the Western Cape, my neighbour is poor, coloured and often illiterate.

As a white South African who has lived a life of privilege and opportunity, I met my neighbour in Scottsville over the past four years. The theme of practical theology's participation in this conference is '**Holistic pastoral ministry in a time of transition**'. In Scottsville I gained a new understanding of what 'holistic' includes. Before I started out on my research, I did not see details of the way in which power relations shape the lives of the majority of South Africans. Or rather – I saw them still from my white and rather theoretical and detached perspective. When I started seeing from the perspective of the other, my vision became more holistic – and even as I say this, I know that there are still more things I do not know or see. So, if to see holistically is one of our aims at this conference, we have to become awake to the topic of the other. If we are to wake to the other we have to become awake to power relations.

With power relations, I am not only referring to the legacy of apartheid or of power relations in the church. I am also referring to the current power relations that are part of a culture of drugs and gangsterism in coloured communities. I am also talking the discourses that support a culture of violence against women and children. These discourses are all linked to a particular understanding of power, namely the power of control. A holistic picture of coloured poverty includes the fact that the Western Cape is currently the most dangerous place in the country for a young person to live. Unfortunately, these realities have for a long time been at the margins of our theological thinking. The silence and suffering of those on the margins therefore compelled me to re-think what I understand faith to be.

### **Foucault & pastoral power**

In several lectures Foucault (2007) gave between 1977 and 1978 at the Collège de France, Foucault analysed the emergence of a particular kind of pastoral power in the Christian church and the laws that governed this emergence. According to Foucault, in the Christian Church, we see the shepherd theme not as merely one of the dimensions or

aspects of God's relationship to men: it has become **the** fundamental relationship that defines the organisation of relationships in the church: the pastor and his sheep. And let us be honest – as far as sheep numbers go, currently women outnumber men...

Foucault gives a detailed and meticulously researched description of the features of pastoral practice that emerged from the centralisation of the shepherd/flock relationship. For the purposes of this talk, I will focus on the practices of **subordination and obedience** that Foucault describes. According to Foucault, this obedience meant that a relationship of control and submission developed in which there is an individual who directs and an individual who is directed. For the one who is being directed, a renunciation of the self is the ideal.

Foucault (1982: 214) argues that **power as control spread beyond the church to other institutions...** According to Foucault what was new about the techniques of the eighteenth century regarding control was that they targeted the body. Foucault calls this bio-power; and he calls the analysis by which this form of power is described genealogy.

The intention of these strategies of bio-power was to create '**docile**' **bodies**' that could submit, that 'know their place'. Historian Hermann Giliomee (2007:18-19) describes the rationale that prevailed between 1665 and 1795 in the Stellenbosch district regarding the relationship between master, slave and the pastorate. The Synod of Dordrecht of 1618/19 demanded that whoever was baptised should have the same right to freedom as other Christians. However, very few masters had their slaves baptised, because baptised slaves, by law, could not be sold. But Giliomee (2007:19) offers another reason why masters did not baptise their slaves: 'They feared that a baptised slave would regard himself the equal of his master and that it would then be very difficult to control him. The slave would not, as it was said, "know his place".' This piece of historical analysis reveals how the function of pastoral power outlives the ecclesiastical institution with which it originated. To this day, the discourse of 'knowing your place' functions outside the church to subordinate the descendants of the slaves in South Africa, namely the coloured community. During the time of apartheid, the laws that forcibly removed coloured people from their land, for instance, became a tool in making coloured people literally know their place. (Tell story of young people not wanting to perform in front of their peers). After I had started reading Foucault, I realised that I only knew the outlines

of how the institutionalised power of the apartheid government, through the policy of forced removals, **had affected the people who were subjected – ‘coloured’ people.**

This is how it happened that I interviewed Mrs Cupido about her experiences of bio-power. I was curious to know if Foucault’s analyses described power in ways that fitted Mrs Cupido’s experience. Mrs Elizabeth Cupido, whose family lived in Douglas in the Northern Cape during the time of the forced removals, shares with us what the bio-power of forced removals did. One of the most significant ways in which pastoral power as control over ‘coloured’ people was executed, and which becomes clear through Mrs Cupido’s story, was through the creation of ‘docile bodies’. Docile bodies can be forcibly removed from their homes so that their land may be used. She also describes the chainlike effects that this form of power had had on her life...

#### DVD INSERT 1

Whilst listening to this part of her story, something strange and new happened to me the first time I heard it, and it still happens to me now. Mrs Cupido’s narrative of personal grief, community fragmentation and unfulfilled dreams against the backdrop of a particularly pastoral landscape went beyond theory or intellectual understanding. There are no tears in Foucault’s works. What Foucault had introduced me to, Aunt Liz brought home to me in bodily ways I never experienced whilst reading Foucault, or the feminists, for that matter. What was different about this was that **I was implicated in her experience.** I was no ‘neutral’ reader reading about power relations in a French asylum. This was South Africa. We were speaking in the same mother tongue. And yet, there was bitter irony in the fact that Aunt Liz could not go to high school and I was interviewing her about this experience for my doctoral thesis. Whilst I grew up with limitless opportunity because of being white, Mrs Cupido, who longed to be a nurse, served customers in a butchery. I realised then that her experience of poverty and humiliation could not be separated from my experience of privilege and recognition.

But the dynamics of control and obedience also had devastating consequences for the coloured community of Douglas...

#### DVD INSERT 2

Since 1994, we in this country have been talking about restitution a lot. I wonder if

restitution within the church can happen without hearing about the details of people's suffering and the effects of the white church's silence.

In a pastoral culture in which control of the other is the norm, the other is only there to obey. **Still today, the blind spot in current theology is located in this inability to recognise how a classifying, controlling pastoral power, by serving some, turns the other into a non-person.** The 'norm' of being a non-person that was established by the operation of pastoral power through its various laws and practices in South Africa was also internalised by coloured people. They started thinking of themselves as non-persons. A former state president's wife even used those exact words to describe coloured people. Consequently their voices of suffering cannot be heard and are of no moral consequence to the persons in power. In Evita's Perron, in Darling – home of satirist Pieter Dirk Uys – the waitresses wear t-shirts that read: 'My conscience is clear it's never been used.' Because of too many people's 'clear consciences', the suffering of coloured people has become an addendum to mainstream theology in this country. Have the ministers and members of the congregation of Douglas's white church who have been playing golf on Saturdays since the 1960s ever acknowledged that their sporting pleasure was built on the destruction of other people's lives? If they were to do so, I wonder what difference it would make to the coloured community in Douglas. Restitution that is done according to the agendas of those who have always held the power will simply be a continuation of the system of control – the control of the restitution process.

We have said 'sorry and now let's get on with it' – instead of asking those whose lives have been violated: now that we have acknowledged you and the suffering we have caused, which acts of reparation will be meaningful to you? I asked Mrs Cupido what the white church can do...

### DVD INSERT 3

This is also what our presentation is all about. To see the experiences and knowledges of Mrs Cupido and to move these to the centre of our reflections on holistic ministry, on restitution and on the nature of theology itself. Because luckily, says Foucault, where there is power, there is resistance. Power can be a positive force – there is the power of mutuality, the power of the Cross.

When I first interviewed Mrs Cupido in January 2008, I asked her this: If she had the ears of the leaders of the white church, what would she say to them? Mrs Cupido considered my question. After a long silence she replied: ‘Thérèse, what I can tell them will be worthless to them...’ Since that time, Mrs Cupido has reconsidered. I asked her why she decided to participate with me in this presentation. I asked her why...

#### DVD INSERT 4

When Mrs Cupido, as a person of colour, but also as a woman, steps out of silence at a conference like this, it gives me hope for what is holistically possible in theology. In a way, this presentation is an act of resistance against the voicelessness that is an effect of being subjected to the power of control...

#### DVD INSERT 5

I want to thank the organisers of this conference for giving us the space to be heard. I am also grateful to the Institute of Therapeutic Development, which, during my training through UNISA, introduced me to Foucault and the feminist theologians. Without them I would never have become other-wise, as my friend Elize would say.

**‘Love your neighbour’ is one of the basic tenets of the Christian faith. But how does one love one’s neighbour if that neighbour is invisible?** Carter Heyward says: **‘There is a way to know and love ourselves, the world, and God: *We can truly know only that which we are not afraid to love, and we can truly love only that which we are not afraid to see.*’**

As we are celebrating 150 years of theological training in South Africa and wondering together about the future, this is what I want to argue for: that more social analysis should form a central part of any theological training, so that we may become less afraid to see.

‘Seeing’ can happen when we are alerted to what power does and how we are all implicated. But there is another kind of seeing with the body that only happens to me because of my relationship with poor persons. My waking to the experiences of poverty only came once I took my body into the Scottsville community. An encounter with the neighbour is impossible from the safety of one’s study. I see Mrs Cupido’s tears, I feel

my own, I hear young people's stories of neglect. I see their desire to be heard and honoured as human beings.

Only through my body have I made discoveries about how little I can ever know about poverty. People like Mrs Cupido have also taught me about resilience in the face of despair, keeping faith in the face of being treated like an animal. Mrs Cupido has also showed me what humanity looks like by embracing me despite what I represent...

In this way I have gained new understanding about the spirit of mutuality which Jesus embodied. God became a human body, but instead of living a life of might and control, He embraced a life of vulnerability – living amongst the poor, serving them with his life and through his death. Since I have been woken to this understanding of God's relationship with me, I prefer the metaphor of the servant in defining my relationships with others, and because of our history, even more so in terms of my cross-cultural relationships.

Then there is the term 'PASTORAL' which I am currently re-thinking. In the light of Foucault's analysis of the history of dominance and control ('shepherd' and 'livestock') associated with the term 'pastoral' and in the light of the fact that the dictionary's explanations reflect the ethos of control over people ('guidance') rather than of mutuality with them, I want to propose that the use of this term be reconsidered.

There is also a certain irony in the use of the word 'pastoral' in the South African context. Aunt Liz's descriptions of the actions of Christian government in fact purposefully destroyed the particularly **pastoral existence** of Aunt Liz's family in Douglas.

I am therefore rethinking my use of the word 'pastoral' in the light of what has been destroyed in Mrs Cupido's life, through its power of control.

**I have come to see my privilege as something that will constantly demand its deconstruction in the light of the other.** Privilege, I've discovered, can be expressed in control. However, I know that I can be lulled to sleep by my privilege – that I can remain insulated from the other. Apathy is another of privilege's luxuries.

But I can also choose to use the positive power of my privilege as Mrs Cupido has just described.... I can also use my privilege and education to create networks of support for

poor people and to create possibilities in their communities.

I want to end with the words of St John of the Cross. As I look to my own future with my fellow South Africans I realise...

*To come to the knowledge you have not,  
you must go by a way in which you know not...*

*To come to be what you are not  
you must go by a way in which you are not.*

*(St John of the Cross, cited in Dombrowski 1992:24)*

In order to become more compassionate, more humane, we, as people of privilege, it seems, must to go to the other; and that in itself is a way which we know not....

**ADDENDUM 4**

**DVD WHICH FORMED PART OF THE PRESENTATION DISCUSSED IN**

**ADDENDUM 3**

## ADDENDUM 5

### INVITATION TO A CELEBRATORY LUNCH TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SCOTTSVILLE JUNIOR DRAMA SOCIETY

Dear .....

You are invited to celebrate all the hard work that went into *Die Groot Gevaar* and its successful performance.

**When?** Wednesday, 24 October

**What time?** 14h30

**Where?** VGK – church next to Petunia

Please think back over the past months and what you

have discovered about yourself that surprised you?

saw in others that surprised you? (Think of examples!) What did this person do?

What did it mean to you?

discovered or learnt about writing and acting?

discovered or learnt about working with others?

found out about what it is like to try out new stuff?

When you have thought about it, don't you want to share it with us?

I also have a letter from Estelle that I will read to you...

Take care!

Ms Therese Hulme

## ADDENDUM 6

### LETTER TO THELREN

2008.11.09

Dear Thelren

Because the story you gave me to read was written in English, I am responding to your story in English too. Maybe my letter will also give you a sense of how the writing and the reading changes when one writes in another language...

Thank you for asking me to read Part 1 of your novel. The amount of work that you have put into this piece is awesome. One of my best friends is a published author and she told me that sitting down and spending time in front of the computer is more than half of a writer's work... I can see that you have started to master the writing of dialogue, which is a real skill. Congratulations.

We write for many reasons. Sometimes we write to create other worlds that we can escape to: jaguars, a mansion with fountains and a helicopter pad, the papparazzi, and a cheering audience, and a main character who not only inherits money, but makes millions. When I was your age, I remember escaping to the world of crime in Agatha Christie's novels: these stories took me to the dark and wonderfully smart English mansions where the rich people lived and were murdered. Sometimes it took me on a luxury train to Italy. What I want to say, Thelren, is that there is a place for escapist literature. The problem for me as a reader is that your story gives me a very superficial glimpse into a world of American wealth. It was almost as if I had seen it all before in *The Apprentice* and in *Desperate Housewives*. Look at the language: it is pure American TV-language and full of clichés. Any American could have written it. Does it make sense?

Another problem with most escapist literature is that the characters we meet in them are often one-dimensional; you know, the "successful actress", the "spoilt brat", the "jealous brother". There is almost no place to write what friendships are like, or the difficulties that a teenager experiences who moves from poverty to serious wealth. In your story I wish I knew what Tyson valued in relationships, what he struggled with and if he missed anything, despite all the wealth.

Thelren, I know that you have the open eyes and the open heart to write stories too about life as it really is. The stories of Kyle and Mark who stayed behind... These stories may be more difficult to write because it may take you to painful and scary experiences in your own life. But I know that you can write them, because I have heard those stories in the scenes that you wrote for the play. I have also seen how you have the ability to turn ordinary experiences into poetry.

I am waiting to read those stories that only you can tell.

With kind regards

Ms Therese Hulme

## **ADDENDUM 7a**

### **LETTER TO PARENTS/GRANDPARENTS/GUARDIANS SETTING OUT THE RATIONALE FOR THE CONSENT FORMS**

2 November 2008

Dear parent, grandparent or guardian

Over the past four years I got to know your child through our conversations and/or through the drama and writers' groups. When I started working at Petunia Primary as a therapist in 2005, I hoped to write down what I was learning for my doctoral research in practical theology at UNISA. The title of my thesis is *Pastoral care and the challenge of poverty: when opening hearts and minds create possibilities in a marginalised school community*.

I never thought that writing and drama would become part of the work that would bring me so much joy and through which I would learn so much. I want to include this work in my thesis. But I need your consent to do that. I also need the consent of every young person.

I thought about doing it like this:

I am inviting you and your teenager to an information session to be held on Saturday 8 November, between 9h00 and 11h00, in the library at Scottsville Secondary School. I will bring my laptop along to show you what I have written about your child and where this writing fits into the thesis. Then you will have the opportunity to ask questions, or to make corrections. I would also like to chat with you about the road ahead. Please join me for a cup of tea.

If it will not be possible for you to join me on Saturday, but you would like to discuss what I have written with me, please contact me to arrange for another time.

If you do not have any problems with me writing about the work and my relationship with Scottsville's young people, then please sign the form below and return it to the school by Friday, 7 November. There will be more of these forms available on Saturday. Every young person will need to sign his/her form as well.

Thank you for the privilege of getting to know your child. The name of each of the young people who have touched my life over the past four years will be recorded in the thesis, on the page where I thank the people of Scottsville.

Regards

Thérèse Hulme

**ADDENDUM 7b**  
**CONSENT FORMS**

**PARENT/GUARDIAN FORM**

I .....,  
parent/guardian of.....  
hereby give permission to Ms Hulme to write about my child in her thesis.

I also give permission for her to include parts of the conversations she had with my child on condition that my child has given consent, and that she can use photographs of and poems written by my child, as well as other documents, for the purposes of her research.

I hereby acknowledge that I have had an opportunity to familiarise myself with the contents of the thesis and to comment on it.

Signed:..... Date:.....

---

**TEENAGER FORM**

I..... hereby give permission for Ms Hulme to write about me in her thesis as she and I have agreed. I also give permission for her to use photographs of me and my poems and other documents, as we have agreed.

I hereby acknowledge that I have had an opportunity to familiarise myself with the contents of the thesis and to comment on it.

Signed:..... Date:.....