

Youth morality

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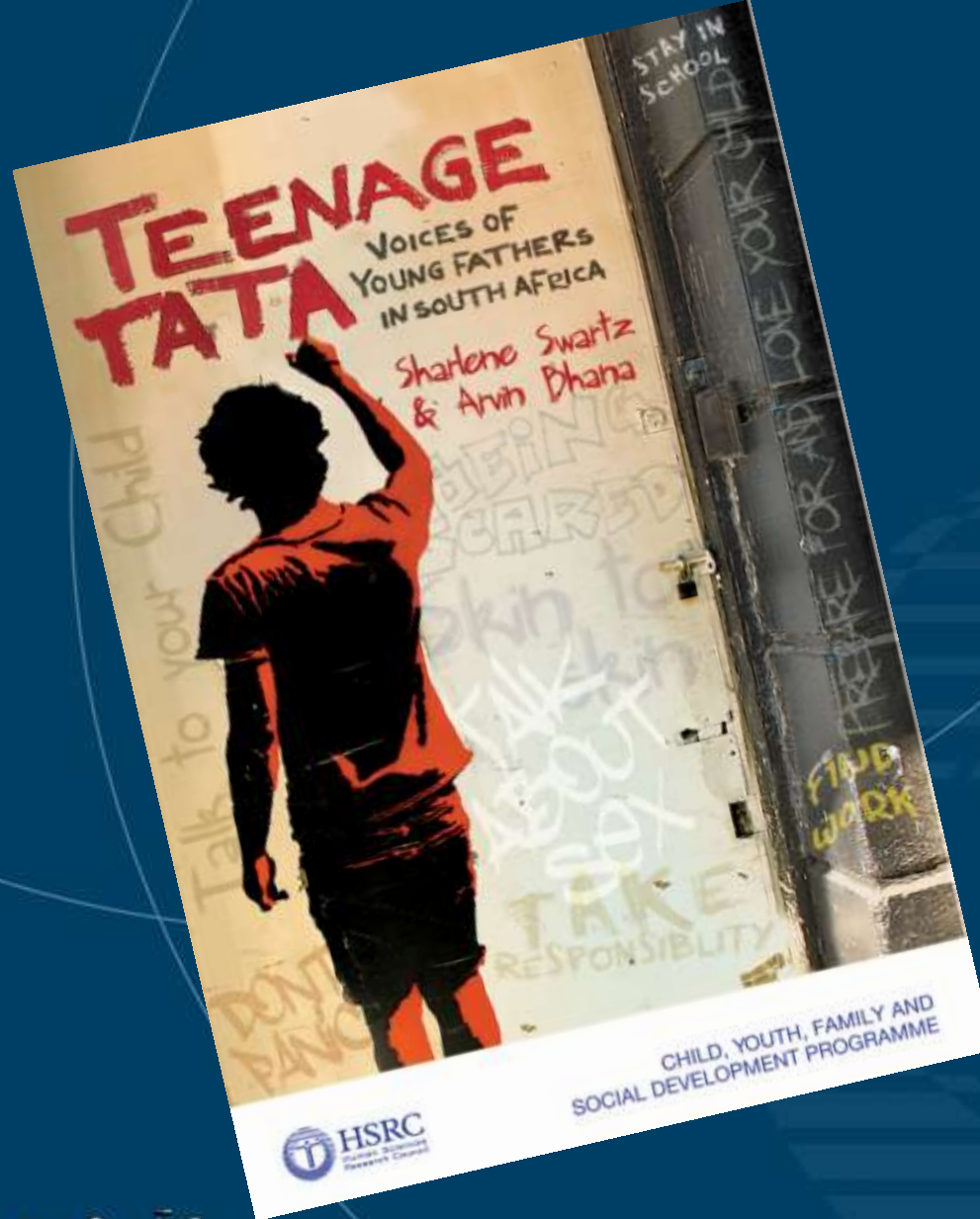
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Central questions

1. What is morality?
2. How might youth morality differ from that of adults?
3. How does poverty affect morality?
4. How do you research morality?
5. How do you speak about morality?





Case Study – Teenage Tata



Why early fatherhood?

1. Alcohol
2. Ignorance and invulnerability
3. Lack of condom use
4. “Ontological insecurity – violence, and others having children
5. Inadequate sex education



Denying or accepting

“Some guys run away when the baby’s born [because] he like [thinks], ‘No man, I don’t have money, so I’m worse for my baby,’ so they run away.

“My father didn’t run away. He stood up and faced the consequences of a baby, so why should I run away from her? So I didn’t run”

“I decided no man, I need to accept this. Because really, for my child to go through with the way that, um, the pain that I went through; it’s not fair.”



A father's role...

- Emotional, physical and financial
- Talking, playing, caring, providing
- Provision is preeminent

“No man, I will lose my respect if I can't support. What will people say about me on the streets?”

“A father's job is to be there and support his family and I'm not doing that and that's what makes me feel a bit down...”



Young men ask for help

“He [child's grandfather] could have at least spoke to me after that conversation we had with my mother them, and he could have motivated me and put words in my mind to think what I can do, because I don't have a daddy... he could've tried to be a father to me as well.”



What issues might we raise if we used a moral framework in this study?



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- Morality of sex
- Morality of culture
- Exclusion by parents
- Gender issues around who leaves school?
- 'Good father'



What is morality?



- The distinction between ‘good or bad... right and wrong, or good and evil’ in human actions (OED)
- Moral values - those ‘principles and fundamental convictions which act as general guides to behaviour, the standards by which particular actions are judged to be good or desirable’ (Halstead and Taylor, 2000, p. 175) and which ‘provide us with reasons for action’ (Halstead & Taylor, 1996, p. 69).
- ‘An informal *public system* applying to all rational persons, *governing behavior that affects others...* and has the lessening of evil or harm as its goal’ (Gert, 2005, p. 14).



What do we mean by 'moral'?

1. Moral action - Doing the right thing
2. Moral knowledge – Knowing the difference between right and wrong
3. Moral identity - Seeing yourself as a good person
4. Moral desire – Wanting to be a good person



What is morality?

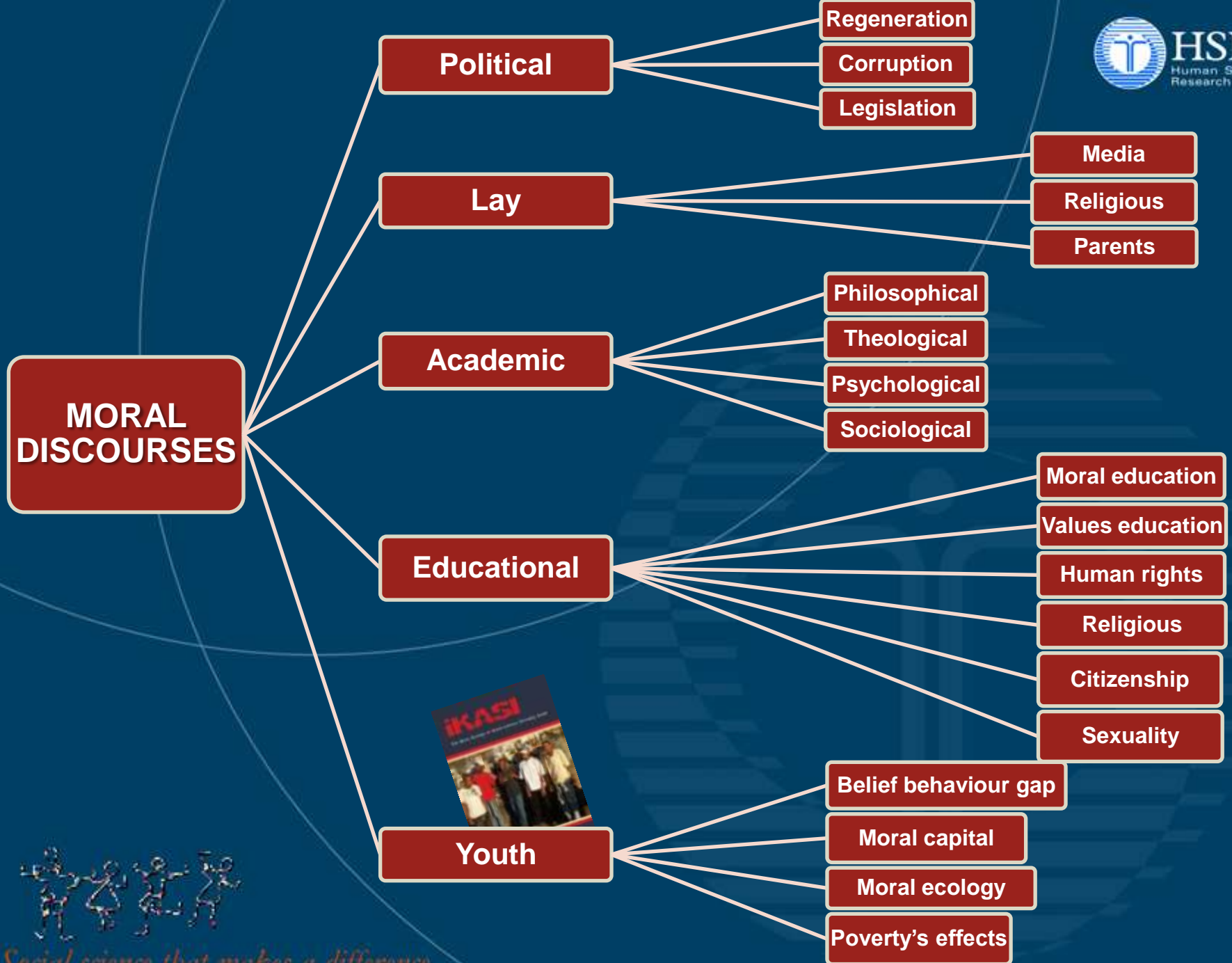
Concerned with both private and public life; with what it means to be a good person and to lead a good life. It covers intimate, communal and national relationships between human beings, as well as between people and their environment. It should be concerned with violence and crime, conflict and peace, slavery and human trafficking, social spending and consumption, judgement and incarceration, inequality and greed. It must be interested in the moral significance of social class, poverty and unemployment, as well as the moral implications of lack of housing, welfare, access to education, gender equality, freedom of opportunity, fairness, racism, homophobia, human rights and justice in all its forms.



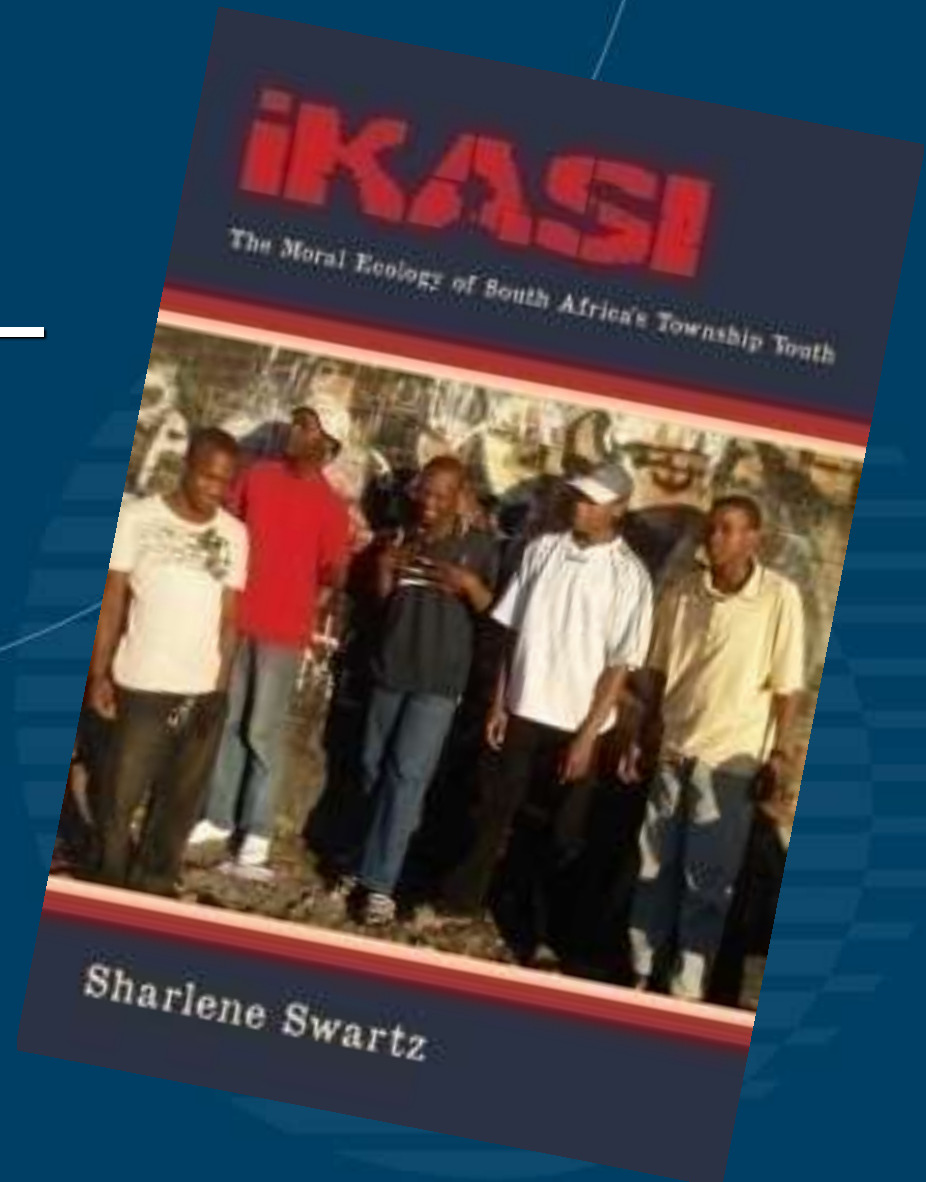
The big moral questions

1. What is our common vision of the good life?
2. What makes someone a good person?
3. How do we become good people?





Case Study – Ikasi



The study

- An ethnographic study
- Two years and ongoing
- With 37 'Black' youth – 18 men, 19 women
- Aged between 14 and 20 years old
- Most in Grade 9
- Cape Town townships



Data Collection

- Three individual interviews
- Participant observation fieldnotes
- Digital photovoice
- Right and wrong questionnaire
- Decision making mind maps
- Free lists of right and wrong
- Rank ordering of moral influences
- Hanging out!

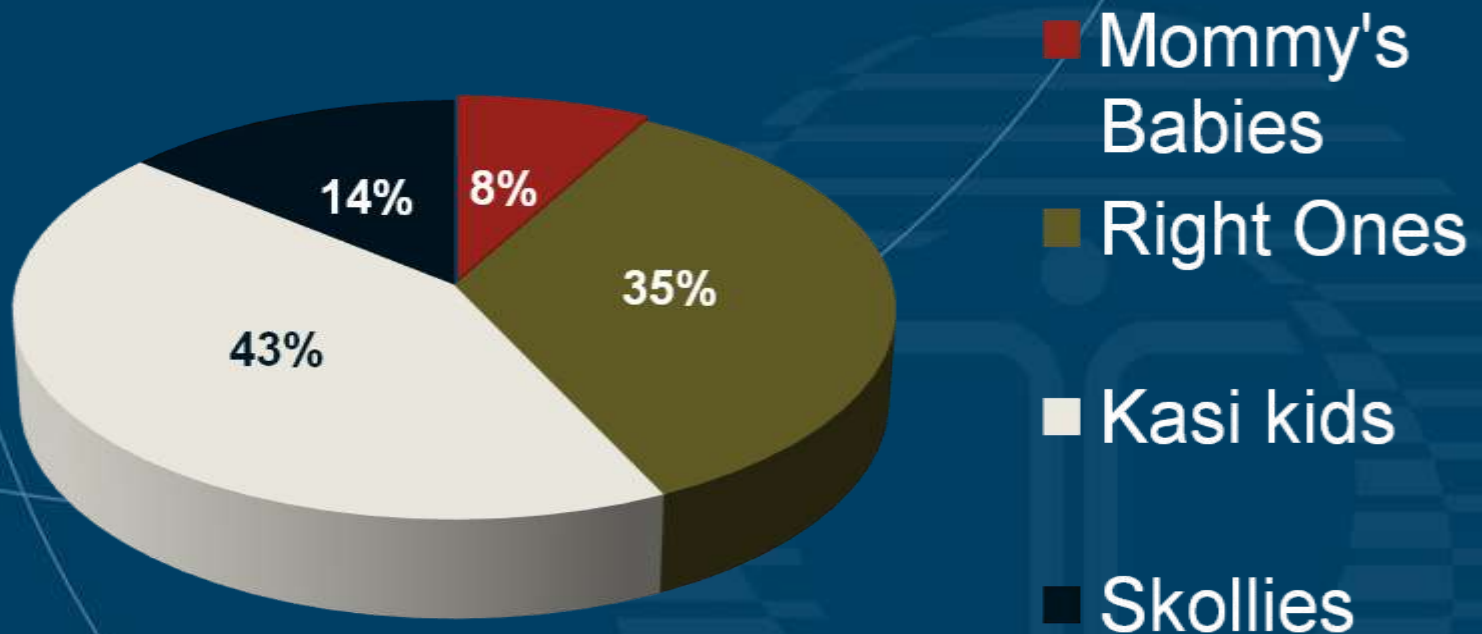


Four main contexts for youth

1. School attendance 43: 10-20-12
2. Home 63% Disappeared fathers
3. Community 51% Youth unemployment (15-24)
4. Streets Alcohol 43%M 23%F, Dagga 56%M 26%F, Sex 62% M&F, 38% victim of crime



Four types of youth in ikasi



Positioning self and others

	Mommy's babies	'Right ones'	Kasi girl/boy	Skollies
Description	Isolated Protected Sheltered	Exposed Restrained, Judicious participation 'not overdosing'	Uncalibrated Competitions, 'Overdosing' Ikasi style	Criminals Hijackers Gangsters Prostitutes
Home	At home	Near home	Seldom home	Seldom home
School	In school	In school	In/out school	Out of school
Streets	Off the streets	Off the streets by curfew	On the streets after curfew	On the streets Rule the streets
Self portrayals	Unequivocally good	Unequivocally good	Qualified good 'in the middle'	Good!!!
Social representations	Hegemonic – what you do	Emancipated – who you are	Emancipated – who you are, where you are	Hegemonic – what you do
Moral stance	Isolating	Deflecting	Absorbing, reforming	Ignoring, reforming

Three kinds of moral code

1. Conventional – substance use, crime and violence
2. Contested – sex and money
3. Postmodern – where you are, self as moral authority



The effects of Apartheid

Vuma: If Apartheid didn't affect... [my parents] then maybe we wouldn't be staying in that shack house... like me I won't get corrupt – like I will be still at school... Where I stay in the township, you see everything there you know. So maybe if my parents are staying in the suburbs I wouldn't know about those things and I didn't see so many people smoking ganja you know.



The effects of poverty

Khaya: They are stress[ed], just because they're unemployed you see. Others they don't have parents to support them. And others they are saying it's [better] rather [for] them to die than to live with nothing. To be poor. [So they drink].



How does poverty affect morality

1. Alcohol and drugs sabotage intentions
2. FASD leads to ADHD and aggression
3. Poor education sabotages reflection skills
4. Lack of supervision and mentoring
5. Stress hormones, fatigue – too tired to act
6. Uncover morality's 'ecology'



Right and wrong

Sharlene: So... shoplifting?

Andiswa: It's wrong. It's plain wrong.

Sharlene: What's the difference between [shoplifting] and not paying train fare?

Andiswa: No, they're different. Because when you're riding on a train, there's a, there's a situation that's forcing you to do that. But for shoplifting, there's nothing forcing me to shoplift. It's just, it's just the fact that I'm greedy.



Are you a good person?

Vuma: Sometimes [pause] it's what I do to make me a good person because like – but it's inside. Some people see me as a wrong person... cos I don't do good... I can say that like, I'm a good person but [long pause] I am a good person *but without dagga and alcohol.*



Mind Maps



Figure 8.12 Mathruifu's Mind Map (young man, township-schooled, aged 18) classified as a 'MPS' diagram, depicting a good but non-specified decision



Not thinking

Khaya: When I was robbing the Pick 'n Pay. Go to the shop to buy something, then do something else that I was not planning for it. I was just ask[ing]me that question. I was not thinking, just do... You just follow—you don't think.





Fundiswa: Oh this is a bad influence - people are living in this - in this bad condition ... like ants. I took this picture from the train - ... sometimes these shacks are burning here – and we are getting wet cos ... the water can come through the zinc (Young woman, township-schooled, aged 16)



Fundiswa: Ah - this is a beautiful place - I think it a good influence - I wish I could stay in this beautiful houses - it's in the way go to Mandalay...I wish the people are living in bad conditions can live in these houses. (Young woman, township-schooled, aged 16)





Xolile: Kgomo, he's a good influence because he work (Young man, township-schooled, aged 20)

Work and morality

Poseletso: I think education should be free. Some... [young people] want to be good people but they don't have money to go to university so that they can study and then become good people when they have got their own jobs. So they don't have money, so they end up staying in the street—doing all those [wrong] things.



The Supernatural

Andile: The muti that [gangsters] are using... it's supposed to be that if you wear that you cannot be stabbed or shot by the gun. If you try to shoot him, the gun will lock. *So it makes you more violent because you think you're strong.* No one can touch you.



A sociology of morality



CHRONOSYSTEM

Tribalism

Colonialism

Apartheid

Democracy

MACROSYSTEM

Poverty, Gender, Racial Inequality, School Quality, Culture, Religion, Social Norms

EXOSYSTEM

Work, Social Services, Law Enforcement, Media, Government Policies

MESOSYSTEM

A System of Microsystems

MICROSYSTEM

ENDOSYSTEM

Gender, Age, Health, Stage, Self

Home

School

Streets

Community



discordant-processes

moral

multiple-positionings

enabling environment

interconnecting-systems

competing-influences

over-time

ecology

complex-antinomies

on-multiple-levels

diverse-codes

Moral capital

1. Moral capital is the strategies and resources that young people need to be good – e.g. Connection, reflection, agency, enabling environment.
2. Moral capital is what young people acquire if they are good – e.g. a good reputation with people, prospective employees, community members – which helps them to get ahead.



Reputation Capacities

Career-opportunities

Financial-success

How-being-good-is-a-form-of-capital

Strategies

Intelligences

The-capital-you-need-to-be-good

Educational-achievement

Good-person Qualities

Dispositions



Discussion



Discussion

1. What does 'the good life' look like for youth in South Africa? Is it different for youth in the UK or in Brazil?
2. How might the four types of youth analysis be used as a model for behaviour change? (Fig 3)
3. What moral influences might be beneficial for youth? (Fig 1)
4. How might a consideration of youth morality be helpful for youth worker? For parents?



So what next?

1. A new moral discourse – ecology & capital
2. Develop youth critical consciousness
3. Increase adult involvement
4. Improve education quality
5. Work as a moral imperative
6. Retooling faith interventions
7. Understand needs of various kinds of youth
 - What makes a kid a ‘right one’?

