

History On Their Own Terms

The Relevance of the Past for a New Generation

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Executive Summary

Various studies focussing on intractable conflicts that have resulted in mass fatalities, such as the Holocaust, have shown that memories of unresolved trauma are often perpetuated through stories told within the family and broader community. Memories continue to affect generations even when they do not directly experience the specific traumatic event. These 'received' memories shape identities as well as fuel negative perceptions and stereotypes of difference, often hindering reconciliation processes and perpetuating identities of continued victimisation.

Today in South Africa, following the 10th anniversary of the TRC, many youth are unable to fully appreciate or enjoy the benefits of life within a democracy. With increasing unemployment and poverty, coupled with the scourge of HIV/AIDS, and the unfinished business of the TRC, for some, South Africa's past has become a means to understand the present circumstances, often resulting in blame and bitterness. However, for those youth that have been able to enjoy socio-economic privileges in a democratic South Africa, the past remains a dislocated memory belonging to another generation and having little, if anything, to do with them.

Through its work with survivors of gross human rights violations and their families, CSVR has found that unresolved trauma and anger of parents and grandparents have often been passed onto youth. There is a lack of creative or constructive mechanisms for youth to adequately engage in the past and the lessons thereof.

This report highlights the findings of research conducted with educators; learners; survivors; children and grandchildren of survivors; ex-combatants; and professionals working within the field of history, memory and memorialisation. The report focuses on themes of life in the new South Africa; reconciliation and the role of memory and forgiveness in the reconciliation process; understandings of the TRC; learning about the past; and sites of learning about the past. While the report highlights a range of diverse views from participants, a central theme of the report is the inherent link between memory and identity.

By emphasising the shift from a history and past of blame and shame, the report argues for the need to remember the past in a way that allows for critical citizenship engagement as well as one that enables the current and future generations to take constructive ownership of that history. The report identifies tools that can be utilised to engage youth in issues of the past and provides recommendations for the role that various sectors of society can play to ensure that the past becomes a relevant tool that empowers current and future generations and ensures that the lessons of never again become entrenched in our society.

The Meaning of Memory for South African Youth

Lerato is 17 years old and lives in Diepkloof, Soweto with her mother, grandmother and elder brother. She attends a multi-racial school in the South of Johannesburg and as with many children of her generation, has friends from different racial and cultural backgrounds. She has heard the many stories of Apartheid but can't imagine that all that really happened. She is just happy that things have changed and that everybody is free.

She does hear the stories though, especially from her mother and grandfather. Her mother is disabled from being from being beaten by security police and has not been able to work since. She hears the stories of how mass funerals of activists fighting for freedom became weekly events in the township; how security police beat down doors in the middle of the night; and how the 'comrade' father that she never knew, left to attend a rally and did not return. But does she want to hear these inhumane, terrifying tales? Can she be angry...with whom? Her friends? Definitely not! Perhaps their parents? Their grandparents? The leaders of that time? But how can she not feel angry when her mother's limp and the unpaid electricity bills continue to taunt her.

Lerato's story is not unique. It could be the story of any child currently living in South Africa. For some of this new generation, Apartheid remains an event for the history books or the storyline of the latest art film. However, for many others the structural remnants of Apartheid continue to be lived realities of economic struggle and unequal social relationships. The following report seeks to understand the extent to which the memories and experiences of older generations affect the current generation of youth. It seeks to determine how history and experiences of the past can be transmitted onto current and future generations in such a manner that it prevents the perpetuation of guilt, victimhood as well as avoids feelings of vengeance. It finally seeks to understand how the past can become a meaningful stimulus to understand lessons of human error that is neither mournful nor triumphant, but aims to re-build splintered relationships and provide hope for a disillusioned generation.

The report begins with an examination of the literature in an attempt to contextualize the report findings. The literature includes the history of South Africa in relation to Apartheid and issues of transgenerational transfer of memory in the context of conflict. Following this, the focus shifts to the methodology and finally to the findings of the field research. The conclusion highlights some practical recommendations of how the youth's interest in the past could be increased and its repetition prevented.

Developments in Memory Theory and Research

Since the implementation of Apartheid policy in the late 1940's until the advent of democracy in 1994, South Africa has been a racially divided country, whose

policies benefited a minority while the majority of South Africans remained oppressed. Through practice, the very nature of Apartheid society ensured that the quality of life for black South Africans was drastically reduced and further exacerbated by policies that included the denial of educational opportunities, access to housing and health, free speech, cultural expression, freedom of association, etc.. These structural forms of violence¹ permeated various aspects of life and became an impetus for cultural² violence. Despite almost thirteen years of democracy, the systematic structural violence continues to exist even after the structures responsible for its perpetuation have been removed. Research conducted by the World Bank found patterns of inequalities continues to exist along racial lines largely due to the socio-political structure produced by the apartheid system (McDonald & Piese, 1999).

Violence in intergroup conflict more often than not involves not only loss of human life (Bar-Tal, 2000), but also great suffering, humiliation, and trauma (Herman, 1992). These are seldom forgotten, especially in the case of intractable conflicts. They are often incorporated into the collective memory of the group and underlie the development of a culture of violence (Bar-Tal, 2000). The significance of physical violence in the evolution of collective memory relates to a belief in the sanctity of life, the emotional meaning of loss of life, the irreversibility of those losses, the desire for vengeance and the need to rationalize violence. Furthermore, the longevity of intractable conflict allows for the accrual of prejudice, mistrust, hatred and animosity, which further play an important part in the selective evolution of the group's collective memory (Bar-Tal, 2000). On the one hand, emphasis is placed on the *other's* responsibility for the conflict's outbreak and continuation, its misdeeds, violence and atrocities. While on the other hand, there is a preoccupation with self-justification, self-righteousness, glorification, and victimization. This collective memory is institutionalized and maintained by the groups in conflict, and then transmitted onto new generations (Bar-Tal, 2000).

Intergenerational dialogue is an essential part of family life. The family becomes a very important context for narrating memories (Weine, 2004). According to Attias-Donfut & Wolff (2003), older generations are burdened with an individual, family and social memory, which they pass on to the younger generations. These family intergenerational exchanges play a critical role in psychosocial identity development and continuity in the socialization of family members (Bengston & Black, 1973). Intergenerational exchanges contribute to the shaping of the memory of historical events and social changes that have marked each family generation (Attias-Donfut & Wolff, 2003). This collective memory is shared among members of a generation and is subject to personal interpretations of the

¹ *Structural violence* occurs when people, by virtue of their group membership, are discriminated against in terms of life chances, resources and decision-making powers (Jeong, 2000).

² *Cultural Violence* is regarded as the source of other types of violence through its production of hatred, fear and suspicion (Jeong, 2000). According to Galtung (1990), religion, ideology, art, and empirical science can be regarded as possible sources of cultural violence.

individuals involved. Jelin (2003) notes that interpretations and explanations of the past cannot be automatically transmitted from one generation to the next, but rather requires a fostering of a process of identification that can produce a broadening of the we, yet leaves the door open for reinterpretation on the part of the young and those who were there, but did not know what was happening.

The stories of successive generations ultimately reveal how the historical generations are intertwined (Attias-Donfut & Wolff, 2003). The lived experiences of parents become part of one's existential reality since it has become part of the family memory (Jelin, 2003). Thus for each generation, the historical inheritance from previous generations are added to the objective current conditions. "The knowledge transmitted through the family has a special tone, as distinct from history learned through the media, books or at school. It is a vivid history, embodied in family members and ancestors. The family circle is a *memory milieu*, which plays a central role in the continuity of history" (Attias-Donfut & Wolff, 2003, p.14). This takes on special significance in countries that have a history of intractable conflict.

As has been mentioned earlier, the violence associated with intractable conflict can be extremely traumatic (Herman, 1992) and these traumatic memories of past conflict are seldom forgotten (Lumsden, 1997). Research now suggests that there may be an intergenerational effect associated with exposure to long-term trauma (Davidson & Moller, 2001). Volkan (1996), using Freudian principles, coined the term *the transgenerational transmission of trauma*. He argues that unresolved trauma of the past is over the years subliminally transmitted from one generation to another. It thus develops the potential for fueling future conflicts. This transmission constitutes both conscious and unconscious³ attempts at finding ways of resolving or reversing the trauma (Volkan, 1997). According to Volkan "Messages are passed, consciously and mostly unconsciously, to the child, making it now the child's task to do the work of mourning pertaining to the losses suffered by the older person and also to reverse the unpleasant feelings and remove the sense of helplessness" (1996, p.111). When the child grows up he may externalize the original traumatized self-representation consisting of guilt, shame, helplessness, and humiliation into the developing self-representation in the third generation (Volkan, 1996). Thus the carrier of the transmitted trauma not only has conscious knowledge of the trauma through stories passed on by parents and grandparents, but also the unconscious obligation to deal with this trauma (Volkan, 1997).

Various Holocaust studies have provided increased knowledge around issues related to the transgenerational transmission of trauma. Since the initial studies, research has now been expanded to include other traumatized populations such

³ According to Scott (2000), transgenerational transmissions of trauma are mostly unconsciously deposited and this is what makes the transmission process difficult to distinguish. She argues that her assertion is based on the assumption that parents would not consciously laud their children with the burdens of their ancestors' past, as this would be considered cruel.

as USA Vietnam veterans, the lost generation of Australia as well as survivors in Bosnia –Herzegovina. It is significant to note though that the theory of transgenerational transmission of trauma has never been empirically investigated in South Africa. This is surprising given the fact that South Africa has all the hallmarks that is required to render the theory applicable.

Despite the lack of such studies within a South African context, it is important to note that the theory of the transgenerational transmission of trauma has been more recently applied to studies undertaken with the African American community in the United States (Apprey, 1993; Apprey, 1996; Apprey, 1998; Scott, 2000). The significance of this for this paper derives from the similarities between the experiences of African Americans and Black South Africans. According to Scott (2000) the African American identity reflects centuries of a transgenerational haunting associated with the pain of colonialism, slavery, exploitation, and discrimination. Mental representations of this pain are endured through verbal and non-verbal transmissions common in the African American vernacular (Scott, 2000). Apprey (1998) contends that the victimization and humiliation of blacks by whites may become internalized as an urgent but voluntary errand towards blacks' extinction or destruction. Thus African American teenagers are not only potential carriers of the deposited trauma, but they may also be unconsciously laden with the responsibility of repairing the humiliating effects of the trauma (Apprey, 1998). If historical circumstances do not allow the new generation to repair the humiliating effects of the trauma and reverse the feelings of powerlessness, the mental representations of the shared calamity will bond group members in a continued sense of powerlessness, which could have destructive consequences (Volkan, 1997). According to Apprey (1998), the destructive aggression associated with transgenerational haunting is also transferred from one generation to the next. This increases in circumstances where the group is prevented by continued oppression from being able to work through the mourning to remove the effects of a massive trauma. What makes these circumstances particularly painful for African Americans is knowing that oppressive forces exist and that they are unable to effect any change upon those forces (Scott, 2000).

It can be argued, though, that within the South African context there have been some attempts to reduce the effects of deposited trauma of previous generations through processes of mourning and uncovering the past. Most significant to this process was the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which was to provide the South African society with a platform on which the past could be confronted in a manner that is just and morally acceptable (Boraine, Levy & Scheffer, 1994). It was the TRC's task to provide a complete as possible a picture of the nature, causes, and extent of gross human rights violations⁴ that occurred between March 1, 1960 and May 10, 1994 (The Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act No. 34, 1995). Thus the TRC

⁴ Within the context of the TRC, gross human rights violations encompassed killings, abductions, torture and severe ill treatment (Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act, 1995).

mandate excluded violations that resulted from structural violence that impacted on the daily lived realities of the majority of black South Africans.

While South Africa's TRC process has in many instances become a model for post-conflict societies attempting to deal with the past, it is significant to note that the TRC process had serious shortcomings, many of which could perpetuate the trauma experienced by victims of gross human rights violations. There appears to be, for example, a widely held perception among victims who testified at the Commission that the TRC failed to live up to promises made to victims of gross human rights violations (Hamber & Kibble, 1999). Some of these include the fact that many families did not find out what happened to their loved ones who disappeared. Many perpetrators chose not to come forward and testify at the commission, while some of those who did come forward did not reveal any new information and seemed to be motivated more by their desire to be given amnesty than to make disclosures of the type that victims were expecting. Furthermore, the restorative form of justice favored by the TRC rather than retributive justice dissatisfied others (Hamber, 2000).

In addition to this, many regard as an injustice the fact that perpetrators could go on with their lives immediately after being granted amnesty as far back as 1998, while the promises of monetary reparations on which many victims depended, only materialized recently at an amount significantly less than what was expected. Furthermore, given that Apartheid permeated all aspects of life and that the TRC only focused on gross human rights violations, scant attention was given to socio-economic abuses unless it was framed within the context of a gross human rights violation. Consequently while Apartheid has ended, its structural effects remain ever present and largely unaddressed in South African society. More than ten years since apartheid's demise, South African society is still characterized by what Chua (2003) calls a market dominant white minority and a market subordinate black majority. Thus although there exists an ever-increasing black economically competitive class, the previously oppressed masses essentially remain poor. This could exacerbate the trauma experienced by victims of gross human rights violations. Even more important, is the possibility for this trauma to be transmitted onto future generations and in the process, provide the fuel for future conflicts.

So while the TRC process may have contributed to the beginnings of a healing process for individuals who are survivors of gross human rights violation, the oppression and different forms of violence experienced daily by the majority of South Africans have not been addressed. It is in focusing on these issues related to some of the unfinished business of the TRC, ongoing socio-economic disparities as a result of the past, the lack of realization of social justice and its effects on the current generation that the current study was undertaken.

Methodology

In an attempt to explore some of questions and challenges around issues of reconciliation; the role of memory work in teaching about the past and healing; as well as the very significance of the past for current generations, CSVR undertook the research to:

- Understand how the knowledge of the past is transferred from one generation to the next
- Understand how this knowledge impacts on reconciliation and reintegration of marginal groups into communities
- Use findings from the research to develop a education materials to better engage youth about the past

To fulfil these objectives, most of the study is based on how people experience their realities. The study therefore used a qualitative approach to gain insights into these views and experiences. Eight in-depth interviews were conducted with individuals working within the fields of memory and memorialisation, and education.

Eleven focus groups were also conducted to engage participants in a more open discussion about issues. These groups included:

- High school learners between the ages of 15-18 from both township and previously model – C schools.
- Educators from both township and previously model – C schools.
- Survivors of gross human rights violation;
- Children and grandchildren of survivors between the ages of 15-23;
- Ex-combatants.

The focus on schools was mainly because schools were viewed as the most significant site for learning about the past. Ex-combatants, survivors and grandchildren and children of survivors were engaged in the discussions because they were most directly involved in the conflicts of the past and in many instances continue to be impacted by some of the unfinished business of the TRC – issues related to re-integration, reparations etc.

Interviews and focus groups were undertaken in Johannesburg, Cape Town and East London between October and December 2005. Both the individual interviews and the focus groups were semi-structured in that the interviewers and the focus group facilitators made use of a guide containing a number of questions. Individual interviews and focus group discussions were tape recorded and transcribed.

Focus groups and interviews sought to elicit respondents' views on reasons for remembering the past; how to more effectively engage youth around issues

related to the past; the impact of the past on current identities; identification of sites of learning about the past; as well as issues related to the TRC and reconciliation.

Views About...

The study yielded a number of themes, which might appear mutually exclusive, but are in fact inter-related. Each of these individual themes will be discussed in detail below.

Life in the 'New South Africa'

There is transformation, we are free and you can move around without fear (KSG grandchild, 2005).

To a lot of people, apartheid hasn't ended. Some people haven't changed. They still treat you unfairly. They treat you differently from other people. It hasn't ended; the struggle is still there (Kulani learner, 2005).

We are still divided. (Herzlia learner, 2005).

Yes things have changed, but in South Africa black people stay in shacks, whereas white counterparts have a good lifestyle. That should change. (Kulani learner, 2005).

There were generally mixed feelings about life in the democratic South Africa. Most participants felt that life had improved in South Africa since the end of Apartheid. Most of these improvements were viewed as relating directly to freedoms that were gained following the demise of the Apartheid system. While others also felt that the transformation processes encouraged and allowed spaces for the celebration of diversity and joint nationhood.

Despite positive views about life in post-Apartheid South Africa, many participants felt that racism and discrimination continued to be obstacles to transformation processes. Despite the structural shifts towards transformation, attitudes and social divisions were viewed as ongoing obstacles to reconciliation and transformation processes. It is interesting to note that amongst the different learners that were interviewed, it was only those learners from township schools and the Jewish school that felt a sense of seclusion and highlighted ongoing segregation as a negative aspect of life in South Africa. This could relate directly to them being sheltered within their own communities and not being able to socially interact with youth from other communities. This was exemplified in the fact that learners from Diversity High, which is a multi-racial school, did not even allude to issues around continued segregation post- Apartheid. However, here

again this absence of discussion around segregation could relate to superficial understandings of segregation and discrimination.

Participants also argued that as a result of the new South Africa, they believed that ethnic divisions were not as salient as they were during Apartheid, however they also pointed out that South Africans of all races continue to discriminate against fellow Africans from elsewhere on the continent who reside in South Africa. According to participants therefore, xenophobia remains rife in South Africa.

In addition to concerns around the ongoing discrimination and lack of attitudinal shifts, the majority of participants felt that the inequities of the past continued to play out in the economic deprivation, of mainly Black South Africans. Concerns were raised around issues related to the continued unemployment rates; lack of sustainable job creation strategies; lack of service delivery; and the perception that Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) continued to benefit only a few individuals.

Apart from the broader economic concerns, survivors felt that their ongoing marginalisation and government's non-recognition of their status continued to impact negatively on their lives. Many of these concerns related directly to the unfinished processes that began during the TRC. These included concerns around reparations; the lack of service delivery related mainly to education and health; and locating family that disappeared during Apartheid.

The ex-combatant group too, expressed similar concerns. They argued that while the economy had grown over the years, their community continued to remain underdeveloped. They felt that they were not reaping the benefits of the struggle for which they fought. Some participants cited the principles of the Freedom Charter⁵. They highlighted that many people still lived in shacks despite the Freedom Charter highlighting the need for decent housing. Social ills such as gangsterism, teenage pregnancy and drug abuse were identified as ways for youth to escape from the ongoing poverty within the community which was exacerbated by the lack of service delivery. There was also a perception amongst participants that issues around service delivery and lack of access to opportunities such as poverty alleviation programmes were underpinned by racism on the part of government. Some participants highlighted that government focused only on African communities in South Africa at the risk of marginalising communities such as the Coloured community, who were active participants in the struggle against Apartheid.

⁵ The Freedom Charter was a document adopted by a multi-racial congress on 26 June 1955. It was treated by many in the liberation movements as a vision of a non-racial South Africa where all would be given access to basic needs.

Reconciliation

Perspectives around reconciliation vary significantly and are often influenced by a range of factors including religious; political; economic and human rights beliefs. This was further reiterated by the variety of responses and understandings of reconciliation from participants.

I suppose [reconciliation] means to have worked through the pain of the violation that was experienced and I think both sides suffer...I don't think the perpetrator doesn't suffer, I think the perpetrator also experiences a loss of humanity, but for the perpetrator and the victim to have communicated with each other about the violation (Potenza, 2005).

You can't solve a problem until you admit there's a problem, now as white people...we have the right to move on, only once we actually admit that a thing called apartheid did happen and we did play a role in it (Herzlia teacher, 2005).

In most cases its black people who are willing to reconcile. Some other races, they are still reluctant (Kulani teacher, 2005).

For some participants reconciliation focused on the victim/perpetrator dichotomy where participants felt that it was a means through which the victim and perpetrator came together to understand the violation or where the process in itself was enhanced by admission of guilt by perpetrators. Others viewed reconciliation in racial terms where it was argued that reconciliation or discussions around reconciliation and forgiveness were still largely undertaken by Black South Africans, the majority of whom were victims of an oppressive system. Others felt that the beginning of the reconciliation process was to create a power balance between victims and perpetrators which would begin by acknowledging the pain that victims had undergone as well as admitting one's own role as a part of the systematic violence that was perpetuated by the Apartheid system.

Being able to [...] accept other people's cultures and willing to learn (Diversity High learner, 2005).

[For me] reconciliation right now is that you can actually go to a white school as a black and make friends with white people (Kulani learner, 2005).

[Reconciliation] is forgiveness (Herzlia learner, 2005).

[Reconciliation] is being united and forgiving each other (Jabulani Tech learner, 2005).

For some learners reconciliation was about crossing the racial divide and about being able to understand and experience different cultural and social practices. It is significant to also note that despite not being asked, learners from Jabulani Technical College, Herzlia Secondary School and Kulani Secondary School felt that it was necessary to have some kind of exchange programme to begin to better understand issues of race and diversity as well as build better relations between previously divided racial groupings thereby contributing to the reconciliation process. As previously stated, this stemmed mainly from learners feeling that they were secluded in their communities and wanted to better engage with the social and cultural lives of their peers. Other learners felt that reconciliation was about working together to get over the past by understanding each other's perspectives as well as actions that were undertaken in the past. Some learners also highlighted that forgiveness was necessary for reconciliation.

Forgiveness

The problem is that we only forgive but we don't forget...but you can learn or try to understand what those people experienced, try to put yourself in their position... (Diversity High learner; 2005).

Acceptance of people who made mistakes and who are trying to make it better (Herzlia learner, 2005).

It is difficult to overcome and to forget (Herzlia learner, 2005).

Issues around forgiveness and its relevance to reconciliation were mainly highlighted by survivors. However, those learners that did identify issues around forgiveness agreed that while it was easy to forgive, it was more difficult to forget. Again it was emphasised that it was necessary to understand the perspectives of *the other* to fully engage with issues of forgiveness. It is interesting to note that learners were able to make connections between forgiveness and reconciliation, given that studies have shown that concepts of forgiveness are understood better and undertaken as a developmental process, where adults are more likely to develop capabilities to forgive as opposed to adolescents and young adults (McLernon et.al, 2003). While these concepts of forgiveness (especially in the context of mass human rights violations) and reconciliation may not be fully grasped by learners, it is also possible that learners have come to connect concepts forgiveness to reconciliation as a result of media influences as well as the national reconciliation narratives.

It means that we should forgive those who have done bad things to us, to reconcile with them...to start a new South Africa...forgetting about the past, even though, it is difficult to forget...you can forgive but not to forget (KSG survivor; 2005).

...It is true that you can forgive but you always have a pain with you, you cannot forget (KSG survivor; 2005).

All participants in the focus group with survivors agreed that it was necessary to forgive but not forget. Forgiveness was viewed as a necessary step towards the process of moving forward and healing. Remembering was viewed as necessary for recognising sacrifices that were made by those who fought for a better South Africa as well as ensuring that such human rights violations never occur again. The significance of remembering will be discussed in greater depth in later sections of the report.

In our tradition, there is what we call *matshidiso*, it means that what has happened a long time [ago] belongs to the past, if they don't accept [the past], they will always be hurt ...they better forgive those people and see what life is going to look like (KSG grandchild, 2005).

I cannot forgive them ... a white person cannot come and apologise or if they do apologise they are just doing it without a meaning...when they turn their back, they haven't meant it (KSG grandchild, 2005).

Yes, I can forgive them because those bad things were done by their presidents...as Nelson Mandela once said there should be peace in this country, I can forgive them but not wholeheartedly (KSG grandchild, 2005).

It was only in the focus groups with the grandchildren and children of survivors that participants were divided on issues of forgiveness. While some participants felt that it is necessary to forgive to move into the future, others felt that issues of forgiveness were directly related to trust and were therefore unable to accept apologies of the *other* because there was an inherent sense of distrust. For other participants, forgiveness was only deserving of those white South Africans that were not directly responsible for Apartheid atrocities, implying that Apartheid leadership or perpetrators could not be wholly forgiven. Furthermore, forgiveness was viewed as imperative for peace – an ideology that formed the foundation for the post Apartheid “rainbow nation” national narrative.

It is significant to note that cross generational studies undertaken in Northern Ireland, also pointed to similar findings. According to McLernon et.al (2003) participants felt that trust was inherently linked to forgiveness and while it was possible to forgive an individual with whom you could develop a trusting relationship, it was more difficult to forgive a group. Additionally, participants in the Northern Ireland study also felt that it was more difficult to forgive the leaders of the group responsible for the violation than the members of a group itself.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)

The stories I think was in many cases sad to listen to... how people suffered. All those details could be overwhelming even if it didn't happen to you personally. But I think it is something that needed to be done... But I also think it was good for the country, for everyone to learn about what happened (Swartz, 2005).

Most respondents working in the fields of memory, history and transitional justice agreed that the TRC was necessary to uncover the hidden experiences of the past as well as to allow a communal space for mourning. However, most agreed that the TRC had various shortcomings. According to Nieftagodien, the TRC did not address the broader structural issues of Apartheid such as the Group Areas Act, educational discrimination, etc. which accounted for the systematic oppression of the majority of South Africans. Given the time limitations, it also failed to sufficiently address the role of various institutions such as the role of business or the role of the judiciary in further perpetuating the system of Apartheid (Nieftagodien, Interview 2005). Similarly, Segal argued that the focus on gross human rights violations, took away the focus from the everyday stories of life under Apartheid. Daily experiences such as arrests for the violation of Pass Laws etc. were the lived realities of the majority of South Africans – experiences which the TRC failed to address (Segal, Interview 2005). Sanger further argues that the lack of a concurrent development component to the hearings further rendered the TRC unsuccessful as a tool towards reconciliation (Sanger, Interview 2005). Others argued that amnesty was an easy way for perpetrators to be set free and that it undermined the justice process especially when viewed in conjunction with the complications and lack of justice for survivors with regards to the issue of reparations. Children and grandchildren of survivors had strong concerns that the TRC process itself caused survivors to be re-traumatized.

I heard about it [TRC] but it is not something that most youth know about... my understanding [is that] it was about forgiving each other, I still feel that I need more information about that (Jabulani Tech learner, 2005).

I applaud those people that came forward and admitted to [crimes]...it shows that they wanted to change and be forgiven for the things that they committed during the apartheid era, some of them were forced to do it even though they never wanted to (Diversity High learner, 2005).

Perpetrators had to speak out and tell the people who have survived apartheid what happened (Herzlia learner, 2005).

Learners had varied responses to questions around the TRC. While some learners were oblivious to the issues that the TRC addressed, others likened it to the Nuremburg trials. For some learners the TRC was viewed in racial terms where it was seen as White perpetrators coming forward to tell their stories of how they killed Black people. Many learners also tended to view the TRC as a platform that focused on perpetrators. It was seen as a space where perpetrators told their stories of the violence they inflicted on victims; asked for forgiveness; and were granted amnesty. Very little focus was given to issues of survivors or their testimonies. Only one learner saw the TRC as a space for reconciling victims and perpetrators where the perpetrators were able to tell the truth about the violation that they committed. However, here again there was skepticism and mistrust around the motives of the perpetrator and how much of the 'truth' was revealed by the perpetrator.

Learning about the Past

The Significance of remembering

If we didn't learn about the past it would be much harder to understand why things are the way they are (Herzlia learner, 2005).

It's important for the younger generation to learn about the past. Otherwise they wouldn't understand and know where they are coming from. They need to know how things have changed, how it used to be in the old time and how people struggled for them (Kulani learner, 2005).

Learning about, and remembering the past, was viewed as important for various reasons. Many saw the past as central in the development and understanding of individual and collective identities. Many of the older participants such as teachers and individuals working in the area of history and memory saw the past as a significant mechanism to learn about the mistakes that were undertaken in the past and to prevent the repetition of these mistakes by future generations. It was viewed as a useful teaching tool to break patterns and cycles of violence and oppression. Additionally, it was also felt that the past was necessary to ensure that younger generations better understand what happened thereby ensuring that they appreciate the sacrifices that were made on their behalf and to make the most of opportunities that are currently available to them.

It's important to know about the past, but [one] can't cling to the past and be trapped. We should not develop an attitude based on the past. We need to look at the past and see how change has come and that there are now opportunities (Kulani learner, 2005).

"Oh, it was then, get over it" Imagine...if they would say the same to us when we insist year after year o[n] remembering the Holocaust? (Herzlia teacher, 2005).

Younger participants felt that it was necessary to view the past more positively by not dwelling on it, but to view it as a process that has assisted in transformation and brought about positive change. However, another participant felt it unfair to ask people to move on, given that other events such as the Holocaust continue to be commemorated annually. Here again it should be noted that the idea of moving on was viewed as another racial barrier that further entrenched notions of *us* and *them*, where it was felt that many White South Africans felt that Black South Africans, who were the majority affected by Apartheid, should come to terms with the past and move on.

Transfer of Memory

Yes, it is important to tell our children but in way that they don't become angry, they might be angry and end up [seeking] revenge, we just need to be careful when sharing with them the past, it should be history to them... ..they should also know that problems could be solved through talking not through violence, they should know what is apartheid, they should know struggle, they should know what we mean by reconciliation (KSG survivor, 2005).

I think most people have misconception of forgive and forget...for some it is a painful experience that they would rather not talk about it, if they talk about it...they don't want to carry that over unto their children, they have experienced it, so the children must not experience it (Diversity High teacher, 2005).

While there was general consensus amongst adults that the younger generation need to know about the past, there was also agreement that these stories also have great potential to evoke feelings of pain, anger and humiliation. It was felt that these stories need to be told in a way that highlights some of the 'positive' consequences of the past – issues related to reconciliation, the vibrant resistance movement and transformation.

How do I not pass all those feelings that I have onto my daughter...It's not what you say to them, but what they pick up unconsciously. You will come with a lot of tension and with a lot of

unresolved issues and not understanding what had happened...It's what you don't say (Jaffer, 2005).

However, Jaffer argues from her own experiences as a survivor it is impossible not to convey negative emotions of suffering to one's children or the younger generation as the experiences of suffering have become so entrenched within the body itself. Furthermore, it becomes present in the silences around various unspoken issues (Jaffer, 2005). Similarly Jelin argues that remnants of an oppressive past remain subconsciously entrenched in bodily actions even when their meanings have been forgotten. It is only those younger generations that have not encountered such experiences that are able to render these actions visible or have the ability, through fresh perspectives, to question it. She argues that transmission doesn't necessarily happen through tangible encounters, but also through the silences and lapses (Jelin, 2003).

When I hear those stories, I sometimes get very angry because a lot of our people were violated. But then I tell myself that, maybe all those people that put black people through trauma have passed on. They are not there anymore. So I don't see any reason why I should be angry with him... So we can't blame each other (Kulani learner, 2005).

It is interesting to listen to them, but sometimes it hurts because they end up crying (KSG grandchild, 2005).

Hearing of past abuses, you understand what these people have been through (Herzlia learner, 2005).

For most of the younger generation, hearing stories about the past evoked feelings of sadness, anger and pain, however some rationalized their anger by concluding that many 'perpetrators' are no longer alive. This demonstrates that for many of the younger generation, Apartheid and human rights abuses are so far removed from their present day situations, that they are unable to fully grasp the possibility of either victims or perpetrators still living within the present day. For other learners, hearing stories about the abuses that occurred in the past, evoked feelings of empathy. However, others felt removed from these stories and viewed it as something that happened to the *other*.

There is this notion that I was not even born - why should be I held responsible for something that happened before I was even conceived, so it is not fair to lay this whole trip on me...and I have got black friends and we all get on well, and we all have the same school and it is post apartheid and let us forget the past and get on with the new South Africa. (Potenza, 2005).

The difficulty [is] when it gets locked into families. It's created this culture of victimhood. ...storytelling becomes pathologizing in creating futures based on past experiences (Sanger, 2005).

You don't want to send the wrong message...That all whites are bad people and that they must now go out and be mean to white people...You also don't want them to feel that they must feel sorry for you...you also don't want them to feel sorry for themselves. They will begin to feel entitled (Swartz, 2005).

Many individuals working in the field of memory and history highlighted the possible negative impact that stories about the past could have on younger generations. It was felt that because stories either fell within two extreme categories: that of the oppression and violence experienced in the past or the good times experienced in the past, that these extremes confined history to oppositional experiences of good and bad and therefore did not allow space for young people to critically engage with the past. The negative impact of these stories, therefore, related mainly to issues of racial polarization; the inculcation of a sense of victimhood; guilt; or entitlement. It should be noted however, that the possible negative impact of the stories or the way information is received is also largely dependent on who the storyteller is and who the receiver of that information is. Furthermore, given that memory is a social process, meaning is often re-interpreted by the receiver according to his/her values, beliefs, and experiences.

Interest vs. disinterest in the past

I would be objective [when telling my child what happened] because if you take sides, it would cause a lot of confusion because by the time he/she attends school, apartheid would be a long time gone, he/she won't understand why I am telling him/her if I take sides...if he/she looks at the white person there would be feelings of hatred and this thing of hatred would never come to an end (KSG grandchild, 2005).

At a certain point one need[s] to say it is history and it is in the past, and it is over now...stop there, we are focusing on the future (Diversity High learner, 2005).

For some of the younger participants, the one-sided views of stories that they heard were seen as contributing to feelings of anger and hatred that further perpetuated cycles of hate and division. There was also a sense that there needs to be a balance of remembering with forgetting. It was felt that too much of a focus on the past resulted in a lack of progression towards a positive future. Participants argued avidly for multiple perspectives of the history so as to gain a better understanding of the past. It is clear from some of these arguments that new methodologies need to be developed to better engage the current and new generations on issues of the past and its significance to their lives.

Most of the kids I teach feel that apartheid was something that their parents did (Herzlia teacher, 2005).

I would say why should we honour them? It did affect us but we don't know them as such...obviously we have to honour our history but do we really have to honour [that many] people who went through apartheid (Diversity High learner, 2005).

We don't consider ourselves part of that era (Herzlia learner, 2005).

In addition to youth's disinterest in the past, there was also a sense of detachment from the past, as many young people felt that it was a time that did not belong to them. It was viewed either as a period during which their parents were responsible for Apartheid or as a period in which their parents and grandparents were victims of the system. According to Nieftagodien, youth's dissociation with the past is due primarily to the broader national perceptions that a certain group of people were right and another group was wrong. He argues that it is only when the past becomes more distant, where people have less of a direct connection to the events and it begins to be understood in a critical way that youth will become more interested in learning about history (Nieftagodien, Interview 2005).

Again, the current generation's detachment from the past and history is not a phenomenon that is new to South Africa. International studies have shown that secondary school learners felt that history education was how people lived in other places and times instead of seeing it in terms of a set of narratives related to events and people that gain salience in their current situations and lives (Barton and McCully, 2003).

You need to realize that our history is very rich, my only concern is that people are only talking about Hector Peterson which according to me, he was never a hero but the way they market him as hero annoys me...they must talk about all youth who were involved in the struggle during 1976 (Jabulani Tech learner, 2005).

It's too linear...It's too single party...Because the ANC is in power we just look at things from the ANC perspective. People must realize how complex it was (Jaffer, 2005).

In addition to the critique by many of the younger participants of a sense of blame and shame when dealing with the past, many participants highlighted the political one-sidedness of stories related to the past. Participants also argued that ordinary South Africans, needed to be acknowledged and that the shift needs to be made from a hero focus to more of a community focus.

I still hear about it especially from my father telling me that I must get educated because in the olden days he didn't go to school he only dropped out at grade eight, so he didn't get a chance and get further education (Diversity High learner, 2005).

We had more of a purpose and that is why the past was important... We were much more conscious about the political realities of the day (Swartz, 2005).

For many youth, the stories of the struggles of the past are often connected with a sense of them needing to be grateful for what they have today. This historical burden imposed upon the younger generation by adults continues to alienate many young people from history and the need to understand the past. For older participants, however, the disinterest in history or culture was viewed as resulting from an overall loss of values, but also more specifically, from the increased Americanisation of South African youth. Participants also felt that youth do not have a common political or social conscience, but are instead influenced by popular culture which is characterized by overt materialism and consumerism. However, it should be noted that the phenomenon of excessive consumerism and shifting identities is not new or specific to South Africa. Hall in his study of globalisation and identity, highlights how a significant shift was seen in the 1970's where English-dominated national identities transmuted into a mainly America mass culture. He argues that these shifting identities are largely a result of globalisation, which is facilitated by increased access to information, flows of globalised currencies and the increased permeability of national borders (Hall, 1991). The fact that the increase in consumerism or Americanisation of identities is more apparent now than in the past could be attributed to the fact that Apartheid South Africa remained closed from the rest of the world restricted by international sanctions and has only recently become an international player. Furthermore, for the current generation of youth there is a less active political struggle as opposed to youth of previous generations that grew up in a context that required political participation from all fronts to fight against the political inequalities of the time.

My grandchildren like to be told about what happened during Apartheid...they like history (KSG survivor; 2005).

Our children... and we are white educators ...are very interested in knowing about Apartheid, they know nothing about it (Herzlia teacher, 2005).

Despite various reasons for youth's low interest in the past and in history generally, it is significant to note that there were a few participants who felt that there is a slow resurgence of interest in the past. Economic realities of unemployment continued socio-economic inequalities, and ongoing transitions in race relations have rendered the past of more consequence to some young people.

Sites of learning about the past

Curriculum

I just think there is an exhaustion with apartheid, unfortunately apartheid [has] become a new great trek, it is being taught badly...curriculum 2000 didn't specify enough what aspect of 20th century South Africa should have in different grades, so every year kids move from the struggle to transition to democracy and they had enough of the struggle, I think is an indication that the school system has failed the kids (Potenza, 2005).

National and international researchers generally agree that the mandate of formal schooling through history education is to promote a sense of national identity through civic education and memory work. It is no surprise therefore that schools are viewed as one of the most important sites for learning about the past. However, many individuals working with issues of history and the past highlighted that the history curriculum is inadequate and unable to achieve some of the goals as it is too broad and does not accommodate for different learning and developmental stages. Furthermore, the curriculum was viewed as prescriptive in that it focused mainly on the grasping of facts instead of allowing learners the space to critically engage with the past. It should be noted that many participants were critical of the teaching methods employed by educators. Many argued that orthodox teaching methods further impact negatively on an inadequately designed curriculum. This will be discussed in later sections.

Some participants identified a further shortcoming in the fact that post-Apartheid proposals to make history education compulsory at a high school matric level were never followed through. It was felt that while people generally begin to understand and take interest in history at a later age, history education at all levels of school, despite some of its limitations, could provide some kind of foundation for understanding the past and its impact on identity. Despite, history education seeming to be the most obvious site of learning about the past, other subjects such as life orientation which is a part of the revised curriculum can also

allow learners space to critically explore issues of identity and the past. It can also be argued that a general study of the self in relation to society⁶ enables learners to critically understand and analyse issues through experiential learning by understanding their own place in the world, whereas formal history education may run the risk of simplifying and distorting official history narratives that are often controversial and contradictory as well as inherently linked to a specific version of group identity (Basalou and Cole; 2006).

Media

I think [the media] shapes the past, the Sunday Times hundred year project⁷ [for example] I think [it is] an incredibly powerful vehicle for promoting the past in an interesting way, where the media is directly saying that we have a role to play in allowing the nation to understand... I think when our media start addressing issues in the past, it is going to be in a much more powerful position to tell our stories, think about the power of the TRC if it was in the radio and television (Segal, 2005).

I think [the media] are giving a perception to people that white people were the ones who were responsible for apartheid etc. the media has to change their approach to the subject on racism and apartheid (Diversity High learner, 2005).

Both print and electronic media were viewed as powerful vehicles for portraying the past. However, many survivors felt that television documentaries etc. that dealt with the past should be aired on specific channels and at times when it was more likely that young people would be watching. It was also felt that the media could play a more direct role in dealing with issues of the past and could more directly in address some of the issues of the past and how it impacts on South Africans today in terms of reconciliation and transformation.

Some youth, however, felt that continued media coverage about the past prevented a national sense of moving forward as well as further perpetuated racial divisions. Learners mainly from Diversity High felt strongly about forgetting the past as a means of moving on. While this was not probed further, again this

⁶ The Life Orientation Curriculum aims to focus on the self in relation to others and to society. The prescribed focus areas are personal well being; citizenship education; recreation and physical activity and career choices.

⁷ The Sunday Times 100 year project is a project undertaken by the newspaper to commemorate its 100 year anniversary. The Sunday Times prints a monthly supplement that maps some of the social, economic and political transitions that was covered in the news over the past 100 years. Additionally Sunday Times is sponsoring the building of memorials that commemorate personalities that made the news over the past 100years and that contributed positively to South Africa's national identity. The project is also encompasses a community outreach component and a schools programme.

could either relate to the fact that this is a multi-racial school and that learners felt a sense of fear that delving further into the past could impact negatively on existing relationships across race, or that learners felt that they had adequately dealt with issues of the past and race relations and felt the need to move on.

Museums

I think the museums are new frontiers, I think the classroom used to be the place where history was or was not taught as the case may be, but I think museums are the new way (Segal, 2005).

Participants viewed museums and heritage sites as significant sites in engaging youth about issues of the past. The non-traditional story-telling mechanisms and multi-media used at these different sites were seen as central in holding the attention of young people as well as providing a space for critical engagement with a past with which they could identify. It is important to note that participants in the Eastern Cape felt that such heritage sites were lacking in their region and was seen as a disservice to youth in the region.

While participants generally commended sites such as Robben Island; Apartheid Museum; Constitution Hill and District Six and the work that they had undertaken to revive history for young people especially, many participants alluded to the shortcomings of some of the sites. One of the weaknesses of Robben Island, for example, was that it is perceived as being more preoccupied with the past of male political prisoners at the expense of female political prisoners and political prisoners at other prisons like Pretoria Maximum Security. It was argued that people were detained all over the country and these places should also become learning sites. It was also felt that there is a disconnection between the different sites and that it was necessary for these sites to draw upon each other to draw the various threads of history together.

Those who have experienced it to speak to us personally (Herzlia learner 2005).

History is a lesson to our new generation, survivors must act so that when they see you speaking, you tend to be their role model, they know you, and you are just part of their community (KSG survivor, 2005).

Participants, especially young people, felt that the history would be more interesting if stories were related in the first person by both survivors and perpetrators of human rights violations. Children and grandchildren of survivors as well learners from Jabulani Technical College felt that survivor stories were being exploited by many who did not even experience Apartheid itself. It was therefore emphasized that survivors needed to be empowered to take ownership of their own stories and be skilled to produce the media such as books or documentaries themselves. While survivors themselves acknowledged that they could play a very positive role for the younger generation, it is important to note that the role of survivors at sites such as Robben Island and Apartheid Museum

have had varied impact on the narratives of these institutions. Some felt that the role of survivors in storytelling provided a more personal viewpoint of history while other experts in the field of memorialisation felt that such interventions deterred from a specific kind of objectivity that was needed for lessons of history.

Commemorative Days

My perception is that June 16 is not properly advertised to show that it is an important day that brings memories of the past...the only thing I see on that day are concerts that involve drinking of beers etc. there is no sense of saying that people died during that day... there should be a person who will explain what happened during that day (Jabulani Tech learner, 2005).

What's the point of having human rights day, nobody knows about it (Herzlia learner, 2005).

Because we don't know the significance of that day, we just regard it as a holiday (Jabulani Tech learner, 2005).

While commemorative days were viewed as potential spaces for learning, a majority of the younger participants felt that there was a lack of information around these days. The lack of information about these commemorative days rendered the day meaningless for youth. Many participants however, had various suggestions around improving commemorative events to ensure that they are more relevant to them as young people as well as to enhance some of the original spirit of such commemorations.

Given that many commemorative days are currently celebrated with live music concerts, many young people felt that these days should be days of memory where past struggles were remembered. Others felt that events leading up to these commemorative days should be days of information sharing where specific programmes were designed to inform learners about the commemorative day; its meaning and purpose. Some also felt that activities should contribute to social services such as cleaning of the environment. Many participants also felt that people who participated at these historic events, their teachers, and parents had specific roles to play in passing on information to them.

Educators

Given that school is seen as the traditional, and one of the most important sites of learning, educators are viewed as vital sources of information. They not only have the ability to shape attitudes and confront stereotypes but in so doing have the power to contribute positively to the re-building of relations within their classroom and more holistically within the broader community. Alternatively, given that teachers themselves carry their own burdens of the past, they can also influence how the past is perceived by learners and fuel existing stereotypes and underlying tensions.

I try to avoid it as much as I can, if they ask me any question in class I would just answer on that level, I would never go deep down to the information, I don't want to go there, I don't want to look at the movie... It just hurts, after I watch a movie about the past, I just wake up so upset...I don't watch it (Diversity High teacher, 2005).

The school is also an important site but I don't think they are doing enough. I believe that teachers do not have the right training especially the older teachers (Bolman, 2005).

Despite the positive role that educators could play in the reconciliation process, many participants felt that teachers continue to bear the legacies of the past and this impacts on the way in which they teach history or engage with issues around transformation. While some teachers themselves admitted that they do not critically engage with issues of the past because they haven't fully healed from their own experiences, others, as a result of their race felt a sense of shame at being associated with so-called perpetrators.

Apart from educators' own feelings about the past and related issues of transformation and reconciliation, many participants working within the fields of memory and history felt that teachers were not adequately trained to engage with the new curriculum or methodologies that would interest learners. It was felt that technology such as the internet, multi-media such as documentaries, photos, posters etc. were tools that could increase learners' interest in the past. Yet these were not adequately utilized by educators who were trained in a history that focused on memorising dates, events and names of great men (Nieftagodien; Potenza, 2005). Here again the re-training or inadequate training of educators is not new to South Africa. Many post-conflict settings such as Germany and Rwanda continue to identify the need for teacher training that promotes human rights values, critical citizenship and long-term sustainable reform. The importance of ongoing teacher training is reiterated by Cole and Barsalou who argue that pedagogy is a most significant aspect of post-conflict education and that teacher training should take precedence over text book reform (Cole and Barsalou, 2006).

Parents

The family could be important but the problem is that many old people are not willing to talk about the past. Many of them accepted what happened and just tried to make the best of it (Bolman, 2005).

While there was general consensus that the other central site of learning was the home through parents and grandparents, there was also agreement that parents are not willing to talk about the past with their children. While scholars have identified various reasons for these silences, many have argued that silences could also be coping mechanism or a means to protect the younger generation from the traumas experienced by the older generation. However, as highlighted earlier, despite silences the past often becomes re-enacted through bodily actions, assumptions and implied meanings. Within the South African context however, some participants felt that given the legacies of the past, there is a culture of silence that was imposed by the Apartheid system. Apartheid was characterized by a sense of secrecy and silence, people were afraid to talk openly about issues as it could have numerous ramifications. This culture of silence has inadvertently continued into the post Apartheid era.

Another theme that was emphasized by many participants was economic issues. It was argued that many parents, especially Black parents in townships faced a variety of economic challenges. Parents therefore spent long hours at work and did not have adequate time to engage with children. Additionally, given these time constraints, parents were unable to attend educational events such as lectures, seminars and exhibitions that did engage with the past, and therefore could not keep pace with some of the current debates and discussions around such issues. One educator felt that many parents were illiterate and were therefore unable to engage with their children about the past. While parents' literacy levels may impact negatively on issues related to formal school curriculums, it is valuable to note that issues related to the transmission of the past are independent of literacy levels and could relate more to the lack of time for communication.

What I see with our parents [is that] they still have the old mentality, [they] forget that we are living in a different and modernized world, communication is very important nowadays [and] our parents don't engage us...they don't share anything with us, or guide us (Jabulani Tech learner, 2005).

It's very hard for parents... I think it's a lot of guilt as well (Herzlia learner, 2005).

There was general agreement amongst learners that parents did not communicate adequately. While some argued that parents were incapable of communicating effectively, others pointed to the negative emotions that parents themselves have to contend with when talking about the past. Again this lack of communication or silences could relate to the reluctance of older generations to transmit the trauma of their experiences. Potenza, further argued that the teenage years are the beginnings of when children are able to grasp social or political issues. However, these years also coincide with periods of personal transition which in itself becomes a barrier to communication between parents and children. The past therefore becomes a site of competing interests with clothes, music, technology and other forms of popular culture (Potenza, 2005).

Conclusions

Various studies have shown that memory is intrinsically linked to identity and the transmission of memory and history in a post-conflict period can play a significant role in evolving new identities of citizenship, empowering marginal groups by providing a sense of re-dress but most importantly providing lessons for the non-repetition of past mistakes. While national narratives often portray a selective version of the past in an attempt to build a national identity and consolidate new political identities, narratives within the home and school have the potential to provide alternative versions of the past to provide a more holistic picture of events of the past as well as promote a critical citizenship. While our study has shown that attempts have been made through the revision of the school curriculum and the celebration of commemorative days to re-build a national identity, there still remains the challenge of how to get youth interested and enable them to understand that the past remains a salient aspect of their lives today. Furthermore, questions of how to transmit the past, without perpetuating a sense of victimhood, blame or shame are significant in ensuring that the younger generation is able to take with them positive lessons into the future. The following section highlights some of the overall themes from the study.

Race and identity

While issues of race were deliberately not directly investigated in the research process, race is an ongoing point of reference in the report. This, however, comes as no surprise as race and constantly changing identities are not only legacies of our past but also characteristic of a diverse, democratic South Africa upon which the post-conflict national narrative has been based. Significant however, is that there are continued feelings of mistrust of and unfamiliarity with the racial other. As previously stated this sense of otherness is due to the lack of interaction between youth of different races, cultures, and nationalities, especially those youth that live in predominantly single-race, insular communities. However,

also important to note is that those youth that have experienced multi-racial communities, also seem to obliterate race, refusing to engage with issues of difference or pretending that race is not an issue and does not exist in their contexts.

While both these findings highlight that race relations continue to pose challenges to the re-building of social relationships, it is necessary that young people are able to share positive experiences of each other. Since people generally learn more from their own experiences than others (Jelin, 2003), it is also necessary that schools and youth centres facilitate exchanges where youth are able to engage with each other on joint projects that go beyond academic learning and focus on common interests related to music, art, sport, technology, etc. Additionally, safe spaces need to be provided to enable youth to challenge and analyse social myths related to race, thereby developing a critical citizenship that aims to overcome some of the barriers that have developed over years of racial segregation in South Africa.

Roles and responsibilities

While there is a common perception that youth are wayward and lacking in vision, it is also true that the various social systems have in some ways failed youth themselves.

The Home

The home which is a crucial space for the sharing of knowledge has become preoccupied with meeting the economic needs of the family. However, as previously stated, there remains a strong oral history tradition within the family and community units. It is both the responsibility of youth as well as parents and grandparents to ensure that lessons of the past are learnt. Also important to note is that youth, through the narratives that they so hear, currently perceive the past as two extremes of good and evil, the good times and the bad times. In acknowledging that the mediation of stories and their transmission can not happen organically, it is important to note that education and school system through projects, can play a significant role in stimulating greater communication between the older and younger generations.

Educators

For creative projects to be initiated at a school level outside of the curriculum, it is necessary for educators to be able to engage with some of the issues that may arise from such a process. Educators themselves need to be willing to undergo their own transformation processes through formal diversity or transformation workshops. Additional formal teacher training is required for teachers to be enabled to design as well as engage with materials that will stimulate critical discussion in the classroom. While the outcomes-based education system allows

for such practices, attitudinal shifts and openness to ongoing learning is required to encourage critical learning about the past. The non-profit sector has thus far played a significant role in transformation processes; however, apart from training and the dissemination of materials, it is necessary that NPOs provide support to educators especially, to ensure that work towards social transformation becomes sustainable.

NPOs and heritage institutions

In terms of working with heritage institutions, NPOs can provide strategic direction and focus through research and policy recommendations. Heritage/Memorial sites, like NPOs are currently underfunded. By developing partnerships, resources can be maximized to ensure maximum outreach. It is necessary that heritage sites continue to engage in critical discussions about the past as these are currently one of the few spaces that allow for creative engagement with the past. Additionally it is the role of both NPOs and heritage institutions to provide a multiple perspective of the past to maintain some equilibrium with politically bias state initiatives and the subjectivity of the family sphere.

The media

Many young participants, especially, have alluded to the role of the media in teaching about the past. While the media has thus far played an important role in education, it is necessary for the media to more directly invest in addressing the past. Apart from corporate social responsibility ventures, the media could contribute by publicizing and encouraging use of its archival footage; developing strategic partnerships with both government and the NPO sector to develop resources as well as use its own resources to provide multi-media learning and teaching material as an outreach mechanism.

Role of survivors, ex-combatants, perpetrators

Most participants agreed that those people directly involved in the past could be useful references to better understand the past and how it relates to the present. Learners also took an interest in wanting to understand the motives of perpetrators of human rights abuses. While the actual definition of 'perpetrator' is blurred due to the dynamics of the struggle for freedom, perpetrators as well as survivors could play a significant role in relating first hand experiences. They can also be used to address racial stereotypes around who is a victim and who is a perpetrator.

While, many survivors and perpetrators of gross human rights violations are alive and able to bear testimony to their experiences, many are ailing and will pass on in the near future. It is therefore necessary that these testimonies, not just those that testified in the TRC, but also those ordinary, daily experiences be captured

to ensure that these stories become in themselves lessons for future generations. It is here again that both media and funders could contribute in ensuring that resources are made available for capturing these testimonies.

Curriculum

A number of sentiments were raised regarding the adequacy of the curriculum at school. Given the heterogeneous nature of the sample used in the study, these sentiments were predictably diverse. Despite this diversity, a number of themes could be discerned. Though strides have been made in terms of methodology of teaching, teacher training and curriculum revision, a major handicap has been those teachers who have been trained to teach history as something that has to do with learning about great men, remembering dates and figures. They are not equipped to teach history in a way that enhances the critical analytical skills of students. Learners still consider the past as detached from their own experiences- something that happened to other people at another time, it is only in bringing these experiences into the classroom that learners can develop a sense of appreciation and understanding about the past.

Commemorative days

Apart from commemorative days remaining meaningless for many youth, festivities are often politically biased depending on the sponsor of the event. More information needs to be provided on commemorative days and its relevance to present day South Africa. Schools and youth centres need to undertake programmes to ensure that learners, educators and the community at large are re-minded and re-educated about their significance.

It should be noted that national government-led celebrations of commemorative days have also been tarnished by racial lenses. Many of these events are perceived as days for African South Africans to celebrate and there is minimal participation from people of other race groups. To a large degree this can be attributed to the fact that there is very little outreach to other communities. The challenge is further exacerbated by the misconception that community outreach invariably means reaching out to poor African people, a myth which not only conforms to issues of stereotypes and discrimination highlighted elsewhere in this report but one that also marginalises other South Africans.

In this regard, it is recommended that government deviate from its trusted formulae of a morning of political speeches, followed by a few indigenous dance pieces to showcase our diversity, and end the day with a *kwaito* concert. If these events are to overcome barriers of age, class, race and gender, it is necessary that the day's programme be imbued with meaning and a sense of national purpose that is further enhanced by a programme that appeals to a variety of tastes.

On their terms

If you want to know your past, look into your present conditions.

If you want to know your future, look into your present actions.

--Buddhist saying

As South Africa continues to progress into a globalised world, shifting identities highlight that identity is no longer simply rooted to place, the history of the world is the history of the individual. How then do we make a South African past relevant to a generation that has the option to choose and organize his/her own life. A generation that continues to have unequal access to opportunities and unequal engagement with the global arena? How do we level out the playing fields to ensure that their past remains an important part of their present and future, but does not become a mechanism to perpetuate a cycles of revenge and racial mistrust?

In addition to the recommendations outlined above, it is essential that we focus on a past and a history that moves away from blame and shame. In so doing we allow a new generation to take ownership of a history and re-interpret it for their own context and not merely re-present it through the clichéd narratives that continue to alienate them. Experience is the best teacher, and it is only in their practical engagement with the past, that youth will better understand the current challenges they face and how best to deal with it.

Additionally, while many may argue that youth's disinterest in the past is a result of their own selfishness and lack of direction; we should also acknowledge their right to enjoy the fruits of freedom. The fact that a struggle was undertaken, even before their time, does not mean that they should continually shoulder the historical burden of the past through eternal gratitude. However, it is in ensuring that the past becomes a lesson of *never again*; a common thread in the fabric of their collective identity; as well as a tool to empower the many Leratos of South Africa to conquer the haunting legacies of an inhumane, destructive system - it is in those lessons, that the present generation can say *kealeboga / thank you*. It is only in defining the past on their terms that the victories of yesteryear will take root in our future.

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Interviews

Danny Bolman (Department of Public Works: Eastern Cape) - November 2005
Emilia Potenza (Apartheid Museum: Johannesburg) - November 2005
Lauren Segal (Constitution Hill: Johannesburg) – November 2005
Mandy Sanger (District Six Museum: Cape Town) - October 2005
Noor Nieftagodien (Wits History Department: Johannesburg) – November 2005
Sabelo Capa (Teacher Ulwazi High School: East London) - November 2005
William Swartz (activist: East London) - November 2005
Zubeida Jaffer (activist, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation: Cape Town) - October 2005

Focus Groups

Diversity High School teachers and learners (Johannesburg) - November 2005
Herzlia Secondary School teachers and learners (Cape Town) - October 2005
Jabulani Technical College teachers and learners (Johannesburg) -
Kulani High School teachers and learners (Cape Town) - October 2005

Khulumani children and survivors (Johannesburg) – November 2005

Bontheuvel Military Wing (Bontheuvel) - November 2005