

THE CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS OF
DEVELOPING A “RECONCILIATORY PEDAGOGY”
USING ORAL HISTORY WITH SOUTH AFRICAN PRE-
SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE HISTORY TEACHERS

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Abstract

This thesis concerns the challenges and limitations of developing a conception of a “reconciliatory pedagogy”. As a history methodology lecturer at the University of the Witwatersrand, I noticed that relationships among students were polarised. But during the course of an oral history and cooperative learning assignment with second year students, I observed a shift in relationships among some of the students. This started my journey towards conceptualising a “reconciliatory pedagogy”, which addresses the difficult issue of how we reweave relationships in the South African history lecture/classroom, given our torrid past.

The methodology used in this thesis is narrative inquiry. I have used this approach to consider the meaning of reconciliation from different perspectives and contexts: the literature on reconciliation, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in South Africa, and in practice with some history methodology students and history primary school teachers.

John Paul Lederach’s (1997, 1999) images of reconciliation were key ideas literature that informed my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy. He developed his dynamic ideas on reconciliation during his international attempts at peace-making, and I explored whether these ideas could be applied to the South African context of the history lecture/classroom.

The TRC started the process of reconciliation in 1996, but everyday events continue to demonstrate the on-going lack of reconciliation in South Africa. A “reconciliatory pedagogy” aimed to take forward some aspects of the TRC, such as students/learners finding out more about the recent South African past via oral history interviews, and encouraging dialogue about this difficult past between the different generations.

The use of cooperative learning strategies facilitated further dialogue about this past among the students/learners, where they shared “their” oral histories during a joint task, and in some cases engaged in Lederach’s (1999) “dance” of reconciliation. By interviewing history students/teachers, and through classroom observations, the successes and limitations of my conception of a “reconciliatory pedagogy” emerged.

The results of the above process encouraged reflection about the education of history student teachers: it suggested the need for a more theory-based approach to their education via a critique of Lederach’s model of reconciliation and oral history in a “reconciliatory pedagogy”. A “reconciliatory pedagogy” does not claim to lead to big changes in attitudes or towards the teaching of history, but it assists in small shifts that may affect the broader project of reconciliation in South Africa.

Key words: reconciliatory pedagogy; reconciliation; narrative inquiry; John Paul Lederach; Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC); oral history; cooperative learning; history pedagogy for student teachers, social justice.

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

Reville Jess Nussey

_____ day of May in the year 2013

To Ivor and Hannah, with love

&

In memory and gratitude to Peter and Mornice Nussey, Judy and Mike
Sarakinsky

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS EMANATING FROM THIS
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Chapter 1: Introduction - Reconciliation and relationships

Introduction

Where did my interest in reconciliation begin? As I walked through the art gallery at Constitution Hill¹ for the first time, I heard a loud, rustling sound and looked up to discover its source: a beautiful, blue dress made of plastic. I wondered what the story was behind this dress that danced in the breeze, and then my eye caught the painting beneath it: the dress again, but in a setting of unspeakable violence with a wild animal tearing at the dress, then another painting with braziers in the foreground and the dress in the background.²

A year later, a scene of mutual incomprehension: a routine handing out of an oral history assignment on “Life before and after 1994” in a Social Sciences methodology lecture at the University of the Witwatersrand, which suddenly sparked an outraged reaction from some of the students who shouted, “Not apartheid again!”

¹ Constitution Hill is the location of South Africa’s highest court, the Constitutional Court, which was inaugurated at this site in 2004. The Constitutional Court has made important rulings concerning how South Africa’s democratic constitution is interpreted. The site was originally a prison, established by Paul Kruger, the President of the Zuid-Afrikaanse Republiek in 1893, and it was converted into a fort prior to the outbreak of the South African War. After the war, it was re-established as a prison: over the years it came to embody both segregation and apartheid with its different buildings, and the unequal treatment of black and white prisoners, who ranged from common to political prisoners. It is significant that the present guardian of South Africa’s constitution is located at the same place where some of the greatest injustices of the past happened. There is a collection of outstanding art in the Court’s foyer. See *Political events*.

² The story that inspired the paintings is recounted in Chapter 2. See triptych by Mason, J. (1995).

Both examples were unforgettable moments that set me on a journey to explore reconciliation as well as its relationship to history teaching by doing this research. These moments also led me to reflect on how I had arrived at these experiences: I was born into a white, middle class, English speaking family in Bloemfontein and was brought up during the height of apartheid in the 1960s and 1970s, which was a reality that I was mostly cocooned from. At school, I was taught an Afrikaner nationalist interpretation of history with a slight touch of a liberal interpretation of the South African past. I studied history further at the University of the Witwatersrand in the 1980s, where I was exposed to a revisionist interpretation of South African history. This interpretation provided an alternative explanation to the South African past and it had an enormous impact on my understanding of South African society. I was outraged that this interpretation was omitted when I was at school, and I was determined that when I became a history teacher my pupils would be exposed to all the interpretations of the South African past, so that they could make up their own minds about the validity of the different versions.

The first high school I taught at was a government (public) school in the Northern suburbs in Johannesburg, where I tried to implement this approach. In turn, this led to posing a further question about history and its relation to history teaching, which was how to make an informed choice among the different interpretations of the South African past? This question led me back to the same university to do a Master in Education in the late 1980s, where I examined the different philosophical assumptions that informed the various interpretations of the South African past. I completed my research report while teaching at an independent non-racial high school during the early 1990s, where encounters with the pupils at this school left me questioning a number of my own assumptions about the teaching of history. This was where I stumbled across a silence surrounding the South African past. I explained the purpose of the pencil test during apartheid to the pupils, where an official placed a pencil into a person's hair for the purpose of racial classification, and I was taken

aback when the pupils accused me of having invented this test. It made me wonder why many of the parents were keeping silent about aspects of apartheid that they must have experienced. I left teaching at schools at the end of 1994, and moved into working for educational non-government organisations. I returned to teaching history when I joined the University of the Witwatersrand as a history methodologist in 2002.

Background to the problem

When I started to lecture, I expected social relations among students in the lecture room to be much more integrated. Instead, I found that this was an extremely polarised space, and this observation provided another impetus for this research, and specifically, the class that I lectured in 2006, where matters came to a head over this Social Sciences assignment that dealt with “Life before and after 1994”. The encounter with this class showed clear evidence of a lack of reconciliation, as the students showed major resistance towards engaging both with the recent past and with one another. The majority of these student teachers were part of a generation that started school during 1994, when South Africa held its first democratic elections, and they were at school while the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was in session (1996 - 1998). This means that they were products of schools that were integrated (in principle) and were exposed to a schooling system that was largely under the influence of a post-apartheid curriculum. The broader society went through a painful process of facing its difficult past during the years that the TRC operated. While reconciliation was part of its brief, the TRC never claimed that it was able to reconcile the South African nation, although it did see itself as “express[ing] significant steps in the reconciliation process” (TRC Report Vol. 5, 1998, p. 350). Yet, I observed that student friendships rarely crossed the barriers of the past, such as racial divisions, and where they did, these relationships were the exception rather than the rule. A question that arose from this observation, which has informed this research, was: Why has there not

been a significant change in social relations in the lecture room given the political changes in the country, especially with a society that experienced a TRC?

While these students were born when apartheid was being dismantled, they showed a remarkable similarity to the post-war “second generation”³, as they behaved as if they grew up under apartheid. The divisions of South Africa’s past have continued into the present: during lectures, there has been a great deal of politically correct speech, but little movement in terms of a reaching out to understand or work with “other” student teachers. This was vividly demonstrated in resentment towards requests to form groups that reflected the diversity of South Africa’s population. If students were allowed to choose their own groups, then the divisions of the past became evident: groups were formed mostly on the basis of friendships, which often corresponded to the same race groups. Race is a controversial concept in a democratic South Africa, but in this case it appears that the effects of apartheid racial classification continue to affect identity and relationships after 1994.⁴

A counter view to the one above is that in a democracy students ought to have the right to freedom of association. However, while this is an important right, in practice it can end up perpetuating the divisions of the past. For example, at the University of the Free State, residences were allowed to operate on the freedom of association principle, which in effect led to separate residences, based

³ The term “second generation” (Hoffman 2005, p. 26) was used to describe the children of survivors and perpetrators who were born after the Second World War. Hoffman (2005, p. 27) described how this “phrase suggested that there were others for whom a Holocaust inheritance was both meaningful and problematic”. She was exposed to fragments about her parents’ past: the legacy they passed on was “the acid-etched traces of what they had endured” (p. 34), which made her feel in a way that she too had experienced what her parents did, although this is impossible.

⁴ Jonathan Jansen (2007), a former Dean of Education at the University of Pretoria, made a similar observation about students at that institution: “One thing that can be said with empirical certainty is that, though our educational institutions are physically desegregated, they are socially among the most segregated spaces in post-apartheid society.”

mostly on race membership (Blaine, 2008). The right to freedom of association was used as a way to justify separate residences at the university. However, the case of the four white students at Reitz residence who made a racist video depicting the humiliation of five black workers from the residence, as a way to show their antagonism to racial integration, demonstrates how the separate residences created a space for discriminatory attitudes from the past to continue. I do not think that what happened at the Free State University was an isolated incident, and suggest that there is a need to create learning opportunities where students can engage one another in a way where the baggage from the past can be processed in a meaningful manner.

Another reason why reconciliation should be regarded as an on-going project has to do with everyday events in South Africa, which continue to demonstrate the lack of reconciliation in the broader South African society. To select a few examples since I started my research: the lack of cross cultural interaction outside of schools (Oakley-Smith, 2005, p. 20); the tenth anniversary of the TRC, which unlocked a furious debate over its meaning for South Africans (Adams, 2006, p. 15; Burnett, 2006, p. 1; Villa-Vincencio, 2006, p. 19); the issue over whether or not South African Defence Force soldiers who died in Namibia and Angola should have their names inscribed on a memorial in Freedom Park (Barron, 2006); the fear of a “race” war as a reaction to the murder of Eugene Terreblanche (“White supremacist leader...” , 2010); the war of words that erupted between President Zuma and Deputy Minister Pieter Mulder over who could lay historical claim to particular parts of South Africa (Kgosana, 2012, p. 2). In a recent report, the 2011 SA Reconciliation Barometer (2011, pp. 41–42) stated that “59% overall agree that South Africans have made progress in reconciliation since the transition to democracy... There was also moderate agreement (47% overall) that the TRC succeeded in bringing about reconciliation”, but only 36% “feel they have experienced reconciliation in their own lives.” For a society that was characterised by deep divisions in the past, it is a major concern that the degree of personal reconciliation is so low eighteen years into democracy. All these examples demonstrate the elusiveness of

reconciliation in South Africa. However, it must also be noted that despite fears that South Africa might descend into the abyss of civil war after 1994 it has not done so, which I think is partly to the credit of the TRC. But the preceding examples provide one of the reasons why I believe that there is a need for a continuing reconciliation project in other areas, such as education.

Research problem and questions

When I first encountered the idea of a reconciliatory pedagogy, I recognised that this might be a way to address some of my concerns about what had happened in the Social Sciences lecture room. The idea for a reconciliatory pedagogy was part of an international research project started in Australia by Robert Hattam and others in 2005. In March 2006, I attended and presented a paper at a workshop in Adelaide that brought together scholars from around the world to discuss and debate the idea of a reconciliatory pedagogy. It became clear that South Africa was not alone in grappling with issues concerning reconciliation, as other countries, such as Australia, Cyprus, Israel/Palestine and New Zealand, were experiencing similar difficulties, although in different ways. In preparation for this workshop, a Johannesburg Teachers' Circle was established, which worked on and developed a series of classroom tasks based on the TRC itself as a way of "trailing" a reconciliatory pedagogy (Ferreira, Janks, Barnsley, Marriott, Rudman, Ludlow & Nussey (2012); Ferreira & Janks, 2007 & 2009). While it did show that for some learners at high schools in Johannesburg there was a substantial shift in attitudes as a result of this intervention, it was limited in scope and timing. I was also concerned that its focus was mainly related to language and art, and wanted to explore the idea of a "reconciliatory pedagogy" in greater depth from a historical perspective.

Aspects of South Africa's history, which forms part of the Social Sciences Learning Area in what was known as the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS), could, I believe, be studied as a process of addressing the

issue of reconciliation in a formal way. In effect, this is an attempt to translate the political impact of the TRC into the everyday Social Sciences lecture or classroom, by engaging with some of the explicit aims of the RNCS, which are to “heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights” (Department of Education, 2002, p. 1)⁵ in a practical manner. This does not imply the support of a transmission approach to the teaching of history which endorses the view that there is only one perspective on the South African past. Instead, there is a need for a deeper understanding of what, how and why events happened as they did, which the different interpretations of South Africa’s past highlighted. I also wondered how a study of history could contribute to a shift in understanding of personal relations in the classroom, and in its small way, how this process could affect the broader society, so that reconciliation might be encouraged.

While the Social Sciences assignment on “Life before and after 1994” started off extremely negatively, I noticed that some of the students’ attitudes shifted during the process of the assignment both towards their peers and also towards me. This made me consider whether this assignment might be a fruitful way to develop the idea of a reconciliatory pedagogy in practice, one which was informed by a historical perspective and a particular teaching and learning strategy, namely cooperative learning. A further question was whether this assignment could help to facilitate reconciliation at an intergenerational level by helping to break some of the silences about the past between the generations.

⁵ When I started lecturing at the university in 2002, the *Revised National Curriculum Statement* (RNCS) was introduced (Department of Education, 2002). There has been a further revision to this statement called the *National Curriculum Statement: Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement* (Department of Education, 2011). But the aims of both curricula, which are based on the South African constitution, have remained the same. History and geography are the two subjects that form the Social Sciences Learning Area/Subject, which is a source of some discomfort for many history and geography teachers, as it means that the time for each subject is halved, and few links are made overtly between both subjects in the curriculum. It has largely been a case of an “arranged marriage”. See Nussey & Rusznyak (2007). For the purpose of this research, my focus is on the subject of history, and I use both history and social sciences interchangeably throughout this thesis. This means that when I use the term social sciences, I am referring to the history part of social sciences.

When I returned the assignments to the students, I asked them for their assistance: I requested their permission to use their oral history narratives and reflective essays both verbally and in writing by means of informed consent forms. A few years later, I interviewed those students who were willing to allow me to use their 2006 assignments and who consented to be interviewed. This means that my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy developed as a result of the assignment. It led me to examine the meaning of reconciliation, to research the background to oral history and cooperative learning in greater depth, as well as the students' experiences during and after the assignment. This was an attempt to understand what happened during the course of the assignment that led to an apparent shift in attitude of some of the students and to address a gap in the literature identified by Cole and Barsalou (2006, p. 14), namely that "few scholars have definitively assessed the impact of history teaching initiatives on social reconstruction in post-conflict societies".⁶

A related observation was that the students became more engaged and appeared to enjoy doing history during this assignment. The students ranged from those who last studied history formally in Grade 9 at school to a few who had chosen to study academic history further at university, but all the students were required by the university's curriculum to do a compulsory course in Social Sciences methodology.⁷ This provided a further reason for doing this research: there was an expectation that History, as a discipline, would flourish in post-apartheid South Africa. However, this expectation has not been realised. There are a number of reasons for this, which according to Bundy (2007, p. 75) were "the result of pressures that were local and international, contingent and structural, practical and philosophical". It is beyond my brief to discuss these reasons, but at an anecdotal level, many students expressed resistance to

⁶ In South Africa, organisations such as Facing History and Ourselves, a Boston based organisation, in conjunction with a Cape Town non-profit organisation, Shikaya and the Western Cape Education Department have run workshops for practising history teachers in the Western Cape. Research based on these workshops is starting to emerge. See Weldon (2010, pp. 353-364).

⁷ In 2012, the curriculum changed at the University of the Witwatersrand so that Social Sciences methodology became an elective course (instead of a compulsory course) for the senior primary students who did not choose history as an academic major.

teaching and learning history, in response to the way that they were taught history at school. This provided another incentive to do this research, to find out whether the teaching and learning of oral history via a reconciliatory pedagogy enabled practising teachers to break with the conventional patterns of teaching history. This led me to extend my research to include former students who are now practising Social Sciences teachers (both from the class of 2006 and some from previous years) at selected primary schools in Johannesburg. I wanted to explore the effects of this 2006 assignment on their history teaching practice, and then to compare these teachers with more experienced history teachers, who had not participated in this assignment.

I have limited my study to the Intermediate phase⁸ at primary schools for the following reasons: first, the majority of the student teachers doing the Social Sciences course that I lectured teach at this level; secondly, there is a lack of research into the issues of reconciliation and the practice of history teaching at this level; thirdly, this phase provides the foundation for the study of history as a subject at the Further Education and Training level and at tertiary level.

Methodology

I have used a conceptual approach that seeks to understand the meaning of reconciliation according to a range of sources that vary from philosophers, such as Derrida, to what was intended and what happened at the TRC. Another approach I have also used in my methodology is a qualitative one (Babbie, 1989, 2005; Bauer & Gaskell, 2000; Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996; Freebody, 2003; Maxwell, 1996; McMillan & Schumacher, 1993; Merriam, 1998). In particular, a qualitative approach known as a “narrative inquiry”, suggested by Clandinin and Connelly (2000), is central to my methodology. One of the key ideas that Clandinin and Connelly use is the concept of “experience”, which (they argue)

⁸ The intermediate phase is from Grades 4 – 6, but many primary schools include Grade 7 as part of this phase.

John Dewey transformed into an inquiry term, so that research is the study of experience, as “education, experience and life are inextricably intertwined” (Clandinin & Donnelly, 2000, p. xxii). Following Dewey, they claim that experience is both “*personal* and *social* (interaction)” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50). This idea links strongly with this thesis: my experience in the Social Sciences lecture room was a starting point for this research, as I wanted to focus on the student teachers’ experience of the oral history assignment. Next, I wanted to develop this idea further by including former students’ experiences and reactions to the idea of a reconciliatory pedagogy once they became practising Social Sciences teachers. I believe that this research has social implications beyond the personal, defined either as my own or the teachers’ experiences. This research provides an insight into the shape a process of reconciliation in the form of a reconciliatory pedagogy might take in a history lecture room and a few primary school classrooms; yet, there are also implications for the reconciliation project in the broader South African society.

Clandinin and Connelly's (2000, p. 49) concept of the “*three-dimensional narrative inquiry space*” is another useful way to conceptualise research in this thesis. I have discussed the first dimension concerning the interaction between the personal and the social in the preceding paragraph. The second dimension is the notion of time, where the research is situated along a continuum of “*past, present, and future* (continuity)” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50). This idea is related to the oral history assignment, where a student interviews a member of the older generation in the present about experiences in the past. The story that is the result of this interview has the potential to affect the present and the future, in the form of the student’s understanding of what happened in the past, and how these ideas are interconnected with one another. It also has the potential to affect other students’ understanding of these ideas too. My research is also on a temporal continuum, as the initial research on the oral history assignment took place in 2006, while the classroom observation and interviews that form the rest of the data about the conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy happened over three years, that is, from 2008 until 2011. But my interviews will

also go backwards and forwards in time, as the questions will draw on the teachers' experiences and my own in the present and past, as well as referring to the future (where relevant). Finally, the third dimension to this framework is "*place (situation)*" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50), which emphasises where the research occurs, and in this context the research is based on what happened in a history methodology lecture room at the University of the Witwatersrand and in Social Sciences classrooms at three primary schools in the South, East and North Eastern suburbs of Johannesburg, South Africa. I examine the impact of this environment on the teachers and the implementation of a reconciliatory pedagogy in this urban context. Furthermore, Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 49) suggest that this framework allows inquiries to travel in different "directions", such as "*inward, outward, backward, forward and situated within place*". By "inward", they suggest that questions can be directed to the researcher's own experience, while "outward" refers to questions that can be asked about the environment. I intend to demonstrate how both directions are appropriate during the course of this research on developing a reconciliatory pedagogy: both with regard to my own experience in the history methodology lecture room, as well as during interviews and classroom observations of the students and teachers. The use of "backward" and "forward" describes how the researcher's questions can move in time, and how these questions are all related to a particular place. My narrative inquiry travels in different directions, as I consider the implications of what I experience, observe and find out about reconciliation and a reconciliatory pedagogy in different contexts.

As part of this process of narrative inquiry, I have collected the following data: eight oral history assignments and seven reflective essays from the class of 2006, and have completed follow up interviews with these former students from this class. This has allowed me to draw on the students' experiences of the assignment at the time, as well as having the benefits of their hindsight during the interviews. Further, I used a participant observer approach for classroom observation of five members from the 2006 class who started to teach in 2009, and I conducted interviews with them during their first year of teaching (with one

exception). This allowed me to find out whether the process of doing this assignment at university had any effect on their teaching practice in the Social Sciences classroom, as well as to observe how they interpreted the brief that I gave them. For the purpose of comparison, I broadened my research to include classroom observation and interviews with three practising Social Sciences teachers who were also students whom I lectured prior to 2006. Therefore, they are more experienced teachers. I analyse the data from the narratives, classroom observations and interviews by using an open coded content analysis. This means that my sample is small, and I cannot generalise on the basis of my data. However, by doing an in-depth focus on a few students/teachers both at university and in history classrooms at primary schools, I believe that there are valuable insights that can be gained into the proposed practice of a reconciliatory pedagogy, which a broader study might lack.

Outline of chapters

I have chosen not to follow the traditional structure of a doctorate, which has separate chapters for a literature review and the data. Instead, I have integrated the literature review into different chapters where relevant, and have chosen to adopt a thematic approach to answer my main research question: What is a reconciliatory pedagogy? The reason for this integrated approach relates to my choice of narrative inquiry as my main methodology, as it has the advantage of allowing me to answer my research question from different perspectives and in different contexts. In chapter 2, I explore the various meanings of reconciliation based on a review of the literature, as well as using the example of South Africa's TRC which aimed to facilitate reconciliation in practice to help answer the following research question: What is reconciliation? Then I examine the student/teachers' understanding of reconciliation, and show how these various conceptions of reconciliation and images associated with it inform my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy. This chapter helps to provide an

overview of some of the theoretical issues that underpin some conceptions of reconciliation, and the interrelationship between these conceptions and the practice of reconciliation in South Africa.

The different components of the assignment, namely oral history and cooperative learning, form the organising ideas for chapters 3 and 4, respectively. Both these chapters examine briefly the theoretical background that informs these concepts and in greater depth how the students experienced the assignment in practice. The process of using oral history and cooperative learning forms the basis of the pedagogy in my proposed conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy. I also investigate the role oral history played in facilitating a reconciliatory process with their elders and the results of the oral history and cooperative learning activity with their peers, and whether or not a reconciliatory pedagogy is an approach the students could use in their future Social Sciences classrooms. This means that the research question for these chapters was: How can reconciliation be facilitated in practice by using a reconciliatory pedagogy?

In chapters 5 and 6, I report on the results of my classroom observations of the use of a reconciliatory pedagogy, and interviews with Social Sciences teachers at three primary schools in different parts of Johannesburg. The teachers were a mixture of first-year and more experienced teachers: five of these teachers were from the class of 2006, and three were from classes that I had lectured prior to 2006. The most important research question that informed these observations and interviews was: How can the primary Social Sciences classroom contribute towards reconciliation? Related questions were: How do the teachers implement the request to use oral history and cooperative learning, that is, a reconciliatory pedagogy in practice? Does an exposure to this approach at university affect their practice? What are the successes and challenges of using a reconciliatory pedagogy in the Social Sciences primary school classroom? In chapter 6, I turn to how the teachers perceive their own identities in relation to the learners, and whether there is a requirement for a

reconciliatory process in relationships between the teachers and their learners. In addition, I consider whether I observed a need for a reconciliatory process among the learners in the Social Sciences classroom. These chapters focus on the implications of implementing a reconciliatory pedagogy not only in the history school classroom, but also the broader questions about present day relations in the history classroom.

In chapter 7, after reflecting on the results of the classroom observations, I discuss some of the implications of these observations of this practice for a more in depth theoretical conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy. This chapter addresses the question of whether student Social Sciences teachers need more theory in the form of a greater understanding of the discipline of history in order to teach a reconciliatory pedagogy. It explores how some of the problematic concepts in oral history and more generally in the discipline, such as “truth”, memory and imagination, narratives, re-storying the past as well as a model of reconciliation, could be further interrogated. This might help the students develop a deeper understanding of a reconciliatory pedagogy, which is informed by a disciplinary perspective. In addition, I examine some of the implications of these findings for the practice of history teaching in South Africa.

Finally, in chapter 8, I summarise the previous chapters to show the implications for my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy as well as make suggestions for future research.

Conclusion

There may be limitations to looking at the issue of reconciliation through the lens of history only. However, I believe that my research could make an important contribution towards an understanding of what reconciliation is and whether or not it is possible to develop and implement a reconciliatory pedagogy in a meaningful way in the everyday South African Social Sciences

lecture and classroom. There is a gap between the idea of reconciliation and its practice in South Africa, and I propose to explore how reconciliation could be facilitated in practice by using a reconciliatory pedagogy in the history lecture and classroom. It is too important to leave this process of reconciliation to chance, because children absorb the beliefs and attitudes of their parents and the broader community (both directly and indirectly), and these attitudes and beliefs can be perpetuated from generation to generation (Bloomfield, Barnes & Huyse, 2003, p. 13). While I am aware that reconciliation is not necessarily a shared project in present day South Africa⁹, my hope is that this research may contribute to a greater awareness of why an on-going project of reconciliation is still important for the broader society; in particular, how what happens in a history lecture or classroom could contribute in a small way towards this possibly unattainable, yet significant, goal of reconciliation in South Africa.

⁹ It is not my intention to link a conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy to a political party, but the idea of reconciliation has come in and out of fashion in South African politics. During the time of transition between apartheid and democracy, the idea of reconciliation as part of South Africa's transformation was introduced by African Nationalist Congress (ANC) politicians, and former president, Nelson Mandela, has become the symbol of reconciliation to many South Africans. Recently, the Democratic Alliance's Parliamentary leader, Lindiwe Mazibuko (2012) has claimed that Mandela's legacy of reconciliation needs to be revived. Mangosuthu Buthelezi (2012), the leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party's (IFP), claimed that there is a need for reconciliation between the ANC and the IFP on the basis of the depiction of the IFP in recent films, such as *The Bang Bang Club* and *Otelo Burning*. These films covered the violence between the ANC and IFP in KwaZulu-Natal and on the East Rand during the 1980s and early 1990s.

Chapter 2: Reconciliation and developing a reconciliatory pedagogy

Introduction

In what ways do the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)¹⁰ and the general literature on 'reconciliation' contribute to my understanding of how a reconciliatory pedagogy could be constructed? As part of the process of a narrative inquiry as suggested by Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 49), which focuses on experience in the social and personal domains, as well as encourages inquiry in different directions, I examine the following: some of the key themes concerning reconciliation that emerged out of the mandate for the TRC's establishment, parts of its process and final report, and then illustrate the similarities and differences in relation to themes found in the broader literature on reconciliation. By doing so, I intend to demonstrate how these themes from the literature and the experience of the TRC could inform my construction of a reconciliatory pedagogy. I also examine some of the successes and failures of the TRC, and suggest that a reconciliatory pedagogy might draw on some of the TRC's successes as well as address some of its shortcomings, albeit in a much smaller and different context. Furthermore, I discuss what kinds of meanings of reconciliation, based on the TRC and the relevant literature, could inform an

¹⁰ The focus of my thesis is not on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) itself, but a brief overview of the establishment of the TRC is helpful to understand the background to my project as the TRC "took shape within the politics of negotiated compromise between the outgoing exponents of white majority rule and the incoming champions of constitutional democracy" (Posel & Simpson, 2002, p. 2). According to Boraine (1999, p. 470), "[t]he idea of a truth commission came first from the ANC" as a way of dealing with the accusation of "human rights violations in some of its camps whilst in exile". In order to move forward politically and socially, Boraine continued, there needed to be a way of accounting for what had happened in the past, not only in the ANC camps, but also against the "overall human rights violations" (p. 470) that had occurred in South Africa over a long time.

understanding of a reconciliatory pedagogy. Finally, a related question will be posed towards the end of the chapter, that is, what is the TRC's impact on some members of a generation born towards the end of apartheid in the 1980s and who were schooled after 1994? This question will help to show how these particular members of a generation have been influenced indirectly by the TRC's conception of reconciliation, where they differ from it, and how their ideas relate to the broader literature on reconciliation. By doing the above, I intend to show how the above ideas could inform the construction of a reconciliatory pedagogy. Furthermore, I suggest reasons why there is a need for a reconciliatory pedagogy in South African education, which is informed by the concept of reconciliation as a process rather than one that is dependent on a particular content.

The concept of reconciliation in the literature

The concept of reconciliation is an important idea within the South African context and also internationally, especially in situations where there is either an on-going conflict, such as the Middle East, or the consequences of past conflicts continue to affect a society, such as Germany. Reconciliation, according to Cole (2007, p. 3) "is an imprecise term... [and] is also highly contested", because it has a variety of connotations with a multi-faceted relationship to other concepts, as is shown in the current literature on the topic. Some of the broad themes that have emerged during the course of my reading are the following: the relationship between reconciliation and the truth (Asmal, Asmal & Roberts, 1996; Cherry, 2000; Clark, 2012; Sachs, 2009; Walaza, 2003) where it is argued that it is impossible to have reconciliation without the truth, although there is an argument that some of the truths are partial. Yet, there is the need for previous supporters of apartheid to accept responsibility for the past and "to capture the complexities inherent in the TRC's truth-finding" (Posel & Simpson, 2002, p. 3). Another theme relates to reconciliation and justice (Asmal, Asmal & Roberts, 1996; Carens, 2000; Mamdani, 1999; Metz, 2010;

Robertson, 2000; Sachs, 2009; Verwoerd, 1999), where it is suggested that reconciliation is possible only on condition that a particular kind of justice is followed and achieved, and includes an examination of the different kinds of justice. A third theme relates to the link between reconciliation and apology (Govier & Verwoerd, 2004), where ideas such as what it means to live in an “age of apology” (Brooks, 1999) are explored, as well as the different kinds of apology (Murphy, 2011; Tavuchis, 1991). An idea that is often related to apology is the theme of healing (Henry, 2000, Posel, 2006). But the major emphasis in the literature is that of the relationship between reconciliation and forgiveness (Ackermann, 2003; Derrida, 2001; Griswold, 2007; Murphy & Hampton, 1988; Richardson, 2008; Schlink, 2010; Tutu, 1999). A fifth theme involves presentation of a framework of reconciliation in a systemic way which shows the links between truth, mercy, justice and peace (Lederach, 1997, 1999). A final theme links reconciliation to education (Cole, 2007; Crowley & Matthews, 2006; Horsthemke, 2004; Zemblas, Charalambous & Charalambous, 2011), which is a central idea in this thesis. Where relevant, I will elaborate on these themes in this chapter as part of the process of developing a reconciliatory pedagogy.

Themes on reconciliation from the TRC

Next, I examine some of the themes on reconciliation that emerged out of the TRC. Its task “... was to examine [gross] human rights abuses on all sides between 1960 and 1994, hear testimony from victims and perpetrators and, where there was full disclosure and political motivation was clearly present, grant perpetrators amnesty from prosecution or civil action. The objective was to encourage truth-telling” (Morris, 2004, p. 285). By doing so, the hope was that the TRC would assist with the healing of wounds inflicted in the past, albeit during a particular period, and facilitate reconciliation in the present and future. Some of the major themes that emerged during the process of the TRC related to truth, justice, amnesty, reparations, forgiveness, apology and guilt, although

education was relegated to a minor role. In this section, I will use these themes to explore the meaning of reconciliation both in the context of the TRC and in relation to the broader literature, in order to develop a working concept of reconciliation that informs my understanding of a reconciliatory pedagogy.

TRC and truth

There are a number of reconciliatory successes to the TRC's credit, where the truth emerged as a result of investigations by the TRC. An example (one of many) is the story of a father, Mr Nason Ndwandwe, who did not know what had happened to his daughter, and asked the TRC for assistance. Her story emerged when graves were exhumed on a farm used by the former security forces in Kwazulu-Natal. Ms Phila Portia Ndwandwe, an Umkhonto we'Sizwe commander, was abducted from Swaziland, then tortured and killed by the security forces. Her remains showed that she was naked when killed, except for a pair of panties made out of a blue plastic packet (TRC Report Vol. 5, 1998, p. 366; Krog, 2002, p. 128; Tutu, 1999, pp. 151-152). This story had a number of reconciliatory effects: the father discovered what had happened to his daughter, and found a grandson, as when Phila Ndwandwe's story became known publicly, her former partner came forward with their son. The reason he had not contacted her family was that he had not known her real name, because members of Umkhonto we'Sizwe used pseudonyms as a precaution (SAPA, 1997). After hearing her story as a result of the TRC, artist Judith Mason, made a dress out of blue plastic as a reconciliatory gesture for Phila Ndwandwe: this dress and two paintings now hang in the Constitutional Court's Art Gallery (Sachs, 2009, pp. vii-viii). When I first saw this dress and discovered the story behind what had inspired the creation of the paintings and dress, it played an important role in influencing my decision to do this thesis. This is a clear example which demonstrates the relationship between truth and reconciliation that the TRC hoped to facilitate: for the family, the truth about her life and death, and a grandfather and grandson who discovered one another. More broadly, her story inspired a wonderful work of art, and in my own case, the start of a

further academic journey. This example also shows the way reconciliation links the individual to society in a dialectical manner, where the journey is non-linear.

However, while one of the aims of the TRC was to expose the truth about gross human rights violations in order to facilitate reconciliation, not everyone who went to the TRC was able to find this kind of closure. For example, by the end of the TRC in 1998, fifty cases of people who had disappeared or had died were solved by exhumation of graves, but there were still two hundred cases outstanding (TRC Report Vol. 5, 1998, pp. 365–366). Thus there are a number of people who still do not know the truth about what happened to their loved ones.

Furthermore, in its report, the TRC interpreted “[t]he complexity” of the concept of truth as “four notions of truth” (TRC Report Vol.1, 1998, p. 110). The first, “factual or forensic truth”, was related to the TRC having “to make sure that findings [on an individual level] were based on accurate and factual information” (pg. 111); the second, “personal or narrative truth”, was based on the stories told by individual “victims and perpetrators...who had been previously silenced or voiceless” and “to recover parts of the national memory that had ... been officially ignored” (pp. 112-113); the third was defined by Judge Albie Sachs as “*social truth, the truth of experience that is established through interaction, discussion and debate*” (p. 113, emphasis added [in original]); and the fourth, “healing and restorative truth...places facts and what they mean within the context of human relationships...[so that] information...is [acknowledged] on the public, national record” (p. 114).

Posel (2002, p. 155) has argued that the TRC's conception of truth is a “very wobbly, poorly constructed conceptual grid”. An example of one of the criticisms she levelled at the TRC's conception of truth states that “the notion of 'healing truth' is defined in a way that undermines the very possibility of factual and forensic truth” (p. 155). To examine the validity of this criticism, I selected an illustration from the TRC report on exoneration concerning “[a] particularly

complex, healing process ... where someone has been falsely accused of being a spy or an informer” (TRC report Vol.5, 1998, p. 364). Ms Evelina Puleng Moloko gave testimony concerning her sister, Ms Maki Skosana, who died a terrible death through “necklacing” in Duduza. Ms Skosana was accused by certain members of the community of being a police informer, as they claimed she gave information that led to the death of youths who were blown up by “booby-trapped” hand grenades. At the TRC, her name was cleared on the basis of the sister's testimony that the surviving group of boys who were involved in the plan around the hand grenades denied that Ms Skosana had ever been at their meetings. Further, there was an account by Mr Mamasela, a former *askari*¹¹, who said that he had given the youths the modified hand grenades. While corroborative evidence was presented during the course of the sister's testimony, there was no sign of the commission investigating the claims further or presenting any form of factual or forensic truth. The reliability of Mr Mamasela as a witness was questioned in other examples where he had given evidence (Cherry, 2000, p. 139).

Perhaps the truth is elusive in cases like this, but as Posel argues, the presentation of the different kinds of truths “*restates* the original challenge of how to manage the tensions between competing versions of the past” (p. 155 [emphasis in original]). She argues that the TRC was not able to resolve this tension and ultimately takes “a conventionally positivist stance” (Posel, 2002, p. 156) in the report. I agree with Posel that the TRC's conception of truth is problematic, especially in the light of its aim to try and establish “lessons for the future” (TRC report Vol.1, 1998, p. 113). However, I do not dismiss the TRC's conception of truth entirely, as the idea of a “personal or narrative truth” found in oral testimony is closely linked to the conception of “truth” that applies to an oral history interview. The difficulty with the notion of “truth” found in “personal or narrative truth” is one of correspondence or lack of correspondence to something that happens in reality. An example is the case where a woman is raped, and the forensic evidence has been lost or destroyed. But the event

¹¹ An *askari* is the name given to former Umkhonto we'Sizwe cadres who were captured by the South African forces, and were “turned” and used against their former organisation.

happened in reality, despite the lack of forensic evidence, and this is an example not only of a valid personal truth, but of truth per se. In contrast, another woman may have experienced the threat of rape, but it did not happen in reality. This experience enters her imagination, so that she believes that the rape really happened, and on that basis, makes the claim that she was raped. In this case, there is also no forensic evidence. This is an example of a belief, often referred to as a “personal truth”. Further, there are events that happened in reality, such as a rape, but there may be different perceptions about how it happened, and this is another example of a “personal truth”. In the case of oral testimony and oral history, it is difficult to establish the difference between a “personal truth” and truth as such. It is for this reason that I will refer to “truth” in the context of “personal or narrative truth” to indicate that this is a problematic concept in the rest of this thesis. I will return to a discussion of this idea of “truth” in greater depth in chapter 7.

At most, what a truth commission achieves, according to a commentator, Michael Ignatieff (2001, p. 20), is that “[it] narrowed the range of impermissible lies that one can tell in public.” This suggests that a truth commission is not always able to establish the truth of what happened in the past, but at least the TRC succeeded in a number of cases, in establishing what almost certainly did not happen. The TRC claimed that it succeeded in establishing beyond doubt that “the practice of torture by state security forces was ... systematic and widespread” and “that the accounts of gross human rights violations in the ANC camps were [not] the consequence of state disinformation” (TRC report Vol. 1, 1998, p. 112). At the time of the amnesty hearings, there was public criticism of the TRC from conservative quarters that it was focusing too much on truth and not enough on reconciliation (McCarthy, 1999, p. 488). However, there were some people at the TRC who wanted to know the truth about what happened to their loved ones, but the perpetrators did not come forward to take responsibility for their deeds. For example, Ms J Msweli testified that she did not know who had killed her son Simon (TRC report Vol. 5, 1998, p. 378). It seems that the TRC has left a mixed legacy on truth: too much from a certain perspective and

too little from another, so that there are ambiguities concerning the truth. More importantly, its conception of the different kinds of truth that appears in the TRC's final report seems conceptually confused. Nevertheless, I think that “the tensions between competing versions of the past” (Posel, 2002, p. 155) is crucial for developing a conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy, as it involves students/learners directly in the dilemma of the basis on how we decide between competing claims to the truth.

TRC and justice

Other commentators have raised concerns about the TRC that go beyond truth, and which point towards issues of justice, that is, those who were excluded from the TRC as a result of its mandate. Bell (cited in Morris, 2004, p. 293) says that the TRC highlighted the involvement of individuals, whether as victims or perpetrators, but it largely left unexamined “the system that gave rise to some of the most horrific, racist social engineering of modern times.” Mamdani (1999, p. 36) develops this criticism of the TRC as he argues that gross human rights violations were defined narrowly by the TRC, where perpetrators were state agents, and their 20 000 victims were political activists. Instead, he suggests that the TRC should have defined its mandate more broadly to include in its investigations events that affected whole communities, that is, an estimated 3.5 million people who were subject to “forced removals”.

It must be said, in all fairness, that the Commission’s report shows an awareness of these criticisms, as it states that it “... walk[ed] a tightrope between too wide and too narrow an interpretation of gross violations of human rights” (TRC report Vol. 1, 1998, p. 60). However, it felt that due to time constraints (it operated formally from December 1995, tabled its Final Report in 1998, which was revised and finally accepted by the government in April 2003) and a lack of resources that it would not be able to cover a broad interpretation of its mandate. Another argument that the commission used was that it stated that the history of segregation policies and practices started with colonialism,

which would have made the period under investigation too big. Instead apartheid formed the background to the commission's investigation, although "... it can never be forgotten that the system itself was evil, inhumane and degrading for the many millions who became its second and third class citizens" (TRC report Vol.1, 1998, p. 62).

There are important implications for a reconciliatory pedagogy that flow from the shortcomings of the TRC, and my main concern is that these shortcomings inhibit long-term prospects for peace. For example, the TRC's effect was limited by time, and the narrow interpretation of its mandate. (Whether it was possible to broaden it or not is a moot point). It was also limited in the sense of the number of people it reached: 20 000 victims out of a potential 3.5 million. The latter number refers to an estimated number of people who were forcibly removed by apartheid policies, whereas many more experienced the effects of apartheid daily in other ways. This means that there are a huge number of people who could justifiably feel aggrieved and potentially claim that they have the right to take revenge for the injuries they suffered in the past. As Dullah Omar, the Minister of Justice in the first democratic cabinet, said on the issue of amnesty and state reparations:

We have a nation of victims, ...and we need to try and achieve maximum justice within the framework of reconciliation...if we achieve social justice, ... then those who today feel aggrieved that individual justice has not been done will at least be able to say that our society has achieved what the victims fought for during their lifetimes (TRC report Vol.1, 1998, p. 124).

At one level, the TRC appears to have contributed towards the establishment of a relatively stable democracy. Yet, at another level, it is open to the question of whether the "nation of victims" has accepted that "maximum justice within the framework of reconciliation" has been achieved. The TRC favoured restorative justice where perpetrators were offered immunity from prosecution, that is, a qualified amnesty, in return for testifying fully and frankly, so that restorative justice "seeks to repair the injustice and to restore the relationship between the

parties involved” (Ericson, 2001, p. 25). Supporters of the TRC claimed that the advantages of taking this route were that it saved a tedious process of criminal court cases, where the truth about events might not have emerged, nor would the court cases necessarily have led to convictions (Robertson, 2000, p. 273). Restorative justice is contrasted to retributive justice, where the latter is focused on prosecution and punishment (Robertson, 2000, pp. 272-273). According to supporters of retributive justice, apartheid should be regarded as “a crime against humanity ... because the very fact that a fellow human could conceive and commit them diminishes every member of the human race” (Robertson, 2000, p. 220). Thus the perpetrators of violence deserved to stand trial for their heinous deeds, and be punished, so that justice was seen to be done.

The idea that bringing apartheid perpetrators to court would lead to justice has not necessarily followed in South Africa. For example, Dr Wouter Basson, who was in charge of the South African Defence Force’s Project Coast, which developed chemical and biological agents for use against the opponents of the apartheid government, did not apply for amnesty from the TRC. Instead, he was prosecuted in a South African High Court, and has to date not been convicted, despite an enormous amount of corroborative evidence (Du Preez, 2005, p. 16).¹² In contrast, Eugene De Kock, who was in charge of the notorious Vlakplaas where “enemies of the state” were tortured and murdered, applied to the TRC for amnesty, and was granted it for a number of crimes. But he was also charged and convicted in a law court for murder, and is serving a double life sentence in jail, so for De Kock it has been a mixture of restorative and retributive justice. However, recent reports (Hamlyn, 2010) suggest that De Kock has applied for a presidential pardon, which, if correct, opens up the debate of whether or not justice was served either by following a restorative or a retributive route in South Africa.

¹² Dr Basson has faced “charges of unethical and unprofessional conduct before the Health Professions Council of SA (HPCSA)”. If the charges are proved, then his licence to practice as a cardiologist will be revoked (SAPA, 2012).

The foot soldiers of apartheid have taken the brunt of the blame for it, as none of the apartheid leaders who were alive at the time of the TRC, such as P. W. Botha or F. W. de Klerk, were ever tried in a court of law. However, the leaders of the National Party were called to testify in front of the TRC. Botha refused to appear, and despite a subpoena by the TRC, his appeal was upheld by the Appeal Court on a technicality (Ramphele, 2008, p. 58), and he never appeared in front of the TRC. In the final TRC's report, he was cited as accountable for "gross violations of human rights", such as the unlawful killing and torture of opponents to the government that occurred during his presidency (TRC report Vol. 5, 1998, pp. 223–225). De Klerk did testify in front of the TRC, where he blamed "mavericks" for the "aberrations" that occurred during apartheid, without accepting any personal responsibility for what had happened. He also refused to apply for amnesty in his capacity as a former state president ("Transcript of the National Party...", 1997). De Klerk took the TRC to court to block the publication of its final report and succeeded in having its findings against him blacked out in this publication ("De Klerk accusations cut from report", 1998). This showed that the apartheid leadership refused to be held accountable or to take responsibility for the government's actions when they were in charge. By acting in this way, the apartheid leaders could be seen as undermining the prospects of medium to long-term peace in South Africa, as there was a perception that the TRC lacked the power to hold them accountable and that they managed to evade justice.

The TRC did not succeed in persuading everyone to accept its version of restorative justice, and as a result there is an on-going, belated attempt to bring apartheid criminals to court. The National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) announced in 2006 that it would be pursuing cases against people who had not applied for amnesty and those who were denied amnesty by the TRC (Benton, 2006).

Nevertheless, there has been a shift in policy regarding justice for those refused amnesty by the TRC. For example, the Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation

(PEBCO) Three, namely, Sipho Hashe, Qaqawuli Godolozzi and Champion Galela were sent a false message to meet a representative of the British Embassy at the Port Elizabeth airport in 1985. Instead of finding the British representative, they were kidnapped and murdered by the following security policemen: Gideon Nieuwoudt, Johannes Martin van Zyl and Gerhardus Lotz. The security policemen applied for amnesty at the TRC for the killings in 1997, but their application was rejected on the basis of competing versions of how the three men had died. The security policemen's account of the truth differed significantly from that of black policemen and *askaris*, such as Mamasela, who were present when the PEBCO Three were killed. Even worse for the PEBCO Three families, at the hearings it was claimed that one of the three claimed to be a police informer, and was given a stay of execution. However, when this information was confirmed that he was a police informer, he was killed on the basis of knowing too much (Cherry, 2000, pp. 137-138). Thus the TRC was unable to unravel the truth of what happened to the PEBCO Three, yet stood firm by rejecting the amnesty application.

Nieuwoudt died in 2005, and the remains of the PEBCO Three were discovered in 2007 on a farm near Cradock (SAPA, 2007). In 2009, the case against the other two was withdrawn from court on the grounds of a pending amnesty plea. Galela's son, Lehlohonolo, is reported as saying that "We are happy with the work of the National Prosecuting Authority. It will bring closure in a way, but justice has not been done" (Masondo, 2009). Thus there is a controversial development to secure amnesty again for certain people, where decisions are made behind closed doors and not publicly. This is contrary to the spirit and intention of both retributive justice or restorative justice, although according to a judgement by the Constitutional Court "the victims of apartheid crimes had a right to be heard before the president made a decision on pardoning the perpetrator" (Smook, 2010). This has challenged the process of granting pardons without consulting survivors and victims.

TRC and amnesty and reparations

The issue of amnesty continues to linger in a controversial, unresolved manner in present day South Africa. It was the result of a political compromise at the end of negotiations for a democratic South Africa. Verwoerd (1999, p. 480), a senior researcher at the TRC, has argued that “amnesty is unjust ... [but] it is the price we, unfortunately, have to pay for peace”. The sight of some of the perpetrators supposedly telling the truth about atrocities at the TRC, when it was clear that they were going through the motions of “confessing” in an attempt to get amnesty, was sickening to some observers (Ackermann, 2003, p. 118). This may have been the price that the country paid for peace in the short term, but this process raises questions about the long-term prospects of peace: what about those who never applied for or were not granted amnesty? A further question concerns the military conscripts and the Umkhonto we'Sizwe cadres who may have committed atrocities. These violent acts were seen as not falling under the TRC's mandate of gross human rights violations, which means that the perpetrators have not had the opportunity to acknowledge or apologise for these events. This lack of accountability could be perceived as an escape from the consequences of their deeds. Another problem was that it was mostly policemen who came forward to testify at the TRC and only those in the military where joint operations were carried out by both the police and the military. But very few members of the South African Defence Force (SADF) testified or requested amnesty at the TRC (Tutu, 1999, pp. 188–189). Given the systematic and massive destruction of documents ordered by the apartheid state prior to the transfer to democracy, there is little documentary evidence left to support or counter any accusations (Harris, 2006, pp. 54-55). Again, this suggests that the TRC was unable (due to circumstances beyond its control) to hold the majority of ordinary members of the SADF accountable, which could also undermine the medium and long-term prospects of peace in this country.

According to the TRC report (Vol. 5, 1998, p. 170), “reparation is essential to counterbalance amnesty” and a reparation grant was proposed for individuals - either victims or families of victims - that was “based on a benchmark amount of R 21 700” (TRC report Vol. 5, 1998, p. 184). However, this grant would be paid

by the government, and not by individual perpetrators. This raised the question of whether it is possible or desirable to put a price on the loss of someone's life or payment for those who were tortured. It also meant that, again, certain individuals were perceived as having evaded the consequences of their actions.

Despite the recent announcement that the children of those people who were found by the TRC to be victims of gross human rights violation would be given financial compensation (SAPA, 2011), it is not simply about reparations at that level. The attempt at reparations for the children of “official” victims does not address the issue of the millions of people whose lives were blighted by apartheid, for example, by forced removals, which was not recognised as a gross human rights violation by the TRC. Yet, where there has been land restitution in order to compensate for apartheid forced removals, it has not always worked as expected. According to Advocate Ngcukaitobi¹³, who is involved with the legal side of land restitution, despite receiving land in the form of physical compensation, the people who received it still express feelings of resentment and a sense of injustice. It seemed to him that the community still needs something more, such as an apology. It is not simply a matter of addressing an injustice via land compensation that leads to reconciliation.

Another issue related to reparations was a court case in the USA where Khulumani Victim Support group has taken the international companies who co-operated with the apartheid state to court to try to win reparations for victims of apartheid from these companies (Colombant, 2010).¹⁴ There are victims of apartheid who the TRC identified, and they may feel that the reparations offered are not commensurate with the suffering and losses that they endured. But there are many others who were not even recognised as victims by the TRC,

¹³ He spoke at a conference on “Living the past”, University of the Witwatersrand, on 11 June 2011.

¹⁴ US General Motors has agreed to pay a small settlement of R10 000.00 to a group of 25 South Africans as a result of this court action. “It is claimed that the corporations produced parts of vehicles that were used by the apartheid police to carry out assassinations of activists and brutal raids” (Ephraim, 2012).

who may feel justifiably aggrieved about the lack of recognition and reparations. This situation could also undermine medium and long-term prospects of peace.

It is clear that the related issues of justice, amnesty and reparations are on-going bones of contention in present day South Africa. I suggest that these issues show the need for a reconciliatory pedagogy in South African education: it could assist with highlighting the reasons why the issues of justice, amnesty and reparations are so important; how they continue to affect the way we perceive the past, what happens in the present and what might happen in the future regarding peace. A reconciliatory pedagogy could also offer learners/students a way of engaging in the complexities of these issues by challenging the neat labels of perpetrators, survivors, victims, beneficiaries, bystanders, where they find that someone who may be considered a victim in one account may also act as a perpetrator in another.

TRC and forgiveness

Restorative justice was linked to forgiveness at the TRC, especially by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who was head of the Anglican Church and chaired the TRC (Griswold, 2007, pp. 158–159). According to Tutu, restorative justice was based on the idea of *ubuntu*, which loosely translated (amongst other maxims) means “a person is a person through other people” (Tutu, 1999, p. 35). This idea was linked to the post-amble of the constitution which calls for the “need for understanding, but not for vengeance, a need for reparation but not retaliation, a need for ubuntu but not for victimisation” (quoted in Mbeki, 2010, p. 2) in addressing the legacy of the past. However, Posel (2006, pp. 88–89) argues that “[t]he idea of *ubuntu* has been widely commodified, even caricatured; but the constitution, together with the TRC, presents it as a foundational philosophical intervention¹⁵ that informs subsequent thinking about

¹⁵ Metz (2007, p. 340) has added philosophical weight to the notion of *ubuntu* through his attempt to develop a normative theory of right action. Richardson (2008) critiques the way *ubuntu* was used at the TRC. Vitsha (2001) adds further insights into *ubuntu* in his attempt to reconcile Western and African philosophy.

the pursuit of national unity and 'reconciliation'." While I agree with Posel that the notion of *ubuntu* has been trivialised in certain cases, such as using it as the name of a security response company, nonetheless, the ideas underlying *ubuntu* played an important role in the TRC. Tutu used this idea to argue that apartheid damaged its supporters as much as its victims and that is why he suggested that "[t]o forgive is not just to be altruistic. It is the best form of self-interest. What dehumanises you, inexorably dehumanises me" (1999, p. 35). Metz (2010, p. 260) further develops the conception of "*ubuntu* as a moral theory, [where] reconciliation should be seen as a substantial *step on the path* [italics in the original] toward realising a society that fully respects communal relationships, ones of identity and solidarity." I think that the concept of *ubuntu* is useful in developing a conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy, with its emphasis on the importance of "foster[ing] relationships in which people think of themselves as common members of a group and act for one another's sake" (Metz, 2010, p. 259). This clearly shows the interrelationship between the individual and society, and there is also a humane view of humanity within this conception of *ubuntu*, with its emphasis on "what affects one person, affects us all". This suggests that it is not simply one person's problem to resolve issues by herself; instead it is in all of our interests to address these issues from the past together, if we hope to move to a shared, peaceful future.

While forgiveness was never part of the mandate of the TRC, Tutu encouraged the survivors to forgive the perpetrators and said that the act of forgiveness "means abandoning your right to pay back the perpetrator in his own coin, but it is a loss which liberates the victim. At the Commission we heard people speak of a sense of relief after forgiving" (Tutu, 1999, p. 219). Furthermore, Tutu also argued that "[t]rue forgiveness deals with the past, all of the past, to make the future possible" (p. 226). However, at the end of the TRC's final report on "stages or signposts on the road to reconciliation" it stated that "[r]econciliation does not necessarily involve forgiveness" (TRC report Vol.5, 1998, p. 435). There is, nonetheless, an ambivalence towards forgiveness shown in this

conclusion to the report, as during an earlier point a link was made between truth and forgiveness. The report stated that “[t]he full disclosure of truth and an understanding of why violations took place encourage forgiveness” (TRC report Vol. 5, 1998, p. 435). This suggests an on-going tension concerning the role of forgiveness between the mandate for the TRC, how this was interpreted by key figures such as Tutu, and the final report.

Yet, forgiveness is seen as an important step in the reconciliatory process according to the broader literature on reconciliation. While what happened in the past cannot be changed, as captured in Hannah Arendt's phrase, “the predicament of irreversibility” (cited in Griswold, 2007, p. xv), the narrative of forgiveness offers an opportunity for both parties to engage with one another in a dialogue, which is “a crucial part of forging a future that is not trapped in a closed loop determined by the past” (Griswold, 2007, p. 184).

Griswold makes a further contribution to the concept of forgiveness, which he aims to secularise. This idea might be important in the South African context, because there are followers of many different religions in the country, besides Christianity, as well as those who are atheists. A criticism by some commentators was that Tutu's emphasis on forgiveness was seen as an inappropriate imposition of Christian values (Griswold, 2007, p. 181; Richardson, 2008, p. 80) on the TRC, and this meant that the TRC was seen as being biased in favour of a particular religion. Instead of being able to draw people together in an inclusive way, forgiveness, defined narrowly as a Christian concept, is potentially divisive. This view suggested that the TRC did not recognise other religions and perspectives, including some people who might reject outright any appeal to forgiveness based on any religion. By secularising the concept of forgiveness as Griswold suggests, it may mean that the idea of forgiveness has the potential to be more inclusive, and thus could contribute more to a reconciliatory process in South Africa.

Another perspective on forgiveness is offered by Derrida who suggests that there is a paradox at the heart of the heritage of forgiveness. On the one hand, there is "...forgiveness [that] forgives only the unforgivable" (Derrida, 2001, p. 32) and on the other hand, there is the view that "...forgiveness can only be considered *on the condition* that it be asked" (Derrida, 2001, p. 34). This is paradoxical because it suggests that forgiveness can be granted unconditionally and freely by the victim or family to the perpetrator, whether the latter requested forgiveness or not; while the other side of this paradox expects the perpetrator to express remorse through an apology and to request forgiveness from the victim or family, who could either accept or reject the request.

Events at the TRC in South Africa demonstrate both aspects of the paradox of the heritage of forgiveness. An example of "the forgiveness of the unforgivable" is the family of Amy Biehl, an aid worker from the United States, who was killed in 1993 by four men in Guguletu, while assisting with preparations for the 1994 elections. Not only did the Biehl parents support the killers' amnesty request at the TRC in 1997, but Amy's mother, Linda Biehl, also attended the wedding of one of her daughter's killers, Ntobeko Peni, and danced with him (in November 2005). 'Biehl said a continuation of the "spirit" of the TRC in the country had allowed her to attend "the wedding of a man involved with Amy's death."' Further, 'in 2003 she told the Boston Globe newspaper: "Everyone says: '[But] you just forgave them.' Yes, forgiveness is one part of it, but the real challenge is reconciliation... and [that] is about work"' (Philp, 2005, p. 13).

While Derrida (2001, p. 55) says he either could or could not understand someone who has been faced with "radical evil" and either chooses to forgive or not, he has "...nothing to say. This zone of experience remains inaccessible, and I must respect its secret. What remains to be done, then, politically, juridically, also remains difficult." But Linda Biehl's response to her daughter's killers shows that she acted out the "forgiveness of the unforgivable" by supporting amnesty for them. She also developed the notion of reconciliation further by suggesting that it is not something that happens automatically at the

moment of “forgiving the unforgivable”, but is something that takes “work” and is continuing. By implication, this suggests the need for a reconciliatory pedagogy as part of the constant “work” that needs to be done in South Africa on how we engage one another in the on-going quest for reconciliation.

In contrast, an example at the TRC of the refusal to forgive, because the “condition” of remorse was not met, is shown by Marius Schoon, whose wife and six year old daughter were killed by a letter bomb sent by Craig Williamson (an apartheid policeman). Schoon said the following:

There can be no indemnity, no forgiveness, without remorse. We see no signs of Craig being sorry. I mean, are we going to have a situation where people can qualify for indemnity just by saying, as if they were reeling off a grocery list, ‘I killed this one and poisoned that one and beat the shit out of the third one’. It seems untenable to me, morally and philosophically (Robertson, 2000, p. 273).

It seems that Schoon's understandable refusal to forgive without an apology or remorse shown by Craig Williamson, and Linda Biehl's remarkable generosity in forgiving her daughter's killers show the two sides of the forgiveness coin. But there is a further question concerning forgiveness that underlies these examples: is it possible for third parties to forgive on behalf of a victim who is dead? Most commentators in the literature on forgiveness reject this by arguing that it is only up to the victim to decide whether or not to forgive the person who has harmed them. An example is Schlink (2010, p. 70), who argues that forgiveness is possible only between the victim and the perpetrator, and that no third party can offer forgiveness. This means that if the victims are dead, then no forgiveness is possible. However, Griswold (2007, pp. 117-119) argues in favour of what he terms “third party forgiveness”, albeit with qualifications. He suggests that third party forgiveness should be considered an imperfect form of forgiveness. It is acceptable as long as the third party has the *standing* (italics in the original, p. 119) to forgive in terms of “ties of care for the victim ... [and] reasonably detailed knowledge not only of the offender's wrong-doing and contrition, but especially of the victim” (p. 119). The TRC started the process of

facilitating forgiveness, which is by no means complete, and it provided very general guidelines on how the broader society could take this process further in the TRC's conclusion to its report (TRC report Vol. 5, 1998, p. 435). Perhaps it was too much to expect of a commission that had a limited life span: while the TRC was able to facilitate third party forgiveness in certain cases, and I would argue that imperfect forgiveness is better than no forgiveness at all, the question of how individuals in the present and future generations deal with this issue of forgiveness is extremely difficult, and there are no easy answers. A reconciliatory pedagogy could aim to make a contribution by trying to address these issues in the following way: by placing students/learners in the dilemma raised by the question of who can forgive and on whose behalf.

TRC and apology

The TRC tried to facilitate interpersonal forgiveness and also what Griswold (2007, p. 188) calls political apology, which he argues is both similar and different to interpersonal forgiveness, albeit in a political context: "Like political apology, ... forgiveness does not reiterate the past, but instead promises renewal without forgetfulness, excuse, or condonation of past wrongs" (p. 211). Govier and Verwoerd (2004, p. 242) describe this kind of apology as *public moral apologies for serious wrongdoing* [emphasis in the original], which is an attempt to resolve an issue by placing an apology on public record (p. 247). The importance of an apology, according to Tavuchis (1991, p. 13), is that "[a]n apology thus speaks to an act that cannot be undone but that cannot go unnoticed without compromising the current and future relationship of the parties ... and the wider web in which the participants are enmeshed." Thus the task of an apology is to restore membership and to stabilise "precarious" relationships (Tavuchis, 1991, p. 20).

In South Africa, there was an attempt to make an apology for apartheid at the TRC by De Klerk, in his capacity as leader of the National Party. In his testimony, De Klerk tendered an apology, which was a general apology to all

South Africans who suffered under apartheid (De Klerk, reprinted in Brooks 1999, p. 505). The irony is that De Klerk apologised for events in the past, such as forced removals, which is precisely what Mamdani, a critic of the TRC, said that the TRC ought to have focused on. But De Klerk took no responsibility for the systematic torture and killing of opponents committed under his or past apartheid governments that had been revealed by the TRC (Govier & Verwoerd, 2004, pp. 251–252). His apology was further undermined by “no clear commitment to practical amends” and his role as public spokesmen for his party was debatable, as the statements in his apology were “publicly criticised” by P. W. Botha, a former State President. Thus De Klerk's apology was a failure, as it did not succeed in its attempt to restore relations with fellow South Africans, and the ANC rejected it “with contempt” (Govier & Verwoerd, 2004, pp. 251-253). I suggest that the failure of this apology continues to affect the majority of the white community who supported the National Party, both in its relations with other communities, and its continuing effects on future generations.

This failure to offer an acceptable apology by De Klerk was echoed by the lack of participation of the majority of the white community in the process of the TRC. I am not suggesting that the white community is a homogeneous entity, but according to Ackermann (2003, p. 7), irrespective of the side your family took during the “struggle”, all white people were beneficiaries of apartheid. This statement needs to be qualified, as not all white South Africans were beneficiaries; for example, some “poor whites” did not benefit from the system. There were also some black people who were beneficiaries, for example, chiefs in the homelands who collaborated with apartheid authorities. Despite the majority of the white community being beneficiaries of the system of apartheid, there were costs involved. Socrates argued that it is “better to be the victim than the perpetrator of an injustice” (Brooks, 1999, p. 4). The pertinence of this statement is demonstrated by the on-going effects of apartheid on the white community. For example, the psychological cost of upholding apartheid by military conscripts was enormous and even today continues to affect individuals, their families and by extension many members within the white

community. This comment obviously does not intend to underestimate the enormous damage that apartheid has had both psychologically and materially on the majority of black people. But this question of culpability, responsibility and guilt will have a profound impact at a range of levels for generations to come, not only on white South Africans (and others who benefited from the apartheid system) but on the reconciliation process itself.

Mamdani (1998, p. 40) argued that the TRC wasted an educational opportunity to show the beneficiaries of apartheid what it was all about through its choice to interpret its mandate narrowly, but I argue that the educational value of what the TRC did should not be underestimated. While there was a widespread reaction of denial by many in the white community which ranged from comments of “we didn't know”, and that “there were a few bad apples”, I think that Mamdani underestimates the shock, trauma and guilt that arose during TRC's hearings and after the report was published, and its continuing effects on the broader white community. Yet, there is also unfinished work of acknowledgement, the recognition of injustices, as well as the taking responsibility for what happened under apartheid by the majority of the white community and other beneficiaries. As Metz (2010, p. 264) has argued, we need to “[n]ote some implications of this *ubuntu*-based argument for the disclosure of political crimes. For one, it underwrites the widespread call for a TRC that did not address merely the worst human rights violations that individuals suffered. Truly sharing a way of life would have also required spreading the truth about collective wrongs done to black people, such as inferior education, exploitive mining and forced relocations.” This is where a reconciliatory pedagogy could assist students/learners to grapple with some of these issues. I am aware that this is potentially an extremely painful process, and there is a strong desire to forget the past and to “move on”, which is often expressed by some members of the white community. But the absence of an on-going process of dealing with the past by this section of the community “explains the common claim that reconciliation has not been achieved in South Africa (Metz, 2010, p. 264)”. A

reconciliatory pedagogy cannot address these issues in isolation from the broader South African society.

TRC and guilt

As a member of the second generation who was born after the Third Reich and Holocaust in Germany, Schlink (2010, p. 17) has argued that collective guilt spreads through society like a web where “perpetrators, inciters, and accessories to those crimes are guilty ... also those who did not offer any resistance or opposition in spite of being in a position to do so are guilty ... guilt also reaches those who do not actively separate themselves from the perpetrators and participants through dissociation, repudiation, or judgement.” But has the same happened in South Africa?

There are differences and similarities between what happened in post war Germany and democratic South Africa, where the Nuremberg trials of key German leaders were seen as examples of “victor's justice” (Tutu, 1999, p. 24). In contrast, National Party leaders were not held accountable in the form of court trials for “crimes against humanity”, yet the TRC publicly named and shamed “ordinary” perpetrators in its hearings and in its final report. This only covered those, who in some cases, reluctantly came forward to the commission to apply for amnesty for “gross human rights violations”. It did not extend to the rest of society who helped to sustain apartheid in other ways, most visibly through military service, less visibly by the benefits that the system of apartheid offered to most white people in their everyday lives, for example, more money being spent on a white child's education.

It is quite manifestly a complex situation. There were those who did critique the system and were activists against apartheid, such as individuals like Reverend Beyers Naude from within the Afrikaner establishment and organisations such as the End Conscription Campaign. The latter encouraged white conscripts not to carry rifles or become conscientious objectors, despite heavy penalties for

these actions from the apartheid government. The white generation that grew up at the tail end of apartheid and at the beginning of democracy could deny responsibility for the actions of their parents and grandparents. But, according to Schlink (2010, p. 18), the issue of guilt waited for the children of the perpetrators and accessories (and to a slightly lesser degree the children of bystanders) in post war Germany. This raises an issue beyond that of amnesty in South Africa: what about those who live among us, but who were never held accountable for their deeds? What about post-1994 South African society's complicity through acceptance of people who may have committed lesser crimes or were bystanders during apartheid? Schlink (2010, p. 15) made this point about post war Germany that "one becomes entangled in another's guilt if one maintains or establishes solidarity with that person". He argued further that many people were complicit in upholding Nazism, not just those who were considered to be perpetrators, but also those members of German society who did not dissociate themselves from those who were guilty even after 1945. In addition, Schlink (2010) continued that it was impossible for German society to dissociate successfully from those who were guilty, because there were so many people involved (I will return to this argument in chapter 5). But a key difference is that in South Africa perpetrators, survivors, victims, beneficiaries and bystanders are present and the question this raises is, how do we live together after what happened before 1994? Whereas in Germany after 1945 the issue was, how do perpetrators, beneficiaries and bystanders live with one another, in a place where survivors and victims are absent from their society? In part, the TRC offered a way forward, but it is only a relatively short time since the establishment of a democratic South Africa, and the issue of guilt and how it might affect future generations is something that may still unfold in South Africa. Again, this suggests the need for an on-going process of reconciliation, which a reconciliatory pedagogy could contribute to, albeit on a small scale.

TRC and education

The TRC did not focus solely on individuals, but also looked at institutional complicity with apartheid. Many institutions, such as the health and the legal

fraternity, were required to present submissions at the TRC to give an account of their past activities, but education was a key institution that was not included (TRC report Vol.1, 1998, p. 58; Horsthemke, 2004, pp. 585-586). This does not mean that the TRC report did not consider the impact of education on South Africa, as there were references to the educational sector in the report. An example was the negative effects on black children of Bantu Education, which aimed to produce manual labourers (TRC report Vol.1, 1998, p. 61). Another example was the statement that schools and universities educated white children for war (TRC Report Vol.1, 1998, p. 131). However, these examples form a minor part of the report, and do not explain why the TRC failed to call the education sector to account.

The reason I believe that this was a severe omission is that education (among other sectors) played a very powerful role of social control in the apartheid system and it is a truism that this legacy continues to affect what happens in educational sites in a democratic South Africa. While there was a major change in the curriculum introduced after 1994, there are also a number of continuities with the past. By visiting some schools in the urban areas, it is easy to point to a change in the population demographics, but it is less easy to answer the question about whether or not the schools' culture has changed. A look at some schools in the rural areas and in some townships in terms of population demographics, resources and school culture show that very little has changed from apartheid times.

Neville Alexander (cited in Morris, 2004, p. 294) states that "the contribution of the TRC to 'reconciliation'... is a very limited one... [and that] the main impetus for 'reconciliation' will come from the economic and educational sectors". It is beyond the scope of this thesis to consider the role of the economic sector in reconciliation; instead, the question is how education could provide an impetus for reconciliation, especially given the lack of coming to terms with its own

past.¹⁶ It is not possible to deal with the TRC's omission of the education sector retrospectively. But a reconciliatory pedagogy could take forward some of the positive aspects of the TRC, by creating a space for dialogue about oral histories with the aim of fostering reconciliation. In turn, this raises another question: what conception of reconciliation informs a reconciliatory pedagogy?

Reconciliation and a reconciliatory pedagogy

There are a variety of conceptions of reconciliation from the TRC and the broader literature. The TRC defined its “framework of reconciliation” as “both a goal and as a process” (TRC report Vol.1, 1998, p. 106). This is very similar to a definition proposed by Bloomfield et al (2003, p. 12), which sees reconciliation as both a process and a goal, where “a society moves from a divided past to a shared future”. However, a difference between the two is one of emphasis – for the TRC the goal comes first, while the process is second, while for Bloomfield and his co-editors, it appears that the process comes before the goal, and the latter makes more sense to me.

It is vital to take students/learners through a process, which allows them to acknowledge their own prejudices, and to understand the reasons why they hold the views that they do, and hopefully to come out with a changed understanding. There are also different reasons for the lack of reconciliation among students, and the students/learners need a safe space to explore these reasons and their emotions both individually, within a peer group and with the broader community, which a classroom setting and interviews with an older generation could provide.

¹⁶ The link between reconciliation and education is a concern in other countries too that have experienced violent pasts. See Magill, Smith & Hamber (2007) for an overview of the situation in Bosnia, Herzegovina and Northern Ireland, as well as Paulson (2011) for an overview of more countries, which includes a chapter on transformation (or the lack of it) from the perspective of language in a South African higher education setting (Johnson, 2011, pp. 103-123).

Lederach's model of reconciliation

Another key idea about the reconciliation process which has shaped my understanding of a reconciliatory pedagogy has been proposed by Lederach (1999, p. 65), who is an international practitioner and reflector on conflict resolution and peace building.¹⁷ He described the assumptions about the process of reconciliation that some national figures, such as in South Africa, have made with regard to a “broad framework of ... what is needed to move from conflict to peace after enormous violence and injustice” (Lederach, 1999, p. 65). Lederach argues that the assumptions concerning reconciliation have followed a linear path in terms of time from past to present to future. The past would be dealt with first by the establishment of a truth commission which aimed to find out what had happened and allow for the “public and social acknowledgement of the wrongs” (Lederach, 1999, p. 66) of the past, while the provision of amnesty aimed “to move beyond the cycle of hatred, recrimination and vengeance” (Lederach, 1999, p. 68) and was based on reintroducing members to civil society so that people could live with one another “in the *present* and move together as a society into the *future* [italics in the original]” (Lederach, 1999, p. 70).

Lederach (1999, p. 79) critiques this view of reconciliation with its monochromatic idea (one thing at a time) and argues in favour of a polychronic (multiple things at a time) approach to reconciliation which favours a “systemic view” of reconciliation. Here people and their relations with one another are seen within a dynamic social context: truth, justice, mercy, and peace are paradoxes, yet joined to one another (Lederach, 1997, pp. 30-31). He describes truth, justice, mercy and peace as “social *energies* [italics in the original]” (Lederach, 1999, p. 79), which appear to be contradictory, but are impossible to isolate from one another, so that reconciliation becomes a focus which centres the energy of the four as shown in the following diagram:

¹⁷ I acknowledge and thank Professor Pam Christie for her suggestion that I read Lederach's work.

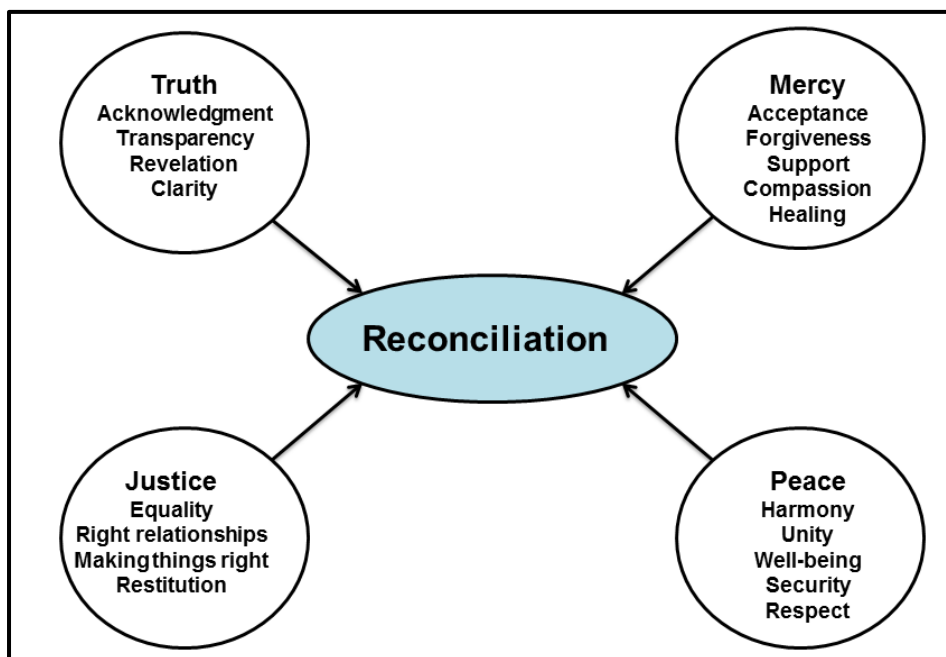


Figure 1: *The Place Called Reconciliation* (Lederach, 1997, p. 30)

This representation of reconciliation provides a view which shows the inter-relationship among the key concepts of truth, mercy, justice and peace as dynamic, interdependent and evolving: a change in one involves a change in the other. A polychronic approach to reconciliation involves simultaneous and many activities that cover the past (truth), the present (justice and mercy) and the future (peace and hope), so that they all impact on one another, and they will help to achieve “[t]he primary goal [which] is reconciliation, understood as relationship and restoration, the healing of personal and social fabrics” (Lederach, 1999, p. 138). Furthermore, Lederach (1999, pp. 79–80) develops his conception of reconciliation by using a comparison between reconciliation and a dance on a stage. This example uses a stage as a place where all four social energies are present; even if one of them takes the foreground, the others are still present (and he adds in a fifth member, Hope, to the cast).

What are the implications of Lederach's ideas about reconciliation for my understanding of a reconciliatory pedagogy? First, reconciliation is not something vague: abstract ideas, such as truth, justice, mercy, hope and peace become social energies which are embodied as dancers. I think that this idea is

important, as he shows the paradoxical connections in a graphic manner among concepts that are generally agreed to inform reconciliation, but are often presented in isolation from one another. The importance for a reconciliatory pedagogy is that this understanding of reconciliation adds to Bloomfield and Hegel's conceptions of the process of reconciliation and underpins the basis on which a reconciliatory pedagogy could be constructed. Abstract conceptions, such as truth, justice, mercy, peace and hope, all ideas which are central to reconciliation, are presented by Lederach in a tangible form. Yet, the dynamic interrelationships among them are made explicit, and the complexity of these interrelationships is captured through the notion of paradox. These are some of the core concepts which students/learners will have to grapple with as part of the process of a reconciliatory pedagogy that uses his model.

Lederach's metaphor of the dance of reconciliation assumes a proscenium arch, with an audience seated in front of the stage. Again, this is a powerful image, but I would like to develop this further for my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy. I suggest that if one shifts from a theatre with a proscenium arch to a theatre in the round, then it allows for different perspectives of the dance on stage, and a better ability for the audience to see the dancers in relation to one another. Another dimension to this image is that the audience and dancers are dynamically linked: there can be no dance performance without either the audience or the dancers, which suggests a view of reconciliation which is participatory and inclusive, and this view is central to my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy. The idea of dancers on a stage is also not simply a useful metaphor for a reconciliatory pedagogy: I suggest that the use of dramatisations literally plays an important role in a reconciliatory pedagogy, and I will expand on this idea in chapter 4.

Lederach's use of a polychronic approach to reconciliation also informs my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy, albeit at a practical level. There are many activities that form part of my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy: such as an oral history interview with a member of the older generation, the

writing up of this interview as a story, then the sharing of this story with a group of peers and finally a dramatisation of all the stories as a cooperative task which is presented to the class. While the process of the activities that I have briefly described may appear as a series of discrete, linear ones, they are designed to encourage dialogue and reflection at many levels during the course of the assignment, and in this way they form part of a polychronic approach to a reconciliatory pedagogy (I will develop these ideas in greater depth in subsequent chapters).

In another important way, a reconciliatory pedagogy is part of a polychronic approach to reconciliation, as it is one of the many activities that could be used to facilitate reconciliation. While a reconciliatory pedagogy obviously falls into a smaller, educational sphere, when viewed against the broader society, I do not intend to suggest that a reconciliatory pedagogy is therefore insignificant. Instead, I argue that a reconciliatory pedagogy could play an important role as part of a greater whole that makes up the reconciliation project in the broader society. Further, a reconciliatory pedagogy understood as a process, encourages a dynamic interaction between individuals and society.

Lederach's criticism of a particular conception of reconciliation that follows a linear model does seem to apply to South Africa's TRC. At best, the TRC started South Africa on "the long road" to reconciliation, but it is an on-going journey, and the TRC never claimed that it was able "to reconcile the nation" (TRC report Vol.5, 1998, p. 350). The TRC was conceived of as part of a political negotiation and it was based on compromise, which meant that it became a top-down initiative. While it did involve many people in the process, it was limited both in terms of its mandate and its effects. This is not to denigrate its many achievements, as there were clearly those who found out what had happened to their loved ones. Even though it was not part of the TRC's original mandate, there were those who offered forgiveness and those who were forgiven, and there is no doubt that this process contributed to greater peace in South Africa. However, it is a mixed achievement, as shown in this chapter.

There were also those who did not find out what had happened to their loved ones, and those who refused to forgive. Another issue is whether or not justice was served: restorative justice, where those who told the truth in return for amnesty, was seen as cheap justice by many people. As Lederach (1999, p. 70) observed, when reconciliation is approached by a commission as in South Africa, “[j]ustice as accountability is left out of the operational picture”. The continual concerns around amnesty and reparations in South Africa appear to confirm this observation. At best, the impact of the TRC appears to be one of ambiguity: there are partial truths, partial forgiveness, partial justice and partial peace, but the dance of reconciliation is not over. There is no doubt that the TRC helped to stabilise a fragile democracy and contributed towards peace in the short term. But it will only be shown by future events whether or not this peace will last beyond the short term.

Students/teachers’ conception of reconciliation

When I asked the students/teachers whom I interviewed for this thesis about the impact of the TRC on their lives, the majority said that it had none, as they were too young when it had happened and that it had simply passed them by (*Aronstam, Drew, Dyer, North, Ngwenya, Rabinowitz, Sofianos and Page*¹⁸). Yet, the effects of the TRC were dismissed by *Dyer* as leaving a sour taste, although he did acknowledge that it was important to show that people were harmed and crimes were committed, and that we “messed up” and the issue is “how do we fix it”. This suggests that the TRC had some impact on his conception of the role of justice and reparations. *North’s* recollections of the TRC involved images of whites on one side, and black mothers/sisters/wives crying on the other. She has only recently realised that the past was more complex than these images suggested, given that there were black informers who worked for the apartheid government too. *North’s* assessment of the long-

18 In order to distinguish between students and experts in the field, I have chosen to put the students' surnames in italics. All the surnames are pseudonyms, and the interviews of students and teachers were conducted between 2008 – 2011. See Appendix A for interviews with former students and Appendix B for interviews with practising teachers.

term effects of the TRC was that it was negligible, because she felt that the effects of apartheid continue, and the TRC offered no “miracle cure”. She qualified her views, by acknowledging that the process led to “closure” for a few. In contrast, *Sofianos* felt that the TRC had made a positive contribution as “we’ve gone forward rather than backwards [as a country].”

Some of the students/teachers' assessments of the TRC was dismissive. Yet, when I asked them about their ideas about reconciliation, I found that their conceptions appeared to be deeply influenced by some of the notions that came out of the TRC (although it is possible that there are other influences, such as religion, at work). The language they used to describe their own understanding of reconciliation echoes motifs present during the process of the TRC, such as the importance of truth telling, forgiveness and not forgetting. For *Aronstam*, reconciliation is about “[n]egotiating and trying to look at the past and find all the problems and then reconcile...find your differences, and then find a path [on] how to move forward.” While for *Baloi*, reconciliation is “trying to, not erase what happened, but to ask for forgiveness.” *Mati* added that reconciliation means “accepting that something happened and you go past the whole thing and you forgive. Sometimes it's hard to forget something, but you must be at peace with whatever happened.” *North* continued to develop this theme of forgiveness, when she said that reconciliation is about “forgiving, but not forgetting, but not in the sense in that you ... feel ... cut up about it, or want to exact some kind of revenge or repayment.”

Ngwenya raised questions about forgiveness by saying that “some people will just say forgiveness, but in order for forgiveness to be there we must start from somewhere. So it's a long process, where first and foremost a lot of people still have unanswered questions, so that's where reconciliation starts. Getting our views out into the open, some people are still hurt ... you need to know how I feel, I need to know how you feel. So that's reconciliation for me.” *Ngwenya's* contribution emphasised the importance of finding out what happened in the past, dialogue about that past and the acknowledgment of feelings, which also

could be seen as a possible influence of the TRC, which emphasised these aspects. *Aronstam* also emphasised the importance of dealing with feelings, as she felt that reconciliation is “difficult, because people are different ... [and they] bring their own emotional elephants and baggage on their backs.” *Green* added to this and reiterated the importance of “remembering what happened, but in a way it's about moving on for your own benefit and ... making it part of you. And not carrying that ... anger, because ... it's not really going to help you ... I don't believe that you need to force people to love one another ... But I don't have to be your best friend, I just need to make peace.” However, she also revealed an ambivalence towards the past and its effects on the present when she asked the following heartfelt question: “Why is it that we as a people have to suffer for what the people of the past did?” *North* developed this idea further when she argued strongly against the children being held accountable for the past: “It's our history as South Africans but our children shouldn't be punished for ... something that they didn't have control over or weren't even part of”. The TRC could be seen as trying to address the issue of responsibility, the truth about what happened in the past and to facilitate forgiveness so that the issue of guilt would not continue into the future. Despite the best intentions of the TRC, the lack of participation by the majority of the white community means that guilt has the potential to affect the generations who were born at the end of apartheid and beyond.

Some of the students/teachers contributed a new dimension to the theme of the differences between the generations concerning reconciliation. *Baloi* felt that “It's not first person ... it's now second person type of reconciliation, ... so it's a different type of reconciliation.” He suggested that there are generational differences in experiences between learners in the classroom, their parents and their grandparents. *Edge's* observation about learners in the classroom emphasised a key difference between past generations and those at school, when she said that watching learners in her classroom reveals that they do not appear to “see colour ... I don't think they would really understand what apartheid was and what it means to not be able to go somewhere because they

haven't experienced that". While *Green* made a similar observation to *Edge* about learners in the classroom, she added the rider, "but what would happen if the parents met for dinner?" Again, this shows the difference between the experiences of the different generations. *Edge* also emphasised the importance of forgetting, interpreted "not [as] forgetting what happened, but forgetting ... your hurts and to just move on ... so that the next generation can grow up without that hurt being instilled in them ... because then reconciliation will never happen." Whether this is possible or not given the trauma experienced by many South Africans who grew up under apartheid is a moot point.

Another theme that came through strongly from the students/teachers was the lack of reconciliation in present day South Africa, and how alienated they felt, which showed that for the most part they are in Hegel's words not "*at home in the social world*". For *Mills*, when we look at apartheid, we see the need for reconciliation: "We're talking about if you look at someone first-hand, then you start to see the need for reconciliation: if you look at the macro scale perhaps you don't. So there's always that interplay." Furthermore, his response to the question of whether or not South Africa is a reconciled society was: "It's not reconciled. It's horrible." *Green* also agreed that South Africa is not reconciled as she felt that people say that they have moved on, but they have not in their hearts. She described "false reconciliation" where we see political leaders shaking hands – it could be black and white, or Arab and Israeli, but she dismissed this as not proper reconciliation "[b]ecause we all know deep in their hearts they don't feel the same way as their handshake". *Rabinowitz* compared reconciliation in South Africa with the Holocaust, but felt that it was "too late to do something...what's the point of punishing someone when it's over and done with and we're supposed to have lived in harmony and together, and unity?" Further, she rejected the idea that South Africa was a reconciled country, because "all it [the TRC] did was just put a nametag on someone, to say you did this, you did that. You know the blame game. I think, after...you know, we talk about how nicely Mandela came out, forgiving, and what would happen if he didn't, if he came out angry? But I think all the TRC did was just, as I say, place

blame, place blame, place blame, let it go, and let's move on." Ngwenya also suggested that South Africa is not a reconciled place, "because normal people are still harbouring their hatred." As an example, she referred to her boyfriend, who still experiences name calling in the workplace, despite awareness by everyone at his work that these words were unacceptable. Her comment was: "We're pretending to go on as if everything's okay. But behind back doors I don't think it is." These quotations show the overwhelming need for continual reconciliatory efforts in South Africa.

Other contributions by the students/teachers included the idea that reconciliation has a moral dimension which is shown by the importance of reconciling the past with the future and "to repair the damage and to also ... not allow it to happen again." (Page). Drew's definition of reconciliation was based on relationships "where people ... come back together ... to remove the barriers between people". This definition could be related to the idea of fostering of relationships, which is embodied in *ubuntu*.

Images of reconciliation

Overall, a recurring image of reconciliation from the TRC, Bloomfield, Lederach, Metz and some of the students/teachers used to describe reconciliation is that of the "journey": from the TRC "the long road" (TRC report Vol. 5, 1998, p. 350); Bloomfield et al (2003, p. 12), which sees reconciliation as both a process and a goal, where "a society moves from a divided past to a shared future"; Lederach's (1999, p. 23) view that reconciliation involves a journey *toward* and *through* conflict with many twists and turns along the way; Metz's image, (2010, p. 261) where "reconciliation is a stepping stone toward a society of genuine community"; and the students/teachers state that "we are on the road to reconciliation, despite the crime and stereotypes" (Cummings). According to Baloi, present day learners are "living the dream": as through this generation,

South Africa will become reconciled even if there are “speed humps” along the way for the previous generation.

However, reconciliation is a complex process: it is not a linear journey from one point to another. There are also no guarantees that reconciliation will succeed in the long term, because as Schlink (2010, p. 85) observed, a past injury could resurface in the present, for example, and might cause reconciliation to “fail”. An example that helps to illustrate this point, albeit in a different context, is Kosovo. The conflict in that area appeared to be resolved after the Second World War, and there were a high number of inter-ethnic marriages. But the violence that erupted at the end of the twentieth century, when the former Yugoslavia became fragmented, tore families and communities apart. This showed that the issues had gone underground for a time and then re-emerged with greater force than ever. According to Bar-On (2002, p. 111), “[t]his example demonstrates that a conflict can be suppressed on the manifest level, but if it is not worked through psychosocially, it may still be present in some hidden form. It is this hidden aspect that psychosocial working through strategies have to address before one can expect successful peacebuilding.” It appears that relationships are central to reconciliation, and the image I have chosen to use to capture all the above aspects of reconciliation is the “reweaving of relationships”. The reason for this choice is as follows: reweaving requires active, intentional participation on the part of those involved in the process, it involves different threads which help to create a fabric at right angles in the form of the warp and the weft; it implies interdependence, as one thread alone will be unable to make the fabric; it also makes use of creativity and imagination in the dynamic creation of a fabric, finally it incorporates both the individual and the broader society in an interdependent way.

Conclusion: the reweaving of relationships in a reconciliatory pedagogy

Everyday events in South Africa show that the reconciliation project needs to continue, and I argue that a reconciliatory pedagogy makes a small, but important contribution to this process. Reconciliation is not necessarily a rational process, where one simply shows where a society went wrong in the past, and then comes up with sensible solutions to solve these problems. It goes beyond that: the reconciliation process needs to be a flexible, non-dimensional approach to people and events, which operates at a number of levels, as suggested by Lederach. I argue that a reconciliatory pedagogy, which has as its underpinning a dynamic vision of reconciliation, based on the paradoxical dance of truth, mercy, justice, peace and hope could make a small contribution to the larger project of reconciliation in South Africa. Another important idea in my understanding of a reconciliatory pedagogy is that it is a non-linear journey from a “divided past to a shared future” (Bloomfield et al, 2003). At the core of my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy is an aim related to restorative justice and *ubuntu*, which is to restore and foster relationships within the South African community (Lederach, 1999; Metz, 2010; Tutu, 1999), so that we can move towards the goal of social justice. The image I have chosen as a way to capture the above meanings is the “reweaving of relationships”, and I will use this phrase in the rest of the thesis. Thus a reconciliatory pedagogy becomes part of a “bottom-up” approach to reconciliation in South Africa, which interweaves the individual and society in a dynamic manner as part of a polychronic process of the broader project of reconciliation. In my next chapter, I will turn to a more detailed consideration of what form a reconciliatory pedagogy could take in practice in the context of a history lecture room.

Chapter 3: The breaking of silence -oral history and a reconciliatory pedagogy

Introduction

An assignment, based on oral history, made me wonder whether this could be a way of constructing a reconciliatory pedagogy in practice.¹⁹ The students, who did the assignment in 2006 as part of a compulsory Social Sciences methodology course, were intermediate and senior phase²⁰ Bachelor of Education students at the University of the Witwatersrand. The assignment required the students to interview a person who lived in South Africa prior to and after the 1994 democratic elections. They then had to use the results of the interview to write a narrative which they could use in a Grade 6 history lesson that related to the development of democracy in South Africa. The next part of the process was for the students to work in cooperative groups to present aspects of their stories as a joint product. Finally, they had to write a reflective essay on what they had experienced doing the oral history interviews, writing the narratives and working in cooperative groups. When this limited intervention in the form of an assignment showed a significant, positive shift in some of the students' attitudes in class towards one another and myself, I realised that I

¹⁹ Cole (2007) has linked history education and reconciliation through the revision of textbooks and curricula as a "secondary phase ... [after] processes such as truth and historical commissions" (p. 15). There is no doubt that the revision of history textbooks has played a role in South Africa (I co-authored two textbooks after 1994). However, judging by many of the education students I have lectured, new textbooks have not necessarily led to reconciliation. This may be due to how the textbooks are used in the classroom (and whether they even reached the schools). I suggest that an alternative approach is needed, and the use of oral history and a cooperative learning process may provide an alternative way to foster reconciliation.

²⁰ This phase covers Grades 4 – 6 in primary schools and Grades 7 – 9 of junior high school.

needed to delve deeper into what this could mean for the construction of a “reconciliatory pedagogy”.²¹

In this chapter, I give a brief overview of the origins of oral history in the discipline as well as in the South African context. Next, I explore the use of oral history in history methodology lecture rooms and history classrooms both in the literature and according to my own experience. In order to understand the shift in the students’ attitudes in greater depth, I have decided to give a brief outline of their oral histories and reflective essays, and then to focus my research on the process that the students underwent by interviewing a sample of the 2006 students. By doing so, I hoped to gain a greater understanding as to who the students chose to interview, how they prepared for the interviews, what they felt about the interviews before and after they conducted them, and what the background was to the narratives that they wrote. As part of this process, I use “narrative inquiry” as suggested by Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 49), which allows my inquiry to focus on the students’ experiences and to travel in different “directions”, such as “*inward, outward, backward, forward* and [is] *situated within [a] place*”, that is the history methodology lecture room in relation to the broader society. Further, I wanted to explore some of the challenges that the conducting of oral history interviews raises for a reconciliatory pedagogy: whether this process helps to heal relationships or causes further trauma; what roles amnesia, forgiveness and guilt play between and also among the generations; and what these ideas mean for the possibilities and limitations to the constructing of a reconciliatory pedagogy. In the next section, I begin with an overview of the origins of oral history.

²¹ The first opportunity to do so was by working on a presentation based on this assignment. I presented it at the “Narrative, Memory and Forgiveness” conference at the University of Cape Town in November 2006. I have subsequently published a paper on this topic (Nussey, 2009). This chapter draws on and expands on ideas from both the presentation and the paper.

Overview of oral history

My research into the origins of oral history showed that it was present from the start of the concept of history: the pioneering social historian in Britain, Paul Thompson, showed how oral history formed the basis of the earliest historical accounts, until it was sidelined by the development of academic history in the nineteenth century (Thomson, 2007, p. 51). A resurgence of interest in oral history occurred in the 1960s in Britain, where social historians became committed to “history from below”, as a way of addressing the undocumented “lived experience of working class, women’s or black history” (Thomson, 2007, p. 52). In turn, this trend influenced some South African historians in the 1970s to use oral history. According to Lekgoathi (2007), the establishment of the History Workshop in 1977 at the University of the Witwatersrand led to the so-called radical scholars in the social sciences using oral history as a way of researching “...the lives and activities of ordinary people within black and white South African communities” (p. 1). There were a number of other oral history projects that emerged during the 1980s at other universities and institutions, such as the University of Cape Town and the South African Institute of Race Relations Oral History Project (Denis & Ntsimane, 2008, pp. 8–9). This focus on oral history was also in response to political events such as growing “worker militancy” in the early 1970s (Kros & Ulrich, 2008, p. 86), the Soweto Uprising in 1976, and was a way of challenging the dominance of an apartheid interpretation of history.

However, there have been shifts and changes in the South African field of oral history over the years (Field, 2008a, pp. 1-2, Denis & Ntsimane, 2008, pp. 9 - 13), and the argument has been advanced that the scholars who use oral history in South Africa are not necessarily a homogeneous group (Bickford-Smith, Field & Glaser, 2001, p. 14). This focus on oral history in the field of historical scholarship has only recently affected the history curriculum of schools in South Africa, possibly as a result of the interest generated by the role of oral testimony at the TRC, and certainly by the inclusion of oral history in the

Social Sciences Learning Area (SSLA) in the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS), which is part of a new curriculum for schools that was introduced after 1994.²² For example, the knowledge focus of history for the intermediate and senior phases in the RNCS (2002, pp. 38–40, 62) encourages the use of oral history. Its use is not limited to areas such as the history of a local area or district (Grade 4), but it can be used at any level that relates to the theme of democracy in South Africa (Grades 5 and 6), apartheid in South Africa and issues of our time, such as dealing with crimes against humanity, apartheid and the TRC (Grade 9).

New South African resources and reasons for using oral history in the history methodology classroom

There are a number of relatively new resources on or about oral history for South African teachers, which could assist students/teachers in the process of using oral history: the History Workshop's *Oral History Guide for Educators* (2004), the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation's *Pass Laws in the Western Cape* (2004), *Forced Removals: a case study on Constantia* (2005) and *Folklore Stories from the Northern Cape* (2006) and the South African History Archive's oral history and memorial project with high schools to investigate the history of four towns in South Africa ("Talking our histories together", 2007, p. 12), and Kros and Ulrich's (2008) account of oral history and working with teachers in Mpumalanga.²³

While these oral history resources for Social Sciences teachers are useful, I suggest that they are not sufficient in themselves. Student teachers need to go through a process of working with oral history from the inside, which means that they should do their own oral history interviews and write up their research, and

²² For a discussion on how the South African history curriculum was shaped before and after 1994, see Weldon's (2009) doctoral thesis.

²³ There are many useful guides on how to do oral history from other countries, for example, Ritchie (2003) and Lanman & Wendling (2006), but I have chosen not to develop this aspect of the literature, as it is not part of the main focus of this chapter or my research.

as a result hopefully see and understand the value of doing oral history. From my own experience of being a student at the University of the Witwatersrand during the 1980s, I never went through a process which highlighted this approach in class, and when I was a history teacher simply used oral history as one approach among many. If student teachers are not exposed to a “hands on” experience of working with oral history, then I contend that the teaching of oral history in the classroom is done either in a superficial manner or not at all. This is not to claim that there is something inherently difficult about using oral history in the classroom, although it is more complex than appears at first glance. But there is the oft cited truism that, despite being exposed to many ideas in pre-service and in-service programmes, “...many teachers fall into a repetitive pattern of teaching in the conventional way in which they were taught when they were at school” (Hoban, 2002, p. 1). I suggest that the majority of student teachers were not exposed to teachers who used oral history in their classrooms, and this means that this particular approach was not modelled for them. In addition, I have discovered through discussions in class that many student teachers express an antipathy towards teaching history, as a result of the way they themselves were taught at school. Methods varied from the teacher reading aloud from a textbook, to using “talk and chalk” to explain or tell the stories from the textbook and to the use of worksheets. This last approach, in its worst form, replaces a textbook with a series of worksheets, and leads to what I call “death by worksheet” in the history classroom.

This is another reason for using oral history with student teachers, as it can be used as an attempt to break the patterns of a conventional way of teaching and learning about history. The “doing” of oral history positions them as historians in the sense that they begin to understand the way that the interviews with older people become dialogues about memory and that multiple interpretations are possible.²⁴ This situation is not unique to South Africa. McCardle and Edwards

²⁴ There is another way that memory enters the history classroom and that is through the teacher’s own memories, which are used in many classrooms. See Dryden-Peterson & Siebörger (2006) for further details.

(2006), who are teacher educators in the United States of America, describe a similar scenario where students found social studies “dull and uninspiring”, because “most [students] had not been engaged in authentic experiences to gather data from primary sources and to write historical accounts” (p. 232). By using oral history, McCardle and Edwards found that it provided an experience of learning how “to be effective educators by being engaged in learning and teaching experiences originating in effective practices” (p. 232). There are many oral history projects that are used at universities, for example, Lee and Nasstrom (1998) and at schools in the United States and England, for example, Huerta and Flemmer (2000) in the former country and Redfern (1996) in the latter. But only a few, such as McCardle and Edwards (2006) and Johnson (2007), refer specifically to the use of oral history with student teachers in the Social Sciences. Johnson linked two oral histories to performance by the students as a means of showing historical interpretation. I suggest that by modelling a teaching and learning process for the student teachers, there is a greater chance that the student teachers will apply what they have learnt through this oral history assignment in their future classrooms. There appears to be a gap in the literature: authors such as McCardle and Edwards (2006) suggest that it would be important to do further investigations as to whether or not the student teachers do change their teaching practice, as a result of doing oral history, when they become practising history teachers. To date, I have not come across any research that has followed up on this issue. In chapter 5 of this thesis, I will report on whether or not practising teachers are able to break the pattern of conventional history teaching, possibly as a result of their exposure to this oral history assignment, as well as their own use of oral history in the classroom.

Oral history as a pedagogical tool

In the assignment that I did with the Social Sciences students in 2006, I did not use oral history in a “traditional” manner, which requires that the interview or

interviews be conducted, then transcribed and housed in an archive. Instead, I used oral history as a pedagogical tool. In referring to pedagogy, I follow Shulman (2004, p. 237), who suggests that the act of pedagogical reasoning involves a process of transformation between what is understood by the teacher and how a resource is prepared and adapted for the purpose of teaching and learning. While the students had to do an interview, I did not require them to record or transcribe it, for two reasons: the first had to do with time constraints – this assignment was one of many required for the course; and the second was that my purpose was not to create an oral history archive, but to see whether the students could create a text based on the interview which they could use as a teaching resource in a Social Sciences classroom. The students had to understand what their interviewees told them in relation to their own understanding of apartheid, take notes during the interview, and select key ideas from the interview which related to life before and after the 1994 democratic election. The next step was to transform it into a narrative²⁵ written from the perspective of the person that they had interviewed, so that it became a resource that they could use with a Grade 6 class.

Research sample

In 2006, I requested my class of Social Sciences methodology students to assist me with my research based on their assignments for a conference presentation at the end of that year. At the time, fifteen students out of a class of sixty three consented to do so. But in 2008, when I requested a follow-up interview, only eight students agreed to do so for the purpose of this thesis. A possible reason for this decrease may have been due to the bad timing of my request, as this occurred towards the end of their fourth year of studying. Many

²⁵ Elliot (2005, p. 4) identifies “three key features of narratives. First, they are *chronological*... second, that they are *meaningful*, and third, that they are inherently *social* in that they are produced for a specific audience.” Further, she suggests that Aristotle’s conception of narrative as “a story with a beginning, a middle, and an end” (p. 7) is the simplest and oldest definition. These definitions are appropriate to the task that was set, and I use narrative and story interchangeably in the course of this thesis.

of the students were going to leave the university to pursue their teaching profession, and simply wanted to get on with their careers. Another reason was that an interview takes time, and is a more onerous commitment than simply handing over previously written work. While there may be other reasons, the result is that I have a very small sample of former students' work and interviews with them that I have used in this thesis, and cannot make grand generalisations based on their interviews or their assignments. However, an advantage is that I was able to do in-depth individual interviews with the students who agreed to be interviewed. This sample of students is divided by gender, as there are six female students and two male students, which is broadly representative of the student body. They are also divided by "race".²⁶ Four students are from what would formerly have been considered historically disadvantaged backgrounds, while four are from historically advantaged backgrounds. The latter division is not representative of the student body, because the majority of the students at the university are from historically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Choice of interviewees

For the assignment, the students selected their own interviewees, as I felt that there was a greater chance that they would find it more interesting and meaningful in relation to their own lives. My expectation was that the students would interview parents or other close family members, which the majority did, as it provided an opportunity for the students to engage at a deep level with members of their families about their past (*Cummings, Edge, Mati, North* and *Ngwena*).²⁷ Those who chose to interview members of their family requested their parents' assistance, but there were different responses to the request for an interview. *North* found that her parents were happy to help, and both were willing to be interviewed. In contrast, *Mati* found that she had to beg for an

²⁶ While I accept that "race" is a social construct, I suggest that the effect of apartheid racial classification continues to affect identity and relationships in post 1994 South Africa.

²⁷ The oral history assignment was done in 2006, and the interviews with the former students were done at the end of 2008 and during 2009.

interview, and had to cry before her mother relented, and agreed to the interview. A reason for the latter's experience could be that *Mati's* mother was resistant to the idea of talking about the family's past, whereas *North's* parents were willing participants, as they were comfortable to talk about their respective pasts.

However, my preconception, that the students were likely to choose members of their families, was proved incorrect. I discovered that three of the students had chosen to interview someone who they knew and who was part of their everyday lives or a member of an extended community. For example, *Green* interviewed her "nail lady" from a beauty salon, *Mills* interviewed a fellow anarchist and *Baloi* interviewed the cleaner at the block of flats where he lived. In the case of *Green*, the reason for her choice was that she felt that her white family would have little to contribute to an oral history about apartheid, and wanted to find out from someone else who had direct experience of the negative effects of apartheid. In the case of *Mills* and *Baloi*, they both arrived in South Africa as senior primary school children with their families, and they did not have family who had experienced apartheid over an extended period.

I discovered during the interviews that both *Green* and *Mills* came from families who were directly affected by anti-semitism in Europe: from the pogroms in Lithuania to the Holocaust in Germany. They described their families as having been victims of extreme prejudice and discrimination, yet in the context of South Africa, neither family had directly confronted the apartheid government. As a survivor of Auschwitz and Doctor Mengele's medical experiments on twins, Eva Mozes Kor explained at a conference on *Memory, Narrative and Forgiveness in Cape Town*²⁸ that just because she was a victim of prejudice did not mean that she herself lacked prejudice against others. She used a humorous example of her own prejudice which was against young boys who wear low slung, revealing pants. I think that she used humour to make a serious point: being a victim of prejudice does not necessarily turn one into a protector or fighter against

²⁸ The conference was held at the University of Cape Town, from 22–25 November 2006.

prejudice in a different context. In the case of *Mills's* family, they used South Africa as a refuge in the early 1990s, and were willing to support a government which was going “to protect our interest”, so that their support was due to “culture identity and feeling threatened rather than a dislike of another race” (*Mills*). Yet, *Mills* himself is a firm supporter of anarchism, which by definition is the antithesis of support for any government. As his family had not lived through apartheid for any length of time, he sought out someone he knew to interview, based primarily on shared political beliefs, and of secondary importance, this person was also a survivor and victim of apartheid.

Green's family has lived in South Africa for much longer than *Mills's* family. According to *Green*, her family also did not do much to challenge the apartheid government, yet she described her family as “liberal”, as they have “[n]ever really seen colour as an issue”. Her family chose to bring up and educate the daughter of a domestic worker, who was the same age as *Green*, which could be seen as an indirect challenge to apartheid policies. She consciously chose to interview someone outside of her family, as she said that she “wanted to hear it [about apartheid] from a person of a different race ... [because] that's the real people who we need to ask” (*Green*). In *Green's* case, it was clear that her decision was due to a belief that her family would not have much to offer in an interview, and a sense that it was almost an obligation to interview someone who had had direct experience of apartheid as a victim.

In the case of *Baloi*, he said that he felt intimidated by the task of interviewing someone, as he did not have any family members who had lived here during the apartheid years. In addition, he stated that “apartheid is over and people have moved on, but you still get people that still carry scars ... [they would] remember what happened ... it's going back into memory land and some had very bad memories” (*Baloi*). He points to a real difficulty with interviewing people who lived during apartheid, because the act of interviewing someone has the potential to retrigger trauma in an interviewee (an issue that I will return

to later in this chapter). *Baloi* decided to ask Mr Ndumiso Peteni,²⁹ the cleaner at the block of flats where he lived, for an interview, and Mr Peteni agreed to be interviewed. However, the difficulty that *Baloi* experienced in finding someone to interview points to the danger of assuming that the students would have a ready pool of people to interview, which is something that a teacher using oral history for the purpose of a reconciliatory pedagogy would need to take into consideration before setting a task like this.

Three of the interviewees turned out to be bystanders as they were people who lived in South Africa during the apartheid years, but played no active role in opposing apartheid policies. Instead, they benefited both directly and indirectly from these policies. No one was identified as a perpetrator, that is, as someone who actively supported apartheid through the killing and torturing of the so-called enemies of apartheid. There were five people who could be considered as survivors and victims, as they suffered discrimination directly as a result of apartheid policies. Yet, the labels of “survivor”, “bystander”, “perpetrator” and “victim” are rather too neat, and sometimes obscure more than they illuminate the complexities of South African history. For example, someone in the above list who could be labelled as a bystander did challenge the apartheid government in a personal way. She befriended another worker, and in public they met at a Wimpy bar in downtown Johannesburg, which was known as one of the few places where people of different races could meet and eat together (*Edge*). In contrast, *Mati's* family could be labelled as survivors or victims of the apartheid system due to the collective experiences under apartheid, but her grandfather was a member of the apartheid police. Some members of the apartheid police were notorious for their actions in the police force, and I suggest that the label of perpetrator might also be appropriate for some policemen. There were also bystanders across the racial divide, as *North* described her mother as a bystander, despite being of “mixed” heritage and at the receiving end of discriminatory policies under apartheid. There is also a tendency to associate the labels of bystander, perpetrator and victim with

²⁹ This name is a pseudonym.

different races in South Africa, and the examples alluded to above challenge these easy associations and assumptions.

Preparation and students' reaction to the oral history assignment

An important part of the preparation for conducting an interview in oral history is to research the written records and accounts to familiarise oneself with the times and history of the person, which I suggested that the students do prior to their oral history interviews. Yet, I discovered that none of them had done so. In my interviews with the students, many of them said that they felt that they had an extensive prior knowledge about apartheid both from their exposure to the topic at school and at university (*Baloi, Cummings, Green & Mills*). It seems that they felt that they had nothing new to learn about apartheid, and that “this topic ... is always being taught ... it was quite redundant” (*Baloi*); hence their angry reaction of “Not again!” to the assignment (*Baloi, Cummings, Mills & North*).

In the interviews, I discovered that there was another dimension to this reaction, as *Cummings* said that she was scared that this “controversial” topic would lead to a fight between the black and white students in class. Even during her school days apartheid was not a topic which led to a “normal discussion, because it ends up with people's feelings getting hurt”. At a personal level, *Cummings* own fear was that “nobody's going to hear my feelings about it, I can't really speak, because I wasn't [there] ... I have a history of how it affected other people but directly I never had anything where ... I had to not sit with a black person. Because I've grown up, since I was in grade one, I went to school with black people, so it never was an issue until we had to study it, and then you get enforced [sic] with this is what you must be thinking because you're white, which isn't really the case”. However, despite her fears, *Cummings* found that “I was a bit uneasy about how to do it but then ... once we got into it, there wasn't such a controversial thing, it was just more how people had experienced [apartheid].” *Edge* acknowledged that it was quite a shock when the assignment was announced, as apartheid is a “sensitive topic ... [which] people don't like to talk about”, and she shared *Cummings's* view that it “brings up emotions in

people, and then to deal with that in the classroom situation ... was a difficult thing to do.” The reaction shown by *Cummings* and *Edge* might be due to a fear that the purpose of the assignment was to cast blame or it could be the result of bad experiences in the past when this topic was raised. This reaction showed the estrangement they felt, however, both these students acknowledged at the end of their interviews that the assignment was worthwhile. Despite their initial misgivings, they were able to participate and felt included in the process.

Results of the oral history interviews

By doing the oral history interviews, the students discovered the value of oral history. As *Green* said, “it was the first experience that actually brought apartheid to life for me” once she discovered the personal impact of apartheid on the person she interviewed: “this is a human ... and this person's humanity was stripped away from them.” The power of the oral history part of this assignment is that the students engaged directly with the past by asking questions of the person they interviewed, and discovered this person’s personal “truth” about apartheid. This was an experience that they found very different to reading about apartheid via books, or hearing about it from a television documentary (*Baloi*). The interview became a dialogue between a student and an older person, which provided a platform for generations who have had very different experiences to engage with one another. It was quite a breakthrough for some of the students to understand the impact of apartheid at a personal level: they discovered how it affected someone they thought they knew well, and then discovered that there were aspects to that person that they never knew about before. As the well-known oral historian Portelli (1998, p. 67) wrote, “oral historical sources are narrative sources...which tell us less about events than about their meaning.” While the students were mostly familiar with the major events and the grand narrative of apartheid, they developed a deeper understanding of what it meant for ordinary people they knew who had lived at the time. For example, *North* wrote in her reflective essay: “By interviewing

someone who lived through the height of apartheid, I gained a different insight into life under apartheid to the one that I had gotten [sic] so used to hearing. At school, as a history student, the stories that were most commonly heard were the ones about the Steve Bikos and the Hector Petersons [sic] of the time. Seldom did we hear about the lives of the ordinary man or woman on the street and by interviewing my own mother, I heard her story and it was actually good to hear how she experienced apartheid.” By interviewing their parents, some of the students discovered a direct resonance of apartheid within their own lives that they had not previously known about, and one that did not depend on the well-known names in the grand narrative of apartheid. *Ngwenya* supported *North’s* view, and extended it by commenting on the importance of using a bottom-up approach to oral history by going “straight...to the normal people”, which helps by “cutting right to the heart of it...then you can relate to the Mandelas [and get] the bigger picture, but let’s start with you and me and my mom and my grandmother, [and] what happened then? ... we’re looking outside our gate, and we have people [who] experienced it [apartheid] right in our homes.” The process of the oral history interviews helped the reweaving of relationships between some members of the different generations and often started a dialogue between them about this difficult past.

Patterns of the narratives

The students heard the narratives told by the people they interviewed. According to McEwan and Egan (1995, p. vii), a narrative “takes shape ... as a rhythm that ultimately springs from patterns implicit in human life and action.” The patterns that emerged in the students’ narratives contained what I was expecting to find, for example, the injustices concerning the pass laws and how they limited access to towns for people who lived in the rural areas (*Mati & Ngwenya*), permits, the differences in education, housing and separate facilities for the different races during apartheid (*Baloi, Cummings, Edge, Green, Mati, Mills, North & Ngwenya*). A specific example that stood out from the other narratives was the humiliating effects of so-called petty apartheid on ordinary

people as shown in *Baloi's* narrative. He retold the story of Mr Peteni's anger as a 12-year-old boy, who was instructed to strip in front of his parents, so that policemen could determine whether or not he was at an age where he should be carrying the dreaded "dompas" or pass. However, Mr Peteni also showed his resilience as an adult where he "bought a pass from a corrupt white official in return for selling illegal [sic] liquor in townships on his behalf."

The unexpected aspect that I found was that, irrespective of the urban or rural settings, the effects of the Group Areas Act were described as "normal" for children growing up under apartheid. It seemed that many of the people interviewed saw growing up and living with people of the same racial group as perfectly acceptable, and this formed part of the narrative or personal "truths" within the stories (*Baloi, Edge & North*).

The release of Nelson Mandela from prison in 1990 started a shift towards hope in three cases (*Green, Ngwenya & North*), despite the recognition of the injustice of his incarceration for so many years. It seemed that these interviewees felt this was the first inkling of freedom and "a chance of a better life" for black people. However, there were contrasts in emotions from different perspectives: from the fear felt during apartheid to the hope and joy of voting in the first democratic elections (*Baloi, Green & North*). The narrative by *Mati* captured some of the humour (with hindsight) that surrounded the elections in 1994 at Queenstown, Eastern Cape "where there were rumours that were going around that people were going to be killed if they voted for a particular party", and the palpable relief of the people standing in the queue "every time someone got out of the voting station alive because they were thinking of the rumours". Mr Peteni described the reaction to the ANC's victory as "[w]e celebrated like there was no tomorrow". But *Cummings'* father acknowledged the fear that some white people felt that there would be a civil war in the years leading up to 1994, and described the end of apartheid as a "miracle".

There was also some disagreement among the interviewees as to whether or not there were positive changes, such as access to resources and unemployment, from before apartheid to a democratic South Africa. In many cases, this showed a lack of hope and the lack of social justice for many (*Baloi, Cummings, Edge, Green, Mati, Mills, North & Ngwenya*). Overall, there was an acknowledgement that life had improved for the interviewees and their families with the advent of democracy and there was freedom from the “chains of apartheid” (*Baloi & Ngwenya*), and that there were human rights for all (*Green & Ngwenya*). Class differences also emerged, as *Baloi’s* interviewee wryly observed that “rich” black people benefit most from the changes, unlike those who still feel the effects of apartheid like himself, as he could not get a well-paid job due to his lack of schooling. *Cummings’s* father also acknowledged that he had not personally experienced much “pain and suffering” financially, although he felt that most people were benefitting economically after the 1994 elections. These examples showed the difficulties of moving from a divided past to a shared future.

Other examples in these narratives show aspects of Lederach’s social energies, such as the interviewees who told their own personal or narrative “truth” about the injustices of the past under apartheid, and how their fears have turned to hope after 1994. But there was a mixed response as to whether their hopes for the future are materialising in the present. *Cummings’s* father was the only person to mention his hope for reconciliation (or mercy according to Lederach’s model) and no interviewee mentioned that peace had been achieved as a result of the 1994 elections. It seems that in some cases the opposites of the social energies of Lederach’s model of reconciliation are found in these narratives, and I will discuss the implications of this in greater detail in chapter 6.

The students had to use the information from the oral histories, select and transform it into a narrative that could be used in a Grade 6 history classroom as the pedagogical part of this assignment, following Shulman's (2004) model of pedagogical reasoning and action. Some of the students selected aspects

which did not hide the humiliating parts about apartheid, for example, the boy who was forced to strip in front of his parents by policemen. Others chose to downplay what they had found out in the oral history interviews by selecting what they felt would be appropriate for Grade 6 learners, for example, stories that highlighted the separation of the races at an everyday level at schools and where they lived. Yet, *Ngwenya* revealed in her interview that she chose to exclude some of the more upsetting parts, such as the young boy who was hit by a gas canister, while observing a demonstration from a distance in Soweto.

Background to the narratives

The students revealed more background to their narratives in my interviews with them, which revealed the story behind the stories. For example, the person who retold the amusing story about the 1994 elections in a rural town in the Eastern Cape, stated in her interview that her grandfather was a much feared policeman during the apartheid era, which is excluded from her narrative. Some members of the community still remember him as a “violent” and “rude policeman” and held her responsible for his actions, which was something she vehemently rejected: “And I always tell them, but I’m not him. So you can’t compare me to him ... he was in the police force, the circumstances forced him to be like that” (*Mati*). Furthermore, she argued that the family was doubly victimised: first, they did not receive any preferential treatment as a result of her grandfather's position; and second, they were subject to the same discriminatory laws as everyone else. This family history may also explain the resistance that *Mati* encountered from her mother when she requested an interview.

Feelings during the interviews

Other interviews with the students revealed the contradictory feelings of the interviewee: the mother’s “scary feeling” concerning her fear of apartheid to a sense that now “she's got a level of forgiveness” (*Ngwenya*). There was also a description of the people interviewed as calm and appearing to respond mostly

from a distance: “it happened there, it's in the past and I'm over it” (*Mati*), or a sense that the person seemed to have forgiven and moved on and had “made peace with that” (*Green*) and also an attitude of “this is how it was” (*Baloi*). From the point of view of a bystander, there was a feeling of anger about the injustice of the barriers that tried to prevent the development of friendships across the colour divide (*Edge*).

North expressed reservations about doing the interview, as she was afraid that she might be opening a can of worms by asking difficult questions: “I know she [my mother] had a very difficult childhood, her mom died when she was very young, and she went to live with some other relatives of hers. So like, in that way, I wasn't sure if like it was something she wanted to talk about.” During the interviews, the learning of new information about the past also elicited strong emotions in the interviewers: anger that some of the stories were repressed in their families; for example, the story about an eight year old boy being hit by a tear gas canister during a demonstration to commemorate the student uprisings on 16 June in Soweto (*Ngwenya*). There was anger expressed by some of the students that their parents had been passive bystanders, and had not done anything active to oppose the apartheid government (*Green & North*). *Baloi* also expressed his anger against the apartheid system when he said that he could not believe that “this [incident] had happened to someone I lived with”. Other students expressed their dismay about the difficulties of living during the apartheid era in response to the stories their interviewees told them, and their relief that they did not grow up during those times (*Cummings & Edge*). It seems that the interviewers discovered a depth of unexpected emotion in response to what they learnt from the interviews.

The breaking of silence: healing or trauma

The process of interviewing older people about their experiences can have positive effects, as it allows the interviewees to break the silence concerning

their experiences under apartheid. For example, *Green* wrote in her reflective essay, “I learnt that the biggest problem with history is the silence, the silence that people have about their past. The fear of re-telling what happened and I realised the great need many hundreds of people have to tell their story and be heard.” In essence, this is the heart of what a reconciliatory pedagogy hopes to achieve during this part of the process. By breaking the silence and the fear, it creates the opportunity for an engagement between the generations in such a way that a deeper understanding of one another emerges. This process also encourages dialogue between the students and an older generation, and it leads to a way to “restory” the past (Longchari quoted in Lederach, 2005, p. 140). Longchari, who Lederach describes as “a philosopher, historian and human rights advocate from Nagaland” in India, explained that from the perspective of indigenous people who had experienced colonisation, “narratives [were] broken”. While history cannot be remade, ‘the challenge... [is] how, in the present, interdependent peoples “restory”, that is, begin the process of providing space for the story to take its place and begin the weaving of a legitimate and community-determined place among others’ stories’ (Lederach, 2005, p. 140). The stories from the interviews are about the long-term effects of colonisation, and there were certainly different perspectives that emerged about apartheid and other aspects that could help to “restory” the past in a more inclusive manner.

But will this process necessarily lead to healing? Some of the people who testified at the TRC showed that it is possible to experience a healing or therapeutic effect in telling one's story. Mr Lukas Baba Sikwepere responded to a commissioner's question as to how he felt after having describing his experience of human rights violation in 1985, where he was shot in the face by police, lost his sight and was later tortured. He said: “I feel that what has been making me sick all the time is the fact that I couldn't tell my story. But now it feels like I got my sight back by coming here and telling you the story” (TRC report Vol. 5, 1998, p. 352). There are also examples of people who had mixed experiences of testifying at the TRC and afterwards. Yazir Henry (2000), who

was a member of Umkhonto we'Sizwe (MK), wrote that he found a degree of healing after testifying about the terrible circumstances which led to the death of another MK cadre, Anton Fransch. While Henry was detained, the security police threatened to kill Henry's mother and four-year-old nephew if he did not reveal the whereabouts of Fransch. Faced with this terrible dilemma, Henry revealed Fransch's address. Henry was taken to the house and witnessed the killing of Fransch by the security police. After Henry gave his testimony at the TRC, his story was reported widely in newspapers and in books about the TRC and he felt strongly that it was abused outside of the TRC and that he had no control over how his story was retold (Henry, 2000, p. 6). It is clear from these experiences at the TRC that retelling one's story can have very different outcomes and consequences.

When we turn to oral history and whether or not the process facilitates healing, Field (2006, p. 34) cautions, "I do not think that oral historians should make claims 'to heal', especially when interviewing trauma survivors." Field (2006, p. 31) follows Gadi BenEzer's definition of trauma which "refers to the rupturing of an individual's sense of internal and external worlds, and leaves post-traumatic legacies such as dissociation, depression and hypersensitivity." While my interviews about the students' experiences and those of the people they interviewed revealed a range of strong emotions, no one involved seems to have experienced trauma as defined by the preceding quotation, and no one made the claim that they found the process healing. Although *Ngwenya* said: "people did experience apartheid differently and that the older generation of South Africa are [sic] still hurting". This suggests that there is the potential for trauma to be retriggered in an oral history interview. However, *Green* argued that "there needs to be a traumatic reaction to something like this [an oral history interview that deals with life during apartheid] ... People do need to cry, people do need to feel angry about it ... they need to tell their story and get it out there, and children need to see how other people feel ... [they] need to know how real [the past] is, and that reality will come when that traumatic [sic] reaction is expressed." *Green's* impassioned plea in support of a "traumatized

reaction” during an interview may be too strong, as she does not take into account the possibility of re-traumatising the interviewee. It also might have an unintended effect of damaging relationships and cause a resurgence of resentment and anger. Further, *Green* argued that those who are scared of triggering trauma are in denial, and supported her argument by referring to Holocaust survivors. When the person who has suffered and cries in response to her memories, then they will do so in the knowledge that someone really cares: there is a “teacher who made this little kid come out here and ask me this story, she’s trying to change the world ... it goes back to the reconciliation part of not forgetting.” However, *Green* does make an important point that these stories need to be asked for and heard by the different generations.

Both *Mati* and *Ngwenya* were more cautious in their responses, as both felt that trauma was a difficult issue, and *Mati* felt that in her present Social Sciences classroom she would use a psychologist for support. But *Ngwenya* felt that it was the parents’ responsibility to deal with this issue, if it arose in her current Social Sciences classroom, although she did not clarify how they would do so. In terms of her own role, *Ngwenya* said that she was aware of the need to play an active role in the feedback, as she would “have to monitor ... especially the feelings that would come about, because ... [of] how it gets passed on to the kids.” Yet, *Mati* and *Ngwenya* felt that their mothers were still traumatised by the past, although *Mati* felt that it helped her Mom to talk about the past, because “you look back at it and then you laugh about it.” A positive effect for *Mati* (2009) was that the more she asked her mother about the past, the more she herself became interested. There was a lot of information that she found out that she did not know before, because “they [her parents] don’t want to speak about it when you raise [the topic].” *Ngwenya* shared this view, as well as discovering that her mother “censored a lot of stuff” in the past. The importance of addressing these silences between the generations, and also the issue of censored stories is one of the places where a reconciliatory pedagogy is most needed.

Eva Hoffman (2005), whose parents were Holocaust survivors in Poland, reported that there are “cross-generational groups in which survivor parents and their children encounter one another in therapeutic settings” (p. 181). It emerged how many parents were silent in an attempt to protect their children from what they experienced during the Holocaust, and how the children criticised them for this silence. Yet, Hoffman argues, the second generation (those born after the end of the Second World War) experienced a transmission of what she calls “first knowledge” (p. 6) about traumatic events as children, which was at the level of “a kind of a fable” (p. 16), and that an understanding of the historical context came later (p. 104). She also argued that this transmission occurred “not only through rational messages, but along unconscious or at least non-conscious, channels” (p. 60).³⁰ This indicates the many levels of difficulty in the relationship between the parents, who are the first generation, and their children, who are considered to be members of the second generation after a traumatic experience. However, Hoffman (p. 185) acknowledged examples from intergenerational studies done by psychoanalyst Dan Bar-On and others which showed that it was easier for members of the first generation to speak to their grandchildren about their experiences during the Holocaust, than it was to their own children. In this case, the choice of members of the first generation to break their silence with the third generation happened in a generative manner. *Ngwenya* recounted that in her family the stories of the past “were not passed down in a hatred kind of manner”. Further, *Ngwenya* argued that when a story about the past is shared between the generations, then you do not want children to “internalise [the emotion] and get this hatred that they don’t know where it’s coming from.” She identified a further need for the parents to retell the story in a way that does not pass on hatred “[b]ecause if the person who’s telling the story, their emotion, that’s how you take it in and get to remember the story with that very same emotion that they had.” My interviews with the students revealed that no family experienced major trauma, such as torture, or

³⁰ The notion of “transgenerational transmission of trauma” was acknowledged by Dr Vamik Volkan (2006, p. 26) as being based on “studies made of the second and third generations of Holocaust survivors and others directly traumatized under the Third Reich”.

the loss of a family member at the hands of the apartheid police and deaths from being part of military organisations. However, *Ngwenya* stated that some families were traumatised merely by living in a township, where children playing in the streets observed and smelt corpses of those who were burnt to death. This is an important qualification that suggests that the impact of traumatic experiences affects groups of people in the same environment, and is not simply an individual experience.

But *Ngwenya* contrasted her experience with those families who lived in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg where, according to *Ngwenya*, they said that “life was just okay for my mom and my dad, ... [there] was also a distance, they used to know that, gee, something like that is happening, we’re not the ones doing it, we’re living in our own world and they’re experiencing this, you know, this conflict elsewhere.” *Cummings*, who comes from the northern suburbs, discovered that after she had done an interview with her father she felt that for the first time she too had a story to share with her peers. In the past, she found that apartheid narratives were all about somebody else's story, whereas she learnt things about her father that were unexpected, as his responses showed that he was “positive towards...the end of apartheid” and in favour of reconciliation. In turn, she could contribute to a conversation about apartheid by sharing his account. In this way, *Cummings* found the process of the oral history to be inclusive of all experiences. While there may be an element of telling the story that the interviewees thought the students might want to hear, there is also a sense of breaking the silence over a topic that was not brought up and discussed previously. This shows a remarkable, yet unexpected, similarity among the parents in households of geographically and socially different parts of Johannesburg.

Amnesia and the generations

An issue related to silence is that of amnesia: Buruma (1995, pp. 263-264) showed how amnesia affected the relationship between the generations in post-war Germany. He visited Passau in order to interview Anja Rosmus, whose story had been filmed as "The Nasty Girl". In brief, it outlined how she entered a national essay competition based on "everyday life in your hometown during the Third Reich". While doing research for the essay she came across "evidence that people who had always been known to her as anti-Nazis, even 'resistance fighters', had in fact been Nazi sympathisers, even Nazi officials" (p. 264), and she was told by them to drop her project. Years later, with the encouragement of her grandmother (and despite numerous death threats), she turned her earlier research into a book and shamed many well-known members of her town. According to Buruma (1995, p. 264), "[t]he story was about repressed history, but the underlying theme was a conflict of generations. Even though the heroine was not born until 1960...the film expressed the rage of ... [the] generation of 1968. ... [She] was too young to be Hitler's child, but her grandmother was a typical example of the pre-Nazi voice of reason. Amnesia is always the parents' disease."

There has not yet been a major conflict between the first and second generations over interpretations of the past in South Africa, and this shows a positive effect of the TRC, as it has made the problem of general amnesia less likely to happen here. However, amnesia is a potential problem, especially in a society where a desire is expressed by some members that the past should be buried, and to "move on" with the present and future. As Jansen (2009a, p. 251) commented, the hope that white South Africans, "confronted with horrific knowledge through the televised sessions of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), would step forward, acknowledge their complicity in Apartheid, and change, was clearly misplaced." Instead, Jansen argued that many whites retreated into denial and silence, which is similar to what happened in post-war Germany. This means that an oral history interview is an

opportunity for members of the first generation Afrikaners to pass on what Jansen calls “bitter knowledge” (p. 114) or “indirect knowledge” (p. 140) about the past to their children, which he further describes as “the intergenerational transfer of coarse and unreflective knowledge” (p. 130).³¹ Horsthemke (2010, p. 37) challenged Jansen’s use of the term “knowledge” on the basis that Jansen used the concept in various ways without “distinguish[ing] it from (mere) belief, assumption, prejudice, dogma, and the like”. Further, Jansen does not present “adequate justification” for his use of the term “knowledge” in the context of “bitter knowledge”, and instead “all kinds of bigotry and prejudice are elevated to the status of ‘knowledge’” (Horsthemke, 2010, p. 39). I acknowledge that Horsthemke has expressed valid concerns regarding Jansen’s usage of “knowledge”, although the image of “bitter knowledge” is a striking one. I continue to use it in this thesis to represent the prejudices that can be passed from generation to generation via an oral history.

A recurring theme of the students who interviewed their parents or members of the community who were at the receiving end of discrimination under apartheid was that their interviewees did not demonstrate bitterness or anger about what had happened to them, nor express the desire for revenge (*Baloi, Green, Mati, Mills, Ngwenya & North*). They wanted the interviewers to understand what had happened and highlighted the injustices of the past. *Mati*, for example, found that her mother focused on the need for forgiveness, especially among the second generation, as she said “there is no need to take it out on the white people that are here now. Because it’s their forefathers that...did that, it’s not them.” This raises the question of whether it is possible for the children of survivors and victims to forgive the children of perpetrators, bystanders and beneficiaries?

³¹ Jansen (2009b, pp. 147-157) uses the concept of a post-conflict pedagogy, which aims to disrupt this “indirect knowledge” through “the clash of martyrological memories”: students from the University of Pretoria visited two museums, the Voortrekker Monument and the Apartheid Museum, which tell different narratives of the past. The contrast between the two narratives highlights the clash between the different memories and provides the means to disrupt the students’ indirect knowledge.

Schlink (2010, p. 69) argues strongly that the only person who can forgive is the victim him - or herself, because “forgiveness granted by someone other than the victim is presumptuous”. This means that he rejects the possibility of the children of the second generation forgiving one another, as he argues that “they are not each other’s victims or perpetrators” (Schlink, 2010, p. 70). I agree with Schlink that forgiveness is a serious matter and it is the prerogative of the victim to offer it or not, but what happens if the victim is no longer alive, and the harm caused by the original injury continues to affect present and future generations? Schlink (2010, p. 70) suggests that should the grandchild of an SS soldier who worked in a concentration camp meet with the grandchild of a Jew who died in the concentration camp, then neither has the right to request or offer forgiveness, but that their fates are “intertwined” and they need to discuss and work through the issues. Furthermore, he argues that “[t]he world is full of guilt that cannot be forgiven and which can now no longer be forgiven” (Schlink, 2010, p. 74). This means that whatever happens between the grandchildren of victims and perpetrators is not governed by the logic of forgiveness. However, Schlink suggests that reconciliation can play a supporting role to forgiveness, as “forgiveness lifts the burden of guilt from the guilty parties, [whereas] reconciliation merely makes it a bit lighter”. Reconciliation is about “recognition that others are human beings like ourselves”, and he includes the “children and grandchildren who share the perpetrator’s guilt and the victim’s fate” (Schlink, 2010, p. 78) among the damaged relationships that can be restored via reconciliation.

In contrast, Tutu (1999, p. 226) argues that “[t]rue forgiveness deals with the past, all of the past, to make the future possible. We cannot go on nursing grudges, even vicariously for those who cannot speak for themselves any longer.” It seems that Tutu sees a strong link between forgiveness and reconciliation, which includes a process where there is “an acknowledgement of the horror of what happened by the perpetrators or their descendants” and in turn the descendants of the victims grant forgiveness, although he suggests that there needs to be some form of compensation, albeit symbolically, for the pain

suffered by the victims (Tutu, 1999, p. 226). This suggests that he supports the possibility that the second or third generation could forgive and reconcile on behalf of the first generation.

A related question is whether non-perpetrators can apologise for the deeds of perpetrators in the past. An example that Schlink (2010, pp. 71-74) gives is the case of the present German government's refusal to apologise for the brutal suppression of the Herero uprising (1904-1907) in the former South-West Africa. He suggests that the "request that the Germans of today seek forgiveness from members of the Herero tribe living today calls for an empty ritual that would show little respect for the Herero at that time" (Schlink, p. 72). Further, he suggests that the request for an apology by present day Namibians may be strategic in the sense that it might be linked to calls for restitution, which he understands, but also rejects on the basis that "forgiveness [is] too existential" (Schlink, p. 74). Thus he rejects the possibility of the descendants of those involved in an atrocity being able to apologise to the children of the victims.

The issues of forgiveness, apology and reconciliation are huge questions for any generation in any country which has experienced a violent past to attempt to answer. I am not suggesting that there is any obligation to offer forgiveness or apology on the part of the children, nor that the "easy" forgiveness that *Mati's* mother proposed for some of the children on the basis of the second generation not being held responsible for the first generation's actions is desirable and/or possible. But these issues require further discussion among the participants, and there are no simple answers to these extremely difficult questions. Some victims desire an apology, such as those involved in land restitution (as shown in chapter 2)³², and the broader project of reconciliation needs to address these issues in the wider society. The TRC provided an opportunity to do so, but De Klerk did not offer an apology that was accepted by all (as shown in chapter 2), and apology and forgiveness remain on-going bones of contention in present

³² In chapter 4, *Mati* provides another example.

day South Africa. At best, a reconciliatory pedagogy offers a space where the second generation, the children of survivors, victims, perpetrators, beneficiaries and bystanders could continue a process of dialogue about the recognition of the injustices of the past, which was started by the TRC, and where they can develop a deeper understanding of these issues. But it is not a space where these issues can be resolved, and this is something that the broader project of reconciliation needs to address in the wider society.

Another related issue to forgiveness is that of guilt about what happened in the past: some authors, for example, Ackermann (2003) and Schlink (2010) emphasise that there is no way for the first generation who were adults, and can be considered to belong to the categories of perpetrators, bystanders and beneficiaries during apartheid, to avoid guilt about what happened, as was discussed in the previous chapter. In turn, this guilt will also affect the second generation, that is, if applied to the South African context, the children of perpetrators, beneficiaries and bystanders who were born during the tail end of apartheid and were schooled and grew up during the time when democracy was introduced. Yet, it encourages hope that both *Mati* and *Ngwenya*, who could be identified as belonging to the category of the children of survivors and victims, stated that their respective mothers expressed no explicit desire for revenge. *Ngwenya* reported that her family did not encourage ideas of harbouring hatred towards white people for what had happened in the past, but her boyfriend's family did, especially the boyfriend's grandfather who spoke of the pain of "what they did to us". Again, this example shows the complexity of this situation, and it suggests that there is a need for a reconciliation project in the broader community, but an investigation and discussion of this idea goes beyond the confines of my thesis.

Oral history interviews and a reconciliatory pedagogy

In what ways could the oral history interviews contribute towards developing a reconciliatory pedagogy? The dialogue between members of different generations is potentially the starting point of a reconciliatory pedagogy, where the reweaving of relationships can occur. The positive aspect is the engagement between the generations where the older person feels the interest of the younger person first in the request for an interview and then during the interview. Most of the students commented on how they started off doing the interview merely for the purpose of doing the assignment, and they described their feelings as those of “boredom” (*North & Mati*). Then they found that their interest grew during the interview: “I got very inspired ... it was a learning process for me ... I enjoyed that I could actually get someone’s real life story and write about it” (*Balo*). This changed the time it took to interview, and *Mills* described how what he thought would be a quick, short interview in fact went on for hours. The experience of doing the interview was an eye opener for some of the students. As *North* said, she was amazed by “my parents’ point of view ... and that everybody experiences the same thing in so many different ways.” *Green* added that she felt that there was more to the assignment, as “it goes a lot deeper than just in terms of what you were asking.” I would agree with *Green*’s view, although during the process of the assignment, I had no idea that this would be an unexpected outcome. But in what ways did this assignment go “a lot deeper”?

I suggest that the “deeper” part of the process of the assignment, common to most oral interviews, is related to the dialogue round a sensitive topic that creates a space for two people of different generations to engage with each other. This is potentially a way of dealing with some of the unfinished business from the past, which may lead to a deepening of understanding between the interviewer and the interviewee. It can help to break the silence in families that so often is found in discussing a difficult past. In addition, it can reveal the underlying historical forces that have shaped the family’s/member of the community’s story in a different way to those found in history books. In this manner, the oral history task can help to reweave relationships, and operate as

a polychronic activity which could help reconciliation. Following Field (2006), the idea that the telling of one's story might lead to healing from the interviewee's perspective is an outcome that could be valid in some cases, but certainly not in all.

However, as Hoffman indicated from the perspective of a second generation survivor of the Holocaust, there is also the potential for a negative aspect to this process: traumatic events can be passed on to the next generation in the form of "first knowledge" (2005, p. 6) and even transmitted in an unconscious way. In the South African context, Jansen (2009a, p. 114) coined the term "bitter knowledge", which is something that Afrikaans-speaking whites could transfer to the next generation in an oral history interview. Thus it appears that the use of oral history can be a double-edged sword: it has the potential to develop a shared, deeper understanding of the past between the generations; and it can be used as a means to transmit myths, prejudices against and stereotypes of "others".

In a different context, Volkan (2006, pp. 30–32) illustrated how unresolved issues in the past might bubble up in the present and affect the future as happened during the war in Bosnia in the 1990s: a battle that the Serbs lost against the Ottoman Empire in 1389, was used as a "chosen trauma" by Serb political leaders to recall an old, humiliating grievance. They used it to fuel the flames of revenge against present day Muslims. In the crisis surrounding the collapse of the Soviet Union and the fragmentation of Yugoslavia, these leaders used this "memory" to unite the Serbs and create a common group identity. They exhumed the remains of Prince Lazar, the Serbian leader killed in this battle in 1389, and the coffin was shown at different Serbian villages, where a "funeral ceremony" was held. This occurred in the year prior to the outbreak of violence, and created a "*time collapse*": the Serbian leaders used something that had happened centuries ago, as if it had happened in the present, as a means to mobilise their community. This example shows Mbiti's idea of the circularity of time, which a scientist, who wrote to Mbiti, described as

“spacetime” (cited in Lederach, 2005, p. 146) in practice. The connections between past, present and future appear to link in a circular fashion and are polychronic in the sense that these different notions of time can occur simultaneously.³³ It also shows how the transmission of trauma can be passed down across generations, and how the “memory” of being victims can be used for political purposes. Lederach (2005, p. 142) also used the example of a chosen trauma to link to group identity, where people remember a particular point in history ... [which] shaped their identity then, and it continues to shape their identity now...[where] the dates remembered may go way back in history but they are present as if they happened yesterday.”

How can a reconciliatory pedagogy address some of these potentially destructive aspects of oral history? A possible answer is that by going through the process of both the interview and writing a narrative about it, a reconciliatory pedagogy opens up a space to develop what Norman (1996) calls “historical thinking”. Her conception is located in a rejection of the modernist assumption, that “of history as representation of some ‘historically’ “real” ’ – the ‘there, there’ – that we call ‘the past’.” Instead she argues for a different way of thinking which she suggests is required by postmodernism that is still “historical but involves reflection on the meaning of being and not representation ... this different kind of thinking [is] ‘historical’ because it is about *change* [italics in the original], change to a person’s way of thinking about the everyday, ... through thinking reflexively” (p. 717). I am not convinced that it is possible to reject entirely the modernist assumption concerning the reality of the past, as this approach could lead to a denial of events, such as the Holocaust and atrocities under apartheid.

However, there are aspects of Norman’s conception of “historical thinking” that are valuable for a reconciliatory pedagogy: it allows for agency on the part of the students in the situation of an oral interview, because they are asking

³³ There is a similarity between this conception of time and that of narrative inquiry in terms of the linkages among the past, present and future. However, a narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50) sees this linkage in a more linear fashion as a continuum between the past, present and future.

questions which are based on their present concerns in order to make sense not only of the information, but also of who they are themselves. This means that the students are not passive recipients of information in the interview, nor are they likely to accept at face value an account simply because a trusted adult has told them about what she experienced. My interviews with the students who did the assignments showed that they were active participants in the process, and in some cases, it was a way of breaking the silence round the topic of apartheid. By “ ‘reflexive thinking’ ” (Norman, 2006, p. 718), and with oral evidence acting “as catalysts for historical thinking” (Norman, 2006, p. 717), this can change the way a student thinks not only about the past, but also about who she is in the present and future. Further, this makes it less likely that the students will be susceptible to being manipulated by “chosen trauma” or indirect knowledge.

Conclusion: implications for a reconciliatory pedagogy

A reconciliatory pedagogy cannot address the unconscious transmission of trauma, as it is not a form of in-depth psychoanalysis. But a reconciliatory pedagogy provides an opportunity for students to encounter oral evidence in the form of another person’s story, which is evidence that is unmediated by historians. This is when the students hear the narratives of those who suffered trauma as survivors and victims, or those who attempt to justify their actions as perpetrators, bystanders and beneficiaries, at first hand. This means that the students will hear and feel the full weight of past experiences and emotions from a particular point of view. The interview provides an opportunity for the interviewee to tell their story, and for the students to respond with more questions, as an interview is a dialogue. But the students’ present concerns will inform the questions they ask during the interview, as will their own past experiences of reading competing interpretations and being taught about the topic, so that there is an interaction between prior knowledge and what they hear in the interview. Hopefully, the process of the interview will provide an

opportunity for the reweaving of relationships between the generations, although it is also an opportunity for first or indirect knowledge to be passed between the generations and for the possibility of Volkan's "chosen trauma" to be transmitted.

However, after the interview, the students can reflect further on what they were told, when they write the person's narrative from the point of view of that person. In this way, the interview and the narrative form part of a polychronic process. These activities place the students in a similar position to a historian which raises the following questions: How do you select information to include or exclude in the account? How do you deal with the contradictions between your prior knowledge and what the interviewee presents to you during the course of the interview? This process of scrutiny assists in developing an understanding of how interpretation and evidence interweave while writing a narrative based on the interview, and it provides a way of distancing the students from the interview itself. But the interview and the resultant narrative is only the first step in developing my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy as a process which is polychronic: the next step is to use this narrative as a means to engage other students in further dialogue via cooperative learning, which will be the focus of the following chapter.

Chapter 4: The dance of reconciliation - cooperative learning and a reconciliatory pedagogy

Introduction

This chapter will focus on the cooperative learning strategy that was used in the assignment (as mentioned in the previous chapter), which was based on the dramatisation of the oral history narratives by the students. By doing so, I intend to show how this process has helped to develop my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy. In my experience, the sharing of the oral history interviews with other students does not necessarily lead to a shift in relations. Instead, a further process is needed, which I suggest a cooperative learning strategy provides. By cooperative learning, I follow renowned theorists of cooperative learning, David W. Johnson and Roger T. Johnson's definition (n.d.): "Cooperation is working together to accomplish shared goals. Within cooperative situations, individuals seek outcomes that are beneficial to themselves and beneficial to all other group members. Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning". There are many different methods or structures that are used in cooperative learning strategies that various researchers, such as Johnson, Johnson and Smith (1991), Slavin, Sharan, Kagan, Herz-Lazarowitz, Webb and Schmuck (1985), Sharan (1990) and Kagan (1994) have used and researched. I do not intend to explore these methods of cooperative learning, as my focus is on a particular cooperative learning process, which informed this assignment.

I propose to investigate how the students experienced this process of cooperative learning and the effects on their relationships with their peers, and how this changed over time. This means that my inquiry moves “*inward, outward, backward, forward* and [is] *situated within place*”, that is the history methodology lecture room (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 49). In order to follow this process, I use the students’ reflective essays from 2006, which provide an immediate response to what happened during the assignment as well as their interviews (2008 – 2009), which has the benefit of more time for reflection to show how this cooperative process helped to shift some of the relationships among the students within the history methodology lecture room. Further, I also intend to investigate the claim by proponents of cooperative learning that it helps to break down negative stereotypes among groups of people, and shifts attitudes in a positive way (Sharan, 1990). The use of cooperative learning strategies in a reconciliatory pedagogy is similar to other approaches that aim to break down barriers and stereotypes among groups of people, such as in some conceptions of peace education. However, I intend to show in this chapter that the way I use a particular version of cooperative learning and link it to the oral history narratives contributes to the process of reconciliation in a different way to other approaches which share similar aims to a reconciliatory pedagogy.³⁴

³⁴ A reconciliatory pedagogy shares some similarities and differences with other kinds of education which aim to deal with conflict in the past and present, for example, internationally, peace education (Christopher & Taylor, 2011; Salomon & Nevo, 2002; Iram, 2003; Harris, 2004); in South Africa: citizenship education (Enslin, Pendlebury & Tjiattas, 2001) and democratic citizenship education (Waghid, 2004 & 2005). In peace education (there are differing conceptions as to what the term means), there are similarities too with my notion of a reconciliatory pedagogy, as some of the approaches encourage contact among groups of pupils/students who share a history of antagonism and conflict. These approaches also use cooperative learning in the form of a shared task with its emphasis on the importance of dialogue, and it seems that reconciliation is an important part of peace education. But there is little explanation as to what is meant by reconciliation, and how this can be related to pedagogy, which I believe my research helps to articulate. Enslin (2002, p. 237) suggests that the term “*peace education* is not widely used in South Africa”, although the TRC is “a powerful model for peace education” (p. 242). Further, Enslin suggests that while there are “creative ways in which the school curriculum can potentially use the stories of the TRC to telling effect, the likely future impact of the TRC is less clear” due to “many of the issues raised by the TRC... [being] morally very complex”, and the reality of “dysfunctional” schools (p. 242). Soudien (2002, p. 155) also examines “the pedagogical significance of the TRC and...how the TRC operates as a medium for teaching peace.” However, there were a number of developments in citizenship education in the South African context, as Enslin et al (2001, pp. 125–126) made use of Iris Young’s notion of communicative democracy, with its emphasis on “a broadened theory of deliberative democracy, which she calls ‘communicative’, to accommodate a wider range of interactions

among participants. In addition to critical argument, greeting, rhetoric and storytelling are endorsed as means of expanding democratic discussion.” There is a clear link with a reconciliatory pedagogy’s use of “storytelling” in the form of oral histories, and a sense of getting to know one another through the importance of “greeting” and storytelling. But the purpose of storytelling and narrative is developed further, as in a paraphrase of Young, the authors argue that storytelling helps the possibility of “understanding across difference ... [as it] exhibits the situated knowledge of the collective from each perspective, and the combination of narratives from different perspectives produces the collective, social wisdom not available from any one position” (Enslin et al, 2001, p. 126). Thus listening becomes important, and the desired result is in another paraphrase of Young’s words a “transformation of ‘...the partial and parochial interests and ideas of each into more reflective and objective judgement’ [the latter understood as] an understanding of one’s own perspective in relation to others in a wider context. It involves a reflective stand that is not merely self-regarding” (Enslin et al, 2001, p. 128). The authors suggest that the subjects of literature, life orientation and history could play an important role in this process. My conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy, which I have located in oral history, with its use of personal stories or narratives, reflection and its emphasis on listening supports and develops this idea of citizenship education. But a reconciliatory pedagogy’s ideas go beyond the importance of storytelling, as I hope to show in this chapter.

Waghid’s (2005, p. 331) conception of democratic citizenship education takes issue with some aspects of Young’s communicative democracy: for Waghid it is insufficient to allow people to tell their stories, without going further into the background of the person who is telling the story. There is a need to take into consideration the students’ personal situations of where and how they live and the struggles they engage with in their everyday lives, as he suggests that this influences the stories that they tell. Further, he argues for the importance of Nussbaum’s idea of “compassionate action” so that his notion of democratic citizenship education goes beyond rational deliberation to one that engages with the emotions, which “involves cultivating in students the ability to imagine the experiences of others and to participate in their suffering—that is, it teaches them to extend their empathy to more people and to different types of people.” Waghid (2005, p. 338) qualifies this idea of people participating in others’ suffering by his use of Green’s idea of “imaginative action”, which creates a space to search “for possibilities of social justice and equality ... this type of imagining creates the potential for realizing a genuine civic reconciliation ... [which] sets the more realistic goal of connecting with rather than participating in others’ suffering and because it acknowledges openly the anger, hurt, and threats experienced by the other.” He also emphasises the importance of dialogues between teachers and students, listening to one another and the establishment of trust. There are strong connections between Waghid’s conception of a democratic citizenship education and my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy: I interviewed the students to find out more about their backgrounds to understand their oral histories and experiences of the cooperative task; there is agreement that emotions play an important role, as I demonstrated in the interviews and I will show how this applies to the process of the cooperative task; there is also agreement on the importance of dialogue, listening, trust and empathy, although his use of “imaginative action” adds an extra dimension and develops the notion of empathy in an interesting and useful manner; both conceptions make a link to reconciliation. Finally, both conceptions are related to and developed out of experiences in the lecture room, although in different areas - Waghid’s in philosophy of education and mine in history methodology. It seems that there might be room for fruitful engagement between the two conceptions, but this would need to be the subject of further research.

Another recent development in the South African literature is the concept of post-conflict pedagogy (Jansen & Weldon, 2009; Keet, Zinn & Porteus, 2009), which has similar aims to the above conceptions. I question the applicability of the term “post-conflict” to South Africa, as it is true that formal conflict was resolved politically in the transition to democracy in 1994, yet variations of on-going conflict continue in the present. I suggest that this continued conflict points to an incomplete project of reconciliation in South Africa, which a post-conflict pedagogy appears to side line.

During the course of this chapter, I first examine a key theory that informs cooperative learning, namely Allport's contact theory. Next, I describe how I implemented the cooperative learning strategy part of the assignment, and used key characteristics or conditions of cooperative learning to facilitate interaction and dialogue within the groups. I also use these characteristics as a way to structure my findings of the students' experiences of this part of the assignment. I then link Lederach's (1999, p. 65) model of reconciliation to this cooperative learning strategy to help further develop my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy. Finally, I turn to the student/teachers' responses to the proposed use of a reconciliatory pedagogy in their own classrooms.

Background to cooperative learning: Allport's contact theory

An important idea that informed this research on cooperative learning came from social psychology and was based on "the most widely accepted theory of positive intergroup relations: Allport's (1954) contact theory" (Slavin, 1985, p. 11) which suggests that if diverse groups come into contact with one another, then this will lead to "familiarity and attraction" (Miller & Harrington, 1990, p. 47). Furthermore, according to Miller and Harrington (1990, pp. 47-48), it has the following "underlying assumptions ... that groups which are isolated (or segregated) from each other will display avoidance, and further that, in ignorance, they will assume that they are dissimilar and develop stereotypic views of each other's group and members ... In its simplest form, the contact hypothesis states that relations between members of groups who have not previously interacted will improve following direct interpersonal interaction." According to Towson (1985, pp. 267-268), there have been a number of "tests and applications of Allport's contact, a theory designed to facilitate the development of affectively positive intergroup contact through the fulfilment of three conditions: (1) strong institutional support for the intergroup contact; (2) equal status for both groups in the contact situation; and (3) a group task requiring mutual interdependence among the interacting group members." Furthermore, she argued that Allport's own writings suggest that he supported

an assimilationist ideology as an underlying aim for the intergroup contact, although the contact theory itself did not necessarily support an assimilationist position.³⁵ In this chapter, I will discuss how these ideas apply (or fail to apply) to my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy.

Background to the lack of contact among groups in South Africa

As Kagan (1994, p. 2:8) noted in a study in the United States of America, while children start out well in “mixed-racial”³⁶ groups in the early school years, this progressively changes during the course of their schooling until by the end they have divided themselves along racial lines. South Africa has had a different experience: schooling was divided according to race during apartheid, but since 1994 (and in some schools prior to this) schools were integrated. However, this does not mean that the barriers of the past have been overcome, as Jonathan Jansen, the Vice Chancellor of the Free State University observed (2009a, p. 144): “[t]his story of physical integration and social segregation continues to run through the current research about black and white relations on university campuses after Apartheid”. As a lecturer in history methodology at the University of the Witwatersrand from the early 2000s, I had expected to find much more integrated relationships in lecture rooms. Instead, I found this space extremely polarised (as explained in chapter 1) and that most of the students

³⁵ Carrim & Soudien (1999, p. 153) argue that in South Africa, the assimilationist approach was dominant in schools, which were desegregated during the 1990s. Then there was a shift to multiculturalism in the form of a change from ‘race’ to ethnicity, and finally, there was the start of a ‘critical antiracism’ which is “explicitly alert and sensitive to the multiple expressions of ‘difference’ in identity.” In the literature on peace education, according to Steiner-Khamsi (2003, p. 15), there has been a movement from multiculturalism to antiracism to what she proposes as “a conflict resolution approach for interethnic conflicts”. However, the contact theory is a recurring theme in both cooperative literature and peace education, and I have chosen to use it as a way of developing my understanding of a reconciliatory pedagogy.

³⁶ As mentioned in chapter 3, the use of apartheid racial terms does not indicate support for a “race as essence” understanding. However, I suggest that the use of racial terms and categories still affect identity in post-apartheid South Africa, as will be demonstrated by the descriptions used by the students themselves in this chapter. I have also chosen not to place the descriptors in inverted commas, as this is a cumbersome approach, and assume that this footnote will be sufficient to indicate my own position and usage of racial terms throughout the thesis. It is important to note that the situation regarding minorities in countries such as the United States of America, Britain and Israel is different to South Africa both historically and in terms of who the minorities are.

appeared rather alienated and they were not at home in this environment. Given South Africa's history, this expectation of social integration was probably unrealistic, but I hoped that by using a cooperative learning strategy this might help in some way to address this worrying situation. If students could not interact and establish a worthwhile dialogue with their peers that sought to break down the barriers of the past, then how would they be able to assist their learners to do so in their future classrooms? My aim in encouraging intergroup contact was not to support an assimilationist position. Instead, I aimed for the students to develop a deeper understanding of their identities both in relation to their families and communities and in relation to their peers in such a way that they could probe, explore, recognise, respect and understand both the similarities and the differences amongst themselves. I decided to try out my own version of a cooperative learning situation through this assignment with Dr Lee Rusznyak, a geography lecturer, with whom I co-taught the Social Sciences course. By doing this assignment formally, it showed that there was institutional support for this intergroup contact.

Cooperative learning assignment

In designing the assignment, I ensured that there were some key elements of cooperative learning present in the process: "heterogeneous groups working towards a common goal" (Slavin, 1985, p. 7). This meant that I divided the class into groups of four, using a process of random distribution of class members to the groups. Each member, who was on an alphabetical class list, was allocated a number from one to four, and then I used a computer programme to sort this list according to the numbers. The advantage was that this random approach mixed up the class, but a disadvantage was that some groups were more homogeneous than others, as this process occurred fairly early in the course, and I did not know everyone well enough to adjust the groups.

As *Cummings* said in her interview, the random assigning to groups did not work, as her group was mainly white, and she felt that she did not get the “other side of the story”. However, I discovered from the records that I kept for this assignment that three out of the five members of her group were white and two members were not. While the majority of the group were white, it is not true that there was a lack of diversity in her group, as *Mati*, another member of the class who I interviewed, was also in her group. Furthermore, this group had a male member, which also was an indicator of difference, as the majority of this class was female. *Cummings* acknowledged that the idea of random grouping is important, as “if you are with somebody that you don’t know, you actually listen to what they say and then you can respond to that”. She acknowledged that the cooperative learning process helped her to develop friendships with some members of her group, which suggests that it was difficult to make friends at the university.

Cummings responded to my question concerning my observation and description of the “segregation” among the different races at university by saying that she saw it as being linked to geography, as it depended on “who I knew” when she arrived: “I knew a girl and she knew friends from her old school, so we just formed a group. And it just happened to be a white group. It wasn’t that we didn’t want to speak to black people. ... So I think that there’s a possibility that people from one area know each other and let’s say it happened to be Diepsloot and then they come here, so they have their own group. And then we come from the Northern suburbs or the East Rand and we know people from there”. Unintentionally, *Cummings* revealed the success of apartheid in dividing the races geographically, and how little this has changed over time, despite describing the schooling she experienced as more integrated.

Cummings’s argument about familiarity forming the basis of initial friendships at university may be valid, but it does not explain why relationships were still so polarised along racial lines. She described her school as “mixed” from Grade 1, and that her best friend in Grade 2 was black, but this early experience of

integration did not appear to affect the establishment of her initial friendships at university. Regarding her school experience, *Cummings* added that “whenever you mention apartheid at school ... it was a debatable topic, [and] I feel every time apartheid has come up we can’t have a normal discussion about it, [because] it ends up with people’s feelings getting hurt”. This suggests that the topic of apartheid was controversial at her school, and this may have affected her ability to make friends across the barriers of the past at university. *Edge* also commented that her school had “mixed” classes, although white learners were still in the majority. Yet, this contact also did not seem to influence her relationships at university. *Mati* saw the situation at university differently, as she said that in her first year, “you try and look for someone who’s speaking the same language as you”, which suggests that language rather than race was more important. This adds another layer to understanding why the class appeared so alienated from one another.

It seems that the idea that “relations between members of groups who have not previously interacted will improve following direct interpersonal interaction” does not necessarily follow³⁷ as it does not explain why the students who experienced a more integrated schooling (in the sense that by the time they reached school-going age, schools were open to all races), were not able to relate in a more affirmative, engaged manner with one another at university level. Apparently, the barriers of the past were still affecting relationships. But the situation is more complicated: some of the schools were not integrated, in the sense that *Mati* went to a rural school and then a school in Soweto, which meant that she had had little contact with learners from other groups, as these contexts were mainly for black learners. In a similar way, *Green*, who went to an independent school whose main constituency is Jewish, found that this led to very little contact with other groups. However, the majority of the students who

³⁷ This is a position that many proponents of cooperative learning would support, as this demonstrates the need for a common task. As Slavin (1985, p. 11) argued, in the United States of America “students make few friendship choices outside their own racial and ethnic groups, and such preferences do not change of their own accord.” Also Allport’s contact theory states that mere contact is insufficient, but there needs to be contact under certain conditions, as mentioned in the discussion of his ideas on page 2.

participated in my research attended public schools that were in theory “open”, although socio-economic barriers such as school fees, and whether or not you lived in the geographical feeder area to these schools, meant that they were “closed” in many ways to “other” groups.

Equality

Another question, whether the students were all equal in status or not (an important part of Allport’s contact thesis), is a difficult issue: if we take it from the perspective of the formal equality for all citizens enshrined in South Africa’s constitution in 1996, then they met as equals given the social transformation that occurred after the democratic transition after 1994. However, if we take it from the perspective of the oral histories they represented, then the spectre of apartheid divisions based on inequality was present in their stories and in their encounters: they are the children of survivors, victims, beneficiaries, bystanders and perpetrators. There is a role reversal between those whose parents/community were in power and those whose parents/community were disempowered during apartheid, and hence one can argue that the issue of equality is not as straightforward as it might appear at a first glance.³⁸

This was shown by some of the students’ reactions when the assignment was announced. *Cummings* recalled feeling fear that “it would be this clear-cut fight between the black people and the white people”, or that it “brings back bad memories” (*Mati*). However, other reactions to the assignment ranged from “boredom” (*North*), and resentment, because according to *Edge* “you hear about apartheid all the time and it becomes ... like you just don’t want to hear about it anymore”, to mixed feelings of excitement, as they were going to be working with different races in the groups (*Ngwenya*).

³⁸ For further discussion of this notion of each member of the group bringing in their status from the larger society, see Cohen (cited in Towson, 1985, p. 269) who argued that “members of most cooperative groups do *not* have equal status and consequently do not evaluate each other as equally competent. Certain attributes like gender, ethnicity, and age function as *diffuse status characteristics* [*italics in original*].”

Positive interdependence

The task required that the group was positively interdependent, in the sense that the students had to depend on one another in order to succeed with their dramatisation, that is, they would “sink or swim together” (Johnson and Johnson, 1994, p. 68). By this phrase I mean that they had to share their oral history stories with one another in order to devise and present a group dramatisation which included aspects of all of their stories. Each member of the group had to retell their story to the group (as well as have a copy for each member of the group to read). Then they had to discuss one another’s stories in detail, in order to select relevant parts which could be used in their joint dramatisation.

One of the intentions of the cooperative task was to facilitate meaningful dialogue about their oral histories and themselves. *Baloi* said that he was initially “shy” to present his story about the young boy who was forced to strip to show whether he was old enough to carry the *dompas*, although “I was inspired and motivated to do it, and it was something I loved doing” and he found that the group was “taken aback” in a “positive” manner by his story, as their stories did not have the same kind of “depth”.

While there may be an emotional connection and attachment to a family member's oral history (if that is who the student interviewed), the oral history would be presented at one remove from the person whom they interviewed. *Ngwenya* confirmed that this process of retelling their stories meant that “we looked at ourselves and where our parents came from and what it means for us”. This suggests that the stories helped the students to reflect on the past and also how it affects their present. *Ngwenya* also acknowledged “feelings of bitterness” when listening to the stories of her group, as she could not help thinking to herself “you guys had it easy ... your parents weren’t even aware, it was like something was happening in another country.” Her comment is a valid response to the lack of awareness of many white people who for all intents and

purposes appeared to have lived “in another country” during apartheid. Yet, another member in her group, *Edge*, retold her (white) mother’s story of a relationship with a (black) fellow worker, where the only place they could meet socially was at a Wimpy Bar in central Johannesburg. This was one of the few examples of affirmative contact across racial lines that any of the students recounted. While this particular story does not undermine the validity of *Ngwenya*’s general observation about her group’s stories and the attitudes they revealed, it also shows that there are complexities and nuances in oral stories from the past. However, *Ngwenya* had no recollection of any stories in her group that broke with stereotypes under apartheid.

Problems experienced with the cooperative task

The cooperative aspect of the task was difficult for some of the groups. *Ngwenya* commented on the problem of not knowing one another at the beginning, so we “had to start from scratch [to] know each other and [to] get comfortable with one another.” In another interview, *Edge*, a member of the same group, recalled the conflict in the group over how to bring the “different stories together”, especially as she felt that there was a feeling that “all white people are responsible for apartheid”. *North* recollected the “interest” that she found in both the stories and the process of cooperative learning, as she said that “I actually enjoyed getting to know about how different people experienced that time and how they ... grew up and how things were different ... for everybody.” The group task allowed the differences to emerge, and there were various responses to this process. On the positive side, some of the students conceded that it was better to work with people they did not know, and found that the discussion was not as controversial as they had feared it might be (*Cummings*). They found the encounter to be more interesting than if they had worked with friends, and they felt that the diversity affected the success of the dramatisation as well. *Mati* reflected that she benefited from the process because “I was working with people from different races. ... We had to be patient with one another and we had to compromise ... but I enjoyed working

with everyone.” This showed that the cooperative activity encouraged participation and was inclusive. On the negative side, *Baloi*, *Edge*, *Mati*, *Ngwenya* and *North* commented on how difficult it was to organise meetings outside of lectures (the groups were given time during lectures to work on their dramatisations, but they also needed to arrange extra meetings outside of class time). Time management was also a problem, and there were different attitudes concerning its importance. The major difficulty that *Edge* mentioned was dealing with different “backgrounds” and “their baggage” that each person brought to the table.

I suggest that this “conflict”³⁹ is part of the difficult process of engaging one another, as I think that an implicit aim of the group’s task was to provide an opportunity for the students to be able to work through some of the issues about apartheid related to truth and justice, which can be linked to Lederach’s (1997, pp. 30–31) paradigm of reconciliation. But a reconciliatory pedagogy could aim to help this process in such a way that if there are difficulties in the group, then the conflict would be acknowledged and allowed to happen. At the same time the hope would be that these difficult moments might help in the process to reweave relationships. With hindsight and after doing more in-depth reading about cooperative learning, I would have used some exercises to assist this process of group formation explicitly. One of the key ideas in the literature on cooperative learning is that the development of social skills in the groups is just as important as the development of academic skills (Johnson & Johnson, 1994, p. 68). In the context of a reconciliatory pedagogy, I suggest that the development of social skills in the sense of conflict resolution and dealing with differences is precisely the point of this encounter, and is just as important as the development of academic skills. One of the aims of a reconciliatory pedagogy is for students to become aware that conflict is normal and to help them engage with one another in such a way that it encourages them to reflect in greater depth on what they are experiencing. Another aim is to help the

³⁹ In an article on academic controversy, Johnson & Johnson (1994, p. 69) argue that “[c]ooperation and conflict go hand-in-hand”, so that conflict is seen as a valuable part of cooperative learning. In turn this means that skills in conflict resolution need to be developed.

students to develop their own understanding of the issues and how to deal with these difficulties in a compassionate manner towards themselves and others. I also suggest that it is important to have a debriefing session after the cooperative task in order to encourage self and group reflection on what happened. While the reflective essay is an opportunity to reflect individually on their experiences in writing, it is important to do so verbally as a group as well.

It is striking to see the emphasis that the students placed on “difference” and the commonality of this motif across many of the reflective essays and interviews when they reflected or talked about the cooperative learning experience. In part, this supports the view that the barriers of the past continue to affect relations in the lecture hall in a deep and divisive way, and indicates the need and the importance of doing cooperative work as a way of providing opportunities for students to engage with one another. But another perspective is possible: one where this showed the richness of the variety of the diverse experiences that they were exposed to through one another’s stories, which the students acknowledged that they benefited from hearing about. It led to recognition of these differences that were based to some degree on race, yet moved beyond race too, as other aspects of identity were encountered, such as class and gender.⁴⁰ I suggest that a reconciliatory pedagogy tries to encourage a safe space where different experiences and ideas can be heard and discussed; in other words, to engage in dialogue with one another about our difficult past. At the same time, we need to bear in mind how much this past continues to affect us in the present in different ways, and how difficult it is to move towards a shared future. This may help to develop an understanding of identity which is more nuanced than a focus on race alone, although this does

⁴⁰ Sen (2006, p. xvi) suggests that there are many “identities that people have and value, involving class, gender, professions, language, science, morals and politics.” At school level, he argues, it is important to “discuss the relevance of our common humanity” and to recognise that “human identities can take many distinct forms and that people have to use reasoning to decide on how to see themselves, and what significance they should attach to having been born a member of a particular community” (2006, p. 119). I suggest that a reconciliatory pedagogy raises awareness of the role of identity/ies and could help with the process that Sen outlines for schools.

not mean to minimise the role that race played and continues to play in South Africa. (I will return to this idea later in the chapter.)

Face to face interaction

These groups met so that it facilitated “face-to-face promotive interaction” (Johnson & Johnson, 1994, p. 68), which is another characteristic of cooperative learning. They had to interact with one another about their oral histories in order to do the set, common task of dramatising parts of their oral histories to present to the whole class. As Professor Philip Bonner, a historian at the University of the Witwatersrand, who was quoted on the cover of a DVD about the South African History Archive’s oral history project,⁴¹ said: “The best that we can do, is to open up discussion amongst young people about our separate but linked pasts. Only then will we gain recognition of each other. We cannot let our children retreat into insulated tribal histories. Reconciliation has to be a face-to-face thing.” I agree with Professor Bonner’s view that reconciliation requires direct contact among the third generation, although a discussion, while important, on its own will not necessarily lead to a reconciliatory outcome. There needs to be much more built into this process, which is where I suggest that the cooperative learning process with its focus on a joint task adds an additional, valuable dimension.

Another aspect of the cooperative learning process - the importance of individual accountability (Johnson & Johnson, 1994, p. 68) - was also present as each member of the group had to contribute and present his/her story based on his/her oral history interview to the group. This means that each story was seen as equally important for the discussion, and given the requirement that the dramatisation needed to draw on aspects of all four stories, the idea of equality

⁴¹ *Meeting history face-to- face: a guide to doing oral history*, 2007.

of all the stories was given additional weight.⁴² Individual accountability encouraged participation and inclusion of all members of the group.

Emotions

The difficulties that the students experienced concerning the “face-to-face” contact were revealed by the way some of the students described the emotions surrounding their experience. *Edge* said, “I think that it [apartheid] is a sensitive topic that brings up emotions in people, and then to deal with that, like in a classroom situation, ... it was quite a difficult thing to do.” Overall, *Edge* did not enjoy the cooperative process, as she felt that by “teaching it [apartheid] over and over and over and over again, I think it does the opposite [to reconciliation]. I think it actually pushes people away because it brings up those feelings of hurt ... from the past.” However, she acknowledged that she had learnt something via the cooperative process “just maybe understand the other side a bit more” (*Edge*). *Ngwenya* said that she still feels “strong emotions of sadness”, and “a bit of anger” when she thinks about life under apartheid, and she felt “uncomfortable” in the process. However, *Ngwenya* described her story as “a shock [for her group] and they learnt something new”. *Green* also described her story as a “shock” for the group, because she had chosen “a coloured person” who was “quite a young person” to interview, and had not gone the “easy” route of interviewing one of her parents. The reason for her decision was that she felt it was important to hear from a person of a different race and someone who could be considered to be a survivor or victim, because “that’s the real people who we need to ask”, and she did not feel that her own family could offer an interesting account. Yet, *Cummings* said that for the first time she could “add to the conversation” via her father’s story by saying what he had experienced. In the past, *Cummings* felt that by being a white person, her fear was that “nobody’s going to hear my feelings about it, I can’t really speak”, which

⁴² The groups were split between two lecturers, and in a particular case, that is, *Cummings* and *Mati*, the group was allowed to choose only two stories, because of the difficulty the group experienced in linking the stories for the dramatisation. I suggest that this compromise undermined the equality of all the stories in this process.

suggests that she felt that she had no right to contribute to a discussion on apartheid, possibly as she was viewed as being the child of a beneficiary or a bystander of apartheid. The aim of a reconciliatory pedagogy is to encourage and include everyone as part of the conversation, and to participate actively in it, despite the difficulties they may feel and the strong emotions that are aroused.

Green said that “it’s such an emotional thing that we were talking about that it was interesting to know ... what they [members of her group] hold by”, which suggests that the process of working together led to a greater understanding and insight into the views and values of the members of her group. She added that the cooperative group process assisted their understanding about apartheid as “everybody got a chance to hear the real story. And no textbook, no video, no ... story in an actual book was as effective as actually hearing it out of somebody’s mouth and having me retell it to my fellow peers.” *Edge* confirmed this view, although the latter had mixed feelings about talking about apartheid. As *Edge* said, she was not “so aware of apartheid, because I was so young, to me it wasn’t something that was that big, although to some of the other students in the group it was their life ... what has struck me the most was seeing how much it actually affected the students that were in the group with me ... those things are still with them today. And it affects them today, and it’s part of who they are.” *Edge* seemed to dismiss the effects of apartheid on her own experience, which is debatable, yet she recognised the effects it continues to have on some of her peers. *Ngwenya* said that “it was unthinkable that people would go that far” in terms of what happened during apartheid, although she felt that she could not be angry with her peers, as they were not alive during this period. There is no doubt that the cooperative group activity succeeded in placing sensitive issues on the table, and it provided an opportunity for personal and narrative “truths” to be discussed and the injustices of the past to be acknowledged. It also provoked strong emotions and the process allowed for reflection on the connection between the past and present.

In turn, this cooperative learning process raised the question of how members of the second generation deal with issues of accountability and the on-going effects of apartheid. There are no easy answers to this question, although *Mati* claimed that a male member of her group apologised “on behalf of the white people” in response to her story about what her family had experienced during apartheid. But when I asked about this apology in another interview with the only male in her group, *Dyer* denied emphatically having made such an apology. Was *Mati* expressing a desire for an apology? Did she feel that her reply that there was no need to apologise was expressing a generosity of spirit that echoed her mother’s words that “there is no need to take it out on the white people that are here now – because it’s their forefathers that ... did that [implemented apartheid], it’s not them”? Or was this simply a case of forgetting on *Dyer’s* part? Unfortunately, *Mati* never replied to my query for clarification about this incident in the group. This example showed the difficulty of establishing the truth between their competing versions: whose account was a personal truth or a “truth”? It also raised the difficult question of whether it is possible or desirable for the children of perpetrators or beneficiaries to offer an apology on behalf of the first generation. Tutu (1999, p. 226) seemed in favour of apology “for those who cannot speak for themselves any longer” so that a shared future is possible, whereas Schlink (2010, p. 74) rejected this option on the basis that “forgiveness is too existential” (as discussed in chapter 3). But it seemed that what *Mati* said in her interview might have been a desire for an apology: if so, then this could be an issue that requires more dialogue among the children in a reconciliatory pedagogy, such as, who could apologise and on whose behalf.

By presenting their dramatisations (not longer than 10 minutes) the groups shared their stories and perspectives on life before and after apartheid in a way that highlighted both the horror and humour of the stories and the period. An important aspect was that their performances were shared with a group of peers (about 32 other students), although not in front of the whole class of 65

students. This helped to create a safe space: each person knew that everyone was expected to participate in the presentation, but it was not such a large group that it intimidated those students who felt shy about acting. The students needed to be creative in devising a situation, where given the success of apartheid in dividing South African society, it was possible for the various “characters” to meet from different sides of the racial divide. Some examples of the situations that they used were a history teacher who was giving a lesson to learners and had a video of the past which the group acted out (*Baloi and Mills*), while another involved an interview, together with flash back memories that were acted out by the group (*Cummings and Mati*). While the performances varied from outstanding to average, all the groups presented something of interest. This was quite a shift from the major resistance to the assignment that they showed at the beginning to a very real enjoyment towards the end. Even more important, each presentation served as a springboard for further discussion among all the groups in the class about the content which informed the dramatisations. This shared task proved to be an important turning point in relations among the class, and showed the importance of a polychronic approach to a reconciliatory pedagogy.

Reflections on the cooperative task

In their reflective essays, many students commented on how working together in a group, pooling their oral histories, then having to select from them in order to devise a dramatisation was a rewarding process. *Baloi* wrote in his reflective essay that “role play had its own set of skills. You had to be creative, because you had to summarise the research and then synthesise it into a short play.” In the interview, *Baloi* also mentioned the importance of using drama, as “it challenges you to come out of your comfort zone and ... you have to be kind of vulnerable for it to work.” He also said that it helps you to get to know one another better as “[p]eople’s strengths and weaknesses come out.” According to *Ngwenya*, the process of dramatisation means that “you have to let down your walls ... [you] had to think out of the box”. *North* wrote that role play is “a

wonderful teaching – and most importantly - *learning* [italics in the original] technique. It encourages creative ... and critical thought on interesting and sometimes controversial issues ... where the responsibility for dispensing knowledge lies with the learners and where learners learn from - and share information with - one another.” From her personal perspective, *North* wrote the following about working and presenting the dramatisation:

Effective role-playing means that I have to put myself into my character’s shoes if I wanted to tell a story that would be believable for my audience. This is important because then I had to try and imagine what it was like for someone living through apartheid and try and bring those emotions and feelings into my portrayal of the character. This is a good thing because placing yourself in someone else’s position forces you to critically consider that person’s experience and their [sic] point of view.

The use of empathy is sometimes construed as highly problematic (for example, would one want students to empathise with perpetrators of apartheid crimes?), but I believe that empathy can also help develop understanding. As Schlink (2010, p. 82) suggests, “true understanding ... includes putting yourself in someone else’s place ... and seeing the world through that person’s eyes”, and this is shown by the following students’ responses. According to *North*, the use of empathy requires imagination and it also forces you to consider critically that person’s experience and her point of view. *Green* agreed that empathy was an important aspect of role play, as she also identified in her reflective essay that “it promotes learner interaction”. *Ngwenya* supported this view and said that the role play “helped us to be able to communicate much better with each other”, which suggests that it helped to break down barriers, as stereotypes about life under apartheid were challenged in a meaningful way. However, *Mills* wrote that he thought the task of a play was not taken seriously by his group and described it as a “waste of time”, although he did acknowledge that the process helped to “break down stereotypes, and as a consequence become personal to us”. This suggests that there is some support for the claim that the cooperative learning strategy assists with the breaking of negative stereotypes (Sharan,

1990). But to what degree did this cooperative learning strategy help to shift changes in attitudes?

Shifts in relationships

It seems that the cooperative learning process did facilitate a shift in relationships and attitudes among some members of the group, so much so that *Baloi* wrote, “Role play ... gave me friends, instead of just names in a classroom. I got to know and work with friends that had different perspectives and social backgrounds.” However, he qualified this view in the interview in 2009 when he stated that while relationships developed as the cooperative task “kind of gave us common ground to kind of act on”, this did not result in “deep friendships but definitely friendships as in we’ve been through this together ... we were now more approachable to one another than before”. According to *Mills*, “none of us really knew anything about one another; it was nice to become sort of friends.” *Ngwenya* supported both *Baloi* and *Mill*'s views by describing the shift in relationships as people talking to one another in the corridor and that some “boundaries” were broken. *Green* commented that no real friendships developed, but that it did create a “connection”, as everyone was more willing to help one another, a view that was shared by *Mati* who said that they “bonded”. *Cummings* also agreed that the cooperative task did assist in helping to make more “contacts”, even if it started with greeting one another.

These may appear to be superficial examples of improved relations, but it suggests that there was not even this kind of acknowledgement or contact among the class prior to the assignment. The polarisation of the class ran deep, and I suggest it shows the value of this kind of assignment, which can assist students with starting to reweave relationships with one another. It can change their attitudes to one another in the short term, but what about the changing attitudes over the longer term?⁴³

⁴³ A major problem with Allport's contact theory is that frequently the change is seen as short lived and that for long term change, there needs to be “close, prolonged and frequent” contact

Many of the students related in their interviews that as a result of their overall university experience, they ended up making good friends across the barriers of the past in the longer term (*Cummings, Green, North and Mati*). I also discovered while interviewing *Baloi* and *Mills* (on separate occasions) that they became close friends during the course of their university career, although neither recalled having been in the same group in 2006, which I had discovered when I consulted my records for this class. While the friendship may not have developed directly as a result of this process, I suggest that the use of this cooperative learning task may have sown the seeds of their friendship. When I mentioned that they were in the same group, both *Baloi* and *Mills* expressed their surprise. *Baloi* suggested that their friendship grew during their third and fourth years at university, but now given work commitments in different environments, it was challenging to stay in touch.

Another example of a friendship was shown in the relationship that developed between *North* and another member of her cooperative group, both in terms of story and what happened after university: when I interviewed her, she recalled clearly *Page's* story, who was part of her group, as *Page's* mother went to school across the road from the place that *North's* family moved to from Eldorado Park. The two kept in touch once they had left university and as a result of their continued friendship, *Page* moved to teach at the same school as *North*. While I cannot claim that there is a causal relationship between this assignment and the friendships that developed, there is a strong impression that it contributed to a small degree in helping to change attitudes and to reweave and develop relationships among some of the students.

(Tal-Or, Boninger & Gleicher, 2002, p. 92). An example, from one of the interviews that related to another context, illustrates this problem: Ngwenya described her church as running a programme which aimed to facilitate reconciliation, where discussions were held in small racially mixed groups on what had happened in the past. This process allowed for perceptions of one another to be shared and worked through within the small groups. She felt that enormous progress was made, yet afterwards, when it was lunch time, the groups sat in racially divided groups, and she suggested that not much changed after this short term contact.

At the time of the interview, *Ngwenya*, who had started her teaching career and was studying her honours part time, still noticed racial divisions at university, in terms of where different groups sat to eat their lunch at the canteen. However, she felt that this situation was improving in other ways, as there were more friendships that crossed the barriers of the past among members of her honours class. While *Ngwenya* acknowledged that the separation among the races is beyond any one person's control, she felt that it was our responsibility as lecturers to start the process within lectures, as was done with the oral history assignment. Both *Cummings* and *Mati* felt that there was little racial separation in their honours class, as they agreed that the class was more integrated. This suggests that it takes time to overcome the barriers of the past, and that one small assignment which encourages cooperation and hopes to assist with the reconciliation process cannot make a major difference. Yet, it may be a case of a drop at a time that does make a difference: *Cummings*, *Green* and *Mati* mentioned that in 2007 they were expected to work cooperatively again during the natural sciences curriculum studies course (which was another compulsory course for the intermediate and senior phase in the then Bachelor of Education curriculum at the University of the Witwatersrand), and that this had further reinforced contact positively among the class. While this happened accidentally (there was no explicit link between the two courses), it is an example of the kind of opportunities that could exist for starting the process of reweaving relationships at university level.

Lederach's conception of reconciliation and a reconciliatory pedagogy

As I have already suggested in chapter 2, there are aspects of Lederach's conception of reconciliation which open up possibilities for my notion of a reconciliatory pedagogy. To recap: his conception of the paradigm of reconciliation as "both a *focus* and a *locus*" (Lederach, 1997, p. 30). It deals with:

three specific paradoxes: First, ... reconciliation promotes an encounter between the open expression of the painful past, on the one hand, and the search for the articulation of a long-term, interdependent future, on the other hand. Second, reconciliation provides a place for truth and mercy to meet, where concerns for exposing what has happened *and* for letting go in favour of renewed relationship are validated and embraced. Third, reconciliation recognizes the need to give time and place to both justice and peace, where redressing the wrong is held together with the envisioning of a common, connected future. (Lederach, 1997, p. 31)

While Lederach is referring to building peace as a result of major conflict on international and national stages, I think that many of his ideas are also applicable to what happened during this assignment: it provided a place for potential antagonists, who are the children of survivors, victims, perpetrators, beneficiaries and bystanders, to meet. This means that the cooperative process allowed these members of the second generation to build and develop their relationships in a safe space. It is not possible that this assignment, limited in time and scope, could address all the wrongs of the past. However, it provided a space for some of these wrongs to be discussed in a way that developed a deeper understanding of the perceptions and experiences of one another, and also of the first generation via the oral histories. *Ngwenya* said that this process of discussing the stories led us “to appreciate and understand what happened in the past. And again we counted ourselves as lucky for not being there and how we should not be taking it out on each other.” This opened up an acknowledgement of what had happened in the past and for compassion to be shown towards the survivors and victims of the first generation, and to one another. By doing so, I suggest that the cooperative task, as one of many possible activities, helped with the process of reweaving relationships in the class, and this might affect the prospects of long-term peace.

Lederach’s (1999, pp. 79 - 80) key image of reconciliation is that of the dance, where the social energies of truth, justice, mercy, hope and peace are embodied as dancers on a stage. It is this image that I suggest is most applicable to what happened among the students during the process of the cooperative activity. The image of the dance of reconciliation is played out at a

number of levels: from the sharing of their stories, which in many different ways illustrated the injustices of the past, as well as the “truths” of what had happened according to people who had lived during apartheid. Another level to this dance is the further discussion of the oral histories amongst the students in order to select and create a common dramatisation of their understanding of life before and after apartheid. This created an opportunity for dialogue, and for a shared understanding to develop not only about the oral histories, but also a broader, deeper understanding of what apartheid meant to the generation that lived during those times. It allowed for the students to empathise with this generation’s experiences and to show compassion for what had happened to their parents. In another twist to the dance, the students had an opportunity to reflect on the implications of these stories for their own lives in the present and the future, so that the interconnection between the past, present and future were shown as suggested by Mbiti’s conception of time (cited in Lederach, 2005, p. 146). This is where the dancers of peace and hope play an important role.

The actual dramatisation of the stories showed the injustices of the past in physical ways. For example, the re-enacting of an arrest of someone who did not have the *dompas* can also lead to a different type of understanding, as this kind of learning becomes embodied learning. In a similar way, Lederach (1999, p. 79) sees the dancers in reconciliation embodying the qualities of truth, justice, mercy, peace and hope so that they are not simply abstract entities. There was a wonderful response to the dramatisations: roles were assigned irrespective of race, and the laughter of the audience at the role reversals provided recognition of the absurdities of apartheid. During the discussion that followed the dramatisations, one of the class commented on how the singing of freedom songs in one of the dramatisations affected him: for the first time he truly understood the injustices of the past in a way that he had never experienced before.

Yet, it was the reflection both in the required reflective essays and in the interviews that showed me the impact and possibilities that this process had for a reconciliatory pedagogy: the issue of past injustices was placed squarely on the table; the fear that some students expressed at the beginning of the assignment that this process would lead to naming and blaming was unfounded. However, this did not lessen the impact of speaking and hearing these stories, as some students still felt uncomfortable. This process needed to be uncomfortable, as it helped to show the difficulties of dealing with our collective past, and it assisted in breaking through the defences that often act as barriers to reconciliation. Emotions that arose as a result of retelling and listening to the stories of past injustice emerged and informed the discussions. Then the process of working together to construct a dramatisation based on the stories helped to create a “focus and locus” for further dialogue about this painful past. The use of small groups and a common task helped to create a safe space, where the students were able to establish a place where they could trust one another. If trust is not established, then there is a risk that this process could lead to polarisation rather than reconciliation.

However, I do not claim that this part of the assignment was able to resolve all the issues on the table. Instead, I see it as a start of a long conversation: it is a process which aims to reweave relationships, without repressing or dismissing difficult issues, such as truth and justice. In both the written reflection and interviews, there was some acknowledgement of the injustices of the past by the children of beneficiaries and bystanders. For example, *Cummings* said that black people are hurt, and she believes that this is rightly so, given what happened in the past, and rejects the “let’s get over it and move on” attitude. On the other hand, *Edge* argued that black people should move beyond their hurt, because “[y]ou’re never going to move on unless you forgive what’s been done to you in the past.” This may be a truism that she expressed, yet there was no acknowledgement that there were injustices in the past that still needed to be addressed. Possibly she was expressing a defensive reaction to the fear of being blamed, or going through the painful process of acknowledging the

validity of the hurt feelings or she felt that this had been done already (at the level of the TRC), so there was no further need for acknowledgement. But I believe that a process that encourages reconciliation cannot happen without the recognition or acknowledgement of the injustices of the past, as suggested by Lederach's model. A reconciliatory pedagogy would need to hold these ideas of fearful feelings and past injustices and allow the students to participate in the dance of reconciliation as they address them.

A reconciliatory pedagogy also allows a space for compassion to develop. *Ngwenya* acknowledged the bitterness that she still feels when she hears about the stories of the past. Yet this view was tempered by the compassion she was prepared to show to her peers: she expressed the view that it was not this generation's fight and that they were lucky to be living in a different time to their parents, which suggests that her attitude towards others did change. But did this assignment lead to reconciliation among the students? *Baloi* was unsure that the assignment led to reconciliation, because the students in the class were born towards the end of the 1980s or towards the beginning of the 1990s. He argued that they were born towards the end of apartheid, so most of them were hardly affected by it because they were young. Furthermore, he felt that they were a different generation (to those who lived as adults during apartheid) and therefore it was a different kind of reconciliation, because "[i]t's not first person ... it's now second person type of reconciliation." While I agree with his view that the process of reconciliation will be different for each generation, I disagree that the students who were born towards the end of apartheid were hardly affected by it. It may be true that they did not experience apartheid directly, but there is no doubt that their own situation was affected by it, albeit through Hoffman's (2005, p. 6) "first knowledge" or Jansen's "bitter knowledge" (2009a, p. 114). Further, Lederach's (2005, p. 136) use of Mbiti's conception of time described as "spacetime" suggests that the past and future are connected, and this challenges the idea of a linear distinction between past, present and future. *Baloi's* conception of time appears to not take into account how much the past informs the present and connects to the future too.

In contrast to *Baloi*, *Ngwenya* argued that this assignment did act as a means towards reconciliation, because it triggered lots of discussion about what happened in the stories: “we looked at ourselves and where our parents came from and what it means for us ... although there’s those feelings of bitterness, but ... we realise that this is not our story, it’s our parents’ story, but it’s important to keep them alive and can make us appreciate where they come from.” *Ngwenya* also makes a distinction about the effect of apartheid on the different generations, and I feel that like *Baloi*, she is also trying to distance herself when she says that “this is not our story, it’s our parents’ story”. At a literal level, she is correct, although at another level the same story still affects both generations, albeit in different ways, as suggested by Hoffman (2005, p. 60), Jansen (2009a, p. 114) and Lederach (2005, p. 136).

Ngwenya points to the importance of the dialogue that happened by means of sharing their stories as part of the process of leading to reconciliation with her peers. *Cummings* also supported this view when she said that it is easier to reconcile if you are involved in both speaking and listening. This implies that it helped to establish a reciprocal relationship. This was further reinforced by *Green* who said that cooperative group work did assist with reconciliation, “as it gave us all a voice and that’s part of having a reconciliation [process]”, since it was an inclusive and participatory process. However, *Mills* had a more flippant response to the question of reconciliation, as he said, “this assignment did not lead to reconciliation, it was just for marks!”. While his dismissive remark does point to a possible flaw in the process, he made me reflect on one of the interviews in greater depth. *Edge* was a student who I felt had made a significant shift in her attitude based on her reflective essay, as she felt that the process of exchanging and sharing stories with one another gave them “a much broader insight into what really happened during this time, we were able to expand our understanding beyond the narrow minded view that might have been in place before. We were able to see and feel and understand the experiences of other races and cultures. I was then able to compare it to life

today and see just how immense and significant the transformation of our country has really been.” When I interviewed her, at first she did not appear to remember much about the assignment, although she recalled how difficult the process of cooperative learning had been for her, as she experienced it as conflict within the group. This made me wonder afterwards whether she truly had experienced a shift or if she felt that this was something I wanted to read in a reflective essay and that it would lead to high marks. If this sense is true that her reflection on the process was for marks, then I would agree with *Mills* that this assignment did not contribute to real reconciliation.

On reflection, the students’ comments raised a further question concerning Lederach’s model of reconciliation. There were clear linkages to aspects of his model such as justice, truth, compassion, peace and hope in the process of the cooperative learning, but I wondered whether it was always possible to solve some of the potential conflicts among Lederach’s social energies in the history lecture room. For example, discussion concerning an injustice in the past might lead to feelings of anger being rekindled, which fosters ideas of taking revenge in practice rather than facilitating peace. There is no doubt that the lecture room provided a space for dialogue to occur about some of these tricky issues, but there is also potential for conflict to emerge beyond the confines of the lecture room. While I have argued that conflict of ideas (both intellectual and emotional) is a necessary part of a reconciliatory pedagogy, in some ways, it seems that the more appropriate space to aim to resolve these conflicts is in the broader society, and not the lecture room.

Use of a reconciliatory pedagogy in history classrooms

A related question that I raised during the interviews with the students was, after having gone through an experience of a reconciliatory pedagogy, would they use it in their own classrooms (or future classrooms)? At the time of these interviews, four of the former students had started their first teaching year in the

classroom (*Baloi, Edge, North and Ngwenya*), while the others (*Cummings, Green, Mati and Mills*) were either continuing their studies at university or planning to go overseas. While their insights differed depending on whether they were teaching or not, there was a resounding agreement that a reconciliatory pedagogy was needed in the classroom (history and other subjects too), although there were important qualifications that some of the students/teachers mentioned.

North felt that it was important to do an oral history assignment with the learners she taught: “Lots of these kids don’t know where they come from ... [they are] just so lost”. She felt that an oral history assignment would help them to develop a sense of identity, as they would begin to know more about their families and/or communities. *North* explicitly rejected race as the kind of identity she meant, as differences at her public primary school were identifiable more in terms of socio-economics than race. To support her argument, she told the story about a conflict at school, where a child said that she did not want to play with another, because she was black. When *North* probed by asking what she meant by ‘black’, the child could not explain what she meant, and she interpreted this as a lack of understanding of the meaning of the term. If *North* is correct, and the child was not quiet for other reasons, then this lack of a conception of difference based on race may be explained by the homogeneous nature of this public primary school.

The third generation

Other student/teachers also supported this view about the “third”⁴⁴ generation: *Edge* said that when she watches her learners who were “born ... into this ‘new’ South Africa, I watch them and they don’t see colour ... I don’t think that they would really understand what apartheid was and what it means to not be able to

⁴⁴ My use of the term “third” generation is not chronological, as some of the learners in the classroom may be considered part of the “second generation”, as they are literally children of the “first generation”. However, I have referred to the students/teachers as members of the second generation, and for the purpose of clarity, I have chosen to refer to the learners as members of the third generation.

go somewhere because they haven't experienced that ... [in contrast] the people in our group had lived through that experience and had had that first hand as children ... not being able to go anywhere." *Green* also said that she felt that the children are more reconciled than the parents. She also made the observation that they do not see colour, although as a result of her teaching practice in her final year at university, she observed that the "coloured kids" she taught did not know how lucky they were to be where they were. But she felt that "it's not their fault because they're young ... And what an injustice their parents are doing by not teaching them about it [apartheid]."

There appears to be a similarity between the students/teachers' observation and Kagan's (1994) about United States schools, where it seems that learners start out in primary schools as socially integrated and then they become more segregated as they grow older. While the contexts are different between South Africa and the United States in terms of majority/minority groups, an example based on the experience of my own child who was a similar age to the learners of my former students, suggests a different perspective. My daughter, who attended a school that appeared well-integrated, was told by some of her peers that she could not sit on a bench, because it was reserved for black children only. This was an ironic reversal of one of petty apartheid's policies of separate benches for different races, but this example suggests that what happens on the ground among the children may differ from the positive views of the students/teachers about the third generation.

There are studies that detail the shift from policies in different contexts: those that encouraged assimilation or pluralism (Sharan, 1985, pp. 256–257, Towson, 1985, p. 272); multiculturalism to critical multiculturalism to anti-racism and conflict resolution (Steiner-Khamsi, 2003, pp. 18–21); and finally, critical anti-racism (Carrim & Soudien, 1999, pp. 153-155). Most of these authors have questioned the "colour blind" approach, because it supports an apolitical denial of the importance of race. In the context of South Africa, race has a particular resonance, as it has shaped and privileged certain learners at the expense of

others. *North* may have been correct in her interpretation of why the child did not answer her question about the meaning of black, but there may be another reason as to why the child kept quiet, such as deciding that it was better not to risk offending the teacher further. I challenged *Edge* concerning her view that her learners would not understand apartheid: I felt that some of the learners' understanding of apartheid would be broader than her example of their not understanding how apartheid restricted the movement of black people. There is no doubt that some of the learners' parents and grandparents would have experienced the full force of apartheid, but the caveat here is whether or not the parents or members of the family had talked to their children about their experiences. *Green's* view that her learners' parents had not told their children about the past is also revealing, and again there are many possible reasons for the silence: a desire to protect their children against this terrible knowledge or a desire "to bury this past and to move on". This silence can have unexpected consequences, and I have argued in chapter 3 that a reconciliatory pedagogy could assist the reweaving of relationships by helping to break this silence between the generations.

Reasons for doing a reconciliatory pedagogy in the history classroom

Despite *Mills's* seemingly flippant reaction to the assignment's link with reconciliation, he came up with the strongest argument in favour of a reconciliatory pedagogy in his future classroom. *Mills* argued that it was the "ethical responsibility of educators" to do assignments like this one in the classroom, and he would use the "ethos" of the assignment in his own teaching. *Green* said that she would do an assignment like this one when she starts to teach "one million percent", as she felt it important that the learners find out the truth about what happened during the apartheid years, because "every child needs the truth!" She saw it as a beneficial and empowering activity for everyone, especially as she felt that she was one of the last generations in South Africa who were "almost kept under wraps" and did not know the truth of what was happening during apartheid. *Edge* was also in favour of applying a

reconciliatory pedagogy in her classroom, because it would help her learners get to the “crux of the matter”. She added that the use of cooperative learning strategies helps the process, “because then the learners learn from each other, ... [a]nd then it becomes like a community ... working together ... bridges that gap that has been formed by society. So I think doing cooperative [learning] and doing these oral histories, they all can bring ... their backgrounds together and they can learn more about each other and understand that although they’re very different that there is a common ground for them.” *Baloi* also argued in favour of a reconciliatory pedagogy in his classroom: “I think that they [his learners] are in need [of reconciliation], ... I think that they need to realise that they are in need ... But if you don’t show them the need, then they won’t learn from it ... and you need to show them why there’s the need.” Furthermore, he suggested that by doing the interview it [makes apartheid] more real ... [it] promotes reconciliation and learning from the past from a different perspective.” I think that *Baloi* made an important observation that a reconciliatory pedagogy needs to take into consideration that the learners need to understand why reconciliation is important, because without this understanding, it could become a fruitless exercise.

Ngwenya identified the need for more “peace building” initiatives in the schools, as Social Sciences has such a “small platform” in the NCS curriculum (which was current at the time of the interviews in 2009) in terms of time and there is only a small space right at the end of the textbook for democracy in Grade 6. She suggested that Social Sciences needed a bigger platform, because what’s prescribed is “cutting it on top, and it’s not going a bit deeper into it.” *Mills* also agreed that the Social Sciences classroom could be used as a place for a reconciliatory pedagogy, but that the reality was that Social Sciences were no longer “celebrated”. Instead, it is “played down ... so a [reconciliatory pedagogy is a] wonderful way to look at reconciliation, but it’s not happening.” In their support of a reconciliatory pedagogy, the students used key ideas such as truth, mercy and peace which can be related to Lederach’s model of reconciliation, even though they were not exposed to this model. *Ngwenya* and *Mills*’s concern

that Social Sciences has been side-lined in the curriculum is valid, given that Social Sciences is given less time than languages and mathematics on the timetable, and by including both history and geography in one learning area, this time is cut even further. However, I suggest that this makes it even more important to do a reconciliatory pedagogy, as it encourages learning “from the past from a different perspective” (*Baloi*), one which enables learners to engage both with an older generation and their peers, and it makes for a worthwhile learning opportunity from sources that are not found in the textbook.

Another point raised by some of the students concerned the timing of when it would be most appropriate to use a reconciliatory pedagogy in the classroom. *North* felt that an application of a reconciliatory pedagogy might be better at a high school level, where the learners would be more mature. In contrast, *Mati* argued that it was important to start with this process at primary school, so that by the time the learners reached the tertiary level, there would have been sufficient time for a process of reconciliation to happen. *Mati* saw education as key, because she perceived reconciliation as part of a long process. She felt that there was a mind-set from a black perspective that white people would always be part of the apartheid era. This has had two effects: white people have become cautious and have stayed in their own shells; while black people have tended to avoid white people. This means that she would use an assignment like the one we did in her own classroom as it could encourage equality, and she wanted the different groups to mingle in order to encourage reconciliation. She was aware that it might bring up anger, but she said that “we need to deal with the anger, so that they learn from it, ... and they get over it.”

Edge also added major qualifications to her support of a reconciliatory pedagogy, as she felt the need to be sensitive about the topic so that differences were not overemphasised. She was concerned that the process might upset black children, but did not express a similar concern for the white children in her classroom. *Edge* expressed the desire to move forward from apartheid and not to keep bringing the topic up in school and reliving it. She

proposed teaching apartheid as history, but not as part of the present South Africa anymore. *Edge* argued that teaching about apartheid does the opposite of reconciliation, as it “pushes people away because it brings up those feelings of hurt ... from the past.” She supported her views based on her own experience of the cooperative learning process at university, where she felt that an enormous amount of anger emerged in her group. Lederach’s (1997, 1999) conception of reconciliation emphasises the importance of a holistic approach to reconciliation, so that it is not possible to avoid having to talk about what has happened in the past, let alone to try and separate the past and the present in the way that *Edge* is proposing. This is also counter to the notion of Mbiti’s “spacetime” (as cited in Lederach, 2005, p. 146), which argues for a circular understanding of time, where the present, past and future are interrelated. *Edge*’s concern about how to deal with the anger that this process of cooperative learning may evoke is a cause for concern.

Yet, there was also an enormous generosity shown towards the third generation of white children by some of the black students who were in their first year of teaching. Despite the injustices of the past, and the need to level the playing fields that Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) has tried to do in the broader society, *North* felt that it was extremely unfair for the white boys in her class to be discriminated against in the future. She argued that her learners were not directly responsible for what happened in the past: “It’s our history as South Africans but our children should not be punished for ... something that they didn’t have control over or weren’t even part of.” For *Baloi*, the learners in his classroom show a distance when it comes to understanding the importance of democracy in South Africa, because he argues they were not directly affected by apartheid. He said that this distance lasts until there is a discussion about BEE, then “[y]ou get angry and you say, it’s not fair ..., it’s so political. ... But once you get affected by something from that era ... then it brings it a bit closer, because it’s now something that’s happening with your heart.” *Baloi* shows the importance of an approach to the past that engages both the intellect and the

emotions, otherwise many learners at this age are inclined to dismiss the relevance of what happened in the past to their present and future.

Edge argued further that there was a fine line between information and understanding, and not taking it too far so that it causes conflict in the classroom: she felt that it was important to “teach our kids about equity and respect and about love ... then when they grow up they won’t have that feeling of that division”. If the learners can learn and understand about *ubuntu*, in turn they would be able to teach their own parents. *Edge* was able to see the potential of how a reconciliatory pedagogy could move between the classroom and the broader society, and *ubuntu* was a powerful idea in the TRC and it has informed my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy.⁴⁵ However, as I have previously argued, I do not think that it is possible to avoid conflict (should it arise) and this process cannot avoid bringing up painful feelings. It is debatable whether her approach of formally teaching about equity, respect and love will work to cross the divide, although these are important ideas. I suggest that there is a need for a reconciliatory pedagogy, because it allows for a nonlinear approach to difficult issues, where the emphasis is on the process.

Conclusion: the dance of reconciliation

There is a need for a “bottom up” approach to reconciliation in South Africa, which could happen in the history classroom or lecture room as a place and space where children of survivors, victims, perpetrators, beneficiaries and bystanders meet one another. I think that Lederach's relational perspective is important: there is often subterranean antagonism in the classroom, which is not openly addressed, and can fester. I suggest that the roots of this antagonism lie in past injustices. A polychronic approach to reconciliation, which

⁴⁵ See discussion of *ubuntu* in chapter 2. A link between *ubuntu* and peace education has also been made by Murithi (2009).

includes a cooperative learning task, might assist in addressing some of these issues.

I have argued in this chapter, using Allport's contact theory, that it is important for the different groups of students in South Africa to have contact with one another, but that mere contact is insufficient to address the problems of polarisation that I have observed in the lecture hall. While Allport agreed that contact was not sufficient on its own and suggested that there needed to be certain conditions met for the contact to lead to change (Tal-Or, Boninger & Gleicher, 2002, p. 89) I have found that some aspects of his theory are problematic. In particular, there needs to be a careful process that leads not only to short-term contact, but to meaningful, on-going contact which has as its purpose not assimilation, but a recognition of difference, albeit one that leads to a deeper understanding of one another. While using a cooperative learning strategy assists with the process of breaking down stereotypes, and it appears to help shift attitudes in some cases in a positive way, I suggest that something more is needed. My conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy, which uses dramatisation as part of a cooperative learning strategy, and is informed by Lederach's paradigm of reconciliation, can help to facilitate a process of reconciliation in the history methodology lecture room. A reconciliatory pedagogy helps the students to put the issues from the past on the table in such a way that through dialogue they develop a deeper awareness and understanding of these issues. Furthermore, it assists with the process of reweaving relationships and it can help to change attitudes towards one another. There needs to be a space and place where the social energies of truth, justice, mercy, peace and hope are allowed to play their roles in doing the work of fostering reconciliation. Yet, I am unsure as to whether the lecture room is the space where potential conflicts among these energies will be resolved, as this is part of the broader society's project of reconciliation. Nonetheless, while Lederach's ideas are intended for a larger, public space and peace-making process, I suggest that it is also possible to apply aspects of these big ideas to a much smaller, stage, that is, the history methodology lecture room. This

stage, which I conceive as literally and figuratively in the round, can encourage the on-going dance of reconciliation in a participatory and inclusive manner, and this will help us in the process of moving from a divided past to a shared future. In its way, a reconciliatory pedagogy can contribute to the broader project of reconciliation, by acting as part of a polychronic approach. In the next chapter, I turn to my classroom observations of whether it is possible to implement a reconciliatory pedagogy in primary school classrooms. Further, how did a reconciliatory pedagogy affect some of my former students' teaching practice and relationships in the classroom once they became history teachers?

Chapter 5: “I almost cried!” -Data from school observations and analysis

Introduction

In this chapter, my aims are to investigate whether my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy, developed in an university context, could be adapted and used in a primary school context and what effect this might have on the way history is taught and relationships in the classroom. I identify the questions that guided my narrative inquiry in this context, describe how I conceptualised and conducted my research in three primary schools in Johannesburg and what my findings were. The first question was, how did the teachers implement an oral history task and a cooperative learning strategy in their own classrooms, and what were the successes and limitations of this approach in this context? Secondly, what were the effects of having experienced this approach at university on the teachers' own classroom practice? Or if the teachers did not have this experience modelled for them, did it make a difference to the way they implemented my request and how history was taught in their classrooms? Thirdly, how did the teachers respond to the idea of a reconciliatory pedagogy, and did their views affirm or challenge my own conception? A further question that arose as a result of reflection on the interviews with the students in chapters 2 and 3, and that I decided to investigate further with the teachers, is related to the issue of identity: how did the teachers perceive their own identities and those of their learners, and was there any need for what Lederach (1999, p. 138) called “reconciliation, understood as relationship and restoration, the healing of personal and social fabrics”?

Within this chapter, I follow a process of narrative inquiry as suggested by Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 49), which focuses on both personal and social experience in the schools in a specific time. This narrative inquiry framework allows my inquiry to travel in different “directions”, such as “*inward, outward, backward, forward* and [is] *situated within place[s]*”, as I question what happens during my classroom observations and in interviews with the teachers for my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy. I start with a brief description of how the first-year and experienced teachers, respectively, interpreted my brief to use an oral history task and cooperative learning strategy in their history classrooms in three primary schools. Then I present an in-depth narrative account of my observation of one of the teachers, and use it to provide a context to examine the successes of and constraints on implementing a reconciliatory pedagogy in relation to both her lessons and the other teachers.

Next, I examine the teachers’ reactions to the idea of a reconciliatory pedagogy and how suitable it might be at primary school level. Further, I select “critical incidents” from my classroom observation and interviews, which link to issues of the teachers’ conceptions of their own identities and their learners. I use them to discuss whether or not there is a need for the reweaving of relationships between the teachers and learners, and among the learners too, by using the process of a reconciliatory pedagogy in the classroom. Finally, I turn to Lederach’s model of reconciliation in order to show how this model could be linked to the current primary school history curriculum at the intermediate phase.

Research sample

I was fortunate that one of the former students, *North*, whom I had contacted to do an interview based on her 2006 oral history assignment, offered to help me with my research sample in terms of my classroom observation. She indicated that she was teaching with three former students from the 2006 history methodology class, and asked them to assist me with my research. They kindly

agreed to do so, as long as the principal was asked for permission, and she agreed for this research to be conducted in the school. This primary school is situated in the south of Johannesburg (for ease of reference I call this School A), and these four former students were in their first year of teaching at the school when I observed them. I also discovered that there was also a more experienced history teacher who had been in my history methodology class in 2004, and she agreed to assist me with my research too.⁴⁶

Another former student whom I interviewed worked at a primary school in the eastern suburbs of Johannesburg, and I call this School B. While he too agreed to my observing him, he did not want this to happen during his first year of teaching. As a result, I observed him at the beginning of his third year of teaching, so that I considered him to be a more experienced teacher.

While supervising undergraduate students at an independent primary school in the North Eastern suburbs of Johannesburg, which I have called School C, I met two more former students whom I taught prior to 2006, and they also agreed to be part of my research. Thus the sample for my research evolved organically, rather than being the result of a predetermined design, and happened at three schools in different areas of Johannesburg: two state or public primary schools (both former Model C schools)⁴⁷ and one independent or private primary school. There was a mixture of four first-year teachers and four more experienced teachers, and I intended to compare whether there were any differences or similarities between their approaches in implementing a reconciliatory pedagogy. While the first-year teachers had all been part of the class of 2006, only one of the more experienced teachers was a member of the 2006 class. But I had taught all of these teachers history methodology as

⁴⁶ I started the interviews with teachers in 2009 at School A. Next, I interviewed teachers at School C in 2010 and conducted my final interview at School B in early 2011. I have put the teachers' names in italics following the convention established for students' names in previous chapters. All the names are pseudonyms.

⁴⁷ A Model C school refers to a formerly whites only school that in 1990 was allowed "to enrol black students legally" (Carrim & Soudien, 1999, p. 156). In 1996, these schools became "public" schools (Carrim & Soudien, 1999, p. 158) and over the years, the demographics have changed at these schools, so that the majority of learners are black.

students, and they had done an oral history assignment for me and had encountered cooperative learning in one form or another at university. The teachers taught history at different levels of the intermediate and senior phase of the primary schools (Grades 4 – 7), with the exception of one teacher who was teaching Economic and Management Sciences (EMS). However, she was willing to do a historical topic that linked with this particular learning area.

For the purpose of this research, I reminded them of the 2006 assignment or outlined what it consisted of (for those who were not part of this class) and requested that they devise a lesson or two based on oral history using a cooperative learning strategy of their own choice, which I would observe. As I did not want my research to interrupt what they were expected to do in their classrooms, I asked them to do a lesson which related to their current teaching and learning schedule. This would also show whether or not a reconciliatory pedagogy could be applied to different topics. Then I requested an interview before and after the lessons that I observed, and the interview consisted of a mixture of structured and unstructured questions.⁴⁸ The first-year teachers attempted to integrate my request with what they were covering in the history classroom, while the more experienced teachers questioned me more closely about the 2006 assignment. This led to two of the four teachers adapting the 2006 assignment for the lessons that I observed, while the other two devised their own tasks for their classes.

The first-year teachers at School A taught Grades 4 and 5. Before I observed the classes, the teachers introduced the topic of oral history and linked it to a task related to what they were teaching. The Grade 4 teacher, *Sofianos*, was busy with the history of transport and asked her learners to interview their grandparents as to how they moved to Johannesburg. *Dyer* and *Page*, the teachers who both taught Grade 5 history and were required to follow the same material and schedule, selected South Africa's old Coat of Arms as a visual source that the learners used as the basis for the oral history interviews with

⁴⁸ Due to time constraints on many of the teachers, I had to adapt my interviews to happen after the classroom observation in most cases.

their parents. *North*, who also taught Grade 5, linked oral history to an Economics and Management Sciences topic of a budget. The learners had to interview their parents or grandparents about the prices of goods in the past and present.

The more experienced teachers all chose to focus the learners' oral history research on the topic of apartheid, despite it not being a formal history topic for all the grades (they taught different grades that were between Grades 5 – 7), but they did so in various ways. My focus was on the teachers' perceptions and the interaction with their learners, rather than on the learners themselves. This meant that I did not examine the learners' oral stories, nor did I interview them, because this was beyond the focus of my research.

Implementation of a reconciliatory pedagogy

I had hoped that the first-year teachers would recall the cooperative learning process that they had experienced during the 2006 assignment, and as a result they would be able to implement cooperative learning (I will describe their cooperative learning tasks in greater detail during the course of this chapter). However, I discovered that these teachers' conception and implementation of a cooperative learning task was problematic, as the majority of their tasks were not really cooperative, but were based on generic group work: *North* organised for the groups to discuss their findings about the budget; *Dyer* requested his groups to do a joint mind map of their findings from their oral history interviews, which was a task that tried to create positive interdependence, but in reality led to some learners participating and others not; *Page* confused a cooperative strategy of "round robin", where everyone in the group takes a turn to write their ideas, with group work where a scribe writes on behalf of the whole group. However, *Sofianos's* task of a group dramatization of the information from the oral history did create positive interdependence, and there was a form of individual and group accountability, which are key characteristics of cooperative learning.

In contrast to the first-year teachers, the more experienced teachers proved better at implementing the cooperative learning activities. *Drew*, who taught Grade 7s at School A, quickly divided the cooperative groups between two adjacent classrooms: she organised the groups in a heterogeneous manner based on whether the learners were independent or dependent workers. The reason for the division of learners was that there were 44 learners in her class, so this physical separation helped to lessen the noise factor while the learners were doing the cooperative activity. This division also helped to deal with the lack of sufficient chairs and desks for each learner in the original classroom. Even though School A was a co-educational one, the classes at this grade were divided along gender lines, so that there were separate classes for the girls and boys in the same grade, as it was part of the school's policy to decrease tensions between the boys and girls (Journal observation, November 19, 2009). *Drew* chose to do the oral history task with the girls only, because she felt that the "boys were not independent workers". The cooperative activity was to discuss the results of their interviews based on their oral histories with one another and then to dramatise their stories, so both individual and group accountability were built into the task. This also ensured that the groups were positively interdependent, and the learners produced dramatisations that were informed and entertaining, although there was a misconception that former President Nelson Mandela won the 1994 election on his own (Journal observation, November 19, 2009).

Baloi, who also taught Grade 7s at School B, focused the oral interviews on apartheid legislation, and organised his groups as they came in to the classroom by giving them pieces of paper which indicated which group they should join. The groups were formed according to his knowledge of who was better at speaking and who was better at writing, and this ensured that the groups were heterogeneous. There were 30 learners in the class. The cooperative activity was a version of think-pair-share, where each learner in the group had to ask another a specific question about his/her interview, then write

the answer down, and report back what s/he had learned to the whole class. *Baloi* then used the answers to generate a whole class discussion which compared and contrasted what happened under apartheid and the present with regard to topics such as education, strikes and xenophobia (Journal observation, February 22, 2011).

Rabinowitz, who taught Grade 6 at School C, gave the learners set questions to ask for their oral history interviews, and it was given as a holiday assignment. It was unclear on what basis *Rabinowitz* organised her groups, as the learners were arranged at desks and on the mat when I arrived. The first task she gave them was to discuss the results of their interviews in groups. Then *Rabinowitz* presented images from the apartheid era on a white smart board that changed in rhythm according to a song by Johnny Clegg, before moving on to the cooperative activity. The follow up task was a mixture of discussion and filling in a table based on their interviews. While it formally met the criteria of a cooperative activity, and encouraged both individual and group accountability, it did not encourage much discussion or dialogue about the information that the learners gained from the interviews (Journal observation, October 7, 2010).

I thought that the above experienced teachers were able to demonstrate a variety of approaches to using oral history and cooperative learning in the history classroom, but there were varying degrees of success in their implementation. On the whole, the process was inclusive of most of the learners and they participated actively. While these classroom observations were over two lessons, I felt that they provided no more than a snapshot of the possibilities or difficulties of implementing a reconciliatory pedagogy at primary school level. However, *Aronstam*, a Grade 5 teacher at School C, recognised that this process would need more time and invited me to observe her class for a day and a half. I have chosen to give a narrative, descriptive account of my observation of her classroom, for the following reasons: this account will help show what a reconciliatory pedagogy might look like in practice at the level of a

primary school, and it also forms a basis from which to compare and contrast her approach to mine as well as the other teachers' approaches.

Narrative account of Aronstam's lessons

Aronstam started her class with a role play which demonstrated discrimination: the class was divided into two groups, which she labelled the pinks and the blues. Then without warning, she proceeded to treat the pinks/blues differently: the pinks were allowed to sit on chairs and have desks, whereas the blues had to huddle on the floor and try to do a task in cramped circumstances; there were enough glue sticks for the pinks and few for the blues; she was kind and concerned about the welfare of the pinks, in contrast, she shouted at the blues if they so much as moved. The class was amazed by the change in their teacher, and laughed very nervously during the role play. A boy in the pink group almost exploded with anger after *Aronstam* stopped her role play. She reassured the class that this was a role play, and that she had not changed into another person.

Then *Aronstam* used a cooperative learning technique called "think-pair-share", which requires the learners first to think about their answers, then to discuss them with a partner, and finally to share the partner's response with the rest of the class. This is how *Aronstam* debriefed the role play: the questions that they used ranged from how they felt about being treated differently because of their colour to establishing their knowledge about apartheid. *Aronstam* demonstrated how the cooperative activity worked, as this was the first time the learners were exposed to this teaching and learning strategy.

Next, *Aronstam* presented a compilation of images that helped to contextualise apartheid, as if it were part of a television programme, such as the History Channel. She presented a variety of images, such as a sign at Muizenberg beach in Cape Town which said "No dogs and non-whites allowed", and explained what that meant. Then *Aronstam* drew the class into a discussion based on a picture taken as a result of the Bantu Education Act: the photograph

was of a class where there were 46 pupils and one teacher, the pupils wore no shoes, and sat on logs, not chairs. All of this detail about the picture emerged from the learners in response to her questions. At the end of the presentation, *Aronstam* made the point that there were some white people who were against apartheid too. I thought that the presentation held the learners' attention, especially due to the skilful way that *Aronstam* included them in a discussion about some of the images. At the end, I overheard one of the learners saying to *Aronstam*, "I almost cried!" (Journal observation, October 22, 2010).

After this presentation, *Aronstam* handed out the oral history task, and linked it directly to the visual presentation. Then the learners had to brainstorm questions that they would like to ask about apartheid from "white and people of colour" in their interviews, and they responded using a cooperative learning strategy called "numbered heads together". This means that each member of the group was given a number ranging from 1 – 4, then they brainstormed questions, and reached consensus on the questions that they would ask. Each member of the group had to be prepared to report back on behalf of the group, depending on the number that *Aronstam* called. This strategy worked well and questions varied from "Did you ever want to marry a black person?" to "What was it like to have a pencil test?" The learners' own questions were added to a list of questions that *Aronstam* had set for the task, and she said that she would check the questions before the learners did the interviews.

After a break for tea, *Aronstam* explained to the learners that apartheid was a traumatic experience for many people, and "if someone refuses to do the interview, it's not that they don't like you, it's because apartheid is a sensitive issue". She also gave guidelines in terms of: how to request an interview, how to behave before, during and after the interview; how to ask questions, and finally how to probe them if an answer is only a "Yes" or "No" answer. The boy who had expressed his anger after the pink/blue role play asked, "What do you do if someone feels emotional about the topic?" and *Aronstam* replied that you

respect this person's views and maybe ask someone else (if necessary). This preparation set the scene for the interviews, which were due two weeks later. The follow up observation lasted a whole school day. At the beginning, *Aronstam* revisited the process that the class had gone through two weeks before. Then she gave a quick overview of what happened to children at school during apartheid, such as the various amounts that were spent on children of different races. The lesson shifted from a whole class situation to the cooperative groups, where each learner read aloud their own interview to the rest of the group, so that they could note down anything of interest. This information formed the basis of the role play. Some of the stories from the interviews were shared with the whole of the class, and major themes were those of passes, curfews and forced removals. *Aronstam* responded to these stories by saying that the learners had been coming to her throughout the two weeks to tell her what they had discovered as a result of their interviews. She also told them that she was sad that apartheid had happened, felt embarrassed by it, and now "we're trying to do something about it".

Next, the groups were given 20 minutes to plan their role plays, then time to practise and finally they would present their dramatisations. *Aronstam* made her expectations explicit as to how they should behave and what they needed to prepare for the role plays. The planning happened in the cooperative groups, and *Aronstam* sat separately from the groups and only responded when a member of a group directly asked her a question.

Most of the groups worked well together, except for an all boy group, where *Aronstam* had to intervene to ensure they remained on task. The groups were friendship based, as *Aronstam* argued that there would be a "major conflict and the focus would be on the conflict and not on the task". But an unexpected result of these friendship groups was that only one out of the five groups was homogeneous in terms of race (*Aronstam* described this class as "multiracial"),

which is contrary to the assumptions that inform cooperative learning.⁴⁹ Gender also appeared to influence the group formation, as there were all girl groups and all boy groups. This influence might be due to the learners' age, as they were between 10 and 11 years old. I noticed a lot of toy guns in their rehearsals and it seemed that the learners tended to see apartheid as a game of "cops and robbers", and this was borne out in their presentations. The major focus was on pass arrests, contraventions of whites-only facilities, and great use was made of real handcuffs in three out of the five role plays (Journal observation, November 5, 2010).

It was clear that the learners enjoyed rehearsing and presenting their dramatisations, but it was more difficult to assess what they had learnt. While all the learners reported in an oral assessment that they felt that they had developed a greater understanding of apartheid after their presentations, it was difficult as an observer to "see" the learning, as the majority of the dramatisations were mostly superficial. This process needed more time, as the opportunity for dialogue among the learners was constrained by the deadline to produce a dramatisation.

After the dramatisations ended, the real drama happened: the handcuffs, inevitably, got stuck on one of the boys. Once *Aronstam* resolved this crisis, the class did a self-assessment written exercise and the lesson ended on an upbeat, hopeful note with the playing of John Lennon's famous song in favour of peace, called "Imagine".

Possibilities and challenges to the implementation of a reconciliatory pedagogy

What did this classroom observation reveal about the possibilities and the challenges to the implementation of a reconciliatory pedagogy? There were

⁴⁹ One of the key characteristics of cooperative learning is that the groups should be set up to be heterogeneous (Slavin, 1985, p. 7), and friendship groups are not often used, because the assumption is that they will be homogeneous.

important differences between my original approach and the way *Aronstam* interpreted my brief, and this was understandable, given the difference in level between university students and learners at primary school. An example: *Aronstam* had to take the learners step by step through a process of how to set up an oral history interview where she also provided questions for the learners to ask in their interviews, although she encouraged them to include some of their own questions. In contrast, I covered generally what was expected in terms of preparing and conducting an interview, which meant that the students had to devise all of their own questions. Another difference was that I expected my students to turn their interviews into stories that they could use to teach, whereas *Aronstam's* learners simply read out their questions and answers of their interviews to one another, which became boring for the group. It would have been different if the interviews were turned into stories by the learners, as I think that this might have made the process of giving feedback to one another about their information more interesting. It would also encourage the learners to process the information from their oral histories, and this would have added greater depth to their dramatisations. I tried to allocate time for my students to process and prepare for their dramatisations, whereas there was little time for these learners to enter an in-depth dialogue with one another about their stories, as they had to focus on the product of the dramatisation. Despite these differences, I think overall that *Aronstam* showed that it was possible to translate the spirit and intention of the way I conceptualised a reconciliatory pedagogy at university level to a primary school history classroom: the process she used was participatory and inclusive of all the learners; it was polychronic in terms of all the activities she devised; and it showed that this process takes time.

None of the teachers knew what my purpose was when I asked them to do the oral history and a cooperative task: the more experienced teachers were able to demonstrate a variety of ways that this request could be interpreted, while the first-year teachers experienced difficulties, given their lack of experience. By using some of the key ideas from my observation and interview with *Aronstam*, I

will relate them more broadly to the other teachers as a way of showing the strengths and challenges of implementing a reconciliatory pedagogy at primary school level.

Aronstam's opening role play of the pinks and blues provided a crucial introduction to what followed: the learners saw and felt discrimination in action. I thought that this form of embodied learning was a good example of a way to introduce a reconciliatory pedagogy for this age group. It also provided an unintended answer to *Balo's* initial concern that the learners themselves “don't see the need [for a reconciliatory pedagogy], but as a class teacher you see [it].” By exposing the learners directly to discrimination in practice, they would be able to understand the topic of apartheid in greater depth, and this was an important addition to my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy.⁵⁰

Aronstam's use of cooperative learning showed the importance of demonstrating what was required to the learners: while the cooperative learning strategies, such as “think-pair-share” and “numbered heads together” appear simple on paper, the reality is that they are far from easy to implement in the classroom. The teacher has to understand what her purpose is in using this approach, and has to give clear instructions to the learners. The various cooperative learning strategies are something that has to be taught to the learners, and it does not happen “naturally”.

Cooperative learning sees a teacher's role as “as a facilitator, resource, and observer during all cooperative learning activities” (American Forum for Global Education, 2000), which implies a move away from a whole class teaching and learning approach. But what is meant by the teacher's role as a facilitator?⁵¹

⁵⁰ This approach reminded me of Shapiro's ideas (2002, pp. 150–154) in “a critical pedagogy of the body” where she encourages students to “question issues of identity and otherness and lead to more compassionate and ethically responsible behavior”, by focusing on stories when they were made to feel like the “*other*” and times when they made others “feel like outcasts” via movement and written work as part of an embodied pedagogy for peace education.

⁵¹ The idea of the teacher's role as a facilitator has sometimes had a negative connotation in the South African context given its use and abuse in the various outcomes-based curricula. According to Mason (2000, p. 1), there was a “passive understanding” associated with

According to Flowers (2000, pp. 23-24), it means that the learners are “at the center of the experience and share ‘ownership’ for their own learning. In this collaborative context, the word *facilitator* is more appropriate than *teacher*, for all concerned should be peers, engaged in a common effort towards a shared goal. ... The goal is not some ‘right answer’ or even consensus, but the collaborative exploration of ideas and issues.” This explanation emphasises the joint nature of the enterprise between the teacher and the learners and the shift to a more learner-centred approach. *Aronstam* was able to demonstrate this role of facilitation during the cooperative learning activities: she moved around the groups and actively engaged the learners, acted as a resource when necessary and otherwise stepped back to observe them while they were working on their cooperative tasks. It was clear that it was a collaborative effort, and that the learners were able to share what they had found out with their peers and with *Aronstam* too.

While the majority of the experienced teachers were able to implement cooperative strategies, they did so with varying degrees of success. *Drew’s* role during the cooperative group work was also one of a facilitator initially, as she went to each group in turn and listened to the sharing of their stories, asked questions about what she heard and interacted with the learners. But she also used the opportunity to probe the learners’ answers further, which helped the members of the group to explain their answers in greater depth. Her role shifted beyond mere facilitation by introducing an element of critical reflection, which enriched the process.

In contrast, the first-year teachers found cooperative learning strategies difficult to implement. *Dyer* confirmed this view, as he stated that he felt that he was

facilitation, while Jansen (2001, p. 243) criticised the notion as follows: ‘Teachers, instead of becoming the dominant force in the classroom that liberates young minds from the evils of apartheid, now became re-imaged to become soft facilitators of a new pedagogy. In the memorable words of a key author of those early curriculum documents: “teachers now become the guide on the side rather than sage on the stage”... In short, the teacher would disappear in a classroom plan where learners and learning became the central focus of policy change under the new curriculum.’ However, in cooperative learning, the role of a facilitator is conceived of in a positive and more active way.

“still learning” about teaching, as his lesson had not turned out as he had planned. *Dyer* identified further disadvantages with this approach such as “if not handled correctly discipline can be a problem”, and “some learners are very shy...but when it comes to actually speaking in front of a class...they don’t want to express their feelings [while] ones who also do feel very strongly might take over the floor...and not allow other people to talk”. However, he felt that “the advantages would outweigh the disadvantages.”

But *Page* was aware of the requirement to form heterogeneous groups, and said that she would have preferred to use a cooperative strategy that relied on pairs (such as think-pair-share) rather than a large group. Overall with the first-year teachers, there was no clear establishment of heterogeneous groups before the lesson started, as the classes were already in groups. But this is a challenge to my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy, if it depends on the teachers’ understanding and ability to implement cooperative learning in practice.

Another challenge to my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy was the presentations by the learners in *Sofianos’s* class. They clearly enjoyed practising and presenting their dramatisations based on their oral interviews, which were done in a creative manner such as a presentation that used a rap song, but there were tenuous links to the aims of a reconciliatory pedagogy. This may be due to the limitations of the briefing given to the learners and the way the topic of transport was used as the basis for their dramatisations: the learners presented how their families had come to Johannesburg, but instead of the reasons why their parents or grandparents moved to Johannesburg, they focused on the mode of transport, such as, whether their relatives arrived by foot or by train. By contrast, *Drew’s* class of Grade 7s were able to do dramatisations that were both entertaining and revealed more understanding, which showed that the briefing they received was in greater depth.

Results of the classroom observations

My classroom observation at School A showed that even though the teachers have direct experience of the oral history assignment and cooperative learning task, it does not necessarily mean that they will be able to implement it easily in their own classrooms. While the teachers were able to implement the doing of the oral history tasks, it appeared that cooperative learning is something that appears simple, but can be very difficult to do effectively in the classroom, unless you are well versed in both the theory and its application. It seemed that first-year teachers suffered under an enormous burden as they tried to survive in the classroom, and my request was one more amongst many others that they were trying to juggle with difficulty. I felt that overall, they were teaching under extremely challenging circumstances (which I will return to later in the chapter). However, I do not think that these difficulties mean that they will never implement aspects of this assignment from university. As they become more experienced teachers in the classroom, they may choose, or be more confident in using, an approach like a reconciliatory pedagogy.

Aronstam also showed the importance of using whole class teaching in conjunction with cooperative learning techniques. By whole class teaching, I mean when a teacher presents and explains her interpretation of knowledge about a particular topic. Whole class teaching was necessary to set the context for the cooperative learning strategy to work: the presentation of the apartheid visuals and her discussion of them with the class were vital as a preparation for the oral history task with the learners. In a similar way, *Rabinowitz* felt the need to expose her learners to more than her retelling the story about apartheid, as she felt that they needed to see as well as feel it. As a teacher you can say, “apartheid this, apartheid that, that’s why I needed to use the pictures as well, because I know that they would never have appreciated it if I hadn’t done what I did [show them pictures about apartheid]”. However, *Rabinowitz* chose to present this background information on apartheid after the learners had done the oral history interviews. While my preference would be for this background to

be covered before the learners did the interviews, I think that without this input, it would be very difficult for the learners to understand the point of doing an oral history task on apartheid, especially at primary school level.

The need for a combined teaching and learning approach was further reinforced by *Baloi*, who used a whole class discussion after the cooperative activity to challenge the learners to interact more with one another. His role was essential in making the learners think critically, as well as encouraging them to engage at a deeper level with one another. An example was a learner who probed another's claim that the white mother she interviewed said that she was too young to know what was going on under apartheid. *Baloi* moved beyond using a discussion to summarise the learning from the cooperative learning activity. Instead, he introduced a way for the learners to critically engage and appraise their own learning, and this was integral in contributing to the success of the learning that happened in his classroom. The learners became so engaged in the discussion, that they did not want to leave the class when the bell rang (Journal observation, 22 February 2011). *Dyer, North and Page* likewise resorted to a whole class teaching approach after their "cooperative learning activities", which may have been a result of a default teaching and learning strategy for first-year teachers. Nonetheless, in their classrooms there were worthwhile discussions about the results of the oral history with the whole class.

One of the major aims of a reconciliatory pedagogy is to get all the learners talking in a constructive manner to one another, so that there is a genuine opportunity for dialogue and for them to be invested in the process. Cooperative learning encourages this by its structured use of groups and the way they interact on a common task, and also with its focus on individual and group accountability. Yet, the teacher's role before, during and after the cooperative activity is crucial. This use of whole class teaching, whether in the guise of an explanation of apartheid or critical questions and discussion after the cooperative process, was not part of my original conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy. However, based on my classroom observations, I think that it is an

important qualification to my conception, as the use of cooperative learning alone would have been limiting and limited the range of teaching and learning opportunities in the classroom. This shift to a whole class approach is necessary especially at primary school level, where learners' knowledge of apartheid may be sketchy. In order for a reconciliatory pedagogy to succeed at this level, the teacher needs to dance between whole class teaching and facilitating the cooperative learning process.

But it is not simply a change in a teaching and learning strategy that informs how the teachers approached a reconciliatory pedagogy; another crucial influence is how they perceive the aim of teaching history. For *Aronstam*, her aim was to “let it be a learning experience [for the class, so that they], ... look at the world with a little bit more of a critical eye, a little bit more of an informed view.” *Baloi* shared her concern about the value of the learning experience. He said that his aim was “to push them further, I’m trying not to give them all the answers...I think that when you challenge them more that’s where the learning makes a huge difference.” *Drew’s* aim in teaching history is that she wanted to broaden the learners’ outlook to move beyond parochialism, in the sense that “they live in X... and that’s all they know...So I really try to make them understand or develop their minds, and to let them engage critically with different concepts, which encompasses the whole world.” All three of these teachers thought it was important for the learners to develop their critical understanding, which is an important aim in teaching history. However, *Rabinowitz* added another important one when she said that she wanted “to get them [the learners] to be as passionate as I am about it...especially South African history.” *Dyer* explicitly linked the study of history to the broader society and its relationship to time when he said that his aims were to “give our learners the tools they need to shape our future history. And do it in a way that we can make a better future for ourselves. I want to make them aware of our past, but I don’t want it to be dwelled on...I think history and the present and the future are all tied in and if you don’t do it properly you’re going to miss the links somehow....I want learners to stop thinking of history as a boring old subject

with just books and that it actually involves people and human emotions.” *Dyer* articulated an aim that showed a very similar understanding to Lederach’s view of time and reconciliation. While I thought that the teachers’ aims in teaching history were worthwhile and could inform a reconciliatory pedagogy, I think that a reconciliatory pedagogy needs a combination of a critical and an emotional approach which is encapsulated by the process involved in the reweaving of relationships.

The value of the oral history task in the classroom

This section does not provide a detailed analysis of the learners’ oral histories, as my research focus was mainly on the teachers and how they interacted with the learners, so I did not read or analyse any of the learners’ oral histories. Yet, there were aspects concerning the oral history task that some of the teachers reported on during the interviews, and I was able to note what emerged about the oral histories through my own classroom observation.

Aronstam mentioned that an advantage of using oral history is that it meant that the learners were active in getting information, instead of “just sitting in the class passively” receiving it. *Page* also articulated and supported this view. This means that the learners are the ones who present and own the knowledge, which is in contrast to what happens in a teacher-centred lesson. As *North* mentioned, “it sort of removes my influence on discussions...so I’m not as in control of the learning situation.” A positive effect was that *Baloi* and *North* said that they heard from learners who do not normally contribute in class. This suggests that the use of oral history introduced a positive shift in classroom dynamics, and may have contributed to a change in teaching and learning styles. However, *North* realised that some of the learners did not take responsibility for finding out the information, as there were “a handful who do not participate” in class. To counter this, she made the learners who had not done the oral history task report back on behalf of a group. This meant the defaulters were very engaged in the group discussion, but this enforced group

accountability was contrary to the spirit of cooperative learning. In this case, the change in teaching and learning styles did not necessarily have the desired outcome.

The oral history task also provided an opportunity for the learners “to interact with their grandparents” (*Rabinowitz*) and “to engage with their parents...and sharing of information from another generation” (*North*), so it had a beneficial effect outside the classroom too. This is similar to what the students experienced in chapter 3. However, *Rabinowitz* and *Sofianos* noted that some of the parents did not give the learners much information or did not cooperate, which meant that some of the learners were unable to do the task, or resorted to monosyllabic answers. This could be due to the way the questions were structured (most of the teachers gave the learners set questions to ask) or another possibility emerged in *Dyer’s* class, where a parent refused “to look at the old [South African] Coat of Arms, because it brought back unhappy feelings about the past.” This could be taken at face value or possibly relate to parents who had traumatic experiences during apartheid.

There was another way that “feelings from the past” entered the classroom via the oral history task. A boy in *Aronstam’s* class interviewed a “racist” farmer (who might be white, but this was not stated explicitly in the interview). *Aronstam* said that the boy was most upset by the interviewee’s attitude that “apartheid should continue”, and the farmer also admitted that “he hits black people” in the interview. This idea in favour of apartheid could be seen as an example of *Jansen’s* (2009a, p. 114) “bitter knowledge” being passed on during the oral history interview. A more ambiguous example, which *Baloi* mentioned, was a mother who said in her interview: “but during apartheid...the transport system was better, the level of education was higher...certain things about apartheid were good actually.” The context was unclear as to whether the mother’s opinion was ascribing the better functioning of many aspects of South African life for white people under apartheid to the efficiency of a police state, or whether this was another example of “bitter knowledge” aimed at passing on a

prejudiced view to the next generation. These views can provide the starting point of a valuable discussion in the classroom about apartheid - as to who holds these views, and how and why they are held, and the contested nature of these personal and narrative “truths”. But I suggest that the teacher would need to mediate this process, as *Baloi* suggested.

This process of doing oral history also helped the learners to work through some of their own emotions about the past. *Dyer* emphasised that the benefits of the oral history task and the interaction that followed were that it allowed “learners’ feelings” to be expressed and it helped to break “certain boundaries, certain perceptions or stereotypes that they had towards other people, regardless of gender or class... and I think things like that can’t really be brought up by looking at a text book, I think that it has to be done by human interaction.” *Baloi* echoed *Dyer’s* sentiments when he said that the oral history provided a “more human [way] than writing on a piece of paper”. *Page* found that some of the learners were extremely emotional about the topic of apartheid, as they could see the effects of apartheid on their families in the present, in terms of where they had lived and the lack of a good education for the previous generation, and they brought this experience into the classroom. Then there were examples of heart-breaking stories that were retold, such as the granny who called the police to rescue a child who was drowning in a swimming pool. When the policeman queried the race of the child, he refused to rescue the black child and said he would collect the body later (Journal observation, 7 October 2010).

The learners shared their feelings and stories in the classroom, and also brought in videos about apartheid, such as *Cry Freedom* (*Baloi*), and copies of the original *dompas* belonging to their parents or grandparents (*Baloi* and *Rabinowitz*). The latter helped to make the stories more real, especially as the theme of passes was a recurrent one throughout my classroom observations where the topic was about apartheid. It also indicated the interest that this task generated among some of the learners and their families.

The overall value of the oral history task, according to *Aronstam*, was that it opened the eyes of the learners as to what occurred in the past, “[a]nd they won’t forget ... they may forget ... all the notes on apartheid, but they won’t forget the interviews.” *Rabinowitz* suggested that the importance of the oral history was that “it is more personal ... they learn to empathise with them [the interviewees], they learn to actually say, ‘Oh my gosh, did that really happen?’” This process encourages dialogue between the learners and an older generation, and it leads to a way to “re-story” the past (Longchari cited in Lederach, 2005, p. 140) in a similar manner to what happened with the students in chapter 3. However, the teachers need to play an active role in mediating the findings of the oral history for the learners, especially as the teachers have to deal not only with the stories, but also the emotions that underpin the stories of the interviewees and the interviewees. *Baloi*, *Drew* and *Sofianos* felt that the most important benefit of this process was that they gained more insight about the learners’ background via their oral histories. *Page* and *Baloi* felt that some of their learners opened up more to them. As *Baloi* said, “they see a teacher that’s willing to ask these questions ... [they] see what the teacher kind of stands for and I think they open [up] to me.” The teachers do not know what kind of oral histories the learners will bring into the class, so they have to establish a safe space for the learners to share their stories, and also help them to understand the background to the different stories. This means that the teachers need to be resourceful and flexible in their approach, and it also shows that the process encouraged both teachers and learners to participate in an inclusive manner.

Overall, it seems that the value of using oral history had mixed results in the classroom: it shifted some of the responsibility for learning in terms of who found the information for the lesson and who contributed in class in a constructive way; it also highlighted the importance of the teachers’ role in mediating the stories and emotions that the learners brought into the classroom. But the use of oral history generated interest in the classroom, which was

shown by the learners bringing in some related historical artefacts and the way learning was made more personal. From some of the teachers' perspectives, the greatest impact of the oral history lay outside the classroom in terms of the interaction the oral history interview generated between the generations, and the "real" learning that resulted in this re-storying of the past. In these ways, a reconciliatory pedagogy encourages a polychronic approach to reconciliation.

Teachers' responses to the idea of a reconciliatory pedagogy

How did the teachers respond to the idea of whether or not a reconciliatory pedagogy was necessary in their classrooms? *Rabinowitz* saw the need for a reconciliatory pedagogy, "because I'm living in post-apartheid, sixteen years into democracy, [and] we are still struggling to unite as one." *Dyer* was in favour of a reconciliatory pedagogy, as it "will help people open up and deal with issues of the past" and "it will help heal the wounds of the past", and he felt that oral history was the only way to do it, as "you're not going to get it out of a textbook... Discussion is the only way you can open people up to how they really feel." *Baloi* agreed as he said that "oral history "definitely has contributed [to a sense of reconciliation]... they don't always see how that is impacting [on] them... in a sense it's helping [them] to reconcile, it's helping them to see things differently." The learners see apartheid as another lesson, which "makes them aware of how far we've come. They definitely see the difference... and I think that they support the difference [between the present and the past]." *Page* felt that a reconciliatory pedagogy could work, if the focus was on stories of the past, because the learners "are very open to stories"... although she felt that it would be better to use "an autobiography rather than an image [of the South African Coat of Arms]... a case study... [of] Hector Pieterson... because it comes from a child's perspective. They would have been better able to connect with it." There is no doubt that the story surrounding Hector Pieterson's role in the Soweto Uprising of 1976 would have made more of an impact on the

learners than the South African Coat of Arms, although this would have been difficult to link with the curriculum for that particular grade.

Sofianos was in favour of a reconciliatory pedagogy, as it was informed by fairness and equality. She saw the School as a foundation for good citizens, so she thought that a reconciliatory pedagogy was a good idea, but she expressed a minor reservation as she wondered whether it would work in practice or not. *Drew* was also in favour of a reconciliatory pedagogy, although she expressed major reservations: she did not think that there was much need for it in her class, as she stated that the learners were “very together”; and she queried whether or not it was important to create a safe space “because of the demographics of the class”, which was black, exclusively. She argued that “their stories were from a similar experience. But even...where people were treated better, ... the children weren’t offended.” *Drew* was indirectly referring to the different experiences during apartheid for those who were labelled African, Coloured or Indian: while each group was discriminated against as they were required to live in separate geographical areas, only African people had to carry passes. However, a possible solution to *Drew’s* concern is that a reconciliatory pedagogy could be used to foster relationships among schools, so that where learners come from a homogeneous background they will be able to interact with learners in schools that come from a different or more heterogeneous background.⁵²

Another reason for her reservation concerning a reconciliatory pedagogy is that she did not hear bitterness or anger in the learners’ stories, which in her opinion meant “that their parents are probably also in a place where they have reconciled their own feelings to our democratic government”. However, this was in contrast to her experience with another class four years ago, where she described “children with bitter stories who’d spoken to their parents and were still angry, even though they weren’t part of it.” *Drew* accepted my suggestion

⁵² An example of a school programme that uses this approach is South African Model United Nations (n.d), where a team is formed based on “two learners from a resourced school and two from an under-resourced school.”

that this change was possibly due to the parents' showing a form of amnesia, but she thought that the parents "don't want to share the worst parts with their children". If this is so, then it suggests that there is a decision to remain silent or to omit details, which shows that some of the stories have been either repressed or edited. Even so, *Drew* argued that there were learners who told stories "about parents who'd protested, who'd been taken to jail...but I didn't hear ... 'we hate white people', ... which I have heard in the past....I've had children who turn around and say, 'but you're white, you must be a racist.'" Finally, she argued that the parents are not passing on their anger or bitterness in a blatant way.

However, *Page* found, contrary to *Drew*, that some of her learners became aggressive when the topic of apartheid was raised: "I think that's the most important, ... getting the parents involved, because they are the ones that are teaching their children [about apartheid]" and "a lot of the children have been affected by their parents and their families....so they take that anger from home". This was one of the reasons why *Page* was in favour of a reconciliatory pedagogy, as she said that "we need to be able to talk to the learners, we need to discuss these things openly, but until the anger goes away, you can't reconcile."

Both teachers taught at School A, but had conflicting views on the need for a reconciliatory pedagogy, which shows that schools are "messy" places, where perceptions differ. *Drew* made strong arguments against the need for a reconciliatory pedagogy in School A, and I accept that in a school group that is more homogeneous, there may appear to be less of a need for a reconciliatory pedagogy. However, I am concerned that this view is based on a generalisation: not all black people were against apartheid and not all white people were in favour of it. There were people who were accused of being informers (sometimes mistakenly) in black communities, as was shown at the TRC (TRC report Vol. 5, 1998, p. 364) in the case of Ms Maki Skosana, as recounted in chapter 2. In addition, there were political conflicts within black communities,

such as the violence that occurred between the ANC and the IFP in Kwa-Zulu Natal and on the East Rand towards the end of apartheid. This suggests that reconciliation is not only a matter between black and white people in South Africa, as it also needed among and within some black communities. The shift that *Drew* observed in four years renders it too soon to judge whether or not a reconciliatory pedagogy is required, as there are silences in the stories told by the parents. Further, *Drew* distanced herself from a reconciliatory pedagogy, whereas I argue that the teacher plays an active role in this process in terms of her own identity. A reconciliatory pedagogy is not only about the learners; it also directly involves and influences the relationship between a teacher and her learners too, so that it is a dialectical process.

The emotional reaction of learners to the topic of apartheid was the aspect that most worried *Aronstam* about the process of doing a reconciliatory pedagogy. I observed that some of the learners in *Aronstam*'s class were very angry after the pink/blue role play and the apartheid presentation, but two weeks later when I observed the class again, I noticed that the anger had dissipated. According to *Aronstam*, "some of the girls came to me at different times and said, 'you know, I get so upset by this, I feel like crying' [in contrast] ... [s]ome of them were quite offended and it is sensitive stuff, but I think that they felt okay to talk about it." She added that "the only thing that worried me [about this process] was that the African children get upset with white people, because it was so like, white people did this and white people were bad and all of that." So *Aronstam* used music to show that not all white people were in favour of apartheid, and played them a song written and sung by Johnny Clegg, an anti-apartheid South African musician. *Aronstam* also tried to defuse the emotion surrounding the topic of apartheid with the class, and said that "it was the people that lived in the past and it's got nothing to do with us, we just want to learn from that, and make sure that history doesn't repeat itself and that it mustn't happen at all. No kind of discrimination must happen." But the shift in the class's mood between my visits showed the importance of allowing time for the learners to process both their emotions and what they had learnt intellectually about the past.

Aronstam's link between apartheid and the broader theme of discrimination is valid and I suggest that this link could be an important part of a reconciliatory pedagogy. However, apartheid does have something to do with the children who represent the third generation.⁵³ As Schlink (2010, pp. 17-18) argued, most of the adults in Nazi Germany were guilty either directly or indirectly and so too were their children “entangled in this web of guilt”. The only exception is the children of “parents [who] experienced guilt solely on the basis of not dissociating themselves after 1945”. This argument is applicable to those who supported or collaborated with apartheid in South Africa after 1994 too, and this is why an emotional response is crucial in the classroom: it gets to the heart of what a reconciliatory pedagogy is about, as relationships in the present are extremely damaged by what happened in South Africa’s past.

At the risk of generalisation, there may be feelings of anger by black children, because the majority of black people were discriminated against and oppressed both directly and indirectly so that the parents can be considered as survivors and victims of this discrimination. Similarly, there may be feelings of guilt on the part of white children, as the majority of white people did support apartheid either actively as perpetrators, or indirectly as beneficiaries and bystanders. A reconciliatory pedagogy acknowledges this situation, but it tries to encourage reconciliation via the reweaving of relationships, where the differences are acknowledged as well as the interdependence with one another. Part of a reconciliatory process is to listen to one another’s stories through oral history, and the cooperative learning is an attempt to encourage dialogue about the stories and feelings of anger and guilt, so that the learners engage both intellectually and emotionally in an attempt to understand one another and what happened in the past. In this way, it leads to both “recognition of others” and the reweaving of relationships in the personal and social sphere. As Schlink (2010, p. 21) argued, “[t]he task of dissociation from specific historical guilt leads to the creation of one’s own identity, an undertaking that each generation has to

⁵³ See explanation of the reason for the use of the term “third generation” in chapter 4.

master.” While the context that he is referring to is post-war Germany, I think that his ideas are applicable to South Africa too: “each generation has to master” the creation of identity in its own way, and I suggest as an extension to his idea that this refers not only to the guilt, but also to anger.

Conclusion

One of the findings of my classroom observations was that there was a marked difference between the way the first-year teachers and the more experienced teachers were able to use oral history and cooperative learning strategies. The first-year teachers were trying simply to survive, as reflected in a frequent complaint to me that their pre-service teacher training at university had not prepared them adequately for the realities of the classroom. Yet, they were able to set up an oral history assignment for their classes, which covered a range of topics, despite admitting that none of them would have considered using oral history without my request. I found that the use of cooperative learning strategies was problematic: this approach appears easy on paper, but in practice, it is challenging to implement. The first-year teachers’ conception and implementation of cooperative learning was much closer to that of general group work. This shows that the classroom is a “messy” arena: what is modelled and experienced at university will not necessarily be applied immediately in the classroom. This is a possible reason why many researchers have not followed up on the effects of modelling a particular approach, such as the use of oral history at university, on what happens in practice at schools. But as these first-year teachers become more experienced, they might choose to implement this approach. Most of the more experienced teachers used oral history in their teaching, and were able to implement cooperative learning strategies effectively, which also shows that experience counts in the use of these approaches in the classroom.

What were the successes and limitations of using oral history and cooperative learning approach in these classrooms? For the learners, some of the successes were that they became very engaged in the lessons that I observed, as they were the ones in possession of the knowledge based on their oral histories, and the use of cooperative learning (when it happened) encouraged high spirited dialogue in many of the groups. I also observed a genuine enjoyment of the dramatisations and/or discussions, so much so, that many of the learners did not want to leave the classroom at the end of the lesson.

Another positive aspect was that the oral history interviews encouraged them to interact with another generation. However, I observed some limitations, as sometimes there was not much substance or evidence of historical knowledge and understanding in some of the dramatisations, and I wondered how much this approach had shifted the learners' understanding of the topic or of their relationships with one another. It seems that for some of the learners this process helped them to start to work through their own feelings about the past, and in different ways, it appeared to help "re-story" the past. But the effects on the learners would need to be the topic of further research, as my thesis has focused on the teachers and the process of teaching and learning in the classroom.

How did the teachers respond to the idea of reconciliatory pedagogy, and how did their views and implementation affirm or challenge my own conception? Generally, the teachers were in favour of the idea of a reconciliatory pedagogy, as they recognised that South Africa was not a reconciled country, and there was a need for dialogue among all its people about the past, and that oral history could be a useful way of facilitating this process. The link between oral history and cooperative learning was a new approach in the teachers' own practice, and they felt that most of the learners appeared to respond constructively to this process. Ultimately, there is no knowing what narratives the learners will bring to class in the form of their oral histories, and the teacher plays a vital role, as she has to act sensitively and mediate the findings of the

oral history, not only in terms of the stories, but also the emotions that emerge during the process. Some of the teachers acknowledged that they learnt more about their learners, and that it had changed their role in a positive way in the classroom.

In some cases, the teacher's role shifted, so that it became a dance between a whole class approach and the facilitation required by cooperative learning. This shift was necessary because some of the learners' knowledge about the past at primary school was quite sketchy. An example was when two teachers used apartheid as a topic for the reconciliatory pedagogy lesson: they needed to explain more about apartheid using a whole class teaching approach, before they went onto the cooperative activity, because without doing so, there was insufficient context for the cooperative activity to work. This was not how I visualised the teacher's role during a reconciliatory pedagogy, yet it provided an important qualification to my conception.

There was also an important challenge to my view for the need for a reconciliatory pedagogy. *Drew* argued that in a more homogeneous class and school, the need for a reconciliatory pedagogy was less evident, as the learners' stories did not show the same level of bitterness or anger as in the past. This is a valid concern, although I suggest that a reconciliatory pedagogy includes the teacher as part of the process, and she excluded herself from the process. However, there was also political conflict within some black communities, around issues such as informers and the conflict between the ANC and the IFP in the years preceding the end of apartheid, which suggests that there is the need for reconciliation between members of these political parties. This suggests that reconciliation is not necessarily simply something restricted to black and white communities. Further, *Page*, a teacher who taught at the same school as *Drew*, expressed the opposite view of the situation in the classroom, and she supported the need for a reconciliatory pedagogy. These contradictory views indicate the complexity of this issue.

Another concern expressed by a teacher at a multicultural school was the emotional reaction of the learners to the topic of apartheid, where black children got angry with white people in general, and how to deal with this situation. I understand the difficulty in addressing this issue, but I suggest that an emotional reaction is crucial in the classroom, as relationships in the present are damaged considerably by what has happened in South Africa's past. There are emotions of anger and guilt even among members of the third generation, and there is a need for a process to assist this generation to work through these issues. I suggest that a reconciliatory pedagogy provides a way to address some of these issues with its emphasis on listening to one another's oral histories and its use of cooperative learning. This process encourages dialogue about the stories, encourages empathy and allows for feelings of anger and guilt to be discussed in a safe space. It encourages an engagement at intellectual and emotional levels in an attempt to understand one another and what happened in the past. There is recognition of the different experiences, and it provides an opportunity for the reweaving of relationships to occur. According to Schlink (2010, p. 23), each generation has to master the creation of its own identity in its own way, and this applies equally to those who feel guilt and those who experience anger. In the following chapter, I report on my findings concerning the teachers' conception of their own identities and their learners in greater detail.

Chapter 6: “So what’s the ratio [of black to white children]?” Data from interviews, school observations and analysis

Introduction

According to Cole, (2007, p. 7) “a key aspect of reconciliation in the minds of many scholars...is the component of transformation of group identity, both of the groups associated with past perpetrators and of that associated with past victims”. There is a question of about whether the effects of the political changes in 1994 and the TRC have transformed identities in South Africa. This concern informed the questions I asked the teachers in the interviews and my classroom observations. Put another way, having experienced a formal process of reconciliation in South Africa, has this led to a shift in relationships in the classroom between teachers and learners as well as among the learners? In this chapter, I have selected a few critical incidents that I observed to discuss whether group identities and relationships are transformed in the classroom, especially when taking into account the choice of words used to indicate identity by the learners and teachers. Next, I briefly outline other influences that may affect the relationship between the teachers and the learners. Finally, I turn to Lederach’s model of reconciliation to explore some of the possibilities and constraints of its application to primary school history classrooms in the form of a reconciliatory pedagogy.

Teachers' perceptions of their own identities

When I asked the teachers about how they would describe themselves if someone asked them, "Who are you?", and whether their answers would change if the question was asked by a fellow South African or by a foreigner, the replies were as follows: most defined themselves as South African (*Aronstam, Drew, Dyer, North and Page*) with some qualifications; *Sofianos* described herself as a "Greek South African", while for *Aronstam* and *Rabinowitz* their Jewish religion was an important part of their identity. This supports Carrim and Soudien's (1999, p. 168) view that "there are cultural differences within racialised groups", and that no one group is "culturally homogeneous". But if someone from another country asked them the same question, then they would identify themselves as "white", because *Aronstam* said: "if you come from SA you have to be of a colour", whereas *Rabinowitz* would contextualise this socially as a "white female living equally". *Baloi* and Moore also defined themselves in terms of their religion, which is Christianity. *Baloi* was the only person in the sample who identified himself as coming from another country, as he was born and did part of his schooling in Zambia. Yet, he has lived in South Africa for twelve years, and while he feels at home here, "there is always a part that still feels foreign".

Many defined themselves as teachers (*Aronstam, Baloi, Drew, Dyer, North and Page*), which *Drew* further qualified as being a "multicultural and multiracial" teacher. Family was also as an important part of their identity for some of the teachers (*Baloi* and *Page*). *Baloi* was the only person who referred to his interests which were rugby and guitar. It is clear from the above that the teachers saw themselves in different ways, ranging from nationality, to religion, to profession and interests and this supports Sen's (2006, p. 16) conception of the "plurality of our identities". There was not a great change between how they would describe themselves locally and in a foreign context, except for the inclusion or exclusion of "colour" in a few cases. At a conscious level, it appeared that their conceptions of their own identities are varied and that the

emphasis was mostly on a common identity based on nation (South African and/or Zambian). There was some mention of race, but this was in the minority, so that it appeared that the changes in South Africa had led to a shift in their group identities.

Teachers' perceptions of their learners' identities

In response to my question concerning the socio – economic status of the learners, the answers varied from the teachers at School A (*Drew, Dyer, North* and *Page*) who identified their learners as mostly “working” or “lower class”, with lots of domestic workers’ children and a few “middle class” children. The teacher (*Baloi*) at School B described the learners as a mixture of “working class” and “middle class”, with the latter being in a slight majority, whereas the teachers (*Aronstam* and *Rabinowitz*) at School C described their learners as mostly “middle class”, with the exception being some of those learners whose parents battled to pay their fees. This was the only time that the teachers raised the issue of “class” in their answers, and it shows the difference in these particular schools, in socio-economic terms, between those learners who have access to state (who were mostly black) or independent schools (composition of the school classes varied from being mostly black to more racially integrated). This suggests that socio-economic divisions are a growing indicator of difference in terms of access to schools in a democratic South Africa.

The question of whether or not there were “social barriers from the past that continue to show themselves in the classroom” elicited a strong response from the teachers. Most suggested that the “barriers of the past” were no longer present for their learners in the school context, except that *North* felt that the learners were battling with being taught and having to speak, read and write in English. Further, *Aronstam* argued that the learners were “born into a democracy, [so] they don’t really feel the effects of it ... they don’t see colour as an issue.” *Drew* agreed with *Aronstam* about the effects of democracy as she

observed a change between when she started teaching, where learners were initially “more... aware of apartheid”, whereas latterly the learners “are pure democracy children, so they really are not as aware of social injustices”. *Aronstam* also stated that there was a “general feeling of respect and tolerance towards each other” in her present class, but like *Drew*, she noted a change between this class and the one she had taught previously where it consisted of “mainly African” and “two white children”, and she felt that there was an “unspoken feeling of tension between myself and the children”. She claimed that it was not something that either she or the class wanted, but “I could feel that they were a little bit angry or a little bit aggressive at times”. *Rabinowitz*, who was now the teacher of the class that *Aronstam* had taught in the previous year,⁵⁴ characterised them as the “most difficult class in the school”. *Rabinowitz* described the class as having “one white boy and one white girl... no Jewish children, three Indian boys” and she omitted to mention who constituted the rest of the class. She felt that they were “brought up [as an] integrated class” and gave the example of the white girl who spoke with the same accent as her African friends. This girl described herself as a “chocolate...a Top Deck”, which has milk chocolate on top and brown chocolate underneath. *Rabinowitz* noted that jokes were sometimes made about the Indian boys, such as, “Agh, you’re so clever because you’re an Indian”, but she did not consider this a “serious” matter. A joke can be used lightly to break tension, but it can also be used in another manner, as Freud (1905/1976, p. 152) noted: “a jest betrays something serious.” There is a possibility that the more serious issues relate to tensions surrounding identity and race as shown in the choice of words by these learners and teachers in this paragraph.

Baloi suggested that learners have “no boundaries [from the past, although] their parents might have boundaries in the background...I think because they started school with every race, with everyone being treated equally...for them a friend is a friend, they don’t see colour.” *Page* was more explicit with reference to the parents. She observed that “some of the teachers have struggled in the

⁵⁴ *Rabinowitz* now teaches the class that *Aronstam* described and taught the previous year. This class has moved from Grade 5 (*Aronstam*) to Grade 6 (*Rabinowitz*).

school where parents have called them racist". *Dyer* commented that there are social barriers from the past which is part of the broader society present at the school: "I think it's a thing you have to deal with in South Africa, not just this school...It's very hard to approach...I think that you have to be sensitive." This suggests that there are influences from the family and the wider society that have an effect in the classroom.

Further, *Page* argued that reconciliation in South Africa is not happening in all areas, because race is still an issue in schools: some of the teachers separate the learners into streams based on race and there is a "them versus us" mentality. She felt that "a lot of it... is the teacher's fault...sometimes I have to block my ears in the staffroom because I think, this isn't the way you're meant to talk". However, among the learners, she argued that race was not such a big deal, "because the kids joke about it with the teachers. Like I heard a story, they [the learners] turn around and say [to a teacher], 'Ma'am, you've got another white child in the school. [The teacher replies:] But you've got so and so in your grade. And they say, no, no, no, she's part of us: this one's a new one.' So for them it's not...a racial thing, it's more personal." Thus she was suggesting that there is a generational aspect as to whether or not there were barriers from the past that revealed themselves at her school.

Despite initial disclaimers by many of the teachers who rejected the notion of "barriers of the past" being present in the classroom, some of these examples show that there are continual tensions concerning race both within the classroom and in relation to the broader society.⁵⁵ Initially, I did not intend to highlight the racial profiles of either the teachers or the learners in my research, as I felt that this served to perpetuate apartheid divisions. I also expected that these identities based on the past would be transformed in present day

⁵⁵ *Page* suggested that there were other social divisions in class mostly based on religion, and noted that there were certain divisions, such as "family feuds" among some learners who are in the same grade. *Page* reported that these conflicts started in the grandparents' generation, and they have nothing to do with race. *Aronstam* also noted that sometimes there were conflicts between the sexes. These comments do show other divisions besides race at work in the classroom, yet they were in the minority. While these qualifications are important, they did not emerge as significant in comparison to the rest of the teachers.

classrooms. But I realised, as my classroom observations continued, that this history of past identities continues to affect South African learners beyond the formal end of apartheid. To explore this issue in greater depth, I turn to a few critical incidents from both my classroom observation and interviews with the teachers in the following section.

Critical incidents

These critical incidents also broadened my understanding of what a reconciliatory pedagogy might need to address. The first occurred when a boy made a disparaging comment about Zimbabweans and the value of their money, which could be linked to a negative attitude towards foreigners. *North* downplayed the incident, and said this example was due to a naïve understanding shown by the boy, although she did concede that this was possibly a symptom of his own prejudices against foreigners. While she felt that tolerance was an issue among her learners, she expressed mixed feelings about the need for a reconciliatory pedagogy. *North* wanted to focus on teaching knowledge without an agenda, so she expressed strong reservations about a teaching and learning approach that focused explicitly on values. Values do matter, and to call for an approach to teaching knowledge without an agenda is to make a value statement in itself. This incident suggests that a reconciliatory pedagogy could include whoever suffers from injustice, that it is not simply about relationships in the past, but also about relationships in the present too, such as those governed by xenophobia. However, there is a history that underlies all relationships, and I suggest that a reconciliatory pedagogy would need to take this aspect into account during its process.

The second critical incident occurred when a few boys taunted another as a “Bushman” after he reported that his father chose to go to school instead of hunting. *Rabinowitz* said it was an “inappropriate joke”, although she did not “think it was a racial thing because they’re all black, but it was more like, what

are the Bushmen today? Why would they want to learn about hunting?” There is an on-going debate as to what to call the indigenous first nation in South Africa: “San” is a term favoured by most historians, although “Bushmen” is being reclaimed by some leaders and individuals within these communities (Davids, 2007, p. 11; Hromnik, 2007, p. 22), but it is still controversial. The teacher acknowledged that the learners “knew it was inappropriate when I gave them the look.” But she did not take it further, and I question the validity of her response that it was not “racial”: just because the boys were “all black” does not mean that there was no indicator of difference in the original remark. A reconciliatory pedagogy would aim to help unpack the complexity that surrounds the issue of names in South Africa, as *Baloi* noted there is “power...behind names”.

The third critical incident took place when a white boy shook his head to indicate a negative response when the teacher asked for members of the class to read their interviews aloud, as he clearly did not wish to do so. When I discussed this incident with *Baloi* after the class, he said that this was due to derogatory content contained in the boy’s interview. This suggests that there are some adults who are trying to pass on their own prejudices via oral history projects of this nature. But what is interesting is that this boy made the choice to be silent rather than offend his peers. A reconciliatory pedagogy would try and address these silences by creating a safe space, where it would be possible to discuss whatever underpinned his refusal, but also to examine how and why some people choose to pass on their prejudices.

The fourth critical incident happened when a white teacher asked a coloured learner whether her father or mother was more “fair” in skin colour as they interacted during the preparation for a dramatisation. I froze at what appeared an extremely insensitive and intrusive question, and wondered if the girl was going to refuse to answer it or respond in an angry manner. There was a long, significant pause before the girl calmly answered the teacher, and I relaxed. During the interview, when I discussed this incident with *Drew*, I suggested that

there was a lack of “tension” between her asking the question and the learner’s response, and *Drew* said that the class was “open to discuss those things. I don’t think there’s this like ‘you’re white, I’m not’. ...we’re all South Africans... and so there really is an openness”. On reflection, I thought this question revealed a lack of sensitivity on the part of the teacher for not recognising how potentially offensive her question was, and the pause in the learner’s reply made me wonder if this example demonstrated that the teachers too were unaware that they need to reconcile with their learners. While there may be greater openness in relations between teacher and learners to discuss sensitive issues of the past, it does not mean that any question is acceptable, especially in this case where the relevance of the question to the discussion seemed minimal. A reconciliatory pedagogy would aim to encourage greater sensitivity between teachers and learners as to where the boundaries might be in an open discussion.

None of these critical incidents that I observed led to further dialogue about the issue, so that in all these cases the comments (or silence in one case) were either stopped explicitly or ignored by the teacher. The teachers did not probe any of these incidents further. This could be due to a lack of time, a lack of awareness or a sense that these issues were too difficult to pursue. I suggest that these incidents indicate that there are tensions in relationships in many of the classes that I observed, and that identities have not necessarily been transformed as a result of the political changes post 1994.

Choice of words to indicate identity

Additional examples of the tensions around issues of identity were the choice of words the teachers used to describe “other” racial groups in the classroom or in the interviews. There was a range of awareness from *Baloi* who mentioned that he did not put “boundaries” on what the learners were allowed to say, as he wanted them to “bring it as it comes, to let them know how things are now”. Yet, *Baloi* saw his role also as to “protect them [the learners] from certain interviews

that I feel...might be too much for them to swallow". For this reason, *Baloi* argued that he would read "hectic" interviews that contained a "derogatory word", and not allow the learners to do so themselves, so that he could help "unpack" the interviews for the learners. His fear was that "if they hear certain derogatory words... [it] might form part of their vocabulary." His reservation is an important one, as it showed an awareness of the sensitivities round the choice of words used to describe others in the classroom.

In contrast to *Baloi*, *Sofianos* described her class, as having "no white children, it's majority black, and Muslim, and coloured. So I would say there's no racism whatsoever". This statement revealed a lack of awareness on her part as well as a conflation of race and religion: the distinction *Sofianos* made between black and coloured children, and then mistakenly using the Muslim religion to indicate all Indian children, suggests an underlying confusion or lack of recognition about identity issues both in the present and the past.

Further examples of inappropriate words used in relation to identity were *Drew's* description as teaching "in a school with all non-white children" and *Dyer* who described some of his friends as "non-white". During *Aronstam's* lesson, her description of black people changed from "people of colour" to "African" to "non-white". The use of this term "non-white" is a term that originated during apartheid, and I was surprised to hear it used in the present. Initially, I thought it was a slip of the tongue, but when it was repeated by the third teacher, I decided to question this usage. I asked *Aronstam* about the changes in her description of black people, and she replied that she did not want to "insult any of the children in my class...and to make them upset", and she acknowledged that she had used these terms, although she had not "thought about" it before. Then she continued a debate aloud with herself as to whether "non-white sounds...I don't know, does it sound better than black? Or does black sound better than...I don't know...a non-white?" Her musing aloud revealed the difficulties and confusion she experienced in relation to choice of words for indicating identity.

How can this use of inappropriate words from the past to describe the “Other” by some of the teachers be explained? An easy explanation is that these examples showed unconscious racism, which is possible, but I suggest that this situation is more complex: this usage indicates continued discomfort around identity issues in the present, which relate to the past. I was reminded of Gramsci’s notion of the “interregnum”. According to Zygmunt Bauman (2010), “Gramsci infused the concept of 'interregnum' with a new meaning, ... [as] [h]e attached it...to extraordinary situations: to times when the extant legal frame of social order loses its grip and can no longer keep burgeoning social life on track, and a new frame, made to the measure of the newly emerged conditions responsible for making the old frame useless, is still at the design stage, has not yet been fully assembled, or has not been made strong enough to be enforced and settled in place”. South Africa has undergone “extraordinary” times, with the change from apartheid to democracy, yet it seems that we are still in a process of transition from an “old” to a “new frame”, especially in terms of language and identity issues. The use of “non-white” is an example of reverting to an “old frame” while we are present in a “new frame”. It is an example of how difficult it is to change language usage and, by implication mindsets, after a major political change has happened. This term raises the difficult question of how can we move beyond apartheid with new terms for South African identities, which both recognise the differences, yet do not have the baggage associated with the old terms? There are no easy answers to this question, but I suggest that a reconciliatory pedagogy could assist by putting this sensitive issue on the table for discussion, as part of the process of fostering reconciliation by “building relationship between [former] antagonists” (Lederach 1997, p. 34), so that we can overcome the divisions from the past and move towards a shared future.

Outside influences on relationships

As I conducted my research, I realised that I was observing an unexpected extension of the contact theory: six out the eight teachers were from a minority

group in relation to the majority of learners in their classrooms. Some of the teachers talked about a shift in demographics from when they were at school. For example, *Drew* mentioned that in 1994 she was at a mostly white school where there were “two non-white children in my school”, whereas now she was teaching at School A where the majority of children were black. In contrast, *Dyer* and *Sofianos* described themselves as having been in a minority at their public high schools, but both were now teaching at School A. Both *Baloi* and *North* went to more racially integrated public high schools, and they were teaching at schools that were mostly black. *Aronstam* went to an independent school which was completely white, and now teaches at an independent school, which is multicultural. This shows how the demographics at many South African schools have changed rapidly since 1994, and for some of the white teachers there is greater contact with black learners than before. I never observed overt hostility in the classroom between the teachers and learners, despite the critical incidents and the problematic language usage that I have mentioned previously. This may be due to the effect of having an observer in the classroom, and the limited amount of time I spent with most of the teachers. When I asked the teachers whether or not their relationship changed with their classes as a result of using a reconciliatory pedagogy, the majority of teachers replied that it had not done so, as they felt that they already had a good relationship with the learners. *Rabinowitz* was the only teacher who described her class as a “challenge” and “difficult”.

I felt that all of the teachers were committed to their learners’ wellbeing, although their relationships with the learners were sometimes affected by societal pressures from inside and outside of the school. *Page* mentioned conversations among teachers in the staffroom, which she described as revealing a “them versus us” attitude. Both *Page* and *Drew* mentioned that there was sometimes a racial dimension that arose in relationships among some of the teachers and parents. Broader societal pressures from outside the school were shown by *Page*’s response to a question she faced from family and friends: “so what’s the ratio [of black to white children]?”. She felt infuriated by

this question, because “the value that’s put on my teaching is [related to] the race of the child”. *Page* explained that she ended up having to defend her choice as to where she taught to family and friends, and noted bitterly that “if I was teaching fifteen kids that were mainly white” then “they [would] put more value on my teaching abilities.” If these pressures are present outside the classroom, then I suggest that they will be present in the classroom in some way, although not necessarily in a direct, causal relationship. But the critical incidents and the choice of words indicate that there are recurring tensions around identity in the classroom, as South Africa continues to go through a transitional stage. Despite the teachers’ disclaimers, I suggest that there is a need for a reconciliatory pedagogy, as there are continual tensions around relationships and identity in the classroom.

Lederach’s model of reconciliation and a reconciliatory pedagogy

The connection between an oral history task and a cooperative learning strategy is a way to turn Lederach’s reconciliatory model into practice at a grass roots level, although an exploration of his ideas of truth, justice, mercy, peace and hope needs to be made explicit in the classroom. There was a gap in terms of Lederach’s dancers in my classroom observations and interviews with the teachers. While concerns associated with truth and justice were clearly demonstrated during most of my classroom observations and interviews with the teachers, the rest of Lederach’s dancers of mercy, peace and hope were not as visible. This may have been due to the age of the learners that were being taught, and that none of the teachers were aware of Lederach’s model of reconciliation.⁵⁶ Perhaps truth and justice are the easiest dancers to foreground at the intermediate and senior phase at primary schools in the present, and the other dancers will have their turn as a reconciliatory pedagogy takes shape in later years. But it is difficult to reach a conclusion without further research into

⁵⁶ This may also be due to not examining the learners’ oral histories, but this would need to be the focus of future research.

the effects of exposing student teachers to Lederach's model, and how this translates into practice. (I return to a discussion of this issue in chapter 7).

Rabinowitz was one of the few teachers to raise the kind of issues that are relevant to Lederach's model of reconciliation. An example was when she compared the situation in South Africa with post-war Germany in terms of justice and considered whether or not it would have made a difference if South Africa had followed the precedent of the Nuremberg Trials. Initially, she said that she felt she was contradicting herself "because with the Holocaust it's okay [to hold the Nuremberg Trials], but with apartheid it's not okay." Later she made the link between justice and forgiveness, when she said that "if you look back at Germany now, you're not going to call them 'those Germans'... I've forgiven, I'm sure a lot of our people have forgiven; it's over with." This was in the context of supporting her view that South Africans should move beyond the "blame game". Her views are debatable, although I think that she inadvertently showed the need for teachers to be active participants in a reconciliatory pedagogy. Lederach's model of reconciliation could be a way to encourage reflection and further dialogue round these difficult issues, both for teachers and their learners.

Aronstam said that she felt that there is a place for a reconciliatory pedagogy, but the big question is "how much time do you allocate to it? Or how little time? Because one group of people may argue that it's sixteen years [in 2010], can we not move on? Let's just spend a few hours on it...why do we have to keep on bring[ing] up the past, the cuts are deep, let's move forward. And other people... would say no, but it's important, it's part of our history, in order for things not to repeat we need to learn about it in greater detail." She supported the latter view, as she said that we need to talk about it "for quite a bit of time". *Aronstam* raised the issue of time, and her concern suggests a link between the past, the present and the future, which could be connected to Mbiti's concept of "spacetime" (Lederach, 2005, p. 146). Her views concerning the importance of the "lessons of history" suggests something deeper, as they could be related to

issues of truth and justice. If Lederach's model of reconciliation was used, it might help her to make these connections more explicit.

But this lack of evidence of all of Lederach's dancers in most of my interviews and classroom observations does raise further questions: Is Lederach's model of reconciliation applicable to all contexts? How appropriate is his model for the primary school history classroom in South African schools? It may be sufficient for learners at this level to focus only on issues relating to truth and justice in our past, so that only part of Lederach's model is used. They can develop their understanding of these aspects of the past by using oral history and cooperative learning tasks as suggested by a reconciliatory pedagogy. By going through this process, it might assist learners to develop empathy and encourage the reweaving relationships with one another and their teachers. Ultimately, issues of mercy and peace are grappled with and resolved in the broader society. A reconciliatory pedagogy at this level cannot pretend to influence these issues directly, although I suggest that it might feed into this wider project of reconciliation, as the learners become adult members of society.

Reconciliation pedagogy and the curriculum

Another concern about a reconciliatory pedagogy that the teachers raised pertained to the timing of when it was appropriate to introduce it at school, and showed similar concerns to those raised by the students/teachers in chapter 4. *Baloi* argued that "primary school learners are still fairly innocent [in]... their thinking", but "as they get older, they will remember things like this [lesson] and they will look at inequalities that are happening now in different things and they will start asking why ... should there be certain ... races in a sports team?" This means that he felt that this approach would be better at "high school, varsity, I think that's where it becomes big." While *Dyer* concurred with *Baloi's* view that these ideas are "not as big an issue" at primary school, he also acknowledged that there was a need to "deal with it properly in primary school [because] that's

the only way we can really get these prejudices out.” *Page* also suggested that a reconciliatory pedagogy should be done later on in the senior phase, although for a different reason: “because they [the learners] are able to think more about these situations and cause and effect. Whereas [intermediate phase learners] don’t understand that ‘this action causes that’ unlike the children at the senior phase.” *Drew* argued that there was a greater need for adults or the children’s parents to be exposed to “some sort of reconciliatory process” than her learners, as she did not see the need for this process in her classroom.

I am in agreement that a reconciliatory pedagogy needs to be developed at high school and tertiary level, although I think that some of the ideas should be introduced in primary school. One of the reasons for this is that the conversation, among learners and between teachers and learners, needs to start sooner rather than later. As *Baloi* suggested, the learners need to remember lessons like this because of societal pressure that increases as they grow up. Recent events, such as a white right wing camp (van Gelder, 2012), which aimed to instil hatred against black people in boys as young as thirteen years, adds support to my view. It seems that learners are exposed to Hoffman’s (2005, p. 6) “first knowledge” or Jansen’s (2009a, p. 114) “bitter knowledge” from their homes and other socialising agencies, and a reconciliatory pedagogy provides a way of working through some of these issues. *Aronstam* felt that the cooperative task did lead to a shift in the learners’ relationships, as it developed “more understanding ... because [the] class is multiracial.” *Drew* felt that for some of the learners there may have been a shift, although she said that they “are quite good friends anyway”, but agreed that it led the learners to “understand where we had the Indian child and the Black child and the Coloured child [in the past]... [so they understand] why they use certain vocabulary”. Other teachers claimed that relationships did not change, “because the majority of my class is from the same background” (*Dyer*), or “they are quite comfortable with each other” (*Sofianos*), and there are “no boundaries between them” (*Baloi*). But *Page* observed no change for a different reason as there are “lots of disputes [among the learners and they come from]...raw,

emotional backgrounds". *Rabinowitz* claimed that the relationship did not change amongst her learners, as "there was no need for it to change. Everyone is equal in my class." The majority of the teachers felt that there were some shifts in understanding or no change in relationships that occurred among their learners, but I think more time is needed than a lesson or two to encourage this process.

A reconciliatory pedagogy needs to be carefully scaffolded at primary school level, as *Aronstam* stated "it has to come right down to their [the learners'] level, they've got to ...understand it". She suggested that the learners watch a movie such as "Sarafina", which deals with some of the events that happened during apartheid, where "they could feel the emotion, then they would see why it's important. And discrimination still happens, so it doesn't have to be a racial thing, it could be anything. And I think that's key." There are many examples of other forms of discrimination in current South African society, such as xenophobia and andro-centrism. However, I think it is important that learners should start with issues related to their own history first, such as apartheid, before considering other examples of discrimination both within South African society and other countries too.

By doing so, it will help the learners to gain some understanding of how this past has affected us as a society, and it is important to develop compassion and empathy for those who have suffered in our own society, before generalising to others. As *Waghid* (2005, p. 339) suggested, in the context of tertiary students, it is important in "civic reconciliation that students be able to imagine themselves as participants in the struggles of others ... [i]t would be difficult for White students to comprehend the oppression Black students might have experienced if stories about racial oppression and political prejudice were not convincingly told. Similarly, it would be impossible for Black students to avoid engaging with the inner voices of White students who might not want to be considered as bearing any responsibility for racist discrimination legislated by a past government that favored White minority rule." Further, *Schlink* (2010, p. 84)

has argued, empathy leads to understanding, which “makes us more hesitant to pass judgement and more forbearing and tending toward forgiveness, understanding brings reconciliation a step closer. The foundation for reconciliation is laid by understanding because it works against all that separates us and toward all that would bring us together.” These ideas are more relevant to older students, although I suggest that the process needs to start in primary school. In the next section, I will discuss how a reconciliatory pedagogy might be implemented in relation to the content which is included in the present primary school history curriculum.

Reconciliatory pedagogy, the history curriculum and history teaching

In the current version of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) known as Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS, 2011), there are topics where a reconciliatory pedagogy could be implemented from primary school to high school. Grade 4 has a section on “Learning from leaders” such as Mandela and Gandhi, so a possible application of Lederach’s model of reconciliation might encourage the learners to focus on peace and hope. Another possibility in Grade 4 is a local history project which includes oral history explicitly, but this section may be related to a number of topics. Grade 6 focuses on “Democracy and citizenship in South Africa”, which explores the concept of democracy and South Africa’s first democratic elections in 1994, which is where I originally located the oral history task for my Social Sciences methodology students. This is where issues such as truth and justice can begin to be explored. However, it is only in high school history, in Grades 9, 11 and 12 history where an in-depth focus is placed on apartheid and coming to terms with the past. There is also an emphasis on oral history in most of the senior grades. I suggest that learners in Grade 9 could be introduced to Lederach’s model, and in Grades 11 and 12, they could interrogate it in greater depth, so that the possible conflicts among the social energies would be explored. While a focus on high school history is

beyond the scope of my dissertation, it is important to show that the topic of apartheid is covered directly in the history curriculum a number of times throughout school: while the repetition may lead to a greater understanding, there is also the danger Schlink (2010, p. 27) identified in Germany, of “[t]he legacy [of continual discussion of the Holocaust] for the next generation ... The ennui sometimes exhibited by schoolchildren concerning the Third Reich and the Holocaust has its roots in the deadening frequency with which they are confronted with the past by their teachers and the media.” It was “ennui” that I faced when I introduced the 2006 oral history assignment to the Social Sciences methodology class, and they responded negatively with comments such as “not apartheid again!”. Unless creative and varied ways are found to address the teaching and learning of apartheid, this “ennui” will continue, and undermine the study of history and the broader project of reconciliation. A reconciliatory pedagogy could help to address this situation by changing the focus on apartheid by using oral history in terms of who is interviewed and about what aspect of apartheid. By exposing learners to Lederach’s model of reconciliation at a senior level (Grades 9, 11 and 12), and interrogating his model (Grades 11 and 12), it could be used as a different way of examining the effects of apartheid. This would be a way of changing the focus from a repetition of the same narrative year after year. Further, by changing the pedagogy in the form of using different cooperative learning structures over the years, this too will vary the approach to the topic. For example, a task on an aspect of oral history uses “think-pair-share” one year, then “numbered heads together” is used the next year,⁵⁷ and another cooperative learning structure is used the following year. Overall, the effects of these changes in approach to both the topic and variations in pedagogy can help to address the problem of “ennui”.

This generative potential of a reconciliatory pedagogy to introduce a greater variety of teaching and learning strategies within the history classroom was supported by the teachers. As *Aronstam* commented, this was the first time she felt that she could call on her creativity as a teacher in her use of oral history

⁵⁷ See chapter 5 where these cooperative learning strategies are explained.

and cooperative learning strategies. All of the teachers agreed that this was a different approach to one that they usually use in the classroom: none of the first-year teachers had used oral history in their teaching before, whereas three out of the four more experienced teachers had used oral history, but not linked it to a cooperative learning approach. *Drew* did feel that the combination of oral history and a cooperative learning activity yielded a beneficial pedagogy, “because it forced the learners to do some of their own work,... then in a group, and they also put something together”, so that the children “put ideas through their own minds because of the whole process”. But for *Baloi*, the value of this process was that it allowed “things [to] come out that you don’t expect...it’s just real learning.” Thus there was a mixed response in terms of whether it was the use of oral history and/or the link to cooperative learning, which led to a change in the teaching styles of some of the teachers, but there is no doubt that the process of implementing a reconciliatory pedagogy led to a shift in the teaching and learning dynamics in some of the classrooms.

Practical constraints on a reconciliatory pedagogy

However, there are practical constraints on the implementation of a reconciliatory pedagogy at schools. The first constraint that I noticed was a physical one: the teachers at School A were dealing with large numbers of learners (between 36 and 46) in small classrooms that were designed originally for no more than 25 learners. This meant that it was almost impossible for the teachers to move around the classroom while the learners were doing the cooperative learning task, and the noise level was deafening. In one of the classrooms, there were insufficient desks and tables for all the learners.

There were other constraints at the schools, such as the work schedules. *Aronstam* explained that she does not use oral history, because she had to stick to a tight schedule, as she said, “[y]ou feel like you’re very limited, you’re not as free as you could be.” *Page* identified another constraint in that she had to do an activity using the same material as *Dyer* (the old South African Coat of

Arms). This was due to the requirement of uniformity of materials used within the same grade that they were teaching. *Dyer* felt that the lack of time and the need for many assessments were both constraints on using this kind of approach to teaching and learning. This was echoed by *Aronstam* who saw this approach as very “time consuming”. *Baloi* also commented that assessment was a huge problem, as often it was like a “sausage factory”. All these constraints do limit the opportunities to use a reconciliatory pedagogy in the history classrooms.

Despite these constraints, I think that it is possible to implement a reconciliatory pedagogy in the primary curriculum *if* the teachers understand its purpose and are willing to experiment with this process. However, it is not desirable or possible to enforce the use of a reconciliatory pedagogy. Teachers may need to be mentored if they choose to undertake this process, as there may be an underlying fear of dealing with sensitive topics in the classroom. Constraints such as time pressures, the need to implement a particular curriculum and the emphasis on assessment means that a reconciliatory pedagogy will not be easy to introduce, although I suggested that there are topics that render possible integration of this process within the current history curriculum. A reconciliatory pedagogy is not something that happens as a once-off experience, but is something that needs to happen in different ways over time during the course of the history curriculum.

Conclusion

An important finding relates to the way the teachers perceived their own identities and those of their learners, and how this indicated that there was a need for reconciliation in relations in the classroom. Most of the teachers identified themselves strongly as South African (only one teacher was from another African country), but there were some qualifications in terms of religion and race, which supported Sen’s (2006, p. 16) concept of the multiplicity of

identities. These views supported the idea that the changes in South Africa had led to a shift in their group identities in comparison to the past.

With respect to the learners, the teachers argued that there were class divisions in the schools, and these were the main indicators of socio-economic difference. Most of the teachers were strongly against the notion of “barriers from the past” being present in their classrooms, and suggested that there was a greater openness in relationships in the primary school classrooms. Some of the teachers suggested that racism was a generational thing, as some parents were racist, as well as other teachers. If this is true of the broader society and school, then how could these tensions not be present in the history teachers’ own classrooms? The contradictions that emerged in the course of classroom observations and interviews mirror a tension in the wider society: South Africa is still experiencing the “interregnum” between the “old” and the “new frame”, to use Gramsci’s terms, despite the formal transition from apartheid to democracy in 1994. The tensions were shown by the following: the use and misuse of racial terms to describe “other” groups in the classroom and in the interviews by some of the teachers; the jokes that were made about race; and the critical incidents in the classroom. All these examples suggest that identity, whether defined by the recognition of differences such as race, ethnicity or nationality, is still a complicated issue in many of the primary school history classrooms that I observed. In some instances, changes after the advent of democracy have occurred rapidly; for example, many of the teachers commented on the shift in demographics compared to their own schooling. This was an unexpected extension of the contact theory, as most of the teachers were in a minority in relation to the majority of the learners in their classrooms. But in other areas, such as transformation of group identities, the change is much slower.

Another important finding was the absence in the primary classroom of many of the ideas that Lederach’s model of reconciliation foregrounded, with the only exception being the dancers of truth and justice. This may indicate the importance for history teachers to be exposed to his model of reconciliation, as

it provides a theoretically informed approach that will help their understanding and ability to implement a reconciliatory pedagogy *if* they choose to do so. But the absence of some of Lederach's dancers in the primary classroom suggests that his model may not be applicable to all contexts: the dancers of mercy, peace and hope are more appropriate to the larger stage of the society than on the primary school history classroom's smaller stage.

Most of the teachers suggested that a reconciliatory pedagogy, which consists of oral history and cooperative learning, would be better suited to high school and university. Judging from what I observed in most of the classrooms and the interviews with the teachers, it appears that there is a need to introduce a reconciliatory pedagogy in primary school classrooms too. There are still tensions in relationships, which mirror those in the wider society, and these need to be addressed sooner rather than later. But the use of a reconciliatory pedagogy needs to be developed at high school: Lederach's model of reconciliation could be introduced at Grade 9 level, and interrogated in greater depth at Grades 11 and 12. However, a reconciliatory pedagogy in primary school needs to be carefully scaffolded according to the level of the learners and not overdone to avoid ennui over the years. There were advantages of using a reconciliatory pedagogy at primary school level: it yielded benefits in the form of learners being responsible for their own learning; it encouraged the teachers' own creativity; and it led to a change in the teaching and learning dynamics in some of the classrooms.

Yet, there were practical limitations on using a reconciliatory pedagogy in the primary school classrooms that I observed and which were revealed in the interviews. The need to focus on implementing and completing the curriculum within a particular time frame meant that it was difficult to implement the process in the time that a reconciliatory pedagogy required. Other constraints were the need for all the teachers in a grade to do similar tasks and the pressure to produce a large number of assessments for all the learners. There was also an incompatibility between the architecture of the classrooms and the

number of learners in the classrooms at School A: this affected the ability of the teachers to move around the small, overcrowded classrooms during the cooperative learning process and the noise level was deafening. In one case, there was insufficient furniture for all of the learners, and this created organisational difficulties for the learners and teacher during the lesson.

Despite the teachers' claim that there were no "barriers from the past" in their classrooms, it became evident, through the critical incidents and choice of words round identity that everyone is not at home in present-day South African society. There is an on-going need to foster the kind of reconciliation that Lederach (1999, p. 138) has proposed, "understood as relationship and restoration, the healing of personal and social fabrics". This also includes a conception of reconciliation where there is a recognition of mutual interdependence as understood by *ubuntu* (Tutu, 1999; Metz, 2010), so that we can strive to overcome the divisions of the past and move towards a shared future (Bloomfield et al, 2003). Yet, there is also a need to recognise differences in identities and to transform them: both the need for interdependence and difference are included in the image of the reweaving of relationships. I suggest that a reconciliatory pedagogy, introduced in primary school history classrooms, and developed in high school, could make a contribution to the broader project of reconciliation in South African society over time.

Chapter 7: “Oh my gosh, did that really happen?” - Reflection on the results of the classroom observations

Introduction

One of the results of my experience of the classroom observations and interviews with the teachers was the realisation that student history teachers needed to be exposed to more theory. This would help to develop their understanding and ability to implement a reconciliatory pedagogy in the history classroom. In the previous chapter, I suggested that this meant learning about Lederach’s model of reconciliation, but on reflection, as part of this process of narrative inquiry about both the teachers’ experiences and my own, I realised that the theory required is more than an exposure and possible critique of this model. Clandinin and Connelly’s (2000, p. 49) use of the “*three-dimensional narrative inquiry space*”, which encourages inquiry into personal and social experience, across a continuum of time, and encourages inquiries in different directions, led me to question in greater depth my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy. Examples of these questions were the problematic issues surrounding the use of oral history from a disciplinary perspective, some of the assumptions that inform cooperative learning, as well as Lederach’s model of reconciliation and *ubuntu*. By following this process of inquiry, I realised that this could act as another level of a polychronic activity that informs my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy. In turn, this might help to develop the student teacher’s understanding of a reconciliatory pedagogy and the practice of teaching history.

In this chapter, I examine issues concerning “truth” in relation to oral history, the TRC and life histories. Next, I turn to the connections between memory and oral histories and the use of imagination and the past. The following section will deal with the controversial question of the relationship between narratives and history, the need to restory the past and the impact of these ideas on history teaching practice. Further, I discuss the implications of questioning Lederach’s model of reconciliation, as well as consider briefly a few other issues related to my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy. Finally, I conclude by considering some of the complexities that underpin a reconciliatory pedagogy in relation to the practice of history teaching.

Issues concerning truth

The student history teachers need to be aware of some of the challenges that oral history has faced from within the discipline of history. This will help them to develop an awareness of the complexities which inform this approach to history, although it is not my intention to delve into the claims to knowledge which inform the discipline of history, as this goes beyond the boundaries of my research. Yet, truth is an important concept not only in history, but also as one of Lederach’s social energies, which deals with the past.

“Truth” and oral history

A well-known oral historian, Portelli (quoted in Field, 2008b, p. 8), has offered the following defence of oral history: “oral history approaches truth as much when it departs from the ‘facts’ as when it records them carefully, because the errors and even the lies reveal, under scrutiny, the creative processes of memory, imagination, symbolism and interpretation that endow events with cultural significance.” I intend to use this defence of oral history as a way of discussing some of the issues raised by oral history within the discipline.

Portelli appears to accept that it is possible to distinguish between “truth” and “lies” in oral history, but his notion of “truth” is qualified by his verb “approaches” which suggests that it is never possible to reach the “truth”. His claim concerning the “truth” of memory in oral history suggests that memory is not merely about individual recollection of events, but instead it is a creative, dynamic and reciprocal process among imagination, symbolism and interpretation, which is located in the interaction between the individual and the society. I agree that memory is not located either in the individual or the society and that it is useful to see it as the product of a creative interaction of both. The role of the oral historian is to place all of the above under “scrutiny”, although Portelli does not elaborate on what he means by this term.

In a brief, personal conversation that I had with Portelli after he presented a public paper at the University of the Witwatersrand (2009), I asked him to explain more about memory and factual recall. His reply was that the relationship between memory and factual recall is complex and becomes blurred. The example that he gave was that the exact date of strikes became unimportant to workers, as each strike is seen as a continuum of struggle against the employer, which makes the dates insignificant. The accuracy of recall about the dates of events may not be the single, most important part of an oral history, although the dates of when the strikes started and ended can be established irrespective of whether or not they are remembered or are important to anyone. Further, the workers’ perception of the continual nature of the struggle does add to one’s understanding of the event. But then on what basis and how does the oral historian subject the oral history to “scrutiny” as Portelli suggests? I will suggest a possible answer further on in the chapter.

Portelli argues further that “‘wrong’ statements are still psychologically ‘true’ and that this truth may be equally as important as factually reliable accounts” (Portelli, 1998, p. 68). While this “truth” may provide insights as to why a person holds certain beliefs, a problem with the concept of a psychological “truth” is that what may be “true” to one person may be a lie or the product of prejudice

from another person's perspective, and on what basis does one judge this kind of "truth"? Further, how does one weigh how "important" a person's psychological "truth" is? Most people cherish their own beliefs, but that does not mean that they are necessarily acceptable nor that they have a significance beyond the personal. There appears to be a similarity between what is claimed above by a psychological "truth" and the TRC's concept of a "personal or narrative truth", which was based on the stories told by individual victims and perpetrators as a means of recovering "parts of the national memory that had ... been ignored". While I am sympathetic to the view that a "psychological" or personal "truth" allows for insights into a particular person's perspective and the milieu that she comes from, and that this process can help to reclaim memories, as was shown at the TRC and by the oral histories in chapters 3 and 5, whether or not this should be considered as "truth" is problematic.

"Truth" and the TRC

A South African historian, Cherry (2000, p. 136), who wrote about the complexity of the issue of truth in relation to the TRC, argued that there are "cases [from the TRC] where the truth remains elusive", for example, the case of the PEBCO Three (the background to this example was given in chapter 2). The problem is that at the TRC hearings, the perpetrators (security policemen from Port Elizabeth, security policemen from Vlakplaas, black policemen and *askaris*) gave different, competing versions of how the PEBCO Three died. These accounts varied from the security policemen's version that the three were sedated before they were killed to the black policemen and *askaris* who claimed that the three men were tortured brutally before they were killed. The account became worse for the families of the victims, as Mamasela, an *askari*, claimed that one of the three "confessed to being an agent of the National Intelligence Service (NIS)" (p. 138), and when this was confirmed by the NIS, he was killed because the information that he had provided was considered not useful. In effect, the hearings created more heartbreak for the families. Instead of establishing the truth about their deaths, it muddied the waters further because

now there was an additional, untested claim that one of the three was allegedly an informer, and it was unclear who this was.

Cherry (p. 143) concluded as follows:

My fear is that in an attempt to establish a consensus about ‘the truth’, many of the complexities and nuances of the truth are lost. It seems that we have to acknowledge that the truth that the TRC has uncovered is, at best, only a partial truth ... it may be more valuable to see historical truth as a continually unfolding process – not something that is past but something that is still part of the present, still contested and under construction. ... As a historian, I hold that there is one reality and that truth is not relative; it can be known. This does not make it easy to find, nor does it mean that all will agree with the way it is interpreted ... Yet there was only one sequence of events leading to the death of the PEBCO Three – despite the different testimonies of those present. Not all versions of history are equally valid, for example that of someone who does not remember the truth, or chooses not to tell the truth. It is inevitable that historical truth – especially that arising out of bitter and violent conflicts – is contested, but this does not give equal validity to all versions.

Cherry’s perspective on “the truth” offers valuable insights: while it is not my intention to explore in depth the knowledge claims for oral history, an understanding of oral testimony at the TRC as leading to a “partial truth”, which contributes to an understanding of a “historical truth” as “contested and under construction” in the “present” are useful ideas. Her view that “there was only one sequence of events leading to the death of the PEBCO Three” may be correct, although Cherry suggests that memory is fallible and that someone may deliberately choose not to tell the truth. Both are possibilities in this case, but what Cherry does not take into account is that there may be differing perceptions as to what happened and how it happened so that “the truth” per se may never be known. The victims cannot speak, although there is no doubt that three men were killed in reality. The TRC was constrained by its mandate and its conception of the differing kinds of “truth” (as shown in chapter 2), so that it was unable to investigate or cross examine the competing claims made by the parties concerned in any depth. Instead, it was forced to rule that it was

impossible to make a judgement between the competing claims of what happened and how the PEBCO Three were killed.

“Truth” and life histories

A related question to that of the “truth” is how to establish how “trustworthy” the narratives are in “life histories, testimony”? Walker (2001, p. 55) asks this question in “tracing the ‘truth work’ that narratives as evidence (data) do in producing better knowledge, by which [she] means knowledge which can be used to improve our understandings of ourselves and how we live in the world; knowledge which is therefore also reliable. [Her] concerns turn on how we make judgements about ‘trustworthy’ knowledge, and related questions of truth telling, of evidence, ‘facts’ and the social justice effects arising from our narrative tales” (p. 56). Walker suggests that the truth matters “in a society founded on the lies of the privileged” (p. 61), such as in South Africa. She further asserts that both the TRC report and Antjie Krog’s account of the TRC provide a “weight of evidence which limits how we might interpret these past events, however ...ambiguous and contradictory” (p. 61). To support this view, she cites the historian, Richard Evans, who said about evidence: “If they say that the pieces only fit together to produce a steam engine, for instance, it is no good trying to put them together to make a suburban garden: it simply will not work” (p. 61). Walker’s argument that the “truth” matters in a society such as South Africa, while acknowledging that it is a difficult, messy process to establish what the “truth” may be, is one that needs to be taken seriously. There is no doubt that evidence plays a role in establishing what is relevant (and supports a specific narrative). Evans’s metaphor holds true at one level depending on whether you are investigating a steam engine or a suburban garden, and it is clear that the two are not interchangeable. But at another level, it rules out the possibility that an interpretation may prioritise certain evidence: while evidence and interpretation are distinct, they are intimately connected and affect one another. Just as the evidence guides (and limits) interpretation, so too interpretation prioritises evidence as relevant or irrelevant in a narrative. I develop this idea further in the chapter when I discuss narratives and history.

By engaging with this oral history assignment, I hope that it will show students that what is at stake at a disciplinary and personal level concerning “the truth” is complex. Cherry’s notion of “historical truth as a continually unfolding process”, that is also “still contested and under construction” in the “present” suggests that the interviewers need to question the “truth” of the “facts” that comes out of an interview. The interviewers can examine how the interviewee’s interpretation of events influences the kinds of “facts” that they select to support their views. In turn, the interviewers need to interrogate the psychological “truths” or personal “truths” that may appear in their accounts. The students need to subject what they find out through their interviews to scrutiny: by this, I mean that they need to question the interviewees further, also to compare their accounts to other oral histories (of their peers) as well as to written historical accounts (historians’ narratives and other written evidence), so that they can explore competing claims to the “truth” and how they are interpreted. By doing so, a reconciliatory pedagogy aims to create an awareness among the students of the importance of interrogating “received truths” based on their own collective pasts via what they learn through the interview process in comparison with other oral and written sources. But the relationship is dialectical, as in turn these “truths”, which may be “partial” truths, can be used equally to interrogate other oral history narratives and established historical accounts. The results of their oral history interviews may lead to differing “truths” and interpretations emerging, but then does it follow that “anything goes”? Walker (2001, p. 61) has argued that while a single “truth” may not be recoverable about the past, “[t]he TRC was not just a discourse, the suffering and oppressions not simply a rhetorical piece ... At issue is the balance of probability in the stories told – a probable truth, given the available evidence, rather than an absolute truth”. While Walker’s argument in favour of a “probable truth” rather than a single “truth” is a helpful re-description, I suggest that this “probable truth” is based not only on the available evidence, but also on the coherence and the consistency of the interpretation that in turn supports this evidence.

Memory and oral history

Another issue that is frequently raised as a problem with oral history is its reliance on one person's perspective so that it is perceived as being very subjective: there is the potential to be influenced by nostalgia for a so-called lost golden age and also to be influenced by one's imagination. By imagination, I mean the sense of inconsistencies in an interviewee's recollections, because individual memories can be repressed, be highly selective of representations of the past and be influenced by the social context.

To illustrate this difficulty, I turn to an oral history written by Alex Haley (1998, pp. 9-20) concerning his ancestry, where he retold how the stories that he heard from relatives in North America led him to take a trip to Africa to find where his original ancestor had come from. A griot in Gambia recounted that his ancestor suddenly disappeared, and confirmed the stories told by the older member of Haley's family. But when I retold Haley's story to a colleague, I was brought up short by his question: "But didn't he invent it all?" According to Thompson (1978, p. 21), while Haley based his account on archival research in the United States, it was his encounter with the griot in Gambia that was problematic for a number of reasons, such as the griot "lacked the full traditional training, ...and he may have had an idea in advance of what Haley wanted.... More important, the African and American generations fit awkwardly – although this could be due to a telescoping not uncommon in oral tradition – and the time-fixing reference is very weak...(Thompson, 1978, p. 23)". These issues raised questions about the authenticity of Haley's account, and illustrate some of the problematic areas associated with "truth" and oral history.

Oral histories are not necessarily based on an active attempt to deceive, although they can be fallible in the sense that they rely on individual memory, and also collective memory, and sometimes the interaction between both can be unreliable. An example of the interaction between individual and collective memory, which is problematic, is shown by an oral history project that was

conducted in Mamre in the Western Cape. According to Ward and Worden (1998, pp. 209–211), Mamre originally was a Moravian mission station where KhoiSan soldiers and their families were based under the British government in the early nineteenth century. However, after the emancipation of the slaves in 1834, the town grew as former slaves flocked to the mission station. By the end of the nineteenth century, the descendants of the KhoiSan and slaves had intermarried, but when present day residents were questioned about their families in the oral history project, there was either denial or amnesia about their slave heritage, which might possibly be linked to trauma. A twist in the debate on the relationship between oral history and written sources is added by Ward and Worden (1998) who suggest that the present day residents have based their recollections on a written source, a novel about the community's origins according to a Moravian missionary, W. F. Bechler's *Benigna van Groenekloof of Mamre*. According to Ward and Worden (1998, p. 210), this novel forms "one of the core myths of Mamre's history".

Imagination and the past

Andre Brink (1998, p. 42), a South African author and academic, has argued in favour of the imagination as the "only guarantee for the survival of history" via the use of myth. He argues that an appeal to memory is insufficient, as it is selective and can suppress the past as shown in the history of the Afrikaners where they forgot large tracts about the past and suppressed key roles played by "outsiders" such as Krotoä (I will return to her story later in this chapter). Brink (p. 37) argues further in relation to the TRC that "there is a double bind that the kind of whole the exercise [of the TRC] is aimed at can never be complete and that ultimately, like all narratives, this one must eventually be constructed around its own blind spots and silences", which leads him to conclude that memory is not the answer. Instead, Brink argues in favour of the role of the imagination in the dialectic between past and present, individual and society. Based on his own books, he further argues that there is a shift that occurs "towards an intimation that that something may have in fact happened,

but that we can never be sure of it or gain access to it, and that the best we can do is to fabricate metaphors – that is, tell stories – in which, not history, but imaginings of history are invented” (Brink, 1998, p. 42). While Brink is correct that memory can be about recovery and suppression, I think that he is incorrect to suggest that all is left is the “imaginings of history”. For example, in the case of Mamre, we see that the memory of slavery is suppressed or forgotten as shown by the oral history of the town, but we also know from historical documents that there is evidence that former slaves joined the Moravian mission station. How can one leave this situation simply to the “imaginings of history”? Should this evidence be ignored, because it does not accord with a particular account? I think that this is an untenable position, and suggest that in this case the written evidence can play an important role in challenging the memories based on oral histories, and in other cases “oral” memories can in turn challenge the written evidence. This dynamic interaction between one kind of evidence and another also leads to accounts being reinterpreted, although as I have previously suggested this process shows an interweaving between “evidence” and “interpretation”, despite both being logically distinct from each other.

The above examples illustrate some of the grey areas associated with oral history. However, research that is archive-based is not necessarily “better” than what is found in oral history. The reasons for this are many: most importantly, a document is found in the archive because someone has selected this document as worth preserving; this process of selection may represent the interests of a particular individual or group; and more broadly, it is impossible to recover all the documents and traces of the past. Furthermore, I support Portelli’s (1998, p. 68) argument that oral and written history are complementary sources, and the verbal source of many written accounts is often not acknowledged. Both sources of evidence need to be subjected to scrutiny, as neither one nor the other is superior.

In a reconciliatory pedagogy, I think that it is important to highlight the ambiguous role that memory plays: students need to understand that it is not simply a process of “recovering” memories during their interviews, although they may discover different perspectives and interpretations of the past. But people may forget, they may exaggerate their experiences due to nostalgia, they may repress uncomfortable memories, and they may appropriate social memories as their own. These issues point to the importance of subjecting the interviews to scrutiny, by comparing them with other accounts, both oral and written.

Narratives and history

Another issue that Portelli (1998, p. 66) highlights with regard to oral history is that of making the narrative aspect of oral history explicit. But the relationship between the narrative and written historical accounts is a source of considerable debate within the discipline. The views of so-called “proper” historians, with their emphasis on investigating the past to find the facts first and then to interpret them, have been challenged by this focus on narrative theory. From a postmodernist perspective, Jenkins (1995, pp. 18-19) describes Hayden White’s views on history as follows: “...the historical work is a verbal artifact, a narrative prose discourse, the content of which is as much invented – or as much imagined – as found.” This idea is contrasted with the “proper” historians’ view that “historical ‘facts’ are ‘produced’ by appropriate discipline from the evidential facts” (Jenkins, 1995, p. 81). According to postmodernists, such as Stone (quoted in Jenkins, 1995, p. 30) “over and above the statement and the chronicle there can be no fully independent check on historians’ accounts save by other historians’ accounts; that is to say, intertextually by recourse to ‘peer appraisal’.... [as]...the events and situations of the past cannot judge the interpretations conferred upon them precisely because they are the phenomena about which the interpretations are being made.” The postmodernists’ views raise serious questions concerning the “proper” historians’ approach to the role of evidence. However, while the postmodernists do not deny the materiality of the past, their approach does seem to open the door to “any narrative will do”

about the past, despite being subject to peer review. As Walker (2001, p. 67) argued, the logic of this position validates Holocaust denial, since there would then be very little to choose between competing narratives.

Hayden White (1987) does not suggest that the use of narrative is neutral. He argues that there is what he calls a “politics of interpretation” in any historical narrative, “which does not refer directly to the interpretative practices of politics itself. Instead, he uses the politics of interpretation to suggest that certain assumptions, concerning the way historical knowledge is constituted, are part of a political position” (quoted in Nussey, 1992, p. 25). By applying this idea to the South African context, it is possible to show the “politics of interpretation” in the different “schools” of South African historiography, namely, the Afrikaner Nationalist, Liberal, and Revisionist (Marxist and Social) Historians.⁵⁸ It is important to stress that the use of the term “schools” does not imply that there are necessarily specific similarities which make it easy to label a historian as belonging to a particular “school”. Instead, I suggest that there are broad similarities among some historians, such as, an assumption (often implicit) of a starting point for history, a selection of a key agent and an unfolding towards a *telos* in their narratives. These assumptions point towards a particular affinity to a “school”, and an interpretative framework, which gives coherence to the historians’ accounts.

However, events such as the transition from an apartheid government to a democratic one in 1994, is an example of politics having a direct influence on the “politics of interpretation” within the “schools” of history. It has challenged the underlying claims of the “schools” of South African history in one way or another, and left some of the narrative conventions in disarray. For example, the story of the Afrikaner Nationalist narrative which started with the arrival of the Dutch at the Cape, where the main agent in the narrative is the “volk”, and its *telos* of the rise to power and dominance of the Afrikaner nation is not a

⁵⁸ See Nussey (1992), where I tried to unpack the political assumptions of these different “schools” based on their conception of the good and just society, as well as the narrative conventions built into each of the “schools”.

coherent account after 1994. There are on-going debates as to whether the liberals' view, that capitalism and apartheid were inconsistent, is valid or not (Lipton, 1986, pp. 6-7 & 2007, p. 115). The Marxist view that capitalism will be overthrown by socialism has not yet been vindicated. Although the Social Historians' approach which emphasised "history from below" has had its successes, it has also been criticised on the basis that oral interviews have been "collapse[d] ... into historical realist narrative" (Minkley & Rassool, 1998, p. 99). While there is a nascent Africanist perspective (Magubane, 2007, p. 253) which is critical of both liberal and revisionist schools, on the basis that "African voices are silenced in South African historiography", there has been no systematic development of "a new nationalist history writing, in line with what occurred in other African countries in the aftermath of decolonisation" (Stolten, 2007, p. 46). Thus there are a number of issues that the competing approaches to historiography in South Africa are grappling with after 1994.

The call for a "reconciliation history" by Etherington (cited in Stolten, 2007, p. 40), who argues that "historians will tell their stories better if they hold the ideal of a shared history constantly in mind", appears a worthy ideal, but will not necessarily happen in practice. Events of post 1994 might mean that a more inclusive approach is needed in the writing of history, and a plausible description of this is given by the former Constitutional Court judge, Albie Sachs, (2009, p. 87) when he wrote about the limitations and successes of the reconciliation process after the TRC:

[o]n an individual basis and between all communities we have a long way to go, but at the national level we now, for the first time, have a single narrative, a common history of the most painful moments of the recent past. You cannot have a country with different memories and expect a sense of common citizenship to grow. You cannot have white history and a black history that have nothing to do with each other, except that they overlap in time and place. You have to have a single, broad, commonly accepted narrative of the country's history. ... As Americans put it - we are coming all to be on the same map, or at least beginning to assemble there. That has been a huge gain.

At one level the TRC has helped to establish what happened in the recent past in a more inclusive manner by clarifying “who did what to whom” in many cases, and Sachs is correct that isolated, stereotypical divisions in historical narratives are problematic. But it would be an exaggeration to refer to the TRC as achieving a “single, broad, commonly accepted narrative of the country’s history”. This does not take into account the “politics of interpretation” found in the different schools of South African historiography. For example, the narrative of the Afrikaner Nationalist “school” will need to be reconstituted in another form as a result of the 1994 election, and revelations from the TRC, but this does not mean that it will disappear or that it will be able to be incorporated into a single narrative about the South African past. It is also possible that the Afrikaner Nationalist “school” may reconstitute its narrative as a tragedy rather than as a comedy, to use a further insight offered by Hayden White (1978) where he argues that the narratives are shaped by narrative conventions such as tragedy, comedy and satire. Formerly, the Afrikaner Nationalist narrative was shaped as a comedy, which White (1978, p. 67) defines as the “drama of reconciliation”, where the story ended happily with the triumph of Afrikaner Nationalism. Now, with the loss of power of Afrikaners post 1994, the narrative needs to be reconstituted.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ It is not only the Afrikaner nationalist narrative that has experienced pressure to change as a result of political developments, so have liberal and revisionist historians. Shula Marks, a well-known historian of South African history, said the following at a recent book launch of the second volume of the Cambridge University Press’s *History of South Africa*: ‘Since 1994, many more historical sources have become available to scholars, while at the same time, the discipline of history has changed. In 1960s post-independence Africa, it was possible to write “magisterial, authoritative narratives”, Marks suggests. But 1990s post-independence South Africa was much different to 1960s post-independence Africa and, after post-colonialism and post-modernism did away with many of the traditional certainties of the social sciences, it no longer seemed possible to write these sweepingly authoritative accounts. “South African historians now have an abundance of sources, but no agreed roadmap, or destination,” Marks explained. Pre-1994, liberal South African historians were essentially “engaging in politics by other means”, Marks suggested. But with the struggle over, there is no longer the sense of a shared project, or as Deborah Posel put it, “the strong, comforting/strangling consensuses of the 70s and 80s”. What has replaced this all is a deep concern with identity politics and the politics of representation: who speaks for whom? Are you allowed to tell my story?’ (Davis, 2012).

Re-storying the past

Lederach (2005, p. 140) supports the importance of the idea of re-storying of the past as part of reconciliation, which draws “on the deepest history”, as the “[n]arrative creates the formative story of who we are as a people and a place” (p. 142), both figuratively and literally as part of a group’s identity. An application of this idea to the South African context is shown by recent developments in Afrikaner circles where “Krotoä, a [Khoikhoi] woman renamed Eva ... [is] now hailed as an Afrikaner foremother. Her life story ... has come to function as an analogue of the state of the imagined South African nation. Her ‘blood’ is now claimed by those whose ancestors denied any relation with her ancestors” (Coetzee, 1998, p. 114). The background to this reclamation of Krotoä/Eva is that she married a Danish surgeon, Pieter van Meerhof, who joined the Dutch East India Company in 1659. After his death, their two children were taken away and brought up in a Dutch household. These children became the ancestors of many Afrikaner families - something which was denied until recently (Coetzee, 1998, p. 112). This suggests that some Afrikaners are in the process of re-storying the past by an attempt to reclaim an African identity, and Krotoä/Eva has become a symbol of this quest. However, their starting point for South African history appears to remain the same, that is, with the arrival of van Riebeeck (Coetzee, 1998, p. 115).

The above example shows how the process of re-storying the past is in flux in South African historiography, and this is one example among many.⁶⁰ A reconciliatory pedagogy aims to help students/learners to question and to understand why historians and the people they interview have developed the narratives of the past that they have done. I argue that it serves no purpose to force everyone to accept one common narrative: part of the process may involve the re-storying of the recent past in a more inclusive manner, which I think that the TRC has started, but I argue that it is impossible to collapse the

⁶⁰ There is also a quest for members of the indigenous communities, such as the KhoiSan to reconstitute their narrative, which was broken by colonialism. I acknowledge the importance of this project, as it deserves to be the subject of a thesis in its own right, but I have chosen to concentrate on the recent past in this thesis.

competing interpretations of the South African past into one homogeneous narrative.

None of the student teachers' narratives in their oral histories reflected an Afrikaner nationalist interpretation, which suggests that this narrative has gone underground, as there were no accounts of people who supported apartheid.⁶¹ A reason for this situation might be that the majority of white students at the University of the Witwatersrand are English speaking. However, many members of the English speaking community actively supported apartheid by voting for the National Party or were complicit through their tacit acceptance of the status quo. As some observers have wryly noted, it is almost impossible to find anyone now who admits to having supported apartheid. But my concern runs deeper: as soon as a narrative account goes underground, then it suggests that it may become a "hidden" account, which is associated with "shame and blame" and the result may be that the story is passed in a secretive way from one generation to the next. For a reconciliatory pedagogy to work in a meaningful manner, it is important that all narratives are present, none are repressed and the intention expressed from the beginning that the aim is to understand them and not to pass judgement by "naming and shaming". But at the same time, all accounts need to be subject to scrutiny, both in terms of other oral histories and written histories.

Narratives and history teaching practice

There are a number of the student teachers' oral histories that show the deep effects that apartheid has had on ordinary people's experience, irrespective of race, and these narratives add personal details to the broad histories that many historians have told about the South African past. As a generalisation, professional historians (with the exception of the social historians) tend to give a narrative account based on the "big picture" of those who are in power and key

⁶¹ An account by one of the learners at School C did fall into the Afrikaner nationalist interpretation judging by the presentation. But I have not included it, as I did not investigate the learners' oral histories because this was beyond the focus of this research.

events. Even in the case of the TRC report, which aimed to capture personal testimony of victims and perpetrators, a selective, representative account is given. I suggest that the students/learners need to understand their own families' and communities' stories in greater depth, and that the best way of doing so and grappling with the resultant complexities, is through oral history. However, the oral histories should be contextualised by a history teacher via exposing her students/learners to the concept of the meta-narrative of the various schools of South African history that informs their own narratives. This will assist their understanding about the broader influences on their family or community narratives from a disciplinary perspective. But the following qualifications hold: the history teacher needs to make explicit that the schools' narratives are in flux, and it will depend on whether or not the teacher decides that it is appropriate to expose the learners to these disciplinary issues. I suggest that this discussion will be too difficult at primary school level, and is better suited to be introduced at high school and developed at tertiary level. But history teachers who use a reconciliatory pedagogy in the history classroom at any level need themselves to have some understanding and be aware of the complexities that inform oral histories in relation to the discipline. This will assist the teachers with the way they present oral histories to their learners and also help the teachers to deal with queries from learners that may involve explaining some of the disputes within the discipline.

The above highlights the complexities concerning the "truth" in oral history, the ambiguous role that memory can play in interviews and historical accounts, and the challenges of narrative theory to the discipline of history as a whole. A reconciliatory pedagogy does not claim to be able to resolve these difficult issues within the discipline, but it is a way to help student teachers develop an awareness and deeper understanding of these tensions within the discipline. It helps to raise further questions, such as, whose "truth" are we hearing in a particular narrative? Is it a psychological "truth" or a probable "truth"? Are there silences in the narrative: if so, what does this reveal about the person who was interviewed and the interviewee? How is the narrative constructed? Is it

possible to relate an oral history to a particular interpretation of history, and further, to identify the politics of interpretation within it?

Lederach's model of reconciliation

There are strong links between these questions round disciplinary issues and aspects of Lederach's (1999, p. 65) model of reconciliation, especially the social energy of truth. But I propose a further way of using Lederach's model, and that is by looking at its "shadow" side (the need to do so was shown by the oral histories in chapter 3). By this, I mean exploring what Lederach's model proposes in the dance of reconciliation, as well as the opposites and the tensions between the social energies in his model. An example that was used in this chapter from the TRC that could be used to illustrate these opposites was the competing versions of how the PEBCO Three died. This could be used to show how truth and lies are often opposite sides of the same coin, and the difficulty in establishing whether an account belongs clearly to a side, or is a more appropriate image than that of a continuum. By adopting a sceptical approach, this will help to subject the oral histories to further scrutiny: questions such as, on what basis does this account appeal to the truth, or is there a grey area which is closer to a lie? On what basis do we make this judgement? Further: does this narrative's point of view support justice or injustice? Does this appeal to justice challenge or support what is considered the truth? Will this appeal to justice lead to peace or war? Is there a plea for compassion in this narrative or does it show a disregard for others? Does hope underpin this narrative or does it show despair about the future? Will this narrative encourage peace via reconciliation or revenge via violence? These questions are at extreme ends of a continuum, but by subjecting the oral histories to further scrutiny in this manner, it will help to raise the students' awareness of some of the difficult issues that the idea of reconciliation encompasses and will encourage them to further question Lederach's model. For example, is there a social energy that takes precedence for reconciliation to happen or does this not

matter in a polychronic approach to the dancers? By raising these questions, it will encourage a working through of their own understanding of these issues, and it is this process which might assist with further shifts in their own attitudes.

I proposed in chapter 5 an application of Lederach's model to the present South African history curriculum, and this could be the topic of further discussion with the student teachers and possible experimentation in history classrooms on teaching practice and later in their own history classrooms. For example, in grade 4, I suggested that focusing on leaders such as Mandela and Gandhi, could be from the point of view of peace, which Lederach placed in the future when he originally developed his model of reconciliation. But in a later work, Lederach (2005, p. 146) used the African philosopher, John Mbiti's concept of time described as "spacetime", which connects the future, the present and the past in a circular way where the one flows into the other. An application of this idea of circular time to the topic about these leaders might encourage the teacher to include related events in the past and the present, so that ideas such as truth, justice and mercy would be included as well as peace. However, whether it is appropriate to teach this section in this way at this level will be something that needs the acid test of practice in a history classroom, and could be the subject of future research.

In turn, the discussion and reflection about Lederach's model of reconciliation in relation to a practical application to a topic in the curriculum, might lead to further questions. This process may affect the student teachers' own teaching practice: Teachers who accept the so-called "proper" historian's view of history with an emphasis on the "facts" first, mostly teach history in a dull, repetitive and unreflective manner. There is a lack of awareness of the way evidence and interpretation interweave and that by teaching the "facts" only, they adopt implicitly a position which links to a particular interpretation. This approach to history is frequently shown when I observe students on teaching practice at schools, especially students who do not have an in-depth background in history. In contrast, an awareness of the effects of the narrative turn (despite the

difficulties in this position) reveals the potential for a more creative, flexible, and reflexive approach to the teaching of history. This is why I think that it is important to locate the process of a reconciliatory pedagogy within history, as it helps to develop “historical thinking”. This is not simply a claim that the doing of oral history changes the practice of history teaching, because it positions learners as historians and exposes them to the historical method. Instead, it develops Norman’s (1996) conception of “historical thinking” further in the sense that oral history becomes a way not only of gathering historical evidence, but also potentially affecting the students who do the interview by changing the way they think. However, it provides an encounter with evidence that the students might not have known about, and there is the opportunity to ask further questions during the interview. By doing so, they subject the interviewee to scrutiny during the interview. The selection of what goes into their oral history allows the students to process the interview in greater depth, and allows them to experience directly how evidence and interpretation are interwoven.

Furthermore, the cooperative learning task provides further opportunities to scrutinise oral histories at another level, as it provides a way for a group to discuss a narrative in much greater depth, in order to do the common task. This will involve asking more questions, as well as comparing and contrasting the various interpretations based on their stories. Again, this process has the potential to challenge and change perceptions about both the present, the past and the future. Historical thinking encourages the students to use their own historicity to question what, how and why certain things are the way they are in the present, and what the implications are for the future. By going through this process, it encourages a participatory and inclusive approach within a reconciliatory pedagogy.

Further, a reconciliatory pedagogy creates the space for the students to reflect on their own attitudes as well as the stories they heard from trusted adults. In Ireland, some history teachers “doubt that anything they teach can counter what the history students learn at home” (Cole & Barsalou, 2006, p. 11). While this is

a different situation and context to South Africa, I suggest that this shows the importance of bringing these views of the respective families into the classroom: learners can hear alternative points of view and subject all the oral histories to scrutiny both in practice and via engaging with the theoretical aspects that I have suggested. These activities will enable them to become agents in the process. There is no doubt that the issues a reconciliatory pedagogy deals with, such as truth and justice, have the potential to ignite conflict, but at the same time a reconciliatory pedagogy also has the potential to help build peace. The importance of being exposed to various oral histories, speaking and listening to one another, working together on a common task and reflecting on other points of view cannot be underestimated as polychronic activities in building peace.

Other ideas to explore in a reconciliatory pedagogy

There are other areas which inform a reconciliatory pedagogy that might be fruitful for student teachers to explore, such as the theory underpinning cooperative learning: if an assumption that informs the contact theory is assimilation (as shown in chapter 4), then is it possible to use cooperative learning in such a way that it fosters the reweaving of relationships so that difference is recognised and valued, instead of assimilation? Another possibility is to examine the theoretical assumptions that inform *ubuntu* in greater depth, so that the use of this term is not reduced to that of a truism. By studying texts on *ubuntu* by Tutu (1999), Metz (2007, 2010) and Richardson (2008), the students could explore this idea in greater detail.

I also believe that it is important to explore the link between a reconciliatory pedagogy and history, because despite concerns within the discipline, it provides a means of in-depth contextualisation that I suggest no other subject brings to the topic. It is also relevant to the broader society as, according to Cole (2007, p. 13), “[i]f the representation of a group’s past is now recognized as an integral part of identity, and identity includes not only how one views

one's own group but also how one views groups seen as 'Other', ... then understandings of history are crucial to a society's ability to reckon with the past for the sake of a more peaceful future." There is a strong link between this view and Lederach's (2005, p. 142) understanding of "narrative", which creates the "formative story of who we are as a people and a place", and by doing so encourages a sense of identity and how "the past was alive" (2005, p. 133) in the present. By engaging with a reconciliatory pedagogy, the process can help to promote changes in understanding and attitude: it may not lead to radical, major changes in understanding or attitude, but it hopes to develop small shifts in individuals over time, and by extension, in the broader society. The diagram in Appendix C represents a summary of all these ideas in my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy.

Conclusion: the complexities of a reconciliatory pedagogy

It is important to link the practical task in the form of the assignment to some of the theoretical issues raised by the use of oral history, Lederach's model of reconciliation and cooperative learning. By exploring issues in relation to truth, the TRC, life histories, memory and narratives, student teachers can begin to grapple with the complexities that underpin a reconciliatory pedagogy. These activities are not abstract tasks. Instead, they form polychronic activities that aim to help them better understand their own families' and communities' narratives in relation to historians' narratives as well as who they are as individuals. Further, by subjecting the ideas that a reconciliatory pedagogy draws on to scrutiny, my hope is that this will develop their historical thinking and affect their teaching practice in the history classroom in a more informed manner, although this will need to be the subject of further research.

Chapter 8: Conclusion – Towards reconciliation in relationships

Introduction

This chapter signifies the end of my current journey to explore the meaning of reconciliation and its relationship to history teaching via the idea of a reconciliatory pedagogy. With hindsight, this journey started many years ago, but my time at the University of the Witwatersrand brought it into sharp relief. The polarised relationships among the students in history methodology lecture rooms, where the divisions of the past were so evident in the present, became a problem that needed to be addressed both in practice and in theory. The opportunity to develop a conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy by reflecting on my practice, and to engage further with students and practising teachers in developing this conception, has been a most rewarding experience.

By using narrative inquiry, this methodology encouraged me to question my own experiences as well as that of the students/teachers, and to see how some of these experiences related to the broader society. It also encouraged my research to range from the past to the present and into the future and to see the interconnections among this conception of time. Narrative inquiry also helped my research to move in different directions: I started with an examination of the meanings of reconciliation in the broader literature and in practice via the TRC, and this process informed the start of my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy, that is, the reweaving of relationships. Then, through a process of inquiry into what happened during the oral history interviews and the cooperative learning process, another perspective on a reconciliatory pedagogy

emerged. By relating the experiences of the students' assignments to Lederach's model of reconciliation, this process deepened my understanding of the successes and challenges involved in my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy. Next, narrative inquiry led me to investigate whether or not a reconciliatory pedagogy could be used and applied in another context, namely, some history classrooms in three primary schools. The mixed results from this part of my inquiry led me to reconsider my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy. It raised further questions about some of the tensions within the discipline of history concerning oral history and the implications this might have for educating student history teachers. What follows in this conclusion is a summary of the main ideas that were covered in the preceding chapters, that show what the findings of this research are, and to recommend areas that could be developed in future research.

Chapter 2

In chapter 2, I explored and showed the complexity that informs the concept of reconciliation both in the literature on the topic, as well as what informed the mandate, process and results of the TRC held in South Africa. There were common themes of truth, justice, apology and forgiveness between the general literature and the TRC, although these concepts were frequently presented in isolation. While the TRC played an important role in stabilising a fragile democracy, the effects of the TRC on the key themes of reconciliation were mixed. Many truths about what happened during apartheid to individual victims were revealed, although there were others where the truth did not necessarily emerge. Its conception of the truth as "four notions" (Posel, 2002, p. 154) was criticised as "poorly constructed" (Posel, 2002, p. 155) and contradictory, but it was able to establish that "the practice of torture" was used widely by the state's security forces, and "gross human rights violations" occurred in ANC camps in Angola (TRC report Vol.1, 1998, p. 112). However, despite the difficulties with the notion of "truth" found in "personal or narrative truth", there are similarities

between the oral testimony given at the commission and the “truths” found in oral history.

With respect to justice, the TRC was criticised for its narrow interpretation of its mandate, so that it focused on gross human rights violations concerning individuals within a particular period, instead of the broader effects of apartheid on communities who were forced to move off their land (Mamdani, 1999, p. 36). This meant that it limited the number of people who were able to testify as victims, and as a result were able to claim reparations. The TRC followed restorative justice, where perpetrators were offered immunity from prosecution in return for testifying fully and frankly, so that the aim was “to repair the injustice and to restore the relationship between the parties involved” (Ericson, 2001, p. 25). This conception was favoured over retributive justice, which aims to prosecute and punish. In practice this meant that some of the foot soldiers of apartheid took the blame for it, in contrast to the National Party leaders, who failed to take full responsibility for what happened during apartheid. The issues of amnesty and reparations, as well as the lack of prosecution of those who did not testify at the TRC, are still controversial issues in present day South Africa and indicate an on-going lack of reconciliation in the society.

The TRC’s leader, Archbishop Tutu, established a link between restorative justice and forgiveness, which was infused by the idea of *ubuntu*, with its emphasis on the importance of reciprocal relationships and the interdependence of people, so that “[w]hat dehumanises you, inexorably dehumanises me” (Tutu, 1999, p. 35), and I suggested that this idea plays an important role in the concept of reconciliation. While forgiveness was never part of the TRC’s mandate, it is seen as an important step in the reconciliatory process in the broader literature on reconciliation. However, Tutu’s emphasis on forgiveness was seen as an inappropriate imposition of Christian values by, among others, Griswold (2007, p. 181), who argued instead for a secular definition of forgiveness, so that it could be more inclusive. Derrida (2001) argued that there is a paradox at the heart of the heritage of forgiveness

between a view that it “forgives only the unforgivable” (p. 32) or that it “can only be considered *on the condition* that it be asked” (p. 34 [emphasis in original]). Events at the TRC demonstrated both aspects of this paradox, where the Biehl family forgave the men who confessed to having killed their daughter, whereas Marius Schoon refused to forgive his wife and daughter’s killer on the basis of a blatant lack of remorse. Another issue is with whom the right of forgiveness rests, and whether it is something that only the victim and perpetrator can resolve (Schlink, 2010, p. 70) or whether “third party forgiveness” is possible (Griswold, 2007, pp. 117–119) as a kind of imperfect forgiveness. The literature on reconciliation and the TRC reveals that there are many difficulties surrounding the concept of forgiveness, and there are no easy answers to this issue.

The TRC also tried to facilitate what Griswold (2007, p. 188) called political apology. De Klerk, in his capacity as leader of the National Party, did offer a general apology to South Africans who suffered under apartheid, but he took no responsibility for the killing of opponents under his or past apartheid governments, nor offered to try and make amends in any form. This meant that this apology was not acceptable to all South Africans, and I argued that this failure to acknowledge culpability on behalf of the majority of the white community, who include both perpetrators and beneficiaries of apartheid, will affect future generations. Even though there were members of the white community who actively opposed apartheid, the issue of guilt and shame will continue to affect the project of reconciliation.

The situation in South Africa after 1994 is complex, and the question is, how do we live together, as victims, perpetrators, beneficiaries and bystanders, after what happened before 1994? While the TRC has started the process of reconciliation, everyday events in South Africa continue to demonstrate the lack of reconciliation in South African society, and the need to take this project forward. The education sector was not called to account for its actions during apartheid by the TRC, and it is possible that a major thrust for the project of

reconciliation will need to come from this sector. A reconciliatory pedagogy could play a role by taking forward some of the positive aspects of the TRC, such as creating a space for dialogue among the students and learners, where stories of the past are heard and listened to, within an educational context. When I asked the students/teachers whom I interviewed for this thesis about the impact of the TRC on their lives, the majority said that it had none. Yet, I found that their conception of reconciliation appeared to be deeply influenced by the ideas articulated during the course of the TRC, such as the importance of forgiveness and not forgetting. But they added another dimension to reconciliation by suggesting that the different generations will view the meaning of reconciliation differently, so *Baloi* described it in the following way: "It's not first person...it's now second person type of reconciliation". Finally, I discovered that the students/teachers all agreed on the lack of reconciliation in present day South Africa.

But what conception of reconciliation will inform a reconciliatory pedagogy? It is informed by the idea that reconciliation is both a process and a goal, where "a society moves from a divided past to a shared future" (Bloomfield et al, 2003, p. 12). Another important idea is the insight that *ubuntu* offers with its emphasis on the importance of reciprocal relationships and the interdependence of people. Lederach's critique of the model of reconciliation that South Africa followed was that it became a linear process, which is monochromatic, whereas he argued in favour of a polychronic approach to reconciliation which favours a "systemic view" of reconciliation. This includes seeing people's relations within a dynamic social context, where truth, justice, mercy and peace are social energies, which are paradoxically joined together. While they appear to be in conflict on occasion, these social energies cannot be isolated from one another, so that reconciliation becomes a centring focus and place for them. This means that a change in one involves a change in the other, and a polychronic approach involves simultaneous and many activities that cover the past (truth), the present (justice and mercy) and the future (peace and hope). Lederach draws a comparison between reconciliation and a dance on a stage, where all four

social energies are present. Even if one of them takes the foreground, the others are still present, and he adds hope to this conception.

Further, an image of reconciliation that occurs in all sources is that of the “journey”, which also informs my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy: it is about the complex, non-linear process of reconciliation, which aims to include South African students and learners in a participatory process that engages members of an older generation and their peers in the classroom. It is an exploration of key ideas that have emerged from the TRC, literature and interviews, as well as those that Lederach drew together within a model of reconciliation. This model includes concepts such as truth, justice, mercy, peace and hope, and how these seemingly contradictory or conflicting ideas relate to one another. A reconciliatory pedagogy is a practical application of these big ideas to a context, which is education, and specifically to history classrooms in South Africa. There need to be different activities where the overarching aim is to assist the process of reweaving of relationships where possible and relevant. A reconciliatory pedagogy is an attempt to contribute in a small way, from the bottom up, to the broader project of reconciliation in South Africa: the journey and the dance continue.

Chapter 3

In the third chapter, I considered the role oral history plays as a way of helping the process of reweaving relationships in a reconciliatory pedagogy. I briefly described the development of oral history, from the Greek historian, Herodotus, to more recent developments concerning oral history in both England and in South Africa, and its use in the history school curriculum. I described how the oral history assignment related to this school curriculum, and showed that a number of oral history resources have been developed to help teachers use oral history. However, I argued that student history teachers need to be exposed to oral history from the inside by doing it, so that they understand the value of oral

history from a personal point of view; otherwise it might be done superficially or not at all in their future classrooms. Furthermore, if they do not experience doing oral history for themselves, then they may teach in a conventional way that they themselves were taught, with a narrow focus on the “facts” of history. Many of the student teachers showed an antipathy towards the teaching and learning of history. McCardle and Edwards (2006) suggested that the students who are exposed to the doing of oral history might change their teaching practice, but further research would be necessary to investigate whether or not this happened once they become practising history teachers (which I did in chapter 5).

The use of oral history had the following effects on the students whom I interviewed about the assignment: it evoked emotions like fear of blame and shock, but the students discovered the value of oral history in terms of who they selected to interview and what they were told. It showed how the labels of survivor, victim, perpetrator and bystander were more complicated than they appeared at first glance, and it helped to break the silence between the generations and developed greater understanding of the topic and of the people interviewed. These were the positive aspects of this oral history assignment, and it showed how this process could assist with the reweaving of relationships between the generations. However, oral history can also have negative effects on the second generation: Hoffman’s (2005, p. 6) use of “first knowledge” regarding traumatic events about the Holocaust that are passed down from the first generation that survived to their children in the form of a fable, and Jansen’s (2009a, p. 114) “bitter knowledge” where white Afrikaners who lived during apartheid pass their prejudices on to their children. Horsthemke (2010, p. 37) challenged Jansen’s use of the term “knowledge” on the basis that Jansen used the concept in various ways without “distinguish[ing] it from (mere) belief, assumption, prejudice, dogma, and the like”. But there is no doubt that these prejudices can be passed from generation to generation, although the effects can be mitigated via an application of Norman’s (1996) idea of “historical thinking”: it allows for agency on the part of the students in an oral interview,

because the questions they ask are not only for information, but are also to make sense of their own selves. This means that the students are not simply passive recipients of information, and will be less likely to accept at face value what a trusted adult may tell them. It also allows for an interaction between their prior historical knowledge and what they hear in the interview, so that they subject what they hear to scrutiny. This exercise is not simply one of gathering information, as it has the potential to change the way the students think about the past and themselves in the present. Oral history is one aspect of the polychronic activities that informs a reconciliatory pedagogy.

Chapter 4

In the fourth chapter, I turned to the second part of the process of the oral history assignment, which involved a cooperative learning approach, based on the dramatisation of the students' oral histories. By cooperative learning, I followed Johnson and Johnson's (n.d.) definition of a small group working together on a shared goal, in such a way that it benefits both the individuals and the group. There are other approaches, such as peace education, that use cooperative learning (based on Allport's 1954 contact theory) to break barriers and stereotypes among groups of people. But by connecting this cooperative process to Lederach's conception of reconciliation, I hoped to show that links to truth, justice, mercy, peace and hope could develop a conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy in a way that goes beyond breaking barriers in order to help reweave relationships. This was an implicit aim which informed the cooperative learning part of the assignment, as I noticed that relationships among the students in lectures were extremely polarised, despite the majority of students having experienced integrated schooling from Grade 1. While the students were formally equal in status, according to South Africa's constitution, the apartheid divisions represented in their oral history stories were based on inequalities, as they were the children of people who could be considered as victims, beneficiaries, bystanders and perpetrators, that is, they were members

of the second generation. In designing the cooperative learning process, I made use of key characteristics of cooperative learning, such as the establishment of heterogeneous groups, and this had the effect of students working together with people they did not know. Other characteristics of cooperative learning, such as positive interdependence, were present in the form of the common task to dramatise their oral histories. This encouraged dialogue about their oral histories, themselves, and their relationships both with the people they interviewed and with one another. There was both acknowledgement of past injustices and compassion shown to one another, which showed some links to Lederach's model of reconciliation.

Some members of the group had positive experiences while working together, such as the interest generated by the stories. But others acknowledged the difficulties of working with students they did not know, and that this sometimes led to conflict, which I suggest is an inevitable and necessary part of this process. Students were able to discuss issues about apartheid linked to truth and justice, which provided another connection to Lederach's model of reconciliation. In both reflective essays and interviews, I found a recurring motif of "difference". This shows how the barriers of the past continue to affect relationships negatively in the lecture rooms at university, yet "difference" was also a source of richness insofar as the diverse experiences of the students and the oral histories were articulated and shared. A reconciliatory pedagogy tries to encourage a safe space where students are able to speak and listen to one another about our difficult past and to reflect on how it continues to affect their own lives, for example, in the form of their identities in the present. But this needs to be done "face-to-face", and in such a way that individual and group accountability are developed, which are other characteristics of cooperative learning. Emotions such as hurt, fear, sadness and anger were expressed, and made the process of the encounters uncomfortable for some of the students, yet it also led to a greater understanding of one another. Difficult issues surrounding relationships among members of the second generation, such as

accountability and apology were raised, which provided another link to Lederach's model of reconciliation.

The actual dramatisations of the oral histories revealed the students' creativity in devising situations where all their characters from their oral histories might meet. Each presentation provided an opportunity for further discussion amongst the whole group and also functioned as a way of debriefing them about the process that they experienced. But it was their reflective essays that showed the importance of this cooperative learning process with its shared task: it helped to change relationships among members of the small groups, through a "creative" process, which involved getting to know others' "strengths and weaknesses" (*Baloi*), it encouraged *Ngwenya* to "let down [her] walls" and it allowed empathy to develop, "because placing yourself in someone else's position forces you to critically consider that person's experience..." (*North*). There was a small shift in relationships among members of the cooperative groups, so that "boundaries" (*Ngwenya*) were broken, and they became "sort of friends" (*Mills*). While I am not claiming that this specific assignment led to long-term friendships developing, it may have sown the seed for the friendships that did develop over the course of their university careers.

Lederach's conception of reconciliation opens up possibilities for a reconciliatory pedagogy, as he suggests that it is a place and space which paradoxically allows for "the open expression of a painful past...and the search for a long-term, interdependent future"; "a place for truth and mercy to meet"; as well as "justice and peace". While Lederach's model was developed for building peace on the international and national stages, I think that some of his ideas are applicable to what happened during this cooperative learning part of the oral history assignment, especially his image of the dance of reconciliation. This is where Lederach suggests that the social energies of truth, justice, mercy, hope and peace are embodied as dancers on a stage. The cooperative learning process operated at a literal level by putting the students on a stage to dramatise their collective oral histories. It also provided a space and place for

some of the personal “truths” and injustices of the past to be put on the table and discussed, and it opened up the possibility to show compassion towards the first generation and to one another. It helped with the process of starting to reweave relationships between members of the second generation, which opens up the hope of long-term peace. This was not a comfortable experience for many of the students, but it provided a safe space for them to enter into dialogue with one another, and to start to understand how the past, present and future interrelated in such a way that time became like Mbiti’s conception of “spacetime” (cited in Lederach, 2005, p. 146). I am not claiming that this process was able to resolve all difficulties. Instead it raised more questions, such as, should the children of survivors and victims be requested to forgive the children of perpetrators? How should the children of perpetrators, bystanders and beneficiaries deal with the guilt for the actions of their parents? These are difficult questions, which go beyond being resolved by a reconciliatory pedagogy, although the latter may provide the space for these difficult discussions to be held. Ultimately, these issues need to be addressed by the broader project of reconciliation in the wider society.

A further question posed to the students as to whether or not this assignment led to reconciliation with their peers received a mixed response: *Baloi* felt that it did not, because as a generation they were hardly affected by apartheid, and therefore the process of reconciliation was different for the second generation. *Ngwenya*, on the other hand, agreed that it was “our parents’ story”, but argued that the discussions within the groups assisted the process of understanding both where their parents came from and what it meant for her contemporaries. Neither of these students took into account the possible effects of Hoffman’s (2005, p. 6) “first knowledge” or Jansen’s (2009a, p. 114) “bitter knowledge” on their generation, although other students confirmed the importance of speaking and listening to one another as a valuable part of a reconciliatory process.

Students responded positively to the idea of using a reconciliatory pedagogy in their classrooms (or future classrooms) with the third generation. Some of the

reasons offered were that it would help the learners to develop a sense of their own identity (*North*), which she explicitly stated was not related to race, and to understand apartheid better (*Edge*). However, this support was undermined by the assertion of the students/teachers that learners “don’t see colour”. This view is challenged in the literature on critical multiculturalism and anti-racism, where the argument is that race has shaped and privileged certain learners at the expense of others, especially in South Africa. Other reasons that the students/teachers gave to support the implementation of a reconciliatory pedagogy were related to the following: the moral obligation for teachers to do assignments like this one, the importance of the truth, and the usefulness of the cooperative learning approach in generating a sense of community in the classroom. Moreover, such implementation could promote reconciliation from different perspectives, and it allows for an approach to history that uses ordinary people’s experience as a starting point to understand apartheid. However, the students/teachers raised concerns, such as the lack of opportunity to implement a reconciliatory pedagogy, given the minimal time allocated to the development of democracy at the end of Grade 6 in the history curriculum, and the overall lack of appreciation of the Social Sciences. Other concerns were related to questions such as whether a reconciliatory pedagogy would be better at primary school or high school, as well as fears being expressed about how to deal with the negative emotions and conflict that might arise as a result of doing this process in the classroom.

While there may be some differences in opinion, it appears that overall the students supported a reconciliatory pedagogy being implemented from the “bottom up” in history classrooms. There is often subliminal and even open antagonism in the history classroom, whether at university or at school. The use of a reconciliatory pedagogy might assist in reweaving relationships in the present, albeit in a limited way, as was shown by the slight shifts in attitude and relationships of the students. The roots of conflict often lie in past injustices and lies, and there is often an unwillingness to engage in dialogue about these issues, because they have not been resolved yet, which can lead to emotions

such as fear and anger being expressed. A reconciliatory pedagogy, which uses cooperative learning, can encourage dialogue about these difficult issues. It creates a safe space for different perspectives to be articulated and helps to develop understanding, especially by using the shared task of dramatisation of the oral histories. There were clear links to aspects of Lederach's model such as justice, truth, compassion, peace and hope during the process of the cooperative learning, but it is impossible to solve potential conflicts among Lederach's social energies in a history lecture room. The more appropriate space for aiming to resolve these conflicts is in the broader society. However, Allport's contact theory which informs cooperative learning, with its implicit assumptions of assimilation via short-term contact, is problematic. Instead, there needs to be meaningful, on-going contact, which allows for the recognition of difference (given South Africa's history) and for a process of understanding one another to develop: a reconciliatory pedagogy can encourage the dance of reconciliation in a participatory and inclusive manner on the smaller stage of the history classroom. By doing so, it can help the shift from a divided past to a shared future. In its way, a reconciliatory pedagogy can contribute to the broader project of reconciliation, by acting as part of a polychronic approach.

Chapter 5

In chapter five, the purpose of the classroom observation was captured by the following questions: how did the primary school history teachers implement the brief to do a lesson which linked oral history to cooperative learning in their own classrooms; what effects did the experience of this approach at university have on their teaching of history in the classroom; how did the teachers respond to the idea of a reconciliatory pedagogy; and finally, what were the successes and limitations of using a reconciliatory pedagogy in the classroom? I made use of journal observations during the classroom observations and interviews with the teachers in order to collect my data. My focus was on the teachers' perceptions and their interaction with the learners, rather than on the learners themselves,

so I did not examine the learners' oral history interviews, nor did I interview them for this research (I suggest that both aspects could be the focus for further research), but I did observe how the learners interacted with one another. The three primary schools that I used for this research were in the South, East and North Eastern suburbs of Johannesburg. The public primary schools were in the South and East suburbs, while the independent school was in the North Eastern suburbs. There were a mixture of four first-year teachers and four more experienced teachers in this sample, and I intended to compare and contrast the approach of both sets of teachers. An unsurprising finding was that the first-year teachers experienced difficulties with implementing cooperative learning strategies, and the majority of their tasks were based on generic group work. In contrast, the more experienced teachers were better at implementing cooperative learning strategies. However, both sets of teachers were able to implement oral history tasks in their classrooms in a competent manner. Another finding of this research was that because the first-year teachers had had direct experience of oral history and cooperative learning, or what I have named a reconciliatory pedagogy at university, it did not imply that they would be able to implement it easily in their own classrooms. This does not mean that they will never do so, as it seems that this approach requires teachers who are more experienced in the classroom. Those who had the benefit of more classroom experience were able to apply these ideas that inform a reconciliatory pedagogy in practice.

But I felt that observing one or two lessons provided a snapshot of the possibilities and difficulties of implementing a reconciliatory pedagogy, so I observed a more experienced teacher, *Aronstam*, for a day and a half at School C. There were differences between *Aronstam's* and my approach to a reconciliatory pedagogy, which were understandable given the differences in context. However, *Aronstam's* use of the role play of the pinks and blues to demonstrate discrimination in practice was an excellent introduction to a reconciliatory pedagogy for this age group, and she also showed that cooperative learning is something that has to be taught and does not happen

“naturally”. The use of cooperative learning as the sole teaching and learning strategy is problematic, as this task required prior knowledge about the topic. *Aronstam* and *Rabinowitz* showed the importance of using a whole class approach to explain and explore the topic of apartheid first, before turning to the cooperative activity. It would have been very difficult for learners to understand the point of doing an oral history task on apartheid without this necessary background. This leads to a finding that there needs to be a combined teaching and learning approach which includes both whole class teaching and cooperative learning for a reconciliatory pedagogy to work at this level. This was not part of my original conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy, but is an important qualification to it.

The adoption of a facilitator’s role as shown by *Aronstam*, *Drew* and *Baloi* meant that a reconciliatory pedagogy became a joint enterprise between the teacher and the learners. However, they all introduced a valuable element of critical reflection during and after the cooperative learning process that went beyond facilitation and enriched the process. They encouraged learners to think critically about their oral histories, and to engage at a deeper level with one another. This means that a reconciliatory pedagogy could create a space for teachers and learners to adopt different approaches to learning in a way that encourages a participatory and inclusive approach, as well as critical thinking.

The value of the oral history task from the perspective of the teachers was that the learners were active in getting information, so that they were the ones who owned the knowledge used in the classroom. Some of the teachers observed that learners contributed who did not normally do so, although there were a few students who did not complete the task. Overall, the teachers commented that the contact between the first and second generations via the oral history interview was one of the most generative aspects of a reconciliatory pedagogy. This was even despite the limited information that some of the interviewees provided, possibly due to suppressing memories, past trauma or a fear of dealing with “feelings from the past”. The oral history task assisted the learners

to work through some of their own emotions about the past, and to break certain boundaries, which *Dyer* said needed to be done via human interaction. *Page* mentioned that some of the learners were extremely emotional about the topic of apartheid, as they saw the effects on their families and they brought this experience into the classroom. Real objects were also brought into the classroom by the learners which showed the interest that this task generated. This process of interviewing members of an older generation and sharing the results helped to “restory” the past, from different perspectives. However, the teacher needed to play an active role in mediating the findings, given the emotions that underpinned the stories. Many teachers commented that they learnt more about the learners’ background, and in some cases it shifted their relationships with the learners, as the learners opened up more to them as people.

For the learners, there were positive aspects, as they became very engaged in the lessons that I observed. The learners were the ones in possession of the knowledge based on their oral history interviews, and the use of cooperative learning (when it happened) encouraged high spirited dialogue in many of the groups. I also observed a genuine enjoyment of the dramatisations and/or discussions, so much so, that many of the learners did not want to leave the classroom at the end of the lesson. However, I observed limitations too, as sometimes there was not much historical substance shown in some of the dramatisations, especially at Grade 4 level. This made me wonder how much this approach had shifted the learners’ understanding of the topic or of their relationships with one another. But the effects on the learners would need to be the topic of further research, as my thesis has focused on the teachers and the process of teaching and learning in the classroom.

On the whole, the majority of the teachers felt that the idea of a reconciliatory pedagogy was beneficial, given the lack of reconciliation in the broader society, and the need to move from a divided society to a shared future. They agreed that the use of oral history and cooperative learning would encourage dialogue

that could help the learners to reconcile with one another. But reservations were expressed as to whether a reconciliatory pedagogy would work in all cases, especially where the demographics of the class were exclusively black, and the parents were apparently not passing on their anger and bitterness about the past to the children. There were different perceptions about this situation, as another teacher at the same school expressed the opposite view. In both cases the teachers concerned were white and I suggest that a reconciliatory pedagogy also concerns the relationship between the teacher and the learners. While there is a degree of validity in questioning the need for a reconciliatory pedagogy in a more homogeneous setting, it is also based on the assumption that reconciliation is needed between black and white people, and it does not take into account the bitter conflicts within black communities, where there were those who collaborated with apartheid and those who resisted it.

Another concern expressed by a teacher at a multicultural school was the emotional reaction of the learners to the topic of apartheid, where black children got angry with white people in general, and how to deal with this situation. I suggest that an emotional reaction is crucial in the classroom, as relationships in the present are damaged considerably by what has happened in South Africa's past. There is anger and guilt even among members of the third generation, and there is a need for a process to assist this generation to work through these issues. I suggest that a reconciliatory pedagogy provides a way, with its emphasis on listening to one another's oral histories, as does the cooperative learning, which encourages dialogue about the stories and allows for feelings of anger and guilt to be expressed and discussed. It encourages an engagement both intellectually and emotionally in an attempt to understand one another and what happened in the past. There is recognition of the different experiences of others, and it provides an opportunity for the reweaving of relationships to occur. According to Schlink (2010, p. 23), each generation has to master the creation of its own identity in its own way, and I suggest that this applies equally to those who feel guilt and those who experience anger.

Chapter 6

This chapter explored whether identities had shifted given the political changes and formal process of reconciliation that South Africa underwent after the introduction of democracy. I asked the teachers to describe themselves and whether their answers would change if the question was asked by a fellow South African or by a foreigner. The replies showed that the majority identified themselves foremost as South Africans, and only a few by nationality and religion. Only one of the teachers was born and grew up for a short period in another African country. Their identities as teachers emerged strongly, and in a foreign context, some of them added “colour” to their description, and this showed Sen’s (2006, p. 16) “plurality” of identities. When I asked about their learners, the teachers identified them according to class (more “working” class in School A, a mixture of “working” and “middle” class in School B and more “middle” class in School C), and most teachers suggested that there were no “barriers of the past”, such as “colour” in the classroom, although the issue of “colour” was one that affected parents and some of the teachers. Thus the teachers argued that there was a generational dynamic at play, and that the third generation had moved beyond these barriers. However, a few critical incidents based on classroom observation and interviews with the teachers showed that a particular barrier of the past, namely race, was still an issue in the classroom, not only among the learners but also in relation to some of the teachers. The classroom observations and interviews broadened my understanding as to what a reconciliatory pedagogy might need to address, such as xenophobia, the names used to describe “others”, as well as relationships between teachers and learners inside the classroom. There are strong indications of enormous discomfort around identity issues in the present, and it appears that South Africa is still going through a process of transition, especially in terms of finding a language to describe and to relate to one another. Demographics at South African schools have changed rapidly since 1994, and many of the white teachers in this sample are experiencing greater on-going contact with black learners than before. However, I did not observe

overt hostility in the classroom, and the majority of the teachers felt that the use of a reconciliatory pedagogy had not changed their relationships with their learners, as it was already good. Given the time spent observing lessons that used a reconciliatory pedagogy, this finding is unsurprising. This suggests that more time is needed to observe and research relationships between teachers and learners in the classroom. However, there are broader societal pressures concerning tensions around identity from inside and outside the schools. I suggest that they are present within the classrooms too, although not necessarily in a direct, causal relationship. This view is supported by the critical incidents and the difficulties in terminology relating to identity that were used by some of the teachers and learners. It seems in some ways that we are not yet at home with one another, and there is a need for an on-going process of reconciliation.

There was a gap between a reconciliatory pedagogy and Lederach's model of reconciliation in the classroom: concerns with truth and justice were shown, and peace was hinted at via music, but the rest of the "dancers" (mercy and hope) were less visible. While this finding may be due to observing the implementation of a reconciliatory pedagogy at primary school level, it also suggests the need for the teachers to be exposed to more theory, such as Lederach's model, in their education as history teachers. But this lack of evidence of all of Lederach's dancers raised the question of whether his model is appropriate to all contexts such as the history primary classroom in South Africa. It suggests that some issues concerning reconciliation are better suited to being resolved in the broader society, although a reconciliatory pedagogy could feed into this wider project of reconciliation as the learners become adult members of society.

A further concern that the teachers raised about a reconciliatory pedagogy was in relation to the curriculum and the timing of when it should be introduced at school: there was a mixed reaction as to whether it was more suited to primary or high school. I suggest that it needs to start at primary school, because learners are exposed to Hoffman's (2005, p. 6) "first knowledge" or Jansen's

(2009a, p. 114) “bitter knowledge” in their homes, and a reconciliatory pedagogy provides a way of working through some of the issues at a formative age. In the case of the learners, some teachers felt that a reconciliatory pedagogy had helped to shift relationships in a small way among the learners, whereas others felt that relationships among learners had hardly changed. A reconciliatory pedagogy needs to be carefully scaffolded at primary school, and as I have conceived of it as a process, it does not necessarily have to relate to apartheid, although I think that this topic may provide an important starting point. Learners need to understand issues that relate to their own history first, such as apartheid, before considering other examples of discrimination and injustices. The hope is that this understanding might help them to develop compassion and empathy based on their own experience of living in a society that is not quite reconciled, so that they can apply this understanding to other situations. A reconciliatory pedagogy does not necessarily have to be confined to the topic of apartheid, as there are possibilities for a much broader application in relation to other topics, but this aspect would need to be explored in further research.

In the current Social Sciences curriculum, a reconciliatory pedagogy could be applied to the topics that are directly related to South Africa, such as great leaders in Grade 4 and democracy and citizenship in Grade 6. The Grade 6s could focus on one or two aspects of Lederach’s model of reconciliation, while in high school there would be the opportunity to examine apartheid from the perspective of the whole of Lederach’s model. By exposing learners to Lederach’s model of reconciliation at a senior level (Grades 9, 11 and 12), and interrogating his model (Grades 11 and 12), it could be used as a different way of examining the effects of apartheid. A reason for a flexible approach to an application of a reconciliatory pedagogy has to do with the danger that Schlink (2010, p. 27) identified in Germany, where schoolchildren sometimes show ennui towards the topic of the Holocaust. I suggest that the same is possible in the South African context with regard to apartheid, as was shown by the initial reaction to the assignment by members of the class of 2006. A reconciliatory

pedagogy could help to address this situation by changing the focus on apartheid: using oral history to explore different aspects of the topic via interviewing many different people. Further, by changing the cooperative learning structures, depending on the grade, this will help to vary the approach too, so that this combined approach will hopefully act as a counter to some learners' boredom in relation to this topic.

The generative potential of a reconciliatory pedagogy to introduce a greater variety in teaching and learning strategies in the classroom was supported by the teachers. They said it encouraged their own creativity, and provided a different approach to the teaching of history than usual, as the connection between oral history and cooperative learning was new to all of the teachers in terms of their own teaching practice. However, I observed practical constraints on the implementation of a reconciliatory pedagogy in the classroom: the need to complete the curriculum within a particular time frame, the need to do similar tasks across a grade, the pressure to assess and the incompatibility between the architecture of the classrooms and the number of learners therein. At School A, the latter constraint hindered the ability of the teachers to move around the classroom, the noise level was deafening during the cooperative learning process, and in one case there was insufficient furniture for all of the learners.

Despite these constraints, I think that it is possible to implement a reconciliatory pedagogy *if* the teachers understand its purpose, and are willing to implement this process, although I do not think that it is desirable or possible to enforce the teaching of this approach. However, it may help for teachers to be mentored while applying this approach, as there may be an underlying concern about how to deal with sensitive issues that a reconciliatory pedagogy might address. This, too, is an area that will require further research.

Chapter 7

One of the results of my school observation of a reconciliatory pedagogy was the realisation that student history teachers need to be exposed to more theory. In chapter 5, I suggested that this meant learning about Lederach's model of reconciliation, but on reflection, I realised that the theory required is more than an exposure to this model. In chapter 6, I argued that there needs to be an awareness of some of the theoretical challenges to the validity of oral history from within the discipline of history. The reason for raising these theoretical issues is that this may affect the way the student history teachers use a reconciliatory pedagogy and also how they teach history in the classroom. It is not my intention to delve into the claims to knowledge which inform the discipline of history, as this goes beyond the boundaries of my research. I have used Portelli (quoted in Field, 2008b, p. 8), a well-known oral historian, to defend some of the claims made against oral history, and have chosen to focus on issues related to truth, memory, imagination and narrative. There are tensions in oral history's claims to truth. Portelli (1998, p. 68) argued that memory is a creative process that relates to the interaction between the individual and the society, which is revealed by both the 'facts' and the errors that are found in oral history. Some cases from the TRC, such as the PEBCO Three, also showed how "elusive" the "truth" can be, where competing versions of how the PEBCO Three died were offered by the perpetrators. This led Cherry (2000, p. 143) to argue that "historical truth" is a "continually unfolding process", which is "contested and under construction" in the "present", although she claims that "there was only one sequence of events" that led to the death of the three men. I am in agreement that "historical truth" is a "continually unfolding process", although Cherry does not take into consideration that there may be differing perceptions of what and how this happened so that the "the truth" per se may never be known. Walker (2001, p. 61) appeals to historical evidence as a means of restricting how the past may be interpreted, however "ambiguous and contradictory" the evidence may be, as shown in the TRC report. Further, she suggests the use of a "probable truth" (Walker, 2001, p. 61) rather than "an

absolute truth”, which is a useful concept. There is no doubt that evidence plays a role in establishing what is relevant (and supports a specific narrative), although an interpretation may prioritise certain evidence. While evidence and interpretations are distinct, they are intimately connected and affect one another. Just as evidence guides (and limits) interpretation, so too interpretation prioritises evidence as relevant or irrelevant in a narrative.

The issue of “truth” links to another concern about oral histories, which is its use of memory. Sometimes memory is seen as subjective, as it may be influenced by nostalgia and imagination. By imagination, I mean inconsistencies in an individual’s recollections, which was shown in Haley’s (1998, pp. 9-20) encounter with the griot in West Africa. There may also be suppression or selection of memories from the past and an individual and group’s recollections can be influenced by the social context. The interaction between the individual and the collective memories may both be unreliable, as was shown by the denial or collective amnesia concerning the slave heritage in Mamre (Ward and Worden, 1998, pp. 209–211). But Brink (1998, p. 42) contended that an appeal to memory is insufficient, due to selective exclusion of someone like Krotoä from Afrikaner history, and argued in favour of what he calls the “imaginings of history”. However, this view is challenged by the role that the evidence played in the case of the researchers of Mamre’s history.

Portelli (like Brink) highlights the narrative aspect of oral history, but this is a source of considerable debate and disagreement within the discipline. In brief, the argument concerns the role of evidence and its relationship to interpretation: so-called “proper” historians suggest the importance of investigating the past in order to find the “facts” first, then to interpret them; whereas postmodernists such as Hayden White argue that a historical account is a “narrative prose discourse, the content of which is as much invented - or as much imagined - as found”, because there can be no “independent check on historians’ accounts” (quoted in Jenkins, 1995, p. 81). Furthermore, White (1987) argues that there is

a “politics of interpretation” implicit in historical narratives, which informs the way historical knowledge itself is established.

If White’s ideas are applied to the South African context, then the “politics of interpretation” is shown in different “schools”, such as the Afrikaner Nationalist, Liberal, Revisionist (Marxist and Social) historians and a nascent African nationalist interpretation. The use of “school” refers to a broad affinity among some historians, where there is an assumption of a particular starting point for history, the selection of a key agent and a movement towards a *telos* in their narratives, all of which gives coherence to their accounts. But events after 1994 have challenged the underlying claims of many of the schools, although there has been no systematic development of “a new nationalist history writing” (Stolten, 2007, p. 46). Despite Etherington’s call for a “reconciliation history” (Stolten, 2007, p. 40) and former Judge Albie Sachs’s view that the TRC has helped to construct “a single narrative, a common history of the most painful moments of the recent past” (2009, p. 87), these views do not take into account the “politics of interpretation” found in the different schools of South African historiography. Nor does it take into account the effect of actual politics, such as the results of the loss of political power of Afrikaners in 1994 on the Afrikaner Nationalist “school”, where it might need to reconstitute its narrative from a comedy to a tragedy. Further, there are signs of attempts to restory the past by reclaiming an African identity, with the inclusion of Krotoä, a Khoikhoi woman, as an Afrikaner foremother.

The above summary highlights the complexities concerning the “truth” in oral history, the ambiguous role that memory can play in interviews and historical accounts, and the challenges of narrative theory to the discipline of history as a whole. A reconciliatory pedagogy does not claim to be able to resolve these difficult issues within the discipline, but it is a way to help student teachers develop an awareness and deeper understanding of these tensions within the discipline. It also helps the student teachers to raise many further questions, such as, whose personal “truth” are we hearing in a particular narrative?

There are strong links between these questions round disciplinary issues and aspects of Lederach's (1999, p. 65) model of reconciliation, especially concepts such as truth. But I proposed a further use of Lederach's model, and that is by looking at its "shadow" side. By this, I mean exploring what Lederach's model proposes, as well as the opposites of the concepts in his model. By doing so, this will help to subject the oral histories to further scrutiny by asking more questions. An example of a question that will encourage scrutiny is, on what basis does this account appeal to the "truth", or is there a grey area which is closer to a lie? This process helps to raise the students' awareness of some of the difficult issues that the idea of reconciliation encompasses, and assists their understanding of them, so that there may be further shifts in their own attitudes.

In turn, a reflection on these theoretical issues and the questions that they raise may affect the student teachers' own teaching practice. Teachers who endorse the so-called "proper" historian's view of history with an emphasis on the "facts" first, mostly teach history in a dull, repetitive and unreflective manner. In contrast, an awareness of the effects of the narrative turn (despite the difficulties in this position) reveals the potential for a more creative, imaginative, flexible, and reflexive approach to the teaching of history.

I suggested the importance of locating a reconciliatory pedagogy within the subject of history. Historical thinking is developed during the process of gathering historical evidence in an interview; the asking of further questions subjects the interviewees to scrutiny, and it also allows the space for the interviewers to change their own thinking about a topic or person. The selection of what goes into their oral history narratives allows the students to engage with the interview in greater depth, as does the cooperative learning task, where a group discusses a narrative in depth, in order to do the shared task. This will involve asking further questions, as well as comparing and contrasting the various interpretations based on their narratives. By going through this process, it creates the space for the students to reflect on their own attitudes as well as the stories they heard from trusted adults. They hear alternative points of view

and subject all the oral histories to scrutiny both in practice and via engaging with the theoretical aspects that I have suggested. This process can help to promote changes in attitude, albeit in small ways.

Conclusion

Reconciliation, a highly contested and complex term, is enormously challenging to apply in practice. As Linda Biehl said, reconciliation is about “work”, especially in the context of the damage done by apartheid to all who live in South Africa. While the TRC can be credited with starting the process of reconciliation, there is a need for an on-going project as shown by the lack of reconciliation in everyday examples. Reconciliation is about a commitment to the future, in the form of social justice and compassion for our children now and for future generations, as well as honouring the truth of what happened to those who lived and suffered in the past. It is about using and questioning how applicable ideas such as Lederach’s (1999, p. 65) model of reconciliation, which holds together the paradoxical relationship between the social energies of truth, justice, mercy, peace and hope, are for our context. Reconciliation is also the acknowledgment of the interconnectedness of the present, past and future via a concept such as “spacetime” (Lederach, 2005, p. 146). It is also about *ubuntu* which stresses the reciprocal relationship and interdependence of humans. It is about a process of overcoming estrangement and moving towards the goal of social justice.

In response to my main research question of what a reconciliatory pedagogy is, part of my answer is that it is about translating and questioning how appropriate some of these big ideas that inform reconciliation are for a much smaller stage, namely, the history methodology lecture room and history classrooms in primary schools. A reconciliatory pedagogy is conceived of as a polychronic activity in the latter context as well as one that interacts with the broader society so that it contributes towards the wider goal of reconciliation. My conception of a

reconciliatory pedagogy is one which combines oral history and cooperative learning, and I have shown in this thesis both the successes and challenges of using this process in a history lecture room and a few primary school history classrooms in Johannesburg. But the implementation of a reconciliatory pedagogy is a complex and difficult task: I have argued that a reconciliatory pedagogy, at best, encourages the reweaving of relationships among the first, second and third generations in different ways and that this process can help to promote some shifts in attitude among all concerned. Yet, I am aware that a reconciliatory pedagogy could also provide the vehicle for prejudices to be passed on between the generations, for stereotypes about the “Other” to be confirmed and for social conflict to be fanned. All these concerns provide an ongoing challenge to my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy. Nevertheless, a reconciliatory pedagogy does not claim to promote radical, major changes. Instead it aims to develop small shifts in individuals over time, and by doing so, the hope is that this will affect the broader society in an affirmative manner: let the journey and dance continue.

Post script

While my entire dissertation is reflexive as it follows the path of narrative inquiry, one of my examiners requested that I include reflexive comments which make the choices concerning my understanding of reconciliation that informs a reconciliatory pedagogy more explicit, and that I discuss how this dissertation has transformed me. I think that these requests are interrelated, and I address both of them in this post script.

As was shown in chapter 2, reconciliation is located historically in the themes and ideas that emerged during the South African TRC, as well as in the broader literature on reconciliation. I decided that it was beyond the boundaries of this research to unpack the ideological assumptions that inform the various meanings of reconciliation. Instead, my aim was to develop an understanding of the meaning of the term reconciliation as used in different contexts, and then to construct a working, multifaceted definition of reconciliation that could inform a reconciliatory pedagogy in the context of a South African history lecture room and school classrooms

I found during the course of my research that many of the “big ideas” that inform an understanding of reconciliation such as truth, justice, apology, forgiveness and the underlying desire for peace are often presented in isolation from one another. For this reason, I found John Paul Lederach’s initial model of a place called reconciliation (see Figure 1, p. 43) extremely useful, because he emphasised the interrelationship among some of the key concepts of reconciliation, namely, Truth, Mercy, Justice and Peace. His model presented these concepts in a dynamic fashion: conceptualising these abstract ideas in an embodied way as social energies, where a change in one affected all the others; and the need for polychronic activities under the banner of each of these concepts. Lederach was able to use this model to critique the TRC’s conception of reconciliation and showed that the flaw in the South African process stemmed from a linear conception of reconciliation. Lederach’s model became

central to my thesis, as it became generative in helping me to conceptualise a reconciliatory pedagogy. For example, it assisted me to conceive of a reconciliatory pedagogy as a polychronic activity, which happened in the history lecture/classroom, and was a bottom-up approach to reconciliation that was the opposite of the top-down approach of the TRC and peace-making efforts at national or international level.

Lederach's conception of reconciliation is dynamic, as he developed his conception of reconciliation by adding Hope to his social energies, and this destroyed the neat symmetry of his initial model. This led him to develop a comparison between the social energies of reconciliation and a dance on a stage. However, his conception was based on a proscenium stage, and I suggested in the thesis that a better conception might be a theatre in the round. The reasons why I think that a change in the conceptualisation of the theatre's stage is significant are that it allows for different perspectives of the dancers on the stage, and a better ability for the audience to see the dancers in relation to one another. It also emphasises the dynamic relationship between the audience and the dancers, as there can be no performance without either being present, which suggests a view of reconciliation as both participatory and inclusive. I also thought that the use of a theatre in the round showed visually how reconciliation is a non-linear process. The link to my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy relates to the importance of performance as shown by the joint task of the dramatisations of all the oral histories.

Furthermore, Lederach's understanding of reconciliation "as relationship and restoration, the healing of personal and social fabrics" (Lederach, 1999, p. 138), can be compared to some of the ideas of an important (albeit contested) African philosophy which Tutu used during the TRC, namely, *ubuntu*. This philosophy suggests that every human is interconnected, and that what affects one affects all. I found that this is a key idea that informs cooperative learning, and I chose to use this theory of learning and teaching in the cooperative groups that were used to my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy. The emphasis on the

interrelationship between the individual and society also led to my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy as the “reweaving of relationships”.

Lederach’s conception of reconciliation also showed the link among the past, present and future in a cyclical manner. His conception was based on his encounters with indigenous people and the idea described as “spacetime” of an African philosopher, Mbiti. Lederach utilised this understanding to emphasise the importance of various levels of narrative related to this conception of cyclical time in the reconstituting of community. In turn, I linked this idea to the use of oral history, which connects both narrative and time, and individuals with communities or the broader society as another important part of my conception of a reconciliatory pedagogy.

Overall, I found Lederach’s conception of reconciliation useful, because it was based on practice (as he helped to negotiate peace in situations of international conflict, and his models of reconciliation were developed cooperatively over the course of more than twenty years), and was linked to abstract ideas that are key to any conception of reconciliation. As a history methodologist, I was searching for ways to present ideas about reconciliation in understandable and accessible ways for my history student teachers. I was looking for a way which reconciled theory and practice concerning ideas of reconciliation in a meaningful manner. I found that Lederach’s model of a *place* called reconciliation (and how his conception developed over time) was coherent and understandable. This did not mean an uncritical acceptance of Lederach’s ideas about reconciliation: during the course of this thesis I discovered that models of reconciliation do not always translate easily into the school history classroom. There are some issues concerning reconciliation that need to be dealt with by the broader society; and there are some issues which cannot be resolved in the history classroom. I also suggested that history student teachers need to investigate the “shadow” side of Lederach’s conception of reconciliation, that is, the opposite of his social energies, as a way of critiquing his conception of reconciliation. In addition, student teachers needed to engage with other historical sources (both primary and secondary) outside of their oral histories. I

also learnt that they needed to have an in-depth dialogue with one another based on the oral histories, which the joint task of dramatising the oral histories facilitated. Finally, the students needed to understand some of the theoretical problems that are raised about oral history from within the discipline of history. Oral histories are double-edged swords: they have the potential to help people understand the interconnection among the present, the past and future, but oral histories also have the potential to be used (consciously or unconsciously) as a vehicle to carry prejudices from one generation to the next. By engaging with the additional processes I mentioned, I hope that student teachers may develop greater reflexivity in the form of historical thinking, so that they have a deeper understanding of the discipline and not teach history in a way that splits “fact” from interpretation in their classrooms.

Ultimately, the results of this research led me to redescribe what a reconciliatory pedagogy might look like, as shown in Figure 2 (p. 446) This conception clearly shows the importance of Lederach’s influence, but it also shows how my ideas were refined by reflecting on the ideas and experiences that I encountered during the process of writing this thesis. The model of a reconciliatory pedagogy shows a bird’s eye view of the link between a reconciliatory pedagogy and reconciliation. At the bottom are the components of a reconciliatory pedagogy, which are shown as interrelated. Then, at the next level, there is a cyclical conception of time. Finally, the top level shows the social energies and their opposites, also engaged in a cyclical dance. Alongside the bird’s eye view of the circular connection between a reconciliatory pedagogy and reconciliation, is the link between the individual (which is the level where I see a reconciliatory pedagogy starting) and the broader society where reconciliation can happen. The two way arrow indicates that this process between the individual and society is interconnected and on-going. By using *ubuntu* in the arrow, this emphasises the importance and interconnectivity of relationships. Unfortunately, for the sake of clarity of the visual, I placed the arrow outside of the bird’s eye view. But what I intended was for the arrow to be placed inside the bird’s eye view, so that it showed how relationships are vital to each level of the diagram, and how they radiate out horizontally as well as move vertically between the

individual and society. The image that now springs to mind is one of a spinning top: in terms of shape as well as one that captures the dynamism of the ideas. It also points to how the process of reconciliation works: sometimes in a balanced way, and then it can fall off balance, but the potential is always there to re-establish the balance again.

The above indicates some of the ways that this research has transformed my understanding of the ideas concerning reconciliation and a reconciliatory pedagogy. What appeared at face level as a simple assignment revealed the complexity of the ideas underpinning reconciliation when put into practice in the history lecture room/classroom. It has made me realise that reconciliation is like a dance, which moves forwards, backwards, sideways and pirouettes during the process. I also understand the centrality of the idea of reweaving of relationships in this process, as well as some of the challenges involved. The mixing of metaphors in my conception of reconciliation, as shown in the previous sentences and paragraphs, shows how difficult it is to pin down its meaning. My students taught me that reconciliation is different for each generation, and that their *ennui* was a symptom of a real problem of how we are dealing with the past in relation to the present and the future of South Africa. I also learnt that what works in one context (university history lecture room) will not necessarily work in another (school history classroom), and there needs to be a process of translation appropriate to different contexts for a reconciliatory pedagogy to work. Moreover, I have recognised the centrality of history, in particular, oral history, as a way of helping the different generations to understand one another. Finally, I hope that by telling and listening to the stories of different people's experiences in a way that encourages dialogue in a safe space that this might promote the healing of some relationships in a small way in this country. It is a place where reconciliation is so needed, but has proved so elusive.

Appendices

Appendix A: Interviews with former students about the oral history assignment

1. Baloi student interview- 9 September 2009 (also interviewed as a practising teacher – see Appendix B).

Reville	Thanks so much for agreeing to this interview, please can you state your name and surname for the purpose of this interview.
Baloi	My name is ... Baloi. And anything else?
Reville	I'd like you to answer the next question: what are you doing now?
Baloi	I'm now teaching at School B. I teach grade 6 Social Sciences, grade 6 Technology, then I take the grade 5s and grade 7s for Physical Education. So extramural wise I'm also coaching...rugby is the main thing I'm coaching. Ya, that's mainly what I'm dealing with here.
Reville	Can you tell us a bit more about your general background? Where you were born, where you grew up?
Baloi	I was born in Zambia. I'm Zambian by birth. I did my schooling in Zambia from grade R to about grade 5, and then my aunt had found a job this side, she was working for a company known as R and H in Randburg. And she came in '95, so she was kind of getting homesick, so in 1997, end of '97 my parents decided that I should come here and, I think, give her company, keep her spirits up and everything, and then in 1998 I started my primary school this side, at ...Primary School. Did my grade 6 and grade 7 there, and later on moved to ...Secondary, that's where I did the whole of my high school there. And I was in boarding. And after I matriculated that side, I then studied teaching. I started studying at JCE. And the reason for that is back home in Zambia, my mom was a teacher and she started a little school, it was more of a crèche, like a nursery school, and it only had grade R, that's how it started, and then she used my father's civil engineering skills and then later on this was now...this is outside our house, and there became a point where the Zambian president basically sold the houses that the government workers were staying in for a cheaper price...a very, very cheap price, so my parents bought the place. And then because of that she

	asked my dad to build a grade 1 class because now the property was ours and so we now had grade R to grade 1, and then we went up to grade 3, when my mom passed away, and then after grade 3 to later on my father took it over and extended it from grade 3 to grade 7, so this school goes all the way from grade R to grade 7 and I think that's where my love for teaching and educating came from, from all of that...that at home I'm...you know, my whole family is one or the other involved in teaching and so that's why I decided to study it and I did at JCE. And then I graduated last year, so I'm now a first year teacher at School B.
Reville	And I'm sorry to hear about your mother... I'm going to take you back a couple of years now. When did you write your oral history narrative and reflective essay?
Baloi	Ooh...that was...it was in my...I studied 2005, was my first year, so my second year at varsity, yes.
Reville	Can you remember your feelings when you heard about this assignment?
Baloi	I think quite a few of us were...some of us were a bit intimidated that we had to go and interview someone. I think a lot of my friends that have parents and grandparents that were...that lived during apartheid, I think for them it was...it was an easy task, like they didn't worry. But for me being a foreigner, I've got no-one who lived in this country during that period so I had to go find someone. I think for me it was intimidating trying to find someone, doing an interview on my own, asking the questions, I mean, even though, yes, apartheid is over and people have moved on but you still get people that still carry scars and stuff and it's almost like asking them about that would make them just kind of...remember what happened and make it not a very wonderful thing they want to tell you about. It's not like, ooh, I got a job, this is what happened, it's going back into memory land, and some had very bad memories, I mean, so it was a sensitive topic and I was a little bit...ya, I was quite intimidated and a bit scared of where it would go, you know, in that sense, yes.
Reville	So who did you end up interviewing?
Baloi	I ended up interviewing...I would use the word...he was more of a cleaner in the flat I was staying in. He basically was in charge of cleaning that flat, sweeping and washing the basement, so he was basically general cleaner, not for my...not for the room that

	we were staying in but for the whole flat. He was taking care of that.
Reville	So he was almost like the caretaker?
Baloi	Caretaker, but caretaker to the point where he didn't have...he wasn't in charge of the flat but more of ...there was a caretaker and he basically, he reported to the caretaker.
Reville	And how did you prepare for your interview? Because you knew this was going to be a sticky topic. Did you ask him beforehand?
Baloi	Yes, yes. I had to ask him beforehand. I asked him beforehand and explained the situation and said, you know...because I knew him a bit and...so...because he also knew me, like I stay in that flat, so I explained my situation and said this is for an assignment and I told him what we were going to do then, the questions I was kind of going to ask him. So I basically gave him an introduction to where I was going, before I even...so it's almost like he knew it was coming, so...and I obviously I had to ask for his permission if he's willing to do this, and...ya, that's how I prepared for it. And then more than anything my preparation was just...just to...because I did not know anyone close enough who stayed during...was around during apartheid so like my...the other thing I did was just to...I just said I was just going to ask, you know, I was just going to ask and ask, that was more...I didn't really have a structure of questions that we led out, I just had to...I had the criteria and asked questions and pointing towards that criteria.
Reville	And the actual interview process did you find that easy or difficult?
Baloi	I think in the beginning it was a little bit challenging. I think once he kind of gave me his word, once I had found that he was willing to do it, that definitely took a lot of anxiety away. The process was a bit...in the beginning it was just challenging trying to...to get the...trying to almost, what would I say, you almost want to ignite something and then, so in the beginning it was a bit challenging trying to get there, but once we started going it was easier because then he started laying out the information and I just basically started asking questions on certain things that he gave me, or I'd ask him to give me a bit more detail, or he would say, we used to do this, or I'd say why did you do it? Or some things I maybe didn't understand I'd say, what does that mean? So in the beginning it was a bit challenging but once we started going it

	was much easier.
Reville	Because actually he gave you some quite personal information, didn't he?
Baloi	Yes. Yes, he did. And for someone who I knew, what, I think...I think we'd been staying in that flat since '98, so I think he...I mean, this was 2006, so basically he's known me as a little boy of, what was I...eleven years old, to now I'm...I was about 20 then. And I think for him it probably was like, he's saying something to a little boy who's asking grandfather, what happened then and stuff like that. So ya, it wasn't easy, definitely, but definitely got easier once he started telling me what had happened in his life, and...ya.
Reville	Did you find anything terribly shocking about what he had to tell you?
Baloi	I think the way...I can't pinpoint what but there were some things that he told me that were like I was quite taken back, you know. I think it was a different...it gave me a different perspective on things. I mean, we've learned about apartheid this in school and every time we went to apartheid we're like, oh no! Here we go again, it's like this topic that is always being taught every time, it was quite redundant. And when he...when it was first person, it was coming from someone who's actually lived that life, it made it very real, you know, it wasn't a history teacher telling you this or...just telling you information so that they can cover whatever content, it was actually someone telling you the life they lived. So it made it very real and that gave me a very different aspect to what was actually going on. And, ya, I mean, some things I think were very, as I can remember, were quite moving...ya, quite moving, I was like, wow, that actually happened.
Reville	Okay. Because I mean, one of the things that I remember from your story is the description of being addressed by the police about the <i>dompas</i> , and being stripped in order to establish his age. I mean, that was just...
Baloi	Ya, that was quite...
Reville	...quite horrifying.
Baloi	It was quite...as in...it's almost inhuman you can say. It's not...ya, it was quite descriptive but it was now me I'm

	interviewing him and he's telling me this, it was quite...ya, it was very moving, you know, like that actually happened...it was someone showing you how they were...what's the word...they were really disgraced or really put down and really exposed as in no-one wants that. And there was a lot of shame involved in the whole process. So it was very...ya, it was very...I can't get the word, but as I said, a very inhuman thing you want to go through.
Reville	And when he was telling you this, was he experiencing quite a strong emotion?
Baloi	Um...it wasn't...it wasn't very...he wasn't saying it from a point where he's...like he's...it's very hard for him to say. I think he was saying it more from a...I think being the person he is, he's someone who's very...he says he's...when he speaks it's more about facts, he wasn't...in his face you couldn't...I couldn't see as if, shoo, he's actually telling me this and, I mean, when someone is emotional they're telling you this, you can see it in their body language and in their expression, but for him, he was just telling me kind of what happened...now this is what we had to go through, it was almost like he was trying to teach me what actually happened. And I think it helped, I think it would have been quite hard if he was very sensitive and very emotional about this period. I don't think we would have gotten that far, I think he would have left a lot of things out. He was just basically trying to say, look, this is what actually happened, and this is what I went through and this is the truth, and that made it definitely easy...a bit easier, not easy, but a bit easier, handling the interview, that he was kind of quite strong and was able just to relay this is what happened. And I think there was a lot of trust because we had...he'd known me since about '97/'98, this is 2006, still staying in the same flat and I think he wasn't ashamed to share the information.
Reville	Alright. What about you, hearing these answers to your questions, did it trigger a strong emotion in you?
Baloi	Ya, I think there was a lot of...if I remember, I was quite...I think I was angry...angry that this actually happened to a person I kind of, not really know, but I've kind of lived with, you know. I think...to be honest like when we were given this assignment I was, okay, let's just get it over and done with, challenging thing to do, but as he told me all this I definitely felt inspired, you know, to...I was inspired now, I was more interested in what I was

	<p>doing. It's almost like a face was put on my assignment, or on my interview. While before it was not really...it was more of it's an assignment, then as he gave me all this information, and being taken back, I got very inspired, I was that angle where I want to do this, I want to write this, and...and made this assignment meaningful, it wasn't just for the sake of doing it, it was a learning process for me, and apart from being inspired, I enjoyed that I could actually get someone's real life and write about it and...ya I think that a lot of things as I wrote them there was a lot of motivation, you know, whereas before the interview it was more of, let's just do this, you know, let's try and keep it...and I think that's the other thing as well, is had he not shared and gone into detail, I think the interview would have been much, much shorter, but as he was telling me all this I was kind of...I wanted to hear more, I was more interested. Now the questions moved from the assignment to me trying to find out, did this really happen? Why or who or...so it was more of the whole point of the...the reason I'm doing is for the assignment was kind of later on, as he told me, pushed aside and it was now me interested to find out what was going on, wow, how did you do this...? And...ya...that was...</p>
Reville	And did it open up the relationship between the two of you?
Baloi	Ya, ya, definitely. I think being...I mean, he was a cleaner, we never used to interact as much. Yes, we would greet each other but it wasn't...we weren't like close and I think for him trusting me with what he said and being...and willing to share his experience, it was...it was...it was...it's now like since he's given me what he has had, we were now able to kind of have a better relationship, you know. Because I know a bit more, you know, more than what I see. There's more to what meets the eye type of thing, and definitely our relationship was quite different after that, ya, quite different.
Reville	I mean, you were quite protective of him too, because when I initially asked you if I could use this story, you requested to be anonymous, or for me to use a pseudonym.
Baloi	Yes.
Reville	And, I mean, which is perfectly acceptable. But I found it quite interesting that you were the only person who requested that, and I thought perhaps it was because you wanted to protect him. Was I right in that?

Baloi	Ya, I think...it was more of trying to...this person has given me their life, I just don't want to give everyone my name or their name, I think more importantly I wrote this...I didn't want to take ownership for...his...I mean, this is his life, I didn't want to take ownership, so it was almost like, you know, it's not mine. And because it's his, I would rather...and because of what was shared, I'd rather keep it as a story for many people to come read and kind of just...just look at it from a...look at a body from a different perspective, but not...it's not done for...to get marks or to expose his life and say this is a man, it's more of this is what happened and...ya, definitely, to protect what he shared, because his story was quite detailed, and not the...I wouldn't want to put my name on it because it's not mine, it's his story and for others to learn from his story.
Reville	But I mean, you did ask him for his permission, so there's...
Baloi	Yes, yes, definitely.
Reville	And he knew that you were writing it.
Baloi	Yes, definitely.
Reville	Let's move now to your cooperative group, how was the story received by your group?
Baloi	Um...I think...well, writing the story, though I enjoyed doing it as in...though I was inspired and motivated to do it, and it was something I loved doing, it was...I was quite surprised at how many...well, I think you, and I think...I'm not sure who else were interested in it. Like I was also quite surprised by the mark that I got. So when everyone was saying well this is a story and I think initially I was shy, but...that it had gotten the response that it had to...after it was marked, and then I think my group were also...they were...if I remember correctly, they were...kind of, I think a lot of them wrote stories but their stories were not to this extent, you know, their stories were...did not go into a lot of depth, and my group was quite...not surprised but they were taken aback at the story, they were taken aback...in a positive way, you know, not in a negative way, but in a positive way. Ya...
Reville	Do you remember who was in your group?
Baloi	Ooh...no, I can't remember. I think...maybe M might have been in it...and I can't remember, I can't remember exactly who was in

	it.
Reville	What about the process of working together with the dramatisation? Did that help you get to know your peers better in the group?
Baloi	Ya, definitely, I think the thing with drama is that it challenges you to try and come out of your comfort zone and...you kind of have to be vulnerable in order for it to work. You need to show people what you have. So it's definitely...and through that you learn each other's strengths and weaknesses, you get people saying, no, I'm not comfortable with doing this or I don't enjoy being in front of so many people or speaking to an audience. So I think because of that you kind of get to know each other more, you know. People's strengths and weaknesses come out, ya, and you...sometimes you rely on each other because one person might be a better actor or better at standing in front of every-one while the other is not, and you can try and work on each other's strengths. So ya, definitely I think the way, I'm just trying to remember the faces, but there were people in my group that weren't...they didn't want to act out, they were quite shy and...ya, it definitely helped just to know each other much, much more, than just sitting in a group, you know...ya.
Reville	So would you say it was a positive or a negative experience for you?
Baloi	Oh, definitely positive. And...definitely positive. The thing with working in a group where you're doing...where you're just writing information or taking information in, is about that's what it stays, so learning, you're just learning about that. But when it's time to act it out, a lot of your character comes out, your personality comes out and you get to know the person a bit more than just someone who you're working with. So it was definitely positive. I think even in my classes when we have group work, there's a difference between group work where they're just trying to work on their work cards to group work where they have to role-play. It's definitely positive. I don't know for them maybe they might...some of them that were shy might have said it was in a negative, but I said it was positive that you get to know each other much, much more, than usual.
Reville	And did any new relationships develop out of that process?

Baloi	Um...I think definitely a relationship in terms of where I could go and...whereas before that person is just a name and they're in your class, now I could go up to that person and say, can you help me with this, it kind of gave us almost a common ground to kind of act on it. I think we didn't...the relationships were not...didn't go into deep friendships but definitely friendships as in we've been through this together and we had a common ground to always, when the person is...when you get together you...to launch into whatever topic...we were now more approachable to one another than before. And another one, I can't remember her name...but where now she was fond of me because of...because there was now a friendship between us...I just can't remember her name...but we were more familiar with one another. So ya, definitely...and all because of the role-play.
Reville	You know I started off by interviewing N, and...he also said to me he couldn't remember who was in his group and stuff like that. And then I went back and I found what I had leftover [lists of groups], and do you know that the two of you were in the same group?
Baloi	Oh, were we? Were we? Is it? (laughs)
Reville	Ya, and I found that quite interesting because it emerged...he started to talk about you, and...but then he wasn't sure, because he said that the two of you did develop a friendship.
Baloi	Ya, a very...ya, we developed a very close friendship. I think by the end of fourth year, N and M were like my two, like closest friends. But I can't believe N was in my group then. But ya, I mean, our friendship was very...as in, we always sat together...in third year and fourth year it was N and M, the three of us were very close, close friends. We've been at each other's houses and, I mean, all three of us have different cultures and backgrounds and...ya, we definitely...I just never thought N was in my group. I know...I can't remember exactly but I know there were some girls in the group. The one girl I can't remember her name, but I never thought N was in my group. (laughter) Because I think by then I didn't...even by then, he was probably by then, N was just N. There was just a name. Ya...ya, I'm quite surprised. (laughs)
Reville	It was very interesting, I mean, it was kind of a...because this is a kind of trick one's memory can play, and yet it seemed, from his perspective, that something had come of it. Are you still in touch

	with him?
Baloi	Not...because at the end of the last year he moved...after we wrote our exam and had our graduation ceremony at Wits, he went to America, and he didn't say when he was going to get back, and then...and then sometime in...when was it...I think in about April, I think he came back about April this year, somewhere there, I can't remember exactly, he came around. We haven't really been in touch, and I think it's...I mean, also with M as well, it's school-wise compared to varsity where we saw each other every day and...we were pretty much in contact with one another, or if there's an assignment, we'd say, hey, what about this, what did you do on this? But now because we're kind of working it's been a bit...it's been quite challenging to be in touch. And I think, I mean, the only times I, for example, with M, I'd get hold of him is usually during the holidays, because during school it's quite crazy and busy and only after March when everything is sorted we can like get together, ya.
Reville	Alright, because I've also...are you talking about M?
Baloi	Yes, yes.
Reville	Because I've met up with him at School A via another first year teacher. So it's been very interesting to see the connections. Okay. Would you say your feelings about the assignment changed from when you first heard of it, and then afterwards once it was completed?
Baloi	Ya, definitely, definitely. As I said before, I think in the beginning it was more of going through the motions, just getting the assignment and in the beginning I was anxious about it. I'm good at just writing an essay because it's coming from me or I don't have to bother anyone, I don't have to bother Vygotsky or...I just need to get his book and write it. But with an interview it was...I had to get out of my comfort zone, I think that was challenging. But then even after that it was more of, let's just get it over and done with. And then after hearing...going through the story, how it became quite personal, you know. And so definitely there was a huge change from the beginning to the end, ya.
Reville	What does reconciliation mean to you?
Baloi	Um...I think to...reconciliation is more of a...it's trying to, not erase what happened but I think to ask for forgiveness. I mean, if

	I wrong one of my friends and we haven't spoken for a while, I think to reconcile is to go up to him and say, look this is what happened, this is why I did what I did, and I'd like to, you know, ask for your forgiveness so we can move on. So I think in that way you're reconciling, you know. So ya, it's not to erase what happened but to...there should be forgiveness and there should be interaction somehow between the two parties of what happened, to speak about it, and...ya.
Reville	Would you say that this oral history and stuff...do you think it acted as a means of reconciliation between you and your peers, or is that going too far?
Baloi	Um...between me and my peers?
Reville	Just within your cooperative group?
Baloi	Um...I think the big thing of...the age that we are at, we never really experienced apartheid...well, I wasn't in this country, but my peers were about 19, 20, so I mean, 1990, you were kind of heading to the end of apartheid and we most of us were born in the eighties, so we...a lot of us were not really affected in a huge way because we were quite young and didn't really know what was happening. And I think it would have been different if we kind of, up to high school, had been under the rule of apartheid, I think that would have really been reconciliation I would say. But the fact that...not ignorant but just because we haven't really led that life, it's a different type of generation and it's a different type of reconciliation. It's not first person, if I can put it that way. I would say it's now second person type of reconciliation, so it's now of...it's almost like saying, this is what my father did, or my father did this and this, and now you are second person, so it's a different type of reconciliation. And not only was it...I think for us a lot of it was informative, we were learning because we hadn't really lived through apartheid as people who can think critically and say this and this. I would say because it's second person, it's a different type...it is reconciliation, you know, but it's not...it's not as strong as first person reconciliation. I think if he had been, let's say, the story that I wrote about him, if he was writing the story and he had lived through apartheid, it then, the learning would be quite different to while it is me who is writing about him. Ya.
Reville	Okay. Look, I mean, I think that the story's passed from generation to generation though, and I like your distinction

	between first and second. Do you think being second generation reconciliation, do you think that gives you a bit more distance?
Baloi	Distance from what happened? Um...I think it depends...it depends, I think it varies. I mean, if...I mean, it depends how I am affected. Because for a lot of children I think...like I was teaching democracy at the beginning of this term and a lot of them it's...there's a lot of distance, there's quite a bit of distance. But I think if they are affected in such a way that the reason why you're doing this is because of this, or nowadays we have policies, or for example you get the...what's this called...I think it's BEE or something, where it's now a lot of people...once you are found to be in that environment it makes you think why, you know. You get angry and you say, it's not fair, and this and this, and it's so political but what I'm trying to say is that it...when you're found in a situation because BEE is being done because of somehow something that has happened and now they're trying to basically dilute it, then I think it brings it that much closer. But when you're not really affected I think in one way or the other, I think, ya, it can create distance. But once you get affected by something from that era or something is being done because of x y and z, then it brings it a bit closer now, because it's now something that's happening with your heart, how you're feeling about this issue.
Reville	Alright. Would you do an assignment like this with your own class?
Baloi	Um...funny enough, this...I was looking at the prep for Social Sciences for democracy, they do an interview...do you mind if I can get it out? I didn't do it with them but it's one of the grade 6 prep. And...yes, this is it, and it's basically where...it says, use the following key phrases and draw up questions that you will ask during your interview. And basically they have a set of laws and here it's got Group Areas Act, Morality Act, Pass Laws, Homelands policies, and that. It's got questions and I think it's something that I would do with my class, but I found that the learners in my class, and I think if we had more time, I would do something like this, simply because I found a lot of distance when I was teaching them about democracy and apartheid. There was a lot of distance, a lot of...not...they kind of have an idea but they don't know to what extent, you know. And I think something like this would get them speaking to mummy or daddy and would get them closer to the whole issue surrounding apartheid and

	everything. So I definitely, I think if we had more time, it's something I would do with my class, ya.
Reville	Just one of the things now what you've read there, and you notice that it's talking about the Acts, it's not talking about what happened to you.
Baloi	No.
Reville	And maybe that's something that shifts the focus.
Baloi	Ya. Ya, definitely. And I think it's finding the...and I think probably it's hard to find the...find something, find common ground that the learners can launch into and I think that's the...that's why you go more into Acts and this and this and that, and not go into, this is a story about me or a story about my father. So I think, ya, launching it, especially when there seems to be quite a lot of distance with the new generation that's coming along to try and keep home, I think it's definitely, it's a bit harder but it's also not as emotional, or as sensitive, you know. I mean, it's now more, I mean, if you read through this, it's now more about asking about what happened but not exactly asking to what extent. So it does shift the point, or the focus of it, yes, it does.
Reville	Alright. An aim of education is to heal the divisions of the past, establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights. Do you think that oral history project like the one we did with you, could contribute towards meeting this aim of education in the Social Sciences classroom?
Baloi	I would say yes, definitely, I mean, look at me, I'm an example that I've never had anything to do with apartheid, being a foreigner from a different country, it's never been relevant to me, I've never had anyone or any of my relatives living under apartheid, and...because of the interview I was able to go on a journey with someone that had been through it and I learned more about apartheid than I ever did, you know. I think the oral part really makes it...just makes it that bit more real, makes it that more realistic, while as we usually use text books and we...the text book tells you that when you seeing the person who it's coming from it definitely adds that bit more value, ya. Ya, it does.
Reville	So do you think that the Social Sciences classroom is a place where reconciliation can potentially take place?

Baloi	Yes.
Reville	If one could use something like a reconciliatory pedagogy?
Baloi	Yes, definitely.
Reville	That it would be a worthwhile place to start?
Baloi	Ya, it would definitely be worthwhile. And I think with Social Science, and you look at the history aspect, there's a lot of issues of things that have happened in the past and by speaking and you're interviewing and going back to them, there's definitely a lot of reconciliation happening. And I think what an interview like this does, or orally, is that it makes it more real, it makes it more relevant for them, just because their mom or their dad or their whatever relative, has gone through it and that promotes reconciliation and learning from the past from a different perspective, I think it moves from information to now reality. It's not the circle doing it but it actually it gives meaning, ya.
Reville	And when you look at your kids in the classroom, I mean, do you think they are in need of a reconciliatory pedagogy, or not?
Baloi	Um...I'd say ...in need? I think they are in need, they just, I think they need to realise that they are in need. Because people say history tends to repeat itself, and I think it's more of if someone says we...we can never know where we're going unless we know where we've come from. And I think for the learners they need to be taken back, and that need it's there but it's not a need that they see themselves. They don't see the need but as a class teacher you can see, you know, they're fighting and this one teasing that one, and this one saying this bad thing and this, and all this has happened before and we're right in South Africa... we've got a place to learn from. And I think...and knowing how far hatred can go, how far fighting can go, and so the need is there in that you see them in everyday lives fighting or doing something that happened during apartheid in a small way, but by taking them back then they can learn and say, oh, you know. But if you don't show them the need, then they won't learn from it. So there is a need but they don't see it and you need to show them why there's a need.
Reville	I mean, from your perspective would you say that South Africa is a reconciled nation after '94?

Baloi	<p>I think there's been a lot of reconciliation. There's been a vast majority, and it's moving...I think when we look at the Constitution there's definitely a huge amount, a huge amount, but I think there's always room for improvement, they say, there's always room for improvement. And it's through that where...I think South Africa has come a long way, but South Africa still has got a long way to go, and I'll think we'll only see it in these learners that we're teaching now. I think a lot of parents and grandparents that lived during apartheid, it's still a long process for them to come to terms...not all of them, but for some of them. And I think through the new generations that are coming up where they...and that's why I'm saying you have to show them that there's a need, because they don't even see there is a need, that they are actually...they're pretty much, for them they're reconciled, there's no favouritism because of this and this, they live in the dream that many before wanted to live and I think through this new generation definitely South Africa will become quite reconciled. I think it's the generation that lived through it that still has a few speed humps along the way. But those that were not really involved that, that don't even have a clue what happened in 1994, these kids, that you need to show them the need, they are proof that, ya, South Africa is going to be reconciled.</p>
Reville	Okay. Thank you so much.
Baloi	Not a problem, thank you so much for coming.

2. Cummings student interview – 15 July 2009

Reville	Thanks for coming along and if you can just for the sake of this interview say your name and surname.
Cummings	My name is...Cummings.
Reville	And today's date is the 15th of July. I'm asking you to go back quite a while, okay? When in fact did you write this oral history?
Cummings	It was 2006, my second year of 'varsity.
Reville	Can you tell me what your feelings were, can you recall when you first got given this assignment?
Cummings	The apartheid topic is quite a controversial one. I don't know, my feelings about it is that it's always coming up and I was scared that it would be this clear-cut fight between the black people and the white people, not to be racist, but...just that you have the white people who have one side with their feelings and the black who have the total opposite side, so I thought...I was a bit uneasy about how to do it but then, ya, once we got into it there wasn't such a controversial thing, it was just more how people had experienced it.
Reville	Okay, you mentioned something that's come up time and again, can you explain more about that? Was it something that came up at school, at...?
Cummings	Yes, whenever you mention apartheid at school or in high school there was this always...it was a debatable topic, so...and a lot of the people feel: well why should we still be learning this, it happened so long ago, and we can't really...I feel every time apartheid has come up we can't have a normal discussion about it, it always ends up in people's feelings getting hurt and...ya, so...even though it didn't offend me as much, because I wasn't older when it happened but...ya, people still feel like they're hurt inside because it's happened to them, which I can...their parents...and I do understand it because if I put myself in their shoes I would also feel the same way. But...ya, no matter when you bring it up, people's reactions normally are, oh why can't we just move on from the past? Why do we keep having to bring it up again and again?
Reville	Where did you go to school?

Cummings	I went to ...Primary School and ...High School.
Reville	Okay, alright, and you say that...so that it was a constant theme from your primary to your high school, soon as apartheid was mentioned there was controversy.
Cummings	And even in 'varsity when we had to learn about Bantu Education and the different types of education, that's still a very heated topic, people, and even in lectures you'd hear, oh, not again and why is this relevant now when we're how many years after that, so...
Reville	Okay. Do you remember the day you were given the assignment, were you in class that day?
Cummings	Yes. (laughs) I must have been.
Reville	Well, I remember it quite clearly because it felt as though there was like a near riot on my hands. Am I right?
Cummings	(laughs) Yes.
Reville	Did you feel quite upset that, here we go again?
Cummings	Not so much. After I had read it, it wasn't...and you hear apartheid and then your initial reaction is: oh no, this is probably going to end up being a fighting match and then what's going to be done. Or we...it's never ever resolved. It's a topic that so many people can contribute to it but there's never ever a final answer, yet there can't be because there's so many different sides, but, ya, I feel, when I got it, I was a bit, hmm, not again, what am I going to say, nobody's going to hear my feelings about it, I can't really speak because I wasn't...I have a history of how it affected other people but directly I never had anything where there was...I had to not sit with a black person. Because I've grown up, since I was in grade one, I went to school with black people, so it never was an issue until we had to study it, and then you get enforced with this is what you must be thinking because you're white, which isn't really the case, so...ya.
Reville	And did you do History at school, C?
Cummings	No.
Reville	You didn't.
Cummings	I stopped at grade 10, ya, because it was compulsory till then.

Reville	Up until then, okay, alright, that's fine. Who did you choose to interview and why?
Cummings	I chose to interview my father purely because he was a lot older; he's now going on sixty years old, so he probably had more experience than what my mother would have had and she's only fifties. So he had...he was a bit older when the whole apartheid thing happened and could recall a little bit more.
Reville	How did you prepare for the interview?
Cummings	I set up...I looked at the assignment and I looked at the different questions that the assignment was asking, so I could write that, and just posed just a few questions about how it was for him back then and just...ya, around that topic.
Reville	So did you...I mean, you didn't do any extra reading, C? I mean, it was something that you felt that you knew quite well?
Cummings	I did know a lot about it seeing as I...we had been introduced it at school when we knew all the rules and regulations, it was just...ya, I wrote personal things, so how did it make him feel, what changed, what stayed the same, just ya...I used the assignment guideline as a base for forming those questions.
Reville	Okay. What about the interview process, was it easy to interview your dad?
Cummings	Um, yes, it was quite...just, my dad doesn't really speak a lot, not very social so I had to sort of probe him and ask him what it meant by that, and so with my questions I think I had to keep on asking him a little bit more if I didn't understand. But I mean that was a lot ... when you hear these case studies about what white people felt, what black people felt, and it was quite similar to what I was getting from my father.
Reville	So you expected those kinds of answers.
Cummings	Hmm.
Reville	Okay, alright. Did you learn anything new or shocking about your dad?
Cummings	Phew...um (laughs) I found that he was more positive towards...not that I expected him to be negative about what apartheid, the end of apartheid, but he was just more, why can't we reconcile...and for somebody who grew up in that, if you

	<p>underneath...okay, whites are always right or blacks have to be segregated you would have followed that, because I know his father was very military like, and you know...and so with that I thought, well he's not going to get rid of his old ways. And my dad's not a racist person, but I just thought, shoo, he's looking out for both sides, he's not looking, oh, but for me it's going to be better, and he even mentioned in the interview that even though the end of apartheid had come that the people on the streets won't be able to do that because of their past, so he was looking at both sides of the story, which I thought he'd be more judgemental for himself, more biased.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. And biased in being more negative about the ending of apartheid than positive?</p>
Cummings	<p>Not too much the ending of apartheid but more...I would say...more that for the white people he would have been more...favourable of the white people. And when I think of apartheid I think racism. So if you were...not proud of apartheid, if you supported apartheid then you would be, okay, the whites should be above the rest, but that wasn't the case. He was looking more on an equal level, which was what...it should have been after 1994, and we should be equal.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. Do you know what he voted...which political party he supported at all?</p>
Cummings	<p>It must have been the DA...I don't know what it was back then, but ya, the Democratic Alliance...I think he would have voted for that.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay, alright. Did you find that the questions you asked triggered any strong emotions in your dad while you were interviewing him?</p>
Cummings	<p>I'm sure there must have been some recall of what he felt back then with the views on apartheid and the black versus white, because you have to be if you've grown up in that. So there might have been resentment, I'm not too sure what...he never would have spoken to me about, ooh, this question made me feel like this. But I'm sure if he would have thought back to those times where he...let's say, he was getting a better job, I'm sure there was resentment to, ya, but I worked towards it. But he had that foundation, he had the schooling, he had the opportunity to go to 'varsity, so it wasn't like it was done deliberately but he had all the</p>

	resources available to him, so he used them, whereas another person might not have had that and then blamed him because he was higher or were given more opportunities.
Reville	And would your dad have said that he was granted more opportunities?
Cummings	I think he would have.
Reville	Alright. What about you, when you were listening to the answers that your dad was giving, did you feel quite emotional as you were doing the interview?
Cummings	I think when you learn about apartheid at school it's more 'way up there', you don't have any experience with it, but when you speak to somebody who's close to you, such as my father, you don't realise, wait, they also went through it, and ya, so I think it made apartheid more real to me, even though I didn't experience it I think I could speak to somebody who was giving me an account of what they felt and it felt more real to me...so...
Reville	I just remember reading some of the comments that were made to you, I mean, did your dad for example have to do military service?
Cummings	I don't know if he did, no.
Reville	That kind of stuff so...
Cummings	But his father was in the army and his uncle was shot down in...I don't know which war (laughs)...ya, World War or something, so he...not that...I know he didn't go into the army, he went straight from 'varsity, he did a diploma in banking and he got his first job. He didn't do a degree, he just got a diploma.
Reville	Okay, alright. Now let's move on to...you know, you wrote up your stories for grade 6 and then you got into these cooperative groups, do you remember that?
Cummings	Did we have to share our stories?
Reville	Yes, you needed to share your story and then remember you had to dramatise the story. But not only just your story but the whole group's story...
Cummings	Our whole groups', yes, okay, so the different viewpoints from everybody, okay.

Reville	And I wondered how your story was received by your group? Can you recall that?
Cummings	I think I was in a group with mostly white people, so our stories were very, very similar, as to that there wasn't the other side of the story. Our parents or whoever we interviewed were seen as the favourable because they had opportunities, they got a job, whereas the other groups, they I think were...you know, they didn't have the opportunity to get a job so they didn't go further and...ya...
Reville	Okay, so that was a major theme that came up in terms of, it was job opportunities or lack thereof.
Cummings	Yes. And I think also education. Because for my dad he got an education which gave him the opportunity to apply for a job. For those people who didn't have the education, they couldn't get into jobs and now this is what's feeding in now because you get children at school even where their parents can't help them with homework because they didn't have their education. So it is coming down through the generations because mom and dad can't help them with maths or English because of the education that they received. And that's a major problem, so...
Reville	Did the process of working together in your groups help you to get to know the members of your group better?
Cummings	Yes. (laughs) It also I think...we all had a common point because we had to interview somebody we knew about apartheid, so we saw a whole variety...as I said earlier, that it's not 'way out there', it was very, very real to us, even though we might not have taken the time previously to ask our parents what was apartheid like, we've never ever thought of doing that. But with this assignment we did and that's...it made it very real, that a lot of us have a lot in common, that our parents might have experienced similar things that we can relate to and we can learn from.
Reville	And you never found that your parents brought up the topic of apartheid themselves?
Cummings	No.
Reville	It was a silence?
Cummings	Yes, it was. It wasn't spoken of. When we would come home from school and speak about, oh I learnt this in Apartheid, or if I had

	trouble, what does this mean? They would explain it but we wouldn't go any further. And the older I got I actually realised like how bad apartheid was, like for some...if I was in there I would have had a resistance to it because I started feeling such strong feelings against it, because people shouldn't be treated like that, and I...it just seems like I was brought up and with the norm accepted this is what happened, I don't want to speak about it, so unspoken...so...
Reville	Okay. You've picked up that there are these patterns that carry on in terms of the lack of education, if you didn't have access to that. So in a silent way it seems also, so there's some of the effects still transmitted.
Cummings	Yes.
Reville	Do you remember who was in your group, C?
Cummings	It must have been T B, T H, and I'm not sure of the third...
Reville	Alright. Did any new relationships develop after your presentation?
Cummings	With?
Reville	With the members in your group?
Cummings	T and I, we never really got together in first year 'varsity, and I'd say from 2006 we started being friends. Maybe it was, because I got introduced to...not that I...she was unapproachable, but I was too scared to speak to her because I didn't have anything in common with her, I didn't, you know, relate to anything she said, and in curriculum studies we...and we sat in that group most times and as we spoke and got to know each other more we had more in common, and now we are still friends...so ya...
Reville	So it's actually...
Cummings	Ya, T and T we are very good friends still.
Reville	Still to this day?
Cummings	Ya, still today.
Reville	Good grief. Okay, that's very interesting, C. Alright. Did your feelings about this assignment change from the beginning towards the end of the process?

Cummings	I think I was more aware of the importance of doing oral history and interviewing people, because I think we're going to learn a lot. If I had asked my dad maybe in high school even, I would have had the opportunity to ask him even more questions and learn more about apartheid than what I already knew. Because it's always in you to think, oh apartheid, it's always black and white and written down in text books and it's...nobody else knows about it, but if you have the opportunity to speak to somebody, then you're more interested in it because it's personalised. You'll want to learn more about it. So I think, ya...I wasn't...every time I heard apartheid before then, oh, no, I don't want to learn this, why do we have to do it, come on, it's second year 'varsity, now I want to learn something else, but now you...people ask you why do you learn apartheid and there is a reason, it's part of our past, and you know, there were strong emotions and feelings that came up through it and we can learn from our mistakes if people speak about it. And that can be real to you, your grandparents might know more and you can learn a lot through them. It doesn't just have to be in text books.
Reville	And just out of interest, did you continue to have a conversation about apartheid with your dad?
Cummings	Um...I think I do still ask him questions about what it was like and how he felt about it and what would he have done, but I don't think...I think I have done it after that assignment but not...I didn't do it at all before, I didn't even speak to my dad because I didn't think it was appropriate for him to, but...ya, I think...
Reville	...So it's been an ongoing conversation, I mean, it's obviously not something you speak about every day but if things come up, you...
Cummings	Ya, if there's questions that I want to ask, ya, he's more than willing to answer them.
Reville	Okay, alright. Do you think that South Africa is a reconciled nation after 1994 (laughs)?
Cummings	(laughs) That's a tricky question. I think there are some people who have decided that, you know, what happened, happened, and it was bad, let's get over it. And I think there's some people who are so clinging on to the hurt that they just can't let go. And rightly so. Something might have happened in their family that,

	<p>you know...that really was devastating. But I think the majority of people yes, but...it's funny if you speak to a lot of white people, they have a stereotype that: things are going wrong in our country and it's always going to be a black man or a black person doing the crime. Which is not the case at all. So people are still in that mindset that crime equals black person. Which is...I don't know, me and my family have debates about this on-goingly. And I just...you know, I see a lot of possibility for South Africa, I'm not intending on leaving this country because I think there's a lot of growth, but if anything bad happens my parents will always be like, ya, but, you know, we need to get out the country. But if everybody had that attitude then nothing's going to ever happen in South Africa. So we've just got to be positive and I think it needs time. It did happen for a lot of people a long time ago, the end of apartheid, but we're still seeing effects from apartheid in our...even in schools, so...ya. I think it will take a lot of time but I think we are on the road to reconciliation.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay, so you're seeing it as a process, C, it's not something that's happened, ya.</p>
Cummings	<p>Yes, okay.</p>
Reville	<p>Alright. Now, C I know that you're studying...you're doing Maths Honours at the moment...</p>
Cummings	<p>Yes. Honours, yes.</p>
Reville	<p>Do you think you would ever be able to include oral history (laughs) in your Maths classroom one day?</p>
Cummings	<p>I'm sure it's a possibility. Ya, definitely. I think...even...they could...I'm not too sure about an example right now but if they...with the whole cross curricular, we want all our subjects to be linked and so that learners can make a link between the concepts throughout all learning areas. So I feel like if they're learning something in History that it can be brought into Maths and you can look at it. It could be statistical data, you could go do a survey about...we hear other people's stories and do a survey and answer...just their feelings on it and how many felt this way, do graphs and stuff; so I think definitely. If you make it interesting for them and say, you know apartheid is actually more real than you think, why don't you go choose five people, ask them questions, you even...because I'm doing primary school, give them a set of questions that maybe just to guide them and then</p>

	they could bring that back and organise that data into a maths subject. So I think, ya, there's a great possibility.
Reville	Okay, that's amazing, because I mean, I think so often...I mean, I think one of the great...or the wonderful things about oral history is that it can go cross curricular, it's not something that's simply limited to history, but I like your ideas in terms of the maths, it sounds wonderful. Alright, now...one of the aims of education is from...and this I'm quoting now from the RNCS, is to heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights. That's quite a mouthful. C, what do you understand these terms to mean? Is it...?
Cummings	Um...I think that, to explain that, I think that an aim would be something that you want to achieve. So it's...just like we have our learning outcomes, maybe do a lesson we want to achieve something at the end, so with our country, there's a lot of people in it and a lot of things to change in order to become a better society. So if we look at the same values of safety and health and just everybody having the same thoughts about it, if we get that at the ground, then we can move forward because everybody has the same ideas and goals in mind. So that we're all going towards the same goal. So that's what I would...
Reville	Okay. And do you see education as playing an important role in that process that you've described?
Cummings	Definitely. I feel that if learners are given the opportunity to better themselves in school and develop themselves in school, they can go out and develop a nation that is determined to get that goal. Not everybody is fortunate enough to go to school and we find some children still are not getting an education and they are missing out an important fundamental basis of what our future should have, and it's not just in history, or it should be throughout everything and that they should have this goal in order for the country to be reconciled.
Reville	Alright. C, what I'm interested in is the notion of a reconciliatory pedagogy. And do you think it's something that...I mean, I'm just throwing the term out...I mean, you've talked about practical ways of applying it in the maths classroom. Do you think it would have a broader application? Could you teach maths in such a way to foster reconciliation in the classroom?

Cummings	I'm sure it is possible if you think of ways...um...(sighs). You could take...it doesn't have to be on a racist level, it could be on the boys in the class are treated unfairly compared to the girls, and you could use that as a: how are we going to deal with this situation in order for everybody to be happy? So that there's compromise...some people might not get what they want but they're happy with what they've got in the class. So you could use different examples, different scenarios where learners learn to, you know what, it isn't fair but that's fine, I'm go...we're going to all have a debate and an agreement until we're settled into something that we're all happy with so we can all move forward. Because not everybody gets what they want. Some people don't get what they want, some people get what they want and some people sit on the fence. They don't know what they want. But I feel that if the learners start to learn that it's not all about me and it's about everybody and everybody has a right to be on this earth and I can't be selfish, then I think they'll be able to foster that.
Reville	Okay. In a way you're talking more about democratic things here...
Cummings	Yes.
Reville	So would you see quite a strong link between democracy and reconciliation?
Cummings	Yes. (laughs) I think so, ya, I think...
Reville	...Can you explain that a bit?
Cummings	For everybody...as I said, everybody is their own person, and we have...we're put on this earth whether we want to or not and we have to...take what we've been given and work with it. We might not like it, a lot of people are jealous of what other people have and they don't have what they have, so I think working with what we have just to be happy with it and move forward, I think, and in a democracy you're voting for yourself, so you have a say, so if you have a say, I think, and everybody communicates in what they want it will be easier to reconcile. Because then everybody has an opinion, and isn't shut down because they're not important, so...
Reville	So it's a lot about listening as well.
Cummings	Ya, listening and talking. But unfortunately not a lot of people like

	to hear what other people say. So they just think they're right...
Reville	So what would you do? I mean, exactly as you say, if a child gets up and says, I'm right, I believe this. How can you start to...work with that?
Cummings	I think with younger children, it will be easier to have a class hat. So if you're wearing a class hat you can speak, and everybody listens, and they can have an opportunity to jot down questions or something, and everybody gets an equal chance. So let's say, five people during the lesson get to wear a hat, then that would, I think, be the best way for younger people. But with respect of other people you've got to learn that. And sometimes the hard way.
Reville	It's a process, isn't it? It's not [inaudible].
Cummings	Ya. I think when you get a class, let's say at the beginning of the year, you need to start teaching them that this is what goes on in your classroom and if you want to learn and you want to be here, let's listen to each other, because everybody's got something valuable to say and you can learn from anything, so, ya...
Reville	And would you use any cooperative group tactics to try and facilitate that?
Cummings	The talking...or the opinions and listening? Um...
Reville	I'm going to push you a bit further, C, because it's not just about the listening and talking. I mean, if you recall when we put you into those groups you didn't know who you were going to be with, you had no choice. Alright. And we didn't know you and we just kind of scrambled the class. We didn't know who was going to be in what group. And that in some ways can be quite a scary process. But is it something that you might use in your own classroom?
Cummings	I think if learners sit together with their friends they aren't challenged to think on...they're just, okay, you come from my same background, but if you have a, as you say, different people from different backgrounds, you get...start talking to them, you learn a lot from what they've experienced and you can also share what you've experienced. So I think random grouping is an excellent idea and way to get learners to speak and listen because when you're with your friends sometimes you don't have

	respect to listen to them because I know what you're going to say, just keep quiet. But if you're with somebody you don't know, you actually listen to what they say and then you can respond to that. So I think that would work with the grouping.
Reville	Okay. Alright C, there's just one other question that kind of occurred to me and it's kind of like good old history and date number. When were you born?
Cummings	1986.
Reville	1986. So in a sense you grew up during the tail end of apartheid, hmm?
Cummings	Yes. I started primary school in 1993, so it was just the year before.
Reville	So it was just before, alright. And then by '93/'94, basically as you said, you were integrated from grade one.
Cummings	Ya. Grade one...I can't remember not...it just being a white school, but I know from grade two I had a best friend, until even now, that is black. And we got on...my parents didn't have...when I brought her home there was no resentment or anything, it was just accepted that we were friends, and I think, ya...I haven't known not being able to sit next to a black person, because I've grown up, as far as I can remember, with black people and I...I'm thinking of having segregation, I just sort of nearly have a heart attack because (laughs) I can't imagine living in an era like that where it's...you just can't be seen with another black person.
Reville	Okay. You know one of the things that really struck me in terms of teaching here at university, is actually how segregated the lecture rooms were.
Cummings	Yes.
Reville	And I wonder if you can comment on that, C?
Cummings	Okay (laughs). For me, I'm (sighs)...I came into 'varsity knowing one person, and I'm a very, very quiet person, I don't talk to people or make a lot of friends easily, I've got to be spoken to, to speak, you know? So when that happened and you come into 'varsity, I knew a girl and she knew friends from her old school, so we just formed a group. And it just happened to be a white group. It wasn't that we didn't want to speak to black people. I

	<p>know that when we had lectures, different lectures, we got to speak more and more to other people, so when we were incorporated into other groups, I began to speak to other people and a lot of them were black people. And I know that...I think there's still this thinking that, okay, whites, you know, we go to 'varsity, they're coming from the northern suburbs, because Wits is very central, so some people come from this area, other people. So I think there's a possibility that people from one area know each other and let's say it happened to be Diepsloot and then they come here, so they have their own group. And then we come from the northern suburbs or the East Rand and we know people from there. For me personally it was who I knew. And there's a lot of people even now in my Honours course, I've met a lot of people, and we sit and we speak and it's just a whole mixed race with the Honour students. There's, I think, 25 of us, and 4 of us are white. So it's not a, I don't want to sit with them or anything, I think it's just who you know. And coming into Honours, we didn't know...there's two of us who knew each other and you're forced to make friends. So when you're forced to, like in lectures, get into this group, speak to this person, you actually become friends with that person and you say, hi, bye, on the corridor, through lectures, you might sit together. And I think that's what you find is during curriculum when we were mixed groups, I got introduced then to a lot of people, even a curriculum C and D, we were forced into groups of people and I did microteach with those people and you know, it's...you get a whole lot of...it's not Honours now I hang out with this person, I'm going to sit with them. But you do, you make a lot more contacts. I know J...I don't know if you remember him? Ya, I'm still in contact with him over email and...so it's very nice to have people like that who you can be friends with. It doesn't necessarily mean you have to sit with them or whatever.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay, so you're starting...you're talking about a process where you came and it was quite narrow initially, because that thing about familiarity, and that as you moved through university it's actually grown wider and wider.</p>
Cummings	<p>Yes. I think the more you're exposed to speaking to people, the more you're going to be friends with them, or you decide, do I want to be friends with this person or not, and you get exposed to other people and you want to be friends, so...and keep the contacts. Ya, I think if we came in here and could choose our own</p>

	<p>groups I'd be sitting with my friends the whole time then I wouldn't know anybody else. And I know when you get into the first lecture and it's, we're putting you into groups and you're, oh, no, why can't I sit with my friends? There's a reason for that because, you know, sit with your friends, you're not going to learn anything, so, ya...I think with 'varsity it's...ya, it's been very good.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. Is there anything else you want to say, C about...kind of the...you know, with hindsight now, with looking back to that particular moment, because it was a brief moment in a very long university career. But is there anything that you'd like to add to what you've said?</p>
Cummings	<p>Ya, I just think I'd like to just emphasise the fact that learning about apartheid at that point it was an interesting moment because I could interact with it and I found it interesting and I wanted to learn more. And when I was put into groups with other people I wanted to know, it wasn't a: oh, just tell your story and let's get to break. It was: what was it like? Speak, you know, tell me all the experiences. And meeting new people gave the opportunity to learn more. If I wasn't put in that group where people...or if I didn't speak to other people I would never have known about it. So ya, I think that was one of the big things is that mixed group and just making a case study, because then it becomes more real. And I think if we encourage that then learners might be more interested into learning because it's, wow, my dad experienced this, or my grandpa, or my mom's friend, you know, because then it's personal. And they'll remember it because learners remember experience, so...</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. Because I mean, I know that I gave you the story just to reread, but I could see that it actually...it seems to me as though it did have an impact, I'm not just guessing, it actually did.</p>
Cummings	<p>Ya. It did. I really enjoyed writing that story and interviewing my dad. As I said, me and my dad speak but we're not...I would never go and ask him about his childhood or anything, so I think that I could relate to it and now I know a little bit more about my dad and what he experienced. So if somebody asked me I'd say, ya, but my dad experienced this and then I can also add to the conversation.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. Well, thank you so much for having come along.</p>

Cummings	Pleasure.
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3. Edge student interview- 28 August 2009

Reville	Tell us your name and surname.
Edge	Edge.
Reville	Can you tell us a bit more about what you're doing now?
Edge	Now I'm teaching grade 4 at ...Primary on the West Rand.
Reville	Can you tell us a bit more about your general background, kind of where you grew up, anything that you'd like to share?
Edge	I grew up on the West Rand, I was born here and I've lived here all my life. I went to a sort of middle-class normal white...so-called white school, and then went to ...High School, and then went on to study at university.
Reville	Okay. Let's go back to a fair time ago. When did you write this oral history narrative and reflective essay?
Edge	It was written in March of 2006.
Reville	Who did you choose to interview and why did you choose that person?
Edge	I interviewed my mother because she's someone who was close and who grew up in the heart of the apartheid era, and who experienced it.
Reville	Okay. Describe your feelings when you heard about this assignment.
Edge	I think it was...it was quite a shock, as it's something that, it's a sensitive topic to talk about and to discuss and, you know, people don't like to talk about the apartheid era. And then to go and ask people like their emotions and their feelings around the topic is quite difficult because some people don't want to be honest about what they truly felt. I think people feel that they have to put on, you know, those masks and say what is expected of them to say, and not what they really felt or really experienced.
Reville	And how did you find the interviewing process with your mom, I mean, did those kind of difficulties that you described come up?
Edge	I think at first it was a little bit awkward, but then after a couple of questions and...I think she relaxed a little bit. She spoke quite a

	bit about what it was like living as a white child in those times. And I don't actually...I think that for most part they weren't aware of what was going on because it was just the norm to not see black children. So I think they were quite oblivious to what was going on around them at first.
Reville	It was kind of like living in a bit of a cocoon?
Edge	Yes.
Reville	Did you learn anything new or shocking during the interview?
Edge	I think I did, because for me growing up and having, you know, black children in class and coloured children and Indian children, to see that there was schools that were just white children and not being able...like my mom had a friend who was...there was a coloured girl, and there was only one place that they could go and have a coffee together, and even when they did that it was frowned upon. And I had, my best friend in primary school was a coloured girl, and I wouldn't be able to imagine not being able to go watch a movie with them or, you know, go play at their house. So just that being...I find it quite shocking having to choose your friends by the colour of their skin and not having that freedom to choose who you associated with.
Reville	Okay. Yet when we started you described your primary school as a kind of whites only...
Edge	Well, it wasn't...it was...
Reville	Was it formerly whites only?
Edge	Ya, it was major...if you look back at school today and when I started there, the demographics have shifted a lot. So when I was there it was maybe one or two or three black or coloured children per class. And if I look at the demographics there now it's switched where there's now maybe one or two or three white children per class. So when I was there it was still...
Reville	And was that K... Primary?
Edge	No, it was D... Primary.
Reville	D... Primary, okay. Did you find that the questions you asked your mom, did it trigger any sort of strong emotions in her?
Edge	I think the only one was with her friend and not being able to sit

	with them on the bus and not being able to do things that she would do with her white colleagues at work. And having been forced to go to that one Wimpy that allowed them to sit there and not being able to go to another place.
Reville	And your mom felt quite strongly about that?
Edge	Yes.
Reville	And how would you describe that?
Edge	I think she felt that it was unfair that her friend was treated in that way. I think it was more for feelings for her friend than for herself really.
Reville	And while listening to her retelling the story, did it trigger strong emotions in you?
Edge	Ya, I...well I felt that if I was in that situation that I would be unhappy about it, and glad that I didn't grow up in that situation.
Reville	Alright, let's move on now to the group that you worked with when you did your oral story. Do you remember the group?
Edge	(laughs) Not really.
Reville	Okay. But do you remember how your story was received by the group?
Edge	Ooh, no. I just remember that there was conflict within the group and having to, I think, bringing all those different stories together and trying to portray one...like, I think we were doing a play. Trying to bring it all together and portray like a true picture of what was really happening was quite difficult. I think there were still feelings of them...of the black students in the group who were upset and, you know, that all white people are responsible for apartheid, and trying to bring across that, it wasn't that in the group. I remember it being quite a difficult thing to do.
Reville	So how did you navigate that process?
Edge	I think we eventually just had to come to...on some things to agree to disagree. I think we did that, and just find a medium ground where we could all just eventually say, well this is what we have to do, let's just get it done. And trying to explain your side of the...of how you...how your person experienced the apartheid, you know, compared to them, and how they

	experienced it.
Reville	And yet your story was dealing with, in a sense, one of the few stories that I read that there was any cross-over. Did the group not respond to that?
Edge	Um...I actually can't...
Reville	Because ultimately...that's fine if you can't remember, because clearly then it didn't make an impression, it hasn't stayed with you.
Edge	Ya.
Reville	But can you remember if there was any discussion about the content of your story? Because it was an unusual story, if I think back in terms of most of the stories that I read. Was there any discussion or did it just polarise people into us and them discussions?
Edge	Ya, there was, there was that mindset of us and them, and you and us, and...
Reville	But now that process of working together, did that open up a space at all, as you had to try and combine those four stories?
Edge	Oh, I actually experienced doing that, it was quite a difficult thing to do. And honestly I didn't enjoy...I didn't mind the essay and the interviewing and that, but the working together it was...it was difficult because people come with their backgrounds and with their baggage and their mind...and to try and put it all together it wasn't something that was easy.
Reville	Okay. But you seem to say in your reflective essay that it really opened things up for you...
Edge	Yes, for me, ya, to see...
Reville	Can you talk a bit more about that?
Edge	...Sorry (<i>in a whisper</i>).
Reville	It's okay. I'm more interested in a sense about your memory of it, rather than turning back to the reflective essay.
Edge	You know, what I...for me growing up as a white South African, and also not being so aware of apartheid, because I was so young, to me it wasn't something that was that big, although to

	<p>some of the other students in the group it was their life. And I think what has struck me the most was seeing how much it actually affected the students that were in the group with me. Where to me it didn't really have that much of an impact on who I was and how I lived my life. But for them it did, and those things are still with them today. And it affects them today, and it's a part of who they are. But for me it wasn't. So to see that apartheid was...what it actually was and the impact that it had on individual's lives, I think that's what struck me the most.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. So would you say that this is the first time that you really had like a direct encounter with that reality as other people experienced it?</p>
Edge	<p>Yes. You know, you hear about apartheid all the time, and it's...and then I think it becomes...like you just don't want to hear about it anymore. And you just push it aside and you go, oh they're talking about apartheid again. But to actually sit with other people who lived it, and to see that it does, it affects individual people that did, it opened my mind up a lot and I realised the seriousness of what was actually happening.</p>
Reville	<p>And do you recall any of the other stories that the group told?</p>
Edge	<p>I think I remember one with...I can't...I don't know if it was the father or whoever was...I remember us doing something about the police beating them at the train stations if they didn't have their passes with them. And people getting thrown in jail for not having a pass. And it can be...I mean, they were innocent people who hadn't really done anything wrong, they could just be walking up the road, and being beaten or arrested just for being there.</p>
Reville	<p>Alright. So in some ways...it sounds like a mixed experience, it was both positive and negative.</p>
Edge	<p>Ya.</p>
Reville	<p>It was positive in the sense that you actually learned something about the country's past, but quite negative in the sense of how you were, in a sense, obliged to confront that past?</p>
Edge	<p>Ya. I think it's a sensitive topic that brings up emotion in people, and then to deal with that, like in a classroom situation, it was quite...as I said, it was quite a difficult thing to do.</p>
Reville	<p>And how would you deal with it in your own classroom?</p>

Edge	I find with the kids and with the age that they're at now, and being born...if I can say, born really into this 'new' South Africa, I watch them and they don't see colour, and I think for them they...I think they would like [inaudible]...I don't think they would really understand what apartheid was and what it means to not be able to go somewhere because they haven't experienced that. So for them it would be different...(interruption) You know, I think for them it would be...you'd need to deal with it in a different way than we did it, because the people in our group had lived through that experience and had had that first-hand as children...not being able to go anywhere...
Reville	And yet if you think about it in terms of...when were you born?
Edge	I was born in '86.
Reville	In '86. Okay. So you started school in what, '91, '92?
Edge	Yes. So it was at that end...
Reville	Right at the end of it...apartheid era, and at the beginning of...so in a sense...when I say, 'you kids', you've actually grown up without having that as a lived experience.
Edge	Ya.
Reville	But your parents definitely had it. Do you think these children's parents grew up without...they must have as well, they must also have grown up under apartheid. Am I...?
Edge	...Ya, their parents have, but they haven't...
Reville	The children haven't.
Edge	Ya, the children haven't. So they only have what...you know, they haven't experienced that themselves. And I think they still...they're young now, so they don't...you know, there could be some that understand it, but there's going to be a lot of them that have never even heard of the word 'apartheid', in the class. So for them, I would be...I would have to be careful because I wouldn't want to go and open up things that would then cause them to now have this mindset that we're different, and...you know, this happened to us, because they would take that on themselves, you know...if we had to speak about, black children not being allowed to do this and not being allowed to do that, it would upset them, and they would take that thing on themselves.

	So I would have to be sensitive with the way you deal with it with them. Because you don't want to...you know, I feel we need to move forward from apartheid and not keep bringing it up in the school, and, you know, reliving it. Teach about it as history, but...not try and make it a thing that they have to live through and...I don't know if I'm explaining it myself properly but, you know, just explain it to them as it is, as its history, because it's not part of this South Africa anymore.
Reville	It's very much part of South Africa still...
Edge	I do understand that but it's still...
Reville	It's how you would then deal with that. Or would you say, don't teach it? Where would you take a stand?
Edge	I think it's important to...for them to know that it's part of the country's history, but then not to put too much emphasis on it. You know...as...I don't know, I felt with that...even at varsity, I felt okay, enough of this apartheid thing now. You know, I feel that it's pushed too much. And yes, it's the whole process of reconciliation and bringing people back together but I think sometimes, you know, bringing it up and teaching it over and over and over and over again, I think it does the opposite. I think it actually pushes people away because it brings up those feelings of hurt and that from the past. I noticed that, even within our group, people got very emotional, and actually got angry within the group, because now all those things have been brought up, brought to the surface again. So I think there's a danger, there's a fine line that you need to be careful with when teaching apartheid, with informing them and making them understand, but then also not taking it too far that it causes conflict within the class.
Reville	Did any new relationships form as a result of that presentation?
Edge	No.
Reville	So afterwards the group just gave a huge sigh of relief and everyone went back to...But there was no shift at all, in terms of at least greeting one another...stuff like that, chatting a bit?
Edge	I actually can't even remember the names of the people that were in my group.
Reville	Do you remember the faces?

Edge	I probably wouldn't.
Reville	Did your feelings about the assignment change from the time you heard about it, to towards the end when you did your reflective essay?
Edge	Um...as I said, for me the essay part and the learning about it, and even after the presentation, although I said that was a difficult experience and it wasn't very pleasant, but afterwards I did feel that, you know...okay, it wasn't too bad. I had learned something and had learned about what other people had experienced, and to try and just maybe understand the other side a little bit more. So I did, I felt...afterwards I felt that it was a worthwhile thing to do. Even to...you know, you just learn something small...I did get something out of it.
Reville	What do you think reconciliation means?
Edge	I think it's bringing people back together, and to eradicate the feelings and the hurts of the past, and to get a clean slate.
Reville	And how would one go about doing that?
Edge	With human emotions it's hard to do that, and to...you know, people always say, I forgive but I won't forget, and I think it's the forgetting that's the important part. It's...you know, not forgetting what had happened but forgetting, you know, your hurts and to just move on from that. I think, you know, apartheid will always be part of South Africa's history, but people need to leave the emotion that was attached to it behind, and to move on, so that the next generation can grow up without that hurt being instilled in them. And I think that's also important, it's not instilling what we've dealt with, with apartheid, into our children or into the next generation because then reconciliation will never happen if they get brought up with that hurt being passed on to them. So I think it's trying to move on from the feelings and from the emotions and just starting afresh.
Reville	And you started off by talking about forgiveness. Where does forgiveness fit into all of this?
Edge	Well...you're never going to move on unless you forgive what's been done to you in the past, and that's within people and individuals. It will start with individuals forgiving one another and forgiving the person that has oppressed them, and if you can

	<p>forgive someone else then you're released from that feeling and you can move on with your life. And I think people hold on to things too much.</p>
Reville	<p>Would you describe South Africa as a reconciled nation after '94?</p>
Edge	<p>No. I don't think so. There's still...there's still...you know, as within, you can see within groups of people there's still hurt and there's still feelings of racism and people...and I think the racism goes both ways in this country. I don't think it's just white people not liking black people, I think it's...you know, black people not liking white people because of what they've done to them, which is then, as I said, the forgiveness then. But I think we still have a long way to go.</p>
Reville	<p>And what do we do about it?</p>
Edge	<p>I think from here we can...you know, we can teach in our schools and teach our kids about equity and about respect and about love and about that everybody's equal and everybody's got the same...you know, the same standing in society and that. You teach it from a young age and then when they grow up they won't have that feeling of that division.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay, so you see education as playing an important part.</p>
Edge	<p>I think it does. It plays a big part.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. Because in a sense it might then be, what you talked about, the hurt that gets carried on to other generations, I mean, that comes within the family, doesn't it?</p>
Edge	<p>Yes.</p>
Reville	<p>So then, would you see it being maybe what one might do in the classroom, as perhaps conflicting with what's going on at home?</p>
Edge	<p>I think that it could, but then, you know, the children can go and take what they learn and take that into their houses and maybe even teach their parents about being, that we're actually equal and that, you know, about that ubuntu and they can take that into their homes. So I think that this education can stem into the different areas of their lives.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. And what about through oral histories? Do you think that might be a possibility?</p>

Edge	I think if...that they can, I mean, they learn a lot through stories and through speaking to...I mean, their parents tell them stories and through...I think through asking questions and through interviewing people they can get down to like the crux of the matter and that would help them.
Reville	And then the use of a cooperative strategy?
Edge	I think that helps because then they learn from each other and they get each other's experiences as well. And then it becomes like a community and they're not just themselves in the situation but they learn what their friends are thinking and feeling as well, and they can then judge their feelings against their friends.
Reville	Would you do an assignment like this with your class? Not saying...you know, not translating directly from university to school, but something working on these kind of principles of an oral history as a classroom strategy?
Edge	I think I would, ya.
Reville	An aim of education is to heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights. Do you think an oral history project like this could contribute towards meeting these aims of education?
Edge	I think it could.
Reville	Okay. How would you see it working?
Edge	You know, they're going out and they're learning from other people's experiences and they're bringing it in, and getting children from different backgrounds working together. It does, it bridges that gap that has been formed by society. So I think doing cooperative and doing these oral histories, they all can bring the different...their backgrounds together and they can learn more about each other and understand that although they're very different that there is a common ground for them.
Reville	Alright. Do you think the Social Sciences classroom is a place where reconciliation can be fostered or not?
Edge	I think it can.
Reville	And what about...I know that English is obviously a major love,

	could you use the same kind of approach in an English class?
Edge	Doing interviews and orals and that, you could very easily put this into the English curriculum.
Reville	Any other learning areas as a grade 4 teacher?
Edge	You could do it even in the Arts and Culture, going back and seeing the cultural side and all the different backgrounds that people have in there...
Reville	Would you go as far as saying religion in terms of looking at Life Orientation?
Edge	Yes.
Reville	And I know that you've done it now in history. Would that be a potential bridge as well?
Edge	It would be.
Reville	Alright, I know you've got a class to go to, so I'm going to leave it there and just say thanks very much for your time.
Edge	It's a pleasure.

4. Green student interview – 22 July 2009

Reville	Give me your name, surname, and just a bit about your own background.
Green	Okay. My name is ...Green. I am 22 years old. I was born in South Africa in 1986 to a Jewish middle-class family. My whole life I've grown up in a Jewish community. I went to a Jewish day school and after matric I started studying school teaching at Wits, and pretty much, at that time, that I really got exposed to the rest of South Africa and the real stuff that goes on. Ya...never been short of anything, been, I think, more than privileged. Ya...got an excellent education at school.
Reville	What school did you go to?
Green	I went to ...Primary, and then ...High School. Ya...I have lots of friends, I grew up with domestic workers, one of their children lived in our home. So I come from a very liberal family. Never really seen colour as an issue. My parents also, there's never been a problem with that. This particular girl who grew up in my home is the same age as me. My parents schooled her, housed her, she even got a degree. And ya, today we're friends. And we're pretty much in the same, you know, social circle, I think. You know, we're in the exact same stage of our lives.
Reville	Alright, thanks for that. Alright, I want to take your mind back to this oral history narrative. You wrote it about two years ago, is that correct?
Green	Ya.
Reville	Can you describe your feelings while you...
Green	...No it was three years ago. Ya!
Reville	(laughs) Alright. Can you describe your feelings when you heard or received this oral history assignment.
Green	I think at first when I...well, when I first received the actual assignment, I was quite confused because I felt like how do I actually ask somebody to now go and tell me their life story, like that's a big thing to ask. And yet when I think back of actually asking the particular person, it was really easy, like she was so excited that I was interested in even hearing that. And I actually,

	<p>the more we got into it, it was like having a cup of coffee with an old friend who I'd never known her whole life, I'd just...you know, we'd met in our later life and she was just telling me her past. And I think also it was the first experience that actually brought apartheid to life for me. You know, it really made...this is a real thing, it wasn't just what I learned at school, or some far out concept, you know? She's a fairly young person, and it really affected her and still today. So her telling me that and like first person really...it like made it all come alive, I think.</p>
Reville	<p>Who did you choose to interview and why did you choose her?</p>
Green	<p>Okay. I chose my nail lady. I chose her because I'm very close to her on a personal level. You know, I see her like once a week and we really get to know each other. And just, I'm always interested in her life, you know, she's always telling me about her granny and her mother and her sister, and I'm always hearing about her family and...you know, I was so in touch with her daily life that I thought, like wow, how did this person actually get to where she is? And...also I thought it would be the most...the best person to choose for me, personally, because I think she was able to...she's living such a different life to what she had lived, that for her to retell the story was like...it wasn't like she chose to forget it, she really...she lives with that. And you know, she was young and she speaks very good English...so like her telling the story, she didn't feel like embarrassed because she couldn't tell...speak the language, or, she didn't feel embarrassed because I'm not coloured or I'm not black. You know, we're equals, and...I don't know, I felt it was just easiest to speak to her.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. Because a lot of people, I mean, receiving the assignment, decided: family members, safest, easiest. And you were one of the few who didn't. And I found that very interesting. And I just wondered what the connection was that made you go beyond your family, K?</p>
Green	<p>Yes. Also, I just want to say, with my family, growing up, we've always asked questions. Strangely enough, I think my parents unfortunately were real bystanders. They almost chose to forget the real story. I don't think they were...they never contributed to it, I think they...but they didn't go out and be these huge, liberal, outspoken people, they just lived their own life, they didn't really know it to them, they did what was good for them, they employed</p>

	a domestic worker, and that they felt they were giving back, but they never like fought for a cause and, when I had asked in previous times, like, you know, what went on, what was the story, it's very vague to them. And also I think growing up Jewish, in such a time, I mean, I say this generally, I don't think it was...they weren't as exposed. I think it's almost because Jews themselves are so condensed with their own. You know, we barely ever branch out, you know? Not that my parents were religious Jews, they were traditional Jews, but...so when I come to...because I did think of asking them, and then when I started asking a few questions, I didn't really get many answers, so...you know?
Reville	So you decided not to pursue it...
Green	Ya, and I wanted actually to hear it from a person of a different race...you know what I mean, like, that's the real people who we need to ask. So I chose her.
Reville	And did you ever go back and ask your parents more, after you had heard her story?
Green	I didn't. I almost feel like it's something they don't want to really talk about. You know, I think...even living in South Africa today they're not those types who sit and harp on the crime and harp on how hard it is and harp on how backwards it is and all the negative things, and they're also not the ones to sit and...you know, they're not pro South Africa either, they're very middle of the road type of people, so...I'm funnily enough, the complete opposite. Like I'm either or, you know? So for them it was never like...I didn't feel that they would like welcome the conversation. I think they just kind of don't really think about it, almost.
Reville	Can I push a bit further?
Green	Yes.
Reville	When did your parents come to South Africa?
Green	Okay, so my grandfather, my dad's dad, came to South Africa in the...like early 1920s. His whole family got killed in the Pogroms in Russia. And...my mother's adopted, so we don't know her biological parents but she was given to my granny and grandpa on the day of her birth. So my granny's born and bred in Ermelo and my grandfather...so it's her adopted father, was from Lithuania. And he had arrived...I would also say like around the

	<p>1920s. And both sides of the family, like my dad never grew up...he grew up below the bread line, in he like shared a one room flat with three brothers and his parents, and his dad used to sell dresses on like the road. He used to...so they like never really...they never employed a domestic worker, and funnily enough they actually lived, you know, sort of near black people. But it wasn't like an issue, you know, it was almost like, they were so worried about their own survival it wasn't really an issue for them. Whereas my mom, I mean, she today still talks about the domestic worker who brought her up with my gran. And...she does however comment on how my gran was like very...not racist but very like...how do I say it, almost...you know, she would ring a bell to call the lady to come and clean off the dishes, that type. So my mom grew up...also my gran gave her a lot and she wasn't treated like a slave. And today I see the exact same thing, like my mom, her staff are her life. Like she cares so much about them. My dad, he doesn't really have an opinion, he's a good guy, he'll help whoever needs help but he doesn't stand on either side.</p>
R	<p>Okay. I think what I was just trying to establish with those questions, is that, you know, there's a history in a sense of discrimination within your own family.</p>
Green	<p>A hundred percent, exactly.</p>
Reville	<p>And, you know, it's interesting to see how it plays out in...</p>
Green	<p>They would have reacted, sure.</p>
Reville	<p>...in subsequent generations. Alright. Let's get back to the interview. How did you prepare for it?</p>
Green	<p>Okay, so what I did was, first I phoned her, I wanted to get permission, you know, I needed to...eliminate questions, I needed to know who I'm interviewing. And when I phoned her, she was like, sure you can come tomorrow and we can do this. So I thought, let me take a bit of time, I want to really think about what I'm going to ask you, and we made a time to meet in like a week's time. And I met her, she had to work, so she worked and straight after her day we met at the salon but were...I'd probably be on a professional basis, in terms of what I needed. And I just sat with her and...I had the questions in front of me but I didn't like set question and answer, it was a conversation, exactly like we're doing here, except I was taking notes, and...ya, and the</p>

	<p>questions I found quite hard to come up with. Though I think once I got to like the third or fourth question, you get into it, in fact you actually get too into it, you want to know everything, you know? But also I found interviewing someone, they almost guide a lot of your questions, because what happened was I actually remember clearly that I added a lot more questions to my questions, through talking to her.</p>
Reville	Okay, alright. So it was...and you didn't read or do anything else?
Green	No.
Reville	Because you actually felt that you came with quite a lot of prior knowledge.
Green	<p>Yes, well, you know, I knew she had a black father and a white mother and she grew up as a coloured, that was always an issue for her, and, she had spoken about it, you know, and the fact that she's very good at Afrikaans and all those types of stuff. I had a very good background. I did look into where she lives. She grew up in Alex and then she moved to...that area, what's it...the flats...where she lives now. It's actually majority coloured in that particular area...the name will come to me. And I remember we had this discussion, why did she move from Alex to this particular area? And it was because Alex became particularly black, and for her, being a coloured, she just felt she needed to be around more of her own people. Like that was an issue for her, because of the past, they'd always been so separated, even the black and the coloureds, even though they were also treated the same, but together they didn't get on that well.</p>
Reville	How did you find the actual interviewing process? Was it easy or difficult to do, the interview?
Green	<p>Um, I think it was both. I think it was easy because you're asking someone about their personal story, so it's very easy and you don't even have to think about it. Where I think it was a bit hard was that I was white and she was coloured and I don't have her history...and I think it's embarrassing as a white person what went on. So for me to like hear what she had to say and...this is human, like this is real stuff, this is humankind and this person's humanity was stripped away from them, and that like...I felt a little bit uncomfortable at times, you know, also the more gruesome the details got, you know, the harder it was for me, you know, to talk. And you know, her schooling, I mean, the way she described</p>

	<p>her school, I mean, I don't even think I did her justice in the writing. And there I was growing up in King David, I had a warm class, brilliant teacher, unbelievable school shoes. You know, at that time I'd never known, so from that side it was a little bit difficult, but other than that like, also, because I knew her on a personal level, it really made it much more easier for me. Like I think, it's hard to just interview anybody, and I also don't think strangers give each other the real truth. You know, like if you have some form...you don't have to be best friends or cousins but...do you know what I mean, like there's...we know each other to an extent, you know? So from that aspect, ya, it was okay.</p>
R	<p>Alright. And in terms of what you learned about the person you interviewed, did you...I mean, you said some of it was quite shocking for you.</p>
Green	<p>Yes.</p>
Reville	<p>How did you react to that, at the time, afterwards, did it hit you as you were doing the interview?</p>
Green	<p>I think what happened was, when she was answering the questions, I would just want to know more. Like she would say, she used to walk to school barefoot. So whether it was hot or it was cold, it was sore. And then I would like obsess over that. I just couldn't get over that...do you know, you just can't grasp the enormity of such a thing! No, my immediate reaction was almost shock, and then I wanted to just know exactly more, it was almost like I was reading someone's story but this real person was like sitting in front of me, it was like...and then where it actually affected me the most, was afterwards. One: seeing children at school today, in terms of like my niece and my nephew and you know we're really so privileged it's unbelievable. And it's also, I thought about it a hell of a lot when I was teaching. Like this whole...I got almost a little bit frustrated because we're so privileged in today's day and whether you're black, whether you're white, we're all privileged, because the whites are learning something and the black people are getting a second chance. And I almost...the frustration comes from like realising this person's story and yet I'm teaching some coloured children who don't even know how lucky they are to be where they are and yet it's not their fault, because they're young and they're children. And what an injustice their parents are doing by not telling them the story and what an injustice their teachers are doing by not</p>

	<p>teaching them about it. So then afterwards also what I...I think I indirectly took it on to like make it my mission to, in some way, try and retell some of the story. Like even if I'm not teaching history, I'll randomly ask the class: what happened during the apartheid? You know, what happened during the Holocaust? And what's interesting, some kids don't even know. In fact, I would say a good majority don't. And they're the next generation which is hellishly scary for me. So...ya.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. While you were doing the interview, did you find that your questions triggered strong emotions in the person you interviewed?</p>
Green	<p>Um...I think when she was talking almost about her family and their life, personal conditions, you know, in terms of their home and the way they lived, that made her very...I could see it made her very like sad...and nostalgic. But, at the same time, there were a lot of things she used to laugh about because she's like, she actually, if she doesn't have a sense of humour she's never going to move on, you know? Something about the way they used to like sing songs and like rant on the police. You know, they used to like irritate the police almost. Like and then, when she started telling me that, then one of the other ladies in the room heard her saying that and then they started singing a song together and like laughing hysterically. So what that did, I mean, the emotions I think also it's her history, that's all she knows! So however sad and horrible it is, like for her it's her life, and we all look back on our life, that silly moments, or sad moments, we have to laugh because you know...but she never cried, she didn't...it's almost like I felt she had made peace with that.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. So there wasn't a sense of anger about her injustices?</p>
Green	<p>No. Certainly not for her on a personal level. Because I think she's, thank God, done really well for herself and she's educating her child and she's got a good job...maybe from in terms of the people in her life that never landed up so lucky as her. You know, like the cousin of hers who got killed and...and I mean, what is this really all about? If she actually sat and thought about it, because she was coloured? Like how random is that? You know, and for that she'll never be able to put her head around it, but for everything else...that's her life, you know. So she...but I didn't get the sense of like she's living with this like...oh, she wants to kill every white person, you know. She's almost embraced it, you</p>

	know, this was the way it is.
Reville	I think that you said that you felt that some of the answers you heard did make you think that it was more afterwards that really the impact really, really hit you.
Green	Yes.
Reville	Okay. Let's move on now to the cooperative group that you worked with. Do you remember who was in your group?
Green	I remember one girl, K. I think it was her, me...I think there was a black guy...that's all I remember. I think there were four of us per group.
Reville	There were meant to be. I've actually, just by chance, got...I've got your group here as, with B.
Green	Oh, that's who it was, it wasn't K, okay.
Reville	And then somebody I.
Green	Yes. It's a...she's a...ya, she was with me. I think she was Muslim or coloured. I know exactly who she is.
Reville	Alright. And it seemed as though it was just the three of you as against four. But I don't know if that was just on the day, because I didn't write this report, somebody else did. And I was quite intrigued just to see who the groups were. How was your story received by the group?
Green	Um...I think, particularly with B, she...I think both of them were in shock that it was my nail lady and someone that I had personally chosen on a personal level. I think for...I'm trying to think, I think her name was R, I can't remember her name but she I remembered was very shocked that I'd chosen a coloured person, not a particularly white or black. And that she...also because she was quite a young person to have interviewed, her memory is very fresh. It wasn't like she couldn't think back to the times. Um...ya, I think they actually found it very interesting. You know, because it's a rare type of person to have chosen in terms of her age, she's coloured, she's quite with it today, you know? In fact if I remember carefully one of them interviewed their domestic worker but she's very old. And that was a problem because she was too old, you know, and also she hadn't overcome the emotional side of it, so for them, I remember I was

	definitely...I think I was the second or the last person to go and then they were like, you know...so it was received very well by them.
Reville	Alright, but they were also intrigued by your choice of person...
Green	...Ya, like they were asking me questions about her and the connection, etc.
Reville	Did the process of working in that cooperative group and the dramatisation, did you feel that that helped you to get to know your peers better?
Green	Um...I think it just gave me a bit of a personal perspective of them. You know, it's such an emotional thing that we were talking about that it was just interesting to know that that's how that person...that's what they hold by, you know? So not, you know, in terms of being a personal, not in terms of themselves, just in terms of themselves, in terms of a particular event, and it's all our history, you know, we all are South Africans. So, ya, I mean, you do think about how they felt when you see them the next day. You know, or when they make a comment in the next lecture then you know, oh, you know they have a certain feeling or, you know? So it did give me a little bit of a taste of what they stand for almost.
Reville	And how they think...
Green	Ya, like what's their outlook on the whole thing of what...of learning history.
Reville	Okay. Did any new relationships develop? Were there any friendships that developed out of that quite small group work that you did?
Green	I can't say friendships...those particular girls, I was also in a group with them and another guy, that's who I was thinking of, in the following year. It was also in Curriculum Studies in Biology. So we had always kept...we had been in a group, you know, and it was quite a personal thing to have discussed, so...it's not like a random group and then you forget about each other. So it wasn't a friendship as such but it was certainly a connection, you know, and if we ever needed anything...but we never became friends but we would always help each other out and then when we got put into that group, then obviously it strengthened.

R	Okay. I wonder what basis that group was...
Green	...Because I thought back to the guy, and it wasn't for your tut it was obviously for something else.
Reville	Did your feelings about the assignment change from the time you got it to kind of the end of the process?
Green	To be honest with you, when I got the assignment it felt like another assignment, and you get so bored of them (laughs). But afterwards it was seriously effective. It was like one of those assignments I'm going to take into my own career as a teacher. And...also I think that the whole concept of what it is to actually interview someone. I took it completely for granted, like it's just such a joke, you know, like Larry King Live is...you know, it's just because of who he is, meantime it's not that, it's what he does is so incredibly effective on the world. Ya, so it was probably afterwards...and also when I had finished my assignment and then I was reading it, was like, whoa, I've done this all by myself, like it was...it was something about...so it was almost very real, you know, because it was a personal thing.
Reville	Because I remember you came to speak to us at the end of the assignment, after the presentations...
Green	Yes.
Reville	And, I mean, I was particularly moved by your comments then. And, I mean, I'm trying to recall now...I just remember you said it was so worthwhile and your words to that kind of effect. And I mean, in a way, it was kind of your comment that made me think, well, there's something more here.
Green	Yes. Because it goes a lot deeper than just in terms of what you were asking. And I think that came from the fact of, the actual experience of the interview and what we were hearing. And on a personal level it was the first time in my life, which hasn't been very long, but I think it has in my own mind, that I actually had this apartheid concept come to life.
Reville	Okay. Was it something that was done to death at school and at university in terms of apartheid education and what happened? Because, I don't know if you recall when we gave you parts of the assignment, there was a near riot.

Green	Yes.
Reville	I mean, people were so angry! Once again, why must we do something about apartheid!
Green	Ya. I'm very intrigued by apartheid generally, so I think during school I particularly even remember every teacher who's ever taught me about it, so I've loved it. In fact, it's the one period, history, that I can owe to my teachers having done a really good job because I'm so clued up on it, in terms of the events and what happened and who come in and etc. So for me...and of course it's so relevant! So for me it wasn't like, during school...I mean, they certainly didn't do anything exciting. It was like boring and tedious, and I've still got the text book, I can show you, it's a joke. And it was very text based and never had it come to life, and...I do remember having to interview someone but it particularly had to be a domestic worker because they knew everyone had one. And that experience to me was not worthwhile because my domestic worker had grown up as a very old lady. But at the same time, like, oh, but now by this time, having been at university level, like I've acquired so much more of a different perspective, that to do it, it was actually...no, sorry, hindsight having done it, or I should say I...it was really, like effective. Like to this day, I mean, you don't...I don't remember my assignments, I have to be honest, ever (laughs). But particularly this, it really like meant something.
Reville	Alright. What do you think reconciliation means?
Green	I think reconciliation is...moving on, but not forgetting. I don't think we can ever forget, but I think we can...make it a part of us, not by choice but by facts, like you know it happened. And I think it's about changing, you know...it's hard for me to say change because I don't know if I could be best friends with a man who put Jews in an oven. And I don't know if I could ever go to Germany. It's a personal thing. But at the same time I don't look at every German person and go, well, you're German, you know, you're a Nazi. So reconciliation I think it is, it's about having a...you can't have a closed mind, you've got to respect that everyone's different, and particularly because I'm not living in that generation of people, I'm a new generation. So I think it's definitely remembering what happened, but in a way it's about moving on for your own benefit and just, you know, making it a

	<p>part of you. And not carrying that...that anger. Because I think effectively it's really not going to help you.</p> <p>Reconciliation...however with reconciliation I don't believe that you need to force people to love each other. You know, after reconciliation that's all you see, you see the black president and the white president shaking hands, or the Arab president and the Israeli...like that for me is not reconciliation. Because we all know deep in their hearts they don't feel the same way as their handshake...you know? But it is, it's about so, you know what happened, we need to move on, it's not going to help us to harp. But I don't have to be your best friend, I just need to make peace of that almost.</p>
Reville	But would you describe South Africa as a reconciled nation?
Green	No.
Reville	Why not?
Green	<p>I always think about that. I have a big issue with it. And I'm proudly South African so don't get me wrong and I'm not going anywhere. I have an issue because I believe what they intended to change...and before I say that I respect that the job is huge. We are living in a revolution technically. I mean, the job that our government has is so much bigger than we think. But within saying that, where do we draw the line to how much we give back to the wrongs of our past? So for example, how long can affirmative action actually stay? How long can BEE? How long can the black child get the bursary over the white child? But when is there ever really going to be equality? So...another thing is I owe crime completely to what happened and I have a big problem with that because why is it that the people who were innocent, why is it that we as a people have to suffer for what the people of the past did? And they themselves aren't reconciling because technically repeating the cycle. You know, we're blaming and hating each other as opposed to saying, right, this is the task at hand, we live in this beautiful country, let's make it work together. So ya, I mean, I often live here and I look around and I think, geez, is there even really room for me? You know? So for me I think they're trying their best...sort of. I believe a lot of people who are running this country have not moved on. Even though according to documents and all these things that have to say they have. But I think deep down, entrenched in their hearts they haven't. And in many ways I can't really blame them, but...I</p>

	<p>don't think South Africa is a reconciliation and I always wonder what's the next thing? You know, so what, is it going to be apartheid on the white people type thing? So ya, I mean, also however I look at kids that I teach and my heart now is to see that they're best friends with one another. That this little black boy who...I mean, there's many, I can picture the kids as we sit here, and they're best friends with these white children, and, like particularly my nephew who's, I'm very close to, I mean, he's five years old, and he is obsessed with my sister's domestic worker's children. Like he can't wait for the school holidays to come. And the way they play and they use each other's toys and they'll go swimming together and they do everything together when they're around each other, and...that is reconciliation, but it's...not completely because they don't know any other way, they don't see colour. So ya, I mean, yes, it's amazing these kids are sitting together but I wonder what it would be like if all their parents had dinner together. You know, I've always wondered, if I invited all their parents to my house for supper, what would be said at the table? You know, like my dad's got a business partner, who for the sake of BEE, and of course obviously he's worth it...but I'm sure if on a personal level they've got absolutely nothing to relate to. And most probably because they haven't even tried, you know? So ya, but it's...South Africa's trying and it's a growing place and if it's not with the personal relationships that we're moving on then it's certainly for the greater good of the world, you know we're trying to keep up with America and, you know, everybody...you know we're doing our best in terms of that but in terms of ourselves on a one on one level, I don't think so.</p>
Reville	<p>And just to go a bit...to back track somewhat, I mean, you said that you came to university, it was the first time that you felt that you really encountered South Africans.</p>
Green	<p>Yes.</p>
Reville	<p>Was that an easy process for you? Has it got easier as the years have gone by?</p>
Green	<p>I think that my time at Wits has been...at first it was very hard, just in terms of finding ways that I belonged, whereas I'd come...in fact I can tell you for sure that that first year out of school was the worst year of my life. I hated it. Because I was all of a sudden questioning myself. And I'd grown up in a world where I was so self assured and I knew my place and I had a</p>

place in school and I was so protected and I was never short of a friend and...you know, my life was so cosy, then I come to this big freezing cold building, with some lecturers I like, some I don't, all the normal teenage things you experience at university level. But then also, you get like slam bang into this world that you've never been in! And in fact I remember I had an issue with my parents because I was like you've done a great job in terms of my Jewish education, and I really am so grateful for it, but I...it's been a little bit of an injustice to me, because I married a guy who went to ...High, and he's just a different person. He's got Muslim friends, Hindu friends, black friends, Greek friends, Italian friends, and they're nearly thirty and they're all still friends. And, he's become a religious Jew, so he's got a good balance. Whereas for me I don't have that, I lost out on that, so my time at Wits, also I've never really...I'm not one to make friends so easily, I have to be honest, I'm a bit shy, so...you know, at first it was hard, but then you...then I just realised, you know, I'm here to study, I'm not here to socialise, I'm going to do my work and I'm going to go. However in the process, I have to tell you, which has been the most interesting experience of my life, I made a really good friend, and she's Kenyan. And we are really good friends, we speak on the phone, we do all our work together. In fact, I know wherever my life takes me she's going to come with, whether she's even in America, which she most probably will be. But it's so funny, after the most challenging experience, my mom got sick and I took off six months of study because I needed to be with her, and like it was a mission to get back to Wits because I had a problem with my registration and it was really the hardest experience of my life, and the one person who was there for me, was this black Kenyan girl. And she was as alone as I was, in this big place. You know, no-one wanted to be her friend, she was Kenyan, the whole xenophobia thing went on, still going on whether you like it or not, and the funniest thing was we had met in first year, she went to America for a year in second and third year...a year and a half, then I met her again last year in January in the registration line, and I hadn't kept in contact because I knew she was in America. And it was like, we started talking around what's been going on, it was like we had the most amazing thing to relate to, like we were both so lost! You know, no-one was there to help us. And our own people, our own kind, weren't even interested. And another thing about this time here is that it's been the least I've ever been around Jewish people, like

	<p>in fact when I started here I think there was only two Jewish people in the whole year. And I never really realised on a personal level how much it had impacted on me until...when I took off those six months and then I had to start again with my third year, and I was in a year with lots of Jewish girls, only then did I think, whoa, this is like big. You know the impact had really...it's like woke me up almost. So ya, I think...but my time here has been very interesting, I think I have a lot of stories to tell my children about it. And even more so, with my intention to bring up very, very religious children, I think that it's not even a debate that they need to study in a place like this, because it's the greatest preparation for the big world. And to send them to some religious seminary in Israel for three, four years, which they might want to do, but they need to have some sort of this. Because without this I would never be prepared to go do what I need to do in this...you know, inevitably you have to meet those people (laughs). You know, you can't stay...so ya, and also particularly with Muslims, I've never (laughs)...that's been a huge learning curve. I mean, I even...I've been very intrigued by their religion and the similarities and what I've advanced in my education on that. Regardless of what my religion said about it. And I feel so much richer for it, you know. I'm not saying I'm pro Muslim or I'm not pro Muslim, the point is that I'm liberal, I respect them, I don't judge everyone I see them, you know. So...it's really opened my eyes. I'm not going to say it's been an easy road because it hasn't. I think for a lot of people here it's the most underestimated thing. You know, you think you just come to college, you go to varsity, you go home, and that's your life. It's not like that. It is a tough place, you know. Wherever you go it's tough. Or particularly Wits though because it's so public, you know? It's every walk of life comes. But it's been a good experience.</p>
Reville	<p>Do you think that by collecting these oral histories, and participating in the cooperative group, did it in any way act as a means towards reconciliation? For you at a personal level, or amongst your peers?</p>
Green	<p>I definitely think it did. Because it gave us all a voice and that's part of having a reconciliation. You know, you gave each other time to talk. And it brought about a reconciliation in terms of the fact that everybody got the chance to hear the real story. And no text book, no video, no...story in an actual book was as effective as actually hearing it out of somebody's mouth and having me</p>

	retell it to my fellow peers, you know. It was definitely a huge...in fact that is what reconciliation is, it's hearing each other's voices. So definitely ya.
Reville	It's not only hearing but [inaudible] that it's listening...
Green	And absorbing what they're actually saying as opposed to just letting someone talk. And I think also because of the actual exercise of it. I sit here, you sit there, you get a cup of coffee if you like...you know, we have a chat and it's...it's so real, it's like almost like...almost like, oh, no, not another assignment, it was not like that, it was actually like I made a meeting with this adult who runs a life and has a heart and has feelings and I'm going to touch on them and it was a big deal, you know. So I definitely think it's...in fact I'm sure if most of us had the opportunity to tell each other our story, we would actually already have so much to relate to. And we actually would have nothing to judge on because we're all the same inevitably, you know. So ya, I definitely think so.
Reville	Okay. Would you do an assignment like this with your own class one day?
Green	One million percent! In fact I can't wait to do it to see the reaction. But I would be...what I've learned from this experience and my choice is that I would be very particular in who they choose. You know, I don't want them to just go home and make it easy for them. They must actually go out and find someone. Whether it's a car guard, the lady who cleans the bathroom at the synagogue, wherever it is, they need to find that person, they mustn't just go in their back yard. Or for those who don't have any relationship with their domestic, particularly those kids, those are the ones who need to talk to them.
Reville	Okay. There's an aim of education that is to heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights. Do you think that an oral history project would contribute towards meeting this aim of education?
Green	Definitely.
Reville	And would you support kind of stuff like this to do?
Green	One hundred percent. In fact I wish there was something that

	<p>someone could design and then as teachers we could implement it. You know, almost like the paper clip project, you know? It would really...first of all I think it would take kids and zone them into the reality of their past, and I think it would make history come alive for teachers. It really makes it real for us, you know, because at the moment I think a lot of teachers think it's really boring. You know, we're so confused in what to teach, how to teach it, when to teach it, and something like this would be life-changing for the students and teachers.</p>
Reville	<p>You don't think that teachers might be scared to take this on?</p>
Green	<p>Sure. Of course they are. They would be freaked out completely. But I think that their...look, it's a very personal thing and I'm particularly outspoken so maybe I don't come from a fair point of view but, I think that their fear would be a real fear, because they're making the kids go out and find out the truth. And what has that got in the end for that kid's future? But I think if just one teacher who was scared could do it and she could be an example to the rest, those that are scared would be...it would change...they would have no fear, they could teach anything. Because they would really see that it's...it's so beneficial and so empowering actually, you know?</p>
Reville	<p>In what way empowering?</p>
Green	<p>I think empowering in the fact that as an educator you can make a difference. But really, we're not talking in story book, this is real stuff, like really you could feel in your heart and go to sleep that night knowing you've done a good job. In terms of the fact that you've given these kids a voice, you've exposed them to a world that they know nothing about, you've taken them into the depth of other people's lives, which most kids probably have never done before, and I think it would just very...well for me at least, it certainly...that captures what our job is. It's not only transferring knowledge, it's about exposing them to everything and anything. Making it come to life, not, you know, things that are far beyond their realm. This is so real, you know? And I actually don't think it's a particularly South African thing, I think all over the world this would be life changing, you know. We're living here. [inaudible]. There's another period that our great grandchildren are going to be learning about. So we start with one generation, it can only filtrate into the generations after that. Something that our parents, even me as such a young person, never got. I mean, I was part of</p>

	<p>the last generation of people who were almost kept under wraps. You know, I didn't have to know all the detail. We needed to know the facts of who came into power, when did the apartheid start, when did it end, when did World War 1 happen, when the...you know? This is different, this is making it, you know, tangible, almost.</p>
Reville	<p>Would you say it would be specifically the Social Sciences classroom where one could try out a reconciliatory pedagogy? Or would you see it as being broader than the Social Sciences?</p>
Green	<p>I think you could do it in English. If I had to teach my kids what the word reconciliation means, I would do it. You know, because it's the actual practice of reconciliation. It's a physical thing that they would need to do. And once they've done that then they'll understand the meaning of the word. So ya...I think History, and Social Science. That would be the two.</p>
Reville	<p>Those would be the two learning areas that you...?</p>
Green	<p>...Ya, I think...even Religious Studies. Unfortunately it's also got its own issues and it's certainly not developed enough for such a thing just yet. In terms of the fact that there's just such fear around transferring that type of knowledge to a kid. So particularly English is definitely in a state to be...to use this type of thing in.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. Thank you very much.</p>
Green	<p>It's a pleasure.</p>
Reville	<p>I really appreciate your time. And I really found your answers very interesting. [A few minutes later] ...I'm going to ask you that question again. What about the problem of trauma that might be generated in the person if you say to your kids, go out and ask your granny and your granddad as to what happened, and actually they've experienced something seriously traumatic, and are then re-traumatized?</p>
Green	<p>I think that that would be brilliant if that happened because it really makes...I don't think trauma is such an issue, I believe that there's a need for that, there needs to be that traumatic...reaction to such a thing. People do need to cry, people do need to feel angry about it, people need to express how they feel, they need to tell their story and get it out there, and children need to see</p>

how other people feel and they themselves, they're human, they're a part of a huge world and one day they will not be children, and they're going to remember, wow, that was a really huge experience for me. And the reality is in history we're telling the story of real live people and the reality is with that comes emotions and life and real side, and without that, no...not without that but in order for children to know and understand the importance of learning history and learning about the past, they need to know how real it is, and the reality will come when that traumatic reaction is expressed. You know, big deal, so...oh look, I'm not downplaying, I'm sure there's some people...like when you talk to Holocaust survivors they can sit and cry for days on end and then only from the interview that they can take home then you come again. I think it's such a powerful thing, because they'll get it off their chest, the interviewer will be able to understand the extent of how badly these people were affected. And I think in many ways they actually...even if they do cry, they will know that, geez, someone really cares. That teacher who made this little kid come out here and ask me this story, she's trying to change the world. And again it goes back to the reconciliation part of not forgetting. I really believe it's so important not to forget. I know with my own Jewish history I can never forget that these things have happened. I'm not saying I can't move on. I can move on. But my people have suffered and for that I owe it to them and the people who survived and the people who perished. That's my duty as a Jewish person and as a South African, to know what is it and why when we celebrate Youth Day. Not just because it's a cool holiday in the middle of exams. This was a real day when some very special people died. Just like you and I. So my issue with that traumatic, in fact, I think people who say they are... they're in denial, and actually not so clear on what it is to be teaching history. So...in fact I even have an issue if a parent comes and says they're not ready to let their child. Then I will take it to the principal because I think it's nonsense. If there's some scary things children don't need to know, fine, you know, like burning of bodies or...you know, something gruesome. But the truth, every child needs the truth. Because you're doing them an injustice for the future.

5. Mati student interview - 12 August 2009

Reville	Can you give us your name and your surname and tell us a bit about what you're doing now.
Mati	Okay. My name is ...Mati. I'm doing my honours in education, and I'm also working at ABSA, and dancing at the same time in Newtown.
Reville	Oh, what kind of dancing are you doing?
Mati	In Newtown I'm doing contemp and Afro fusion. And then also here at Wits I'm doing ballroom and Latin.
Reville	So that's a fair amount of dancing you're doing.
Mati	Yes. If I had my way I would just be dancing only.
Reville	And then tell me more about working at ABSA, is that helping to fund your studies and your dancing?
Mati	Yes, it is helping a lot, because, like my mother now is not working because she lost her job last year, so I'm sort of like the breadwinner at home, so it helps a lot. Even with my dancing I got an internship, so I get paid for whatever shows that I do for them, so it helps a lot with me paying for my studies and supporting my family.
Reville	And your honours, are you doing it in something in particular or is it a general..?
Mati	No, it's just a general thing.
Reville	And are you going to teach after this?
Mati	Yes! Yes! Yes! Actually I was applying for a teaching post and when they say extra mural activities, the only thing I'm interested in is dancing and music, if there is a choir. If there is not a choir, ask that one. (laughs)
Reville	Can you tell us a bit more about your background, where you come from, a bit more, whatever you'd like to share with us?
Mati	I'm from Queenstown in the Eastern Cape. I grew up... I was born in a rural area, I grew up there. we left there when I was in grade 5. So from grade R until grade 4 I was in the rural areas and then we left. That's when we were allowed to go to town and you can

	<p>stay in the locations and stuff, so that's where I grew up until now, that's where I'm staying. And...ya, I attended like public schools, and I used to walk to school for like a long distance (laughs), so for me walking is not a problem, I used to walk, primary school, high school, because I don't come from a very rich family. It's just a family where there was a mother and a father and that time my father was working at a mine. It's now, I think it's now called Harmony, the mine. And my mother then got a job at Shoprite and then she started as a cleaner, and then from there she moved until she was a supervisor.</p>
Reville	<p>So it's been quite a transition and quite a contrast between that rural initial upbringing to being in the city then.</p>
Mati	<p>Yes, it was. But I think also from Queenstown and to moving to Jo'burg, it was also another huge transition because Queenstown is just a small town and you get to Jo'burg and you're like, whoa! People don't have time for you, like if you get lost, you are lost, no-one will stop for you and give you directions, so it was one of those things that...quite a learning curve for me...ya.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay, but now you're a city girl, you're not going to go back to Queenstown?</p>
Mati	<p>No, I think I'm going to go back to Queenstown. I would love to go teach that side because I went there to do my teaching prac and I saw that, you know what, there the standard of education, I now understand why we get so much a low pass rate. It's because of the standard of teaching and the way learners are being taught. So I was like, you know what, I think I can...if a lot of people can come back to the Eastern Cape and give back to the community, then we could upgrade the standard...</p>
Reville	<p>Alright...I want us now to turn to the oral history, can you remember when you wrote the story and had to do the interview?</p>
Mati	<p>I think it was in...was it 2005 or 6?</p>
Reville	<p>I think it was 2006. And can you tell me what your feelings were when you heard about this assignment?</p>
Mati	<p>At first I was like, I am so bored of hearing about history and the...I was not a history person in school, I ran away from it. Standard 6 and standard 7 I was forced to do History and Geography, I was like, oh my god, I don't like it. And for me it just</p>

	brought back like those bad memories. So I was like, you know what, I feel much better voicing something like...I can't speak orally, like voice my view, but when I write something down that's when I get to voice my emotions and stuff. So it was one of those things that, do we really have to do it? But then the more I talked to my mother about it, that's when I was like, wow, I'm really glad that I was born in the time that I was born, not in your time. So it was kind of an eye opening for me.
Reville	Okay, so you didn't know about kind of her history before you asked her about it?
Mati	No, it was one of those things that they don't want to speak about it when you raise it up, it's one of those things, why, why, why, why do you need to raise it up? And you just...you are a child, you don't ask questions, whatever your mother says, you just take it and you just keep quiet (laughs).
Reville	Alright. Now, why did you choose to interview your mom?
Mati	Because I think she...I thought she went through a lot, and her story was more interesting. I was like, no, I heard some other woman's story and I was like, no, when it comes from home it's more like you are so close to it, it's close to your heart so it's better than interviewing someone who is a total stranger. Sometimes you won't be able to identify with them, you won't be able to share the same emotions with them. Because you don't know exactly that their lives will be like, are you sure that's what happens? Ya, like that, but with someone that is close to you, someone that is in your house, then that person you will know...probably you will go and check other facts from the other family members if, are you sure this happened, this happened, and this happened? So it was...for me, her story was interesting.
Reville	And did you go and check out her story with others?
Mati	Yes (laughs), I actually checked with my dad, because at that time my grandfather was a policeman, so I went and I checked with him, and he was like, yes, that's what happened. He was one of the people that were part of doing those things.
Reville	Alright. And in terms of preparing for the interview did you do anything special or did you just write down the questions and go and ask your mom?

Mati	It was one...I didn't really...I drafted the questions but I started more on finding out how she grew up and stuff like...so I forced her basically to tell me how she grew up, everything, and then from there, that's when we took...we took it...she just narrated this whole story of her childhood and everything, and then I would pop in questions whenever I saw they fit, and then that's how I just wrote everything down and I'm like, okay, this question, this question, you didn't answer, so answer me and whatever, and (laughs)...that's how it came along.
Reville	Was it an easy process to interview your mom?
Mati	No.
Reville	Explain why?
Mati	My mom is one of those people that when she's not in the mood to talk, she does not want to talk. You can bribe her with everything, you can make her coffee, you can ask to rub her feet, if she doesn't want to do it, she doesn't want to do it. So, for me, I did not just go to her and then we started doing it. So it took like two or three days for me to actually convince her, and I had to cry and I was like, you know, I'm doing this for...this is for my school work, so I need to interview you. That's when she was like, okay, give me the questions, I'll answer them, I was like no, I don't want you to answer the questions, I want you to take me through the whole process so that I can have that, the whole picture of it. And then that's when she was like, okay, make me tea then. I made her tea and then we sat and then we talked about it.
Reville	And she spoke freely then?
Mati	Yes, she spoke freely. And it was just me and her. Like my sister was playing outside so it was just us. And I think that she got over the bitterness and everything so she was just talking as if, okay, it happened, it happened there, it's in the past, I'm over it, and that's it.
Reville	Can you explain a bit more about that, when you said that you felt that your mom was able to overcome the bitterness. Do you feel that that was a process that happened while she was speaking to you, or did she say, look, that's what happened then, and now I'm going to tell it to you?
Mati	No, like, she got...before she talked to me, like when I was

	<p>talking to her there, I did not sense any bitterness in her. I think she got over it after, like she got an opportunity to stay in the location, when she was given a chance to stay there, so for her it was like, I'm given a second chance, I'm not going to hold on to the past. Like she's not a person to hold on to grudges and stuff. If she does not like something, she will tell you right now, that, you know what, I don't like this and this and this. And if you take it personally or you hold it against her, then the next time you see her she's going to be smiling and talking to you as if nothing happened. So that's her. I think that that's how she managed to get over the anger.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. And did anything...I don't know quite how to put this...but did anything particularly bad happen in your family or to your family during apartheid?</p>
Mati	<p>The fact that my grandfather was a policeman, like, people always looked at us as one of the traitors. And the actual fact is we were part of the victims as well, because he could not do anything to help us, like if we had to sleep in the location, it was not only a favour thing, okay, you are my family, you will sleep. No. So that was one of the things that even today when I go to the village and stuff, people still have that man said that your grandfather was a very rude policeman, he was just violent and everything. And I always tell them, but I'm not him. So you can't compare me to him. You can't compare my father to him. And my father was just a very humble person, so...he was in the police force, the circumstances forced him to be like that, so there were no favours, we were as much victims as anyone else.</p>
Reville	<p>Alright. Have you ever spoken to your grandfather?</p>
Mati	<p>Well, he passed away. But we were close, we were close.</p>
Reville	<p>And when you interviewed your mom, did you learn anything new or anything that shocked you about her life?</p>
Mati	<p>I was shocked with...you know you always think that people had it easy, just because you...I grew up and I had most of the things, but with her, it was one of those things, she was young when she fell pregnant and stuff, so she had to drop out and she didn't have a chance to go to tertiary education and stuff. So for me it's one of those things that I thought she had it easy. Your mother was around, she was working, you had your grandmother, so probably you had everything but, in the actual fact, she didn't. So it was</p>

	one of those things...like even now when I think about it, I'm like, whatever I'm doing now, I'm doing it for her, because I want her to...I want to replace what she didn't have, and she must just enjoy life now.
Reville	Alright. Did you find that the questions you asked and listening to the story she told you, did that trigger any strong emotion in yourself?
Mati	It did. You know, I never...for me I never had an interaction with white people and stuff. So for me, the fact that she told me all these stories, and it was the black man as well who were doing these things, I thought...like I had so much anger, and that anger, like, it was slowly disappearing from talking to my grandfather and him explaining that, you know what, we had to do this. It's not that I was doing it for whatever. Like we were forced to do it. So for me, I felt like, you know what, a black person doing such a thing to a black person, it's just unfair. Why do you do that? You know that we come from the same background and everything, and you are...you're taking the opportunities from me. Why? You are in a great position, like you are a policeman and you are whatever, so why can't you just let me go and stay wherever I want to stay? But...like I was so angry, and then my mom, when I talked to my mother, she was like, there is no need to take it out on the white people that are here now. Because it's their forefathers that like did that, it's not them. So I was like, okay, she has a point, that I cannot just take it out on anyone else. Like, that's how I was, like, you know what, okay, maybe I should just take this anger somewhere else, that's why I found the love of dancing. It's like when I dance, I just...I take out my frustrations on that. So... (laughter), so my partner knows, when I'm in a bad mood, okay, something happened, what is it? And then we just go and dance it away. And the strange thing is when I come out of dancing I feel like a new person.
Reville	Alright. N, it's quite interesting, I mean, I'm just going to make a connection here. You're saying that there are people within your village who will say, but you are so and so's grand-daughter.
Mati	Yes.
Reville	And in a way, they're kind of holding you responsible, aren't they?
Mati	Ya, ya, they are.

Reville	How do you break that kind of pattern?
Mati	Eish, It's really hard, but I am just outspoken and I'm like...I just tell them that, I was not here, I was not part of it. So him doing that, he is going to pay for whatever things that he did, because I believe we cannot judge people, we are not God. I tell them, I'm not God, you are not God, you cannot judge me because of what my father did. So he is going to be judged by God for whatever things that he did on Earth and everything. Don't hold it against me, I am not him. I just...I have that thing of blocking negative things away from me.
Reville	And has that worked for you?
Mati	Yes.
Reville	Have people responded to that?
Mati	Now people just see me as Mati. As just Mati, not Mati as N's grand-daughter.
Reville	Okay. Let's move on now to your story and your working in the cooperative group. How was your story received by your group?
Mati	They were quite shocked. Because I remember there was...there were two white guys, and they were like, wow! That happens. Like, you know you always see...you read about these stories somewhere else, and when someone comes and tells it, they were really shocked so I had to take them back, give them a little bit of background of my mother's childhood and everything, and they were just shocked. They were speechless, they didn't know...this other guy, I think he was N or something...he even said to me, you know what, I'm going to apologise on behalf of the white people, on behalf of the policemen, I'm just going to apologise. And I just looked at him, I was like, you don't need to apologise, like I'm over it, I'm fine, I'm fine now with it.
Reville	So it's interesting that he took on himself to apologise for everything that had happened to your mom.
Mati	Yes!
Reville	But clearly it must have moved him in order for him to say that.
Mati	To say it. I was like...I was shocked myself, and like, wow, okay.
Reville	Okay. But you could have simply accepted it too. (laughter)

Mati	For me, I was shocked...it was the shock that was like...why are you apologising? For me it was like, it's not your fault, but you're apologising and then, okay...I was shocked, I didn't know what to do, I didn't know what to say.
Reville	Okay. And did you feel that that helped make the group work better in a way?
Mati	Yes, it did. Like with...when we started we didn't know each other, we didn't know each other, were from different backgrounds. And then after we told our stories and everything, I think we sort of like bonded with each other because everyone now had a slight idea of what happened in your family and everything else. So we got to know each other in a better way.
Reville	Okay. So you say before you didn't know one another, and then afterwards, did it make any difference in your relations with one another?
Mati	Yes! Like you'd be at varsity, sometimes you see people in your lectures and you don't really notice them, but after having those small group discussions about where we come from, we would be walking around, I would be walking with my friends, and someone would greet me, or I would greet them. So, it...we sort of like got aware of each other, that there is this person here on campus, oh there she is, oh there he is, oh let me say hi. Those kind of things, ya. And there was a time where we used to help each other with, in terms of our school work, I would go to him and be like, I need help with something else. And he would be like, okay, I'm free at this time, and this time, and this time. That made it easier, because now we knew a little bit about each other.
Reville	Okay. Would you say it became a friendship? Or is that pushing it too far?
Mati	It was just a mutual...not really friends friends, but...ya, someone that you can run to, but they're not really, really, really...you can't say they're close to you, but it's someone that you can really go and speak to.
Reville	Alright. Because if you think back...I mean, you're now in your, what, your fifth year at university here?
Mati	Yes.

Reville	When you started, in terms of relations with your peers in your group, would you say things have become more integrated, or...?
Mati	Yes.
Reville	...is that separateness still...?
Mati	No, there's integration, a lot of it. Like I have best friends that are white people, and for me...like some, my mother was like, this is funny, you're friends with white people because this guy called me when I was at home, and we were speaking over the phone and my mother was like, who is this that you're speaking to? It's my friend. And then I explained to her and everything, and she was quite shocked that, wow, you're now friends with white people? And I'm like, ya. But in first year it was one of those things that you try and look for someone who's speaking the same language as you. You try to stay out...even in the lecture halls you would find that black people are sitting here, then there are whites here and then there are blacks. But now we just sit all together.
Reville	Okay. Would you say that by the time you reached Honours it was much more integrated?
Mati	It's much more. Even like...third year. Third year it was more integrated. And I think it's more...we spend more time in smaller groups than in those huge groups.
Reville	Okay. So would you say that this assignment actually helped to facilitate that process?
Mati	Yes, it did, it did a lot.
Reville	And it facilitated the process beyond...I mean, it was a limited assignment...it was small...
Mati	Yes (laughs), and we only had a limited time to sit with those people, but we took it even outside of the groups.
Reville	Alright. Did your feelings then change about the assignment from when you first heard about it and you were bored - apartheid once again, and to the end?
Mati	Yes. For me now it was an interesting thing. Like, I have something to tell my kids now, that, you know what, the way you see things are now, they were not like this. This is how my mother grew up, this is how I grew up, now this is how you're

	growing up. So it's quite like, I have my own history in a way. So it was one of those things that we're really ignorant about them when we're given something to do, and you just like, oh, do I really have to do it? But when you...during the process of it you really see that, actually the person who's going to benefit here it's me. It's not the person that I'm handing in the assignment to. It's me.
Reville	Actually I think it benefits everyone. I must say I loved reading all the stories, I mean, that's been a very, very special part of my teaching here. And then I began to think, how could I make sure that other people within the class got to hear some of the stories? Because otherwise I was the only one benefiting, you know, besides the fact the person who's doing the interviews and all the rest. But ya...so it was something that had an impact then. What do you think reconciliation means?
Mati	It means accepting that something happened and you go past the whole thing and you forgive. Sometimes it's hard to forget something but you must be at peace with whatever happened. That's what I think it means to reconcile. Like you are at peace with whatever happened.
Reville	Why is that so important to be at peace with what happened?
Mati	Because you will never go anywhere if you're holding a grudge against whatever...if I'm holding a grudge against you, then if whenever I am faced with a situation where I have to face you, then nothing productive is going to come out of that situation because there is that grudge that I'm holding against you, I can never do anything. So if when you reconcile with whatever situation that is there, it allows you to grow even more. And like you learn from it, so that if a situation like that arises again, then you're able to say, you know what, I have overcome such and such, this is just a minor thing that I can just overcome.
Reville	Would you say that South Africa is a reconciled nation after '94?
Mati	(sighs) I don't think so. South Africa has got a long way to go. Particularly with the elections now, like we just had the elections and I found that there's still going to be that separation thing, and I have a boyfriend who is doing...he's a lawyer, and I think it was two weeks or three weeks back where there was an incident where it happened in the Vaal. Some black people were taken out of the farm, off the farm, this white farm that is close to...I

	<p>think it's...I don't know what they're selling, but they were taken out of that farm, Of course, they didn't have any place to stay. So they were staying in that field, and I felt like...why did they have to do that? Okay, there's this assumption that, yes, I know that there are black people that steal, that do all those things, but if I don't have a home, you are my brother, you are my sister, why can't you take me in? So I felt that there is still that whole race thing that is still...I think it's still, it's going to be there. We're trying as much as we can to combine, to be one nation, but it's still going to be there, it's still going to be there. And I think the people that influence it a lot are the political parties. Because now we're having the DA which is like more...the majority, it's white people. And then we have the ANC which is like majority black people and I feel like yes, they have a right to fight for black people, but don't make it up there horrid - you are only helping black people and whatever. You're not only in South Africa to serve black people, you're serving everyone, so you should accommodate everyone.</p>
Reville	<p>And what do you think we can do about this...this problem that we face in this country?</p>
Mati	<p>I don't know. People need education. We need to be educated. And we cannot say...it's going to be a long process, it's going to take a long process, for people to really get to know what...these white people that you have here, then yes there are white people that did something in the apartheid era, it's not them! It's their forefathers. Them being part of their forefather's blood or whatever, it does not mean that they're going to do the same thing. So now people have that mindset that a white person will always be part of that apartheid era, so that's what is causing all these separation things. Because now, also the white people are cautious of, you know what, I don't want to be killed, I don't want to this to happen to me and whatever, it's better if I stay in my own shell. And the black person is like, I'm going to avoid the white person. So we just need to educate the people.</p>
Reville	<p>Would you say it starts in the schools?</p>
Mati	<p>Yes. It starts in the school. It starts in the classroom.</p>
Reville	<p>And how would you go about it as a first year teacher?</p>
Mati	<p>As a teacher, I don't like having a classroom where there's like, in that group, there's Indians, there's black, there's whites, no. They</p>

	<p>must know that in the classroom we are all one, there's no-one who is better than the other. We're wearing the same uniform, that's why I encourage the wearing of uniform, because when you're wearing a uniform it does not say that you are from a rich background or you're from a poor background. It just means you are all equal. So then to be in my classroom that means you are equal. You are not going to have your own group there, you need to mingle with other people, you need to know about other people's cultures. South Africa is rich with different cultures. You need to learn other people's cultures. If you're going to sit there with your black people, with your Xhosa people, you're not learning as much because you know exactly what happens in your culture. So you can't say I've learnt about the Zulu culture, I've learnt about the white people culture, no! So for me, whenever I go to teaching prac and I get to a school where there's like majority of kids it's Indian, I move them around, I move them, I don't care if they're friends. You will see your friends when you get out of my classroom. And you need to make new friends. So that's me, that's my policy, and I always fight with them but I tell them: in this classroom my authority that's it. You can say whatever you want, I have the final say.</p>
Reville	<p>Alright. Do you think that by collecting oral histories and participating in a cooperative group, that it acted as a means towards reconciliation between you and your peers?</p>
Mati	<p>Yes, it does.</p>
Reville	<p>Would you do an assignment like this with your own class?</p>
Mati	<p>Yes, yes I would. I would. Because they need to learn about it and even though it might bring back some anger and that...we need to deal with that anger, so that they learn from it, they deal with the anger and they get over it. Because I think if you start with...you do something like this with kids at primary school, then when they get to tertiary, they have dealt with the anger already, so in tertiary that's when you meet all different kinds of people, so you are able to deal with every one of them, you know that you have reconciled with them.</p>
Reville	<p>And what about the possibility, I mean...it sounds as if you had had to have interviewed your grandfather then that might have been a bit of a traumatic experience for both you and for him, am I right?</p>

Mati	Ya (laughs).
Reville	How would you manage that, if your child went and did an interview and got really traumatised by the process and the person they interviewed as well?
Mati	That one is quite difficult because I'm not trained as a psychologist or what...but I would try and find someone like maybe a psychologist who's going to come and talk to the kids about it, maybe before they go and interview these people, prepare them for whatever things is going to happen there. And then afterwards we can...when they come back with it then that person can continue with them so that they...it does not affect them, like mentally or physically or emotionally, and everything, ya...
Reville	Okay. So you'd see it as, there would need to be some kind of psychological support?
Mati	Yes, yes.
Reville	Alright. An aim of education is to heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice, and fundamental human rights. Do you think an oral history project like this, would contribute towards meeting this aim of education?
Mati	Ya, I think so.
Reville	Alright. Do you think that the Social Sciences classroom is a place where reconciliation can be fostered by using a reconciliatory pedagogy?
Mati	Yes.
Reville	Is that the only place it could be used?
Mati	I think it has got a strong...it's where it's going to happen powerfully, unlike in other classes, because...ya, there's...where the history is and everything. Like in other classes they will just see it as one of those, oh, I don't care, but where they're doing history then they get to know about these things, you build it one step, one step at a time until you get to where you want the kids to be.
Reville	Alright. And now this is coming from somebody who said that

	they hated history.
Mati	(laughs) Ya, I know. But like I hated history, like, the notion of Hitler, Jan van Riebeeck, I said, oh god, do we have to do this again? But when...like what I said to you, like when you really get to interview someone who is very close to you, then it becomes interesting, unlike when you just read about this person, agh, I was not even there, I don't even know this person. But when you see this person and you get to know them it's one of those, wow, I'm really glad that it didn't happen to me, but ya...
Reville	And do you still speak to your mom about kind of the stuff that happened in her past?
Mati	Yes, we do. We do speak about it. Like when I was at home in June, it was one of those, like when we talk about it now, we just laugh about it. She makes a joke about it and we just all laugh, because she's over it already. So it's one of those things that we just laugh about it. You look back at it and then you laugh about it.
Reville	Okay. And do you think it helped her to speak to you and tell you about her story?
Mati	I think it did. I think it did. Even though she will not admit to you that, ya, it helped, but I think it really helped. Because with the fact that my father was part of it, my grandfather was part of it, it's one of those things that sometimes you're going to have that hate when you see that person but they were really, really, really, really close with my grandfather. And I was like, wow, if I was me, maybe I would be angry with this person for being part of it, I would get angry.
Reville	Okay. Alright, thank you so much for having come along.
Mati	Okay. Thank you so much.

6. Mills student interview – 8 December 2008

Reville	Alright, N, can we start, your name and surname, and I just also need to say to you that at any time you would like us to stop the interview it's your choice. So what's your full name?
Mills	My name is ...Mills.
Reville	And can you tell me a bit more about yourself, N, where were you born, a bit about your life history.
Mills	I'm Israeli born, moved to South Africa to do schooling basically, I've just finished a BEd, which I thoroughly regret and am planning to drop out of life, soon.
Reville	Okay, alright. N, let's turn back to this oral history. When did you write it?
Mills	I wrote it when I was in second year, I would estimate that I was about 22, perhaps, ya.
Reville	Alright. Tell me about your feelings when you heard about the assignment?
Mills	If I can recall my feelings, which I'm not sure I would, you know there was a very definite undercurrent of thread that was running through Wits education. It may have changed now, I suppose one will see, there definitely was a hegemonic view where people...well, where knowledge and lecturers and students alike all based their assumptions at a certain ideology, and I at the point was like: oh no, this again!
Reville	You mean, kind of the topic of apartheid?
Mills	The topic of apartheid and not necessarily the topic of injustice perpetuated by one group onto another but the topic of trying to see in a certain light and that was, you know, one good, one bad, you know, those in power now being bad and the evil Nazi Afrikaners being... the evil Nazi Afrikaners being bad, perhaps it wasn't meant to be that and perhaps that's a bias in my part, but definitely that was the light, I suppose, that I saw through and, you know, when you throw the baby out with the bath water, you know, wanted to give a fair chance to everyone here.
Reville	Okay. N, can I just ask you, I mean, you've raised the issue and you brought up again the Nazi Afrikaners, did the Holocaust play

	any particular role in your...?
Mills	Yes, it did. Both of my grandparents on my mother's side were in the Holocaust...well, they were in Auschwitz, so...
Reville	Okay, okay, and coming to South Africa, I mean, in a sense...when did you come here?
Mills	I came when I was 13, 14, basically.
Reville	Alright. And kind of was any strong connection made between Nazi Germany, apartheid South Africa for you at all?
Mills	You know, that's a really interesting thing, and my grandparents were from Belarus, which was really hard hit by the Stalinist regime, and so when they went over to Israel they just basically reproduced that kind of oppression. They were on a kibbutz and they were also part of a group called ..., which was 'Revenge of the Infants', and they were firing rockets at Arabs basically. So they were ethnically cleansing. No, definitely not, if I think back of the times when my parents said stuff about that they were actually pretty pro the apartheid government. You know, there's a lot of, I suppose, interpretations of that, and again, throwing the baby out with the bath water, you're looking at something of, you know, culture identity and feeling threatened rather than a dislike of another race. And I think a lot of times, especially in my parents' case, it was feeling threatened, they were like, well, which group claims to protect our interest more?
Reville	Okay, so it was kind of looking at self-interest...I mean, it's ya...now you were brought up in that kind of household and clearly you decided to rebel against certain core values. Was that...?
Mills	Ya, I mean, definitely look, things [inaudible], I was just rereading this thing and I was talking about like the idea of polarity and I also think that there was this central like anti-governmental strain that went through my family, although my mom does still espouse to Communism or rather Marxist values. Yes, it definitely was a rebellion but nothing more of a continual progression of taking a central theme to its logical end....
Reville	Alright, who did you choose to interview and why?
Mills	I chose to interview an old political comrade of mine. Actually I met him, Woodstock I think, and I had actually worked in

	[inaudible] and he had a reggae album, and his name was T, his surname I forget. He actually worked at Wits. At the time he didn't work at Wits, but he was really one pissed off bloke. I chose to interview him because I knew he was a really like politically aggro guy.
Reville	Okay. Because if I recall correctly, I mean, I think we called you in and said, did you actually interview someone? Do you remember that conversation?
Mills	I remember that, yes, definitely.
Reville	Okay. And I mean, at the time, I think there was a concern because you being quite vocal about your own political beliefs, and it seemed as though the interview was, you know, very much...there's quite a congruency to that.
Mills	Yes, definitely, I mean, I chose that cognitively.
Reville	Yes, okay, alright, that's fine. How did you prepare for the interview, N?
Mills	How did I prepare for the interview? Hmm, how did I? I seem to remember...I'm not actually sure. I seem to remember (laughs), it was a very drunken stage of my life...ya, I don't think I did, I think I just phoned him up and said: hey, I have to do this for university, just tell me about yourself. What I do remember, if I'm going to be honest about it, is him definitely being a lot more...how do you say it...placid than I expected and me being a little upset that, come on, you know, get it out there. And I think that was our age differences, you know. He was trying to, for university, you know, be more neutral about it, where I was none the slightest interest about neutrality at that point.
Reville	Okay, I mean, you wanted to hear where he was coming from. Do you feel that you actually interpreted, or did you try and push him in that particular direction?
Mills	Um, I definitely did feel like I tried to push him in different directions...in a particular direction. I don't think I succeeded. And I did attempt to interpret it. I do think that [inaudible] are not interpreted though. Well, I mean, as one...you know, how, in that...
Reville	Ya, sure, look I mean, I think that when, as you do something you are going to, obviously it's going to be interpreted.

Mills	But I do think at some point I tried to be fair about it.
Reville	Okay. So, I mean, and I'm going to push this a bit further, N, you've used what he gave you. You didn't superimpose?
Mills	No, I used what he gave me. Though just re-reading it I am looking, there's a lot of stuff in brackets and a lot of like, obviously me, editor's notes. But I think the words were all his, as far as I can recall.
Reville	Okay, no, no, that's absolutely fine, and I mean, that's quite interesting that you're saying, you put in brackets what you felt because then you're trying to distinguish between his voice and your voice.
Mills	Ya, I mean...I don't know if that was the intent at the time, but looking back, probably.
Reville	Okay. So would you say it was easy or difficult to do the interview?
Mills	Um...I think there were both difficulties and simplicities in it. My biggest, if I do remember at that time, was the motivation to do anything. I think once I actually started I got quite into it and I quite like the bloke.
Reville	Okay. So it was something you found personally interesting. Did you find out anything new about him that you didn't know?
Mills	I didn't know he was a bricklayer. I mean, that was something I was like, wow. Because he always came off quite a...air of affluence, which I think was totally cultured.
Reville	Okay. Alright. Did you hear anything new or shocking about the person you interviewed?
Mills	No, not...
Reville	Nothing, besides, you said, a bit more about his personal background. Did you find that the questions you asked triggered strong emotions in the person?
Mills	Um, ya. I mean, I definitely...he had strong emotions definitely there. I think the strongest came out of that, you know, post 1994 things went smoothly and now it's democracy and everything was great, and I think he, like I, was very intent in dispelling that notion.

Reville	Yes, I think that came through very strong.
Mills	And I mean, he...if I know in his personal life, and the kind of activism he does now, he's part of the APF, which is Anti-Privatisation Forum, and why these are the things that he is doing, is in such blatant contrast to the ANC. I mean, he's working direct opposition to the, ya.
Reville	Okay, so there's been quite a turnaround in terms of what his politics were, say in '94, and then post.
Mills	Ya, I mean, he...and I think you find it with most black activists that you find over the age of 40, or even white activists, you know, A. L., if you are familiar with him? My wife works with him. And to just like the anger that they have against the ANC is phenomenal.
Reville	Kind of a sense of betrayal of the ideals?
Mills	A betrayal of how much...you see this is where it gets very difficult, is it ideals or is it like what they gave up in their life, like A. L. spent so many years in exile, you know, he gave so much of his life to this kind of liberation and he personally is totally disenfranchised. Now whether it's because he has anarchist ideals or whether it's because his life now sucks, one can never distinguish. I think definitely with T in question there, I'd like to give him a lot more credit than maybe I would give someone like A. L. Perhaps it's political but...because he, you know, is not doing too bad now, working at Wits, but he really is...he's upset for maybe amalgamation of those reasons.
Reville	Okay. Just to clarify, did you do the interview over the phone or did you actually go and meet T.
Mills	I actually went to meet him, ya.
Reville	Okay. Because I think that there is a different dynamic as well.
Mills	Ya, definitely.
Reville	Alright. How did you deal with this situation when you started to encounter these really strong feelings?
Mills	I egged him on basically. I mean, I can remember we were at a bar and he was saying this stuff must go, and I'm like, ya, like I know...the problem I had with the interview is that it often snowballed and we ended up talking for hours...well, not hours

	but, you know, quite a lot of time about, like these things and reinforcing it and bring that theorist in, you know, so, it definitely...we were on the same side. I definitely also wasn't a neutral interviewer, you know.
Reville	Okay. I don't think it's possible to be completely neutral.
Mills	Ya, I mean, definitely...
Reville	You said something that you felt that it was important to represent him fairly, and I think that that's an important qualification there. Okay. Did you find that the answers you heard during the interview triggered strong emotions in yourself?
Interviewee	Definitely, ya.
Reville	Can you explain a bit more?
Mills	Um...as I previously said they did...you know, I agreed with him and something I was really upset about. But as I said, you know, it's...you kind of like view this macro world of the way things happen and many times it's a problem because you're looking at like the macro interplay of power relations and a few times you are looking at the individual and what the individual went through. And I find this over and over and over again when you're working there, you brought up the Holocaust, and yes, it's an international tragedy but when you're speaking to somebody you're like, wow, who cares about that? It's the person that matters. I think T is exactly the same, maybe not to the extent of the Holocaust but just looking at a person and he struggled for what some might call justice, some might not. And to look at that on the one hand you're saying that the political issues, yes, like that outrages me but also it's a person like, I feel for you, I suppose.
Reville	Okay. Alright let's move on from the interview to working in the cooperative group. How was your story received by your group?
Mills	Not well.
Reville	Not well, okay. Why?
Mills	You know, as I said, and here's where I start to get a bit of a...can I swear on this...
Reville	It's okay, go ahead.
Mills	I start to get a bit of an asshole like, and I probably am, but, you

	<p>know, it's like...and I think a lot of people have really grown out of their shells and that's alright, but especially at that time, you know the other students are just coming out of school, they're coming out 12 years where they've taught [inaudible] you know, and that wasn't really my case however, you know I'm not saying anything special about this...</p>
Reville	<p>Can I just interrupt to say, so you didn't come here straight after school then?</p>
Mills	<p>No, no, no, I did not.</p>
Reville	<p>It was how many years after you left school?</p>
Mills	<p>Three?</p>
Reville	<p>Okay, alright. So you were a more mature student.</p>
Mills	<p>Yes, I'd also done military which...like, you know, that's good exper...well, I'm not going to...it's experience, it's self-growth, let's just say that. You know, you're looking at, yes, you wanted to say?</p>
Reville	<p>No, I just wanted to say that you thought that people who'd been in school for 12 years coming here were...?</p>
Mills	<p>There was just no critical engagement and, you know, and you see it, it's not particular to South Africa, it's how life in South Africa, it's bad education, but, you know, I've experienced it in the States as well. You have people who have a homogeneity of thought and there definitely was a homogeneity of thought and a lack of critical engagement. Right? You know, it's a generalisation, it was a generalisation that proves true, the 18-year-old who finishes, or the 19-year-old, stays at his parents' house, receives the same kind of reinforcement, and even if it's great reinforcement the problem is this lack of critical engagement, this lack of diversity, and that's what you're dealing with, you know. In South Africa you have a unique problem if you are an English speaking person that you...there's a lot of people who just don't have that linguistic ability. And I mean, that's not a lack of intelligence, it's just a lack of communication or Noam Chomsky would argue that meaning is built on language – if you take that to be true, I'm not sure, I don't. But you know there's a big problem then, there's a...I felt, and I do still feel that, it's a disparity, a stratification between what I can produce, what my</p>

	contemporary at that point can produce. There's just...there's a difference. And mine is based on my cultural capital, I realise that and theirs is based on their cultural capital. And that's alright, right? This is what we're working towards trying not to bring me down, or the proverbial me down, but to bring people up to a certain level where everyone, right?
Reville	To engage, you know, N, because I mean, in a sense you're talking here about cultural capital. I think that if you have a family, for example, who experienced apartheid at first hand, it's very different to being, you know, in a more, and at that time a more privileged kind of position.
Mills	I mean, definitely!
Reville	So it's an interesting engagement of cultural capital.
Mills	It is interesting yet it was also a very frustrating engagement.
Reville	Can you explain more about that?
Mills	Um, well, I mean, as I say, there's this diversity of this inequality. I think the thing that really gets me, and always has, is that you have someone and, you know, they don't believe anyone my age actually...they probably are still feeling the after effects of an unequal system, but they weren't harassed by the police. I mean, that's you know, straight up that. But what's come out of it is whether you were a victim of apartheid or not, now you're still buying into something new that's really impressive. And this is the main irritation. Where here we're talking about apartheid now, we're talking about, you know, how personal stories, how we're all affected, but what you are now and what you are going towards now is even worse, because if you're saying you were a victim of this, why are you becoming a victim of something now? And I mean, that was really a frustration. It's also, I mean, it's worth noting that at the same time it's also a diversion, you know, I do feel a lot of like looking at apartheid, which is necessary, I mean, reconciliation is necessary, okay, we're talking about if you look at someone first hand then you start to see the need for reconciliation; If you're looking at a macro scale perhaps you don't. So there's always that interplay. But there is a danger if you spend so much time looking in the past, that you forget to start talking about the future, and you know, as I say, those who remember the past are condemned to repeat it, you know, then be held hostage by history. And I mean, that's pretty much a

	<p>motto of like my strain of political thought. It's that, you know, [inaudible] yes you were a victim of that past but you yourself are still a free autonomous individual, you know, but with others it's now that matters. You need to do something about that now. And it just...there always seems to be a lack of that.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. Look what about the thing, you know, I mean, certain people say let's just leave it under the carpet, what's passed has passed and it has this uncanny ability to kind of keep on popping up in the future, if you don't deal with it.</p>
Mills	<p>Well, I mean, it's because people aren't dealing with the effects of apartheid now and these are not the social effects. And I mean, like, you know, we're informed by this world yet we have no say of what this world is, and if you're looking at South African economy and you're looking at South African, you know, the social construction of it, it's still more or less an apartheid schematic. You know, there's still a bunch of rich white guys who own everything and, you know, manipulate the state to make them even richer. Now it's worse because you know, all these things. So if you're looking at well, you know, the majority of white guys didn't like the majority of black guys. This is how apartheid is presented, well, let's either reconcile that or let's sweep that under the table...I mean, that just misses a whole point of anything about apartheid. So ya, sure, I can look at me and you and I can look at like white versus black but that's not really what apartheid was. That's not really why apartheid fell, you know...really come on like, you know, it's all economic based and it's all those in power who are engineering these things. So if we would like to reconcile it, let's look at the forms of government, the forms of control, the forms of capital, you know, I'm all for that. But that's generally not based on race, it's generally based on profit. And power.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. Alright. Did the process of working together with your group, on the dramatization of all the oral stories, did it help you to get to know your peers better?</p>
Mills	<p>The fact that I can't think who I did it with, probably indicates no.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. Alright. Because you did mention in your reflection N, that you started to say, it did help us to make...you know, we did become friends. But then you qualified it. And you said, but it's not quite...it's kind of a grey area.</p>

Mills	Ya. I mean, definitely, ya. Um...I did it with Roxanne, I like Roxanne. I'm just trying to think...like, I don't know. I mean, I don't think, I'm sure at the time it was great...
Reville	But there was no kind of lasting after effects?
Mills	No, there was no kind...but I mean, you know, you really need to question whether it was my fault or theirs, you know, and that's...
Reville	No, I'm not trying to...it's not about blame...
Mills	...no, but I'm just trying to say that it wasn't a failure of why do the dramatisation as in my professional life as a school teacher at this point. I used that and it really worked, we actually just shot a film at my school in which we've got A and J, two outcasts who like become friends and it's worked. I just don't think, no, with me it didn't.
Reville	Okay. But it's something that you've used in your own teaching?
Mills	It is definitely something, ya. I've used most of Social Sciences course in my own teaching.
Reville	(laughs) Can you just clarify, have you used oral history in your teaching?
Mills	I have used oral history, ya.
Reville	And dramatisation?
Mills	I have used dramatisation, yes.
Reville	So you've found both of those powerful...
Mills	Yes.
Reville	...powerful tools in your teaching?
Mills	Extraordinary powerful tools. Ya, the dramatisation was amazing.
Reville	Okay. Alright. Can you just talk a bit more about that, when you said that you brought in the two outcasts?
Mills	Well, it's not solely dramatisation, I have used that before. My wife is shooting the film, she's in film and part of it she used was the school that I work at, Parkview Senior, and she wanted to use the kids for nostalgic reasons, because she likes me. Anyways, and I'm really into...this year's kids I really do like them, I took them on camp and we've got a very good relationship. And so at

	<p>some point she was filming and they were extras and, you know, by law you have to have a teacher on set and it was on a Saturday and I said...I lied, and I said I was registered, which I wasn't, but who cares. And so I was there, just checking it out, you know, and she wanted certain placements of kids and I know my kids fairly well and I intervened and I said, no these two kids need to sit together, because she was putting them alone and they always sit alone and you could almost see J go, oh god again! and Bob's your uncle, wow, I don't know what it was about the film but they were hanging out in the lunch break and it's really nice.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. And oral history, what can you recall?</p>
Mills	<p>Oral history, what have I done with oral history? In Social Sciences we've done very different voices. The last thing that I remember teaching a couple of weeks ago, we were doing that...it was a geography section, doing things like overpopulation and polygamy. And we were looking at like how men feel to have more than one wife, or how females feel to have more than one wife...aagh, more than one husband...uh, BE more than one wife. And that was really interesting because we got a lot of little Muslim girls...well I got a lot of Muslim girls to question that idea, which was really great because it's really patriarchal. So we were, again, we were looking at one of many wives who were going, I love my husband. And you were looking at ones who were saying, no, you know, if men can have a lot of wives, why can't we? And we were looking at the facts of polygamy and the difference of polyandry and you know, those kinds of things, and there was a really strong, like people were upset about that, you know.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. And this provided a way, a forum for actually engaging with those ideas? Was it kind of a like a safe space?</p>
Mills	<p>Mmm. It was very much a safe space, yes. I do try run a safe space in my classroom.</p>
Reville	<p>And you had no parents who complained?</p>
Mills	<p>I constantly... the head of the governing body is constantly trying to get me fired. He intensely dislikes me. The kids swim together and they weren't allowed to be in the same pool but they were just flapping around, so, you know, who cares. Anyway...</p>

Reville	(laughs) So, I mean, N, you said no new relationships developed after the presentations.
Mills	Was I in a group with M, do you remember? M?
Reville	I can't recall but I know that I got something...let me just have a look here...
Mills	And secondly decided I wasn't trying to destroy God and actually was nice to me.
Reville	Okay, N, here are the people that you were with. D?
Mills	I don't know who that is.
Reville	O?
Mills	No idea.
Reville	N?
Mills	Oh, ya, ya. I'm friends with N, he's nice.
Reville	And W. Okay. So actually...I mean, this is something that I...it was by complete accident that this was included with the actual assignment, but those were the people that you were with...
Mills	It's nice.
Reville	It is nice. Did you have feelings about the assignment change from the beginning of the process to the end?
Mills	Did they change?
Reville	Ya.
Mills	I think there was always a little mild disdain there. As I said, you know, once I got into something I probably appreciated it more.
Reville	Ya.
Mills	Look, I did enjoy interviewing T, and I did enjoy like...I enjoyed that. I don't think I enjoyed the dramatisation. So I think I probably didn't like it that much and I think then the [inaudible] was just like, oh goodness what am I doing here, you know. And I think I included that when I was saying, after three months [inaudible] trash, I came back ready to...and of course, you know, so I think that was me trying to say like well, I try and engage...
Reville	But what I found interesting is that you've kind of taken the

	process because you've actually used it in your own teaching.
Mills	Ya, definitely. You know, I think it's wise, especially when you're in education not to let your personal biases come through, and that's definitely something I try very, very hard, although I think I fail a lot...to really try for an ethos with some kind of diversity...and that's we want. You know, I don't care if kids are [inaudible] because I care that they're critically engaging.
Reville	Okay. Alright. Do you think that South Africa is a reconciled nation after 1994?
Mills	No, I think it is a higher murder rate in Johannesburg than the Vietnam war after ten years. I think it is horrible. I wake up every morning depressed, I have electric fences, I've got broken in about ten times. It's horrible, you know, it's absolutely horrible. I do a lot of charity outreach in my own neighbourhood and a lot of like workshops and I just keep getting the proverbial slap in the face. It's not reconciled. It's horrible.
Reville	Alright. Do you think that by collating oral histories and participating in a cooperative group that it acted as a means towards reconciliation between you and your peers?
Mills	Um...that's a difficult one to say. You know, I think on the one hand you're looking at it in an abstract concept, i.e. you're getting this for marks, it's assessment. And I think that's the presiding thing. You know, that's what matters. And it's on the basis of a degree not on the basis of reconciliation. And you know, as I said, when I've done dramatisations in my educational...been an educator, and it hasn't been for assessment, and it's been pretty much the same, so it hasn't been different. People still like...well, he's a teacher when you think about this, how are they going to like or dislike it? I did notice however that in other groups there's far more engagement and some points there were people actually starting to get to know each other, and my group wasn't. But I don't think that that's true for all the groups, I think there were groups where that happened.
Reville	Okay, N, thanks for picking up, the battery had run out there. Alright. I think the next question you've actually already answered. I mean, saying, you know, would you do an assignment like this with your own class one day? I mean, in a way you...it sounds like you...not quite, but it's kind of you've

	adapted the ideas to suit your own situation, teaching style.
Mills	I will definitely use the basic ethos of it.
Reville	Okay. Alright. Now, I've got...according to the policy documents, the aim of education is to heal the divisions of the past and establish its society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights. What's your understanding of these terms, N?
Mills	Um...I think the terms are self-explanatory, heal divisions of the past, was the first one. Democracy was the second one. I mean, there's no way we live in a democracy, democracy...
Reville	How do you understand democracy?
Mills	Well, democracy tells us about the participation of people, areas of their life, we don't actually participate in pretty much any area other than our specialised, you know, little box that we live in. South Africa especially, even the notion of a nation state with so many millions of people actively participating and choosing representatives who then decide things for us. I mean, if it was just that it wouldn't be so bad, but the interplay between the economic and the, you know, social globalised system, pretty much if you look at it, day to day and you look at the way our government was restructured and especially what's happening economically in South Africa, we will never hear about it, there's no way in hell that this has anything to do with democracy. I mean, okay, you know, the notion of democracy is...so my concern [inaudible] it's definitely about participation, and we really have no participation in things that really matter. We may have some participation in consequential things, you know, I had the same, if voting really changed anything it would be illegal.
Reville	(laughs) Social justice, N?
Mills	Well, what is social justice? There's such a wide variety of what we call social justice but it's basically people having an ability and an opportunity to pursue their happiness. In South Africa we, I think, we have a 52% at this point, UN poverty line, under the poverty line, so over half of this country doesn't have the opportunity to pursue what they want, and if they did what would they want? No-one cares to find out. So social justice, what's that? You know, I just did my 4th year project on the true aims of education. And, you know, if you look at some really

	<p>contemporary authors and what they say and what they're talking about, you know, if you're going back to like whatever, Bourdieu, all those guys about cultural capital, you're looking at education that is there to reproduce the working class, to secure the means of production not to heal the divisions of the past, create social justice, and especially in South Africa? Like OBE, we're working on the commodification of education, you know? This neo-liberal agenda it's definitely in bold, bright, colourful letters with neon signs around them and bomb blasts and fireworks. It's not there to heal the divisions of the past, [or] create social justice, it's there to drive the economy in a certain manner, whatever that manner may be. You know, I probably have a different understanding of it than you would, but it's not there for social justice. And anybody's who's actually involved in education deeply, I think, should have the least understanding what's going on here. You know, and I'm not saying it wasn't like that in apartheid era, I'm simply suggesting that the idea of state education is linked towards a capitalist economy who never ever tried implementing social justice.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. Human rights? What do you consider that to be ?</p>
Mills	<p>What do I consider? I would probably have a really different conception for human rights, I mean, I would laugh at the idea of a fair trial, you know, if the state doesn't like me, why beat around the bush? Try, you know, eliminate me. Human rights, the pursuit of freedom, the idea of individuals to be un-interfered...</p>
Reville	<p>Okay, I need to ask you, do you think that you would use an oral history project for other values? Do you think that it could be used to support these values in education or would you...?</p>
Mills	<p>...you know....I think it's complicated, because, many a classroom does support these values, it's not to say that there's these individual teachers...and like, you know, the principal I work for, she's a great lady, you know, but she's deskilled. And as I'm deskilled, it's the nature of the structure in that school and it's the intrinsic environment that all permeates down, you know, you can't get away from it. I think oral history can, you know, and I would use oral history, even like popular oral history, to re-support social justice, you know, I've actually gone through the [inaudible] with my children. Said, well, this is what education hopes and..., if this is what its function is, is there social justice? And I do a lot of lessons on democracy. So I think it can but, you</p>

	know, it's definitely, it's limited to those people in that classroom.
Reville	Okay. So it's very much a micro thing.
Mills	It is a micro thing and it's maybe the challenge of the educator to get that learner who gets that micro value of social justice to then start fighting for it outside their classroom.
Reville	Okay. Alright, last question. Do you think that the Social Sciences classroom, in particular, is a place where reconciliation could be fostered by using what I call reconciliatory pedagogy?
Mills	I think it definitely could, yes. I don't think in a lot of ways that it is...and if we are making it again the new agenda and what's important in the economy at this point, Social Sciences. You know, you had that honeymoon period where Arts and Social Sciences, things were celebrated. I feel in comparison to the Czech Republic when they had their liberation they did the same thing and then like ten years later [inaudible] where they made Frank Zappa Minister of Arts.
Reville	(laughs) I didn't know that.
Mills	It's insane! And then they realised, wow what drives us is this economy and South Africa's done the same thing. And I felt for a while I was really impressed and excited about Social Sciences because it was celebrated. I remember my teaching pracs and my teaching jobs at that point was, you know, you were like the Social Sciences teacher, it's great. I think even from the school that I teach at now, two years ago, the emphasis on Social Sciences compared to now, is really different. You know, Social Sciences is really played down. And you know, kids pick on that and my learners really aren't that interested in Social Sciences. You know, it's almost like a free period for them. It's like you're always fighting against that inertia. So yes, I do think that it's a wonderful way to look at reconciliation, reconciliatory pedagogy, but it's not happening.
Reville	If you...I know that you said that you're planning to drop out, but if you had to go into the classroom, would that be something that you would try and facilitate?
Mills	It would be definitely something that I'd ethically have to do. I mean, whether I'd want to do it or not just...you know, who knows, but ethically I think if you are a school teacher you've got

	a big ethical responsibility and I wouldn't, I mean, I wouldn't give it that name if you hadn't given it that name. But the notion around that, yes, I think that's an ethical responsibility of educators to do.
Reville	Alright, thank you very much.
Mills	No worries.
Reville	Is there anything else that you kind of feel that you would like to say on this topic? Talk about anything that we haven't covered?
Mills	No, I mean, I don't think there really is, I think that that covered a lot. And I mean, sure...
Reville	Okay. Well, I really appreciate you coming in.
Mills	No worries.

7. Ngwenya student interview – 7 August 2009

Reville	For the sake of this interview can you tell us your name and just briefly describe what you're doing now.
Ngwenya	Okay. My name is ...Ngwenya, I'm 23 years old, I'm a first year teacher at ... Primary School. The subjects I teach are Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences. And I teach Social Sciences to the grade 7s.
Reville	And Natural Sciences as well?
Ngwenya	Grade 7s as well.
Reville	Can you give us a bit more about your own life history, any details that you're willing to share?
Ngwenya	(laughs)
Reville	Tell us a bit more about yourself.
Ngwenya	Well, I look at myself and my life has been quite full in my 22 years. But most of it...a lot of it has been positive...but I'm a person who likes to work with people, and evidently I ended up teaching and I'm involved in the church with a lot of youth groups and the Sunday School. And I'm a multi-talented person as well. But I enjoy my job, although it's stressful. I enjoy it. At home I live with my mum and my dad, my sister and brother. I haven't moved out yet. Life has been good at home, no major problems, I think I've been blessed in many accounts because I still have my family together, and everything's just okay. When I relate my life to my friends I must say I've had it quite light and easy, so I've been blessed. Went to good schools, primary school and my high schools. Was at ...College, and ...High School and ...Community, and they were all good schools. And now I'm here.
Reville	And tell me where were you born?
Ngwenya	I was born in Soweto, 1987.
Reville	And you grew up?
Ngwenya	And I grew up in Soweto as well.
Reville	Okay, so...when you described your commitment to teaching in Soweto, it comes from having come from...

Ngwenya	...Yes, grown up.
Reville	Okay. Alright, I'm going to ask you to go back a couple of years now, just to say, when did you write your oral history and reflective essay?
Ngwenya	Um...I wrote it in 2006, in March, the 6th of March.
Reville	(laughs) Okay, alright, that's nice to have the assignment right there in front of you, isn't it?
Ngwenya	Yes. I won't have remembered.
Reville	Who did you choose to interview and why did you choose that person?
Ngwenya	I interviewed my mother, because...well, she was the closest person around and I had always heard dribs and drabs of, you know, her past life, what happened during the apartheid era, so she was the closest person and I knew that she had quite a bit of a story to tell me, unlike my father. But I just chose my mother, she was easier to talk to, I guess, at the time.
Reville	And can you tell me if you did any preparation for the interview? Did you read further? Did you ask around in terms of the family? Or did you just decide to go ahead with it?
Ngwenya	I think I decided to just go ahead with it. I think the only preparation I made were the questions: what exactly was I going to ask her?
Reville	And did you find that as you did the interview, your questions changed?
Ngwenya	Ya, definitely, because you get new information and more information, then you have to adjust some of the questions that you're asking...to pursue whatever has come about that you might think is interesting.
Reville	And did you find the process easy or difficult to interview your mom?
Ngwenya	It was a bit difficult. I think it was, the actual technicality of having to write and listen at the same time while somebody tells you their story, because the person doesn't wait for you to write, they suddenly go back in time and they just want to talk and talk and talk, so catching up with that was a bit difficult, because I had to

	always stop her, like, wait I need to write, stop there, just pause, I need to finish writing.
Reville	And did you learn anything new or shocking about your mom?
Ngwenya	Yes, I did learn something new. I think anytime she talks about the past, you know, I learn something new. So, I did. I think the one thing I remember was the fact that she used to tell always how scared she was, you know, during that time, and when she retold it I could actually see the fear that she went through.
Reville	And can you explain more of a context, was it just a generalised fear, or was it a specific fear about stuff?
Ngwenya	I think it was...I think it was both. It was generalised and there were some instances where it was specific, you know, because I remember...can I tell a story? Some new information that I got from her was how, after 1976, every June 16 kids - you know the youth - would kind of make celebrations, and how my cousin who was eight at the time had got a cut from a teargas tin which they had thrown, and she had to go to Bara without money, and her coming back...'cause she went there, they got a lift and the man said, I'm leaving you here because you know how bad it is back home, so they just got a lift to the hospital and she couldn't go back home and she had left my brother who was a few months old. And her just going through the ordeal of coming back, and luckily she met a woman at the taxi rank who lives around the same township, and said, what are you doing here? And the lady's a nurse, and she was like, no, I'm trying to get back home, I just left my eight year old nephew and, you know, he's really bad. But she came back home and at the time where she took...actually the bus stop where she got off the taxi to home was terrible because every time they'd see police vans they had to duck because the police would just be shooting randomly. So at that stage that was something personal. Other than that it was the general fear for all the other kids, if they've gone out to a protest or a Youth Day celebration, there would be a general fear for everybody.
Reville	Did you find that the questions you asked triggered strong emotions in your mom as she was retelling you the stories?
Ngwenya	Not as strong as maybe I've seen other people as they retell. For her, it's...it wasn't...it's not that personal...it is but I think she's got a level of forgiveness so she was just retelling as, oh, that's

	where we come from and that's where, you now, we are now. There was no cursing or (laughs) anything like that. She was actually very calm and...just normal, telling it.
Reville	Okay, you said that she spoke with forgiveness. Can you explain more?
Ngwenya	Um...I think with her, the only personal incident we really have is that one, you know, my cousin's one. Other than that it was just a general thing happening to everybody, and I think because of that aspect she didn't have personal hatred maybe towards, you know, people at the time who were doing this. But...so, I think that helped her, and...you know, be okay about it, I guess. And the years have gone by, and we didn't lose anybody personally because of apartheid, so, I think that's why. It was just an experience, for her it's like it happened to everybody, and it's over now and here we are.
Reville	Did you find listening to your mom's story and the answers that she gave you, did it trigger a strong emotion in you?
Ngwenya	Yes. In me it did, and still does, you know, it still does. Because I paint a picture and...because we were not there personally it's unthinkable, like some of the things that happened, especially when you compare them to today, it's wow, you can't believe that people would actually go that far. Especially because when I...with this present story, the recent story, but he was only eight years old, how could they throw teargas to a group of boys, they were not even of the protest, but from our house you could see the Regina Mundi, you know, the famous church? Ya, you could see it from there, so they were just standing there watching what was happening. It's quite a long distance but it's a clear view. So ya, for me it still does, you know, it's...but it's not a hatred kind of thing. I can understand it in the context of that time but it does release strong emotions of sadness.
Reville	Okay. Mostly sadness? No other emotions?
Ngwenya	Sadness, a bit of anger, but I mean, when I think about it, I'm like, to who? My peers, or people my age, whites or Afrikaner, they weren't there either, you know, so I can't be angry at them, and I can't be angry at the old people because I don't even...okay, I see them but me and them have nothing, you know...my mom and them, the same generation, my generation weren't there

	also, but a bit of anger, yes, but it really doesn't help much.
Reville	Let's move on to your actual oral story and working in the cooperative group. How was your story received by your cooperative group?
Ngwenya	Hmm...I think we were mixed at the time. For them it was also quite a bit of a shock and they learned something new. It was received in a positive light, actually very informative of all. I got to learn another aspect of other people, the fact that we were different races working in a group, it helped a lot.
Reville	And do you remember who was in your group?
Ngwenya	No.
Reville	It's okay.
Ngwenya	No, I don't think I remember. Ya, I'm not clear.
Reville	Alright. Did the process of working together on the dramatisation of your stories, did it help you to get to know other members of your group better?
Ngwenya	Definitely, definitely. It did, although it was a bit hard working together, but...ya, it helped us a little. Just a little because I think...it was a totally different group of people who I never used to talk to, so...although that took us like one step further we didn't get too close, so there were still those boundaries.
Reville	Can you talk about, you said, it's helped a little bit? Just a little bit. What did it help with?
Ngwenya	I guess with dramatisation, half the time you have to let down your walls, you know, and express yourself, so in that aspect it did, because then we had to discuss how are we going to do this, you know, working closely together because you have to think out of the box. So with that aspect that's how it helped a little, everybody got relaxed and they got to share ideas in a weird way because we had to dramatise this, and that helped us be able to communicate much better with each other.
Reville	And hearing other people's stories, did that help as well?
Ngwenya	Not really, because the stories I heard were the ones...I don't know, from a black child's perspective ... that's what you always saw, as in they had a good life. Because this I remember, my

	<p>other group members they didn't experience what...the other one I remember, the parents lived somewhere in the...I don't know, in like the rural villages and for them it was like, that they were white, so for them like it didn't affect so much, we used to hear about it. And the other group members like, life was just okay for my mom and my dad, it was also a distance, they used to know that, gee, something like that is happening, we're not the ones doing it, we're living in our own world and they're experiencing this, you know, this conflict elsewhere.</p>
Reville	<p>Alright. So any new relationships develop after the presentation?</p>
Ngwenya	<p>Yes. Yes, we did...it really helped, now when we passed each other we could say hi and talk to each other afterwards.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. So it broke down the boundaries within that group...</p>
Ngwenya	<p>Yes, definitely.</p>
Reville	<p>...but it didn't translate into firm friendships.</p>
Ngwenya	<p>No, it didn't. But the boundaries were broken and we could talk to each other. We noticed each other. At first we didn't even know the other existed. But afterwards that's what happened. Although no firm friendships or anything like that.</p>
Reville	<p>Did your own feelings about the assignment change from the beginning to the end?</p>
Ngwenya	<p>Maybe they did...</p>
Reville	<p>I'm going to backtrack, when you first heard about the assignment, how did you feel about it?</p>
Ngwenya	<p>There were mixed feelings. Bit of excitement, but then it looked like such a long thing to do, and the fact that we had to work with people and different races and we had to work with people we'd never talked to before. But it was exciting because for me I'm very much interested in South African history, so I knew that this was a chance for me to learn something new. But looking at the way we had to structure it, that was a bit of an uncomfortable position for me, then afterwards...well it was uncomfortable till the end, it really was. Up till the dramatisation point. But afterwards then it was really good to hear other people's stories and to see what everybody else was doing once we were done with our own presentation.</p>

Reville	And if you have to think back, what made you feel so uncomfortable?
Ngwenya	Again it's the group work. I guess it's the group work from different people who come from different backgrounds and having different values on time and how do we meet each other, that was the most uncomfortable thing because it was always difficult to get people together, because some people were just relaxed, and others didn't care, wanting to do it rush-rush. That's the most uncomfortable thing, the time issue, and understanding each other on time, when, how we meet.
Reville	And there was no real discomfort then about having shared the stories.
Ngwenya	No, not at all.
Reville	That wasn't an issue?
Ngwenya	Not at all.
Reville	If I had to ask you what you think the meaning of reconciliation is, what would you say?
Ngwenya	Reconciliation for me, it's about...you know, some people will just say forgiveness, but in order for forgiveness to be there we must start somewhere. So it's a long process, where first and foremost a lot of people still have unanswered questions, so that's where the reconciliation starts. Getting our views out into the open, some people are still hurt, and we had a similar thing at church, because I'm an Anglican and they brought everybody together and we were in different race groups and we had to talk about apartheid and what happened. And we didn't just say, okay, let's forgive each other and let's move on. We started from scratch, right, you know, like how did this make you feel? Because a lot of people are still harbouring the anger. Then from thereafter we heard our different views and how other people are still hurt, then we moved on to the next step was okay, and how do we move past that? How do you forgive each other past that, because here we are now, so many years later? So that was that process from really taking out what's inside and how you feel to letting ... especially letting that person, who you feel, okay, I want you to feel this. Because as you're sitting there, you're a group of Afrikaners, it doesn't really mean much. Because you have the same experiences. So what helped was that it looked like the

	black people were telling the white people, even though some of them didn't experience, and the white people were telling the blacks, okay, but this is what you guys did, and this is how we perceived you, and still perceive you guys and vice versa. And from thereafter letting everything out into the open, that's why it was much easier to say, okay, let's move on now, you know how I feel, I know how you feel. So that's reconciliation for me.
Reville	And did you find anything like...okay, you're describing now in terms of the church context...were people able to move on?
Ngwenya	Hmm. Now that's the funny thing. During the group discussions, yes, people seemed to move on, you know, a lot of pointing fingers, but it's all part of the process. But then after the conference when they actually urged everybody to...okay, when we go for lunch, let's all mingle, I sat and I watched how still people sat there and that particular group sat on one side afterwards. Because that's when you were supposed to have seen the growth that happened, and people still sat there and others sat there and it was over.
Reville	And was there any follow-up after that?
Ngwenya	Um...I think from my church there's big follow-ups because then one of the things that emerged was that how you always see...okay, we can talk and talk here but then when we walk out the door, people are still separated, people are still keeping to themselves. The only follow-up that there was, was how they're going to start changing priests, because the black people were saying, Anglican parishes in the location have black priests, there have got white priests, where are we trying to come together here? So we're still waiting for that to happen, to see that changing of pastors and priests from the different races. Because in the suburbs, because a lot of black people have moved to the suburbs, you can see somewhere that okay here the congregation is mixed. In the location there's no such, it's all black people. Not much follow-up has been done so far, we're still waiting, but a lot of feedback was taken in to the diocese to go and discuss such, because we are an inter-racial church society.
Reville	Indeed. And I mean, in terms of...were there different dioceses who came together, or was it...?
Ngwenya	It was Johannesburg diocese and different parishes.

Reville	Okay. And what about here at university?
Ngwenya	I still see the same thing. I know with me, personally, every time I was in a different lecture, I always used to hate how when you say group work, all the black people want to stick together and I always used to make a conscious effort that I don't want you guys, number one you're going to use me for my brains (laughs), so I want to go to a different racial group. That's the effort I always made. But outside, walking in the corridors, at the canteen, you still see a bit of separation. I think it's gotten better because there's a few people where you can see that they're friends and they're different races. But here at the education campus more so, there are still three groups...four...you can see them. Indians, very...oh, the blacks because there's a lot of them, then you see the Indians, then you see the whites. Okay, we don't have a lot of coloureds here at school, but the coloureds maybe if they rarely mix with the blacks. But those three groups you can see them clearly. Even in positioning in where people sit, and where they eat their lunch. That's very evident.
Reville	What can one do about it?
Ngwenya	Outside, I really don't know, because it's like that's people's free time, you can't really control that, that one is difficult. Other than having some sort of activities where they will actually engage, because people don't talk to each other. So maybe if we start in the lecture hall like with something like this, you know, the group work that we did, I mean, that really helped us, because from there I could talk to them in the corridor, I could ask, where are we going next, just from that exercise. So maybe if we start in the actual lecture rooms, where lecturers have got control and they can control that you guys, like you did, you have to mix together, you have to be an inter-racial group. I think that's where it will start, then outside becomes much easier. Because from our group, after this exercise, I mean, it was evident, people could talk to each other, even if they're in the corridors, nobody was shy, or you could just ask: where are you going? You know, when you see everybody going the other way. And it was from that, that those boundaries were really broken in that sense.
Reville	Would you say that South Africa is a reconciled nation after '94?
Ngwenya	No. No it's not. And I think it's because normal people are still harbouring their hatred. And I mean, I know from my boyfriend, I

	<p>always fight with him, because he sees Afrikaners and he gets so angry, and with him I'm always on his case: you were not there during apartheid, I don't know why you get so angry. And with him, he's like, but I saw the after effects. I saw how blacks turned on blacks afterwards. But with him, it's like he didn't have a firsthand experience but he's still quite angry, and even though he's in the workplace...oh, I remember when he was telling me his accounts in the workplace that they will still call each other names, that we know were banned. And it's like, no, but we go on like that, and like no, you're pretending to go on, I mean, you shouldn't even be calling each other like that. But the racial slurs will come up, even though it doesn't get really violent or...for them it's like, no, but we're joking about it in this manner. But you could see still that you know what, South Africa is not reconciled. We're pretending to go on as if everything's okay. But behind back doors I don't think it is.</p>
Reville	<p>Can I just ask a bit about your boyfriend, did anyone in his family experience kind of the rough hand of apartheid?</p>
Ngwenya	<p>No, not anybody in his family, but he was a young boy himself and when he tells me what he saw, sometimes I don't blame him, because he's seen how a person who'd got burnt to death, things like...I know the smell of a dead corpse, and I've seen somebody being burnt to death and I've seen all those horrendous things, so I know he was...his family was also quite blessed, they were protected personally from that. But as a young boy, as he was playing in the streets he used to see all these horrendous things and that's what he'll keep recalling over and over and over again. And I think that's the trauma that he has, he actually saw the victimisation himself, even though it didn't happen to him or anybody else in his family.</p>
Reville	<p>But he was aware of it and he saw it.</p>
Ngwenya	<p>He was aware of it.</p>
Reville	<p>Do you think that by collecting oral histories, the way you did for the assignment, and participating in a cooperative group, that it acted as a means towards reconciliation between your peers and yourself?</p>
Ngwenya	<p>It did. Because a lot of discussion emerged from there after we'd talked about your stories, you know, we looked at ourselves and where our parents come from and what it means for us. So that</p>

	<p>was something offhand that it just came about, and we got to understand, and I think this is the biggest thing, we got to appreciate and understand what happened in the past. And again we counted ourselves lucky for not being there and how we should not be taking it out on each other. So it did kind of bring us together, even though some stories you hear, it's like, you don't...you can't help but think to yourself, you guys had it easy. I mean, hello, look at you, your parents weren't even aware, it was like something happening in another country, although they were right in there. So although there's those feelings of bitterness, but at the end of the day we kind of realise that again this is not our story, it's our parents' story but it's important to keep them alive and can make us appreciate where they came from.</p>
Reville	<p>Would you do an assignment like this with your own class in Social Sciences?</p>
Ngwenya	<p>I would, but I think the feedback I'd have to monitor and especially the feelings that would come about, because what I've seen from both, and I remember we had Professor Jansen coming to our church as a speaker, and I've seen this as well, how it gets passed on to the kids. And for grade 7s...but even for older kids, I think that would be the case, because then parents would become personal: Oh, I hate the Africans, and then the kids take it in as well, and when they retell it's like, they did this to us, you know, they take it personally. Although it's a very important learning, you know...to learn a message, I think when it actually comes back to the sharing of stories, to the feedback, there would have to be control because they're still young minds, so that they don't internalise it and get this hatred that they don't know where it's coming from.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay, because I think one of the things, I'm going to just pick up on Professor Jansen having come to your church...I mean, I think one of the things that he's said very clearly is that the stories get passed on from generation to generation. And how do we keep the stories, because they are important. We need to remember what happened, but at the same time, how do we break the trauma? Just think about your boyfriend, I mean, he experienced and I'm sure there are stories that have been passed down.</p>
Ngwenya	<p>That's true, that's true.</p>
Reville	<p>You've had the stories come down as well.</p>

Ngwenya	Mm. That's a difficult one, because for me the stories weren't passed down in a hatred kind of manner. My parents, when my father talks about it as well, he talks about it and he tries to teach me that, I mean, what's the point in harbouring the hatred? We can thank that experience, let's turn it around because that's what has brought us here. So for me already I was programmed in that way and for other kids who were told...like my boyfriend, I know with the grandfather, I'm sure he's the one who kind of instilled that kind of hatred because that's how he'd speak with this pain of, you know, what they did to us. So in terms of changing that, it's kind of difficult because as a child you are easily influenced and your parents, whatever they say, that's what you take in. So maybe it has to start right at the top, you know, when they give the stories the parents mustn't tell it in a way of hatred and, you know, they must say, ya, this is what happened and it was hard at the time, because that's how I always used to get the story. It was hard at the time, it was not easy, but you know, here we are. So I think it has to start right at the top. Otherwise get the stories in another medium if it's going to be personal, there's museums, there's other people who are a bit more objective about it and not so personal. But it definitely has to start from there where the stories are coming from. Because if the person who's telling the story, their emotion, that's how you take it in and get to remember the story with that very same emotion that they had.
Reville	Do you think you as a teacher though, could also mediate that experience?
Ngwenya	Definitely. That's why, you know, when you asked me, with my class, I think I'd have to, that's the word, mediate the response and teach them, you know, a different view from what they would have gotten at home if it was negative. I would be the best thing, the next important person, to do that.
Reville	Okay, because, you know...kind of two thoughts, for lots of the other students that I've interviewed, for them, the fact that they interviewed parents or whoever and it was personal, meant a lot. Because for...and I'll say this as a generalisation, for lots of the white kids, they had no idea.
Ngwenya	Not at all.
Reville	And no idea in terms of what role their parents or their families might have played. So for them it kind of...it made apartheid

really come alive in a way that they'd not experienced it if they'd studied it at school, in the text books, and stuff like that. And you know, talking about the role of museums, and yes that can play a part, but one of the students I took along to Constitution Hill, his granny had been imprisoned there, and at the end of that trip, and the next time I saw him he was furious, both with me and with his granny. And when I asked him what was...why he was so angry, he said to me, his granny hadn't told him the truth. And he was furious with her, and also furious with me because I'd exposed him to a so-called objective story telling about the place. But his granny hadn't told him what he had learnt there. And that kind of just jumped...it made...it was a traumatic trip for him.

8. North student interview – 5 August 2009 (also interviewed as a practising teacher – see Appendix B).

Reville	For the purpose of this recording can I ask you to say what your name and surname is and just to describe briefly what you're doing now.
North	Okay. My name is ... North, I'm 22 years old, I'm a first year teacher at School A in the south of Johannesburg, I teach grade 4s and 5s, I teach English, Natural Science, Afrikaans, and EMS.
Reville	And anything more in terms of your own life history you can share with us, like where were you born, where did you go to school?
North	Okay, I was born in Hillbrow, Florence Nightingale Hospital, which is Johannesburg, and I've lived in Johannesburg my whole life. I grew up in Eldorado Park, and when I was four we moved to...that was sort of the end of apartheid, '94, we moved to Ridgeway, which was a formerly sort of white suburb, and then after that...I went to nursery school also in a sort of coloured township, Riverlea, and then after that I went to a former model C primary school, ...Primary School, because we lived in the area. And then I went to school at ...High School. So I come from a, I'd say, mixed background. My parents are both coloured, classified coloured, but I'd say they're more mixed. My grandfather was black Sotho, African Sotho, and my grandmother was also coloured, but also had a mixed background. My mother as well, Chinese father, mixed mother, so...ya, quite South African...
Reville	So you really are a melting pot of everyone in South Africa.
North	Ya. But most of all, ya, I just classify myself as South African. I don't really...people ask me if I...I don't really associate with any of those cultures, I've never really known...both my grandparents lived as coloured people in a coloured area, so that's how we've grown up, and I just associate myself as a South African...just classify myself as a South African. Ya...and that's a bit about my life story.
Reville	Okay, that's absolutely fine. I'd like you now to turn to this oral history narrative in the reflective essay. Can you tell us when you wrote this?
North	2006, I'd say, for a Social Science assignment. Ya, that's when I wrote it.

Reville	Can you recall your feelings when you first heard about the assignment?
North	Um...I won't lie, like boredom, sort of, you know, [inaudible] because it fitted into that broader theme of apartheid history and being a history student...I've been a history throughout my whole school career to matric. So just doing the same apartheid things over and over again, and then getting to varsity and having to do it again...ya, boredom, I'd say.
Reville	Were you in class that day that I handed out the assignment?
North	Probably, I always went to class, yes. (laughs)
Reville	Alright. Do you recall the class's reaction?
North	Also, one of, oh no, apartheid, not wanting to do it, ya, I do remember, B... and those naughty boys. (laughter)
Reville	Can I ask you who you chose to interview and why you chose that person?
North	Um...I think...oh, I did two people incidentally. I did both my parents, my mother and my father. One of my friends said that she didn't have anybody to interview, so she said, can I please interview someone for her, or if she could interview someone...for some reason, I just remember that I...I don't know, I get confused as to why I interviewed both of them...maybe I couldn't decide myself. But, at any rate, I interviewed both my parents. I remember the task being...it interested me, even though I was bored, it interested me because I thought...both my grandparents had like recently died, and I thought like, I'd never actually spoken to either of them, and like found out anything about their life, you know, and now they're gone, so like I'll never have a chance to ask them again. And so I thought like, well, they're my parents, I don't honestly know much about them, you know, so I thought well let me interview them, because I knew some parts about their life but I didn't know like all the things that I found out while I was doing the interview, so I'm very pleased that I interviewed them.
Reville	And how did you prepare for the interview?
North	Well, I just...well, we usually spend lots of time together in the evenings anyway, so we just sort of set a time, just I asked them if they were, you know, busy, if we could just chat a bit, for a few

	minutes while I asked them some questions. Oh, and I had to obviously think of the questions I wanted to ask them beforehand, so I had written down the questions I was going to ask them before, and then...ya.
Reville	And did you find that that changed as you interviewed them?
North	The questions?
Reville	Yes.
North	Um...ya, because as they spoke, they'd say something and then...like my dad told me something about growing up, where he grew up, and I was like, I didn't know that, so then that took me a different direction, I wanted to know more. So then I just started sort of adding in more questions as we went along and ya.
Reville	And was it easy or difficult to do the interview with your parents then?
North	Um...not difficult. No, not at all. Just...in some ways it was difficult, I think, for my mother, like, because I know she had a very difficult childhood, her mom died when she was very young, and she went to live with some other relatives of hers. So like, in that way, I wasn't sure if like it was something she wanted to talk about. So it was kind of difficult because of the topic we were talking about, but...like otherwise, I didn't really, I didn't experience any difficulty talking to them.
Reville	And did your mom open up more and more as you asked her questions?
North	That's what I also really enjoyed, like, I like realised like how much they both enjoyed talking about their childhood and...just...I just could see like the look of reminiscing on their faces and how they just like were thinking back to all these things that they were telling me about and how they actually were enjoying telling me about those things, so...ya, I think they enjoyed it.
Reville	Was there anything that shocked you in terms of what you found out about your parents?
North	Um...some of the things, like um...in that thing, I just remember reading there that my mom said like, she didn't know that there was...that the education systems were different, but she

	said...retrospectively it doesn't matter to her, like if she had known it wouldn't have mattered anyway, because just the mere fact that they could go to school was...meant something to her. So, that was quite interesting for me.
Reville	And did you find that the questions you asked triggered strong emotions in you as you also heard the replies and...?
North	Um...ya, like I mentioned now, like I also think that passivity made me quite cross (laughs). Like, it made me quite cross how passive they were...why weren't they more angry at how things were...and it surprised, ya, I was quite...knowing how my parents are, they're also quite...well, passive people so I suppose it didn't surprise me too much, but just thinking that if I were in that situation, made me wonder what I would have done and what I would have been able to do, you know?
Reville	And did you ask them why they didn't do more? Because what I found quite interesting is that you described your parents...or your mother, I mean, that was the story you wrote about...as being very much a bystander.
North	Yes. I think that's her personality, like that's why I wouldn't ask her, you know? Because I think, that's how she is, I know that's how she is. Like, she's always said she's a peace maker, she doesn't want to be involved in conflict and things like that, so for her, just the fact that she could go to school and learn and that was what she was happy to do. That's what she wanted to do and that's what she got and that was fine. So...
Reville	And there was no awareness that maybe the other side of the road, or the track, were the people who were getting superior education?
North	I don't even think so, I think also like, lots of these kids like had such hard lives to begin with that there was actually no room to be looking at what someone else had, they were just happy to have what they had, so ya...
Reville	And just kind of focused on their lives...
North	...And just focused on their lives, ya, ya.
Reville	Alright. Let's move on now to the cooperative group. How was your story received by your group?

North	Um...trying to think...
Reville	Can you remember who was in your group?
North	I think C..., and there were two other people...I think C... was in my group also...I think there was interest. They were interested to read the stories, as I was when I received other people's stories. It was very interesting to...I actually enjoyed getting to know about how different people experienced that time and how they...different people grew up and how things were different for each...for everybody, you know?
Reville	And was there much discussion about your story, or...?
North	Um...was there? I don't think so, I don't think so, not from what I can recall.
Reville	Okay, that's absolutely fine. What did the process of working together on the group dramatisation, did it help you to get to know your peers better?
North	It did, yes...well, for the small time that we spent together, did get to know some personalities you'd rather not work with as well. Um...I knew C... before so that was...and C..., ya, we'd worked together on some other tasks, so...and I also ya, probably got to know her better, like that story about her mom also stands out, also probably because her mom went to a school that was across the road from where I, in that area, that we moved to, after we moved from Eldorado Park, so that story sort of sticks out in my mind as well.
Reville	And you remembered it...?
North	And I remembered it, yes, ya.
Reville	So in a way, your kind of...the relationship that you developed with C..., I mean, that has now come to this school.
North	Yes, it's come to this school, ya. She actually asked me, she was at a different school to begin with, and she asked me what it was like here, and then that's how she came here. And then, ya, she enjoyed it, so here she is.
Reville	If you think back, you mentioned that you felt quite bored, 'oh, here we go, another assignment on apartheid'. By the end of the assignment, if I look at your reflective essay, I mean, it showed

	for me, quite a development. Can you talk more about that?
North	Ya, definitely. Like I said, ya, it just opened my eyes to...to my parents' point of view, to somebody else's point of view, you know? And gave me the excuse, maybe, to find out about what their lives were like, where ordinarily I actually would have taken it for granted, you know? So I think by the end of it I really appreciated doing the task and having been given it. And ya, just opens your eyes to that everybody isn't the same and that everybody experiences the same thing in so many different ways, you know. So, I definitely, by the end of it, I'm glad that we...I'm glad we did it.
Reville	Okay, and is it something if you look back on your university career, is it something that you remember actually having done, instead of kind of like a blank slate approach?
North	Um...
Reville	Or not really?
North	It's...well...I, like now, haven't been in contact with you again I must admit, but even like before that...my father actually passed away last year...
Reville	Sorry to hear that.
North	So...it's okay...so having done that with him is like, makes me really glad that I did, so...sorry... (<i>emotional</i>)
Reville	Were you close to him?
North	Um...well, ya, we were close, you know, so...still it's hard to talk about it, so...but I'm really glad I did that, so...
Reville	Do you want me to pause this? Let me do so. (<i>Recording turned off</i>) Okay, let's move on to just a more general discussion. If I were to ask you what you think the meaning is of reconciliation, what would you say?
North	Um...I'd say...it's quite difficult...um...because I think it's about forgiving...but not forgetting, but not in a sense that you are...feel still cut up about it, or want to...still want to exact some kind of revenge or repayment. Just making amends, just, and not...I don't know, like when I think of it in terms of like South Africa and reconciliation and things like BEE, and all those kind of things like, I don't really think that's reconciliation. Like I think...you have

	to remember, you have to remember what people have experienced and gone through, but in a way that you're not bringing it up all the time, you know? And allowing people to move past it as well. And if people need to...not pay...I don't know what the word is...
Reville	You talked about making amends.
North	Ya.
Reville	How would one do that?
North	By acknowledging what you've done, I think is a start. But things like BEE, white males who are, whatever, 21 years old today, and can't find a job, it's not their fault, their grandfather might have been an apartheid perpetrator, but I mean, they're not. So why do they, just because they're white, are affected by things like that, and I don't think that's right and that's not what reconciliation is about. It's about wiping the slate clean for people who deserve it, you know, and not making future generations suffer for what has happened in the past. Or benefit, for that matter, for things that they weren't part of even. Ya, so...that's what I think reconciliation is about, is forgiving, but not forgetting, but not in a...not in a holding a grudge kind of way.
Reville	So now, how would you see the not forgetting?
North	Um...
Reville	You said, not to hold a grudge, but how would you make sure that it's not forgotten?
North	Things like history. Like...apartheid is something...it's a part of our national history, you know? Children should know about it, but these children shouldn't...if I have a white child in my class, in twenty years' time when he's out looking for a job, he shouldn't be disadvantaged because it is his, whatever, ancestors' history. It's our history as South Africans but our children shouldn't be punished for it. They need to know about it and know where we came from, so...relating that history to them, through stories or history, like in the subject history, where they learn about these things, is important. I think it is important. Because it's what makes us who we are, it makes us South Africans, you know. But I don't think that...ya, like I said, I don't think they should be punished for something that they didn't have control over or

	weren't even part of.
Reville	Okay, then what about the generation that was around during apartheid? How can they make amends? What would you suggest?
North	It's difficult. Um...because there are also different groups of people. You can't make all white people suffer. There were lots of white people that were involved in liberation, whatever, liberation struggles and so on, you know? And so those people also need to be acknowledged. It wasn't...and not all Afrikaans people were racist and did horrible things. And so we can't...and this, ya, this whole whites against black thing, is also not...and also, when you teach children that, that's not what it is about, and they'll tell...they'll also, well, if you ask them, don't even get into that (laughs), they'll tell you, it's this white people and black people. That's what stands...and they don't really understand what it was about. So I think that's the first thing, like really...now I'm getting off the topic, you asked something else (laughs).
Reville	No, keep going.
North	But, ya, people who...there are lots of things that happened, I mean, this is...like for example, there's conflict all over the world, it's our world, isn't it our responsibility to do something about it, but we all sort of stand back and do nothing. So are you going to punish every person who didn't do something in apartheid, you know? How can you make amends? Ya, people who were involved in torture and those kind of things, should be punished, maybe with things like the TRC Commission, and Amnesty Hearings, and all those kind of things, but are you going to punish everybody who didn't do anything? Shouldn't we all be punished then as well for not taking enough responsibility for things that are going on in our own world, and in Africa. We...South Africans, our neighbours next door in Zimbabwe, dying and starving all the time, we don't do anything about it. Who's going to punish us for not doing that, you know? so I think it's a very difficult...it's a difficult thing to handle, but I think definitely, like not letting people forget about it, and...but not in an ugly way, like making people feel guilty about it. I think also just...and now we must have peace and just move on with it and just...ya, just trying to move on and make a new South Africa, you know, where everybody is free and everybody is equal, because...and also, just not forgetting but allowing people to move to...like, to have a new

	generation of children that know about apartheid but aren't burdened by it.
Reville	Okay, I'm going to push you there. If you had a child in your class who learned about...and it is a horrific history...and this child came up to you and said, how do I make amends for what has happened? How would you deal with that?
North	First of all, I think it's...ya, it's important to...it's not your fault, first of all, it's not your fault. But...well...but we can't forget about it. It's good that you know about it, it's good that you are...that you have these feelings, that you feel you want to make amends, but not to be burdened by it, it's not your...you are not the perpetrator of this action, but you must remember it, remember what those people experienced...and maybe...um...how can I say...maybe we can think of a way that you can show your remembrance of what these people have experienced, and that could be a way of making amends, your remembering what they've experienced is a way. And just to understand that it's not their fault, but not to just, oh well, those were those people, doesn't affect me, but still to remember them and to show, and to make a conscious effort to show that we do respect what they've experienced and to remember what they've been through.
Reville	Okay. Because that's one of the things that looking at present day Germany, there was a whole sense of...there was a generation during the Nazi era, then a generation that followed, then there was the third generation [who started to ask questions]. So in a way we've got to wait for our third generation, but there will be some very tough questions, I'm sure our kids are going to ask us. And I think, kind of at the moment, I get a sense of people who are being in denial...
North	Ya, in denial.
Reville	That, you know, it's very much let's bury the past and then we'll move on, let's not go back there.
North	Yes.
Reville	So, as you said before, it's something that's very difficult.
North	It is very difficult, yes.
Reville	Now...in a way...I'm going to ask you this question: would you say that South Africa is a reconciled nation after '94?

North	<p>Um...in some ways...I mean...you can walk down the streets wherever you want to, your children can go to any school they want to, you can travel anywhere freely, to an extent...and um...ya, so in some ways there is that...a freedom from conflict, which I think is part of reconciliation. There is remembrance. There's lot of emphasis, I think, on remembering what has happened in the past. In some ways though I think it's not like I spoke about, a ...a forgive and forget without that holding a grudge. In many ways I feel like there's still...oh, it's over and we've forgotten about it...like apartheid's over and we're all friends and black and white live together, but there's still...there's still lots of segregation happening. If you just look at people's social groups, the kind of people who will hang out together, that's not reconciliation. And like I spoke about BEE policies, and just like...ya, just other things that happened, like people who...ya, people who get jobs and people who don't and based on the colour of your skin and that kind of thing, no. I mean, why should someone who is twenty and didn't live through apartheid, doesn't know what it's like, why should they benefit over someone who also, is at the same age as them, and neither of them know nothing really about what it was like to live under apartheid. So I don't think that's true reconciliation, or truly reconciled.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay. And when you think back on your varsity career, I mean, you described the situation where people are socially segregated, would that describe what you experienced at varsity?</p>
North	<p>No, not really. I think my group of friends was very mixed. We had different friends, all of us hung out together. Not so much me, like I don't...personally I don't look at the colour...like skin colour doesn't even...I don't even notice, that's not the first thing, I'd probably notice other things about people, the colour of their hair or something like that, as opposed to the colour of their skin, so for me that's not a...I'm not that kind of person. But for other people, like...in more ways like religious groups, like I noticed lots of the Muslim kids will stay together and lots of the...I don't know if they're all Hindu, but lots of the Indian kids will hang out together, you know. But not just them, like many other groups tend to hang out together, but for my...my social group wasn't like that, there were lots of different people from everywhere really.</p>
Reville	<p>Alright. Now I know that you're not teaching History at the</p>

	moment, but would you ever do an assignment like this oral history one with one of your classes?
North	I think it's very...I would love to do that, I think it's so good for...you can't interact with written notes, written out on a page. You can't ask it questions, it's not going to respond to you. And I think it's so important, lots of these kids don't know where they come from, they've got such mixed up families living with this aunt and that uncle and it's so...like for that little boy, if he had been able to talk to his mom, and know exactly where she came from and what it was like for her growing up, and whatever bus she caught to school, and that kind of thing, it's so important for them. And also because they're just so...so many of them are so lost, just to know where they came from, and you know...just...
Reville	So you think this would help them develop a sense of identity?
North	I think so, I think it would be so good for them just to be able to, you know, just to know where they came from. I think, ya, it would be very good for them.
Reville	Okay. So, this isn't necessarily something that's only in a Social Sciences classroom, if you think about some of the learning areas that you're presently teaching, which one do you think you could maybe use this kind of thing?
North	EMS, incidentally, is also very...how things were and how they are now. Like we've just done a self-sufficient and modern societies and we talked about what it was like, not even as far back as the stone age, or whatever, maybe what it was like for their parents growing up, what kind of resources they had access to, and...like we'll just talk amongst ourselves, some of the old teachers will say, oh they could buy this for this amount in this year, and just, you know, we'll have those kind of conversations in EMS as well. The value of money, how it's changed, how South Africa's industries have changed, you know, and what the reasons for that, and that kind of thing. So EMS I think is one of those things. English could also be. You can learn a lot, we're doing space travel and that kind of thing now, and what were their parents doing when...did their parents even know what was happening in the country at that time, that kind of thing? There's lots of different ways that this can be used.
Reville	Alright. An aim of education is to heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice

	and fundamental human rights. I'm quoting from the RNCS. Do you think an oral history project like this could contribute towards meeting this aim of education?
North	I think so. Can I just see what...can I see that? I think it draws attention to how people lived, how different people lived, and it draws attention to how certain people were socially disadvantaged or how they were treated unjustly and that kind of thing. And by drawing attention to it we can say how have things changed, have things changed, how would you like things to change kind of thing, you know? And, ya...drawing attention to how their parents grew up and those kind of things, and if they, ya...for me, seeing how my mother grew up and how would I...what would I have done if I'd grown up like that, you know? What could I have done? What would I have been willing to do kind of thing? So, and how...would I even want my own children to grow up that way, you know? Makes you think about those kind of things and what kind of values also you want to teach, and what kind of values you respect and want to adopt in your own life. So, I think it's a good thing, I think it's a very good thing.
Reville	Okay. Last question. Do you think that in your classroom, it is a place where reconciliation could be fostered by using, say, a reconciliatory pedagogy?
North	Um...I think these kids are quite young, so they aren't really that aware of...conflict, in a sort of racist way. I don't think they're that aware of it. The other day I had one of the girls come to me say, oh this one doesn't want to play with her because she's black. And so I said, do you know what that means? And she said, not really, I just happened to hear. So I think they just sort of hear these things tossed around, but they don't actually know what it's about. I think higher up maybe, this is definitely a good way to explore different things, especially, ya, reconciliation, the idea of reconciliation. I think here they're a bit too naïve and a bit...don't really know what that means, I think if we delved deeper into those kind of things, I think so. They also don't really relate to those kind of feelings and those emotions of...ya, of I'm white and I feel prejudiced...not prejudiced...what's the word...discriminated against, or I'm black and I feel discriminated against. I don't think they're really aware...I think in this school, in this area, it's more a socio-economic, I think that's what...ya, that's the bigger problem, as opposed to like a race kind of thing.

Reville	Okay. So what you're saying is that you're not seeing that the kids are that aware of differences amongst them unless it's a socio-economic issue?
North	I think that's what they g...that's their greatest difference that they've all noticed is, rich or poor, lots of money, no money, that kind of thing. Because it's also...it is quite a homogeneous group of children within the school, so maybe in a different sample area you'd find something different but I don't think here that's the issue. I think more socio-economic status is something that affects them more.
Reville	Thank you so much for your time.
North	That's a pleasure, thank you very much.

Appendix B: Interviews with practising teachers

1. Aronstam teacher interview – 5 November 2010

Reville	How long have you been teaching at School C?
Aronstam	Three and a half years.
Reville	And this is your first job from once you left university or not?
Aronstam	No, I taught for a term at ...Primary school and then I came here.
Reville	And you're teaching grade 5 at the moment; have you always taught grade 5?
Aronstam	I've always taught grade 5 since I qualified.
Reville	Will you please give me a brief general background about yourself that you're willing to share.
Aronstam	Anything?
Reville	Anything that you feel makes you who you are.
Aronstam	Okay. I am a teacher, I've always wanted to be a teacher since I was a child, that was one of my goals, so I'm very content with what I do, my job, I love it. I'm married and I've got a little boy named Shane. I married someone I studied with at university. I'm Jewish, I feel like that's one of my strong identities. And I'm a white South African.
Reville	If you visited a foreign country and someone asked you: who are you? How would you describe yourself?
Aronstam	I would say, I would say I am South African, a Jewish white South African. That's how I'd...
Reville	Is that how you'd describe yourself?
Aronstam	Yes.
Reville	And would your answer be any different if somebody in South Africa asked you the same question?
Aronstam	No. I may not say that I was white because they could see that I'm a white South African. But overseas I would say that I'm a white South African because I think there's this assumption, in some places, that if you come from South Africa you have to be of a colour, like you have to be black, so I'd say I'm a white South

	African.
Reville	If we turn to the learners, how would you describe the learners at your school in socio economic terms?
Aronstam	The children that we teach, generally come from middle class income groups...middle to high, but I'd say the majority are middle, and every now and then a low-income group child comes to the class. For the majority, middle class. Socially they come from pretty dignified well-mannered homes, quite open-minded homes as well. Quite accepting. And I'd say the parents are parents that have got good values, hard working attitudes, [inaudible].
Reville	And how do you find the kids interact in the classroom? Are they able to get on with one another both inside and outside the classroom?
Aronstam	In this class, this year, the class dynamics are quite good. They generally do get on with each other. There's a general feeling of respect and tolerance towards each other. In my class there are only two children who have social issues. The one girl is isolated a little bit because she's a bit different, and people find her a bit frustrating. And there's one boy who's socially accepted by the boys but he starts like...he has issues with the girls, he's like always attacking them or fighting with them, or insulting them. But otherwise they generally get on quite well.
Reville	And do you know whether they socialise outside of the school?
Aronstam	Yes, they do.
Reville	Are there any social barriers from the past that you feel still manifest themselves in the classroom?
Aronstam	Not in this class. This class is completely one hundred percent different to the class I taught last year. Last year, definitely. There were definitely issues from the past that affected relationships between the students, and the relationship I had with them as well, big time. I was...they were...in my class, if I talk about race, from last...can I talk about last year? My class last year was mainly African; there were two white children. The one left. There was one white child and me, and there was definitely an unspoken feeling of tension between myself and the children. Not because I wanted it and not because they wanted it, but they

	just...they used to come into this class with a type of attitude and even though they never said it I could feel that they were a little bit angry or a little bit aggressive at times.
Reville	How did you deal with that?
Aronstam	I tried to ignore it in the beginning, and then as the year progressed, I started to tell them that there's one thing I want to teach them and that is to be kind to each other. And I remember we reiterated it constantly. There's one thing you learn, it's not the content that you learn from your books, it's how to treat another person with dignity and kindness, and I just kept on saying that and saying that and saying that, and I think they got sick of me saying that, it was almost like a nag. But they come to me now and things seem to be different, like I think it went into their minds, they digested it, and we have a very good relationship funnily enough now. I think something did click. And I think they see that I do respect them and there's no issue. But it took a lot of time. And also between themselves they had these issues...they look at these African American stars and they try and act like them but then they get confused because their parents treat them or teach them different cultural values, it was just very different last year. Like if we did the group work that we did today with the class last year, there would have been issues, without a doubt in my mind. People would have been cross and there would have been fighting, without a doubt.
Reville	How would you describe the relationship between you and your learners now? And we're at the end of the year...
Aronstam	You know, I try from my side, I can't tell you really...I can sort of tell you from their side but from my side I really try and cultivate an environment...I actually base it on principles of like respect, dignity, honesty and care. Like I really try every day, like I try and say those are the things I need to foster in my class, so I try not to embarrass any children, I try and discipline them in a way that they learn the right behaviour not feel embarrassed at any point in time, and they don't have to feel scared to come to school, I want them to feel happy. So I think because of that they reciprocate in a way that I should, then they treat me sort of in the same way. Sometimes it's not always that way, sometimes they do push or they don't listen to me, but I try and get them grounded. So I think we do have a good relationship.

Reville	It's something that's absolutely evident. I want to just go back to when you did the pinks and the blues, the class was devastated.
Aronstam	They were shocked.
Reville	They were absolutely horrified that their wonderful teacher could suddenly start and treat them in this terrible way. And it was [inaudible] look it's okay. And that laughter was complete and utter unease.
Aronstam	They were so nervous they were shocked.
Reville	Because it's not the way that you treat them.
Aronstam	Never. And we've spoken about that numerous times since then. D says she wants to play the pink and blues again. G refuses and he's quite a verbal...he tells us a lot of what he feels. He's like no, no, no. And they really enjoyed it. And G said...when I told him that he was going to get a detention because he was acting out of turn, he was like shocked. We've spoken about it a few times. It was nice for me to see as well.
Reville	Because I wanted to ask you how you felt?
Aronstam	I felt, I loved that lesson. I loved it. I loved it from beginning to end. I thoroughly enjoyed teaching it and getting them involved. I'm so glad that I could do it.
Reville	What's your understanding of cooperative learning?
Aronstam	I do know a little bit but not as much as I think I'd like to know. At varsity we learnt about think pair share. Think pair share square. Round robin. The home groups I don't really understand that well. [inaudible] and I vaguely remember doing some activity but not great. And cooperative learning is being...but I've read your notes...to be interdependent, that you do your own work but within a group. Like everyone has this need to be independent and autonomous but socially still this strong need to belong to a group. So it like sort of satisfies those two types of needs at once. That's what I sort of understand by it.
Reville	What are your aims in teaching history to your class?
Aronstam	What is my aim? To really learn, to really let it be a learning experience. I would say that is my goal. Not just another lesson, just another lesson, go to school, how was your day at school, my child says, it was fine. I want them to really learn, to look at

	the world with a little bit more of a critical eye, a little bit more of an informed view, that's really, if I could, if I could really do that, that would be wonderful.
Reville	Do you use oral history regularly with your class?
Aronstam	No.
Reville	Is there a particular reason for that?
Aronstam	Yes. We're following...we typed out our lesson plans and our progression schedules and work schedules when I first came to School C, and assessment plans, and we try and follow...we try and reach what we've set out to do and it constricts you, and you feel like you're pressurised. And I'd say that's the biggest thing, you feel like you're very limited, you're not as free as you could be. This was nice because it gave me an opportunity to sort of break away from that. It's under a lot of pressure with those assessment schedules and learning...all that stuff and very pressurised. Because you have to write the dates of when you get through, and when you assess this and when you assess that, and if you don't do it, then your books and your files go in for assessment, you're seen as being not on top of your work, so you just do it.
Reville	Would you try introducing oral history?
Aronstam	I'm going to do this and when I teach evidence next year, I'm going to try do a little bit more. Apparently they're changing the system of education so they're going to be adjusting things. And my colleague and I have discussed that we're going to readjust. We are going to adjust.
Reville	So this is actually an opportunity now.
Aronstam	Best opportunity. We're going to use it, and...no, definitely. It's also a problem because it's not just history that we do, we have to do geography as well. It's not seen as separate subjects. So we have to do a little bit of history here then we've got to do geography. Which is fine, but it's not just a map, it's like direction and grid work, it's difficult.
Reville	Have you tried to integrate the history and geography at all?
Aronstam	We do try. Not easy though but we do try. Sometimes it links beautifully, other times not so well.

Reville	They are two different disciplines, but I think there is also...there's room for integration.
Aronstam	Not like this, but there's an overlap.
Reville	Are there any advantages or disadvantages to using oral history?
Aronstam	Are there any advantages? Advantages, I think, for children it is an absolute skill to learn how to conduct an interview and it's an absolute skill to learn how to sit opposite someone and ask them questions, sometimes not the easiest questions. I definitely think it's a skill. A thing about oral history that's nice is it's hands-on, you're not just sitting in the class passively getting information told to you. You're actively going out and gaining it for yourself. So the input is there, the teacher gives the child the input, and then they can use that as a foundation and then they just build on it through the interviews, so it's really nice. Disadvantage...but it's not really a disadvantage, it's a little bit of an issue, is that, it's quite time consuming, so if you've got time then it's wonderful. But like my colleague, she teaches skip, she teaches a remedial class, she's way behind, so she may not be able to do this. So time consuming is probably the only thing, but if you've got time it's the most wonderful thing.
Reville	Now, you started off by giving all the learners quite a solid foundation in terms of what apartheid was. Would you do the process in the same order again?
Aronstam	I would.
Reville	Did you feel that you gave them sufficient background to go and do the interview?
Aronstam	I actually started off with a lot more information. For example, the PowerPoint presentation had like 40 slides, it was way...a lot more, and I would have loved to have given them more information but I think even though they're at the end of grade 5 I still think they're small and I would have lost them. So I gave them as much as I thought they could possibly take.
Reville	And you know what I found very interesting in terms of that PowerPoint presentation was the fact that you said to them, look I'm not taking questions but every now and again you stopped and you asked them questions. So instead of them being...because I think that is a potential problem with

	PowerPoint, in that the learners can end up being completely passive and then just tune out. But by mixing it in terms of saying now look at this and then asking questions, you got them more involved in the presentation. So I think that worked well. I think it needs to be that balanced.
Aronstam	Thank you. And I never...I wasn't going to do that. The day before that lesson I was going through the PowerPoint presentation and it was only the day before that I decided on that change. But it was very useful. Because I did the presentation to someone else and they started getting bored, and that was why I was like, no, I have to change it a bit.
Reville	And as you say, they are little. I can't think of the exact amount of time, it was about 15/20 minutes.
Aronstam	It's long for them.
Reville	It's long for them to be sitting so still. Do you think that the lesson today created a safe space for learners to discuss difficult issues from the past? Or was that process actually happening before? Because you said to me that they were coming to you with their stories.
Aronstam	For two weeks, since the last lesson, some of them were quite enthusiastic about the interviews and they conducted them quite quickly soon afterwards. And throughout the days they've been coming to me and saying, do you know, I heard this and I heard that, and they came and played their interviews on their cell phones to me and they were really quite passionate. And I think it diluted it a bit. I think it made it not as harsh. By them coming to me and talking about it over the last couple of days made it not as horrible for them. But I think they did feel safe to talk about it. Yesterday they brought up the names that were spoken about during apartheid, like non-believers, and what did you call Indians, like all those stereotypical names. And some of the girls came to me at different times and said, you know I get so upset by this I feel like crying. So I think they did get upset. Some of them were quite offended and it is sensitive stuff, but I think they felt okay to talk about it. I think so.
Reville	Do you think that the relationships amongst learners changed as a result of doing this process?
Aronstam	I think there's more understanding...I think there's more of a

	<p>general understanding. I think, if anything, it's enhanced. Because this class is multi-racial, so it's definitely enhanced an understanding. The only thing that worried me was that the African children get upset with white people, because it was so like, white people did this and white people were bad and all of that. And actually I think when they come back from computers I'm going to say to them, do you know the music that I was playing at the beginning, who sang it? It's Johnny Clegg. Johnny Clegg went to university during apartheid and he was white, and he wasn't for apartheid. So I just want them to know that it wasn't only white people. Because I see like ... I see some of the boys getting a little bit angry when I talk about how white people mistreated African people. That was the only thing that worried me.</p>
Reville	<p>Because I remember, going back to the previous lesson, one of the boys was really, really upset, and you handled it at the time and I just...today I didn't feel that same kind of anger coming from him, and I just wondered what had happened in the process?</p>
Aronstam	<p>Perhaps, we have mentioned maybe twice in total, that it was the people that lived in the past and it's got nothing to do with us, we just want to learn from that, and make sure that history doesn't repeat itself and that it mustn't happen at all. No kind of discrimination must happen. No type. Because one of the boys in the other class hit one of the girls in this class because she's fat, and that I said is a type of treating someone unfairly and it can't happen at all. So I've tried to do that but I think I need to say it again.</p>
Reville	<p>Possibly. It's up to you. I mean, they've gone through the process now but it's kind of...if there are, and I think that's something to maybe talk about is the emotion that this has brought about. And maybe to debrief at that level.</p>
Aronstam	<p>Okay. Well, I've got one more SS lesson, so I can do revision and then at the end of that I can just talk about the emotions, and I will, I'll do that.</p>
Reville	<p>Because I think it's not only at an intellectual level because this project engages people, that there are very, very deep emotions, so that's possibly just something to consider.</p>

Aronstam	I will do it.
Reville	Do you think that the relationship between you and your learners shifted in any way as a result of this oral history project?
Aronstam	I don't feel that there's been a shift in our relationship at all...I don't. Not yet. It's not apparent to me.
Reville	So you kind of felt...you started off with...and even the pink and blue that didn't kind of upset them in terms of their ability to relate to you?
Aronstam	I think when it was happening they were shocked and there was like a little bit of...they were unsettled in the library and I started getting a bit worried. I realised I had to back off a bit because I was going to lose them. Because they started laughing and...I see it with other teachers that when they start screaming at the children, the children start to retaliate and they even behave worse, so I had to back off because I was losing them, and then I stopped doing that whole thing. But since then, no, thank god, I don't think so.
Reville	Okay, so it didn't have a negative effect?
Aronstam	No. But I also told them they were so good and it was not real, and we spoke about it afterwards.
Reville	You used lots of positive reinforcement, and I mean, at the time you addressed it. And I think you dealt with the emotions then, you said, how did it feel? And they were able to verbalise.
Aronstam	But I will do it again.
Reville	I think not so much in terms of the pinks and the blues, but in terms of the interviews, in terms of the process that they've been through. It's just a suggestion.
Aronstam	Thank you, I appreciate it.
Reville	Did the TRC have any effect on you?
Aronstam	I don't really have much knowledge about it to be honest.
Reville	What do you understand reconciliation to mean?
Aronstam	Negotiating and trying to look at the past and find all the problems and reconcile. Like try and make a way to sort them out and move forward. That's all I really...reconcile. Yes, like find

	your differences, and find a path and how to move forward. But I have to be honest, I don't know too much about that.
Reville	That's absolutely fine. Do you think that one is able to apply kind of some of those things that you're talking about in terms of reconciliation, in the classroom, do you think that it's an important part of teaching?
Aronstam	Reconciliation? In what way, like between learners?
Reville	Among learners, among...you mentioned your class last year and yourself.
Aronstam	Do I think it's important? I think it's very important. But it is so difficult, because people are different. People are different. And sometimes there can be issues between people, and like even if you try and sit down and negotiate a way, where there's a solution, people like still don't like each other or people are aggressive, or people bring their own emotional elephants and baggage on their backs. It's hard, it's very hard. So we try with the children, like we put them in chairs and they talk to each other but it's hard. Sometimes they just don't like each other, and how can you force them because as an adult you know it happens with us too.
Reville	Of course it does. And I don't think it's something that can be forced. But I wonder if it can't be facilitated.
Aronstam	It can be facilitated and I think leadership, like even in a classroom as a teacher, in a school there's a principal, I think leadership should take the reins and do it, I really do. And I actually feel quite strongly about this, I think when a leader, or the person who's in charge doesn't take control and doesn't guide the process, they're actually not doing their job properly. I really strongly believe that.
Reville	Because you said something in terms of the class today that there'd been an issue not in this class but in the broader school, where people would hurt one another based on the fact that they were different. And I just wondered if you could talk a bit more about that?
Aronstam	Oh, that was with the girl in my class and the boy next door. It was the day before, he called her fat and he said, [inaudible] of the KFC, and she is overweight. And he's been doing it for a

	<p>while, but I never knew. No-one told me that this boy from next door has been saying this to her. And she's like back off, she said to him, back off, and he went and punched her in her face, like right over here, so it was quite serious. So I couldn't even intervene, and my colleague was absent, I went straight to Ms L and it was taken out of my hands, and they both had serious discussions with Ms L and Ms G, and the consequence is a detention, and the parents were phoned. And so I think it was dealt with. But that's something that was taken out of my hands because...</p>
Reville	<p>Look, sometimes these situations happen and that's just the way it kind of pans out. But I just kind of then wonder, how does one get...I mean, that's kind of a serious situation, how do you get the kids to reconcile after that?</p>
Aronstam	<p>I think they have to sit opposite each other, and I also learnt this at varsity, they're meant to sit opposite each other, and one person talks at a time, so like this person will say, number one will say, this is what I'm upset about, this is what this person did wrong. Then number two says, this is what I'm upset about, this is what you've done wrong, then they both feel that they've verbalised how they're feeling. And you're not criticising either one. And then you say to number one, is there anything you think you should apologise, even if you did it by mistake? And then they usually say yes. And the same with number two. And then the facilitator will say...the mediator will say, can we now move forward, like, can we carry on, is there anything else that needs to be spoken about? That's how I usually do it in the class.</p>
Reville	<p>And what do you do in the case of what I call a false apology?</p>
Aronstam	<p>What do I do? I'm in trouble when that happens. I'm in a big...I've got stories, because A over here, I don't know if you've heard, he's got a bit of a feminine voice, and he is potentially a victim of bullying, and the grade sevens have picked on this, and Joshua next door in grade 7 said, aah, girly voice, get out of my way, or something. And then I said to him, J, how can you say that? And he's like, I'm in grade 7, I'm only playing. And he's like sorry, A. And A said to me, he doesn't mean it. So like in a situation like that I feel lost, because you can't really force a real apology. You can't. And some people emotionally, their development is not high, like they're back a little bit where some are a little bit more developed. Like you can't force it, you can't, there's nothing I can</p>

	do. I really feel that way. Some are very egocentric, some are a little bit more...I don't know...that's how I feel.
Reville	That's absolutely fine. What I'm on about is wondering whether there's a place for what I call reconciliatory pedagogy in the classroom. If you think about it, we're now sixteen years into democracy, do you think that this is something that might be important to facilitate?
Aronstam	I think it's definitely got a place. The question is like how much time do you allocate to it? Or how little time? Because one group of people may argue that it's sixteen years, can we not move on? Let's just spend like a few hours on it and then move on. Like why do we have to keep on bringing up the past, the cuts are deep, let's move forward. And other people maybe in other schools, people would say, no, but it's important, it's part of our history, in order for things not to repeat we need to learn about it in greater detail. So I think I'm like probably on the side where I think you should spend quite a bit of time talking about it and learning about it, and letting it become part of the children. But I do think there's a place, I think it's just got to be done very carefully.
Reville	And did this kind of oral history here sort of thing help with that? Do you think that would be a place for reconciliatory pedagogy?
Aronstam	Yes, I do. But I feel that the children, because they have been...they were born in a democracy, they don't really feel the effects of it. I experienced a little bit of apartheid so I sort of appreciate this...I would appreciate what was done a little bit more. But they are friends with each other, I mean, H and G are best friends, they don't really see colour as an issue. So...I think it's got a place but it has to come right down to their level, they've got to really understand it. I think maybe if they could see movies and...like Sarafina, I think, like that kind of stuff, that they saw what happened, and they could feel the emotion, then they would see why it's important. And discrimination happens, it still happens, so it doesn't have to be a racial thing, it could be anything. And I think that's key.
Reville	And kind of getting them to speak with members of the older generation?
Aronstam	Very good. Very useful. It really...it opens their eyes to what happened. And they won't forget, I don't think they'll forget. But

	they may forget this, all the notes on apartheid, but they won't forget the interviews. They've never done it, it's interesting, it's different, they'll love it, they'll never forget.
Reville	And this particular learner whose book that you brought to the table, can you just tell me a bit more as to why this particular interview stuck out for you?
Aronstam	G...I have to do a little bit of background...G... is an interesting student because he's very intelligent, he's probably one of the smartest kids in my class. He's got parental support; parents are right behind him, quite a wealthy boy. He himself has the potential to be a bully, and he really decided to do this interview full force, he was like very eager, and he was like disgusted by what happened during apartheid. Like he was very upset that he was a 'blue' person, and like when he got told that he was going to be given a detention unfairly, he was very upset. And it was nice for me to see a child who sometimes gets...he does, he's a leader of the pack, notice oppression, notice inequality and be against it, and when he interviewed this person, P..., he's an unbelievable racist and he says in the interview that apartheid should continue and he hits black people many a times, and G... was really upset by this, he didn't like this. And I thought that was quite interesting. And I also liked the fact that he chose someone different. Most of the children chose an African person, and he found a racist, like he made...
Reville	How did he do so?
Aronstam	He's very wealthy and his parents own a farm, and he found someone on the farm, near his farm. And I liked it. And he's very protective of H, his friend who's black. If anyone messes with H he'll do anything to protect him, but he himself can be a bully to other children.
Reville	It's something that I think is also quite interesting about this process, and it's something that I've read about, with somebody saying how did it feel, and to act out a time when you discriminated against someone else, and when you felt you were discriminated against yourself. And that's quite an interesting shift. And it's quite a good kind of thing in terms of developing understanding of the multiple perspectives.
Aronstam	And to be on the receiving end. Like when he was hitting today in the play, he had really been like that, he can really be quite

	vicious, but he's been...I don't know, there's a very gentle side to him, but I think he could have...during apartheid he could have potentially have been one of the people that was pro it, I don't know. Look, it's not fair to say that.
Reville	The 'what if' role?
Aronstam	But I shouldn't say that.
Reville	But what's interesting about the role-play then is that it allows people to actually act out stuff in a safe environment. So I think that that's actually quite positive.
Aronstam	Yes, it was good. And he was so enthusiastic about it. It was good.
Reville	I think the general level of enthusiasm, I was quite taken aback, because I thought that the kids were, end of the year, as you say, into exams, tired, and they were very enthusiastic about this. Can I ask you a bit more about the role-play then, how did you feel that that went? Were you expecting a kind of response like that?
Aronstam	Response of the excitement, of the enthusiasm?
Reville	Any kind of comment about like what happened.
Aronstam	So role-play I've never done actually, ever, as a teacher. So I was a bit nervous, myself, I was very hesitant to do it, and I've been going over it in my mind again and again. So I wasn't quite sure what to expect at all. From the children's side, I thought to myself in the beginning that maybe they could have done better, that maybe they didn't take the information exactly the way I would have liked them to put it together or arrange their play. But then if I look at the time restraints, they didn't have that much time. That I think is a major factor. That alone. Like they only had till break to practise. If I consider that and I only told them yesterday that they're doing a role-play, they did quite well. I would have liked them to use a bit more content that they've learned, I would have liked that to be reflected in their role-plays. But I think they did the best of their ability. Really the best.
Reville	There's no doubt about that. Is there...and I'm asking this as an open question, you said that you would have liked to have seen more of the content coming through. Kind of with hindsight, is there anything that you think that you could have maybe done differently that would have allowed for that? Given all the

	constraints that you've mentioned?
Aronstam	I would have had to have given them a sheet to say, I want to see this, this, this and this in their play. But I didn't. I said to them, use the information that you've obtained. I gave them a little bit more freedom. So maybe next year I could do that, I could say I want to see the pencil test in this group, I want to see a passbook here, I could give them a little bit more input.
Reville	Look, you could do that but it actually was very interesting to see where they were at and what they picked up. So I wondered maybe, rather...again this is just a suggestion, rather than mechanically reading out their interviews, is maybe to let them decide to speak about what was it that they found to be the most interesting thing, and to use that and to see possibly as a way of how they could combine what they found interesting for each of their stories. So not necessarily to structure it in terms of, you know, but to actually let them...
Aronstam	Talk about it.
Reville	Talk about it a bit more.
Aronstam	I think I'm going to do that as well, because it was...I think it also became a bit monotonous reading questions. I think I will change that.
Reville	It's either that or it was kind of...yes, I just wondered about in terms of, because I mean, you gave them lots of structure in terms of their interview questions. As well as the (un-structured/their own structure?) but where they could choose the questions. And did that go okay?
Aronstam	Giving them the questions? Yes.
Reville	And the unstructured questions, was that also alright?
Aronstam	It seemed okay, not a lot of them used the questions that they had spoke about in their groups. G did, and only a few others. The rest of them didn't want to ask more.
Reville	And I think that's absolutely fine to give them that kind of choice. Just as an idea is to maybe say to them, what did you find the most interesting?
Aronstam	Instead of asking them to read. I couldn't agree more. I like that.

Reville	It's just a possibility. And then to say, as I say, just say to them, right, now that's what you need to use in terms of your...and to see...also to think about not to focus on one person's story only, but to see how they could integrate them all. And that's quite a request, but I think that it can be done and maybe it would need more time and more practice as well. So, as you say, the time constraint.
Aronstam	But if we could it would be great. I'm going to do that next year. I appreciate the input a lot as well.
Reville	I'm more than willing to come and work with you and Haley, if you'd like me to. Let me just get through writing up this research. For me the big question is, it's something I've done at university level, could this actually be translated into a classroom? And from what I've seen in terms of what you have done, the answer is definitely yes.
Aronstam	Can be.
Reville	It can be done. And it requires a lot of scaffolding and you really...I think you scaffolded it so much so beautifully, but it's kind of like, how do we tweak it now?
Aronstam	Because definitely there is room for improvement.
Reville	But this is with anything that one does as a teacher. It's a process. And it's only now, kind of like, yes...when I say the oral history assignment in this particular form four years ago. It's organic. And I don't think there's a teacher who ever gets something 100% right. There's always something that you think about, what about trying this way, what about that? So I think it's always a process. The last thing I wanted to ask you about and it's something that struck me about the previous lesson, not so much today, but it kind of really echoed with me, and there is the issue of names, and how do you deal with how people were called in the past and how do you deal with it now? And it was very interesting, and I don't know if you were aware of it at all, in terms of the way you used the naming process? You moved from saying these were the apartheid categories, you moved to using non-European, non-white, and I just wondered if you...how you felt about those kind of changes?
Aronstam	That maybe I should have used one term?

Reville	Not necessarily, but it was quite...I think for me it actually indicated a discomfort.
Aronstam	For me? I haven't thought about it being that way actually, I haven't thought about that. It does feel a little bit strange. It does, because it's a bit foreign to me, myself. And also, I'm not sure, like a non...I don't know, maybe there is a bit of discomfort. I'm not exactly sure. And I think another thing, is that I don't want to insult any of the children in my class. I really don't want to make any of them upset. And I don't want to say things that...like a non-white sounds...I don't know, does it sound better than black? Or does black sound better than...I don't know...a non-white? I think that's another reason I don't want to make them upset. Even Coloureds, like there are two Coloureds in my class, I feel terrible saying that. I don't know, I think that's the main thing. Yes, I don't want to make them upset, and Ms L said I mustn't get emotional about it, so I don't know. I don't think I really paid much attention to that myself, but it's true.
Reville	Is there anything else that you'd like to tell me about? What you've experienced?
Aronstam	I think I've always wanted to do an apartheid lesson, but it's not really part of the grade 5 syllabus, so it gave me an opportunity, a good reason to find time to set up lessons and to do this lesson, the two lessons, and I really am grateful for it. Even though I've had to allocate this time and this time it was worth it, and I think I can use it again and again, like now that PowerPoint presentation is done I can just work on it, I've got it now...So I feel like it's been an opportunity for me and I've enjoyed it a lot and I hope it works well next year, and I'm just glad that I could help you.
Reville	I want to say a very big thank you. The amount of work you put into this was enormous and I really appreciate it.
Aronstam	I'm so grateful that I could do it and thank you for asking me, and I hope you got everything you needed from it.

2. Baloi teacher interview - February 2011 (also interviewed as a former student in Appendix A)

Questions I omitted in the interview, but asked via e-mail on 9 February 2012.

1) Who am I? I am Baloi, am originally from Zambia, but I work and live in South Africa. I am a Father and a Husband. I come from a family of three brothers. I am a Social Science and Physical Education teacher by profession. I come from a family of three. Christianity is my religion. Rugby is my passion. I am a guitar player.

2) Would your answer differ if you went to a foreign country? My answer would still be the same as in South Africa, because I am still foreign in South Africa. Even though I have been living in South Africa for 12 years, there is always a part that still feels foreign. I love South Africa and I feel at home here, but there is still a part that feels foreign in me. That's why I would still introduce myself as above.

3) What is the socio-economic background of the learners at your school? I would say our learners' socio-economic status is mostly middle class. We have between 30% and 40% of our learners on government exemptions in relation to school fees.

Reville	I want to ask you a couple of questions in terms of what you've experienced. I'm going to refer back to our discussion two years ago. You mentioned at the time that you thought that it was important to foster reconciliation in the classroom, but you said you didn't think that the kids themselves realised it.
Baloi	Yes.
Reville	And I wondered how this whole oral history process that you've taken them through, whether you feel that that has contributed to a sense of reconciliation or not?
Baloi	I think it definitely has contributed. It has contributed just...you know, they were given the homework to go ask their parents, to go find out, and I think it gave them a sense of awareness, it gave them...sometimes they get stuck into what they need to do, they don't always see how that is impacting them. But because they're so, 'I need to write this, I need to write that down, write that down', but in a sense it's helping to reconcile, it's helping

	them to see things a bit differently.
Reville	But a lot of the process is also dependent on your questions and how you're facilitating it because you're able to push your learners in a particular...or ask them and say if somebody agrees, somebody disagrees, let's hear. So you kind of set it up in a way that they've got the raw material and you've asked them to develop that, but you are taking them further down the road.
Baloi	I'm trying to push them further, I'm trying to not give them all the answers, I mean, they are...some of them say, no, apartheid ended here, others are saying, no, Mandela came out in 1990, others are saying apartheid ended...and it's so easy for me to just say, this is it, but what do they learn? So I think some questions is to try and push them a little bit, to challenge them a little bit, and I think that's where learning then ...I think when you challenge them more that's where learning makes a huge difference.
Reville	Because they're coming up with quite sophisticated answers, in terms of your comparison between apartheid then and now, it was very interesting, and then they started off with education and then moved on to xenophobia and then you moved on to the strikes, I thought that their understanding was very impressive. They're young kids.
Baloi	And they still come and they're in grade seven now, xenophobia took place when they were in grade five and they can still remember. I think part of the comparing was to try and get them to think about things that are relative to them: education, xenophobia, strikes, you know, things that happened, that makes them also question why, why?
Reville	A very important question. Were any of the kids actually directly affected by xenophobia at your school?
Baloi	Yes, there were, we did have...I was still at JCE though, I was doing my fourth year, but I asked teachers around, that's why they told me they were in grade five and apparently there were learners that were affected, that couldn't come to school, that their parents were in big trouble. So the school was hugely affected by it, yes.
Reville	Do you think that the lessons that you're doing, is it creating a safe space for the kids to talk about these kinds of issues?

Baloi	Um...I think to a point...
Reville	Have you set up some rules in terms of...?
Baloi	I haven't set up rules in terms of what...how far they're allowed to go and how far they're not allowed to go. I think...and I've done that deliberately to let them bring it as it comes, to let them know how things are now. I mean, I was going to get a few learners to just read out their interview, and some of the interviews, they were...there were some terms that were derogatory, I went through the interviews. I didn't ask them to...so yes, I would try and protect them from certain interviews that I feel this is...might be a bit too much for them to swallow, they might use this word and use it in a wrong way. But I haven't protected them from, for example, the one child the mother was saying, but during apartheid time, the transport system was better, the level of education was higher...I can't remember the third thing...where now sometimes...certain things of apartheid were good actually. Not everything about apartheid was bad. So I haven't put those boundaries on them. The parents have said what they want to say. But I went through the interviews that they wrote down, and obviously I'm going to try those that I've seen, okay, this was quite hectic, I'll try and not get them to say those interviews in front of the class, that type of thing.
Reville	I'm going to play, because you played devil's advocate very nicely with your kids, is it not possible to take a hectic interview and see if you can't unpack it with them?
Baloi	Unpack it with them and make it...you know, I could, I could, and I think...I mean, the hectic interview..., what I would say, when I read from one or two of their books, they just use a derogatory word, saying, we were called this, we were called that, so I could use the interview but it would come from a point where maybe I would have to read it to them, not them reading in front of the class. So...because my only fear is that if they hear certain derogatory words they might form part of their vocabulary. But yes, unpacking it, I could do it myself, as a teacher. A teacher can ease it.
Reville	Absolutely. And I think that there's got to be an understanding that names actually matter. I mean, it counts, if you call somebody something on the playground, I mean, it also mattered in the past too. So I think it...and it starts to help them to

	understand...
Baloi	The power.
Reville	The power of words.
Baloi	Behind names and stuff. Definitely. And I think it...even up to now people get sued for defamation of character and it's all to do with that kind of...
Reville	And hate speech.
Baloi	Yes, so it's something that is still around today, yes.
Reville	Absolutely, and I think it is important to be able to connect them with what's happening now with what's happened in the past. Until those attitudes again, it's to unpack them, so that they start to understand the power of it in the past as well as how it relates to their lives now.
Baloi	Now. That's right.
Reville	Do you think that relationships among your learners have changed in any way as a result of doing this kind of work?
Baloi	I think...see these learners...my argument has always been, because they are influenced by the environment they're in, everyone is...they have no boundaries. Yes, their parents might have boundaries in the background, but won't...outward they say it, say, oh, can this one come sleep over, that type of thing, but them themselves, I think because they started school with every race, with everyone being treated equally, or trying to be at least, they don't have the...for them a friend is a friend, they don't see colour. And it's amazing how, you ask them about apartheid and they can still answer, but when they go to the playground they're playing together, you know, this just goes as a lesson, and I think, I wouldn't say helps them but I think it makes them aware of how far we've come. They definitely see the difference, they see the difference, there is a difference and I think they support the difference. I'm here to help learners that say, you know what, but apartheid was actually good, I prefer things went back (I'm not having [inaudible] any. So I think in terms of that they acknowledge apartheid but they also to a certain extent they feel that they should learn from it. They don't support it and I think it just goes morally more than apartheid itself and the values that they're taught at home, and the way the world is moving forward.

Reville	So you don't see them as being affected by the past in any way?
Baloi	In a positive or negative way? I think, with them what I find is I don't see them being affected by apartheid at school now or...I always draw to the background at home, how they're raised up. I don't see them...I mean, they've been affected by apartheid in a positive way because of the structures that are in place. And everyone is treated the same way, everyone is looked upon the same way, and I think they don't immediately see it at this level. I think as they start getting older, when they move into high school, I think the why question becomes bigger then. I think because they're still...not innocent, but they're still fairly innocent. Not all of them but their thinking is still very innocent. And I think as they get older, they will remember things like this and they will look at inequalities that are happening now in different things and they will start asking why. They will start looking at why should there be certain colour...certain races on a sports team? So they will start challenging that, but they're not there yet. I think I can push them too, but it's not something that comes naturally. But I think when they get into high school and they start growing up and they now start seeing society, using different eyes and ears, and they see what's on TV, and I think there, high school, varsity, I think that's where it becomes very big. Primary school, not yet. Unless it's enforced on at home, from what I've noticed here.
Reville	And do you feel that doing this kind of work shifts the relationship between you and your learners in any way?
Baloi	Um...I think it does, I think it does...I think...I've never really thought about it but I think it definitely does help them. They see a teacher that's willing to ask these questions, and I think this form of communication does also make it easier for them when they have personal issues to come and relate to me, and say, Sir, this has happened. They see kind of what the teacher kind of stands for and I think they open to me, I think they're more open, they're more...I think if I was a teacher that kept my distance they wouldn't share things in their life that might be, oh, Sir, someone took this away, or at home, or someone did this to me at home, and...but what I do find is the boys relate to me more. The girls as well, but because of the gender thing, the girls easier probably with the female teachers, but with me...both of them can relate to me, both of them, our relationship is open, but I do find that it does create an openness, they're willing to share, they're seeing

	it as a way of life, not just in the classroom.
Reville	Indeed. And it's also a two way exchange of information. The one child said something about her father being at J... School, been there all his life. You found out something more about the child.
Baloi	Yes, more about their parents. That means the father has been working there during apartheid and is still there now. And that is something significant. You think, oh, apartheid is over, maybe now he's moved to somewhere else but he's still there. So it's really great.
Reville	Do you think that it is important to do this kind of work in the classroom?
Baloi	In terms of just history on its own or in all learning areas?
Reville	It could be in all learning areas. I guess I would say history in particular, because I think that the subject offers a particular depth and a way in. But it's not necessarily just history.
Baloi	Yes, I think it is important. I think it gives you a different...it's a different form of learning. I think in classes there's always, you know, sometimes it becomes like a sausage factory where you've got these assessments to cover and you're trying to cover them, and I think sometimes it's so easy to push this aside and just do what needs to be done to get your results or your whatever.
Reville	Because this is time consuming.
Baloi	It's time consuming. And I think that's where the problem comes and I think that's where you question education as well as in should we be doing things so that you've got something that says on a piece of paper, passed/failed, or should we do something where this, I feel this is where...where this learning is more real. And others they're writing to get results. But here it's more real. It's time consuming but for me this is where the learning becomes realistic. We can look at things, we can discuss, we can try and unpack it. It's not always easy to assess this form of learning, because you're getting from all different places. You can say, okay, what we've discussed, put it on paper, but I think it's very important, oral history. I mean, even now I didn't know about it, but you can do a matric exam orally if you've got problems with whatever, you can write a matric exam orally. So oral is really an important part of our lives as humans and we use it every day.

	And for me it's more human than writing on a piece of paper.
Reville	And did you find that you were hearing things from children who don't normally contribute?
Baloi	Yes...I mean, I think I tried, you know, when I put them in 1, 2, 3, 4....I mean, they don't know that, but my ones are my learners that need a challenge. My fours and threes were the ones...more my fours...my two and threes were in between, my fours are the ones that struggle with academics and things like that. And their strength might not be writing but they're good at speaking up, and [inaudible] I do find that some learners that are not good with writing in the book, can somehow do better in an environment like this, than putting pen to paper. So I do see that.
Reville	Because by using that cooperative structure, I mean, you were calling on people, you knew who they were.
Baloi	I knew who they were, but I was just saying numbers and yes, and having more or less...I was trying to get those that I feel don't answer but also trying to get those that might challenge our thinking a little bit, might challenge me (<i>laughs</i>). Because a teacher doesn't know it all, a teacher also gets challenged and things like that.
Reville	And especially in the environment like this, where you don't know what's going to come out.
Baloi	Yes, anything.
Reville	Anything can happen. But what was also quite interesting is that you did the cooperative structure and then you moved away from it and you said, right, I now want us to compare apartheid and you opened it up to the class. Under those circumstances, were there some learners who participated in [the lesson] that you weren't expecting?
Baloi	Yes, I think with cooperative learning as well is, yes, you get them to do certain things but you've also got to know that some of them won't do it the right...some of them won't ask...some of them will ask very...what can I say...very...not lower grade, I'm trying to find a better word, but not lower grade, but lower grade questions. Questions that grade fives...very vague...grade fives, fours can ask that. But then grade seven, I want them to go a bit more. And you find that there's some they will do it for the sake of

	<p>doing it. And in an environment like that when I will stop talking they get caught up in the topic, but they...it's now just, I need to do it because I have to do it. A lot of hands were going up, and when they get...when someone says something and they don't agree or they miss a point, it gets them more involved. You pick up those that also don't want to take part. I can ask them the question but also it allows them, it gives them the opportunity to say something. If they don't disagree they're like, no, they put up their hands, that type of thing.</p>
Reville	<p>Because they got quite involved. They really and truly did. Their friends were already out and they were mostly happy to stay to continue the discussion, which was quite interesting. Would you do this again, you've really done this at my express request, but would you...?</p>
Baloi	<p>I would, and I think we...I did this at the end of last year. I didn't really do it...I didn't do the numbering heads, 1, 2, 3, 4, but what I did do is, we did the lesson, and we spoke about it but we didn't...it wasn't a cooperative learning structure. It was more now comparing, that type of thing. But definitely, I think yes, it takes up time, yes, it's a lot of things actually to take into consideration, but I think it's vital, especially in history, that you do do this, even if it's once a term. It also just gives you a different form of...you don't want to come, sit at the table, and always do the same thing over and over again. This gives the lesson, or the subject, more variation.</p>
Reville	<p>And did you find it was different doing it at the end of the year and now doing it...?</p>
Baloi	<p>Yes. I think it's better to do it at the beginning of the year. What I found was at the end of the year, I think everything has its pros and cons but at the end of the year, I think a lot of the grade sevens are...they can't wait to go to high school, they can't wait to go to high school. So for grade sevens I would do it at the beginning of the year when they're still eager, they still want to work, they still want to do the interview. Learners bring me these video tapes on apartheid, you know...yesterday a child brought me a <i>dompas</i>, I've never seen a <i>dompas</i> in my life. It's his father's and we went through it, so I think it's really good in that sense.</p>
Reville	<p>And is there anything else that you want to say about the</p>

	sources, the idea?
Baloi	I think it...I mean, I really enjoyed having the lesson with them. I think having the grade sevens do it now has given me a different perspective. When we did at the end of the last year, it was very...there wasn't a lot of eagerness, you know. They want their exams now, they want to write, they want to go to high school, they're worried about the application, and there wasn't as much effort. Now I've got, you know, sources here, I'm getting a dompas, there's a lot of excitement. And that excitement does [inaudible] end of the year, so I think I've enjoyed it now than at the end of the year. Because we did democracy at the end of the year, and I've really enjoyed doing it now. So I would say, yes.
Reville	And how would you follow up now?
Baloi	Follow up the interview? I think with the interview we...from what we've done now, we'll have a few learners read to the class. They're getting marks for their interview, and maybe some of them might even read...I don't know, we'll see, in assembly, depending on how it goes. But we will round it off with a few more things on apartheid, but that's how I'll follow up. I mean, they're getting this for marks, I'm going through it, and...yes, and I think that's where we'll...we'll see from what they've given me, from what I've looked at, we'll see what else we can do with it. Because also I teach four classes, it gives you a chance to vary...you give these ones...it's the same activity but you just ask them to do it in a different way, that type of thing. So from the feedback, the other classes are busy finishing their interviews, going through this process, so at the end of it I think I'll see when everything is done, how much more or what else I can follow up with.
Reville	That's fair enough. Because it is a response to what comes out of it.
Baloi	What comes out of it. Yes, you need...you can only do with what you have...play around with what you have, yes.
Reville	And would you say that this is something that you would recommend that other teachers do in history?
Baloi	Yes, I think definitely. I think it just gives...it's great, you know, learners, you get visual learners, you get learners that are good with their hearing skills or listening skills rather. And you get

	<p>learners that are just good at talking orally, and it gives them a chance to, those that don't stand out in certain ways of assessment, stand out in a different form. And that's the one advantage. It gives you a different form of variation to your lessons. And for me, what I like about oral history is it just makes it real. It's not just a do it, things come out that you don't expect, that you were not expecting and for me it's just real learning. It's raw and you get it as it comes. And you can try and put boundaries around it, but for me it's real, and I think...when something becomes realistic, it becomes...it starts turning into a life skill. So I would say, definitely, yes.</p>
Reville	Thank you very much for your time.

3. Drew teacher interview - 19 November 2009

Reville	Can you say your name and surname?
Drew	...Drew.
Reville	How long have you been teaching here?
Drew	This is my fourth year.
Reville	And have you taught Social Sciences throughout?
Drew	Yes.
Reville	And what grades do you teach?
Drew	Grade 6 and grade 7.
Reville	Can you give us a brief background about yourself, anything that you'd like to share.
Drew	Well I've always lived in the southern suburbs, in this area, which is why I have a heart for this community. I am passionate about Social Sciences, which is why I like teaching the senior children because I love sharing the extra knowledge I've got from when I studied, giving a bigger view of this world. And I suppose a lot of my personality comes out in my teaching and the distinct things that I do. Is that alright?
Reville	That's absolutely fine. If you visited a foreign country and somebody said: who are you, how could you describe yourself?
Drew	I would say that I am a South African and I'd probably have to give some sort of description of where South Africa is. I would also...in visiting a foreign country it has come up that, like lots of people have this perception that only black people live in Africa, so I have sometimes had to say that, you know, South Africa is a multi-cultural, multi-racial nation.
Reville	And would your answer be any different if you were in South Africa and somebody said to you: who are you? Would it differ at all?
Drew	I don't think I'd have to go into much detail, then I'd probably focus more on sort of myself and not the nationality I belong to. I would probably say that I'm a teacher, I work with children, I love general knowledge, current affairs (laughs)...

Reville	So it would be more general.
Drew	Yes.
Reville	How would you describe your learners at the school in socio-economic terms?
Drew	Socio-economic, I would say there's quite a good mixture. We get varied learners, but...mostly from our suburb though. We still have one or two coming in from places like Eldorado and Soweto, but most of our learners live in the suburb, either in the houses in M... or as domestic worker's children.
Reville	Are there any social barriers from the past that continue to show themselves in the classroom?
Drew	I don't find so much anymore. When I started teaching four years ago I found those children were a lot more sort of aware of apartheid, and the perceptions attached to it. And they were a lot more, almost volatile, in many ways, whereas these children now in the last two years that I've taught are pure democracy children, so they really are not as aware of social injustices or anything like that, as children four years ago were. I almost find that I have to put more into these children like giving them a context of apartheid, because they're actually not too clear about it. It's like, as time continues, the details almost fade.
Reville	That's very interesting. Do you think it's just a time thing...is it more than that?
Drew	Well the demographics of the children haven't really changed. I mean, we mostly have got coloured, Indian, and black children. I just...I think that children aren't as aware of it so much anymore. Obviously they know it happened, but a lot of them don't know details, whereas four years ago like children could describe things, like their parents had told them things, where now, children actually have to go and question their parents to find out.
Reville	Okay. What I found quite interesting, in terms of the class today, I mean, there was up front kind of description of people in terms of racial terms, but there was a comfortableness with it.
Drew	Ya.
Reville	You know, I mean, I think you said to one of the girls, oh was your father more fair or your mother? And she was quite happy to

	<p>say...I can't remember if it was her mother or father, it didn't matter, but it wasn't an issue, I didn't feel that there was any...that there was any tension, between you asking her that question and her responding. And just in terms of your interaction itself with the class, I mean, I just didn't feel that there was a barrier from the past coming through.</p>
Drew	<p>I really don't think there is so much at all. And like in the discussion over the last couple of weeks, I mean, we've been very open, and even with my grade 7s, I've been talking about slavery and how different people came to Africa. They're very open to discuss those things. I don't think there's this like 'you're white, I'm not'. It's, we're all South Africans and this is what we know about our heritage, and so there really is an openness, I think, generally.</p>
Reville	<p>Alright. What would you say your aims are in teaching history as part of Social Sciences?</p>
Drew	<p>I really think that to give the children a good idea of what came before. It's quite a difficult thing teaching the history. The time concept, if I think of all the sections involved, is a very difficult thing for children to grasp. But I'm trying to get the main ideas across. What I found is that they...I think there's a lack of sort of parent interaction. So they're not getting told things as much. So there's a lot more...I have to have a lot more input in saying, well this is what happened. And I mean, some children are shocked, but it's within their own culture maybe or...I mean, they know some big events but when they start right at the beginning of the year with Ancient Civilizations, they can't conceptualise that actually people lived that long ago, and they were, you know...and also our children are very Westernized, so to conceptualise organised society that is not like our own, is a very difficult concept. So I try to really break barriers with paradigm shifts, is really often what I try to do, particularly using history, is because they are so used to seeing the world the way they live in it, countries, in the way they know South Africa, the way of life and the way they know it. And it's very difficult for them to actually grapple with something that is just as organised, but maybe not in their frame. So that is why...ya, I try to bring in a lot of different things to...so they don't...I'm worried that our children go to high school in this little...you know, they live in M... and that's all they know. They don't understand about Europe countries or early</p>

	African civilizations. They have a tendency to measure everything by the yardstick that they know, which is their immediate thing. So I really try to make them understand or develop their minds, and to let them engage critically with different concepts, which encompasses the whole world, ultimately.
Reville	Okay. And what about oral history then, do you think that plays a role?
Drew	I think most definitely. And I mean, we have done some oral history much earlier in the year when we did medicine, talking about different ways, like familial methods that people have used. And it's quite interesting getting children with different cultures working together, because there's like...like coloured children will always tell you their parents feed them castor oil and...so there are very distinct things that are part of particular cultures. And it's actually so nice for them to be speaking from their own life and seeing how it links to sort of a greater event.
Reville	And cooperative learning, is that a strategy you use often?
Drew	Not as often as I would like to. When I do use it I like to use pair share and then sometimes pair share square. I find the...I tried it very bravely in my first year to come and use cooperative learning and that one really had the home groups and that was very difficult because you get some children just piggybacking onto others and hoping for the best. But the pair share I use all the time. Even if people are just sharing with their own partner, at least we start getting them to talk about what they understand, primarily, and then how they interpret things, I think.
Reville	Because I was thinking a lot about our last conversation and you sort of said: how do we teach big classes? And I thought, we have a similar problem at university, how do you know that you are reaching those kids? And cooperative learning for me is a way. I'm not saying it's the only way, but it's definitely a way. So I'm quite interested to hear that you've actually used it, because it's the pair work that is the most...
Drew	Yes. I don't like to make groups too big because they're not independent enough. So the class you saw today is our strongest class in that age group. Mostly independent workers. And those who weren't, when I split them into groups, I managed to put them with a group that would encourage them.

Reville	I wanted to ask you about that.
Drew	I specifically did that. There was that one group that performed second, that little black girl who has got a bit of a learning problem and is very introverted, she needed a group to care about her and those particular learners, like all children, they don't have a particular aversion to her. So I did that with a couple of children, make sure that the group they went into, was a group that promoted working and wouldn't allow them...because you can't...like in the boy's classes we've got a large amount of boys who aren't independent yet. So they can't get on with it without being helped constantly.
Reville	Do you think that this lesson created a safe space for your learners to discuss some pretty difficult things from the past?
Drew	I think so, I think they all had come with something, so it wasn't a case of going to offend somebody else, and because of the demographics of the class though, it was also quite...they knew that they were all in...or their stories were from a similar experience. But even those who were, you know...where people were treated better, as I was listening to some of the stories come out, children weren't offended by that, but I think almost because I've taught them about apartheid a bit, they had an idea that that was not the only thing, we do have democracy to see it through on the other side. And I think for them they feel...they feel comfortable anyway and they're also quite mature in the way that they are able to discuss it without taking offence. Which I was quite happy to see, that they really wanted to...they actually wanted the group to listen to what they were saying, because they wanted to get some really good points across, I think.
Reville	But I also found your role very interesting, you went to each group, and you asked the kids for their story, and you listened to them. I mean, I don't know whether you were able to listen to each one of them, but I found that it was an incredible thing because not only did you listen, but you were asking them questions, you were probing. Because when I went around, I mean, I just listened to what they had to say, but you listened and you asked them questions, which pushed the stories...because lots of them were saying, so and so did x, and left it at that. But you didn't, you'd say, and so, and why and how and did you ask this? And it immediately took it to a different level.

Drew	I think that's part of my style of teaching. I'm a varied person...when I was sort of scaffolding this activity with them I said, try and stay away from just yes or no or one answer questions. I said, tell me why. Which is why when I had a chance to answer...ask some children, I kind of said to a group, whose story should I listen to? And they said, this one was quite interesting. So I started off like that, and then saying, but why did your mom say they were poor? Were they poor because they didn't have a car? Were they poor because they didn't have food? Or were they poor because they didn't have a house? What kind of aspect...to try and get them to also say, well, this is not the end of the answer. And I think I apply that quite a bit in my teaching anyway, is to say, but why do you say that? Give some sort of evidence to say this is why that statement is like that.
Reville	Okay. Because I found that very interesting because you pushed them. And they were comfortable with you pushing them as well, it wasn't kind of like, that's just the answer she gave. There was no attempt to cut you off. Do you think the relationship amongst the learners shifted as a result of this kind of lesson?
Drew	Um...I think for some of them it might have been...you know, some of them are quite good friends anyway but to almost understand where we had the Indian child and the black child and the coloured child, I think those could also make them more understanding of why they use certain vocabulary or why they do certain things. And I think this activity actually was very beneficial to start getting children to interact with each other on a more valuable...in a more valuable way, and not just a superficial sort of, we're school friends way. Which I think is quite important.
Reville	And did you feel that the relationship between you and your learners shifted? Did you find out more stuff?
Drew	I did find out more stuff about a lot of children and I know the children quite well, so for some of the stories I was quite fascinated to hear what was behind that. Like that one child who I kept saying, that one who spoke about her father who grew up in Wentworth, Durban, I taught her older brother so I have a concept of the family, but I haven't interacted with her on a very deep level this year and I think listening, probing for those questions and...like giving the bit of what I know, I got a lot more back from that and maybe in future...I mean, I still teach them for

	another year...I'll have more information coming out or more sort of experiences shared possibly.
Reville	And you find that important?
Drew	Yes, I think so.
Reville	Did the TRC have any impact on you at all?
Drew	The Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Um...not a huge amount of impact, I don't think. I think when it started happening, I was still in high school and still sort of understanding apartheid myself, and that's how I started off teaching this section, telling the children that in 1994 I was a 12-year-old child, there were two non-white children in my school, I didn't even understand apartheid until much later because almost for me, I've only understood it in retrospect and the studying that I've done. I wasn't aware. And it sounds silly, but I don't think as a young child you make the connections. Like I remember, in my own experiences, our maid being taken away in an orange van. I remember that, I remember my mom having to go and get her out, but I did not associate that with the fact that there were thousands of black people. As a child, I didn't know. And I went to a white primary school in a white suburb, so for me that whole process, even the Truth and Reconciliation, like I can remember key characters and certain people being given amnesty and pardon, but not really understanding the issues at that time.
Reville	What is your understanding of reconciliation?
Drew	Well I think it's where people come together to...to come back together, almost. So to remove the barriers between people...I think, ya...in my simplified version of it (laughs).
Reville	That's fine. Do you think it's possible to apply the positive aspects of something, say like the TRC, to developing, what I call, a reconciliatory pedagogy in the classroom? Via something like this oral history?
Drew	Yes, I think if you sort of gave them an understanding of the TRC and what impact that had, and I think that could be used as sort of methodology to introduce that and to understand the process of reconciliation. One thing I was quite glad to hear today, is I didn't hear a bitterness in any child's stories. Which for me means that their parents are probably also in a place where they have

	reconciled their own feelings to our democratic government. Because I know...I've got distinct children in my mind, of this same section four years ago, and children with bitter stories who'd spoken to their parents and were still angry, even though they weren't part of it. Whereas today I heard events, I heard people protested, they stood up for beliefs, they went to jail, but I didn't hear an anger behind it. I heard like...like almost a positive aspect of they were fighting for freedom and they've almost got what they were...they weren't still attacking a past government.
Reville	Okay. You don't think there's a bit of amnesia in terms of the parents now?
Drew	Possibly. Maybe.
Reville	Or an unwillingness to share some of the hard aspects?
Drew	Maybe some of them, maybe they don't want to share the worst parts with their children, but some of the stories I heard, I was hearing about parents who'd protested, who'd been taken to jail...but I didn't hear that 'we hate white people', sort of attached to it, which I have heard in the past. I mean, I've had children who turn around and say, 'but you're white, you must be a racist'. And I mean, I teach in a school with all non-white children where I didn't hear that so much today.
Reville	Okay. So there's been quite a shift in four years?
Drew	Most definitely.
Reville	Do you think it's also, kind of like, as you've become more experienced as well?
Drew	Possibly. I mean, I've taught very much in a...stuck more or less to the same content, because obviously there's certain things that need to be covered. But also I think as you build a better relationship with children. In my first year of teaching I had four very difficult classes. And very difficult characters. I mean, it was one of the most difficult years I've ever taught, and not only because it was my first year of teaching, because they were very outspoken, vocal...sort of, in your face, bunch of children. They were all about their rights and children's rights. And whereas I found with these children, they know with rights come responsibilities. So within four years throughout learning areas, I think we've definitely bridged that gap there, and they're not vocal

	about...they're vocal about who they are and...but they have an understanding that it's not just them, almost.
Reville	Do you think we need or it's desirable that we have a reconciliatory pedagogy...I mean, it's fifteen years after democracy? Do you think there's a need for it?
Drew	I'm not sure so much about this age group, where they are still not as focused on...like they're not...they're very together already. I don't think there's as much as a need, because we don't get that so much in the classroom. I however think maybe if you were teaching adults, and over a couple of experiences I've had over a couple of weeks dealing with adults of different races, there still needs to be some sort of reconciliatory process happening, because there are people still very...not...I don't know how to explain it, they're like, in what I've been experiencing, people don't understand, I think, what reconciliation is. So it's either only white or only black, we've got no middle line. There's no sort of grey area, which for me reconciliation is saying, it's not just black or white, this is a grey area issue and how can we solve this? And I think there's definitely still a need for it, I just don't know if it's necessary in this school that I'm teaching at with these children, because I don't experience that same thing that I've seen though from some of those children's parents, to put it...or with institutions, if that makes sense.
Reville	Alright. And you don't think that the parents are going to pass that down to the kids, or you're not seeing it in the same way?
Drew	I'm not seeing it in the children...and I think that's what makes the difference, I think a lot of sort of parents' thoughts or their feelings are not coming through to the children in an outward sort of blatant way, almost.
Reville	Okay. And what would you say then, just, if you think about this whole process, what is the overall value of what you did in the classroom today?
Drew	Well, what I enjoyed about it from my perspective was that it got all the children involved, number one, which means that everybody is interacting with something, and that is so important, because in a class of forty-six children, it is so easy to lose, but doing this type of activity which forced them to do some of their own work, forces them to work then in a group, and then also put something together, to see that process but to also see children

	<p>starting to sort of put ideas through their own mind, because of the whole process. And it was nice to hear their stories and nice to hear what they understand by it because even in hearing some of their stories I read a lot more into their parents' answers than maybe they did. And something simple, like one girl had written that her father studied at three different places. So I said, your father is an educated man then. So she looked at me like completely confused, she hadn't linked that with all that studying he has to have some sort of good education. And then that's just a little example. I think for a lot of the things they don't always reach sort of their full understanding and their full comprehension of it.</p>
Reville	Yes. Thank you very much.

4. Dyer teacher interview – 15 October 2009

Reville	For the purpose of this interview can you say your name and your surname?
Dyer	...Dyer
Reville	And how long have you been teaching?
Dyer	I've been teaching for about nine, ten months.
Reville	And so that would be the amount of time you've been teaching Social Sciences.
Dyer	Yes, the same amount of time.
Reville	What grades do you teach?
Dyer	I only teach grade 5 Social Science.
Reville	And can you give us a general background about yourself, who you are, where you come from, anything that you're prepared to share.
Dyer	I'm from M, I was brought up here, I grew up here, I went to ...High down the road, so my roots are in the school that I'm teaching in. I went to Wits for four years where I developed my passion for teaching, especially my passion for Social Sciences. Ya, as far as my background goes, I wouldn't be able to teach the way I do if I don't have the support of staff that I do, and if I didn't have the great lecturers that I did back when I was ... to guide me along the right path. It's quite exciting to try new techniques and stuff you've learnt at college and bring it in to the whole system and see how it's going to change Social Sciences enough.
Reville	And what have you found?
Dyer	I found that college sugar-coats teaching quite a bit, and it's very different from the real world, but I like the challenge, I thrive on the challenge, and although it's challenging I think it's good because this is where we can actually change it and change it the way we need it to be and more easier to teach or better develop it for our children out there. And I think that this is really where it happens. And ya, [inaudible].
Reville	And was there anything useful that we did to prepare you for, as you say, the real world of teaching, is there anything that you've

	brought in and that you've tried and said, ya, this actually works? Or has it all been...?
Dyer	No, it hasn't been a waste, the thing which I found the most useful was the cooperative learning. I found that is very...it's stimulating, it's not just coming up here and standing in front of kids, and one thing I found this year was that half of your time for teaching is just assessment, assessment, assessment. So when you do bring cooperative learning in, it kind of breaks that barrier between assessment and it's the action and the learning, so I find the cooperative learning and the strategies related to cooperative learning very useful.
Reville	I want to just ask you a question, and please, it's just I'm interested that you're willing to help me now and I really appreciate that, but when I asked you a couple of years ago to help me with your oral history assignment, you were one of the people who didn't...
Dyer	I didn't...yes, yes.
Reville	And I just wondered if you could tell me a bit more about that?
Dyer	I think it's...I kind of realised when I'd said, no, once I'd done my thesis, I had to come and do interviews and research and I found out how hard it is to find people who are willing to actually do it. And I realised as well that the work you're doing is to try and benefit the school and change Social Sciences to what it can be. So ya, I understand now what you're going through and what...how hard it is to get interviews and I agree with the purpose, so that's pretty much why.
Reville	Alright. And can you tell me a bit more about what happened in that second year, was there something that happened that made you think actually I just want to put this assignment down and just go now.
Dyer	I think it was just the whole apartheid thing. Because although it is important to teach the children and I think it's often just...everything is too centred around it, so I was taught it from grade 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and then to do an oral history exam on an apartheid related issue again, I kind of just got irritated with it, but now since I've been teaching, and I see how prevalent it is in the lives of our children and how it affects them, I realise its importance. And how it has to be taught but how we must just

	change the approach. So instead of just bombarding them with it we kind of develop it just to show them the mistakes of our past and how we can go and change it.
Reville	So you didn't have a bad experience?
Dyer	No, no...
Reville	It was just enough.
Dyer	Ya, it was just enough of apartheid which had been like loaded onto me in lecture type of form, like get up and teach, talk about what was bad, that type of thing...so ya...
Reville	I'm relieved to hear that. Because one doesn't always understand what the background is, and I mean, there might have been more to it than just enough. But that's absolutely fine.
Dyer	Ya, that's all it was for me.
Reville	In terms of cooperative learning, what is it about it that you found so appealing?
Dyer	I just think that it gives children a chance to maybe relate their personal experiences with each other. And when they realise that they share similar feelings, that kind of lets them open up a bit more about what they know and how they feel. And I think that from using those feelings you can work better. It just takes it out of just talking to them, and I mean, I've taught lessons where you stand there and you see that it's just going in and out, nothing's happening, and then you do the cooperative learning and you can see just how much more they're developing their cognitive knowledge just through talking in their groups. And you know that they won't forget, I mean, you know, that's stuck in there. And often they use the ideas of the other learners to build on their ideas, you know, that might have battled to...that's what I've found. Often the weaker students battle to put their words together, and with other people when they get their words, when they hear what they say, they're now able to structure what they need to say and put words to what they need to say. So I think it's just the positive effect, that's what I like, the positive affects everyone in the group, where it's not just one person standing up and talking.
Reville	Okay. I remember as students, you kind of...I'm not talking about you per se, but there was quite a challenge saying, what about

	the weaker ones? What about the stronger ones? How have you found?
Dyer	Um...in most cases I've found that the weaker ones are actually encouraged by the stronger ones to talk up and to give their opinion and to really help with the group work and whatever. But you do get your cases where the learners, it just goes above their head and they do just sit back and do nothing. And it's quite a challenge to try and engage them in the lesson, but ya, still working on those cases.
Reville	And the stronger learners?
Dyer	I think the stronger learners, I don't know about other classes, but in my instance they kind of seem very eager to share what they know and use that to try and get the other groups encouraged, the rest of the members of the group encouraged. I think that positively influences the weaker learners and I think because they know they're stronger that also makes them feel important, because they feel important they want to contribute to the group.
Reville	Okay, so they're not just opting out saying I'm not going to help you because I'm strong.
Dyer	No, in my class no, in my experience no. I'm not saying that's the general thing, but in my experience, no.
Reville	Well look, I think the thing about group work is that if it is structured differently it can lead to somebody saying, I'm the one doing the only thing, really contributing towards it, but...
Dyer	But you do get your cases, ya.
Reville	But the thing is with the cooperative learning is that it does spread the burden, I mean, everybody has to bear some responsibility.
Dyer	Yes. And what I find as well is I normally give each of them like responsibility, or the group will have to mark them on each one's performance, so they can't just sit back and do nothing. Even if they just try and contribute at least they can get a mark, where if they don't, they know the group's going to give them nought.
Reville	So you've built in an assessment (laughs).
Dyer	Funny enough, ya. But also I find with group work you have to change it around all the time as well. If you just leave it, and you

	do group work every day, all the time, it doesn't work, because eventually they become so accustomed to it and it becomes just as if you're talking to them.
Reville	Exactly. And I think you've got to mix it up.
Dyer	To bring the strategies in, it's a bit difficult, and I'm still learning that, but...ya.
Reville	It's a challenge that I don't think one ever fully...
M	Ya, fully accomplishes.
Reville	Ya. But it's good to try and see what works. There's another question that I wanted to ask you. I interviewed another student and I think that she referred to you, but I'm not sure about it, and I just wanted to check with you. She said something about, when she told her story, which was set in Queenstown, set in kind of like a rural Eastern Cape...I don't know if this is ringing a bell with you at all...
Dyer	Not yet.
Reville	And she kind of told the story about what had happened, and how people felt just before they were going into vote during the '94 election. And she said after she told her story, an incredible thing happened, she said one of the white guys apologised to her.
Dyer	No, that wasn't me.
Reville	And it wasn't you. Okay.
Dyer	I don't recall it.
Reville	Okay, and I think that's something that you would recall, and I wasn't sure. She couldn't remember who it was either. And I think that you were in the same group...but that's not something...it wasn't you...
Dyer	Not that I can recall.
Reville	Okay, that's fine, I'm just trying to check and just to see if it is recording. I'm going to pause.
Reville	<i>(new recording)</i> Going back to this issue about if you visited a foreign country and someone asked you who you are, how would you describe yourself?

Dyer	I'd describe myself as a worker, someone's who's maybe not appreciated as much as I should be. I'm a professional who deserves the respect that other professions deserve. And a South African, I think it's important. There's a lot of culture and issue behind where you come from and I think maybe that all means something, so that's pretty much what I'd tell them.
Reville	And would your answer be any different if someone asked you in South Africa, who are you?
Dyer	For me, not really, obviously I wouldn't tell them I was South...oh, I would tell them I'm South African, but I think it would be...I wouldn't have to tell them that...maybe some of the negative things I wouldn't have to tell them because I think it's quite well known that teachers aren't really appreciated as they should be. But it would be pretty much the same answer.
Reville	Okay, so you would describe yourself as a South African.
Dyer	Ya.
Reville	How would you describe your learners in terms of socio-economics?
Dyer	Socio-economic, I think it's a mix between predominantly middle and lower. Ya, I think that's what it would be. We have quite a variety but I wouldn't say very low, I'd say mostly middle...well the experience I've got of teaching children, and I think that does play a part as well in their education to a certain extent.
Reville	Okay, so they're drawn from the suburb of M and not much beyond that?
Dyer	I'd say maybe bordering on maybe L, N, those areas. But in my personal opinion I'd still consider M and N pretty much on the same socio-economic grounds, I wouldn't really say one's higher than the other, but that's just how I see it.
Reville	So no children from informal settlements?
Dyer	Not that I'm aware of.
Reville	Would you say that your learners interact well in class?
Dyer	I'd say they do. I mean, they had a few hiccups like every class does, but I think we've got a nice bond. I think maybe because we all come from predominantly the same area and have more or

	less the same struggles, I think ya, they do, in my class anyway they do pretty much get on well together which aids our discussions and learning environment.
Reville	And outside the classroom, do they interact well on the playground?
Dyer	Um...on the playground I think it's different, you see a bit of their different like, how can I say, cliques, where they hang out with your...you can see how it's put into your different categories of your children, you've got the cool kids, the...but I still think there's a common underlying thing, I think...I don't know about other schools but in M I really do feel we've got like a sense that we're one big family, which is quite nice I think. But yes, often you can see other sides to them outside and sporting environments and stuff, you do see the different...especially with children from different cultures where it can clash. I suppose that could pose a problem in the classrooms, but not too much from what I've experienced.
Reville	And do they interact outside the school?
Dyer	Um...as far as my knowledge, it's only as far as sports go, I don't really...if we go to...I've been to your local shopping malls and I've seen them hanging around together in groups and stuff and not really barred by culture or race, which I think is positive and I think, ya, they do, but I think it's different when you're outside of the school grounds, I think that that whole sense of family has changed a bit, I still think they've got that feeling of togetherness but it's not as intense when they're outside of the school environment. They're not as exposed to different...the boundaries or the different...how can I say...the different elements that you are exposed to at school and I think that changes it a bit.
Reville	Are there any social barriers from the past that continue to manifest themselves in the classroom?
Dyer	I think there are. I think that there can be. I think it's a thing you have to deal with in South Africa, not just in this school, but I think there is. The majority...
Reville	How do you deal with that?
Dyer	Very sensitively. It's very hard to approach and to deal with. I think you've got to be sensitive. And the way I approach it is I do

	<p>let them know that what happened in the past was wrong, but I try and push them towards the way that I've seen it, yes, it was wrong, but by keep dwelling on the past and just pointing fingers it's not really changing anything. And I also encourage them to look at everyone in the class whether you're white, black, whatever, that although the past was bad we have to look beyond that now. You can't blame someone from this generation for our past generation. And I think that is often what happens and maybe not as much as in primary school but I think in high school it does, and I've had personal experiences where I have felt, you know, that I've been made to feel inadequate by certain individuals because I am white and they hold apartheid and stuff against me, but I think that if we deal with it properly in primary school that's the only way we can really get these prejudices out. But it's a very sensitive topic to deal with and I think the only way to deal with it is talk them through it, get them to express their feelings, and then once those feelings are out then try and deal with them the best way that you can.</p>
Reville	<p>And in terms of your own experience was there some things that occurred at high school, at 'varsity?</p>
Dyer	<p>At 'varsity it wasn't too bad, but high school there were definitely occasions. I went to a majority school where the minority were white people, which, not that it bothers me, and most of the people there are very, very open minded and part of the new South Africa. But you do have your few individuals who still hold it against some of the white people there, and they did use it to blame with, which I used to get a bit upset about because I thought it was unfair. But the majority of it was very, very equal. Just a few individuals.</p>
Reville	<p>So would you say that they're not...were there different types of barriers when you were at school and at 'varsity than to what you see with your kids?</p>
Dyer	<p>I think there are. And I think that at 'varsity maybe it's dealt with better. It's approached in a way that these behaviours can be warped or broken. High school I think the barriers change as well as you mature as a person. That's why I think in primary school it's not as big an issue, and as you grow up you start becoming more aware of it and you start interacting with people who actually do have feelings of...I don't know if I'd say hate, but they do have resentment against other people because of issues like</p>

	that, and you actually have to deal with it. And I think at 'varsity, by the time you get to, say, tertiary education, you've experienced it, you may have if it's dealt with properly in your school, you've had a session where you've talked about it and you've done what you need to do, blamed who you need to blame, but then moved on from there, I think that helps. I think if that's not done properly then these feelings can manifest themselves in 'varsity life and...ya.
Reville	It's something that struck me as a lecturer coming into Wits, I expected what I imagined the barriers of the past to have been dissolved by that stage. And yet looking at the classes, I found them amazingly segregated.
Dyer	Ya. Well, from my personal experience, not really with me. I mean, my best friends are non-white...at college my best friends are non-white people, N, and all of that, but I do think you still have that, maybe a section of people who are still very...how can I say...maybe from the past, they're still in the same mindset. Different races, not just, I mean, white, black, whatever. And I think you do get segregated but I think slowly people are starting to break these barriers. Maybe I didn't notice it as much when I was in university because the school I came from was very, very mixed, and when I've made friends I broke most of my boundaries that I had. So I think maybe that's why when I went to university I didn't notice it as much as other people might have.
Reville	Alright. How would you describe your relationship with your learners?
Dyer	I'd say we've got a very good bond. Sometimes I'm maybe too friendly with them, which either has its positives and its negatives. I think some discipline obviously is the one negative it has, but the positives I feel it makes it easier for me to talk about things like apartheid and things that are very sensitive issues, because they know that they can trust me and talk to me at any time and we're very sensitive towards each other's feelings and I think that that's a positive. Especially when we're doing like an oral history lesson because they've got that confidence that they would not maybe have with other teachers to speak about how they feel because they know I'm being sensitive towards their issue.
Reville	And are there any processes or pedagogies that you use in the classroom that help to overcome various barriers perhaps?

Dyer	I think I've used various, just not being aware of it. If I try and think back now I can't think of any particular ones but I do know that I have incorporated them maybe subconsciously in my teaching. Maybe even used Bloom's Taxonomy for questions, I think. I've tried to utilise that to try and bring out different answers and different feelings in their responses.
Reville	Because you know, one of the other teachers here said to me, you guys really did not prepare us for the realities of school. And I just wondered whether you felt that?
Dyer	I don't know...the apartheid was just thrown at me when I was a child, so I think in that sense we weren't prepared because it was not done properly. I think when it's done like that it really builds resentment because as soon as you hear about apartheid you've got these negative feelings where...not that it was a positive thing but you've got to try and look about how you can use it to positively influence our country. For me, I also think maybe it was, as I started getting older, and like I said, high school was different, and especially at 'varsity, I think 'varsity did break...it basically, ya, broke the cycle.
Reville	What are your aims in teaching Social Sciences to your learners? Or can I say, teaching History.
Dyer	My aims in teaching History is I would say to try and make our learners, give our learners the tools they need to shape our future history. And do it in a way that we can make a better future for ourselves. I want to make them aware of our past but I don't want it to be dwelled on the past, I don't think history is something that should just be history. I think history and the present and the future are all tied in and if you don't do it properly you're going to miss the links somehow. So I'm trying to also shape views in history, I want learners to stop thinking of history as a boring old subject with just books and that it actually involves people and human emotions and that it's a tool to shape our future.
Reville	Do you use oral history regularly?
Dyer	I don't. I don't know if it's just because I'm a first year teacher, but college life and real world is very, very different, I've found. Time restraints is one of the big reasons and it's a lot of work and preparation to put into it. But I have found it's very fruitful. If done properly it's very, very fruitful. So maybe not this year but next

	year I'll definitely consider using more oral history with my lessons.
Reville	What do you think the benefits are of using this in the classroom?
Dyer	I think the benefits is that it gets learners' feelings out there where as if they just...if it's like a lecture type of lesson where it's just assessments and worksheets and feelings or issues they maybe wanted to have brought up, they won't bring up, whereas oral history, not only will they bring it up but if they see their friends and their peers bringing it up they can also get more courage and bring it up. And I think it also breaks certain boundaries, certain perceptions or stereotypes that they had towards other people, regardless of gender or class or whatever, maybe by seeing them speak out, they can...it will change their opinions or change the way of looking at it. And I think things like that can't really be brought up by looking at a text book, I think that has to be done by human interaction.
Reville	And any disadvantages?
Dyer	If not handled correctly discipline can be a problem. I think also some learners are very shy, maybe in writing they'd be more confident but when it comes to actually speaking in front of a class they're very confined to themselves and they don't want to express their feelings. I think that can be a problem and I think also ones who also do feel very strongly might take over the floor, so to speak, and not allow other people to talk. So I think it does have its disadvantages but I think the advantages would outweigh the disadvantages.
Reville	Tell me what your oral history lesson is going to be about?
Dyer	My oral history lesson is going to be about looking at the new and old coat of arms. I've sent each of the learners home with a copy of the old coat of arms. They've already been taught the new coat of arms in term 3 so they've got a general knowledge about the new coat of arms, the symbols on it, and those type of things. And I've formulated questions to go with it, which they're going to ask their parents. By doing this I'm hoping they can bring in a perspective of someone who did live in the past and by looking at the perspective of somebody who lives in the past and someone's who's living in modern day South Africa, has been brought up in the so-called new South Africa, I'd like to see how perceptions change and I want to use this to try and really help

	the learners to understand why things are the way they are today, or not the way they are today.
Reville	Thank you.
Reville	<i>(new recording- post lesson)</i> How did you feel that your oral history lesson went?
Dyer	Not as well as I think it could have went. I think there were certain things I overlooked or I could have paid more attention to. Like I could maybe have just focused the whole lesson on the old coat of arms because a lot of the learners brought up questions about the old coat of arms and we didn't really think about the new one, so it went well but not as well as I'd hoped. It didn't have as many results as I wanted it to bring out.
Reville	Do you think that this lesson created a safe space for learners to discuss issues about the past?
Dyer	...I think for the majority of my learners it did. I think there might be one or two where they didn't. I had a girl who said her parents didn't want to look at the old coat of arms because it brought back unhappy feelings about the past. And I think it's something that I should have considered a bit more carefully and maybe plan around better. So I think for the majority it did, but for those who didn't I should maybe have had maybe a brief discussion the day before just to get a feel of how the learners felt, so I could have shaped it differently.
Reville	Okay. Because it was an issue of time, wasn't it?
Dyer	Ya, as well, and you're only limited to forty minutes, it's quite hard to...
Reville	Ya, it's very difficult.
Dyer	And it's hard to try and condense it all into that time frame.
Reville	It kind of felt it needed to be expanded.
Dyer	Ya, there were still issues that needed to be talked about.
Reville	Ya, okay. Do you think that the relationships among learners changed as a result of this discussion?
Dyer	Um...not really, I don't think so, maybe it's because the majority of my class is from the same or similar backgrounds in the culture and stuff. No, ultimately I don't think it did.

Reville	Okay. Do you think that the relationship between you and your learners shifted in any way?
Dyer	I don't think, I think because of the relationship we had before, because we have a very, very open type of relationship, where we can talk about most issues, I don't think it has. However I think if I didn't have this type of relationship it could have been a problem, especially if we're talking about dominant races and I'm an opposite race from them, it could have brought feelings of resentment. But because I really felt where there was...that I keep reminding them how I stand, where I stand, I think they already went into the whole discussion knowing where I stood, and I think that made a big difference.
Reville	Alright, so really that thing about having a good relationship with the learners fed into the lesson.
Dyer	Ya, I think it did.
Reville	It wasn't something that was...
Dyer	Not that I could pick up, anyhow. And if it was, I'm very open, I encourage them to come and talk to me about it, and since then no-one has so...
Reville	Did the TRC have any impact on you?
Dyer	Not personally, I didn't really know about it enough until I got to college. It was nice to see that people from the past who did commit crimes are reconciling, so...ya, not on me personally but on as far as my knowledge of it goes, yes, but emotionally not really.
Reville	Not really. And did you know some of the stories before the TRC?
Dyer	Not really. College was the first time I was really exposed to it, so I don't know if it was intentional that it was kept that way at schools or not, but...ya.
Reville	And what do you understand reconciliation to be?
Dyer	Reconciliation to me is acknowledging that people were harmed or that crimes were committed and that instead of pointing or blaming things at people it's more about, okay, we've messed it up, now how can we fix it up. That's how I understand it.
Reville	And do you think the TRC achieved the aim of reconciliation in

	this country?
Dyer	I think in certain aspects it does, but I still think it's left a lot of people with a sour taste in their mouth. But I think it's something that needs to happen, I think things like that...at least it will make our country aware people are trying to reconcile from the past. So I think it did have an impact. I don't think it had the impact that people maybe had wanted it to have had, but I think it was important to a certain degree.
Reville	I don't know if you are aware of what's happened at the University of the Free State?
Dyer	Recently?
Reville	Yes...it kind of goes both ways...I'm referring here to the Reitz Four, and to Jonathan Jansen's suggestion that he would like to welcome them back as a symbol of reconciliation, and that the university is going to drop charges against them.
Dyer	Okay, that's a tough one. Personally I think their actions were unacceptable. And if I was the head of, whatever he's the head of, I wouldn't allow them back. I do understand that you do need to reconcile but I believe there are certain boundaries that if you cross it's still unacceptable. And I understand that apartheid a lot of these boundaries were crossed, so it is important to reconcile but I think in that instance I wouldn't really approve of that. I wouldn't be happy if I was a university student letting them come back. That's just me.
Reville	Do you think it's possible to apply the positive aspects of the TRC in developing a reconciliatory pedagogy?
Dyer	I think it is. I think by doing it, it will help people open up and deal with the issues of the past. Yes, I do.
Reville	And then an oral history lesson...?
Dyer	I think that's the only way to do it. I think if you don't do it that way you're not going to get it out of a text book, out of standing and reading notes. Discussion is the only way you can open people up to how they really feel and I think that's key in it.
Reville	And any advantages and disadvantages in using a reconciliatory pedagogy?
Dyer	I think the advantage is, like I said, it will help heal the wounds of

	<p>the past and help open up. I think the disadvantage is I think a lot of people who are maybe not as serious can...how can I say...just use it as...misuse it or take advantage of it, just say, well, I was part of the past, I did this, I did that wrong, but it's fine, going through reconciliation, so it's fine what I've done. And I think that's where the problem comes in, a lot of people take it for granted and think that as long as you go to this or you try and reconcile, it's excusable, and I think that's where the problems can come in.</p>
Reville	<p>Do you think we need to use a reconciliatory pedagogy, I mean, we're now fifteen years into a democracy?</p>
Dyer	<p>I think we do to a certain extent, I think maybe not focus on it as much as we need to, but we do need to let people know how, or we do have to...ya, I think we have to put it in our education to some extent. Maybe not as much as in the past but we need to still keep this reconciliation process going.</p>
Reville	<p>Thanks very much.</p>

5. North teacher interview - 15 October 2009 (also interviewed as a former student in Appendix A)

Reville	A couple of questions just linking back to this morning. If you visited a foreign country and someone asked you, who are you? How would you answer?
North	I'd say I'm a South African, I am a teacher, I'd explain a bit about where I come from, I come from the city and I've grown up in the city and I teach in the city, and...ya, and I'm a Christian.
Reville	And would you describe yourself differently if somebody in South Africa asked you, who are you?
North	Slightly differently perhaps. My teaching is my profession, so I might say, I'm a teacher, I might tell them where I live, and that I am South African, because as I said, people ask me where I'm from, so...I am South African.
Reville	How would you describe your learners in terms of socio-economic terms?
North	Lower to working class backgrounds, ya...and I'd say that's eighty percent of the school, with a few middle class children.
Reville	And how would you say the learners interact in the classroom, outside the classroom?
North	Um...depends on the grades, I think. Lower down they interact more easily, more freely, whereas higher up there's a lot more friction, clash of personalities...ya...but otherwise the lower grades, I teach grade 4s, so they get along quite well, but higher up there's a bit more...clash, personalities, I'd say.
Reville	So basically personalities, you're not feeling that the other kind of issues coming in, the kind of socio-economic at all?
North	Um...no, no, I don't think so.
Reville	Do any social barriers from the past manifest themselves in your classroom?
North	Um...I think...social? I think the social barriers from the past perhaps affect the learning barriers now. Like for example the fact that we had a homeland system and all of that, and black schools and...so lots of people were restricted to certain areas,

	<p>and...with democracy and with the removal of certain laws, people started to move more freely into certain areas. But it takes a while, I mean, it costs money to live in the suburbs, so even though the laws disappeared people didn't probably have money, so it's taken a while and I think what's happening now is that there's sort of a boom of people who are moving into the area and so there's lots of kids in the class who come from areas where they haven't been exposed to lots of English as a first language. I know we teach English as a second language, but essentially we are first...the teachers, like most of us are first language speakers so we teach it as we know it, as first language. And lots of children battle, so...ya, that whole...I think it has affected...those social barriers have affected or manifested themselves in the class.</p>
Reville	<p>Would you say different types of barriers from when you were at school?</p>
North	<p>Yes. Definitely, far more, language is definitely an issue. And because of that children really battle. Maths is a problem. Reading and writing mostly those are...those core skills are very...the standard is very low, and I think the children really battle whereas when I was in school, I don't think...if there was such a problem, I don't think I was really aware of it as much...let me think...ya, well, I suppose I did go to a white school, a former model C school, so most of my classmates were English speaking anyway so I suppose I wouldn't really have noticed those problems. I suppose they did exist, but they just seemed...I seem to be more aware of them now teaching.</p>
Reville	<p>And while we were speaking before, you mentioned that you find that you use a lot of rote learning. Can you just tell me a bit more about that?</p>
North	<p>Um...I was saying that it's so much harder to teach across all the abilities, all the learners' abilities, so one common place is rote learning, so it's just so much easier to say, this is the answer, go and learn it, than to say, for example, to take Vygotsky and to develop each child's...to get into each child's zone, you know. It's just so much harder with forty children times four classes to do that. So it's just easier to say, this is the answer, go and learn it and come back and regurgitate it tomorrow. It's not good but...</p>
Reville	<p>...And do you think that it helps those kids who are battling with</p>

	their reading and writing in any way...or...?
North	In some ways. Like, for example, I battled with maths when I was in high school, so when the teacher said, this is the...like she'd write out formulas and you'd go and learn the formula, and then you come and you apply the formula, that's...you don't really know what's going on, but you know the formula so that's fine. Which is bad because if you blank out and you can't remember the formula then you don't know what's going on. But I was lucky and I've got a good memory, so it didn't happen to me, so I made it using...that was my method. And obviously for the children as well if they can manage to...it certainly doesn't help them, if you can't spell, you can't spell, you can't read, you can't read, so...for some it helps them because they get to get onto the next grade but it doesn't really help the core of knowledge, their basics.
Reville	And in terms of all your lessons you prepared for me to come and observe, what outcomes were you hoping to achieve?
North	For them to engage with their parents, to find out about what their parents experienced, and just to share...just to engage in that sharing of information from another generation. (<i>end of pre lesson interview</i>)
Reville	(<i>post lesson interview</i>) You picked up on EMS and as I said to you, it is something that was linked to history in the past. What are your aims in terms of teaching EMS?
North	Um...I think to just give them a basic overview of...I don't know, I feel like it's lots of it is general knowledge and things like budgeting and saving and introducing them to tourism and entrepreneurs and that kind of thing, so just giving them a basic general idea about those kind of economics, a basic idea of economics.
Reville	And you made a strong link to history today, is that something that you generally do, or not necessarily?
North	Not necessarily, I don't think. Now that I think about it, lots of systems that we have done...like we did, self sufficient in modern societies, and that had a strong history link to...to history and that was nice as well, but it wasn't actually a conscious decision.
Reville	This use of kind of like oral history, was it something you've done before or did you do it especially for today?

North	No, I can't say that I've done it before.
Reville	Would you do it again...?
North	...Yes, definitely. Now that I've done it and I've seen how much they've enjoyed it. The only problem I would say is, what do I do when four or five or a handful of them don't participate, it makes it a bit hard. Whereas otherwise I'm providing the material and I can ensure that they will do the work, so that's the only drawback I would say with that, but otherwise, ya, I'd definitely be keen to do it again. I enjoyed it as well.
Reville	Did it change the classroom dynamic for you?
North	Yes, lots of the so-called quiet children, they participated very nicely. The little girls they...usually lots of the time the boys are very dominant in their answering the questions and I found more...I don't know how to express it but far more willing to answer questions. With the girls it's usually a bit hard to draw stuff out of them, but today it was nice because they were far more giving. I think that was good.
Reville	I was sitting there thinking, there was the whole comparison between the answers and stuff, and it really wasn't about, in a sense, engaging with the past, except when the kids were going [inaudible] but something did come up which I found quite interesting, was the issue of Zimbabwe.
North	Yes.
Reville	And I wondered...I mean, you dealt with that, and I just wondered, is this an issue, kind of like who's a foreigner, who's South African, has that ever come up?
North	Not really. It's quite interesting though because I do know that child, this was the first time he's ever said anything about his dad being from Zimbabwe. So it makes me wonder if more of them...I do know one of the other children is also from Swaziland, but I mean, that sounds far more exotic than Zimbabwe, you know, so he won't really be afraid to say you come from Swaziland. So possibly, I don't know, so this is like, that was the first time I encountered that so...
Reville	Okay. There was that kind of sense of the child laughing at another, you immediately picked up on that and just shot it down.

North	Ya.
Reville	But I just wondered if that was a symptom of more [inaudible] or not? What was your take on it?
North	I think in general they do have this idea, they don't know much about Zimbabwe, they only know what they've heard about in the news and whatever. So it's also very naïve...their own little naïve understanding when they'll just make fun of everything. So ya...um...it is, it possibly is symptomatic of their own prejudices against foreigners. I know we had another little boy, he was from Nigeria, he spoke with an accent, and we all thought it was fabulous because it was quite cool, so...
Reville	So it actually counted in his favour.
North	His favour, ya.
Reville	Do you think that by using kind of a cooperative strategy like you did, has it changed the relationships amongst your learners?
North	Um...it does...they have been placed into their groups based on their behaviour, the ones who sit in the front are the naughty ones, so...ya...I think also it allows the quieter children also, to share, whereas if we had just done it whole class-wise, they probably wouldn't have. And ya, it's nice to hear this one talk about that one and you know that they've shared that information with each other. I think that's good, ya.
Reville	And did you find this changed the relationship between you and the class?
North	Um...in a way. I think it sort of removes my influence on discussions and...so it's also a bit difficult because sometimes they could be talking about all kinds of things (laughs) so I'm not as in control of the learning situation. But it's fine because I know them, I chose them specific...I chose this class, because most of them I know will do what's required of them, so...ya.
Reville	But I mean, even though you say that you didn't feel as in control, I mean, you were directing everything that actually happened. I don't know if you were aware of that?
North	Probably not.
Reville	But in terms of where you were moving around, by selecting who was going to do the report back and stuff. And I think that the kids

	actually got into it. They did find it interesting to find out what the other groups...how much did bread cost? It really, I think it did hook into their interest but you kept the process moving.
North	Okay, well, it wasn't a conscious thing.
Reville	I think it's something that one just does, you give...while you're busy doing you can't reflect, and it happened, and you happened next...I would love to see your follow-up. Because what I found was interesting was a link to stuff they'd done previously as well as now, and I think that would also help to make them see the relevance of what you were doing. It wasn't just a [inaudible] about...
North	...An isolated...ya.
Reville	Did the TRC have any impact on you?
North	Um...you mean for this...?
Reville	No, I'm just talking generally.
North	In general...
Reville	I mean, were you aware of it?
North	I was aware of it. I think I was a bit young, I was probably in my early teens or something like that. Ya...in a way, but I think maybe I was also a bit too...nobody really explained it to me so I don't think I really...knew about it really. I think I just remember hearing...seeing on the news, and what does stick out in my mind is very white on this side and then the black crying mother or the sister or the wife or whatever, so that's one thing that sticks out in my mind.
Reville	Do you remember any of the stories, besides that very powerful image?
North	Um...I think I read something quite recently...what was it...um...or something that did stick out, I think, was that...something that came up was that there was actually like informants, black informants, working for the apartheid government, and someone's son was taken by the police and tortured and so on, and...ya, so, I think that was quite strange for me, because I had this picture of white and black and then, for a black person to be on the other side was a bit...ya.

Reville	Alright. Do you think...I mean, I've asked you about reconciliation before, but do you think that the TRC was able to achieve reconciliation for this country?
North	Um...no, I don't think so. I don't think the effects of it are lasting enough, if that makes sense. I mean, it brought closure for those people and their situation, but for lots of people they're still faced with issues from apartheid. I mean, like we spoke about this morning, with the children, with the schools that are the way they have become now, wasn't a miracle cure, there's still lots of side effects. It might have helped being good for those people but like I say, it didn't really fit me and my life, so...no.
Reville	Do you think that it would be important to take maybe the positive sides of the TRC and apply it in our classrooms, that in a sense we can take forward the process?
North	Um...it depends if you deal with, how often you're sort of faced with these issues and how often you have to deal with them in your classroom.
Reville	Do you feel that you are faced with this, or not really?
North	No, I don't think so. Like, maybe when you mentioned like this issue with this...with foreign children and that kind of thing, then yes, then we've got to deal with it, but for the most part, no, I don't think it's something that we need to deal with.
Reville	And do you think that's possible because of you teaching EMS as against SS? Do you think if you were teaching Social Sciences it would be more of an issue?
North	I think so. I think...ya...I think because of the subject material, doesn't really call on these issues, whereas with Social Science and History, it does more and it does require more teaching of those values and more exploring of them and...ya...so...
Reville	So you see it as being quite subject specific then?
North	Um...not always, like for example, you might deal with it in EMS, like the one child said something today about...he asked me if, could black people buy cars in apartheid? So there's the economic link and the history link, and I think if we had had to go into that more, there would have been more need to...
Reville	To go into that. Would you say that there's a need for a

	reconciliatory pedagogy? We are now fifteen years into our democracy.
North	Um...yes...in some ways...like we would, just saying, our school mission statement and our vision uses a lot of the...they're wanting to revise it because it uses lots of the terminology like redress and reconciliation and that kind of thing and tolerance and...some of those issues are still very much relevant, tolerance, all of that. And I think like when you get into this whole mindset of teaching...it takes away from what you're actually trying to do. Like when you focus too much on...values are important, and they should be present in every lesson, and lots of the time, but sometimes it's just nice to share information and share knowledge without an agenda, and just to be a teacher and a facilitator, and ya...
Reville	So kind of a mixed feel.
North	Kind of a mixed feel.
Reville	There's a space and place for it, but it's not necessarily something you would do every day.
North	No. Well, maybe...I mean...I'm just thinking...ya, maybe not every day, but...
Reville	But when the need arose.
North	When the need arises, ya.
Reville	Because...the two examples that have come up in your classroom...and that happened today, it's not to say that immediately you've got to say, oh...
North	Yes.
Reville	But there's something there that might need to be...
North	That might need to be addressed, ya.
Reville	Thanks very much for being willing to let me come into your classroom and to interview you again...

6.a) Page teacher interview – 22 October 2009

Reville	For the purpose of this interview, please state your name and your surname.
Page	...Page.
Reville	How long have you been teaching here?
Page	I've been teaching now for ten months here.
Reville	And teaching Social Sciences?
Page	Well, I have been teaching Social Science, I haven't been doing the prep for it.
Reville	Okay. And what grade are you teaching?
Page	Grade 5.
Reville	Can you give us a general background about yourself that you'd be willing to share.
Page	About teaching or...?
Reville	About you personally.
Page	Personally, I'm extremely passionate about teaching but I feel I'd like to do more of the remedial side of it. I like focusing on individual children and things like that and seeing them focus on it. Very family orientated, very...(laughs)
Reville	Where were you born?
Page	I was born in Johannesburg.
Reville	And at school, where did you go?
Page	School - I went to K... Primary, H... Primary, then K...Primary, and then to B...High School. And further education was at Wits.
Reville	If you visited a foreign country, and somebody asked you, who are you? How would you describe yourself?
Page	I guess I'd...well, first of all I'd have to explain myself as being South African. I have a lot of friends that are on the internet and things like that, and for myself I've described myself as family-based, like sitting at the fire, the braai with friends and things like that. Very private, slightly introverted, and...but then still open, in

	a way.
Reville	And if somebody in South Africa said to you, who are you? How would you describe yourself, would it be any different?
Page	No...oh well, other than the South African, they would understand that side of our personalities and things like that but also private, family-based, things like that.
Reville	How would you describe your learners in socio economic terms?
Page	Socio-economic, I'd say that many of them are sitting with extremely difficult backgrounds, many are staying without parents, with grandparents, so they lack that social background, knowing about what a whole family is. Economically some of them are extremely...are struggling financially, whereas some of them are middle-class, and things like that.
Reville	And would you say your learners interact well in class?
Page	I'd actually say that my class has a lot of disputes. A lot of very different personalities and a lot of raw, emotional backgrounds that cause those disputes.
Reville	And how do you deal with this?
Page	With great difficulty. This year it's kind of been separating them. They will not allow themselves to see the similarities, they only see the differences. (<i>break</i>)
Reville	You were talking before the lesson of how your learners interact, and you said that there were these issues in terms of in the class. What about outside the classroom?
Page	Outside the classroom, a lot of the same squabbles and fights and things like that happen. I've got quite a few examples of kids that will continue fights or continue spats that happen in class, outside of class. So you end up keeping them for detention in order to stop the learner have a situation outside.
Reville	And are you able to get to what's the root of the problem?
Page	No, I don't feel we are able to because you can discuss with them, you can have counselling sessions and at the end of the day I feel, you have the support from the staff, but you don't have the support from home. And the families realise there's a problem but they'll make excuses for the problem.

Reville	So do you call the parents in?
Page	I've called the parents in for a number of students, and they blame it on other students, they blame it on me, and then they blame it on the situation in the classrooms, or the situation that's happening in other classes. But they never actually help with the situation, they never discuss it with their child or anything like that.
Reville	And do you think that the kids socialise outside of school? Are you aware of that?
Page	They have their own cliques and their own friends and things like that within the school that they'll...they'll have fun time with, [inaudible] with out of school. But it's also determined by the religion I've noticed. A lot of the Hindu and Moslem children will sit together because they have similar religions or similar beliefs and things like that, so they stay together, whereas other learners will also stay together because of [inaudible].
Reville	Are there any social barriers in the class that continue to show themselves?
Page	From the parents side, yes. Especially since as a white female they feel that I'm [inaudible] favouritism and some of the teachers have struggled in the school where parents have called them racist. But from the children's side I feel they want to because of their families and their parents saying things, but they don't...if they fight with one another it's because of something silly, it's not because of race or because...ya...[inaudible].
Reville	Would you say that the kids experience different values to ones that maybe you noticed when you were a learner or at university?
Page	I feel they are struggling more with family-based. I came in from a divorced family and for me that was odd in our schools and things like that because a lot of my friends had married families and things like that. Now it's no longer marriage, it's death and violence and things like that they now deal with. A lot of the things they've experienced in their life I couldn't even dream of going through during school and things like that. So I feel in that situation has changed but then also our expectations of the learners are so much higher and so much more that it pressurises them.

Reville	And how would you describe your relationship with the learners?
Page	With some of the learners I've been able to help and assist them and it's been...I have a nice relationship with them. Others unfortunately because of their behaviour problems, I've tried to relate with them, I've tried to discuss things with them and unfortunately I've just never been able to connect with them, or help them, and they see me more as an enemy than someone that can help them.
Reville	Any processes, pedagogies that you use to try and help deal with these barriers?
Page	Um...well, with those learners I find that a lot of the learners that are a discipline problem, that have those emotional backgrounds, strangely some of them that are the extremely strong learners but then they are extremely mature, so you need to give them more challenging work and you need to treat them more maturely. Whereas other learners they've reverted, they act younger, they don't do the activities, they don't do their work, and they suffer in their marks. But with that, I've just kind of learnt to balance it out, with the more mature ones, you're able to give them more challenging tasks and things like that, otherwise you call on them to assist the younger ones, because they like that role, that dominant role, and with the other ones they...as I say, I try to help them and assist throughout the lessons and it's just so I can get through the minimum.
Reville	What are your aims in terms of history teaching for the Social Sciences?
Page	Ooh gosh. I'd love to change everything I've taught this year (laughs). The history, I find that a lot of it...the SS this year, is geography focused. When it does come to history it's kind of...it's just a referral back to time. We were doing natural resources and the learners found out that this is a mineral, it's a resource, it's renewable, or non-renewable, but they didn't actually know how a resource is found in South Africa. So I spent an entire period explaining to them how the Randlords were and how this happened, and they find it unbelievably interesting, they were just voracious for that information, they wanted to learn more.
Reville	So, clearly you saw a link between what you did last year and what you were able to apply in the classroom?

Page	Yes.
Reville	Do you use oral history regularly in your class?
Page	We don't actually. If it wasn't for your assignment, we wouldn't have done it. Like with our interviews and things like that, this group of learners I feel, they cannot work together, so the discussions don't actually flow. And I can get one group to flow and I'll go to another group and then that group will fall apart and the other one will be fine. And you just can't get them all going. So...
Reville	What do you think are the benefits of using oral history, from your experience now?
Page	From my experience now, these learners wouldn't have compared the two. They wouldn't have even thought that there was a difference between the two. Making some of them [inaudible] some of them can see the difference because you can see the background [inaudible] and others can't, and I think it's because they haven't been exposed to it more. With oral history I think if they were exposed to it more then they would have been able to identify certain things.
Reville	And as a teacher, what were the benefits for you?
Page	The benefits for me were...well, one that they did a form of research for themselves. I wasn't...they weren't sitting passively getting the information, they actually had to go and find the information. I found that that was very good as well, the time maybe with their moms or their dads, to find the information, while they had to interview, they had to ask, they had to find out. They had to understand what their parents were saying, you could see some of the learners that their parents explained. Like Leila, she was able to explain what her mother was thinking. Whereas the other learners sat there and said, I remember my mom said this, and that was it. So...ya.
Reville	In terms of oral history, do you feel that you met the outcomes that you were hoping to teach?
Page	Um...I don't think so. The concluding discussion could have been far bigger. I would have preferred to have done this in pairs and have them discuss. Maybe match them different races with one another, different sexes with one another, and put them together

	in pairs rather than in groups. It would have worked far better with my class. Now I realise that but it would have been far better in pairs. And I think with that they would have been able to discuss more, I would have had more participation during the answer and feedback part.
Reville	Because remember pair work is a form of cooperative work.
Page	Yes, I realise that...M told me, oh no, it'll be fine in big groups. I was like, okay (laughs).
Reville	So there was a kind of like, in a sense, a disjuncture between what you would have liked to have done and then being sort of "this is the stuff, this is it". So you felt constrained by that?
Page	Yes. A lot of the class work this year you've been told to do an activity this way, to keep the uniformity along the classes but you can't do it because each class is different.
Reville	Do you think this lesson created a safe space for the learners to discuss something quite difficult?
Page	Some of the learners were able to discuss it. T became extremely emotional about apartheid and I think that's because [inaudible]. You could see where R was trying to give his opinion and R is also quite an aggressive child, if his point isn't seen then [inaudible]. So there if you facilitate it, it will be fine, but like I said, the histories and things like that with some of the learners, the fact that they are aggressive already makes it difficult for us to stay in groups. That's why in pairs you could have put them together with someone that was...[inaudible].
Reville	Do you think that the relationships amongst your learners changed by doing this kind of thing?
Page	I don't believe they were able to change, because they weren't able to actually grasp it, they...some of them had grasped it and seen it. I would have loved to have seen a group where everything we had, for example, W, L, M, together, because their answers were so nice they would have actually debated and discussed [inaudible]. Groupings like that I can see them coming away with a relationship and understanding.
Reville	And what about your relationship with your learners, did you find that it changed while you were going around and facilitating, did you feel that there was stuff that happened that changed your

	relationship or...?
Page	For some learners like T, T is usually extremely introverted, he's afraid of sharing...well, not afraid of sharing, he doesn't know whether it's right, so when I was able to come and talk to him, he opened up, he was able to say things and [inaudible], which I felt was nice. And with him sometimes it happens, sometimes it doesn't, and right there I felt that he was more open and more willing to participate.
Reville	Did the TRC have any impact on you, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission?
Page	Within my family or...? I remember my mom wanted to know the TRC and things like that [inaudible] it's another thing going on. But now I can see the effects of it and the learners are very open to it, especially if something in the news comes up, they turn around, especially the ones with parents that are very politically-minded, like they say, oh, this and this is happening. So I feel for me it doesn't affect me but knowing about it and when the learners do bring it up, allows me to discuss it with them and talk to them.
Reville	What do you understand reconciliation to be?
Page	To reconcile the past with the future first. To develop and grow from it. To repair the damage and to also...not allow it to happen again and also to allow ourselves to see the mistakes, make informed decisions for the future. But I feel, I don't know, with our reconciliation, I feel it is happening in certain areas but not in other areas.
Reville	Can you explain that?
Page	Ya, sure. I look at those that I've gone to on teaching experience, how many of the teachers are meant to be teaching the children that this is how you're meant to [inaudible]. And I actually find that a lot of the teachers separated the learners.
Reville	On what basis?
Page	On the basis of race. And on the basis of them versus us. My brother is even experiencing it with a teacher in his maths class and the teacher will sit and discuss with other learners in another language and leave the rest of the learners out. And that's not reconciliation, that's not showing the learners we have to work

	together. And unfortunately a lot of it is the teacher's fault. Even in our staff, sometimes I have to block my ears in the staff room because I think, this isn't the way you're meant to talk, this isn't the way you're meant to live your life. So...ya.
Reville	So these issues keep on coming up. The one that's kind of coming up in the newspapers at the moment is what's happening at Free State University. I don't know if you've been following that at all?
Page	Was that that video with the students? Yes.
Reville	The video, and Jonathan Jansen who's now the new Vice Chancellor and he's said, the criminal trial will go ahead, but as the university, he's saying as a reconciliatory gesture, we're going to allow the guys to come back and finish their studies.
Page	[inaudible]
Reville	Anyway, do you think that the TRC achieved reconciliation?
Page	I think at the time it opened a lot of old wounds. It...a lot of old wounds, a lot of families, but then also a lot of families were allowed to grieve and let go. They finally had closure on the situation. So in ways, yes, open up old wounds, but in other ways many families were given that closure, so I'd say fifty/fifty. Maybe more, further reconciliation.
Reville	Do you think it's possible to use the positive aspects of the TRC, to developing what I call a reconciliatory pedagogy in the classroom?
Page	What do you mean by a reconciliatory pedagogy? By having and discussing it, opening it up, keeping it open to all...?
Reville	Take the stories in your second year. Just, for me, that was one of the positive things, because people were able to say, this is what happened to me, to my family, or that kind of thing, do you think that's...?
Page	I think it can. With a lot of the situations in the past I try to get both sides of the story especially when there's a fight, I listen to one child and then I listen to the other. I find it happens but maybe in the older age, not the intermediate, more the senior phase. Because they're able to think more about these situations and cause and effect. Whereas here, they understand that there

	is something that happens once you've done something wrong, but they don't understand that this action causes that. So...
Reville	Do you think an oral history lesson like the one that I observed you teaching now - could that form a basis of a reconciliatory pedagogy?
Page	Yes, it could. Especially if you...they're very open to stories and things like that. So if you worked it...I think more of an autobiography, rather than an image [of the old South African Coat of Arms] that tied in with our teaching. But with a case study, a lot of them will ask you about Hector Pieterse, you have to give them an oral history like my [fourth year] Soweto project. They would have been able to read it and see it and especially because it comes from a child's perspective. They would have been able to connect with it far better than they would have with the image. None of them had experienced this image, none of them had seen it before, none of them understood it, so for them to have a story they could relate to it. [Aside discussion of the possibility of a future follow up visit].
Reville	Do you think we need or is it desirable to have a reconciliatory pedagogy. We're fifteen years into democracy, do you think we still need it?
Page	Yes. Because like I say, a lot of the children have been affected by their parents and their families and things, so they take that anger from home...even though some of the parents haven't even experienced it - Mom is twenty-three [inaudible] and so at the end of the day for them to be able to reconcile things and be able to learn from their mistakes.
Reville	Thanks very much.

6.b) Page re-interview to clarify inaudible parts of first teacher interview- 29 January 2010

Reville	The question was: are there any social barriers in the class that continue to show themselves? And you said, definitely from the parents' side. And you said some of the teachers are struggling, there are parents who called them racist, but it was from the children's side, 'I feel they want to because of their families and their parents saying things, but they don't. If they fight with one another it's because of something silly, it's not because of race or because...'
Page	No, I agree, if they fight it's about small things, like so and so stole my eraser or my pencil, this or that, or for them it's also attacking family members. I think I told you that one white little child in my classroom that was, oh so and so called my mother a name, and he would continuously come up to me and say, but they...what's it...they demeaned or they broke down my parents or my mother or my aunt or something. So for them it was more that they were more defensive of their family but they weren't as much about race. And it's actually, a lot of the teachers joke around about it, the kids joke around about it with the teachers. Like I heard a story, they turn around and say, ma'am you've got another white child in the school. But you've got so and so in your grade. And they say, no, no, no, she's part of us; this one's a new one. So for them it's not that it's a restriction or a racial thing, it's more personal.
Reville	So it's more personal and it's more who's part of us? And if you're in a class you're part of us, and if you've just arrived you're not.
Page	And then also something I became aware of after you spoke to me, was family feuds. Some families are actually feuding where their children are in the same grade where the children continue to feud within the classroom. And that's same race not...
Reville	That's very interesting. Yes, but that's a question mark of conflict carrying down across the generations?
Page	With this family, from what I can understand, it's the grandparents and it's just continued and continued.
Reville	Let's have a look now at page 5. The question was: do you think

	the lesson created a safe space for the learners to discuss something quite difficult? And you said, yes, some of the learners were able to discuss it. T... became extremely emotional about apartheid, and I think that's because?
Page	I think it's because his family is still experiencing the effects of it. They're living in townships, the AIDS pandemic, and all of that they see as a connection to apartheid has now affected him, and he is extremely emotional about it. I remember I met him after rugby and he turned around and he's like, yes, but the white man is different. I'm white of skin, that's my cells in my body, it doesn't mean I'm a different person, it's just that my cells are different. And he turned around and said, yes, but...and I said, I'm here teaching you and I care for you and you care for me, that means we are fine and [inaudible] we're working together. And he still held on to that belief adamantly that because of apartheid, because of this, because of that, his entire life has been affected and changed.
Reville	He's truly grappling with those issues. It's kind of his daily life.
Page	Yes. I think it's also, there he sees his grandmother hasn't received a good education and therefore his mother didn't, and it's just a continued...like a domino effect, from one [inaudible] struggle continued.
Reville	And does he feel that he's getting a good education now? That he's going to be able to break the cycle?
Page	I think for him, I think at school he feels he's getting a better education, but the problem is when he goes home and he needs assistance and that extra support, he doesn't receive it. So immediately, he's still negative about the education system because it's still not giving him what he needs.
Reville	You could see where R... was trying to give his opinion and R... is also quite an aggressive child. If his point isn't seen then does it become even more aggressive?
Page	Yes. I think it was R... we were discussing, what R... does, he becomes extremely aggressive and he was one of the ones that was always involved in fights and [inaudible] defensive, and rather than talking about his [inaudible] he would fight. And then the other learners would become defensive and it would just end up in a big squabble rather than...

Reville	It was a spiral.
Page	Yes.
Reville	You were talking about reconciliation and you said that you felt that it's happening in certain areas but not in other areas, and I asked you to explain that, and you said that when you went on teaching experience how many of the teachers are meant to be teaching the children that this is how you're meant to...and I actually find that a lot of the teachers separated the learners...was that according to race, according to class...?
Page	No, that's...for me, I think, you're meant to teach them as a whole and ensure that together you can improve their knowledge. For example, you have a weaker child next to a stronger child, or just to give them that extra support. Whereas now I felt that we are streaming them and things like that. ...
Reville	You were talking about that whole thing that just happened with the University of the Free State that Jonathan Jansen, and saying that he's going to allow the guys to come back and finish their studies. What is your opinion because it was completely...Do you think it's a good thing, bad thing?
Page	You know what the thing is, I can understand the emotions behind it, that people would feel watching those videos. I watched them and I think it was on Carte Blanche or the news, and I watched them. You think okay, fine, they're silly students and they're not thinking further than the enjoyment of the moment. Maybe it would have started out that they did it as a joke, I don't think they were meant to demean a certain race, but it was still demeaning to the people. Not a race, the people. So for me I feel, yes, okay fine, allow them back to finish their studies but they still need to show them that they need to be punished for their actions, that you can't treat others the way they did and not be corrected. And then for the women that were involved, I think it's also kind of a conclusion to something that might have hurt them in their lives. Because if you were to stop them from getting their education you would teach them nothing. This happened and that's it, they would probably maybe become racist because we did this to a black person, we lost out on their future. So it could have a negative effect.
Reville	Yes, it's just quite interesting, there's been a follow up to that in a

	<p>sense that if the students had chosen not to come back, then there is going to be kind of like a process where they actually meet the women and try and sort things out before the court case. So I don't know if they're trying to undermine in a sense the court case, or if they're just trying to say, this is something...and I know that's Jonathan Jansen's view, that you can't resolve this kind of stuff in courts.</p>
Page	<p>If you take it into a court arena it's more law. Everything is based on law and things like that and the emotional side to it or the mental side to it will be lost. It will all be, they broke the law, the Constitution... nothing will be sorted. And maybe some parties in our country will think that that's fair and others won't. And then we'll always have a debate.</p>
Reville	<p>It is a debate in terms of, if you go to court then you'll get justice. Is this a just kind of thing? So it kind of...it's a conflict.</p>
Page	<p>But then there's a problem with that, that whole thing that justice is balancing innocent until proven guilty. Now with it being in the media, some of the people have made their own verdict that at the end of the day would those boys really be able to get a fair verdict? Would people in society accept that verdict? Because that's the most important thing. If the courts go easy, or are lenient with them, then if people don't accept that, then [inaudible]. So they'll never move on from this.</p>
Reville	<p>You know where the difficulty lies – in fact I was born in Bloemfontein – it's that it's so tricky, and I mean, I think Jonathan Jansen is trying to do something interesting in a very difficult situation, because there is lots of racism. As they said, the kids were born and bred; they've grown up in a particular way. And kind of like whatever happens, one part of the community is going to see them as guilty as all hell, and the other part is going to say, where's the problem, it was a joke? And it's very difficult to balance that and to deal and to grapple with that in such a way that both sides can start to understand where the other side is coming from. And the divide in Bloem is still great.</p>
Page	<p>But the sad thing is that no-one can remove the black and white. If you could remove that then maybe you could find an equal way to solve it, but because black and white [inaudible] it becomes far deeper and far more...</p>

Reville	There's a history and you can't turn this incident outside of [inaudible].
Page	But even the Americans are still struggling with it. And they've had over fifty years of non-slavery and civil rights and things, and they're still struggling. We're still young in this so we have to get there.
Reville	Okay, the last response. You were talking about the fact that the kids have been affected by their parents and their families, and that they take their anger from home. Even though you said, some of the parents haven't gone [inaudible]. Can you remember what you meant? You say for them to be able to reconcile things and be able to learn from their mistakes, what did you actually mean there? It's also in the context of saying is a reconciliatory pedagogy still needed? I mean, fifteen years down the line...
Page	But you see I think...what I meant by [inaudible] the parents is for us a lot of our parents are extremely well educated, they were given the opportunities to improve their education and things like that, so most of them, there are still those who due to Bantu education, and this and that and whatever, they were affected. I agree that they are affected. But there are some parents that were able to get education to further themselves and to develop. And things became more [inaudible] 1994. I had a parent last year that was 24...she's the same age as me, and I was shocked that...she was raped and that's why she had the child and she had the same education and she had her parents who had an education. So I think when I said that is that they weren't as affected as most people were. But I think that our education needs to be reconciliatory, in a way yes, it needs to be reconciliatory, we need to be able to talk to the learners, we need to discuss these things openly, but until the [inaudible] you can't reconcile.
Reville	It's a Catch 22. How do you deal with that anger?
Page	With T and things like that I felt that he wasn't ready...I tried to talk to him, I took him aside, and he could talk to me fine. But the moment it became a discussion on apartheid, that aggression would come out. We would work perfectly in all the subjects, he actually, I think he enjoyed my lessons, but when it came to race, it was like switch was turned and we would never see eye to eye. So I think through discussion and education, and maybe in very

	bad situations involving the parents, talking to them...this is the situation we need to make your child realise that yes these things did happen but we can move forward from here. I think that's the most important, is getting the parents involved because they're the ones that are teaching their children.
Reville	Another question relates to when you were a student, when I asked you for help with the assignment, you didn't let me have your story, and I just wondered if there is a reason for that?
Page	I think you asked certain people and I think...I also felt maybe my story was similar to a lot of people. My mom was raised in an Afrikaans family and she had [inaudible] education and her family was quite racist.
Reville	Can I just tell you that your mom's story actually came out through the interviews in a sense that somebody said what she found so fascinating was that your mom was on one side of the track and her family was on the other side.
Page	Literally.
Reville	And I was just quite fascinated by that. And I really thought, I want to hear the story.
Page	I think I have it my files....
Reville	I also wanted to ask you something else, when I spoke to you in your fourth year, you said something about the fact that you had had quite a bad experience during that second year, and I don't know whether it was in class or if it was outside of class?
Page	On teaching experience?
Reville	It wasn't on teaching experience, it was just...
Page	Oh, I walked out of [other] lectures and things like that because it would turn to race, and the one lecturer and E...he would turn around and he would take up a racist point of view and then continue, and it became a bashing of the whites and the blacks and this and that. And then in that lecture he turned around and the conversation was turned to, no, it's no longer a racial problem it's now a class problem and he would try to discuss it from that point of view, and the lecturer actually turned around and said, no, no, no, I'm going to go back to the race issue. And immediately N... and I both sat and talked to one another and

	<p>said, no, if you want to continue on the race then you've got to make sure that it's an [inaudible] discussion, and I actually walked out of that lecture. And she continued, she stayed, and then when she left, she shouldn't have stayed, it wasn't...at the end of the day her father, he loved her mother no matter what the racial [inaudible] were... they've got this whole situation where [inaudible]. So for us, in our lectures and things like that, I found that second year was extremely tense when it came to race and things like that and when you did have those discussions, when you tried to see it from their perspectives, we felt attacked.</p>
Reville	<p>And did this assignment, this whole process, did that help at all with that dynamic?</p>
Page	<p>Talking to you? Yes, I found that I can see it in my classes now. I can actually see where [inaudible] different points [inaudible] work on those things. I notice the aggression but after this assignment I especially notice when apartheid was mentioned [inaudible] so I was able to see after your [inaudible] just to close it up and talk to them. They all have the same ideas and the same views, and when we were able to talk as a class they were able to voice their individual points of view, and then those that became [inaudible] and in that form we were able to discuss it more.</p>
Reville	<p>And just to go back to varsity, did doing this oral history, working in the cooperative groups, did that help the dynamic there?</p>
Page	<p>Yes, it did. I enjoyed it. Because when we got together and we discussed things and whatever, we noticed that there were (parallels) and I think we did discuss and I was a little bit worried at first because I kind of did try to...I told my mom's story honestly, but then I didn't want to go further back to my grandparents because they were quite racist, but they were raised during a racist period. So with that, I also felt that I was watching my tongue, but when we started talking and we started becoming more comfortable with one another we were able to say, I don't agree with the way my mom was raised because of this, so we were able to explore things but also in a safe...</p>
Reville	<p>It was a safe environment.</p>
Page	<p>Yes.</p>
Reville	<p>Look, that's what I was hoping. Because it's something that has</p>

	<p>always worried me incredibly in terms of our teaching at Wits and like I was expecting to find classes much more integrated and... then coming to School A, has it been a comfortable experience for you?</p>
Page	<p>It's been a comfortable experience for me to come into the class because I feel I'm not a racist person. A child is a child to me. I've actually enjoyed it far more because I find that these children can be far more than a private school...it would be a lot easier to teach in a private school because the classes would be smaller but I find that I'm doing okay. But as a teacher outside of the school the first thing a lot of people ask me, and it's not only family, it's family, friends, everyone, so what's the ratio? And immediately I get that question I get so furious because I think you know what, they're kids. But then when they start hearing me talking about my kids, with the names and things, like I say, so and so did so well, then they're like, what's the ratio? And immediately the value that's put on my teaching is put onto the race and the child. So it infuriates me.</p>
Reville	<p>How do you deal with that?</p>
Page	<p>My biggest thing is that I turn around and I tell them honestly that I work at a school that is predominantly black. Then I say that these children [inaudible]. I feel I'm doing a good here, I feel that the children need me and they are getting a good education and for me I start defending my...but that's the worse thing is I start defending my choice in life, my reasoning behind teaching at a school like this. And I defend myself, that's how I deal with it.</p>
Reville	<p>Okay, you've just not reached the point where you just ignore as a self-defence.</p>
Page	<p>But I can't ignore it, because someone is actually putting value...if I was teaching at a private school where I was teaching fifteen kids that were mainly white, and because they put more value on my teaching abilities. So I don't think I will ever reach the point where it's going to be okay just to ignore it and move on.</p>

7. Rabinowitz teacher interview – 7 October 2010

Reville	How long have you been teaching at School C?
Rabinowitz	I started here in June 2008, so just over a year and a half.
Reville	And have you always taught Social Sciences as part of your class?
Rabinowitz	At School C we teach all learning areas, so yes.
Reville	And the grade you teach is grade six.
Rabinowitz	Grade six, I started grade five, a “skip” class.
Reville	Can you please give me a brief general background about yourself, anything that you’re willing to share with us.
Rabinowitz	As far as my professional...anything? I don’t know how I became a teacher, I actually never envisioned myself being a teacher. I always wanted to be a lawyer, and I never got the marks to do so, so when it came to studying my father said, just pick a degree. And I took a pen and I went eenie meenie minie mo, and it was teaching. So that’s how that happened. And it was just fate I suppose, because I found myself doing something that I actually thoroughly enjoy and love. I’m 29 this year, I’ve been married for nearly two years, with a little boy, and I’m very family orientated.
Reville	If you visited a foreign country and someone asked you, who are you, how would you describe yourself?
Rabinowitz	I’m sociable, bubbly, I’m not shy, I hate confrontation...I respect my elders, that’s part of my values and morals, and I’m a proud Jew, that’s the basis of who I am.
Reville	And would your answer be any different if someone in South Africa asked you the question: who are you?
Rabinowitz	No. No. I think it would be quite obvious that I’m a white female living equally, but no, the same.
Reville	How would you describe your learners in socio economic terms at this school?
Rabinowitz	I have one white boy and one white girl in my class. The boy is actually new, so there was only one white girl in this class at grade 4. There are no Jewish children in my class, I’m the only

	<p>class that has no Jewish children...so I am the only class in this school that has no Jewish children in. I would say 80% of my class come from wealthy...I wouldn't say wealthy, I'd say middle class homes where their parents work and if they are able to afford the school fees. I've got two children in my class whose parents can't afford the school fees and are really struggling, and might be told to leave because there's no money. I've got one child whose mother abandoned her and she lives with her father. And...I'm just trying to think...I've got three Indian boys all very well behaved, academics, good children. That's about it.</p>
Reville	<p>Are there any social barriers from the past that continue to show themselves in the classroom? And if yes, how do you deal with this problem?</p>
Rabinowitz	<p>I don't think so. I think...at E... we're fortunate because these children have been brought up with an integrated class. So, no, I don't think so. I do notice though that as far as the white boy goes, none of the kids want to play with him, because he has come into this class this year, and they've got their clique. The white girl, she plays with all the black girls, she's the only white girl in the class...she actually speaks like them, like her accent is very African, so we actually giggle about that, that she's...she calls herself a chocolate...a Top Deck, a white and yeah...so that's what she is. And the Indians, they tend to make a joke now and then, agh, you're so clever because you're an Indian, but other than that, I don't think there's anything that's really serious, that needs to be confronted and worked upon.</p>
Reville	<p>It's just something that I noticed while I was in the classroom, when you read out that bit about the boy who said that his father...I don't know if it was his father or not...he chose to go to school, but it was a choice that he made because most went hunting. Did you notice the response of the class to that?</p>
Rabinowitz	<p>The Bushmen?</p>
Reville	<p>Yes, yes. And how did you feel when you heard that?</p>
Rabinowitz	<p>You know what, because it came from the same kids that always tend to make jokes when it's inappropriate, I actually just...I don't know if you saw, I gave the one a look, as if to say, that is so inappropriate. Because they weren't saying, oh, Bushmen, as though, to give them the kind of respect they deserve. It was very derogatory. As if, ha, ha, ha, Bushmen.</p>

	Like, get with the program. So I don't think it was a racial thing because they're all black, but it was more like, what are the Bushmen today? Why would they want to learn about hunting? So...but they knew it was inappropriate when I gave them the look. I think they realised it.
Reville	And is that something that you would actually address, not directly, I mean, you gave the look, but is that something that you would address?
Rabinowitz	I maybe would have had...because normally M would say, what did I do? Then I probably would have elaborated. But I think he realised so I actually didn't go further.
Reville	How would you describe the relationship between you and your learners?
Rabinowitz	My learners...personally, I have the most difficult class in the school. We have a discipline problem in this school, the boys are very rowdy, very disruptive, disrespectful, they're naughty, and it's a challenge for every teacher that actually gets to the school. In fact, the grade six teacher who was meant to have them really didn't want to teach them and that's why I was then moved into grade six. So they are a big challenge for me, I would say that this year has been the biggest challenge in my teaching career. They're difficult, they're a very difficult class. They...
Reville	And what kind of reasons do you think makes them so difficult?
Rabinowitz	I don't know what it is. I actually don't know what it is. There's a certain...there's a group of, I'd say, maybe three boys, they're like the ringleaders. And whilst I have probably the cleverest class, I have the class with the most academics every term; I've also got the weakest class as well. So it's like a real, you know, big scale. But...they tend to see me as their friend. And I'm really struggling with that. You know, I have one girl who says to me, my oldest sister is older than you, and that's a problem. Because now she sees me on a different level, but I'm getting there. Look, we're in October and I'm still waving my white flag, but it will get there I hope, I hope.
Reville	What is your understanding of cooperative learning?
Rabinowitz	Cooperative learning would be the group work and I suppose

	where the weaker children are getting...I don't want to say pulled along, but assisted by the stronger children.
Reville	And what are your aims in teaching history as part of the social sciences?
Rabinowitz	To get them to be as passionate as I am about it. I loved history, all through school, all through high school, all through varsity, I chose it as a major, I loved history. So that would be my goal, for them to be passionate about...especially South African history.
Reville	And do you use oral history regularly with your class?
Rabinowitz	You know, it's so difficult, because...I wouldn't even know where to find (other) resources. The only resources you can really do is what I used with this lesson in terms of interviewing the parents. What I find the most difficult is that a lot of the parents aren't interested in helping a lot. So if I say, go home and do this, you'll get, I'd say out of a class of 17, 12 of them brought home decent answers, 5 of them just slapped answers onto a piece of paper. So I know that whilst for the 12 it might be beneficial, but for the rest it's just a waste of their time. Sorry.
Reville	And so basically you'd only use it for the democracy purpose then?
Rabinowitz	Pretty much, because that is something that I think the parents could relate to. As far as the syllabus goes, I don't think the parents...like when I taught them about [inaudible] and Zimbabwe they were all like, what? What's that? So I think where it relates to the family, parents, wherever I can find oral resources, then yes, so probably democracy would be the easiest, yes.
Reville	And any particular advantages or disadvantages of using an oral history approach?
Rabinowitz	What I liked about this particular lesson was...it was actually, the idea stemmed from, as I said, we had a grandparent's day at our school, where the grandparents were invited to come, and they were supposed to do an activity, and in my class it turned out that it was actually an interview session where the grandparents sat there and they started telling us about...you know, because the one grandfather said, wow, we never had

	<p>this when we were children, he looked around the classroom. So when you said to me, try do an oral one, I knew that this was what I needed to do. And it was good for the kids because they got to interact with their grandparents, which I'm sure most of them don't. Also, it was nice for them to see...like you can stand and you can say, apartheid this and apartheid that, that's why I needed to use the pictures as well, because I know that they would never have appreciated it if I hadn't done what I did. So the oral history, I think, maybe hit a [inaudible] part for them because it was more personal.</p>
Reville	<p>Do you think that the lesson created a safe space for learners to discuss kind of difficult issues from the past?</p>
Rabinowitz	<p>I think in the classroom it would have. I think because we had the other class there listening and maybe they felt a bit more intimidated. I did notice though that when we came back to class, when I was walking around the different groups and seeing their answers, they were more open to me. So I think yes, I think if I had to do this lesson again, which I probably would, I think the class might open up a bit more, yes. And my class are very story based. They've always got a story to tell, so they are very open.</p>
Reville	<p>Do you think the relationship amongst the learners changed in any way?</p>
Rabinowitz	<p>No. There was no need for it to change. Everyone is equal in my class.</p>
Reville	<p>Did the TRC have any impact on you?</p>
Rabinowitz	<p>Me personally? No.</p>
Reville	<p>Did you not see anything on the radio, on TV?</p>
Rabinowitz	<p>You know, I must be honest with you, when it was happening, I was in a different space. I wouldn't say that I was involved as I would have liked to have been, but if I look back now and if I had to reflect on it now, I would say, it's much like, the other trial from the Holocaust, it's much like that, and I don't know, I don't think...I think it's too late to do something, it was just too late. It's like, what's the point in punishing someone when it's over and done with and we're supposed to have lived in harmony and together, and unity. So, I don't know, I don't think it would</p>

	have affected me, no.
Reville	What's your understanding of reconciliation?
Rabinowitz	Reconciliation would be, I suppose, coming together, uniting in harmony, peace.
Reville	Do you think that the TRC helped us achieve reconciliation in this country?
Rabinowitz	No.
Reville	Would you say that South Africa is not a reconciled country?
Rabinowitz	<i>(laughs)</i> I suppose all it did was just put a nametag on someone, to say you did this, you did this, you did that. You know the blame game. I think, after...you know, we talk about how nicely Mandela came out, forgiving, and what would happen if he didn't, if he came out angry? But I think all the TRC did was just, as I say, place blame, place blame, place blame, let it go, and let's move on. What are we sixteen years into democracy, we're still blaming things on apartheid and the children that have moved through the education system are now working...when we started our education system in '94, [inaudible] '97 I think, so they should have matriculated by now, and we've still got the blame game. And then we've got political figures, I won't mention any names, but are still saying, it's the white man, it's the white this, it's the white, white, white, white, so, no, I don't think so.
Reville	Do you think there might be a need for what I call a reconciliatory pedagogy?
Rabinowitz	Definitely. Definitely. We're reconciled, but as I said to you, it wasn't because they came out and still blamed. So had we all just done as Nelson Mandela had done, dropped it, forgot about it, changed the laws, yes, absolutely, I think.
Reville	And I'm going to pick up on, you're 'proudly Jewish'. If you think about going back to the Holocaust and kind of that time, and you mentioned sort of looking at what happened in Germany, do you think that it would have...sort of worked here to actually have trials the same as the Nuremberg Trials? Do you think it was needed?
Rabinowitz	You see, once again, no, I don't think...I don't think it made

	<p>much of a difference. Like, yes, the people that were responsible for it, had their sentence, went to jail, death sentence, whatever they got. But then again, it happened, it's over with, punish those, yes, but let's move on. So...I suppose I'm contradicting myself here because with the Holocaust it's okay, but with apartheid it's not okay. With the Holocaust, you see it's...you've put me in a bit of a pickle here.</p>
Reville	<p>Take your time to think, you don't have to...</p>
Rabinowitz	<p>I'm living in it. So I'm living it now. Then I wasn't. So, to turn back and say...I suppose...okay...so to turn back now and say, it's too late to punish those but yet for the Nuremberg Trials, it's okay. And then I thought in my head, but this is the Holocaust, we're talking about millions and millions and millions and millions of Jews, and here we're talking about...how many black people died? I can't even tell you how many black people died in the struggle. So...but it's been rectified, now. And I suppose it was rect...I don't know...next question. I'm really contradicting myself, but you can see that for me...</p>
Reville	<p>It's a very difficult issue. I'm not meaning to put you on the line here.</p>
Rabinowitz	<p>I know I'm contradicting myself, I know. That's why I think I'm actually finding it difficult to answer because it's okay for the Holocaust but it wasn't okay for apartheid, because I am living it now and as a white South African living in post apartheid, sixteen years into democracy, we are still struggling to unite as one. So something else needs to be done pretty much, where if I had to look back, okay, I wasn't around, but no-one...okay, if you do you're silly, but if you look back at Germany now you're not going to call them 'those Germans'...you know, they're Germans. I've forgiven, I'm sure a lot of our people have forgiven; it's over with.</p>
Reville	<p>Was any member of your family involved?</p>
Rabinowitz	<p>Ummm...well, my grandfather's parents were, but not directly. They fled before it was...but I do know of people that were involved, so...and I've heard their stories. And it touches because it is personal.</p>
Reville	<p>Have you ever thought of bringing that into the classroom?</p>

Rabinowitz	Funny, I have, but...I must be honest with you, it's so hard to stick to the curriculum as it is. There's not enough time. So for me to now bring in the Holocaust, would take at least two weeks of teaching, and if I had to say to my kids, what was the Holocaust? They wouldn't know. So I've actually asked if we could bring in the Diary of Anne Frank to read, but I was shot down. They said there's other stuff that's more important. They want to focus on South African more than the Holocaust.
Reville	And is it not possible to make kind of like a brief reference and comparison?
Rabinowitz	I suppose it is possible. I have mentioned to them before, and a lot of them were like, what was that, what was that? I just find that a lot of our history has just been forgotten about and I don't know maybe because we're older and we've learned this history, these kids, even the Twin Towers, they don't know what happened in 2001. So that's what I'm saying. We do make reference every now and then, but I think in order to get the real core of it, you actually need to get into it proper.
Reville	And do you feel that by doing these oral interviews and stuff, it has actually made the kids understand apartheid in a different (way?)...
Rabinowitz	Definitely.
Reville	...from just simply...?
Rabinowitz	Definitely, definitely. As I said, because it is more personal. They've now spoken to someone who's been there, who knows. You know, the same with me, as I said, I spoke to somebody who's been through the Holocaust, and you actually...they learn to empathise with them, they learn to actually say, oh, my gosh, did that really happen? You know, when I read that story to them about the little boy that drowned, a lot of them were like, you know...and it was funny also that picture with that man lying dead and Serena, the little white girl, I saw her face, and she went, oh! It was very personal because...these kids aren't exposed to it all the time. So I think yes, I think the exposure to this was a good thing for them.
Reville	Can I ask you, you know, you talked a bit about saying that you wanted to use the visuals; what kind of underlay that?

Rabinowitz	<p>I'm a very visual person personally, so if I'm told something, I need to see it. Even if I see it in my head. So I know that children, the majority of them are visual. So in order for me to get that impact that I wanted, I needed them to see it. So that was it. Just to...they hear it, they hear it, they hear it, they hear it, they needed to see it. And I still said to one of my colleagues – I showed her the slide the other day, with that man lying dead – is this not too hectic for these kids? And she said, no, they need to see it. So that's why. It was to hit that spot and I think it did.</p>
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8. Sofianos teacher interview – 23 October 2009

Reville	For the purpose of this interview, can you tell me your name and surname.
Sofianos	... Sofianos.
Reville	And how long have you been teaching at this school?
Sofianos	I started January this year, 2009.
Reville	And so that would be, you've been teaching Social Sciences for the same amount of time?
Sofianos	Yes, and prepping Social Sciences.
Reville	And what grades do you teach?
Sofianos	Grade 4.
Reville	So you are the class teacher for this class?
Sofianos	Yes, I am.
Reville	Can you give us a general background about yourself, as to where you come from, anything that you're willing to share.
Sofianos	I come from the south and I teach at School A, which is also in the south, so I stay very close. I've graduated last year from Wits and...
Reville	Where did you go to school?
Sofianos	I went to ...High, which is just up the road here. And...what else?
Reville	And primary school?
Sofianos	I went to ...Primary. What other kind of things would you like...?
Reville	No, that's absolutely fine. So you're born and bred in this area?
Sofianos	Yes.
Reville	So you've come home in a sense to teach.
Sofianos	Yes.
Reville	If you visited a foreign country and somebody said to you, who are you? How would you describe yourself?
Sofianos	I'm Greek South African. Probably South African Greek (laughs).

	I would put South African first.
Reville	Alright. By doing that, I mean, are your parents from Greece or are you Greek speaking? How would you...?
Sofianos	Well, my mom speaks to me majority in Greek and I speak in English (laughs) to her dismay, should I say. And I don't know my father but he was born in the Congo and he is here somewhere, I don't know where, but...ya, but I would say, South African Greek, if I was asked.
Reville	Alright. And would your answer be different if somebody had to ask you, who are you in a South African context or would it stay the same?
Sofianos	In a South African context I'd probably just say Greek then, because I'm in a South African context (laughs).
Reville	How would you describe your learners at this school in terms of socio-economic?
Sofianos	I think it's quite a variety because they do exempt a lot of learners, so there are a lot of domestic workers' children in my class, but there are also learners that have parents that are professionals, so it's quite a mix, I would say, judging from my class.
Reville	How well would you say your class interacts amongst one another?
Sofianos	Well I do encourage that a lot. I think you could have seen from their plays, and it's very difficult to encourage that because they just go berserk, but I do think it's a very important thing for them to have. They have to be able to speak to each other and speak to the teacher and I do think that's a very important form of learning.
Reville	Okay. And outside the classroom, do your learners interact with one another on the playground?
Sofianos	Yes, I would say they do.
Reville	And beyond the school?
Sofianos	Um...they do from what I know...I mean, who knows what is happening. They will have like a birthday party and invite friends in the class, but there will also be children that they don't invite,

	so I'm sure they do choose their friends.
Reville	Would you say there are any social barriers from the past that continue to show themselves in the classroom?
Sofianos	Like racism? Not really, because in my class there are no white children, it's majority black, and Muslim, and coloured. So I would say there's no racism whatsoever.
Reville	Okay. And no kind of difference...you've mentioned religion...there's no kind of grouping together on the basis of religion or not?
Sofianos	No...well, there is, I mean, I always encourage...like now it was Eid on the weekend, and on Monday I discussed, oh what festive season did you have? And we would all discuss it and they would share, so I do encourage that. So they are aware...like I now have two Muslim children in my class that weren't at school on Monday, but the other one did...I think he was Muslim...Indian. Sorry, two Indian children in my class that didn't come to school on Monday, but the one did, and she told us probably why they weren't here, because they would be still having...
Reville	Diwali.
Sofianos	Diwali, that's it, sorry! Not Eid. What's Eid?
Reville	Eid is related to a celebration in the Muslim religion.
Sofianos	Ya, Eid is Muslim, ya.
Reville	Are there different barriers, is there any difference between when you were at school and what you're seeing now?
Sofianos	Um...yes (laughs). I was a short Greek girl that always wanted to play netball but I never could (laughs). And I was...I mean, at that stage, I would say, all my teachers were Afrikaans. And...ya (laughs).
Reville	Okay, so that's quite a difference now in terms of what you see.
Sofianos	Yes.
Reville	And in terms of at university, did you notice different barriers at university...or not really?
Sofianos	Um, no, I think because of the high school I went to, it was majority black, and obviously being white I was a minority. I think

	we were exposed to each other and that helped me, in a way, to be able to socialise with black people at 'varsity. I mean, I had white friends at 'varsity that didn't know how to socialise with black people because they were in private schools, which were majority white. So I think having the interaction for myself...
Reville	Was actually an advantage.
Sofianos	Definitely.
Reville	How would you describe the relationship between you and your learners?
Sofianos	I would say that we are quite close. I do teach in other classes and I'll go next door and teach Social Science and I'll go to that side and teach Natural Science and Arts and Culture on the other side. I'd say with my class I'm a lot more closer because we have, you know, discussions about the weekend on a Monday and have share time and, you know, I'll read a book to them as a treat (laughs) just to control the discipline, you know, stuff like that. I think for my class I'm very close with them. But the other classes I find it more difficult because I'm not their class teacher.
Reville	Then how come you're going to those classes, just out of interest?
Sofianos	Um...because...well I...why is that? Hang on, let me think about this...I don't like teaching Afrikaans, I can't teach Afrikaans, I didn't study it at 'varsity either, so Nadine swopped, she does my Afrikaans and I do that class Social Science. And the NS, that's because the maths teacher does...she's a grade 4 teacher, she does all the maths in all the classes, so all the teachers will go to her class and teach two or three learning areas....
Reville	Are there any other processes or pedagogies that you might use in the classroom, that help you to kind of overcome some of the barriers? I mean, you're saying there are not many, but any things that you do in particular, that you feel help the interaction amongst the learners?
Sofianos	Well, I mean, judging from the conversations that I had with them, because we do discuss, you know, if someone does something mean to someone else, you know, I'll say how would you feel? I'll discuss with the whole class. I mean, the one boy, D, he actually has to go and drain himself to go to the toilet every hour or so,

	and it's a problem because sometimes he doesn't do it properly and there's a very bad stench. And the other day when D was in my class, she was teaching maths, B asked to go to the toilet and she said no to her, and she actually wet herself, and D started teasing her. So, you know, I discussed it with the class, and we can't tease each other, because it's not nice, obviously didn't mention the whole situation, and then I said, how do you feel when someone teases you? Who can give me an example of something that happened, or something you saw what happened, and we'll discuss it. So...what was the question?
Reville	It's okay, it's alright, it's just kind of like, are there any things that you've used to help manage the interaction between your learners, to facilitate it? So you were talking about problematic areas.
Sofianos	Ya, I say talking about things helps.
Reville	Okay, it does. What are your aims in teaching History?
Sofianos	Teaching History. Well, the Social Science that I'm prepping, I'm using the file from the teacher that prepped it last year. And that is majority Geography. So she hasn't really integrated History, but I am looking at next year, with her prep, that I've put all together because it was actually all over the show, I want to start integrating History more. But it is dominantly Geography that was there.
Reville	Have you used oral history before with your class?
Sofianos	No. Except today.
Reville	What did you find the benefits were of using oral history?
Sofianos	That...I mean, I noticed when Sharon said that her dad was born in France, that they were like, wow, and her mother was born in...no, her mother was born in France and her dad was born in the Congo, they were like, oh wow! And S said, his grandfather came from Swaziland, they were all like...I think that they were interested to hear different places besides Gauteng, Soweto, or...you know...so I think that was interesting to them.
Reville	And for you?
Sofianos	Yes, definitely for me as well. I was a bit disappointed in their responses on why the names changed. I don't think the parents

	wanted to give a lot of information on that. I think maybe they had been hurt by it, maybe...I mean, I don't know, that's just assuming. Because a lot of their answers were very vague.
Reville	Yes, they were.
Sofianos	They could have been very scary answers, but they weren't.
Reville	Ya. And that's something maybe then to probe and to develop in terms of a kind of a follow-up.
Sofianos	Yes, definitely.
Reville	It is with hindsight, because we couldn't meet before, if you had to describe what your lesson was about, how would you...and what outcomes you were aiming for, how would you describe it?
Sofianos	Well, I was aiming for these questions to be answered. I was a bit disappointed in the question where I asked, "How did your parents come to 'Joburg?'" By train, by bus, by plane (laughs)!
Reville	But then you realised that they'd interpreted it from kind of like a transport angle.
Sofianos	Yes.
Reville	And it didn't actually get the story. I mean, that's something you only learn as you do it, and the thing is now to think how to rephrase it?
Sofianos	No, definitely. When I heard that answer, what!
Reville	I was listening to the groups I was thinking, what on earth are they asking? And then suddenly as they were presenting it clicked, that they took it very literally. By what means did they come here?
Sofianos	They did.
Reville	How did you feel the lesson went?
Sofianos	Um...like I said, I do think the parents didn't give too much information. I do think I should have given them the old names and maybe said, all of these provinces were one province's name, you know, emphasise that more. I think maybe I should have assisted with more of that instead of just throwing it out there and seeing how they dealt with that. And I think...ya, I definitely wouldn't have put the 'how did your parents come to

	Joburg?' I probably would have said something like, what made them come? Come from wherever, if they did come from somewhere, why would they want to be here, or wherever they were going?
Reville	Because some of the kids were hinting at that, saying like, my parents came, or my grandparents came to find a job...
Sofianos	...To find work, yes.
Reville	...a thing like that. So it was there and maybe that's, again, it's important to ask a question like that, find out where they're coming from and be able to extend it. I mean, that's definitely a possibility. Did you feel that there were any difficult issues that came up, I mean, one child was crying, I didn't know whether it was from the discussion, or was it a group dynamic.
Sofianos	Oh, no, it wasn't the discussion, T was shouting at her because she wouldn't do what she was telling her.
Reville	Okay, so it was a group dynamic, it wasn't stuff that came up.
Sofianos	No, no, no.
Reville	Alright. Another boy said that he didn't know his grandparents. I don't know if you picked up on that?
Sofianos	No, I didn't.
Reville	And he said, no, no, I can't talk, I don't know my grandparents, I don't know who they are. And I wondered if...because when I went around and was listening and he mentioned that, but I didn't want to push and find out what did he mean by, he didn't know...
Sofianos	Do you remember which desk he was sitting at?
Reville	I'll show you as we go.
Sofianos	Was it the coloured boy, I?
Reville	No, no, no. It wasn't the boy who got up to close the door. It was someone within the group. Maybe just find out about that in terms of.
Sofianos	Let me write it down, or else I'll never remember. Was it the Indian boy, R?
Reville	It might have been, I'm not sure.

Sofianos	But it was a boy?
Reville	Ya, it was definitely a boy.
Sofianos	He's the only boy that sits there and then it was this group. So it must have been...
Reville	Do you think that the relationship amongst your learners changed in any way? I mean, it was one lesson, one can't expect a whole lot, was there any shift in terms of the way they normally interact with one another?
Sofianos	No, I think generally they are quite comfortable with each other. I mean, judging from their confidence.
Reville	Their confidence is good. I was very impressed. I mean, there wasn't time to rehearse and they actually got up and there's somebody that they don't know in the classroom and they could do it.
Sofianos	Ya, that didn't bug them at all.
Reville	It didn't worry them at all. It was lovely to see that, it really was.
Sofianos	And they're quite creative (laughs).
Reville	They were, they were. I mean, it kind of...I think that it sort of got mixed between wanting to give the information and then setting the scene, but there were some lovely ideas that really...it just had the potential.
Sofianos	...the body language.
Reville	It really and truly did. What about your relationship with the learners, did you feel that it changed the way you teach or that you interact with them?
Sofianos	No, I think it was interesting, especially for S and K, because they both said that one of their parents were born in France. Like I thought that was very interesting.
Reville	So it was more interesting in terms of learning more about your learners, than actually any shift in the relationship per se?
Sofianos	Yes.
Reville	Okay. Did the TRC have any impact on you at all...the Truth and Reconciliation Commission?

Sofianos	Um...not really, no. What do you mean?
Reville	I mean, did you know about it, did you hear anything?
Sofianos	I mean, besides what I learnt at 'varsity, which was a huge eye-opener, when we went to Constitution Hill, I mean, I never in my wildest dreams thought that something like that existed. But growing up I don't think I knew really what was happening, and I don't really come from a very racist home. But there was definitely tension being a little Greek girl in an Afrikaans school (laughs). But, I mean, I was never...it wasn't that bad as some other people might have gone through, I mean, I'm fine (laughs), you know, so...and I think being at a multi-racial and cultural high school, was a big...good thing for me growing up. To be able to handle being in this environment, as well as at 'varsity.
Reville	Okay. I mean, you seem perfectly comfortable with your kids...
Sofianos	Ya, I am, definitely.
Reville	... there's no sense of any kind of...distance or...it just hasn't been an issue for you.
Sofianos	No, absolutely not.
Reville	What do you understand reconciliation to mean?
Sofianos	Um...making things better and uniting...reconciling (laughs).
Reville	Making what things better?
Sofianos	Living together as...day by day, you know, on a normal level. Like, going to the bank, or walking in a shopping centre, or driving on the road. Even though that can be very frustrating (laughs).
Reville	But would you say that the TRC helped us to achieve reconciliation in this country?
Sofianos	Well, I think we've gone forward rather than backwards, so in that sense definitely.
Reville	And do you think that we need to work more on facilitating reconciliation or not really?
Sofianos	I think that the focus should be on things being fair and equal. Not, oh, they come from a disadvantaged home so they need to make sure that they get this and this and that. I think things now need to be more equal and fair. Although, I did notice, thinking

	back, what was it? We had to choose learners to do the grade 4 assembly...I don't know if I should be saying this (laughs)...and one of the teachers suggested to me that instead of choosing a black child, I choose an Indian child, so we have a variety of learners on the stage. So I did it because...I said, no, that was fine, because I did have another Indian child in mind, although I wouldn't have done it if I didn't have another Indian child in mind, because I would have thought that the black girl that I had chosen would have been perfect for presenting. So I do think fellow colleagues do try and promote having a diverse bunch of kids on stage, for example, when we do that.
Reville	Okay. And do you support that?
Sofianos	To a certain extent I do. But I wouldn't support it unless the child deserved it. Because I want to promote being fair rather than saying, okay, now we need a white child, now we need a black child, now we need an Indian child. I would rather say who deserves it to go.
Reville	So you would say it's something that now deserves to be on merit, not necessarily on background.
Sofianos	Yes.
Reville	Do you think it's possible to apply the positive aspects of the TRC in developing something like a reconciliatory pedagogy in the classroom?
Sofianos	Yes, I think that would be a good idea because I guess a school is a foundation for kids to be able to be citizens of the school. And then one day when they grow up they're going to be citizens of the country. So I would say that would be a good thing.
Reville	Any advantages of a reconciliatory pedagogy, of using something that ensures that people come together in a sense?
Sofianos	Yes, because they would be working together and building whatever they are working towards, and working together always has a good outcome, so...
Reville	Any disadvantages?
Sofianos	Um...no (laughs), that's why it's there. I mean, it's a good idea, whether it works or not is another story, but I think the idea behind it would be only positive.

Reville	And do you think that we even need something like a reconciliatory pedagogy fifteen years after democracy was introduced to this country?
Sofianos	I would think yes, because it would have to be a reminder of what had happened, because if we don't have history to remind us of all the wars and all the bad decisions leaders have made, then we wouldn't be able to move forward and not make bad mistakes again.
Reville	Thank you very much.

Appendix C:

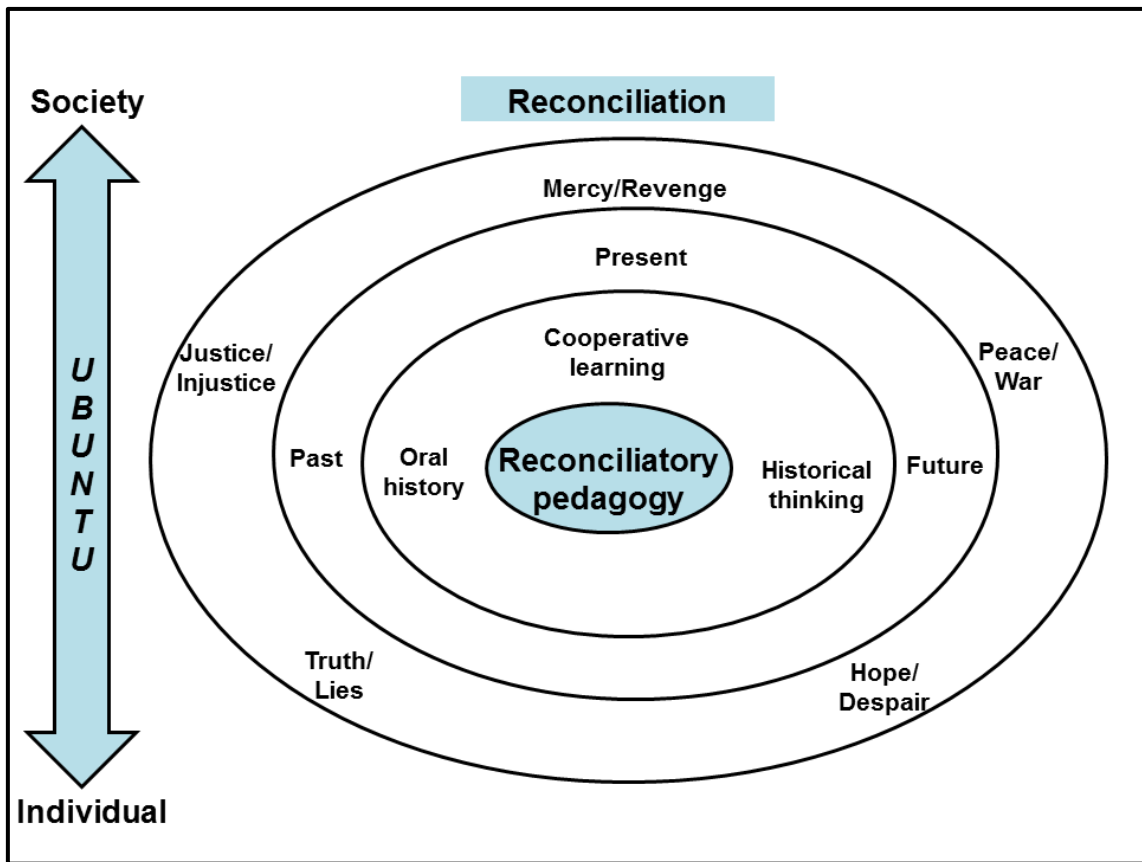


Figure 2: Reconciliatory Pedagogy.

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