CHAPTER 2

POWER RELATIONS IN A CONTEXT OF POVERTY:
A FOUCALDIAN ANALYSIS

2.1 WHICH KINDS OF KNOWLEDGE DO WE INCLUDE TO DESCRIBE ‘POVERTY’?

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

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

Reflective knowledge is created when people allow themselves to stand back from their reality, view it critically and deconstruct the premises on which knowledge operates. Davidson (1997:2) quotes Foucault on the focus of his reflections: ‘For a long time one has known that the role of philosophy is not to discover what is hidden, but to make visible precisely what is visible, that is to say, to make evident what is so close, so immediate, so intimately linked to us, that because of what we do we do not perceive it.’ In this chapter I therefore use philosophy to make visible precisely that which is visible in the poor ‘coloured’ community: the historical, social and economic conditions that create and sustain ‘coloured’ poverty and how these conditions breed various forms of violence and abuse, legitimises a culture of drugs and alcohol and discourses, such as powerlessness, the necessity for ‘discipline’ and the normalising of violence.

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

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

Rattansi (1995:253) argues that Foucauldian genealogical and archaeological analyses
are useful in ‘exploring the accretion of meanings, political affiliations, subject
positions, forms of address, regimes of truth, and disciplinary practices involved in the
construction of particular myths of origin, narratives of evolution, and forms of
boundary marking and policing engaged in by different “communities” in particular
historical contexts’. Challenges that arise from an archaeology and genealogy of power
relations embodied in both historical and in current social practices therefore also
shaped the methodology of this research. Specific accounts of physical abuse that young
people shared with me led to the research methodology of talks on ‘discipline’ and
conversations with male teachers identified by these learners (see Section 2.3.3.2).

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

In this chapter, I refer to various kinds of research methodology that I used in relation to the topic of physical abuse: brainstorming conversations (with the principal), therapeutic conversations (with Mr M) and pastoral conversations (with Mr R and Mr Noach) and how these conversations influenced the course of the *pastoral praxis*¹ of the research. In this chapter, I also include reflections on sessions (with the boys, teachers) from my research journal. The themes that emerged for my workshops with staff emerged through consultative conversations with a local clinical psychologist, Elize Morkel (Morkel 2005). In this chapter I also include extracts from an interview with Mr Noach in front of staff (Noach 2005).

A research document is a document of power because it prints people’s words and gives a voice to people’s experiences. Representational and relational knowledge of the people of Scottsville therefore emerged in the research, not only through me, but especially through the people’s own use of language. Because Afrikaans is the mother tongue of the ‘coloured’ people in the Scottsville community, I consciously wanted to

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¹ Generally, in this study, in line with accepted practice, I use italics for emphasis, but sometimes need additional emphasis and then use both italics and bold. This practice reflects the complexity of experience and thought.
honour their use of Afrikaans in the research. In doing so, I also wanted to honour the powerful meanings that emerged in the research through their voices. Where I quote people from the community, I have given their words with an English translation, and for longer conversations or comments, I have split the page with the English translation appearing alongside the Afrikaans original.

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

2.2 ARCHAEOLOGY

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

Foucault’s ‘archaeology’, according to Sharon Welch (1985:10), ‘is concerned with the episteme, the field of knowledge: what counts as knowable, who is it that knows, the impact of knowledge’. I therefore regard an epistemology that centralises the foundations of the different forms of knowledge – as described by Park (2001) above – and its impact as its point of departure, as making a critically important contribution to pastoral care as a practical response in a context of poverty. Therefore, the next two chapters introduce analyses that led to an inquiry of the links between power and knowledge. The research then followed up on this inquiry with the purposeful inclusion of those without social power in the research itself, thereby not only expanding the
sources and content of new knowledge, but rethinking what constitutes theological knowledge as well.

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

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

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

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

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

2.2.1 Historical conditions and discursive formation

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

‘Coloured’ people lived as slaves in conditions, for instance, which precluded close and stable relationships between parents and their children. Giliomee (2007:4) writes that for the community later known as the Cape coloureds, it was extremely difficult to cultivate a tradition of close family ties after a system had existed for more than 180 years under which slaves could not marry. In the eyes of the law they had no family. Children could at any point in time be taken away from their mothers and sold to someone far away. 2 Van der Ross (2005:67) comments: ‘...family life, as generally understood, namely father, mother and children living together, could hardly exist or flourish easily among Cape slaves. Illegitimate children were commonplace and numerous, although they were kept and reared by their mothers’ owners. If the fathers were “Christian” (white), such children, if in the Slave Lodge, were to be freed at the age of twenty-five years.’ These inhumane social conditions need to be taken into account in the formation of, for instance, discourses of subservience, illegitimacy, non-attachment to one’s children and of alcoholism in earlier centuries, the legacy of which did not simply end with the abolition of slavery.

In the twentieth century new and inhumane political laws directly created new conditions of dislocation and poverty for thousands of ‘coloured’ people. In 1950, the Group Areas Act was tabled in Parliament (Giliomee 2007:193). By 1976, as many as 306 000 (or one in six) ‘coloured’ persons had been moved due to this law (Giliomee 2007:203). These laws as conditions (in the archaeological sense of the world), disrupted communities and created realities of disconnection, poverty and isolation.

2 ‘Vir die gemeenskap wat later as die Kaapse kleurlinge bekend sou staan, was dit uiterlik moeilik om ‘n tradisie van ‘n hegte gesinslewe op te bou nadat daar amper 180 jaar lank ‘n stelsel bestaan het waaronder slawe nie kon trou nie...In die oë van die wet het hulle geen familie gehad nie. Kinders kon op enige tydstip van hul moeder weggeneem en aan iemand ver weg verkoop word.’
Giliomee (2007:192) stresses that the classification of people according to race had the greatest impact on the lives of ‘coloured’ people, of all the race groups in South Africa. Over a six-year period, 90 000 people were identified as ‘borderline cases’. Based on their race status, some families were split up.

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

Therefore, the archaeological analysis in this chapter has to be read with this understanding in mind: how the historical relations have a bearing not only as a possibility in terms of physical goods, opportunities or care in relations, but also in that they affect people who have been placed in positions of obedience and can invite them to regard themselves as agents of their own lives. By taking this dynamic into consideration, a new purpose emerges out of participation of the poor in the research as described in following chapters. This purpose has to do with the discovery of oneself as an active agent in the world in which hierarchical relations had previously denied one that possibility. Likewise, this research afforded me with an opportunity to become mindful of my powers of voice and action and how these can be used in other ways than in maintaining the historical hierarchical status quo, which leaves some people with a
sense of agency and others with a continuing sense of powerlessness, apathy and fragility.

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

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

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

Hence the experience of exclusion based on race that has always been a feature of a ‘coloured’ people’s life under apartheid continues to be so for especially the most marginal of groups within the ‘coloured’ culture, such as unskilled people. Although the new democratic dispensation in South Africa claims to be working towards improving job opportunities for blacks, it seems to be neglecting ‘coloured’ people. Hence, it becomes clear that an experience of exclusion and of poverty cannot be understood as a
universal truth, as was claimed to be possible in the time of modernity. The larger context of power relations to which ‘coloured’ power are subjected shapes their specific experiences of poverty, and brings about an understanding of conditions that have an impact upon those experiences, such as retrenchment.

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

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

The number of unemployed people in all of Kraaifontein grew by 7.8% between 1996 and 2001. According to sociologist Jeremy Seekings (2007:17), finding employment is also linked to other factors such as skills (including language skills), credentials and (especially) connections (in other words, social capital). ‘Social capital’ refers to having family or friends who have jobs and are able to help someone find employment. According to Seekings (2007:17), it ‘is therefore especially worrying that the number and proportion of the unemployed living in “workerless” households, i.e. where no one is in wage employment, have risen...from 1.8 million (42 percent) in 1995 to 4 million (49 percent) in 2004’ in South Africa.
A total of 19.1% of all residents in Kraaifontein were unemployed in 2001 (Unit for Religion and Development Research & Transformation Africa 2005:10). From this percentage and the statistics of income distribution for the area (Unit for Religion and Development Research & Transformation Africa 2005:13), it is evident that Scottsville (where I did this research), together with Scottsdene, and the squatter camps of Bloekombos and Wallacedene, constitute the poorest areas in Kraaifontein (where people have an income of R0 to R66105 p.a.) and that the overall unemployment rate of 19.1% is predictably exceeded in these areas. Adhikari (2005:180) quotes a study done by Van den Berg and Louw, who found that ‘though the poverty headcount ratios of all other race groups declined between 1990 and 2000, only amongst coloureds did it increase during that period.’

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

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

2.2.2.1 Lack of resources

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2.2.2.3 Drug abuse

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

According to the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Unit of the Medical Research Council (Plüddemann, Myers & Parry 2007:1), methamphetamine is a powerfully addictive stimulant that affects many areas of the central nervous system. It is a white, odourless, bitter-tasting crystalline powder that ‘is typically smoked by placing the powder/crystal in a light bulb, from which the metal threading has been removed. A lighter is used to heat the bulb and the fumes are smoked’ (Plüddemann et al 2007:1). The drug can be made from relatively inexpensive over-the-counter ingredients and can be purchased at a relatively low cost (about R15 to R30 per ‘straw’), which makes it the drug of choice for young people. Another danger lies in the fact that Tik is highly addictive. Pauw (s.a.:s.p.) quotes the Cape Town Drug Counselling Centre as warning that ‘over six months of use, 94 percent of those who smoke meth, become addicted’.
According to the research findings of the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Unit (Plüddemann et al 2007), the average age of patients who reported methamphetamine as their primary substance of abuse in the second half of 2006 was 22 years and 72% of the patients were male. Most of the patients (90%) were ‘coloured’. The Cape Argus cites the then Western Cape Premier Ebrahim Rasool (who is himself a ‘coloured’ person) as saying that ‘Tik is a coloured problem’ (Oliver 2007:s.p.), when he spoke at the launch of the province’s new anti-Tik campaign, ‘Tik Off – There is Hope’.

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

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

The drug culture on the Cape Flats also feeds property crime (theft and burglary), as addicts may steal to pay for their habits. The drug trade operates through Cape Town’s many gangs. According to the then Western Cape Minister for Community Safety, Leonard Ramatlakane (2007:s.p.), drug-related crimes in the province increased by 17.8% in 2007. In the suburb of Kraaifontein, of which Scottsville is a part, the number of reported ‘drug-related crimes’ increased by 321% between 2001/2 and 2006/7. Not surprisingly, the Western Cape has ‘the highest rate of recorded drug crimes’ (Leggett 2004a) in the country. According to the then mayor of Cape Town (Zille 2007:s.p.), there is a link between the rise in crime and Tik: ‘Drug related crime skyrocketed from 7000 incidents in 2003 to 25 000 incidents this year, largely as a result of the introduction of methamphetamine into our communities.’ Tik has therefore become an important factor that shapes the context of ‘coloured’ poverty in the Western Cape.

2.2.2.4 Housing and gangs

According to Leggett (2004b:23), the average size of ‘coloured’ households is 4.3 members, which is the largest household size of any population group in the country. In practical terms, this means that the houses, flats and dormitories to which communities were removed under apartheid rule are seriously overcrowded. Leggett (2004b:23) notes that ‘(p)opulation density has been correlated with juvenile delinquency in at least 12 academic studies’. The reason for this lies in the fact that, because of overcrowding and a lack of recreational opportunities, young people spend a lot of their time on the streets. Burton (2008:65) therefore warns that ‘the larger the household, the greater the risk of a young person engaging in violent behaviour’.
The streets in ‘coloured’ townships are often ‘ruled’ by gangs who wield territorial and often violent power over community members. Ironically, a more just political system has created increased opportunities for criminal activities, because the police service has undergone a process of restructuring at the same time that border controls were relaxed. This caused a flood of new drugs and the influx of new and violent foreign crime syndicates (Standing 2005:1), who gained access to ‘coloured’ communities, like other communities. According to André Standing (2005:2), it was estimated that by the late 1990s, around 130 gangs operated in the Western Cape. Standing (2005:2) explains that the recruitment into gangs ‘involves a cynical targeting of youth and typically, the most vulnerable are singled out, including those whose family situation is unstable’. Therefore, ‘(p)articipation in gang activity is still substantially driven by such elements as group identity, self-protection, pride, boredom and turf’ (Standing 2005:9).

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

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

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

In the municipal area of Kraaifontein, of which Scottsville is a part, the categories of crime recorded by the police (SAPS 2007) that have shown a marked increase in numbers since 2001 are drug-related crimes, indecent assault, public violence and the neglect and ill-treatment of children. However, it ‘is less commonly known that South Africa’s youth, that is, young people aged 12-22, are generally victimised at twice the adult rate, and at rates even higher for violent crimes... assault at roughly 8 times the adult rate; theft at five times and robbery at four times the adult rate’ (Pelser 2008:2).
Another disturbing statistic is the rise in gun-related violence in the ‘coloured’ community: ‘For more than two decades, knives or other stabbing weapons were used in the vast majority of murders of coloured people. Firearms were used in less than 5% of murders before 1990, but this has since risen to 41% in the latest mortuary reports, with guns now as likely to be used as knives’ (Thomson 2004). According to Leggett (2004a:s.p.), the Western Cape also has ‘the highest rate of recorded cases of illegal possession of a firearm or ammunition’ in the country.

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

2.2.2.6 Reporting of violence and crime

It must be borne in mind in analysing official statistics that, in a poor community, reporting drug-related violence and acts of intimate violence and crime is not a neutral affair (Dawes et al 2006:15). The reporting of such crimes is affected by the discourses of control through intimidation by gangs or individuals who wield power over others in families or schools. The discourse of intimidation controls its victims by fostering fear of reprisals or retaliations. In turn, the discourse is informed by the physical reality of the relationship between victims and perpetrators; namely, that victims continue to live in the same neighbourhoods as the perpetrators of violence and abuse. Then there is the
issue of family loyalties. Kinnis (1996:18) states that ‘...traditionalists fail to understand the deep-rooted nature of the problem. The people we call gangsters are our brothers, fathers, cousins, uncles and aunts. Hence, support for gang members is very strong in some communities’. For many young people from these families, a culture of drugs, violence and coercion is not only normalised and legitimated, but often revered (see Sections 2.3.3.2, under the subheading ‘The normalising of violence through the discourses of ‘discipline’, and 2.3.4). Others find themselves torn between experiences of loyalty to their family and horror at the violence that is part of the gangster culture.

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

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

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

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

2.2.2.7 Problems in education

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

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

(Myburgh 2008:s.p.)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Another significant contribution that Foucault’s methodologies have made to this study is that the focus of genealogy is the body. The actions and practices I wish to analyse become visible through what Foucault terms ‘bio-power’, the location of the experience of power in the bodies of people. In this study, I refer to Foucault’s analyses regarding young people’s bodies and the ways in which ‘the body is invested with relations of power and domination’ (Foucault 1995:25-26).

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

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

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

2.3.1 ‘Bio-power’: A poststructuralist analysis of the body as the object and location of power

In his first lecture at the Collège de France in 1978, Foucault (2007:1) described bio-power as ‘the set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of the human species became the object of a political strategy, of a general strategy of power’. He argued that an analysis of these mechanisms of power ‘involves investigating where and how, between whom, between what points, according to what processes, and with what effects, power is applied’ (Foucault 2007:2).

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

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

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

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

2.3.3 Technologies of power

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2.3.3.2 Interpersonal violence

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

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

Both these categories of interpersonal violence are dealt with in discussing what it means to be a poor ‘coloured’ child living in the Western Cape. I do not make specific distinctions between ‘family and intimate partner violence’ and ‘community violence’ in discussing the different forms that violence take. However, I do note how the increase in family and intimate partner violence in the community has created new discourses of family and of normality.

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

- **Murder and sexual assault**

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

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

These figures are borne out by Western Cape statistics. The then Premier of the Western Cape, Ebrahim Rasool, reported that between March 2006 and March 2007, 105 children were murdered in the Western Cape (Dentlinger 2007). Of these 105 children, ‘only 12 were killed by strangers; the rest by somebody known to the family’ (Dentlinger 2007:1). Between March 2007 and March 2008, the figures increased to a total of 128 children or young teenagers who were killed in the Western Cape (Jooste 2008:5). Thomson (2004) comments as follows: ‘…victim survey data, as well as docket research on murder by the SAPS’ Crime Information Analysis Centre, suggest that the vast majority of murder victims are killed by people they know, including intimate partners and family members.’

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

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

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

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

- **Physical abuse**

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

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

  - **Physical abuse in Scottsville**

    In the following excerpt from my research journal (26 April 2005), I describe how I heard first-hand accounts of the use of violence in the school and my therapeutic and pastoral responses to the challenge these stories posed in terms of my relationships with teachers. Because of the ways in which these
conversations informed my understanding of the operation of discourses, in this section, I include an account of my research methodologies as these became connected to the accounts of abuse, and to the knowledge I gained through the research itself. This section therefore contains the accounts of abuse, the discourses that support it and our collective response to the challenge it posed.

○ The boys take me into their confidence

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

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

(Excerpt from the research journal, 26 April 2005)

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

○ Research methodologies that developed in relation to accounts of physical abuse
In deciding on which methodologies to use, I allowed myself be led by the context itself. Initially, my conversation with the boys led to conversations with the principal. In May 2005, I presented a workshop with teachers about narrative therapy and the respectful stance it invites from adults. In these sessions, I introduced the idea of discourses of control and domination and how they support abusive practices. However, after this session with staff and the lack of energy I experienced in the room, I decided instead to offer individual sessions to teachers who wanted to talk with me about their struggles in teaching. Subsequently, four male teachers had therapeutic conversations with me.

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

- Conversations with Mr Foster

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

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

He told me that he would support me in whatever course I chose to take in our group sessions in dealing with the theme of abusive practices. I asked for time to reflect on how to go about it. He told me that in dealing with the theme of abusive practices, we may not be moving at the pace of ‘step by step’ but rather something much smaller, like ‘movement by movement’.

(Excerpt from the research journal, 26 April 2005)

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

A memorable day, May 10th 2005
Mr M had been charged with assault after hitting a boy with a belt. The parents of this boy had issued Mr M with a warning after a previous incident in which he had hit their son. Now they acted on that warning, even though Mr M apologised a second time.

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

He then told me that the stories of the incidents I shared with him in our last conversation had moved him deeply. He was concerned that young people would experience that those types of incidents are not followed up, and that, as young people, they are ‘ignored’. Then he spoke of his aim for the school: to build a ‘culture of care’ in which young people can be ‘empowered’ through teachers’ living respect and other values. He told me of another male teacher speaking of his practice of hitting children with a belt in his class. Then Mr Foster told me that he told the teacher: ‘This has to stop!’ (‘Dit moet einde kry!’). I picked up a shift since our last conversation. We were talking about what can be changed.

(Excerpt from the research journal, 17 May 2005)
Mindful of my conversations with the boys and Mr Foster, I consulted with Elize Morkel, a clinical psychologist, in choosing an angle to approach this talk. Many teachers are busy with sports coaching and were unable to attend our session. But the two teachers who were identified by the young people were present. I picked up on Mr Foster’s comment during our last session about the carrying of ‘baggage’. Most of the teachers were by now aware of Mr M’s position regarding the assault charge. It gave me the freedom to introduce the issue of abuse without having to compromise the safety of the boys who shared their stories with me. I therefore spoke about my sense that participation in the research also involved reflecting on our own ‘baggage’ and its influence on our practices, which includes abusive practices. I made visible how the historical discourses of control in this country led to the sanctioning of abusive practices during apartheid. I told staff that whilst they are concerned about young people bullying others, I have heard about the abusive practices of teachers that often get legitimised through the discourse of ‘discipline’. What are the practices we want to eradicate and which ones do we want to foster? How does/could self-care make a difference to developing nurturing practices? What were/are the experiences of oppression and humiliation that these teachers have been subjected to? How could these experiences inform their position on subjecting others to oppression and humiliation or in taking a stand against it?

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

Towards the end of our session, I heard Mr Foster use the word ‘culture’: we must build a ‘different culture’ at the school. He reminded us that our individual work can benefit the whole. When we take part in self-reflection the purpose also has to do with contributing towards the changing of a culture.

(Excerpt from the research journal, 10 May 2005)

- Individual therapeutic conversations

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

(Excerpt from the research journal, 17 May 2005)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(Excerpt from the research journal, 21 June 2005)

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

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

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aan mnr. R</th>
<th>To Mr R</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>– met groot waardering vir jou oop hart vir die belangrikheid van die ‘ander werklkheid’ van die poësie. Jou oop hart het gemaak dat kinderharte kon begin</td>
<td>With great appreciation for your open heart for the significance of the ‘other reality’ of poetry. Your open heart made it possible for young people’s hearts too to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A joint belief in the power of creativity and imagination led to our pastoral participation, creating a platform for possibilities for Mr R, the Grade 7 classes and for me as a researcher. In working in a context of abuse, in which the abusers, such as Mr R, have been abused themselves, pastoral care means a deliberate quest for new ways of relating. The analogy in narrative therapy is the ‘problem story’ (often the ‘dominant story’) and the search for ‘unique outcomes’ in people’s lives. Michael White (2007:61) comments: ‘It is these unique outcomes or exceptions that provide a starting point for re-authoring conversations. They provide a point of entry to the alternative storylines of people’s lives that, at the outset of these conversations, are barely visible.’ Mr R’s passion for the arts and for the importance of teaching the arts to poor young people emerged as a unique outcome in our conversations. Our uncovering of these unique outcomes developed into several ‘alternative storylines’ in the research in which I participated with Mr R.

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

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

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

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

On 18 August 2005, I interviewed Mr Noach. In this interview, Mr Noach illuminated another way of relating to young people that did not rely on the power of subjugation. Through the many examples Mr Noach gave of how he practised what he preached, he became a pastoral participant in this research towards the creation of relationships of care (see Section 5.3.1.4, under the subheading ‘The move to openness: Mr Noach’s “enlarged thinking”’).

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

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

(Excerpt from the research journal, 9 Sept 2005)

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

The word ‘discipline’ often came up in conversations when I asked teachers what some of the most serious problems they encountered in their relations with young people were. A ‘lack of discipline’ implied that discipline had to be enforced on young people by adults in some way.
In ‘coloured’ education, therefore, ‘bringing back discipline’ has been proposed as a remedy to cure many of the problems between teachers and young people. Many teachers at Petunia Primary told me that they saw enforcing discipline as one of their main tasks as educators. In fact, ‘disciplining’ is often the dominant action that defines the teacher-child relationship. A relationship that is primarily defined by fixed positions, in which one enforces and the other is subjected, in which one is active and the other docile, in which one is in position of power, the other without political power, is an unequal relationship that is open to abuse. According to Foucault (1995:170), ‘(d)iscipline “makes” individuals; it is the specific technique of power that regards individuals both as objects and instruments of its exercise’.

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

○ ‘Discipline’ and docile bodies

Foucault (1995:138) argues that the ‘mechanics of power’ produce ‘coercions that act upon the body, a calculated manipulation of its elements, its gestures, its behaviour. Thus discipline produces subjected and practiced bodies, “docile” bodies’. Hence the ‘success of disciplinary power…derives from the use of
simple instruments; hierarchical observation, normalising judgement and their
combination in a procedure that is specific to it, the examination’ (Freire
1995:170). What this means is that in order to achieve docility of the body, the
body (in this case of a young person) has to be subjected to observation and
judgement. Consequently, a culture in relation to young people has developed in
which ‘power had to be able to gain access to the bodies of individuals, their
acts, their attitudes, their modes of everyday behaviour. Hence the significance
of methods like school discipline, which succeeded in making young people’s
bodies the object of “highly complex systems of manipulation and
conditioning’” (Foucault 1979a: 41).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- ‘Discipline’ and corporal punishment

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

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

In 2007, a fierce debate raged in the letter column of the morning
newspapers in the Cape regarding the newly proposed legislation by which parents who are found guilty of the corporal punishment of their children can be fined. Reverend Tommy Solomons (2007:13) of Elsiesriver, who called himself a ‘worried minister’ in *Die Burger* of 16 October 2007, wrote: ‘…if I look at what the new Children’s Law could do to our community…. My opinion is that the state takes the use of reasonable disciplining out of parents’ hands, although disciplining is a Biblical instruction to parents…. Loving disciplining is a fundamental Biblical instruction which has to be carried out with discretion by parents’. The combination of the words ‘loving’ and ‘reasonable’ with ‘disciplining’ (meaning corporal punishment when read in the context of his argument) demonstrates how discourses of violence are perpetuated and sanctioned in poor communities by people of influence, such as ministers.

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

- A feminist theological position on parent-child relationships

In the Old Testament, the words for ‘discipline’ that are used to describe a specific relationship between a parent and a child are either *yacar* or

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*yacar*: ‘to chastise, literally (with blows) or figuratively (with words); hence, to instruct – bind, chasten, chastise, correct, instruct, punish, reform, reprove, sore’ (Dt 21:18) (Strong’s lexicon s.a.).
muwcar. Muwcar is used in those texts in which disciplining is linked with ‘the rod’ (Pr 13:24, 22:15, 23:13) and that are most often quoted by Christians who use these texts to legitimise their own practices of corporal punishment.

Even if one accepts that the words lend themselves to a variety of interpretations, it is well known that society in the Old Testament was structured according to violent social codes for punishment. In a postmodern 21st century world, most people no longer subscribe to violent forms of punishment such as burning (Gn 38:24, Lv 20:14), stoning (Lv 24:14), plucking out the hair (Nm 13:25, Is 50:6), bruising in mortars (Pr 27:22), or retaliation or injury according to the injury done (Ex 21:24, Dt 19:21). Violence as a form of ‘disciplining’ adults in South African society is no longer constitutional. However, the use of ‘the rod’ against a young person, the most powerless in society, has continued to feature in Christian ‘disciplining’ discourses. The question that this exception poses is whether it suits those who make proclamations about corporal punishment because it confirms their position of power over young people in their care. The kind of pastoral power of which corporal punishment is an expression is pastoral power as control.

If one accepts that a postmodern reading of Scripture means that the interpretation is informed by the reader’s observational set-up (Deist

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4 *muwcar*: ‘chastisement; figuratively, reproof, warning or instruction; also restraint – bond, chastening (-eth), chastisement, check, correction, discipline, doctrine, instruction, rebuke.’ (*Strong’s lexicon* s.a.).

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


1994:260), in the case of corporal punishment, it means that my experiences of patriarchy coupled with the suffering of young people in a poor community has brought a sensitivity to power abuse to my reading of the Bible. As a Christian feminist I am therefore less concerned with being right and more with doing right (Rossouw 1993:903). In doing right, I prefer to take my cues from Jesus about right relations between adults and young people.

Jesus introduces a way of relating that does away with control and punishment. In fact, by His death He took the punishment we deserved for our sins upon Himself. Therefore a feminist christology of embodied care takes the place of rules and rods. The word that is used for discipline in the New Testament is *paideia*.

It signifies a relationship of learning and instruction. Hence the Greek word for disciple is *mathetes*, a learner or pupil.

Jesus made the point that hierarchical relations had to make way for caring for and serving others. Jesus himself told of a different kind of relationship that is possible between a father and his errant child. In the parable of the lost son (Lk 15:20-32), the lost son uses the word *hamartano* (Lk 15:21). The word *ham-ar-tan'-o* means ‘to miss the mark (and so not share in the prize), that is (figuratively) to err, especially (morally) to sin – for your faults, offend, sin, trespass’ (Scripturetext s.a.). But in this parable there is no disciplining rod in sight. The father of Jesus’ story chooses not to heed the sins of his son and the need for punishment for what he had done. Instead, the father feels compassion (Lk 15:20). The Greek word is *splagchnizomai*,

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

9 *Strong’s lexicon* (s.a.)
which means ‘to have the bowels yearn, i.e. (figuratively) feel sympathy, to
pity – have (be moved with) compassion’ (Scripturetext s.a.) and he prepares
a feast for his son. This radical love of the father for his sinful son in this
parable goes against popular sentiment. His father’s generosity to his sinful
brother therefore outrages the good, ‘disciplined’ son.

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

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

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

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

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

The following excerpt from my conversation with Mr M (Excerpt from the research journal, 14 June 2005) illustrates how violence sometimes gets normalised, even revered, through its links with other discourses such as that of ‘manliness’ and ‘leadership’:
Today Mr M told me that he has not regretted for an instant the corporal punishment incident for which the charge was brought against him. I gathered that the incident that gave rise to the charge had been reported by only one ‘sissy’ (Mr M’s word). Mr M told me that a man is supposed to be able to take a hiding… Mr M told me that he knows that what he did is wrong (against the law), but that he was prepared to go to Pollsmoor (jail) for practising the principle of discipline.

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

Mr M told me stories of people whom he had caned who ‘turned out well’. He told me he has to add that it all depends on how one administers corporal punishment. No humiliating bending forward. No, he does it in a playful way and, at other times, he ‘comes in from below’.
Whilst I was listening, I remembered that this was the man who tells stories from his youth at his home to the neglected youngsters of the neighbourhood. The same man who gives chores for the young people to do around his house, like cleaning his car, for which he pays them. The same man who told me how vital it is to know a young person’s circumstances.

At the same time, he tells me that corporal punishment does not work for all boys. No, with some you don’t achieve anything with the rod and then you have to go sit and talk. But... he does not hit girls. The reason, he tells me, is that he does not want the marks (from the caning) to be on their bodies. But the same does not apply to most of the boys. No, ‘they have to take it because one day they will have to take the lead in life’. He wanted to add, he told me, that it is almost as if he and the boys have a better relationship after a caning. I asked him if it almost represents an experience of being initiated into manhood, of male bonding? Mr M told me that it is precisely what he experiences.

(Excerpt from the research journal, 14 June 2005)

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

According to Foucault (1995:136), a ‘body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved’. Mr M’s exercising of bio-power is multiform in its purpose: to subject the boys to his authority, to use the violence as a form of initiation into manhood or of male bonding, and to legitimise the violence as something which transforms (it prepares them for leadership, he says). The kind of rationality that informs the idea of leadership that uses corporal violence as a technique is the rationality of control and domination. By his own admission, girls are not subjected to corporal punishment and, if Mr M’s argument is taken to its logical conclusion, girls can therefore not be prepared for leadership. Thus the intentionality of bio-power becomes clear: domination, initiation into maleness and leadership-as-control, which excludes (and subjects) women. It is probably not surprising that Mr M thought my questions interesting, but meaningless, because of the strong ‘convictions’ he held. I do not know if my questions would have been considered differently, had I been male. I nevertheless organised for Mr M to consult with a male colleague of mine. He never went.

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

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

- **Young people witnessing violence**

In his 2007/8 Budget Speech, the then Provincial Minister of Community Safety, Mr Leonard Ramatlakane (2007) said that ‘as many as 73.4% of the murders committed in our province, are committed by perpetrators who know their victims. And 57% of these murders occur within our communities, on our street corners close to our homes. Our reports further reveal that from this, 62% of the females murdered, were murdered in private homes or residences. Of the 62 % of females, it is reported that only 6.8% of the victims did report the crime or have laid a complaint of domestic violence prior to the murder’. These words by the minister paint a sombre picture of the extent to which the Western Cape’s young people have been traumatised by witnessing domestic violence and violence in their immediate neighbourhoods, and that their trauma has been compounded by the fact that the perpetrators of the violence were often known to them.
In analysing the findings of the National Youth Victimization Study of 2005, Leoschut (2006:8) reflects on the fact that 22% of the young people who participated mentioned that they had witnessed family members intentionally hurting one another. Leoschut (2006:8) comments: ‘Of particular concern is the violent nature of these family disputes, since two fifths (40%) of those who were exposed to domestic violence reported that a weapon had been used in the attack.’

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

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

Violence and abuse also alter the physical experiences of young people. It affects concentration levels and has a negative impact on their school attendance and performance. Where violence is a feature of domestic life, young people, from a very young age, are put in situations where they have to fend for and look after themselves and younger siblings. The scope of the trauma that ‘coloured’ young people experience as witnesses is brought home when the sharp increase in drug-related crimes (312% in Kraaifontein between 2001 and 2006) (SAPS 2008) is considered. Many of these crimes are committed on the streets, in full view of young people.

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

- **Verbal abuse and ‘shaming’**

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

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

○ Shaming

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

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

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

Paulo Freire (1972:22) writes in Pedagogy of the Oppressed: ‘...almost always, during the initial stage of the struggle, the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend themselves to become oppressors, or “sub-oppressors”...The ideal is to be men; but for them, to be a “man” is to be an oppressor. This is their model of humanity.’

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

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

> ...what defines a relationship of power is that it is a mode of action which does not act directly and immediately on others. Instead, it acts upon their actions: an action upon an action, on existing actions or on those which may arise in the present or the future. A relationship of violence acts upon a body or upon things; it forces, it bends, it breaks on the wheel, it destroys, or it closes a door on all possibilities. Its opposite pole can only be passivity... (my italics)

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

- Laughter as a form of shaming

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

What I initially experienced in the writers’ group (this changed as the group became a safe place of sharing and of trust) was that the traumas that young people are exposed to are so varied and occur with such frequency that it
becomes almost impossible for young people to allow themselves to experience or to voice the emotional effects on them such as grief, anger and sadness. In order to survive the continued harshness of life, laughter may then be cultivated as a safe way out and a protection from sharing the experiences of horror. Thus a strange sense of jollity (which as a witness I found strange) sometimes accompanied the telling of stories of trauma in the community. What I therefore experienced was that laughter can be an effect of trauma; a way of dealing with the unspeakable. On the other hand, when young people do risk showing an emotion such as grief, they often risk being laughed at by others. I also wondered about the double bind that young people experience in this community. They cannot share the experience of it, if they share it, they will be laughed at.

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

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

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

- **Shame and cultural imitation**

Zoë Wicomb (1998:100) states in terms of the experience of ‘coloured’ people, ‘(t)his failure or inability to represent our history in popular forms and consequently the total erasure of slavery from the folk memory presumably has its roots in shame: shame for our origins of slavery, shame for the miscegenation, and shame, as colonial racism became institutionalized, for being black...’ This awareness of the historical effects of shaming on literature and drama and on the performing arts prompted me to direct my own power in this research towards the geography of young people’s belonging, and the kinds of identity that may be produced when their own experiences are honoured by the researcher. I now recognise how the mythologising of places like District Six happened in ‘coloured’ drama and how the ‘politics of nostalgia that sentimentalized the loss’ (Wicomb 1998:95) was tied up with the culture of shame and was linked with the silence of speaking the trauma of living life as a subject of violence.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(Pelser 2008:8)

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

The theory is that these people exist on the fringes of society and create their own set of rules about how to behave. These ‘subcultures’ see violence as normal and are more willing to use violence in situations where other people would not. They are also more likely to carry a weapon
and more willing to fight to protect their ‘honour’ or ‘status’. Young adult males are more likely to engage in this type of behaviour, and thus increase their chances of being both victims and perpetrators of violence. (Thomson 2004: s.p.)

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

2.3.5 Community responses to violence directed at young people

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

In the ‘coloured’ community, the relationship between adults and young people is characterised by an ethic of dominance and control. Such a culture, if it remains oblivious of its ethic, will continue to react strongly to rapes and murders of young people, but remain uncritical of its own violent practices of dominance, such as the practices of corporal punishment and verbal abuse.
Even official responses to violence against young people in the Western Cape are marked by proprietorial language that signifies a patronising relationship: ‘Hands off our children!’ What all the relationships have in common is ‘a normalizing gaze, a surveillance, that makes it possible to qualify, to classify and to punish’ (Foucault 1995:184). In reflecting on the social crisis in current policies in the United States that marginalise the youth, Henry Girou (2005:57) comments:

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

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

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

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

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

2.3.6 Neglect and the discourse of the family

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

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

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

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

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

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

2.4 **FOUCAULDIAN ANALYSIS: ITS ETHICAL IMPACT**

In this chapter I have shown that the discourses of poverty that affect young ‘coloured’ people should not be seen in social or historical isolation. In the next chapter, I use Foucault’s poststructuralist analyses to reflect on the historical, political and social discourses of pastoral control and subjugation in South Africa and how these have shaped the discourses of unworthiness, distrust and shame in the ‘coloured’ community.
I show how ‘pastoral power’ in South Africa was employed to subject the bodies of the most vulnerable members of society: poor people of colour. I also reflect on the physical, educational and psychological bearing that the operation of pastoral power had on the current challenges of ‘coloured’ poverty and how it affects its young. The fact that I, as a doctoral researcher, have benefited from the same system of pastoral power whose effects I describe in such painful detail emerged as an ethical research challenge. To me, the challenges of poverty became linked to the challenge of power – in this instance, the power of research and how to use it in such a way that it creates possibilities for ‘coloured’ young people. The acts of restitution of this research as described in Chapters 4 to 6 are therefore based on and supported by the insights provided by the archaeological and genealogical analyses set out in Chapters 2 and 3.